

“We Are not into Politics, but Politics Is into Us”: The Politicization of the Ghana Armed Forces Through Patronage Exchanges between Political Elites and Military Leaders

Humphrey Asamoah Agyekum 

Abstract: Throughout Ghana’s political history, soldiers have inspired socio-political change. Based on fieldwork with the Ghanaian military, this article contributes to literature on militaries and civil-military relations in Africa. Agyekum analyzes how the politicization of the military impacts dynamics within the barracks, while highlighting how the country’s political class endeavors to diminish the armed forces’ societal and political influence as a way to gain control over the institution through patronage exchanges. Since the early 2000s, the elite’s strategy entices individual soldiers as well as the whole institution through the politicization of promotions and appointments, recruitment, better service conditions, and infrastructural projects in the barracks.

Résumé : Tout au long de l’histoire politique du Ghana, les soldats ont inspiré le changement sociopolitique. Basé sur un travail de terrain avec l’armée ghanéenne, cet article contribue à la littérature sur les armées et les relations civiles et militaires en Afrique. Agyekum analyse l’impact de la politisation de l’armée sur la dynamique au sein des casernes, tout en soulignant comment la classe politique du pays s’efforce de réduire l’influence sociétale et politique des forces armées afin de prendre le contrôle de l’institution par le biais d’échanges de patronage. Depuis le début des années 2000, la stratégie d’élite a séduit individuellement les soldats ainsi que l’institution dans son

African Studies Review, Volume 66, Number 4 (December 2023), pp. 967–987

Humphrey Asamoah Agyekum is an Assistant Professor at the Center for Global Criminology, Department of Anthropology, University of Copenhagen, in Denmark. He is currently working on a project on illegal mining in Ghana. He is the author of *From Bullies to Officers and Gentlemen: How Notions of Professionalism and Civility Transformed the Ghana Armed Forces* (Berghahn Books, 2019). E-mail: h.asamoah@mail.com

© The Author(s), 2023. Published by Cambridge University Press on behalf of the African Studies Association.

doi:[10.1017/asr.2023.28](https://doi.org/10.1017/asr.2023.28)

ensemble en politisant les promotions et les nominations, le recrutement, l'amélioration des conditions de service et les projets d'infrastructure dans les casernes.

Resumo : Ao longo da história política do Gana, os soldados têm motivado diversas mudanças sociopolíticas. Partindo de um trabalho de campo com as forças militares ganianas, o presente artigo é um contributo para a literatura sobre as relações entre forças militares e entre forças militares e civis em África. Agyekum analisa o impacto da politização dos militares no contexto dos quartéis, ao mesmo tempo que sublinha o modo como a classe política do Gana se esforça por conter a influência societal e política das forças armadas, como forma de obter o controlo da instituição através da troca de favores. Desde o início da década de 2000, a estratégia desta elite tem consistido em aliciar individualmente os soldados, bem como a instituição no seu todo, através da politização das nomeações e das promoções de carreira, do recrutamento, da melhoria das condições de trabalho e de projetos infraestruturais nos quartéis.

Keywords: Ghana; politicization; armed forces; patronage; military; clientelism

(Received 25 August 2022 – Revised 21 January 2023 – Accepted 12 April 2023)

Introduction

In line with the apolitical façade it inherited at independence, the Ghanaian military considers itself a politically neutral institution (Parsons 2003). And while the Ghanaian constitution does not explicitly prohibit soldiers from engaging in politics (or shield the military from political interference) (Constitution of the Republic of Ghana 1992), the Ghana Armed Forces' code of conduct explicitly forbids military operatives from actively engaging in any form of partisan politics.¹ Still, for most of Ghana's political history, soldiers and the military have been important actors in the political arena, instrumental in triggering and realizing socio-political change (Israel 1992; Ansa-Koi 2007). For instance, the struggle for independence was inspired by demonstrations by ex-servicemen of the Gold Coast Regiment, following the death of two colonial soldiers on February 28, 1948 (Israel 1992).

This article builds on a body of literature on African militaries (including Gutteridge 1966, Welch 1970, First 1970, Baynham 1978, and Hutchful 1997) which exists in dialogue with earlier works on civil-military relations (such as Huntington 1957, Janowitz 1960, and Finer 1962). Thus, the article contributes to recent scholarship that seeks to rethink civil-military relations in the African context, which are often characterized by patronage politics that undermine military organization and effectiveness (Khisa & Day 2020, 2022; Agyekum 2019, 2021).

