

**From King's African Rifles to Kenya Rifles:
The Decolonization and Transition of an African Army, 1960-1970**

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Introduction:

At midnight on the 12th of December 1963, the Union Jack was lowered for the last time at a moving ceremony at Independence Arena in Nairobi, Kenya. Immediately after, to the sound of cheering and jubilation, a green banner emblazoned with spears and shield was raised: the national independent flag of Kenya. For the first time in nearly seventy years, political power, in what had been known as the Kenya Colony, belonged to indigenous African people. In conjunction with the flag raising ceremony, two separated and differently uniformed detachments of African soldiers paraded in front of the packed stadium. One group wore the red fezzes and short sleeveless zouave jackets of the King's African Rifles. The other, the dark green peaked hats and tunic uniforms of the newly formed Kenya Rifles.¹ But this was only for show. Legally, there was no difference between the two groups. With Kenya's independence; the 3rd, 5th, and 11th Battalions of the King's African Rifles were handed over to the Government of Kenya and became the 3rd, 5th, and 11th Battalions of the Kenya Rifles. In the ceremony a contingent of Kenya Rifles, dressed in the old uniforms of the KAR, symbolically handed over the regimental standards and emblems to their differently uniformed comrades.² In what was a confusing time for the rank and file (and also many of the officers), this was meant to confirm for the soldiers, civilians, and government officials of Kenya that the allegiance of the army had indeed now changed, but that its pride, competence, and esteem had not.

The symbolism presented in these ceremonies, particularly the inferred connection and legacy between the old King's African Rifles and the new Kenya Rifles, has proved to be a significant omen for some. Indeed, the relationship between the Kenya Rifles and the United

¹ Richard Cox, *Kenyatta's Country* (London: Praegar, 1965), 172.

² Cox, 172.

Kingdom remained strong for many years. Even today, Kenya sends many of its army officer cadets to the Royal Military Academy at Sandhurst, and the British Army maintains a training base in Nanyuki, Kenya.³ This has been the United Kingdom's only long-term military presence on the entire continent. Like most other post-colonial African countries, Kenya faced tremendous difficulties upon achieving independence, particularly in the army. Since 1960, Sub-Saharan Africa has witnessed over 80 successful military *coup d'états*.⁴ Less than two months after its independence, Kenya, as well as Tanzania and Uganda (all inheritors of the KAR), experienced significant military unrest through the 1964 East African Army Mutinies. These traumatic events and the general difficulties that the Kenya Government faced at the time led Kenya to maintain its military ties with the UK. Through the 1960s and early 1970s, the UK financed and trained large portions of the Military of Kenya, particularly the Kenya Army, otherwise known as the Kenya Rifles. This continued relationship between the Kenya Rifles and the British military has caused many critics of Kenyan History to issue charges of neo-colonialism and dependency.

Several important academics and political commentators have mirrored this sentiment. They see British influence on the Kenya Rifles, especially during the 1960s and early 1970s, as maintaining the colonial status quo. They argue that continued British legacies and connections prevented the Kenya Army from developing into a modern and representative national organization. Instead, they assert that the early Kenya Rifles operated similarly to the KAR, as a colonial army.

³ "The British Army in Africa," The Army Website, accessed February 10, 2016, <http://www.army.mod.uk/operations-deployments/22724.aspx>

⁴ Monty G. Marshall, *Conflict Trends in Africa, 1946-2004 a Macro-Comparative Analysis*, Report prepared for Africa Conflict Prevention Pool (Arlington, VA; London: Center for Systemic Peace; Department for International Development, 2006), 53-61.

In “Structural and Political Change,” historian William R. Ochieng' supports this assertion. He states that “due to the Western and capitalist orientation of Kenyatta and his regime, Kenya’s colonial heritage – laws, parliament, civil service, police, *army*, economy, education and provincial administration – remained largely unchanged and unsympathetic to and remote from popular wishes [emphasis added].”⁵ Historian Timothy H. Parsons, in *The 1964 Army Mutinies*, echoes this by explaining “The British government’s willingness to supply Kenya with technical expertise, extensive military funding, and generous donations of weapons and equipment allowed Kenyatta to keep the organization, training, and traditions of the old colonial army.”⁶ This ensured the African government that the Kenya Rifles would be run “along KAR lines throughout the 1960s.”⁷ Most recently, Musambayi Katumanga, a security analyst and senior lecturer at Kenya’s National Defence College, argues that the Military of Kenya maintained a colonial outlook from independence until the 1990s. In “Morphing Mirror Images of Military Culture,” he states, “instead of seeking to transform [the colonial] mirror image structures, [the security institutions] were consolidating it... With a core successor elite from the military and police evolving from the rank and file below, independent Kenya adopted an essentially mirror image of a military culture.”⁸ For Katumanga, the early KR was used colonially, “to suit the ethnic and class imperatives of the new [indigenous] elite.”⁹

The main object of this thesis will be to explore the transition of the Kenya Rifles after independence, and the aforementioned controversial relationship between the armies of

⁵ William R. Ochieng', “Structural and Political Change,” in *Decolonization and Independence in Kenya, 1940-93*, ed. Bethwell A. Ogot and William Robert Ochieng' (London: James Currey, 1995), 106.

⁶ Timothy H. Parsons, *The 1964 Army Mutinies and the Making of Modern East Africa* (London: Praeger, 2003), 169.

⁷ Parsons, *The 1964 Army Mutinies*, 169.

⁸ Musambayi Katumanga, “Morphing Mirror Images of Military Culture and the Nation-State Insecurities in Kenya,” in *On Military Culture: Theory, Practice and African Armed Forces*, ed. Francois Vrey, Abel Esterhuysen, and Thomas Mandrup (Clearmont, SA: UCT Press, 2013), 137.

⁹ Katumanga, “Morphing Mirror Images of Military Culture,” 137.

independent Kenya and the United Kingdom. In doing so it will be necessary to delve into the processes of decolonization, Africanization, and state-building. These subjects are not only important for understanding Kenya, but African militaries in general. Kenya is one of the few countries in Africa to have never suffered a successful coup, and the Kenya Rifles are consistently regarded as one of the most professional and highly trained armies on the continent.¹⁰ Exploring the early years of this specific military force will add insight to these observations, and may provide a useful reference for studying other African and post-colonial states, their militaries, and their international relations. The first decade of the independent Kenya Rifles can only be understood in the larger context of the King's African Rifles' historical development. The KAR, which originated purely for colonial purposes, slowly evolved due to indigenous and imperial influences and interests. At independence, due to the unstable and chaotic situation it inherited, the Government of Kenya was forced to act pragmatically and flexibly. First, by ensuring that the Kenya Rifles was a loyal, representative, and effective armed force. And secondly, by pursuing and taking advantage of British military assistance in this process, which provided the stability, training, and influence for the future development of an organic national army.¹¹

Because of this, the early Kenya Rifles should not be seen as the simple continuation of the King's African Rifles. Nor can the early KR be accurately categorized as a neocolonial

¹⁰ For examples, see Kibiwott Koross, "Kenya Defence Forces Considered among Strongest, Most Disciplined Army in the World," *Standard Digital News* (Kenya), October 26, 2013, accessed December 14, 2015, <http://www.standardmedia.co.ke/article/2000096248/kenya-defence-forces-considered-among-strongest-most-disciplined-army-in-the-world>; The Kenyan Daily Post, "Proudly Kenyan: KDF Ranked the 68th Most Powerful Army in the World and 5th in Africa," *The Kenyan Daily Post*, March 3, 2015, accessed December 14, 2015, <http://www.kenyan-post.com/2015/03/proudly-kenyan-kdf-ranked-68th-most.html>.

¹¹ Katumanga states that organic military cultures "emerge driven by internal state-building logic." He explains that organic military culture "is best referred to as the ideal culture, culture as expressed in norms and values people claim to believe in." Katumanga, "Morphing Mirror Images of Military Culture," 137.

institution. Such understandings not only misrepresent the KAR, but they also fail to take into account the KAR's conflicting discourses and evolution. Instead, this thesis argues that the positive forces of evolution in the KAR were maintained by the independent government in the KAR, thus providing for the future development of an organic national army.¹²

This thesis adds to the expanding discourse on African colonial armies and independent African military institutions. Colonial African military institutions have been well documented by historians. This is particularly true of the KAR, whose first major historical account was produced by H. Moyse-Bartlett in 1945. Historians have also written extensively on independent Kenya. Many of these works, such as Charles Hornsby's *Kenya: A History Since Independence*, analyze Kenya as a whole or focus on its political developments.¹³ Other academics, especially political scientists, have exhaustively explored military developments in post-colonial Africa.¹⁴ Many of these works address the problems of military intervention in domestic politics. Nevertheless, despite this wide range of existing research, little has been done to specifically focus on the transition of colonial armies immediately after independence. Even more surprising, post-colonial African military research has generally failed to focus on a single country or institution, instead opting to compare certain states or analyze Sub-Saharan Africa as a whole. Therefore, conducting research specifically on the Kenya Army, particularly in the context of its transition from colonial to independent army, will provide a valuable addition to the discourse on African colonial and military history.

¹² This thesis is primarily concerned with the relationship between the Kenya Rifles and the British military. It does not assert that the relationship between independent Kenya and the UK lacked neocolonial attributes.

¹³ Charles Hornsby, *Kenya: A History Since Independence* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2012).

¹⁴ For some examples, see Mathurin C. Hounnikpo, *Guarding the Guardians: Civil-Military Relations and Democratic Governance in Africa* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2010); Zoltan Barany, "After Colonial Rule in Africa: Ghana, Tanzania, and Botswana," in *The Soldier and the Changing State: Building Democratic Armies in Africa, Asia, Europe, and the Americas* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2012), 275-302.

Historiography

This thesis relies on many important secondary sources for establishing a background on African colonial armies and independent African military institutions. The current discourse on African militaries can generally be divided into two disciplines, history and political science. Of special importance to the historiography of Kenya's post-colonial military is Timothy Parsons' *1964 Army Mutinies* and Myles Osborne's *Ethnicity and Empire in Kenya*. Parsons' *1964 Army Mutinies* provides the greatest insight into the Kenya Army's transition from colonial force to nationally independent military. He shows how the consequences of the 1964 East African Army Mutinies greatly affected the future armies of Kenya, Uganda, and Tanzania. Of particular interest is his description of the relationship and dealings between the Kenyan and British governments. While the most extensive historical account of Kenya's post-colonial army, especially with regards to the 1964 East African Army Mutinies, he stops short of examining the nature of British training or the changing culture of the Kenya Rifles. In his analysis, Parsons maintains that the Kenya Rifles of the 1960s were independent Kenya's equivalent to Britain's old King's African Rifles.

Myles Osborne's *Ethnicity and Empire* provides a comprehensive in depth account of the KAR, particularly through the eyes of the Kamba people. He shows how their military contribution to colonial, and later independent Kenya, changed over time. They made important impacts on the KAR, and their legacy of service was influential in post-colonial Kenya. Osborne portrays some of the challenges facing independent Kenya's Army, particularly the conflict over ethnic representation. While his narrative focuses on the particular experience of the Kamba, Osborne's work is particularly useful in identifying various aspects of Britain's colonial military legacy.

Many important political scientists have also invested their research and efforts on Africa's and Kenya's military institutions. The work of J.M. Lee and Musambayi Katumanga are especially central to this thesis. Lee's *African Armies and Civil Order* has provided one of the greatest and most enduring narratives on the problems facing African militaries, despite being published in 1969. One of the most important issues Lee discusses is the specific problems societies and their militaries face when receiving or establishing independence without making a clean break from former institutions. He describes these problems as "The Ambiguities of Succession."¹⁵ Lee also analyzes the problems of creating an African officer corps, especially with regards to relationships between former colonizer and colonized countries. These insights are important for the development of this thesis' arguments. Despite Lee's valuable analysis, he does not deeply explore the great diversity of Africa's military cultures and colonial legacies.

Musambayi Katumanga provides the most particular and specific account of Kenya's post-colonial military transition. In addition to being a gifted strategic analyst, he is also a senior lecturer at Kenya's National Defence College. In "Morphing Mirror Images of Military Culture," Katumanga describes the development of Kenya's military from the colonial period to the modern day. His account details the Kenyan military in general, in which he includes paramilitary and police forces. Interestingly, he describes the Kenyan security forces as maintaining a "mirror image" military culture. He explains

Mirror images, as opposed to organic militaries which emerge driven by internal state-building logic, are driven by the exclusive logic of ruling elite colonial or neo-colonial

¹⁵ J.M. Lee, *African Armies and Civil Order* (New York: Praeger, 1969), 55.

and are core in the deviation of violence and resource extraction. Such a mirror image becomes in effect the reality of the military and culture.¹⁶

For Katumanga, Kenya's independent military was colonially oriented and changed little during its first decades, at least in a technical understanding of mirror image military culture. While Katumanga provides an important political analysis, he fails to note the dramatic evolution the KAR underwent before it became the KR. Because of this, he refrains from pinpointing the causes for the KR's eventual organic development.

Finally, Mithi Mukherjee's *India in The Shadows of Empire* has inspired some of the ideas for this thesis. While specializing in legal, political, and cultural Indian history, Mukherjee's distinction between colonial and imperial ideals and aims has important implications for historical research on African colonial military institutions. Mukherjee states that the British Empire "was not a simple and homogenous phenomenon but rather a complex one, internally divided between... two competing but also collaborating discourses: the discourse of the 'colonial', and the discourse of the 'imperial'."¹⁷ It will be argued that this was true of the KAR as well. Mukherjee explains "the 'colonial' was a discourse of governance driven by ideas of territorial conquest, power, violence, domination, and subjugation of the colonized. The 'imperial', on the other hand, was based on a supranational deterritorialized discourse of justice under natural law, and was critical and censorial towards the arbitrary exercise of power."¹⁸ While Mukherjee's argument pertains to India's legal and judicial colonial legacies, it will be shown that a similar dynamic existed in the KAR, particularly displayed by the competing visions between imperial military officers and colonial officials and interests. This dynamic had

¹⁶ Katumanga, "Morphing Mirror Images of Military Culture," 130-131.

¹⁷ Mithi Mukherjee, *India in the Shadows of Empire: A Legal and Political History, 1774-1950* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), xv.

¹⁸ Mukherjee, *India in the Shadows of Empire*, xv.

important implications for the Kenya Rifles and the independent Government of Kenya's initial military policy.

Primary Sources

A wide range of primary sources are used to support this thesis. Government publication collections such as *The Kenya Gazette* and *The Kenya National Assembly Official Record* have been well used by other historians and provide copious amounts of information about the inner workings and debates of Kenya's government and politicians. These sources cover a large time period from the beginnings of the British protectorate to the present day. They give insight into the inner working of the government, as well as the desires and fears of Kenya's political elite. Other publications produced by important Kenyan leaders, such as Jomo Kenyatta and Tom Mboya, offer valuable insight into the official mind and rhetoric. In addition, contemporary local newspaper articles produced by the *Daily Nation* and *The Standard* provide firsthand accounts of important events, and gauge popular opinion and sentiment.

Finally, sources provided by *The Sandhurst Collection* present the greatest value. This collection, partially provided by the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst, allows access to the personnel files of past graduates, of which Kenyan military officers were and continue to be a significant segment. More importantly, this collection provides access to Sandhurst's military magazine, *Wish Stream*, which has been produced since 1947. This magazine gives important insight into British military training, culture, and the cadet experience. With this resource, the nature of the continued connections between the Kenya Rifles and the UK become clearer. To this author's knowledge, this source has never been used before in African historical research. All taken together, these sources will provide strong support for this thesis and its arguments.

Outline

This thesis is divided into three main chapters. Chapter one introduces the predecessor of the Kenya Rifles, the King's African Rifles. It shows how the KAR evolved dramatically from its origin in the late 19th century to the years leading up to independence. Importantly, the KAR was a tripartite institution made up of indigenous (rank-and-file), imperial (officers), and colonial (colonial administration/policy) influences and interests. These influences were often at odds with one another, and the conflict between imperial and colonial interests particularly fueled the KAR's initial transformation. Chapter two explores the political environment and needs of the Government of Kenya. It establishes that Kenya could not afford to disband or completely rebuild the KR, nor could it sacrifice the KR's reliability and efficiency. It immediately required the KR to deal with various internal and external threats while remaining professional and loyal. Chapter three explores the post-independence relationship between the KR and the British military. It shows how British military aid was the best option for the KR's unique needs. This assistance was important in maintaining the KR's loyalty and efficiency, as seen by the significant positive impacts made by British trained Kenyan KR officers. British officer imperial ideals were central to the success of this aid. The stability, training, and influence that British military assistance provided enabled the KR to stifle its own neocolonial discourse, and eventually develop a national organic military culture.

There may be some confusion regarding the terms and abbreviations used throughout this thesis. The King's African Rifles, or KAR, was the British Empire's predominant military force in East Africa. The Kenya Rifles, or KR, was and is independent Kenya's army. Kenyan sections of the KAR, became the KR at independence. While the Government of Kenya uses the

title Kenya Rifles and Kenya Army or Army of Kenya interchangeably, for the purpose of this thesis, Kenya Rifles will be the predominant term. Importantly, the Kenya Rifles or the Kenya Army never referred to other forces such as the GSU (General Service Unit), Tribal Police, or regular police. As the Government and Military of Kenya use the term Kenya Rifles, as opposed to Kenyan Rifles, the former will be maintained. Finally, it should be understood that Kenya's colonial government was a separate entity from Britain's metropolitan government. While both were components of the British Empire, they often had conflicting visions and policies.

Chapter 1: The King's African Rifles

Before analyzing the development of the independent Kenya Rifles, it is first necessary to understand its predecessor. The King's African Rifles was the British Empire's primary military force in East Africa. Along with other colonial formations such as the India Army and Royal West African Frontier Force, it was instrumental in expanding and maintaining Britain's imperial rule. Consisting of indigenous African soldiers and British officers, the KAR played a major role in many difficult campaigns in East Africa and abroad. Originating in the final decades of the 19th century, the volunteer force took part in significant conflicts such as World War I, World War II, and the Mau Mau Emergency. In World War II, it fought as far away as Madagascar, Malaysia, and the Middle East. In the early 1960s, during the dissolution of the British Empire, it was finally broken up and handed over to the newly independent governments of Malawi, Uganda, Tanzania, and Kenya.

The KAR's development was influenced by three different interests, which can generally be described colonial, imperial, and indigenous. Colonial interests, represented by the Colonial

Office and the East African colonial governments, were mostly concerned with economic extraction and maintaining internal rule and stability at the lowest cost. Imperial interests, represented by British military officers, generally wanted the KAR to be a professional (even prestigious) and conventional force capable of defending the empire. Indigenous interests, represented by the rank-and-file, desired to shape the KAR and their terms of service for their own benefit. Throughout its history, the KAR changed and evolved dramatically as it was impacted by these influences. This was particularly the case due to the disparity of vision for the KAR's development between colonial officials and imperial military officers. This chapter will make clear that the purpose, identity, and essence of the KAR was not singular, and that as it developed the KAR began to transform from a 'colonial' to an 'imperial' institution. This evolution and these influences would have significant legacies for the new independent Army of Kenya.

The original purpose of the KAR was colonial inspired, or in the words of Mukherjee: "articulated and operated in terms of conquest and domination of the colonized."¹⁹ In the last decades of the 19th century, private European companies and individual traders, with or without formal British or other imperial connections, began colonial operations in East Africa. An important former general of the KAR, George Giffard, explained that these business interests "were compelled, in order to maintain order and protect their stations, to raise local forces."²⁰ But these forces also had an offensive purpose. Parsons states that early colonial officials and agents "needed an armed body of men to impose their will on the local population."²¹ These

¹⁹ Mukherjee, *India in the Shadows of Empire*, 7.

²⁰ George Giffard, foreword to *The King's African Rifles: A Study in the Military History of East and Central Africa, 1890-1945*, by Hubert Moyse-Bartlett (Eastbourne: Rowe, 1945), v.

²¹ Timothy Parsons, *The African Rank-and-File: Social Implications of Colonial Military Service in the King's African Rifles, 1902-1964* (Oxford: James Currey, 1999), 14.

units, which were originally largely composed of foreign Muslim veterans from Sudan and Egypt, were effective in expanding British control and coercing the indigenous African population.²² Parsons explains that their “primary mission was to force East Africans to surrender their sovereignty, and it was imprudent to recruit askaris [colonial soldiers] from the same African communities targeted by British military operations.”²³ While effective in protecting business interests and small-scale colonial conquests, these inexpensive units had little value as a conventional force. Giffard describes them as “scantily equipped levies armed with out-of-date rifles discarded by the Army and employed on local expeditions against ill-armed tribes.”²⁴ Indeed, these soldiers were not well treated and a contingent in Uganda “rebelled in 1897 to protest infrequent pay and excessive campaigning.”²⁵ While these forces had not yet become the KAR, their original purpose of local conquest and control, as designed by local colonial interests, would prove to be an important beginning.

The first years of the 20th century would see the unification of these forces and the formal development of the King’s African Rifles. The original quasi-private armies slowly gave way to governmental control as the various companies surrendered their charters to Britain’s Foreign Office. By 1902, the Foreign Office had created the Central African Rifles, the East African Rifles, and the Ugandan Rifles, which they combined to form the KAR.²⁶ In 1905, the Colonial Office took overall command of the KAR, but gave responsibility for the individual battalions to the East African colonial governments.²⁷ This was an important development, as colonial

²² The East African colonial governments also relied on Britain’s India Army for a time. Parsons, *The African Rank-and-File*, 14-15.

²³ Parsons, 15.

²⁴ Giffard, foreword to *The King’s African Rifles*, v.

²⁵ Parsons, *The African Rank-And-File*, 15.

²⁶ Parsons, 16.

²⁷ Parsons, 16.

interests would continue to heavily control the KAR's future. Equally important however, was the formalized relationship with the British military, which provided an official command structure consisting of regular British officers holding the King's or Queen's commission.²⁸ This introduced an imperial influence which would grow in importance in the years to come. Despite these reforms, the purpose and role of the KAR, as dictated by colonial officials, remained largely the same. Between 1902 and 1914, the KAR carried out "punitive" expeditions against various indigenous groups including the Kikuyu, Embu, Kisii, and Turkana, to name a few examples.²⁹ The KAR was also used to intimidate various indigenous groups to pay taxes or otherwise submit to colonial authority. H. Moyse-Bartlett, former KAR officer and author of *The King's African Rifles*, the semi-official history of the organization, describes how the "protective and preventive function exercised by the mere presence of disciplined troops" could settle colonial matters "without the use of force."³⁰ While the new official British commissioned officer command structure wished to make the KAR "into a modern military formation, capable of undertaking full-scale, battalion level operations," settler and colonial influences mostly prevented this development at this time.³¹

But World War I would initiate dramatic changes in the KAR, particularly in terms of recruiting and the introduction of direct indigenous influence. While some Sudanese veterans remained in the force, during World War I, the ethnic composition changed drastically as local indigenous Africans became the primary recruits. At the onset of World War I, British East

²⁸ Before the formalization of the KAR, not all officers were regular or serving British officers. After this point, overall officer qualifications began to improve. See Anthony Clayton, *The British Officer: Leading the Army from 1660 to the Present* (London: Pearson, 2006), 224.

²⁹ Hubert Moyse-Bartlett, *The King's African Rifles: A Study in the Military History of East and Central Africa, 1890-1945* (Eastbourne: Rowe, 1945), 204-215.

³⁰ Moyse-Bartlett, *The King's African Rifles*, 206.

³¹ Timothy Parsons, *The African Rank-and-File*, 16.

Africa officials found themselves ill prepared to face German Tanganyika forces. While hesitant to risk the façade of white superiority and invincibility, the colonial governments began to rely on the KAR (at the encouragement of British officers) and thus increased the size of the force by recruiting indigenous Africans from their own colonial territories.³² While many difficulties and tragedies characterized the East African Campaign, locally recruited African soldiers of the KAR proved to be very capable, and they would be used from then on. Importantly, this shifted the KAR's demographic composition from foreign to local. KAR authorities now needed to be able to better meet the demands of their soldiers in order to make service worthwhile and attractive for suitable indigenous recruits.

This was a major source of development as indigenous soldiers now directly influenced the King's African Rifles. This not only led to significant changes in the KAR, but it also increased tensions between colonial officials and imperial military officers, the latter of which were inclined to accept their soldiers' demands as long as it ensured the reliability and effectiveness of the force. Indigenous soldiers influenced the nature of KAR and their terms of service through manipulating British ideas of 'martial race,' leveraging their willingness to accept discipline, syncretizing British military ideals and practices with local African values and traditions, and impacting the comportment of their officers.

Indigenous soldiers first influenced the King's African Rifles through recruitment practices. Recruitment into the King's African Rifles must be understood as a discourse between potential African soldiers and British authorities. Colonial and military officials generally understood this discourse or dialogue through erroneous theories of "martial race." Largely

³² Moyse-Bartlett, *The King's African Rifles*, 332-333.

based on experiences in India, colonial military authorities believed that certain ethnic groups or tribes were inherently better suited for military service. However, Parsons explains that “Although portrayed by British officers as an innate cultural attribute, in reality martial race signified an acceptance of military discipline.”³³ Because of this, conceptions of martial race were always static as indigenous individuals responded to military recruitment in different ways at different times. Thus British ideas on martial race were beholden to indigenous agency. Individuals and communities could even use labels of martial race for their advantage. In his important study of the Kamba and their experience of empire, Myles Osborne explains, “local leaders could use that military reputation [martial race] to pressure the colonial government in Kenya for benefits, and also attempt to solidify positions of authority at home by bolstering their social standing.”³⁴ Recruitment and ideas of martial race were not only used by colonial and military officials to understand and recruit in East Africa, but also by indigenous communities to seek colonial and societal concessions.

Indigenous soldiers also directly leveraged their British officers to negotiate their terms of service. Generally speaking, African members of the KAR did not join out of notions of loyalty or sense of duty to the British Empire or the Kenya colonial government.³⁵ Parsons explains that the majority signed up “because military service was the most lucrative form of unskilled wage labor in colonial East Africa. Most African soldiers thought of soldiering as prestigious work that entitled them to special consideration from the army and, consequently, the

³³ Parsons, *The African Rank-and-File*, 53.

³⁴ Myles Osborne, *Ethnicity and Empire in Kenya: Loyalty and Martial Race among the Kamba, c. 1800 to the Present* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 3.

³⁵ There were some important exceptions to this however, particularly in World War II. KAR soldiers joined for various motivations, including protecting their homes, fighting Hitler, and even helping individual Britons. See, David Killingray, *Fighting for Britain: African Soldiers in the Second World War* (Woodbridge, Suffolk: James Currey, 2010), 58-64.

colonial state.”³⁶ These concessions were not concrete or freely given however, and KAR soldiers used their willingness to accept discipline and risk, to impose their demands on their officers. Parsons explains that this was done through various means “ranging from minor violations of standing orders and regulations to a few mass strikes by entire units during the Second World War.”³⁷ Due to the mortal dangers, strict discipline, and other peculiar burdens soldiers faced in the army, they demanded and were given special considerations by military authorities, such as relatively lucrative pay and enhanced prestige. However, the colonial government and settler population often resented this treatment, as they feared that African middle class veterans with special statuses would undermine the colonial social order.³⁸ Imperial officers created tension with colonial authorities by acquiescing to indigenous rank-and-file demands. While Parsons has noted that these concessions may have created praetorian trends in the KAR, it is important to understand that many modern societies also specially distinguish active and retired service members.³⁹ The King’s African Rifles was created by colonial interests and imperial influences, but that did not stop indigenous soldiers from imposing their own desires on the force.

Indigenous African soldiers not only negotiated for concessions, they also directly influenced the nature or culture of the KAR. Parsons states that the shift in recruiting and new indigenous composition made the KAR “first and foremost an African institution.”⁴⁰ While colonial settler demands and British military influences and organizations were important, “Ultimately, the military culture of the KAR evolved from the daily interaction of Western and

³⁶ Parsons, *The African Rank-and-File*, 82.

³⁷ Parsons, 182.

³⁸ Parsons, 128-134.

³⁹ Praetorianism is the practice or of the armed forces to wield or excessively influence civil power. See Parsons, *The 1964 Army Mutinies*, 32.

⁴⁰ Parsons, *The African Rank-and-File*, 110.

African values.”⁴¹ While on campaign, African soldiers sang African songs they specially adapted for marching.⁴² When burying the dead, including alongside their British comrades, they personally performed special indigenous ceremonies or rituals depending on whether the deceased was Animist, Christian, or Muslim.⁴³ They translated traditional British military ideals such as loyalty, duty, and honor into similar albeit different local understandings.⁴⁴ Importantly, they valued their martial prowess and success and eagerly passed on their pride to their communities and new members. Despite being constrained by the rigid structures of military discipline and colonial exclusion and exploitation, African soldiers significantly influenced the KAR’s culture.

The KAR’s indigenous soldiers also impacted their British officers. They expected consistent and fair treatment, as well as respect. British officers who conformed to the expectations of their soldiers developed “a sophisticated understanding of African languages and customs through extended contact with askaris and recruiting visits to their home areas and developed strong, albeit paternalistic, emotional attachments to their men.”⁴⁵ A former British Somaliland official noted that a good officer of an African colonial unit knew not only their soldiers’ “regimental numbers, he knows how many children they have as well, or what songs they sing when the rain comes.”⁴⁶ KAR officers and their men also developed unique systems of negotiation and reconciliation. *Ngomas* and *Barazas*, heavily African influenced KAR

⁴¹ Parsons, *The African Rank-and-File*, 111.

⁴² Killingray, *Fighting for Britain*, 160.

⁴³ Killingray, 172-173.

⁴⁴ The subjects of loyalty, duty, and honor in colonial military service are difficult to approach. On loyalty for the Kamba people group, Osborne explains, “it is a mistake to view “loyalty” as something that only connected the British and the Kamba. The latter had their own understandings of the notion... loyalty, was of course, no uncontested notion.” See, Osborne, *Ethnicity and Empire*, 157-160.

⁴⁵ Parsons, *The African Rank-and-File*, 106.

⁴⁶ Parsons, 105.

celebrations and ceremonies, allowed officers and soldiers to interact in culturally meaningful ways that allowed room for equal dialogue.⁴⁷ While such institutions worried some officers due to their discouragement of military hierarchy, they were defended as being an innate part of the KAR. Good officers were well appreciated, and veteran soldiers often remained in contact with and honored their former officers.⁴⁸ However, this was not always the case as the KAR sometimes attracted bad officers, especially during its early years. There are instances of widespread dissent and even fragging in World War II.⁴⁹ While colonial societies and institutions were constructed with racist prejudices, it is important to understand that army life and the rigors of combat could provide a stark knowledge of reality to officers and men. During such times, Africans and Britons lived together in close quarters and shared certain experiences which shattered colonial or racial myths. In his detailed study of Britain's African forces in World War II, David Killingray states "Military action involving mutual dependence of men and officers overrode barriers of race and class that were impenetrable in peacetime; there is much evidence of close working relationships between African soldiers and their white officers especially on the battlefield."⁵⁰ British officers and the KAR could not have been successful without meeting the expectations of their soldiers, sometimes needing to act outside the narrow constraints of colonialism and racism.