With the notable exception of Khisa and Day, who study how practices such as begging impact discipline in the barracks, the aforementioned body of work has generally focused on how the military affects society

(Agyekum 2021). This study, which focuses on a specific section within Ghanaian society—political actors who seek to influence the military—also positions itself within the well-established literature on clientelism (Kitschelt & Wilkinson 2007; Hyden 2016; Ravanilla, Haim & Hilken 2022; Miscoiu & Kakdeu 2021), and (neo)patrimonialism (Clapham 1985; Bratton & van de Walle 1999; van de Walle 2007; Vlavonou 2016; Glawion & de Vries 2018; Duursma 2022; Oostrom & Gukurume 2022). Hence, it examines how political actors in Ghana seek to influence dynamics within the barracks, not only through patronage exchanges—politically motivated distribution of favors to an individual or institution from which the patron aims to gain support and loyalty—but also through negotiations with military leaders. The article zooms in on the implications of such engagements on the military by pursuing the following questions: how does politicization affect the functioning of the Ghana Armed Forces as an institution? How does politicization impact the military’s internal dynamics? What are the implications of contested promotions and appointments (that result from politicization) on professional standards and military discipline?

Mats Utas (2012) has observed that power in the African political arena is often personalized, and Ghana is no exception. This personalization of power by the country’s political elite can occur only with the explicit or implicit approval of other important actors in the political space, including the armed forces. Thus, the members of Ghana’s political class on whom this paper focuses—including high ranking (mostly male) political actors such as members of parliament and party operatives with extensive networks and in-depth knowledge of the military—influence the country’s security institutions, for instance, through skewed recruitment practices. Such moves have serious implications both for individual soldiers and for the military as an institution. At the individual level, commanders may be disrespected by their subordinates due to suspicions about their engagement in patronage networks and partisan politics—activities which raise questions about their qualifications, professionalism, and ability to command. At the institutional level, politicization can lead to a decline in military discipline and professional standards.

Further analysis zooms in on the perception in the barracks that Ghana’s political class is intent on encroaching upon and gaining control over the military. The existence of such an agenda has been declaimed by leading political figures in media appearances. For example, Kennedy Agyapong, parliamentarian for the Assin Central Constituency and a member of the ruling New Patriotic Party (NPP), bragged about infiltrating various security agencies by staffing them with party loyalists, political foot soldiers, and his constituents, stating in an interview: “I have been able to recruit over 1000 people from my constituency into the security services, including the military.”² From the perspective of the barracks, initiatives that improve infrastructure and overall conditions for serving personnel are also tactics deployed by the political elite to entice the military into patronage exchanges. President Nana Akufo-Addo promised, for instance, to “provide

improved training facilities by transforming the [Ghana] Military Academy into a World Class Institution.”³ And although soldiers welcome such initiatives (considering the inadequacy of facilities, weapons, and material, including such basics as operational vehicles, tires, and fuel), these promises also engender suspicion and mistrust as military operatives question the motives behind them.

This article begins with a discussion of the methods of qualitative research deployed. This is followed by historical examples of attempts by various governments in post-independence Ghana to diminish the military’s power in the political arena. Subsequently, the article analyzes the nature of the relationship between Ghana’s two main political parties and the armed forces, attending to the ways in which political actors engage the military in clientelistic exchanges. The final section focuses on the politicization of the military by means of recruitment from the so-called protocol list.

Methods

An examination of Ghanaian political actors’ engagement of the military requires on-the-ground ethnographic observation that is sensitive to the relational, dynamic and—due to their illicit nature—largely subtle tactics of the political class. Taking a qualitative approach to data gathering and analysis, I obtained the original data presented here through long-term ethnographic field investigation of the Ghana Armed Forces conducted between December 2013 and January 2015. I was granted official access and full approval for fieldwork (without any limitations regarding data collection or the use thereof) after months of negotiation with the military. Fieldwork, which consisted of personal interactions, interviews, and participant observation with military operatives across the ranks, has subsequently been supplemented and updated with information obtained through contact with key interlocutors during annual visits to the Ghanaian military barracks. The decision by the Ghana Armed Forces to grant me permission to conduct fieldwork is in itself indicative of the military’s resolve to become more transparent and accountable, less “sealed off” from society. During the initial 14-month field study, I interacted with over a hundred respondents—of which a fifth were women—in informal conversations, and I recruited 40 interview partners—23 commissioned officers and 17 non-commissioned officers—for in-depth discussion. The interviews lasted between 30 and 90 minutes and were conducted with soldiers on duty in the barracks. Interviews took place in the soldiers’ offices, under trees and sheds, or in their living quarters. Besides serving personnel, I engaged with retired officers and soldiers of all ranks, ranging from privates to generals. Retired officers and ex-non-commissioned officers (NCOs) were interviewed in their homes or at their new workplaces outside the barracks.