⁴⁷ For more on *Ngomas* and *Barazas* see, John Nunneley, *Tales from the King's African Rifles: A Last Flourish of Empire* (Surrey, United Kingdom: Askari Books, 1998), 62–65; Ian A. Pylväinen, "Bwanas in Burma: British officers and African regiments in Southeast Asia, 1944-45" (undergraduate honor's thesis, Wesleyan University, 2010), 30-31.

⁴⁸ For example, soldiers sometimes named their children after their officers, or invited certain officers to act as treasurers of veterans' organizations or co-ops. Parsons, *The African Rank-and-File*, 107, 246.

⁴⁹ Fraggings are the act of a soldier to kill his own officer on purpose in the confusion of combat. Due to the violence and combat of WWII, as well as the difficult conditions soldiers experienced, some soldiers became so frustrated with their own individual situation that they reacted by attacking their own force. Such occasions were rare, and KAR soldiers were generally praised. Parsons, 184.

⁵⁰ Killingray, *Fighting for Britain*, 85.

Good British officers not only conformed to the desires of their men, many of them also advocated for greater rights and promotions for KAR soldiers. This was especially true of NCOs. African NCOs played an important role in shaping the KAR, and they were highly trusted by their British officers. Killingray explains that “African NCOs held positions of considerable influence... Senior NCOs occupied key positions, acting as arbiters, negotiators and translators... they were men to whom first referral was often made in dealing with disputes involving rank-and-file.”⁵¹ Indeed, Parsons has noted how “Many British officers who served in combat with senior African NCOs and WOPCs [warrant officer platoon commander] firmly believed they were qualified for commissions, but intense political pressure from the settler community maintained the racial segregation of the colonial officer corps.”⁵² The aforementioned WOPC is a testament to the prowess of African NCOs in the KAR. It was a platoon commander position created especially for Africans, by senior army officers, due to the need for competent leadership. While not technically commissioned, WOPCs held the same responsibilities usually reserved for lieutenants and captains.⁵³ African NCOs helped lead the KAR as well as translate the wishes, desires, and expectations of British officers to African soldiers, and vice versa. African NCOs may have been the most integral and indispensable part of the KAR.⁵⁴ Indeed, many became important leaders and officers in their respective armies

⁵¹ Killingray, *Fighting for Britain*, 85.

⁵² Parsons, *The African Rank-and-File*, 109.

⁵³ Louis Allen, *Burma: The Longest War 1941-1945* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1984), 654.

⁵⁴ It is interesting to note that most modern militaries follow this structure. From the U.S. to the UK to France, NCOs fulfill the priority role in managing and executing the various actions of the armed forces. This is different from U.S.S.R. style forces, which did not prioritize the role of NCOs.

after independence. Indigenous Africans played important leadership roles in the KAR, and British officers pressured and started the conversation for establishing an African officer corps.⁵⁵

Indigenous soldiers' influence and demands were largely supported by British officers because the given concessions agreed with their imperial ideal of a professional and prestigious military force. Generally speaking, British officers were highly influenced by ideals of honor, duty, and exceptionalism.⁵⁶ They had a personal stake in their force's welfare, strength, and prestige. Thus, they were willing to give concessions that ensured the effectiveness and reliability of KAR soldiers. British military ideals also meant that officers often saw little need for, or glory in, policing the civilian African population. This conflicted greatly with colonial interests. Parson explains that "The British Army has always had a particular distaste for operations 'in support of the civil power' requiring the use of lethal force against civilians." This was true in East Africa as well. Moyse-Bartlett, historian and retired KAR Lieutenant-Colonel, explained that senior KAR officers "stoutly maintained their opposition to the attitude of mind that permitted the... [KAR] to be used as a species of superior police in support of frontier administration."⁵⁷ British officers were motivated by an idealistic vision of the empire and its future, and they sought to make the KAR conform to and take part in that endeavor. Most KAR officers also genuinely desired the best for their men, and they wanted the KAR to become more like a professional regular army, instead of a colonial formation. Thus they were willing to give certain concessions to their soldiers that were in line with European practices, such as increased pay and prestige. They did not have the same financial or governmental concerns as colonial

⁵⁵ It should be noted that British officers were not as committed to forming an African officer corps for the KAR as indigenous representatives and politicians. Nonetheless, the fact that their views more or less aligned is significant.

⁵⁶ Clayton, *The British Officer*, 7.

⁵⁷ Moyse-Bartlett, *The King's African Rifles*, 684-685.

officials and the settler population; instead their greatest loyalty was for their particular units and the empire.⁵⁸ As such, KAR officers were often opposed by colonial interests in their effort to transform the organization from a colonial force into a modern, effective, and prestigious imperial formation.

From the onset of direct imperial influence, colonial interests strove to maintain the KAR's original internal control and domination oriented mission. As has been noted, the East African colonial governments were forced to rely on the KAR for external defense during World War I. Afterwards, they only grudgingly accepted the concessions military officers advocated for the indigenous troops. Colonial interests not only tried to limit the concessions given to indigenous soldiers, they even tried to disband the KAR or turn it (back) into a "body of armed constabulary."⁵⁹ This led an irritated Colonel J. Harington to state, "settlers in Kenya... do not appear to regard the force [KAR] maintained there as a small contribution to the defence of the Empire, of which the Colony forms a part."⁶⁰ Moyse-Bartlett noticed this discrepancy between colonial and imperial visions, stating "despite the insistence of Whitehall that the K.A.R. was essentially a military force, the view was still current in the Colony that its proper role was that of a frontier police."⁶¹ Even after World War II, during the menacing environment of Cold War, the colonial governments refused to offer greater support for the KAR, instead planning to make do with newly formed paramilitary units (including what would eventually become the GSU).⁶²

⁵⁸ For more information on regimental pride, see Clayton, *The British Officer*, 142-143.

⁵⁹ Moyse-Bartlett, *The King's African Rifles*, 456.

⁶⁰ Moyse-Bartlett, 456.

⁶¹ Moyse-Bartlett, 457.

⁶² Parsons, *The African Rank-And-File*, 38.

However, KAR officers continued to champion “an efficient military force commanded by professional soldiers and charged with the joint defence of all the territories.”⁶³ But Colonial interests resented having to pay for the KAR as they “believed public funds should be spent on loans and subsidies to help [settlers].”⁶⁴ Indeed, the colonial governments even tried to rescind or eviscerate various privileges or benefits given to indigenous veterans. For example, Parson notes that during 1950s the East African colonial governments held off on, and eventually only grudgingly approved, increased pensions and wages, despite soaring growth in the cost of living.⁶⁵ Consequently, the KAR had enormous difficulty during this time “to make serving in the army appealing to Africans.”⁶⁶ This was a difficult period for the KAR, as imperial budgets dried up and independence loomed large. Despite this however, it was planned “to preserve the core of the KAR as a viable military force.”⁶⁷ As British officers prepared for independence in East Africa, they worked “to ensure that the new African armies would inherit the organization, traditions, and philosophy of the [KAR] intact.”⁶⁸

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The King’s African Rifles was a complex institution which evolved from colonial, imperial, and indigenous influences. While a tool of the British Empire, it was significantly impacted by its indigenous soldiers. These soldiers not only negotiated their terms of service, but they also directly influenced the culture and leadership of the KAR. British officers had to adapt and sometimes defer to their KAR soldiers in order to maintain the effectiveness of the

⁶³ Moyse-Bartlett, *The King’s African Rifles*, 456.

⁶⁴ Parsons, *The African Rank-And-File*, 23.

⁶⁵ Parsons, 254-256.

⁶⁶ Parsons, *The 1964 Army Mutinies*, 45.

⁶⁷ Parsons, *The African Rank-And-File*, 39.

⁶⁸ Parsons, 44.

force. Equally important, was the conflict between colonial officials and imperial military officers over the purpose or mission of the KAR. Its original purpose, as dictated by colonial interests, lay in conquering, coercing, and intimidating the indigenous population of East Africa. However, as control became more formalized and regular British officers became more involved, the KAR changed dramatically. British officers strived to increase the professionalism and prestige of the force. They wanted it to become an imperial force used against outside conventional threats, instead of for internal policing and domination. Due to the KAR's success in World War I, and then the threats that World War II and the Cold War presented, this imperial vision eventually won out. But such an outcome was not guaranteed, and colonial interests, due to financial and governmental concerns, constantly tried to return the KAR to its colonial origin. These influences and conflicts of vision would have important implications for independent Kenya and the Kenya Rifles.

Chapter 2: Fighting for Survival in the Frenzy of Independence

When Kenya achieved independence on December 12, 1963, it inherited an incredibly unstable and perilous political situation. Harold MacMillan's famous "Winds of Change" speech in 1958, and the speed with which Kenya's independence was planned, caught British military officials off-guard.⁶⁹ As such, the Kenya Rifles was not yet ready for independence in late 1963. Certain important tasks, such as the Africanization of the officer corps, had yet to be accomplished. In addition, the KR's configuration was still composed along British theories of martial race. But the biggest challenge Prime Minister Jomo Kenyatta faced was to unite the

⁶⁹ Parsons, *The 1964 Army Mutinies*, 53.

many diverse peoples of Kenya whose only commonality was the shared experience of colonialism.⁷⁰ Indeed, the biggest threat to the new independent Government of Kenya was from its own institutions and people. The Government of Kenya faced the full force of desire and expectation by people who had been systematically marginalized for over fifty years. In addition, Kenya inherited a wide range of external threats. The end of the major European empires in Africa created a volatile and precarious continental diplomatic environment in the 1960s and 1970s. Politically unstable and expansionary neighboring states threatened Kenya's sovereignty. Even more concerning was the Cold War, in which Africa was caught in the middle. To combat these problems and maintain its rule and integrity, the Government of Kenya was forced to act pragmatically by ensuring that the Kenya Rifles was a loyal, representative, and effective independent army.

This chapter describes the threats that independent Kenya faced, and the steps the government needed to take in order to counter them. It begins by explaining the internal and external threats to the KR's loyalty and reliability. It then details a related problem, the necessary reforms the KR needed to immediately undergo to make itself more representative and acceptable to the public, as well as the tensions those reforms created. The chapter ends by describing the security threats to Kenya's sovereignty and ability to rule. Violent conflict involving internal ethnic groups, and the threat of invasion by foreign powers, meant Kenya could not afford to disband or completely rebuild the KR. It needed to be able to immediately rely on an effective KR, in order to defend its sovereignty and maintain its rule. Therefore, the

⁷⁰ Kenyatta was the Prime Minister of Kenya before he became President in 1964 when Kenya left the sovereign Commonwealth. With this action, Kenya replaced Queen Elizabeth II with Kenyatta as its sovereign head of state. Kenyatta then switched from the position of Prime Minister to the position of the President.

situation the Government of Kenya inherited forced it to ensure the loyalty, representativeness, and effectiveness of the KR.

The loyalty and reliability of the Kenya Rifles was one of the most important concerns to Kenyatta and his government. They rightfully recognized the dangers a standing army could present. Generally speaking, the greatest threat newly independent African governments faced were military coups or other forms of military intervention in civil politics. One study has recorded that by 1985, post-colonial African states had suffered sixty coups and 197 attempted coups or military conspiracies.⁷¹ Kenya's politicians and government were well aware of these developments. Indeed, less than two months after independence, in an event that will be discussed in greater detail further on, the 11th KR staged a military mutiny along with other former KAR battalions in Uganda and Tanzania. While the issue was peacefully resolved in Kenya, Parsons explains that the "military unrest shook the foundations of civil authority in the region and sparked a crisis of confidence in Great Britain and the new African governments."⁷² Order was restored but trust was not.

While the 1964 Army Mutinies were generally forgotten or explained away as an innocuous misunderstanding, Kenya's politicians and government remained concerned over the reliability and loyalty of the Kenya Rifles.⁷³ They had observed violent coups occur in other parts of Africa, and they feared for the same in Kenya. In one parliamentary session, M.P. Omar stated

⁷¹Augustine Kposowa and J. Crag Jenkins, "The Structural Sources of Military Coups in Postcolonial Africa, 1957-1984," *American Journal of Sociology*, v. 99 (1993), 126; First seen in Parsons, *The 1964 Army Mutinies*, 19.

⁷² Parsons, *The 1964 Army Mutinies*, 2.

⁷³ Due to the considerable embarrassment the mutinies caused, the UK and the East African governments were eager to move on. The event has largely remained undiscussed, excepting Parsons' works. See Parsons, 21-22, 149-150.

I would like to remind our Ministers about the political atmosphere in Africa, particularly in countries where there have been coups by the military or the army. Now, our country, Kenya, is good; its political stability at the moment is good, but that is not enough. We would like the Government to ensure that our Army and the police are satisfied... if they are not satisfied, then they will be tempted to do the same as has happened in Ghana, Nigeria, and elsewhere in Africa.⁷⁴

Indeed, some members of Kenya's government and parliament feared that the KR had already become disloyal. The Minister for Internal Security and Defence allegedly told the *Daily Nation* that "in a [Kenyan] army barracks... there are people in our midst who would like to overthrow the Government."⁷⁵ M.P. Ngala echoed this stating, "This is a more serious matter, to have in the army... people who are alleged to be trying to topple our own Government."⁷⁶ While such fears were probably exaggerated, there were signs of worrying behavior. M.P Ochwada, a KAR veteran, informed the house that "at the present moment you find there are a lot of rumors going on about in the army as to what they intend to do, what might happen if this or that was done and so on and so forth."⁷⁷ While historians have debated the evidence for such developments, the fear that the KR was or could be coopted was genuine, and the government was forced to react.

Subversion by a foreign power was thought to be one of the primary threats to the Kenya Rifles' reliability and loyalty. As the international situation at the time was generally divided between East and West, communism and capitalism, individual fears and accusations from Kenya's politicians developed along these lines. As with many other governments of the time, the Soviet Union and communism were often thought to be a significant threat. M.P. Okando

⁷⁴ Hansard, *Republic of Kenya, House of Representatives Official Report Volume VIII, 25 January- 10 March 1966*, (Nairobi, 10 March 1966), 1953-1954.

⁷⁵ Hansard, *Republic of Kenya, House of Representatives Official Report Volume VI, 14 September- 22 October 1965*, (Nairobi, 22 October 1965), 1343.

⁷⁶ Hansard, *Republic of Kenya, House of Representatives Official Report Volume VI, 14 September- 22 October 1965*, (Nairobi, 22 October 1965), 1343-1344.

⁷⁷ Hansard, *Republic of Kenya, House of Representatives Official Report Volume III (Part II), 28 July- 1 October 1964*, (Nairobi, 29 July 1964), 1087.

illustrates this when he stated to parliament that “there are evils of which we must be aware, and one of those evils in this country to which we must be completely awake is the advent and infiltration of communism in many different forms. By support, financially or otherwise, communism is certainly getting into this country.”⁷⁸ Yet many of Kenya’s politicians feared the opposite. M.P. Anyieni expressed this concern when he cautioned the Government that

There are a lot of *coups d’etat* which are taking place in Africa today and, if we analyse these *coups d’etat* properly, we will find that they are imperialist inspired... The Government must guard against any foreigners approaching our people in the army in order that our army may remain loyal only to the Kenya people and not to imperialist forces or any other forces for that matter.⁷⁹

While members of parliament and government officials disagreed upon who was a greater threat, they all recognized that the KR was vulnerable to foreign cooption. Such fears led to a greater effort to confirm and maintain the KR’s reliability and loyalty.

The Government of Kenya was also concerned that the KR could be subverted by internal interests. While most of Kenya’s politicians had been united against continued British rule, bitter disagreements over Kenya’s independent future often led to deep-seated mistrust and animosity.⁸⁰ One example of this is the relationship between Jomo Kenyatta and Paul Ngei. While they had been imprisoned together during the Mau Mau Conflict as part of “The Kapenguria Six,” after their release and as independence approached they became bitter enemies.⁸¹ Osborne explains that Ngei became “a political thorn in Kenyatta’s side,” and that at

⁷⁸ Hansard, *Government of Kenya, Legislative Council Debates Official Report Volume XC, 16 October- 20 December 1962*, (Nairobi, 18 October 1962), 149.

⁷⁹ Hansard, *Republic of Kenya, House of Representatives Official Report Volume VIII, 25 January- 10 March 1966*, (Nairobi, 10 March 1966), 1969.

⁸⁰ In the first years of independence, extreme tension existed between Odinga Odinga and Jomo Kenyatta, and their respective allies. Odinga broke away from Kenyatta’s political party, the KAU, to form his own, the KPU. Kenyatta considered this a direct threat to his government.

⁸¹ Keith Kyle, *The Politics of the Independence of Kenya*, 173.

one rally Ngei's constituents "forced [Kenyatta] to end his speech early, and he had to flee Machakos with the windows of his car broken."⁸² Such open public hostility was one issue; another was the efforts of Ngei and other Kenyan politicians to gain the support of the Kenya Rifles.⁸³ One international observer commented that "If Paul Ngei... were to join forces with Odinga against the Kenyatta government—so the argument goes—they might be able to draw leading elements of the Army and police to their side."⁸⁴ Such angst was created by rumors of improper connections between politicians and the Kenya Rifles. M.P. Matano demonstrated this fear when he announced, "there are rumors circulating... that there are Members of Parliament who have taken people outside this country and they are now recruiting them privately to return... and join the army... What security arrangements are going to be made to avoid any clashes or any *coup d'etat*."⁸⁵ Parsons explains that "With roughly 170 Kenyans, most of whom were personally selected by Odinga and his allies, having received some sort of military training in the Eastern Bloc, it seemed apparent to many observers that Odinga was trying to train and equip his own private army."⁸⁶ More worrying was that certain members of parliament even tried to get these or similar trainees recruited directly into the army.⁸⁷ The government was well aware of these real or imagined threats, and they were forced to implement policies to protect the KR from internal subversion.

⁸² Myles Osborne, "'The Cat With Nine Lives': Paul Ngei and the Making of Modern Kenya," *Journal of Eastern African Studies* 6 (2012): 202.

⁸³ Myles Osborne, *Ethnicity and Empire*, 236-237.

⁸⁴ John Spencer, "Kenyatta's Kenya," *Africa Report* 11, no. 5 (May 1966): 14; First seen in Parsons, *The 1964 Army Mutinies*, 187.

⁸⁵ Hansard, *Republic of Kenya, House of Representatives Official Report Volume III (Part II), 28 July- 1 October 1964*, (Nairobi, 25 September 1964), 2830.

⁸⁶ Timothy Parsons, *The 1964 Army Mutinies*, 187.

⁸⁷ Hansard, *Republic of Kenya, House of Representatives Official Report Volume III (Part II), 28 July- 1 October 1964*, (Nairobi, 28 July 1964), 1087.

The Government of Kenya not only worried about the Kenya Rifles loyalty or reliability, they were also concerned about the KR's negative effects on Kenyan society. Even though the King's African Rifles officially became the Kenya Rifles at independence, that did not mean that it was now a national or representative army. It lacked sufficient indigenous officers and its composition was ethnically exclusive. Rather than improve or stabilize the political situation, the newly independent Kenya Rifles actually deteriorated it. M.P. Ochwada observed that the government must change this and work to ensure that the army was not "a liability but is an asset for the nation."⁸⁸ The KR's colonial attributes decreased confidence in the government, and they also inflamed ethnic tension, as various groups struggled to gain or defend their access to the Army's patronage. To reverse this tension and provide the stability that would allow it to effectively rule, the government needed the KR to address these colonial legacies.

The most glaring colonial aspect of the Kenya Rifles at independence, and one of the most destabilizing, was that indigenous Africans only made up fifty percent of the officer corps.⁸⁹ East Africa's colonial governments discouraged indigenous commissions and only after intense political pressure, and the realization that independence was on the horizon, did they produce their first indigenous African officer in 1957.⁹⁰ M.P. Arwings-Kodhek lamented that there were "certain things which have really been neglected in the past... The people who were governing us... never arranged that we should have an officer class of the King's African Rifles

⁸⁸ Hansard, *Republic of Kenya, House of Representatives Official Report Volume III (Part II)*, 28 July- 1 October 1964, (Nairobi, 28 July 1964), 1086.

⁸⁹ Hansard, *Government of Kenya, Legislative Council Debates Official Report Volume XC*, 16 October- 20 December 1962, (Nairobi, 13 December 1962), 504.

⁹⁰ The first African officers of the KAR were given the inferior Governor's Commission instead of the Royal's Commission. This changed several years later due to political pressure to end the KAR's racial discrimination. Parsons, *The African Rank-And-File*, 109-110.

which we can call upon.”⁹¹ The KR’s lack of indigenous officers not only weakened its ability to perform and develop, it also caused unease in Kenya, particularly in the army itself. Less than two months after independence, the 11th KR joined other former KAR battalions in Tanzania and Uganda in the 1964 East African Army Mutinies. While the 11th KR eventually peacefully returned to their barracks, the region wide event caused considerable worry in the UK and East African Governments. Parsons has explored this event in detail and one of the key sources of early discontent in the KR was the slowness or lack of African promotion. He states, “Most [indigenous soldiers] believed that expatriate British officers stood in the way of their promotion to higher ranks.”⁹² Some soldiers even “charged that British military personnel plotted to stay in Kenya because they would not be able to get jobs back in the United Kingdom.”⁹³ Kenyatta was aware of this issue and when the mutinies were starting to break out, he immediately “announced plans to accelerate the Africanization of the officer corps.”⁹⁴ The Government of Kenya wisely realized and then confronted this issue early on in its existence, and it withstood the 1964 East African Army Mutinies relatively well.

The promotion of Africans into the officer corps was tied to another colonial legacy, the Kenya Rifles’ ethnic composition. In terms of ethnic or tribal conflict in Kenya, the composition of the KR proved to be one of the most divisive and destabilizing issues. Indeed, ethnic conflict was one of the greatest problems Kenya faced. Anthony Swann, the Temporary Minister for Defence informed the Parliament of Kenya in 1962 that the “immediate threat to security today,

⁹¹ Hansard, *Republic of Kenya, House of Representatives Official Report Volume III (Part II)*, 23 July- 29 November 1963, (Nairobi, 28 November 1963), 2409.

⁹² Parsons, *The 1964 Army Mutinies*, 88.

⁹³ Parsons, 122.

⁹⁴ Parsons, 118.

at this moment... is the very real inter-tribal tension in some parts of Kenya.”⁹⁵ Britain’s martial race recruiting policy created an army that was highly exclusivist and a large source of political patronage. Ethnic groups such as the Kalenjin and the Kamba, who had dominated the KAR since World War I, assumed the same position at independence.⁹⁶ This created two significant problems. The first is that groups with previous access to the military defended their privileged martial race status. Military service had become integral in martial race communities, significantly influencing their economies and identities. One Samburu (considered martial race by colonial authorities) veteran sergeant-major of the KAR, M.P. ole Tipis, demonstrated this when he explained to the house that

We know that it is a fact that some people are better fighters than others. Nobody can deny this... those people who have the greater ability, who are stronger, who can endure difficult conditions, people who have been brought up in semi-desert areas, not in places like Nairobi having an easy life all the time, people who can trek the enemy long distances on foot, not on bicycles, why should they be denied the chance of joining the army just because there have been imbalances in the past.⁹⁷

Representatives of martial race communities not only worried about their peoples’ identities, but also their future welfare. M.P. Tanui wondered that “in view of the fact that the Kalenjin, the Turkana, and the Masai are educationally backward, is it not fair for the Government to recruit more people from these tribes into the army?”⁹⁸ When the government did try to make the KR more representative, martial race communities felt targeted. After an inquiry from M.P. Choge in regards to declining Kalenjin recruitment, Minister Mungai felt compelled to inform him, “We

⁹⁵ Hansard, *Government of Kenya, Legislative Council Debates Official Report Volume XC, 16 October- 20 December 1962*, (Nairobi, 19 October 1962), 229.

⁹⁶ Osborne, *Ethnicity and Empire*, 236-244.

⁹⁷ Hansard, *Republic of Kenya, House of Representatives Official Report Volume III (Part II), 28 July- 1 October 1964*, (Nairobi, 22 September 1964), 2624.

⁹⁸ Hansard, *Republic of Kenya, House of Representatives Official Report Volume III (Part II), 28 July- 1 October 1964*, (Nairobi, 25 September 1964), 2827.

have no policy of discrimination against the Kalenjin.”⁹⁹ But Parsons notes how soldiers in the KR were uneasy and uncertain about their futures after independence. Parsons states “Veteran Askaris were profoundly suspicious of their new African leaders,” because “these leaders came from the politically sophisticated ‘non-martial’ ethnic groups that colonial officers had barred from the KAR.”¹⁰⁰ Reforming the ethnic composition of the KR would prove to be a complicated process as its current members feared for their futures and they posed an internal threat to the stability and integrity of the Kenya Rifles, the government, and Kenya in general.

The second problem with the KR’s colonial composition is that other ethnic groups throughout Kenya wanted their own people to be better represented and have access to the army’s patronage. Parliament members often presented motions that dealt specifically with ethnic or regional recruitment. One motion titled, “Recruitment to Kenya Army and Police,” read “in view of the fact that the Coastal people have been neglected in the selection of Kenya Army and Police—particularly the Digos—this House urges the Government to distribute vacancies to those forces when they occur.”¹⁰¹ Kenya’s official parliamentary records are also filled with complaints and expressions of disappointment about army recruitment and the lack ethnic representation. In 1963, after 300 of his people failed to gain entry into the army, a frustrated M.P. Oduya stated, “Now I find that this is a deliberate attempt to ignore my people in every appointment.”¹⁰² In 1964, M.P. Matamo complained, “The Government had a big plan of taking new recruits in the army. They came to the coast, I told my constituents, everybody went

⁹⁹ Hansard, *Republic of Kenya, House of Representatives Official Report Volume III (Part II)*, 28 July- 1 October 1964, (Nairobi, 25 September 1964), 2826.

¹⁰⁰ Parsons, *The 1964 Army Mutinies*, 24.

¹⁰¹ Hansard, *Republic of Kenya, House of Representatives Official Report Volume III (Part II)*, 28 July- 1 October 1964, (Nairobi, 5 August 1964), 1300.

¹⁰² Hansard, *Republic of Kenya, House of Representatives Official Report Volume III (Part I)*, 9 June- 3 July 1964, (Nairobi, 25 June 1964), 638.

there, and there were between 500 and 600 people who went to be enrolled. When they came out, they were able to pick up only five men.”¹⁰³

Such ambition and competition to gain access to the army often led to open hostility and division, if not subversion. After a particularly heated debate about KR recruitment, M.P. Ngala placed blame on the government stating, “it is tribalism plus political consideration which is spoiling the situation... it must stop.”¹⁰⁴ On a similar occasion, Tom Mboya defended the government by explaining that

as long as we have many people wanting promotion, only one person can be selected for a particular post and some people are bound to be left... Those who have criticisms should make them in a helpful and constructive way, but it is of no use for people shouting ‘tribalism’ when some of them are actually talking tribalism.¹⁰⁵

Indeed, there is evidence that some politicians planned to replace the KR’s traditional ethnic groups with their own interest groups. M.P. Kaggia, who was an important Mau Mau leader, played to his constituents by suggesting to the house that those who suffered or fought against the colonial government during the emergency “be considered by the Government and given priority in getting jobs especially in the police and army.”¹⁰⁶ M.P. Godia, who had made his career as an advocate of the controversial KANU youth wing, even proposed that the government should hire 20,000 youth wingers for jobs in the police and army.¹⁰⁷ Some politicians worried that policies of detribalization and Africanization were a plot to “Kikuyuize”

¹⁰³ Hansard, *Republic of Kenya, House of Representatives Official Report Volume III (Part II)*, 28 July- 1 October 1964, (Nairobi, 5 August 1964), 1348.

¹⁰⁴ Hansard, *Republic of Kenya, House of Representatives Official Report Volume III (Part I)*, 9 June- 3 July 1964, (Nairobi, 25 June 1964), 642.

¹⁰⁵ Hansard, *Republic of Kenya, House of Representatives Official Report Volume III (Part II)*, 28 July- 1 October 1964, (Nairobi, 11 September 1964), 2296.

¹⁰⁶ Hansard, *Republic of Kenya, House of Representatives Official Report Volume III (Part II)*, 28 July- 1 October 1964, (Nairobi, 1 October 1964), 3046.

¹⁰⁷ Hansard, *Republic of Kenya, House of Representatives Official Report Volume VI*, 14 September- 22 October 1965, (Nairobi, 6 October 1965), 670.

the KR.¹⁰⁸ Interestingly, these discussions, which emphasized personal (or interest group) gain as opposed to the behavior and ability of the security forces, were reminiscent of the old colonial KAR discourse. In order to increase confidence in the state and decrease ethnic tension, it was in the government's best interest to make the KR genuinely more representative. Minister Mungai illustrates this when he felt forced to confirm for parliament that "the government can give an unqualified assurance that it is determined not to permit tribalism to spoil its armed forces."¹⁰⁹ However, at the same time, the government had to prevent dissatisfaction in its existing soldiers and defend against other ethnic or interest groups gaining control of the KR. Thus, the Government of Kenya decided to do away with the colonial martial races, but it needed to do so in a delicate and judicious manner.¹¹⁰

The situation Kenya inherited upon independence not only required a loyal and more representative army, it also necessitated an efficient and competent army to deter the multitude of Kenya's potential aggressors. The 1960s and 1970s were tumultuous times for much of the African continent. The empires of Belgium, Britain, France, and others gave way to many unstable, handicapped, and unpredictable independent states who faced an uphill internal battle with their colonial legacies. Kenya itself had to deal with a military mutiny as well as several low level ethnic conflicts early on in its existence. Many of the political disasters these states endured had far-reaching affects outside their borders. Finally, the Cold War diplomatic

¹⁰⁸ Hansard, *Republic of Kenya, House of Representatives Official Report Volume III (Part II), 28 July- 1 October 1964*, (Nairobi, 14 August 1964), 1736.

¹⁰⁹ Hansard, *Republic of Kenya, House of Representatives Official Report Volume III (Part II), 28 July- 1 October 1964*, (Nairobi, 8 September 1964), 2100.

¹¹⁰ While the Kenyatta regime did make significant strides in making the KR more ethnically representative, it purposely made other organizations such as the GSU and Presidential Guard mostly composed of Kikuyu individuals. It is important to note that the UK, through the SAS, assisted Kenyatta in these efforts. Significantly, it kept such actions secret from seconded British officers, who would have been firmly opposed. Parsons, *The 1964 Army Mutinies*, 190.

situation threatened to embroil East Africa or the continent in general. Western and Communist regimes fought bloody proxy wars in several parts of Africa, much to the detriment of local interests. It is this international political environment in which the Government of Kenya found itself at independence. The fears and concerns this situation generated forced the government to ensure that the KR was an efficient and competent armed force.