The ages of the respondents ranged from 23 to above 70 (for the ex-servicemen and women). Women make up about nine percent of military personnel in Ghana, and to ensure gender balance, I proactively included

female personnel in my sample. As the matters discussed in this article affect all ranks and gender positionalities, the predominant criteria for identifying and recruiting respondents were experience and expertise. Hence, respondents were selected through thematically focused snowball-sampling (Atkinson & Flint 2001). Significantly, this also allowed me to establish trusted relationships with my interlocutors in the “closed world” of the Ghana Armed Forces (Wulff 2000:148).

For a multi-sited approach, the soldiers interviewed belonged to fourteen different units across the country and cut across the North-South divide in the Ghana Armed Forces, while taking into consideration historical influence and relevance; they were also drawn from the different services (army, navy, and air force) (Marcus 1995). For instance, whereas the choice of 1st Infantry Battalion was based on the unit’s influence and proximity to Ghana’s center of power in Accra, the selection of the 6th Infantry Battalion and the Airborne Force in Tamale was informed by the operations of these units in the pockets of conflict in Northern Ghana (cf. Awedoba et al. 2010; Wienia 2009).

To enhance analytical rigor (Welsh 2002) and the accuracy of the development of categories (Woods et al. 2015), I used the qualitative data analysis software NVivo. The software supported an interpretive and reflective analysis of the qualitative data by organizing and coding the fieldwork material which was comprised of (semi-structured) interviews, informal conversations, participant observations, news items, and field notes, in a systematic manner. New and old codes were continuously compared to determine patterns (Curry et al. 2012), and analytical steps and interpretations were made traceable by the linking of fieldwork material to the codes and nodes (Welsh 2002).

A History of Patronage and Politicization

The Ghana Armed Forces have their origins in the colonial Royal West African Frontier Force (RWAFF) (Gutteridge 1966; Aboagye 1999; Addae 2005). The Gold Coast Regiment of the RWAFF officially became the Ghana Army on March 6, 1957, and in 1960, the army was combined with the Ghana Navy and the Ghana Air Force to form the Ghana Armed Forces (Hutchful 1983). At independence, the Ghanaian military inherited the British command structure as well as its notion of an “apolitical armed forces” —a military that in theory did not interfere in politics (Gutteridge 1966:32).⁴ The apolitical façade, joint training exercises, secondments, and cadet training at various foreign institutions enabled post-independence Ghanaian governments to temporarily achieve “civilian supremacy” over the military in the early independence years (Kemp & Hudlin 1992:8). However, the status quo did not last long, as the military soon began to intervene in the country’s political processes (First 1970; Ocran 1977).

With the exception of the government of Hilla Limann—in office for less than two years and under probation of the military rulers of the Armed Forces

Revolutionary Council after the coup of 1979 (Oquaye 2004)—almost all governments in Ghana have tried to control the military. Kwame Nkrumah's government, in an effort to gain a foothold in the barracks, interfered in the military's internal affairs by dismissing two influential generals, Stephen Otu and Joseph Arthur Ankrah (Welch 1970), as these senior officers opposed the president's moves. Nkrumah also tried to diminish the armed forces' socio-political influence through the use of informers within the ranks, and established an army within the armed forces, the President's Own Guard Regiment (POGR), which was directly under Nkrumah's command (Welch 1970). The POGR, advised by Soviet security specialists, was also lavishly equipped at the expense of the needs of the regular army (Welch 1970). Some of my respondents who served during Nkrumah's rule noted that, had his plans succeeded, the military would have become docile and susceptible to manipulation by the political class for generations to come. Unfortunately for Nkrumah, his machinations triggered a coup that overthrew his government. Even then, the junta leaders of the National Liberation Council began talks immediately after the coup to hand over power to a civilian government, and the transfer of power eventually happened in 1969 (Austin & Luckham 1975).

Between 1969 and 1972, the government of Kofi Abrefa Busia also endeavored to gain control over the barracks. Fearing a military coup, his party—the Progress Party—sought to reduce the influence of the military in the Ghanaian political arena. Busia's government prohibited the training of the troops, which led to a depreciation of professional standards. His government also forced about half of the senior officers (holding ranks of lieutenant colonel and above) into retirement or semi-retirement, a move that not only deprived the military of skilled and experienced officers who could pass their knowledge on to younger officers, but also stripped the institution of officers who possessed the stature to withstand pressures from the governing elite (Baynham 1978:27).

Additional acts of interference by the Progress Party included manipulating ethnic divisions and tensions within the barracks by replacing non-Akans who held strategic command positions with Akans.⁵ “Officers,” observed Colonel Ignatius Kutu Acheampong, leader of the coup that later overthrew the government of the Progress Party, “were put in certain positions to suit the whims of Busia and his colleagues” (Baynham 1978:31). Thus, the Progress Party politicized the Ghana Armed Forces through tribalistic appointments and through promotions that were based not on merit but rather on ethnicity and political affiliation.