When Kenya became independent on December 12 1963, it inherited several destabilizing internal ethnic conflicts that had existed throughout Britain's colonial rule. Many of these conflicts occurred in the border regions next to Somalia, Ethiopia, and Uganda, but some also existed in between different Kenyan ethnic groups. While the violence of these conflicts was limited in nature, they were significant sources of instability. As has already been noted, the Temporary Minister for Defence informed the Parliament of Kenya in 1962 that the "immediate threat to security today, at this moment... is the very real inter-tribal tension in some parts of Kenya."¹¹¹ One of the greatest sources of this tension was the Rift Valley, where the Land Freedom Army had been operating for some time. M.P. Wabuge reported "the situation in the Rift Valley is not a pleasing one, people are being terrorized, there is the Land Freedom Army."¹¹² M.P. Odede feared such a situation could spiral out of control and he explained to the house that "The Land Freedom Army is a serious organization and we should deal with it... Are they going to fight the Kalenjin? This might bring about what you could call civil war."¹¹³ Different conflicts continued to flair in other areas of Kenya. In the same parliamentary session, M.P. Odede asked the government "to post a Kenya army in the Northern Frontier, so that when

¹¹¹ Hansard, *Government of Kenya, Legislative Council Debates Official Report Volume XC, 16 October- 20 December 1962*, (Nairobi, 19 October 1962), 229.

¹¹² Hansard, *Government of Kenya, Legislative Council Debates Official Report Volume XC, 16 October- 20 December 1962*, (Nairobi, 18 October 1962), 164-165.

¹¹³ Hansard, *Government of Kenya, Legislative Council Debates Official Report Volume XC, 16 October- 20 December 1962*, (Nairobi, 23 October 1962), 258.

the Merille or tribesmen from Abyssinia come to attack the Turkana they will find it not easy to do so, because the army can deal with them.”¹¹⁴ During this time period, violent conflict was also reported between Kenyan Masai and Kamba over cattle.¹¹⁵ The Government of Kenya had a tremendous area to cover in terms of asserting a monopolization on violent force, and some politicians realized the enormity of the task. M.P. Agar recognized “we cannot afford to have the army or the police force all round the [northern] border: it is a difficult area, dry, mountainous, and I know very well that these tribes can go through the defences.”¹¹⁶ Kenya’s government inherited an ongoing internal security crisis, not to mention external conventional threats.

These tribal conflicts sometimes led to larger developments, as seen with the Shifta Conflict and the immense tension built up between the governments of Kenya and Somalia.¹¹⁷ While cross border raids by various ethnic groups had occurred in the Kenya’s North-Eastern Province since the colonial period, ambiguous claims by the newly independent state of Somalia to unite the Somali people threatened to escalate the conflict into a full blown war. Kenya’s Parliamentary record is filled with expressions of fear and concern for this development. Even before independence, M.P. Arwings-Kodhek exclaimed,

I sincerely hope that once things are settled, and after 12th December, should anybody tamper with the lives of Kenya people in Kenya, the government will really hit at that

¹¹⁴ Hansard, *Government of Kenya, Legislative Council Debates Official Report Volume XC, 16 October- 20 December 1962*, (Nairobi, 23 October 1962), 259.

¹¹⁵ Pius M. Mutie, “‘In Spite of Difference’: Making Sense of the Coexistence between the Kamba and the Maasai Peoples of Kenya” (PhD diss., Bielefeld, Germany, 2003), 189-190.

¹¹⁶ Hansard, *Republic of Kenya, House of Representatives Official Report Volume III (Part II), 28 July- 1 October 1964*, (Nairobi, 13 August 1964), 1698-1699.

¹¹⁷ The Shifta Conflict was a low-intensity engagement between the Government of Kenya and ethnic insurgents in Kenya’s North-Eastern Province. The insurgents received limited support from the Government of Somalia, but conventional war never broke out between the two states. For more information, see Hannah Whitaker, *Insurgency and Counterinsurgency in Kenya: A Social History of the Shifta Conflict, c. 1963-1968* (Boston: Brill, 2015).

person or nation where it will hurt most, including of course, the particular group in Somalia... we cannot have pan-africanism when we have *dudus* raiding our own areas.¹¹⁸

Indeed, in the same time period, M.P. Oduya warned, “the Somali government is well equipped. They are buying expensive weapons and they are ready to attack Kenya at any time. There is a rumor already that even on the 12th December they may interfere with our celebrations.”¹¹⁹ Kenya’s government and politicians were greatly concerned that Somalia was preparing for war, and feared the consequences of such a development.

In response to the Somalian threat, the Government of Kenya became greatly concerned for the effectiveness of the Kenya Rifles. Many politicians lamented the small size and inadequacy of the inherited KR. Ngala told parliament, “We have 3,000 people [in the KR]. What equipment do we have? Do you think that 3,000 people constitute an army for a free country?”¹²⁰ M.P Oduya observed that the KR was not “sufficient, because this army has not been trained... to handle these machines like the ones which are being purchased by the Somali Government from China, Russia, or America—they are large missile machines.”¹²¹ One very discouraging M.P. even told the house, “the strength of the Kenya Army is surprisingly very little... I was only thinking that if the weakest State in Africa invaded Kenya today, then Kenya would be defeated.”¹²² While this was certainly an exaggeration, it points to the fear and

¹¹⁸Hansard, *Republic of Kenya, House of Representatives Official Report Volume III (Part II)*, 23 July- 29 November 1963, (Nairobi, 28 November 1963), 2408.

¹¹⁹ Hansard, *Republic of Kenya, House of Representatives Official Report Volume III (Part II)*, 23 July- 29 November 1963, (Nairobi, 28 November 1963), 2415.

¹²⁰ Hansard, *Republic of Kenya, House of Representatives Official Report Volume III (Part II)*, 28 July- 1 October 1964, (Nairobi, 11 September 1964), 2307-2308.

¹²¹ Hansard, *Republic of Kenya, House of Representatives Official Report Volume III (Part II)*, 23 July- 29 November 1963, (Nairobi, 28 November 1963), 2416.

¹²² Hansard, *Republic of Kenya, House of Representatives Official Report Volume VIII*, 25 January- 10 March 1966, (Nairobi, 10 February 1966), 787.

helplessness some Kenyans felt with regards to the regional political situation. The government was forced to respond to these threats and fears by strengthening the KR.

If the Government of Kenya failed to address any of its security responsibilities, it risked losing its monopoly on violence to non-state powers. Such developments would challenge the government's ability to rule as well as lead to increased instability. After a series of raids began to get out of hand, Kamba leaders threatened to lead their tribe in war against the Masai.¹²³ Similarly, as the government struggled to get ahold of the Shifta Conflict, M.P. Oduya advised his peers to give the Prime Minister

a list of militant chaps. I will supply him with a list of 1,000. We have people who can walk into this area. If our people are given arms and get training of one week and if we ask them to go in to Somalia, they can see that every Somali who causes trouble is shot. We shall make Somalia a colony of Kenya.¹²⁴

Fortunately, neither of these scenarios materialized. But it is important to note that such processes were possible, and even proposed and developed. The Government of Kenya could not allow such developments without compromising its own integrity, stability, and legitimacy, thus it needed to ensure the ability of the KR to handle Kenya's security needs.

The final reason the government needed the Kenya Rifles to be competent and efficient was the Cold War diplomatic situation. The Government of Kenya relied on various secret and open alliances to secure its sovereignty, but it also recognized that "we should [not] rely on other people. Those countries which are friendly today may decide not to be friendly tomorrow."¹²⁵ M.P. Agar pointed out in terms of the Shifta Conflict that "I know that the British Government will find it very difficult to assist us after 12th December because then some British enemy might

¹²³ Mutie, "In Spite of Difference," 189-190.

¹²⁴ Hansard, *Republic of Kenya, House of Representatives Official Report Volume I (Part II)*, 23 July- 29 November 1963, (Nairobi, 28 November 1963), 2415.

¹²⁵ Hansard, *Republic of Kenya, House of Representatives Official Report Volume III (Part II)*, 28 June- 1 October 1964, (Nairobi, 15 September 1964), 2348.

say, ‘Well, if the British are assisting then we shall help Somalia.’”¹²⁶ Due to the Cold War Kenya could not count on outright alliances or guaranteed military assistance in case of war. The best Kenyatta and his government would accomplish was a short-lived military alliance with Ethiopia, and a secret ambiguously worded commitment that the UK would look with favor upon Kenya in case of invasion.¹²⁷ Charles Hornsby explains “the British were characteristically careful to leave their options open.”¹²⁸ In contrast to this line of thought, Agar wisely pointed out that “Once this part of Africa is plunged into war or international struggle we know that our economic development [the Kenyatta regime’s stated ultimate goal] will not materialize.”¹²⁹ Therefore, Kenya implemented a policy of neutrality.¹³⁰ In order for this neutrality to be taken seriously however, Kenya needed to be capable, or at least appear to be capable, of strenuously defending itself and its interests. Minister Mungai stated “every nation must have its defence forces to guarantee its integrity and its independence. This is particularly true in Africa today, and even more so in Kenya.”¹³¹ M.P. Odinga Odinga echoed this sentiment, exclaiming that when Kenya gained independence “we must defend our own freedom... we must do so, we must

¹²⁶ Hansard, *Republic of Kenya, House of Representatives Official Report Volume I (Part II)*, 23 July- 29 November 1963, (Nairobi, 28 November 1963), 2417.

¹²⁷ Hornsby, *Kenya: A History*, 182.

¹²⁸ Hornsby, 182.

¹²⁹ Hansard, *Republic of Kenya, House of Representatives Official Report Volume I (Part II)*, 23 July- 29 November 1963, (Nairobi, 28 November 1963), 2417. Economic development was one of the keys to Kenyatta’s African Socialism. For more on African Socialism and Kenyatta’s rhetoric, see Jomo Kenyatta, *Harambee!: The Prime Minister of Kenya’s Speeches 1963-1964*, ed. Anthony Cullen (London: Oxford University Press, 1964).

¹³⁰ While the Kenyatta regime sympathized with the West, it needed to appear neutral, or at least not significantly aligned, in order to avoid unnecessary interference or conflict. This policy was successful. Hornsby explains, “Kenya’s strong security forces, non-interventionism and policy of armed neutrality had left it the only country in the region not fighting a war [in the 1970s], either internally or with a neighbor.” Hornsby, *Kenya: A History*, 318.

¹³¹ Hansard, *Republic of Kenya, House of Representatives Official Report Volume III (Part II)*, 28 July- 1 October 1964, (Nairobi, 8 September 1964), 2099.

do so.”¹³² Kenya’s Cold War policy forced the government to ensure that the KR was efficient and capable.

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Upon independence, the Government of Kenya inherited an unstable and precarious political situation. Internal and external threats created fear and angst, and in the interest of its ability to rule the government was forced to respond. Due to its colonial legacies and the situation at independence, the Kenya Rifles were initially ill trusted and prepared to individually deal with Kenya’s internal and external security threats. The KR was even considered a threat to the state, as well as a factor in increasing instability. To deal with these issues Kenya’s government sought to ensure the Kenya Rifles’ loyalty, reliability, and effectiveness.

Chapter 3: Backwards to the Future

The situation Kenya inherited upon independence created a sense of urgency for reforming the Kenya Rifles. The Government of Kenya needed to act quickly in order to establish and secure the loyalty and efficiency of the KR, as well as to end many of its negative effects on Kenyan society and order. But its efforts were constrained by a myriad of factors. Not only did independent Kenya’s starting environment necessitate extreme political and ethnic sensitivity, it also called for resources outside Kenya’s disposal. Kenya could not financially afford to expand the KR, nor did it have the expertise and infrastructure to rapidly Africanize the officer corps or train new enlistees and NCOs. Importantly, most potential sources of

¹³² Hansard, *Government of Kenya, Legislative Council Debates Official Report Volume XC, 16 October- 20 December 1962*, (Nairobi, 13 December 1962), 495.

international military aid were limited, inadequate, or ill fitted. Because of this, the Government of Kenya pragmatically and flexibly decided to pursue and take advantage of British military assistance, in order to address the unique needs of the Kenya Rifles. This line of action provided the stability and set the stage for the future development of an organic national army.

This chapter details how British military assistance helped Kenya ensure the loyalty, reliability, and effectiveness of the Kenya Rifles. It begins by showing how possible assistance from other international sources was insufficient. In contrast, the UK was not only willing to help, Kenya was able to increase and maximize its flow of aid. The chapter then describes how British military assistance was well fitted to the Kenya Rifles. This was due to British officer's values and motivations, experience in Kenya and the KAR, and desire to genuinely help the KR. Finally, the chapter analyzes the consequences of continued British connections. It argues that British military influences were important for maintaining the reliability and effectiveness of the KR. These influences were also important in enabling the future development of an organic military culture and institution.

Despite the government's desire to expand and strengthen the KR, it could hardly afford to maintain the KR's original budget. In 1962, Anthony Swann reminded Kenya's parliament "that the entire cost of the King's African Rifles at the moment is met by Her Majesty's Government, and after independence it will have to be met by this Government... As my hon. Friend, the Minister of Finance, has already stated, the country is bankrupt."¹³³ As it turned out, the government was not able to come up with the funds and Minister Gichuru reported a year later that £547,000 of the KR's yearly budget had partly "been covered by a British Government

¹³³ Hansard, *Government of Kenya, Legislative Council Debates Official Report Volume XC, 16 October- 20 December 1962*, (Nairobi, 13 December 1962), 506.

grant.”¹³⁴ Kenya’s government could not reform the KR in the desired way without financial assistance.

Kenya also did not have the infrastructure or personnel resources to expand, strengthen, and modernize the Kenya Rifles. M.P Oduya observed that the KR was not “sufficient, because this army has not been trained... to handle these machines like the ones which are being purchased by the Somali Government... they are large missile machines.”¹³⁵ Kenya did not have the technical ability or expertise to develop its army in such a way. J.M. Lee explained that in the process of Africanizing militaries “it is difficult to find sufficiently able technicians and N.C.O.s to take over fairly complicated clerical work and maintenance duty. The quartermaster-sergeant was harder to replace than the second lieutenant.”¹³⁶ Developing the KR was more than just promoting indigenous members and changing its ethnic composition. Mboya told the house, “what we need is not just people in uniform but an effective Army, properly trained and well disciplined and effective in every respect... it is not just a question of overnight promotion.”¹³⁷ Many of Kenya’s politicians felt that without assistance their security concerns would be hopeless, especially with regards to aggressive neighbors. M.P. Khalif told the house that the KR “would be very badly defeated unless Kenya relies on other powers like Britain and other imperialist powers.”¹³⁸ The Government of Kenya also believed that quickest way to Africanize and expand their forces was through international assistance. After training arrangements with

¹³⁴ Hansard, *Republic of Kenya, House of Representatives Official Report Volume III (Part I)*, 9 June- 3 July 1964, (Nairobi, 16 June 1964), 215.

¹³⁵ Hansard, *Republic of Kenya, House of Representatives Official Report Volume I (Part II)*, 23 July- 29 November 1963, (Nairobi, 28 November 1963), 2415.

¹³⁶ J.M. Lee, *African Armies*, 99.

¹³⁷ Hansard, *Government of Kenya, Legislative Council Debates Official Report Volume XC*, 16 October- 20 December 1962, (Nairobi, 13 December 1962), 509.

¹³⁸ Hansard, *Republic of Kenya, House of Representatives Official Report Volume VIII*, 25 January- 10 March 1966, (Nairobi, 10 February 1966), 787.

the UK had been made, Mungai explained, “we are committed to Africanizing the army as rapidly as possible [so] the only people we are going to have next year will be the British training team.”¹³⁹ In order to reform the KR in a timely, effective, and responsible manner, Kenya needed to seek outside assistance.

When Kenya achieved independence, there were no absolute guarantees of long-term assistance from the United Kingdom, or any other international power. While the UK had considerable interests in Kenya, it itself was under financial strain as it balanced decolonizing its empire and finishing World War II reconstruction. With the loss of its East Asian and Indian holdings, Kenya was of much less strategic importance for the UK, and some British governmental officials discouraged sacrificing much-needed funds in order to assist Kenya. Other international powers also had a somewhat aloof outlook. Parsons states that although the United States had the resources, “the Johnson administration considered the region a British sphere of influence,” and decided not to interfere.¹⁴⁰ While China and Russia did try to entice Kenya, Parsons explains, “Eastern Bloc nations were happy to offer vast quantities of outdated military equipment, but could not provide enough financial assistance.”¹⁴¹ Eventually, Kenya would pursue and take advantage of British military aid, but that was not inevitable.

Kenya not only accepted British military assistance, it pursued and took advantage of it. As has already been noted, aid from the United Kingdom to the Kenya Rifles was not a guarantee. When Kenya did agree to accept British assistance, Kenya’s government manipulated the situation in such a way as to extract as much as possible from the UK for minimal

¹³⁹ Hansard, *Republic of Kenya, House of Representatives Official Report Volume III (Part II)*, 28 July- 1 October 1964, (Nairobi, 25 September 1964), 2825.

¹⁴⁰ Parsons, *The 1964 Army Mutinies*, 159.

¹⁴¹ Parsons, 159.

concessions. Kenya implemented a public policy in which it would accept foreign aid and purchase foreign arms based on what suited Kenya best, and not international politics. M.P. Anyieni advised parliament that “To advance our neutral position we should learn from the East what is good in the form of defence and from the West what is good in the form of defence.”¹⁴² Mungai, who was Minister for Internal Security and Defence at the time, stated “the Kenya Government is not limited to buying weapons and ammunition from any particular country; whether the country be communist or not, capitalist or not... we are going to purchase them if the price is right.”¹⁴³ Kenyatta’s government used this position, being open to both East and West, to leverage British fears of the spread of communism. Many significant Kenyan politicians were Marxist oriented, particularly Odinga Odinga, and they encouraged greater connections to the East. Parsons explains “it is quite likely that Kenyatta used Odinga’s Eastern Bloc connections to push Britain into increasing its aid to Kenya.”¹⁴⁴ Informatively, Kenya’s sporadic flirtations with Soviet or Chinese interests corresponded with new and improved packages of aid from the UK.¹⁴⁵ Parsons also explains that Kenyatta was willing to be “‘reasonable’ about protecting the interests of non-African [settler and immigrant] communities to increase the flow of British economic and military aid.”¹⁴⁶ Kenya was able to maximize the amount of aid offered from the UK by manipulating British fears and interests.

The Government of Kenya was also attracted to British military assistance because British officers shared some of the same ideals and visions for the KR as Kenyan politicians. As

¹⁴² Hansard, *Republic of Kenya, House of Representatives Official Report Volume III (Part II)*, 28 July- 1 October 1964, (Nairobi, 11 September 1964), 2316-2317.

¹⁴³ Hansard, *Republic of Kenya, House of Representatives Official Report Volume IV*, 14 December 1964- 12 May 1965, (Nairobi, 2 April 1965), 1182.

¹⁴⁴ Parsons, *The 1964 Army Mutinies*, 171.

¹⁴⁵ Hornsby, *Kenya: A History*, 87-89.

¹⁴⁶ Parsons, *The 1964 Army Mutinies*, 170.

has been noted in Chapter one, British KAR officers were inspired or motivated by ‘imperial’ ideals or forms of discourse, as opposed to the ‘colonial’. They worked to make the KAR a professional, prestigious, and modern conventional force capable of defending the empire from outside threats. They did not want it used for internal control or domination. After independence, this process of thought only changed slightly, as British officers now wanted the KR to be a positive testament to Britain’s imperial legacy. Anthony Swann, Temporary Minister for Defence and former KAR officer, told Kenya’s parliament that contemporary British KAR officers

felt that they could leave the running of the King’s African Rifles in African hands with total confidence. It was a sense of pride in an achievement that this had been the mission of those in charge of the King’s African Rifles for 50 years, this was the ultimate aim, that they would move the great tradition of the King’s African Rifles into the hands of Kenya’s own people with total confidence... I wish sometimes, though I saw this source of pride in all branches of the retiring authority.”¹⁴⁷

In other words, British KAR officers did not want the efforts, sacrifices, and developments of the past fifty years to be in vain. Because of this, many British officers easily transferred their loyalty and devotion from the KAR to the KR. They continued to champion a professional and effective KR over other competing interests, even over the interests of the UK itself. Edward Peck, the British High Commissioner, complained that one seconded officer, General Robert B. Penfold, was “proving a harder bargainer on behalf of Kenya than the Kenyans themselves.”¹⁴⁸ Parson explains, “officials in the Commonwealth Relations Office tried to keep Brigadier

¹⁴⁷ Hansard, *Government of Kenya, Legislative Council Debates Official Report Volume XC, 16 October- 20 December 1962*, (Nairobi, 13 December 1962), 512.

¹⁴⁸ General Penfold was the highest-ranking British seconded officer in Kenya at the time. Parsons, *The 1964 Army Mutinies*, 172.

Penfold from knowing how much money was available for Kenyan aid.”¹⁴⁹ These British officer ideals and traits were attractive to many Kenyan politicians.

While Kenya’s politicians generally sought to completely Africanize the officer corps and do away with martial race, they did share some ‘imperial’ ideals for the KR with British officers. They rejected the argument that they only needed paramilitary or police forces. They liked the idea of having a respectable and even prestigious force representing Kenya. Mboya told parliament “Kenya wants to be proud of an army that is effective, an army that suits and fits into the modern concept of the army, that we all, I am sure, have in mind.”¹⁵⁰ This sentiment was echoed by M.P Kariuki who stated, “I hope we all appreciate that as an emerging country we are committed most strongly to the building of a modern army in this country with all its modern paraphernalia.”¹⁵¹ Parliamentary Secretary arap Bonnett agreed even further with British officer ideals when he insisted that it was “very important” to “have people [in the army] who are very, very hounerable... we do not want people who will let down Kenya.”¹⁵² Kenyan politicians also shared British officer disdain for internal control oriented forces. For example, M.P. Anyieni proposed to the house, “in Kenya there are too many policemen... to terrorize our people... I feel that is a complete waste of money. Instead of that, we should have this money put into another channel... the Army.”¹⁵³ British officers ran into more opposition from the Kenyan colonial

¹⁴⁹ Parsons, *The 1964 Army Mutinies*, 172.

¹⁵⁰ Hansard, *Government of Kenya, Legislative Council Debates Official Report Volume XC, 16 October- 20 December 1962*, (Nairobi, 13 December 1962), 508.

¹⁵¹ Hansard, *Republic of Kenya, House of Representatives Official Report Volume III (Part II), 28 July- 1 October 1964*, (Nairobi, 28 July 1964), 1031.

¹⁵² Hansard, *Republic of Kenya, House of Representatives Official Report Volume III (Part III), 2 October- 1 December 1964*, (Nairobi, 27 November 1964), 4713.

¹⁵³ Hansard, *Republic of Kenya, House of Representatives Official Report Volume I (Part II), 23 July- 29 November 1963*, (Nairobi, 13 September 1963), 1973.

government in implementing their visions for the KAR than they did from the independent Government of Kenya.

Kenyan politicians not only agreed with certain British officer ideals, many also genuinely respected the British military, and they did not see its assistance as necessarily problematic. While they were eager to see the empire end, they also had some appreciation for the KAR, its history, and the individual connections between British and indigenous KR soldiers. They had reason to hold British military aid to the KR in special regard. In one parliamentary session right before formal independence, Mboya told the speaker, “I hope, Sir, that no one in this House will fail to pay tribute to the Army, the K.A.R. for what it has done in the past and for the efforts that are being made within it at the moment. I believe that we can be rightly proud of our K.A.R. and all its personal and officers.”¹⁵⁴ In a similar situation, M.P. arap Moi remembered that “those who fought in these two World Wars believed genuinely that they were fighting for the right cause.”¹⁵⁵ He would later state, “people in the Rift Valley Region will continue to have Remembrance Day for those who lost their lives, even after independence.”¹⁵⁶ Anti-imperialist politicians such as M.P. Oduya conceded to such sentiments, stating, “They were not only defending the soil of Kenya... They were also defending British international policy.”¹⁵⁷ This understanding of British military legacies was important because it recognized that continued British assistance was not necessarily negative. Even Odinga Odinga, influential Marxist oriented politician, recognized this when he told parliament “that what is most important

¹⁵⁴ Hansard, *Government of Kenya, Legislative Council Debates Official Report Volume XC, 16 October- 20 December 1962*, (Nairobi, 13 December 1962), 509.

¹⁵⁵ Hansard, *Republic of Kenya, House of Representatives Official Report Volume I (Part II), 23 July- 29 November 1963*, (Nairobi, 14 November 1963), 2161.

¹⁵⁶ Hansard, *Republic of Kenya, House of Representatives Official Report Volume I (Part II), 23 July- 29 November 1963*, (Nairobi, 14 November 1963), 2162.

¹⁵⁷ Hansard, *Republic of Kenya, House of Representatives Official Report Volume I (Part II), 23 July- 29 November 1963*, (Nairobi, 14 November 1963), 2162.

is first of all to Africanize the policy of the Army before we make it black-faced.”¹⁵⁸ To bring this argument further, M.P Mwendwa told parliament “I want to know... where there is a black policy in the Army or a white policy in the Army? I thought, Mr. Speaker, the Army was there to defend whether it is a white or black Army, it is there to defend the county.”¹⁵⁹ Some Kenyan politicians even went so far as to propose that the British military take care of Kenya’s security problems such as the Land Freedom Army and Shifta.¹⁶⁰ Many of Kenya’s politicians and leaders had positive (or at least neutral) opinions of the British military and thus they had little problem with its continued presence in the form of aid.

Another reason British military assistance was implemented was because it helped stabilize the Kenya Rifles. This was primarily due to the close personal and institutional relationships between seconded British officers, many of whom were KAR veterans, and KR soldiers and promoted officers. While the KR did experience serious unrest due to slow rates of promotion, Kenyatta largely addressed this problem in 1964. By removing seconded British officers from operational commands to temporary training units, Kenyatta opened up the force to indigenous African officers. Essentially, he created new commands or increased the number of officers without having to eliminate significant portions of expatriate officers. This can be seen when Kenyatta promoted Joseph Ndolo to General of the Army (now a defunct position), while moving the previous British general to the new position of Chief of Staff.¹⁶¹ The presence of British officers allowed the KR’s hurried Africanization process to be less destabilizing. Many

¹⁵⁸ Hansard, *Government of Kenya, Legislative Council Debates Official Report Volume XC, 16 October- 20 December 1962*, (Nairobi, 13 December 1962), 494.

¹⁵⁹ Hansard, *Government of Kenya, Legislative Council Debates Official Report Volume XC, 16 October- 20 December 1962*, (Nairobi, 13 December 1962), 501.

¹⁶⁰ Hansard, *Republic of Kenya, House of Representatives Official Report Volume III (Part II), 28 July- 1 October 1964*, (Nairobi, 8 September 1964), 2110-2111.

¹⁶¹ Parsons, *The 1964 Army Mutinies*, 172.

of Kenya's new officers had risen rapidly through the ranks at an unprecedented rate, much to the concern of Kenya's governmental officials.¹⁶² British officers helped guide these men as they learned and became accustomed to their new roles. KR soldiers could have similarly challenging demands of their African officers as KAR soldiers had of their European officers, so it was important that new officers had the time and example to adapt.¹⁶³

British seconded officers to the KR, many of whom were KAR veterans, could also have a stabilizing impact with the rank-and-file. As has been noted previously, many KAR officers genuinely cared for and had good relations with their African soldiers. Most of them spoke Swahili, knew about their soldiers' personal lives, assisted them with personal and financial advice even into retirement, helped retired soldiers find employment, and would later personally raise funds for impoverished African KAR veterans.¹⁶⁴ KAR soldiers remained in contact with their officers, entrusted them with important roles (such as treasurer of veteran associations), and even named their children after them.¹⁶⁵ This dynamic was important for maintaining morale and discipline during the KR's early years. British officers also helped keep the politicization of the KR in check. Kenyatta trusted seconded British officers to remain professional and loyal to the government. It was expected that potential subversive plots would be impossible to carry out, or uncovered by expatriate officers. Senior British military officials encouraged their officers to be used as such an asset.¹⁶⁶ Seconded British officers helped stabilize the KR and

¹⁶² Hansard, *Government of Kenya, Legislative Council Debates Official Report Volume XC, 16 October- 20 December 1962*, (Nairobi, 13 December 1962), 507-510.

¹⁶³ It is important to understand that soldiers in the KR increasingly came from diverse backgrounds. While new indigenous officers would have certain advantages in adapting to their new environment, the experience would not have been that dissimilar from the new British KAR Officer's experience. Both would command troops that came from cultures they had little or no knowledge of. See Osborne, *Ethnicity and Empire*, 140-142.

¹⁶⁴ Parsons, *The African Rank-and-File*, 106, 227-245.

¹⁶⁵ Parsons, 106, 227-245.

¹⁶⁶ Parsons, *The 1964 Army Mutinies*, 170-175.

protect it from political subversion while it reformed, and they provided an example and a level of experience that otherwise would have been immediately unattainable.

The relative stability and lack of subversive activity in the Kenya Rifles during the precarious 1960s is a testament to the stabilizing power of seconded British officers. While many other African countries suffered military coups and dictatorships during this time, the KR refrained from interfering in Kenya's civil politics. This is especially remarkable considering the various reforms the KR underwent during these early years. As noted in chapter two, the Government of Kenya needed to Africanize the officer corps and make the composition of the KR more representative. This was problematic because it caused tension and even unrest within the army and certain ethnic communities. But Kenyatta's government completely accomplished the first task and made significant progress on the second without causing rebellion within the KR. While at independence only 50 percent of the KR's officers were Kenyan, the last seconded British officer in the KR left Kenya by 1969.¹⁶⁷ This was an extremely rapid process and it could not have been carried out without stability or British training assistance. Similarly, in 1959, due to martial race recruiting practices, the ethnic composition of the Kenyan KAR was highly irregular relative to the civilian population. While only accounting for 22 percent of the civilian population, the Kamba and Kalenjin made up two thirds of the force. But 10 years later, this proportion had been cut down to 42 percent. The Kikuyu, despite being Kenya's largest ethnic group at around 20 percent of the total population, accounted for only 3.4 percent of the KAR in 1959. But by 1969, their proportion had increased to 13 percent. While this progress may seem incomplete, it was significant for Africa's post-colonial coup prone environment. Interestingly, in 1969, Kenyatta finally felt sufficiently confident in the KR to shift its

¹⁶⁷ Hornsby, *Kenya: A History*, 181.

recruitment policy from ethnic to regional quotas.¹⁶⁸ It is important to note that other Kenya military institutions such as the GSU, AP, and Presidential Guard remained highly imbalanced in favor of the Kikuyu.¹⁶⁹ British military assistance enabled the Government of Kenya to carry out these reforms without sacrificing the loyalty, reliability, or efficiency of the KR.

Ethnic Composition of KAR before Independence¹⁷⁰

Ethnic Group	Percentage of Army, 1959	Percentage of Kenyan Population, 1962
Kamba	36.3	11.2
Kalenjin	25.8	10.7
Samburu	3.6	0.6
Northern Frontier Pastoralists	11.6	6.1
Maasai	0.6	1.8
“Unspecified”	9.0	29.0
Luo	9.7	13.7
Kikuyu, Embu, & Meru	3.4	26.9

Ethnic Composition of Kenya Rifles in 1969¹⁷¹

Ethnic Group	Percentage of Army, 1969	Percentage of Kenyan Population, 1969
Kamba	21.4	11.2

¹⁶⁸ Parsons, *The 1964 Army Mutinies*, 175.