The party's actions were intended to enable the political class to secure the loyalty of its supporters within the barracks, thereby minimizing the chances of a coup. But the manipulative interventions weakened the military's internal structures and generated uncertainties about career progression among soldiers (Baynham 1978). This led to envy within the barracks and animosity toward the government, resulting in disaffection that brought the barracks together against the Progress Party and triggered the coup that

was led by Acheampong (who was ironically an Akan officer) in February 1972.

From 1993 to 2000, under the presidency of Jerry Rawlings, the military appeared to have become a constituency of Rawlings’ National Democratic Congress (NDC) and a full-blown political actor. Rawlings, junta leader of the Provisional National Defence Council (PNDC) following the establishment of Ghana’s 4th Republic in 1992, had morphed into a democratically elected president in January 1993 after establishing the NDC as an offshoot of the PNDC. Under Rawlings, soldiers were appointed to political positions as heads of civilian institutions, and serving officers openly engaged in partisan political activities. As further indication of the politicization of the Ghana Armed Forces, the militia (64 Infantry Regiment), a relic of the PNDC era that was under the direct control of the president, had migrated with Rawlings into his reign (Agyeman-Duah 2002). After 2001, the militia became part of the Ghana Armed Forces and was renamed 64 Infantry Regiment (Ansa-Koi 2007; Agyekum 2019).

While previous attempts by various presidents to politicize the Ghana Armed Forces had resulted in coups, Rawlings succeeded in gaining control over the military and obtaining the loyalty of the soldiers. A commissioned officer, he knew the institution inside and out, which contributed to his success. My interlocutors assert that he ran a patronage scheme in which he rewarded officers with ranks, promotions, and appointments, placing his allies in strategic positions—an example being the appointment of his confidante and fellow tribesman Major Courage Quashigah as the commanding officer of 64 Infantry Regiment (cf. Oostrom & Gukurume 2022).

It should be noted that Rawlings did more than transform the military into political powerbrokers. He initiated a much-needed transformation in the barracks at a time when the armed forces were in dire straits, appointing well-regarded generals (such as Arnold Quainoo, Winston Mensa-Wood, and Ben Akafia) to run the armed forces (Agyekum 2019; Oquaye 2004). Still, with the establishment of 64 Infantry Regiment, Rawlings had essentially created a better equipped parallel military, while gradually disarming the regular armed forces (Oquaye 2004). According to interlocutors who served during Rawlings’ tenure, the members of 64 Infantry Regiment were especially loyal to Rawlings, since they received extra incentives for performing such activities as escorting and protecting the president: “They were Rawlings’ babies so they got better paid than us the regular army people.”⁶ This also meant that the ex-militiamen’s welfare was at stake if the regime were to fall, further ensuring their loyalty.

Rawlings’ moves were not motivated by altruism but rather by the recognition that an ailing armed forces could be detrimental to his regime’s survival; he also realized the potential of wayward soldiers to stage a coup against his junta, hence his interventions to transform the barracks. Therefore, although Rawlings’ interventions demoralized and weakened the military and affected *esprit de corps* and cohesion (Agyeman-Duah 2002), his actions also yielded the very results he sought. The regular forces were in

tatters and thus could not rebel against him, while the influential 64 Infantry Regiment firmly supported him. As was the case under Busia, the regular military was not allowed to undertake training exercises; the soldiers of 64 Infantry Regiment, on the other hand, were obliged to partake in exercises (Agyekum 2019). Respondents who served under Rawlings further note that the regular soldiers were held to military regulations in the barracks, while the militiamen of 64 Infantry Regiment were exempted from these; commanders of the regular military could not hold the militiamen to disciplinary standards, as they were not officially part of the military. In short, morale, military discipline, and professional standards diminished drastically due to Rawlings' brand of politicization.

A New Era of Patronage: Kufuor's Administration

Patronage exchanges are two-way engagements (or negotiations) between political and military leaders, with which the political class aims to extract loyalty from the Ghanaian military through politicization. When Rawlings' presidency ended in 2000, he left Ghana's security sector in a poor state. This provided an opportunity for the new government, led by John Kufuor of the New Patriotic Party, to make amends with the security sector (including the military) and gain its support and trust—that is, loyalty (Ansah-Koi 2007)—through patronage engagements (cf. Oostrom & Gukurume 2022). In short, the early 2000s can be seen as the starting point of the new era of such interactions.

At the start of Kufuor's tenure, his government invested heavily in the security sector. He acquired modern communication equipment and vehicles, increased salaries, and substantially improved the conditions of service for all personnel (Ansah-Koi 2007). The administration further initiated numerous infrastructural projects, including building the Kofi Annan International Peacekeeping Training Centre (KA IPTC) for the Ghana Armed Forces. In the words of an interlocutor, "The new minister of defence, Dr Addo Kufuor, started project after project. He built us a new assembly hall, Burma Hall. We just had to support them."⁷

Where his predecessors had focused largely on securing loyalty by establishing patronage networks with individuals within and at the apex of the military hierarchy, Kufuor's brand of patronage, according to a senior serving military officer, was geared toward rallying the whole institution behind him. The aforementioned interventions, which served to boost military morale, set the new government on the path to achieving its aims.

Many officers believe that the success of Kufuor's government with the military has inspired subsequent presidents to copy his approach, seeking to obtain loyalty from the institution as a whole. But such ventures are tricky for both political and military leaders. Senior military interlocutors noted that high-ranking officers are aware of the need to avoid being seen as engaging in patronage-type relations with the political class, as this would damage their reputation in the barracks. Military leaders who engage in politics and

patronage exchanges are considered unprofessional, or worse, “bootlickers”; they are viewed as puppets of the politicians who appointed them and not as independent leaders.⁸

Nevertheless, the “intrusion of politics” (Sørensen 2011:234) remains a problem. Competent officers with no political affiliations believe they are being overlooked in favor of those associated with the political class, who receive prestigious offices and promotions. My senior serving military interlocutors with in-depth knowledge of these matters echoed the sentiment, noting that eligibility for key positions is frequently based on political affiliation rather than on merit, which is widely apparent: “We know ourselves. We know who is good and who is not.”⁹ Thus, appointees to these offices enjoy less support from the barracks: “They are tolerated, but not respected.”¹⁰

For the political class on the other hand, not having the backing of the whole military would mean, a senior officer observes, that the government would have to tread carefully in order not to provoke hostility and lose control of the country’s security apparatus. This is a particularly uncomfortable position for the Ghanaian political elite to hold, given the military’s history of coups. To generate support from and control over the barracks, Ghana’s political class have over time resorted to a variety of tactics, a mixture of past methods (such as biased appointments) and new methods akin to the Kufuor administration’s modus operandi of executing projects to entice the whole institution (cf. Miscoiu & Kakdeu 2021).

New Patriotic Party (NPP) versus National Democratic Congress (NDC)

The key players in the current era of politicization and patronage exchanges involving the Ghana Armed Forces are the New Patriotic Party (NPP) and the National Democratic Congress (NDC). Political actors including the ruling NPP have accused the NDC of being in bed with the military, due to the party’s connection to Rawlings (Agyeman-Duah 2002). According to my military interlocutors who support the NPP, their party is less tied to the military, and therefore has to work harder to earn the trust and loyalty of soldiers. Since the early 2000s, during Kufuor’s administration, the NPP has consistently worked on establishing patronage relationships within the barracks. Currently, there is a lot of sod cutting for initiatives in the barracks by the NPP government, which according to my respondents generates the impression that the NPP is trying to entice and appease the military.¹¹

Political and military pundits observe that new projects often spring up in the military barracks in the final years of any Ghanaian president’s tenure. Soldiers believe that these projects are part of the electioneering process, geared toward winning their sympathies and soliciting their votes for the ruling political party (Ravanilla, Haim, & Hilken 2022). After general elections, the new president usually meets with soldiers in the barracks; my military interlocutors who have participated in these events note that they serve as a means to introduce the barracks to the new president, and to present a new Chief of Defence Staff, who is usually appointed around

inauguration time. But serving soldiers also believe that, unofficially, the first visit by the ruling elite is aimed at convincing the barracks that the new government is an ally, that it is concerned with soldiers' welfare, and will ensure, with the help of the new CDS, that the military's needs are met (Erdmann & Engel 2007). For instance, after Ghana's current president, Nana Addo Dankwah Akufo-Addo, was inaugurated in January 2017, he attended the Ghana Armed Forces' end-of-year get-together, where he announced the increment of peacekeeping allowances from \$31 to \$35, and reminded soldiers that this had been a major campaign promise of the NPP to the barracks.¹² He further promised, among other things, to provide accommodation facilities to soldiers and to retool the military. In the president's words:

"We will continue to modernize and provide the equipment needed by the military to help them carry out their mandate effectively and I will be presenting to the Ghana Armed Forces 50 ANKAI buses, the first tranche of the 138 Staff and operational vehicles of various categories and 26 dispatch motorcycles. (...) We would expand the housing project from 16 flats to 44, and begin constructing 160 two-bedroom apartments across the country."¹³

One sees how, in the above quote, the president draws attention to what was promised and delivered, while making additional promises. Media reports and promotions by the NPP's propaganda division suggest that the ruling party has initiated more projects in the military barracks in recent years.¹⁴ But my respondents in the barracks are sceptical about the motives behind these endeavors. They view these initiatives, as well as the organized durbars and speeches associated with their presentation, as calculated reminders of what the political class has done and intends to do for the military—a ploy to engage the barracks in patronage exchanges (Oostrom & Gukurume 2022).