¹⁶⁹ Some historians and political scientists have understood Kenyatta’s use of the paramilitary as designed to keep the army in check. However, the GSU never seriously rivaled the KR in terms of manpower, training, or equipment.

¹⁷⁰ Taken from Parsons, *The 1964 Army Mutinies*, 38.

¹⁷¹ Taken from Parsons, *The 1964 Army Mutinies*, 175.

Kalenjin	20.8	9.5
Luo	13.7	10.1
Kikuyu	13.1	19.6
Luhya	13.0	9.9
Other	18.0	39.7

British military assistance was also well adapted to Kenya's strategic needs. Due to its extensive knowledge and experience, the British Army was the foremost authority on East African military issues. The British Empire had long been concerned with operating in the region, and the UK retained that insight. Even with the dissolution of its empire, the British military remained interested in the developments of the region and the continent. For example, in 1961, W. F. Gutteridge, a Sandhurst professor, was sent by the War Office to make a "detailed study of 'The place of the Army in emergent states in Commonwealth Africa with special reference to the social and educational background of recruits.'" ¹⁷² Gutteridge traveled through most of former British Africa, including Kenya, Tanzania, and Uganda. ¹⁷³ His research and presentations influenced the understandings of both British and international officers and cadets. ¹⁷⁴ Likewise, in 1967, J. M. Lee was commissioned by the Institute for Strategic Studies to write *African Armies and Civil Order*. This work, describing the issues post-colonial African militaries face, has remained influential to this day. The British military also remained concerned about African military tactics. One 1960s military training exercise held in the

¹⁷² William F. Gutteridge, "African Study Tour 1960-1961," *Wish Stream*, Autumn 1961, 85.

¹⁷³ Gutteridge, "African Study Tour," 85-87

¹⁷⁴ One Sandhurst cadet describes Gutteridge's research as "serious information and opinion." See The Literary Society (The Polished Bun Club), *Wish Stream*, Autumn 1961, 145.

mountains of Portugal for Sandhurst cadets was specifically designed to prepare for operations which had “caught the Army somewhat unprepared in the years following the Second World War-in Kenya.”¹⁷⁵ No other army at the time was as experienced, knowledgeable, or focused on East African military affairs as the British Army.

The prestige and nature of British officer training also greatly attracted Kenya’s government. As shown above, the British military had a wide range of information and experiences concerning East Africa. This knowledge was passed on to officer cadets, particularly at Sandhurst, to which Kenya was given generous access.¹⁷⁶ Several instructors and professors were even KAR and KR veterans. For example, Lt. Col A.P.H. Hartley commanded the 5th Battalion of the King’s African Rifles from 1961-1964. In 1964 he was appointed a Sandhurst training command, where he would have been in contact with several Kenyan cadets such as G.K. Kinuthia, D.N. Masai, Bernard Kiilu, and John Musomba, to name a few.¹⁷⁷ British cadet training was also starting to take on more of an international focus.¹⁷⁸ Whereas the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst had originally been focused on European and imperial concerns, after World War II and the end of empire, it began to cater to the international community. It became renown internationally as a prestigious investiture for young men (and women in 1981), attracting gifted cadets and future military leaders, not to mention the children of royalty and presidents, from across the world.¹⁷⁹ As such, many Sandhurst cadets not only rubbed shoulders

¹⁷⁵ J.R.A., “Portugal: Winter Camp, 1960,” *Wish Stream*, Autumn 1961, 14.

¹⁷⁶ The Government of Kenya was allowed to send at least seven cadets of their own choosing. Not only was this a significant portion of the available admissions to Sandhurst, but the Government of Kenya could select its own criteria for the acceptance of its future officers. See Hansard, *Government of Kenya, Legislative Council Debates Official Report Volume XC, 16 October- 20 December 1962*, (Nairobi, 13 December 1962), 507-510.

¹⁷⁷ G.S.O. 1. Training, *Wish Stream*, Autumn 1964, 80.

¹⁷⁸ Editorial, *Wish Stream*, Autumn 1968, 1.

¹⁷⁹ One Indian Army general and historian characterizes 20th century Sandhurst as “the Mecca of all military leadership training.” Chandra B. Khanduri, *Thimayya: An Amazing Life* (New Delhi: Knowledge World, 2006), 22.

with many prominent people from Africa and abroad, they were also exposed to the ideas and challenges their international peers faced. Cadets would study subjects such as Indianization, Africanization, Pan-Africanism, and “the peculiar and local characteristics of” African, Asian, and Middle Eastern nationalism and politics.¹⁸⁰ Many Kenyan cadets would cherish their time and remain in contact with their Sandhurst peers, and such connections could have important impacts on individual careers.¹⁸¹

One of the most attractive aspects of British officer training was its values and ethics. The Government of Kenya primarily desired the Kenya Rifles to be loyal, reliable, and professional, and British officer values and training accommodated this. While many aspects of the British military changed after World War II and the end of empire, some of its ideals did not. General Lathbury, at a Sandhurst graduation speech, laid out what he believed to be the core characteristics of a good military officer, whether British or international;

I will begin by saying how glad I am to see the many officer cadets from a broad, particularly those from the Commonwealth and newly independent nations... You will have a very important part to play in the development of your own Armed Forces and I hope that what you have learned here will be of benefit to you... There are important social changes too which are, of course, a reflection of our national life. But certain things have not changed nor will they while armies remain; and amongst these are the characteristics required of a good officer. The first requirement is professional competence... The second is the ability to lead the men whom you will have the honour to command. Professional skill will help here too, for ability always commands respect... With it must go determination and a real and human understanding of the soldiers you

¹⁸⁰ For example, see M. J. Marson, review of *Political Ideas in the Modern World*, by Derek B. Heater, *Wish Stream*, Autumn 1961, 115; The Literary Society (The Polished Bun Club), *Wish Stream*, Autumn 1963, 137; The Literary Society (The Polished Bun Club), *Wish Stream*, Autumn 1964, 154.

¹⁸¹ Arusha Times Reporter, “General Sarakikya Attends Royal Military Academy’s 50th Reunion in Sandhurst,” *The Arusha Times* (Dar es Salaam), August 13, 2011, accessed October 15, 2015, http://www.arushatimes.co.tz/2011/30/Local%20News_1.htm.

will lead. Of course there are many other qualities which we should all like to possess. But it seems to me that those few I have mentioned are the ones that really matter.¹⁸²

Such values corresponded well to the Government of Kenya's vision, as noted previously, and thus government officials believed that British officer training and development would be useful for successfully operating the Kenya Rifles. Indeed, many of Kenya's greatest KR generals would be characterized by these or similar traits.

Positive influences from British officer values and training were evident early on. After independence, Kenyan KR officers and soldiers strived to maintain and even increase the force's discipline and effectiveness. Parsons explains that Kenyan KR officers on selection boards

had even higher standards than their British predecessors. Where British officers had been willing to excuse minor defects to accelerate the Africanization process, African examiners now downgraded candidates for poor discipline, sloppy appearance, laziness, and weak social skills.¹⁸³

The Government of Kenya encouraged this spirit and they implemented policies that "sought to keep politics out of the commissioning process."¹⁸⁴ British officer influence and KR professionalism was also recognized in the Shifta Conflict. While both sides committed atrocities, the KR largely distinguished itself as a respectable institution.¹⁸⁵ A.S. Khalif, a M.P from the embattled North-East Region, praised Major Wambua and his KR soldiers for reigning in the abuses of the GSU and saving the lives of "innocent and loyal Somalis."¹⁸⁶ He told

¹⁸² Gerald Lathbury, "Speech by General Sir Gerald Lathbury, G.C.B., D.S.O., M.B.E., A.D.C., at the Sovereign's Parade, 19th December, 1963," *Wish Stream*, Spring 1964, 5.

¹⁸³ Parsons, *The 1964 Army Mutinies*, 173.

¹⁸⁴ Parsons, 173.

¹⁸⁵ The KR did not come away spotless, but its performance is remarkable compared to other units of the Kenyan military apparatus such as the AP, GSU, and Police. Interestingly, the fortified village strategy that was eventually implemented, was almost identical to the one used against Mau Mau. However, this strategy was proposed by representatives of the North-East Region to protect their constituents. The implementation of this policy was delayed for several years. See Hansard, *Republic of Kenya, House of Representatives Official Report Volume III (Part III)*, 2 October- 1 December 1964, (Nairobi, 6 October 1964), 3130.

¹⁸⁶ Hansard, *Republic of Kenya, House of Representatives Official Report Volume V, 1 June- 30 July 1965*, (Nairobi, 20 July), 1200.

parliament that Wambua “had no alternative, but to bring his army troops to Wajir township, to stop the General Service Unit Platoon killing the loyal Somalis.”¹⁸⁷ British Army officer observers who accompanied Kenyan military units in the Shifta conflict had similar effects as they criticized and discouraged “trigger happy” actions.¹⁸⁸ Parsons explains the outcome of these developments; “The successful campaign against the Shifta on the northern frontier led the Kenyan public to see the soldiers as defenders of the nation. The army’s strong reputation reaffirmed its commitment to professionalism.”¹⁸⁹

The positive effects of the continued relationship between the Kenya Rifles and the British military during the 1960s were also demonstrated in later years. Exceptional future leaders of the Kenya Rifles, who entered the military during this time, received training from and had important personal connections with British army officers and institutions. British trained Kenyan officers had significant roles in maintaining the reliability of the KR and thwarting coup attempts in 1971 and 1982, neither of which infected the army. While Katumanga characterizes the KR of the 1960s as “inclined towards regime consolidation rather than deterrence for fending off external aggression,” the only two KR officers he later recognizes as positively influencing Kenya’s military institution and culture both entered the army and received their training and commissions during this time.¹⁹⁰ General Daudi Tonje and General Elijah Sumbeiywo are eminent examples of Kenyan officers who made important positive contributions in the maintenance of professionalism, and the development of an organic military culture in the Kenya

¹⁸⁷ Hansard, *Republic of Kenya, House of Representatives Official Report Volume V, 1 June- 30 July 1965*, (Nairobi, 20 July), 1200.

¹⁸⁸ Whitaker, *Insurgency and Counterinsurgency in Kenya*, 99.

¹⁸⁹ Parsons, *The 1964 Army Mutinies*, 175.

¹⁹⁰ Katumanga positively mentions General Elijah Sumbeiywo, and he especially praises General Daudi Tonje. Katumanga also credits Major General S.K. Mutai for positively influencing Kenya’s military culture. Mutai was an air force officer who also trained in the UK. Katumanga, “Morphing Mirror Images of Military Culture,” 142-145.

Rifles. Both entered the KR and received British officer training through British military schools and other avenues during the 1960s. The coup attempts of 1971 and 1982, as well as the careers of Tonje and Sumbeiywo, provide strong evidence for a correlation between noteworthy professional Kenyan officers and 1960s' British military influence.

Many aspects of the coup attempt or conspiracy of 1971 demonstrate the professionalism and reliability of the Kenya Rifles. While the details of the plot are vague, twelve men were arrested for planning to overthrow the government, none of whom were KR members. General Joseph Ndolo, who was later reported to have expressed dissatisfaction with the Kenyatta Regime, was only loosely related to the plot.¹⁹¹ But rumors suggesting the army was involved shocked and alarmed Kenyan society, a testament to the generally good public reputation the KR had enjoyed.¹⁹² The plot was significant because it involved many important Kamba individuals, an ethnic group who still made up a large proportion of the KR. Yet the force remained loyal to its values and the government throughout. One Kamba General, Jackson Mulinge, "pledged to Kenyatta the army's undivided loyalty and assured him that the newspaper reports to the effect that the country's armed forces were in any way involved in a plot to overthrow his government were 'completely untrue and unfounded.'"¹⁹³ Mulinge had enormous exposure to the British military. He joined the KAR in 1942, fought in Malaysia during World War II, was promoted to warrant officer in 1952, and was the first Kenyan to receive the Queen's commission in 1961.¹⁹⁴

¹⁹¹ Parsons suggests that it was Ndolo's loyalty which kept him from participating in the coup plot. See Parsons, *The 1964 Army Mutinies*, 190-193.

¹⁹² Hilary Ng'weno, "Kenya: The Making of a Nation - Plot to Overthrow Kenyatta's Regime," *Daily Nation* (Nairobi), December 10, 2007, accessed February 1, 2016, <http://allafrica.com/stories/200712100122.html>.

¹⁹³ Ng'weno, "Kenya: The Making of a Nation,"

¹⁹⁴ Erastus Mulwa, "Kenya's Longest Serving Military Chief Gen Jackson Mulinge Sent Off in Style," *Standard Digital* (Kenya), June 29, 2014, accessed February 1, 2016, http://www.standardmedia.co.ke/article/2000126355/kenya-s-longest-serving-military-chief-gen-jackson-mulinge-sent-off-in-style?articleID=2000126355&story_title=kenya-s-longest-serving-military-chief-gen-jackson-mulinge-sent-off-in-style&pageNo=2.

The *Daily Nation* explains “His military education was entirely British. He attended command and staff course there in 1962 and 1968 and was adjudged diligent enough to be awarded the Distinguished Conduct Order among other decorations.”¹⁹⁵ On the 1971 coup plot, Parsons states that Mulinge’s “reasons for refusing to be party to a political conspiracy reflect both the high code of professionalism that the British had tried to instill in the Kenyan Army and a pragmatic assessment of the risky nature of African coups.”¹⁹⁶ Mulinge later explained that KR participation in the coup would create a military culture or discourse of “an endless power game whose end result is death and more deaths.”¹⁹⁷ While neighboring governments struggled to control their militaries, Kenya largely avoided this with army leaders like Mulinge.¹⁹⁸ He encapsulated the professionalism and reliability the British military could help provide, and the desire the Government of Kenya had for its forces. Mulinge later explained, “For me the army was the army, and I was there to obey the commands of my superiors and serve my country with dedication.”¹⁹⁹

The air force coup attempt of 1982 also demonstrates the long-term positive nature of continued KR connections with the British military. Claiming intolerable corruption and poor economic conditions, junior air force members staged a military takeover as they seized key government buildings on August 1st.²⁰⁰ Described as “one of Kenya’s darkest moments,” senior

¹⁹⁵ Daily Nation, “Mulinge Loved Playing by the Rules,” *Daily Nation* (Nairobi), June 17, 2014, accessed February 1, 2016, <http://www.nation.co.ke/news/Mulinge-loved-playing-by-the-rules/-/1056/2352250/-/14q25tc/-/index.html>.

¹⁹⁶ Parsons, *The 1964 Army Mutinies*, 193.

¹⁹⁷ Parsons, 193.

¹⁹⁸ Certain countries, such as Central African Republic, Democratic Republic of Congo, Mali, and Sudan, continue to suffer from a continuous cycle of military intervention in civil politics. In East Africa, Ethiopia and Uganda also experienced periods of repeated coups and military dictatorships.

¹⁹⁹ Ciugu Mwagiru, “Kenya: General (Rtd) Jackson Kimeu Mulinge: His Story,” *Daily Nation* (Nairobi), February 22, 1998, accessed February 1, 2016, <http://allafrica.com/stories/199802220013.html>.

²⁰⁰ This was the first and only coup attempt to be successfully initiated in Kenya. Hornsby, *Kenya: A History*, 376.

army officers led loyalist forces in successfully ending the coup.²⁰¹ As in 1971, Mulinge was also instrumental in foiling the plot and dealing with the aftermath. But other British trained Kenyan officers played more direct roles. General Bernard Kiilu, General John Musomba, and Colonel Alex Mwangangi were all Sandhurst graduates who were important in terminating the coup. Kiilu graduated from Sandhurst in 1965 and is described as “a British-trained officer with a fine intellectual mind.”²⁰² He assisted Generals Mohammed and Shaw in organizing a counterattack and successfully removing the rebels from one of their main positions, the Voice of Kenya radio station.²⁰³ Musomba, the commandant of the 3rd KR, entered Sandhurst in 1964 and graduated two years later, having achieved considerable success as vice-captain of the athletics team.²⁰⁴ He was given the important task of securing the safety of President Moi and transporting him to Nairobi.²⁰⁵ He did so successfully.