The following words from Vice President Mahamadu Bawumia were met with similar scepticism: "Government is aware of the numerous challenges facing the Ghana Armed Forces [...]. Looking back, the Ministry of Roads and Highways started the rehabilitation of roads within the various barracks in 2016."¹⁵ Like Akufo-Addo's speech above, the Vice President's speech mentions specific and concrete projects in an attempt to underscore the government's past efforts in dealing with the issues facing the military. The barracks see this, and the reminder that the government is aware of the difficulties the military faces, as being geared toward politicking. In short, efforts by the political class to portray itself as a trustworthy partner by emphasizing kept election promises are invariably regarded as attempts at enticing the military institution into patronage exchanges.

The NDC, despite its longstanding ties with the military, is similarly perceived as engaging in patronage exchanges and awarding of favors to the military when in office. From 2008 to 2016, when the party was in power, it adopted the Kufuor blueprint for establishing patronage networks and strengthening existing relationships, expanding accommodation facilities

and purchasing vehicles and aircrafts for the military.¹⁶ Now, without access to state coffers or the ability to promote soldiers, the NDC uses its public utterances to validate supporters in the barracks who believe they have been bypassed for promotions, encouraging them to keep faith for better days when the NDC returns to power.¹⁷ For instance, in his 2020 elections message to the security forces including the military, the party’s flagbearer, John Dramani Mahama, promised (among other things) depoliticization, fair promotions, and the re-instatement of time-tested conventions, rules, and regulations within these institutions.¹⁸

Although Ghana’s prominent political parties relate differently to the military, both parties aim to forestall interventions by the Ghana Armed Forces in the political arena, while also trying to gain a foothold within the ranks of this powerful player. Thus, according to my interlocutors, initiatives by the political class, regardless of whether they belong to the NPP or the NDC, are viewed by the military as devices to gain control over their institution.

Patronage Exchanges Between Powerful Actors

Patronage exchanges—give-and-take or two-way exchanges/negotiations—between politicians and the military in Ghana play out both at the individual and institutional levels. It is important to emphasize the reciprocity and the mutuality of patronage exchanges, which by definition do not depend on any one side alone. The notion of exchange is important: the military is not always being seduced by political actors. Rather, there are military operatives who actively seek out and engage in these relationships, the returns of which can include favors, expressions of loyalty, and (as discussed above) promotions and appointments to prestigious or lucrative offices. In Ghana’s political system, which is modelled after that of the United States, the president wields extensive executive powers. The president and the 275-member parliament are elected every four years through universal adult suffrage. But despite Ghana’s democratic system and its reputation for peace, the political class, according to my respondents with intimate knowledge of these affairs, generally needs the military’s loyalty and support—tacit or explicit—to personalize and expand its power. One example of this is that, during the elections of 2016, Charlotte Osei, then chairperson for Ghana’s Electoral Commission, and Mahama, the incumbent president, sought clearance from the upper echelons of the Ghana Armed Forces before the final results were announced and the president finally conceded defeat to the current president, Akuffo-Addo (Awuni 2019).¹⁹

When clientelistic exchanges involving promotions and appointments at the apex of the military’s chain of command take place, it is usually the case that ambitious senior officers are motivated to mobilize their relations in corridors of power for prestigious appointments. My respondents observed that such politicking usually starts approximately halfway through the tenure of a sitting president/ruling government, reaching its peak in election season

as senior officers vying for prestigious appointments—Chief of Defence Staff (CDS) and service command positions such as Chief of Naval Staff, Chief of Army Staff, or Chief of Air Staff—align themselves with the party of their preference, usually the anticipated winner(s) of the election.

Since it is forbidden for soldiers to openly engage in partisan politics, military operatives are not active members of the parties they support, and they do not go on the campaign trail. According to my interlocutors, they instead offer various behind-the-scenes services, such as logistical support, security provisions, and strategic or tactical advice. Retired military officers have also been known to use their knowledge and foreign contacts to recruit foreign military contractors who train political vigilante groups and the security details of political parties (Gyampo, Graham, & Asare 2017; Paalo 2017).

Soldiers of lower rank with ties to political “big men” (Nugent 1995:12) use their connections to gain access to the corridors of power. They may, for instance, lobby to be deployed on guard duties at the “Jubilee House”—Ghana’s presidential residence and political powerbase—as this can pave the way to joining the entourage of powerful political actors such as the president, vice president, or the president’s chief of staff. According to one commanding officer who has overseen such soldiers, being part of these circles can be lucrative; on top of their monthly salary, soldiers receive extra financial incentives for services such as participating in presidential escorts. Soldiers also hope to forge relationships with political bigwigs through such deployments, as these contacts are thought to become useful in the future, when they retire and are applying for employment outside the barracks. A recommendation from a prominent political figure can do wonders in Ghana, where jobs are scarce and unemployment is rife (GSS 2014). Sometimes soldiers previously deployed to “Jubilee House” re-enter politicians’ entourages as personal bodyguards or security advisors upon retirement from the military. There is also the prestige associated with certain deployments. In the words of a regimental sergeant major who assigns soldiers’ deployments, “It is important for some guys to be seen in the entourage of powerful political people. That makes them look good to their mates.”²⁰ In short, soldiers engaging in clientelistic relations with political actors hope not only to benefit professionally but also socially, by enhancing their status within the barracks (Ravanilla, Haim, & Hilken 2022).

Engagements of military actors in patronage exchanges can have detrimental effects at the institutional as well as the individual level. According to commanders, soldiers lobbying for lucrative and prestigious offices view themselves as being in competition with one another, and the perception in the barracks is that those who were appointed gained their offices based not on merit but on lobbying skills. Soldiers with no access to powerful political figures believe that, no matter how qualified or talented they are, they will be overlooked in favor of less qualified but politically savvy and well-connected colleagues. This view leads to envy among peers and, according to commanders, a decreased level of support for soldiers who secure prestigious

appointments. Additionally, such leaders are dogged by questions about their suitability for their elevated position, with subordinates harboring misgivings about the qualifications and command capabilities of their leaders. My interlocutors who are serving senior officers note that this situation translates into a reduction of internal cohesion in the barracks, which can affect the military's effectiveness.

Lobbying by soldiers for deployment to centers of power and the attendant competition among peers for appointments and offices have, according to military leaders, led to a depreciation of military discipline in the Ghana Armed Forces. Military discipline here entails “the totality of an individual's conformity to a prescribed role depending on one's task in the military, informing one's behaviour, attitudes, beliefs, values, and definitions” (Arkin & Dobrofsky 1978:60). Military commanders note the difficulty of handling soldiers who have been deployed to the centers of power, as these officers begin to feel more connected to the political realm than to the military. There have been instances of soldiers who refused to return to their units after deployment to the “Jubilee House,” while some who did return refused to take orders from their superiors.

The Politicization of the Military

Ghana's constitution grants the president the prerogative to appoint the Chief of Defence Staff (CDS) as well as the commanders of the army, air force, and navy, thus making these appointments a political affair (Aning 2008:323).²¹ Unlike the appointments of the aforementioned leaders, the selection of commanders within the military is officially administrative, a privilege of the military system (Agyekum 2019). The perception in the Ghanaian barracks, however, is that these appointments are increasingly being politicized, especially the nominations for commanders of units deemed “sensitive” due to their history and their place as key units in Ghana's security infrastructure: the Armoured Reconnaissance Regiment, 5th Infantry Battalion, 1st Infantry Battalion, Airborne Force, 64 Infantry Regiment, and 66th Artillery Regiment (Agyekum 2019). For instance, there was the case of a senior officer from 64 Infantry Regiment who was seconded to the National Security Ministry as a director of operations. This officer and operatives under his command attacked journalists, which resulted in a huge public outcry.²² The Ghanaian government was forced to terminate the officer's assignment and return him to his military unit. The Ghanaian public was expecting the officer to be punished for these breaches, but he was instead appointed the commanding officer of the influential 64 Infantry Regiment, resulting in more condemnation.²³ Such cases feed into and strengthen perceptions of politicization in the barracks.

Soldiers familiar with the matter observe that their institution is being politicized through the redistribution of resources. The president, given the prerogative to appoint military leaders, redistributes resources by promoting allies to key military positions with the aim of extracting loyalty from them.

Appointments and promotions within the military are used as bargaining chips in patronage exchanges between politicians and top military commanders. Political patrons not only have their trusted associates appointed to desirable key offices, but also often keep senior officers under their control with further promises and post-retirement offers. In recent years, it has become common practice for senior commanders to be appointed upon retirement as “Ghana’s ambassadors” to various places (Agyekum 2019). In the barracks, these posts are assumed to be rewards for services rendered to political patrons (cf. Oostrom & Gukurume 2022; Miscoiu & Kakdeu 2021).

Furthermore, retired senior military commanders have been known to offer their knowledge, skills, and contacts to the party responsible for their appointment to prestigious and lucrative offices. For example, the NDC announced the appointment of former CDS Lieutenant General P. Blay to its campaign team for the 2020 elections, and NPP, the current ruling party, once engaged the services of former CDS Lieutenant General JB Danquah.²⁴ Although former military commanders engaging in politics is not a new phenomenon in Ghana, such activities are still frowned upon in the barracks, where they strengthen the view that the institution is being politicized.