However, the most interesting connection between the British military and Kenyan 1982 counter-coup efforts is the actions of Mwangangi.²⁰⁶ Mwangangi graduated from Sandhurst in 1969 and was promoted to head of the military police in the late 1970s.²⁰⁷ He maintained his relationship with the British military, and they warned him directly of a possible coup attempt in 1980. Interestingly, this British intelligence was provided by Kenyan cadets studying in England

²⁰¹ Francis Mureithi, “Retired Soldeir Recalls Intrigues of Failed 1982 Coup,” *Daily Nation* (Nairobi), August 1, 2014, accessed February 1, 2016, <http://www.nation.co.ke/counties/nakuru/1982-coup-recollections-of-soldier/-/1183314/2405578/-/ox3q2v/-/index.html>.

²⁰² Roy Gachuhi, “Untold Story: Night Metting that Saved Moi Presidency,” *Daily Nation* (Nairobi), July 20, 2010, accessed February 1, 2016, <http://www.nation.co.ke/news/politics/Untold-story-Night-meeting-that-saved-Moi-presidency/-/1064/967980/-/9h3muxz/-/index.html>.

²⁰³ Hornsby, *Kenya: A History Since Independence*, 376.

²⁰⁴ Athletics, 1965, *Wish Stream*, Autumn 1965, 131-138.

²⁰⁵ Daily Nation, “Kenya: Where They Are, 20 Years On,” *Daily Nation* (Nairobi), August 1, 2002, accessed February 1, 2016, <http://allafrica.com/stories/200208010053.html>.

²⁰⁶ Gitau wa Njenga, “Kenya: UK Knew About 1982 Coup,” *The Standard* (Nairobi), March 20, 2004, accessed February 1, 2016, <http://allafrica.com/stories/200403220138.html>.

²⁰⁷ Junior Term, September, 1966 (Intake 41), *Wish Stream*, Spring 1967, 55.

at the time. Mwangangi was aware of these developments, and he took the necessary steps in informing the government and preparing a response. While the Moi regime's reaction to this warning is not well documented, the relationship between Kenyan cadets, the British military, and Colonel Mwangangi in opposing the takeover is significant in itself.²⁰⁸ Many of the KR officers who were responsible for preventing the 1982 military coup had important British connections and training.

General Daudi Tonje is a prominent example of a British trained and influenced KR officer who made immense positive impacts on Kenya's military institution and culture. Katumanga praises him for initiating "the first major revolution in Kenya's military affairs."²⁰⁹ While Katumanga is extremely critical of the KR and its British connections and legacies in the 1960s-1980s, he fails to recognize that Tonje entered the King's African Rifles in 1962 and had extensive British training. After attending Mons Officer Cadet School in England, Tonje received the Queen's commission in 1963.²¹⁰ He subsequently participated in peaceably quelling the Kenyan segment of the 1964 Army Mutinies, alongside seconded British officers.²¹¹ He then was influential in developing the Military Academy of Kenya, and he would come to be seen as a keen British trained academic and reformer.²¹² Tonje, "informed by moral courage and a grasp of national interest," Katumanga explains, "sought to 'revolt' against the existing culture and

²⁰⁸ It seems as though the Moi regime ignored the warnings. It is unclear why this would be the case, but some Kenyan reporters suspect sinister motivations.

²⁰⁹ Katumanga, "Morphing Mirror Images of Military Culture," 143.

²¹⁰ Mons Officer Cadet School Aldershot was derived from the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst. Interestingly, two of Tonje classmates were Olesegun Obasanjo and Ibrahim Babangida, both of who would go onto become generals, and then presidents of Nigeria. "The Academy Commandants," Kenya Military Academy, accessed August 5, 2015, <http://kma.mod.go.ke/index.php/2014-07-20-03-51-59/profile-of-the-academy-commandants>; Mwenda Njoka, "Kenya: New Military Chief Has Job Cut for Him," *Daily Nation* (Nairobi), August 12, 2005, accessed February 1, 2016, <http://allafrica.com/stories/200508120047.html>.

²¹¹ In contrast, President Julius Nyerere required British commandoes to violently suppress the revolt in Tanzania. Parsons, *The 1964 Army Mutinies*, 125-128.

²¹² Njoka, "Kenya: New Military Chief Has Job Cut for Him,"

doctrine.”²¹³ Beset by falling standards in discipline and professionalism in the 1990s, Tonje “asked to be given a free hand in ridding the armed forces of tribal influences before he accepted the appointment as chief of the general staff [in 1996].”²¹⁴ He reformed the Military of Kenya’s strategic outlook, command structure, procurement methods, educational requirements, and retirement age.²¹⁵ Many of these reforms were based off British doctrine, but uniquely adapted to Kenya’s needs.²¹⁶ With his commitment to integrity and other traditional officer values, Tonje “made Kenya’s military to be seen as one of the most professional in Africa as exemplified by the number of invitations by the United Nations for Kenya troops to assist in peace-keeping missions abroad.”²¹⁷ He is widely referenced as one of the most important generals in Kenya’s history.²¹⁸

General Lazaro Sumbeiywo is another example of an important British trained Kenyan officer. He was appointed Commander of the Army in 2000, immediately after Tonje’s tenure as Chief of General Staff. Like Tonje, Katumanga also praises Sumbeiywo for playing a “positive role” in Kenya’s military discourse.²¹⁹ His influence on military culture and development would spread beyond Kenya’s borders. Sumbeiywo, the son of a KAR corporal, joined the KR in 1968.²²⁰ After excelling in academic tests, he was sent to Sandhurst, where he received his

²¹³ Katumanga, “Morphing Mirror Images of Military Culture,” 142.

²¹⁴ “Soldiers Need Degree for Promotion,” Times Higher Education, September 22, 2000, accessed February 1, 2016, <https://www.timeshighereducation.com/news/soldiers-need-degree-for-promotion/153544.article>.

²¹⁵ Katumanga, “Morphing Mirror Images of Military Culture,” 142-145.

²¹⁶ “Political Risk and Ethnic Balance Weigh Heavily as President Moi Decides Whether the Army Chief Should Go,” *Africa Confidential*, September 15, 2000, accessed February 18, 2016, <http://www.africa-confidential.com/article/id/975/A-soldier's-story>.

²¹⁷ Nation Reporter, “Kenya: Tonje’s Legacy of Reforms,” *Daily Nation* (Kenya), November 6, 2000. Accessed February 1, 2016, <http://allafrica.com/stories/200011060282.html>.

²¹⁸ Kenya Online ranks Tonje as the 32nd most influential Kenyan of all time, the first soldier on the list. “Top 100 Kenyans of All Time,” The Kenya Online, accessed February 1, 2016, <http://thekenyanonline.com/top-100-kenyans-of-all-time/>.

²¹⁹ Katumanga, “Morphing Mirror Images of Military Culture,” 142.

²²⁰ Waithaka Waihenya, *The Mediator: Gen. Lazaro Sumbeiywo and the Southern Sudan Peace Process* (Nairobi: Kenway, 2006), 18.

commission on July 30, 1970.²²¹ He excelled and made many important connections at the academy, captaining the athletics team and winning the prestigious silver-bugle award.²²² Motivated by “rigid” principles of discipline, loyalty, and integrity, he rose through the ranks quickly, especially after helping quell the aforementioned 1982 air force coup attempt.²²³ He would go on to be promoted to Commander of the Army, where he had the difficult task of implementing General Tonje’s reforms and mediating the Darfur Conflict. He maintained his connections with the British Army, attending the Royal College of Defence in the UK in 1998, and taking an official visit to Sandhurst on June 23, 1999.²²⁴ While in the UK, he contemplated various peacekeeping problems in Sudan as he wrote his thesis, “The Dilemma of the Horn of Africa.”²²⁵ Sumbeiywo would go on to play the foremost role in establishing peace between Sudan and South Sudan.²²⁶ He is widely acclaimed as one of today’s most successful peacemakers. He is proud his efforts “because I served in this noble profession with honour and dignity. This should be the aspiration of every officer in uniform.”²²⁷ While British officer influence and training are apparent Sumbeiywo’s qualities, it should also be noted that some of his practices are in stark contrast to British dogma, which is further evidence for the development of a unique and organic military culture.²²⁸

²²¹ Waihenya, *The Mediator*, 22.

²²² Kenyan Graduates from this class also include P. Ikenye, T.L. Wanabisi, and T.Kipronto. Future General Ikenye would remain a particularly important connection in later years. General J. K. Attipo, a Ghanaian cadet was also in this class. He became the Commandant of the Kofi Annan International Peacekeeping Training Centre, an important connection for Sumbeiywo’s later work in Sudan. Junior Term, September 1968, Intake 45, *Wish Stream*, Spring 1969, 57-59.

²²³ Waihenya, *The Mediator*, 23-35.

²²⁴ Waihenya, 41; Visitors and Reunions, *Wish Stream*, Autumn 1998-Summer 1999, 88.

²²⁵ Harriet Martin, “The God-fearing General,” in *Kings of Peace, Pawns of War: The Untold Story of Peacemaking* (New York: Continuum, 2006), 134.

²²⁶ Waihenya, *The Mediator*, 111-133.

²²⁷ Stephen Muiruri, “Kenya: Army’s Change of Guard: Lt Gen Sumbeiywo’s Tenure Cut Short By Two Years,” *Daily Nation* (Nairobi), February 28, 2003, accessed February 1, 2016, <http://allafrica.com/stories/200302280118.html>.

²²⁸ Many international commentators notice Sumbeiywo’s outward and devoted Christian faith. While this could be likened to certain British Generals, such as Bernard Montgomery, the way Sumbeiywo compliments his

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Kenya had to overcome many problems upon its independence. It especially needed to address its security needs, and ensure the loyalty, reliability, and effectiveness of the Kenya Rifles. But the Government of Kenya did not have the financial resources, expertise, and infrastructure to accomplish this task during the 1960s. Thus, it sought aid from the international community. Eventually, Kenyatta's government pragmatically decided to accept and pursue British military assistance. This was partially due to Kenya's ability to manipulate British interests and maximize aid. But it was also because the British military was uniquely positioned to assist the KR. British officer values, experience, strategic knowledge, and genuine concern for the KR was desirable to Kenyan government officials. Continued British military influence would prove to be beneficial. The KR was loyal and professional throughout the tumultuous 1960s. This remained true in later years, particular in the 1971 and 1982 coup attempts. Kenyan officers, who had received extensive British training and influence during the 1960s, were important in these efforts. Such officers were also essential in creating an organic military culture and further developing the KR. By taking advantage of British military assistance, the Government of Kenya was enabled to expand the KR, maintain its loyalty and effectiveness, and build a principled and professional officer corps which could eventually be relied on to operate independently.

(charismatic) religious beliefs or practices with his occupation is unique. It is unlikely that he would have found much success or political support as an officer in the UK. This is evidence for the development of an organic military culture in Kenya. To be clear, Sumbeiywo's religious convictions are generally recognized as positive sources of dialogue with his Muslim coworkers and peers, as evidenced by his close relations with General Mohammed (Kenya) and many Sudanese officials. Interestingly, his religious convictions greatly clashed with some aggressive Christian U.S. officials. For more information, see: Martin, "The God-fearing General," 149-157; Waihenya, *The Mediator*, 25-27, 45-46, 146.

Conclusion

The continued relationship between the Kenya Rifles and the British military is a controversial issue due to the historical legacies of colonialism in East Africa. Many observers have condemned this development due to concerns of neo-colonialism and dependency. They see continued British presence, especially during the 1960s, as maintaining the colonial status quo. It is true, that historical legacies are important for discerning post-colonial developments. But the legacies of colonialism in Kenya are complex, especially regarding the Kenya Rifles. In order to understand the KR's transition after independence and its relationship with the British military, it is necessary to identify the dynamics of its predecessor.

The King's African Rifles was a multifaceted and constantly changing institution. Originating at the end of the 19th century, it would evolve dramatically as various interests struggled for influence. Of particular importance was the conflict between colonial and imperial discourses. The colonial discourse, which sought to maintain an inexpensive and unprofessional paramilitary force, was motivated by desire for conquest, domination, and economic extraction. This was opposed to idealist imperial forms of discourse, which sought to build a formidable and prestigious imperial force. British officers, who were immersed in ideals of honor and duty, championed this imperial vision. The international conflicts of the 20th century and the persistence of devoted officers enabled the KAR to increasingly become a professional, effective, and conventional military institution. Indigenous soldiers also influenced the KAR. They acculturated various military values and practices, negotiated their terms of service, and shaped the behavior of their officers. Because of these factors, the KAR that Kenya inherited at independence should not be understood as purely colonial, but rather the result of a mix of

influences. The legacy of competing colonial, imperial, and indigenous discourses was an important aspect in the Kenya Rifles.

The situation Kenya inherited at independence greatly constrained its possible actions. Kenya could not afford to completely disband the KAR, nor could it immediately focus on building an organic military culture for the Kenya Rifles. Instead, it first needed to ensure the KR's reliability, loyalty, and effectiveness. This partially entailed ending the KR's martial race composition and Africanizing the officer corps. These measures were necessary due to the range of internal and external threats the Government of Kenya faced. In addition, various individual and ideological interests desired to gain access to or control the KR for political or economic reasons. Most of these interests were not concerned for the actual performance and mindset of the force. This was reminiscent of the KAR's colonial discourse. It is in this environment which the Government of Kenya sought solutions for its security dilemma.

In order to ensure the loyalty, reliability, and effectiveness of the Kenya Rifles, or to carry out any of the desired reforms, the Government of Kenya needed international assistance. While Kenya had options, the British military proved to be the best suited to help provide for the KR's unique needs. British officers were familiar with Kenya and the KR, knowledgeable of African security issues, and highly motivated to build a positive legacy of the KAR and the British Empire. In addition, British officer ideals and vision for the KR corresponded well with many Kenyan politicians. They too, desired to make the KR professional, formidable, and worthy of national pride.

The Kenyatta regime's strategy of taking advantage of British military assistance paid off. Unlike many other African states, the KR did not intervene in civil politics during the 1960s, or any time after. Instead, it played eminent roles in extinguishing the coup attempts of

1971 and 1982. It remained loyal, reliable, professional, and effective. 1960s' British trained and influenced Kenyan KR officers were particularly important in these efforts. Individuals like General Tonje and General Sumbeiywo went onto reform the KR and develop an organic military culture.

British military assistance was important in these developments. As during the colonial period, British officers were motivated by high ideals, which have been categorized in this thesis as imperial. While the independent Government of Kenya could not tolerate the presence of foreign British officers within its own forces in perpetuity, nor the peculiar theories of martial race recruiting those same officers originally implemented, the government did take advantage of some of their ideals and inspirations. In effect, they maintained the KAR's imperial discourse in the KR during the 1960s. The power vacuum independence created meant that the old colonial discourse continued to exist in Kenya, as evidenced by the various interests trying to gain control of the KR. By maintaining the imperial discourse of loyalty, professionalism, and prestige, first through seconded officers and then through properly motivated and trained indigenous officers, independent Kenya caused this colonial discourse to be stifled. The KR was thus enabled to transition, evolve, and stabilize. KR officers who received training and commissions in the 1960s were allowed to remain and mature in a relatively stable environment. These conditions were important for the efforts of Tonje and Sumbeiywo as they moved the KR towards an organic national military culture and institution.

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