Despite all this, the Ghanaian military as an institution maintains that it is politically neutral. “We are not into politics, but politics is into us,” an interlocutor quipped, referring to the fixation that the Ghanaian political class is viewed as harboring for the Ghana Armed Forces.²⁵ This notion of political neutrality is of central importance to the military, and it is backed by regulations and codes of conduct that guide soldiers’ behavior and activities, as well as by institutional efforts invested in maintaining the military’s neutrality, including public relations and civilian assistance programs. Since the early 1980s, the Ghanaian military has been undergoing a transformation process (Agyekum 2019) which has converted it into one of the most trusted institutions (Agyeman-Duah 2002). The Ghanaian military is very aware of the value of being considered trustworthy and the least corrupt institution in the country (Agyeman-Duah 2002). Despite this, it is unable to prevent its individual members from being politicized by the political class in their effort to gain control over the institution for political power.

Politicization of Recruitment through the Protocol List

Jobs are scarce in Ghana, but state institutions such as the Ghana Immigration Service, Ghana Police Service, and the Ghana Armed Forces recruit personnel annually (Agyekum 2019). Competition is fierce during recruitment rounds, not only among applicants but also in elite circles, with political actors vying to place their wards and other associates in these institutions. Thus, apart from engaging soldiers in patronage networks and exchanges in an effort to gain control over the military, Ghana’s political elite have politicized recruitment, gradually filling the rank and file of the military with political foot soldiers through recruitment from the so-called “protocol list.”²⁶

One senior recruitment officer intimated that many influential people, ranging from parliamentarians to political party officials and judges, have had their relatives drafted into the military.²⁷ In this way, foot soldiers are drawn into patronage networks, since soldiers who gain their employment through political connections are obliged to return the favor by exhibiting loyalty to their political associates (Clapham 1985; Kitschelt & Wilkinson 2007).²⁸

Many soldiers believe that the fixation of Ghana's political elite on the Ghana Armed Forces is due to the institution's growing societal reputation as "professional, incorruptible and reliable" (Agyeman-Duah 2002:12).²⁹ The burgeoning reputation of the Ghanaian military, interlocutors in the barracks claim, is a thorn in the side of the political class, who fear that a reputable and professional military is more difficult to control.³⁰ For their part, commanders worry that the practice of recruiting based on affiliations rather than qualifications results in substandard personnel and undercuts the professional standards that the institution strives to uphold.

The rank and file are also aware of this development. In the words of one interlocutor: "Foot soldiers are brought in and their task is to feed their political backers with information on the military establishment."³¹ Another respondent noted that a military staffed with political pawns dances to the tunes of its paymasters and is loyal to the leaders of the political establishment, rather than to military leadership.

In the view of several commanders, politicized recruitment practices must be halted if the Ghanaian military is to maintain high-quality personnel and professional standards. Some in the barracks predict that if the practice continues, a time will come when the rank and file will be split according to their political affiliations. Commanders also worry about a decline in standards of discipline as superiors with no political connections are reluctant to enforce regulations for fear of reprisals from the political backers of subordinates recruited through the protocol list.³² In the words of one interlocutor: "We fear the backers of some of the soldiers. They can use their influence to frustrate your promotion or appointments if you want to take on their man. You will be stuck. We have seen it happen."³³ In short, political figures are believed to regularly interfere in disciplinary matters at the unit level, making it difficult for commanders to enforce military discipline, thus depreciating professional standards and disciplinary norms.³⁴

Conclusion

Historically, the Ghana Armed Forces have been influential in the country's political arena. As a result, various Ghanaian governments have deployed a wide variety of strategies to diminish the military's important position. Favorite strategies are politicizing the military and engaging barracks actors in patronage networks and exchanges, thus contravening the institution's apolitical stance and code of conduct. In recent years, the perception in the barracks is that the weapon of choice for the political elite is not only to

engage individual military leaders in patronage exchanges, but also to buy the loyalty of the whole institution with visible infrastructural projects and increases to benefits and salaries. This article, using a qualitative approach and perspectives from the barracks, examines how individual soldiers as well as the military as an institution are affected by the actions of the country's political elite, which are geared toward gaining control of the military.

The transactions between the political elite and the military come at a high cost. Patronage engagements affect soldiers promoted or appointed to prestigious offices as they are not respected, while commanders assumed to be involved in patronage and clientelistic relations with the political elite are disdained by their peers and subordinates for exhibiting poor leadership and for not leading by example. These factors contribute to the depreciation of the institution's professional and disciplinary standards. Furthermore, soldiers' involvement in patronage networks is thought to turn senior officers into passive, docile actors who render the institution susceptible to manipulation by the political class.

The strategies deployed by the ruling class—politicization of recruitment, promotions, and appointments during and beyond the military career, and the creation of patronage networks—all serve to diminish disciplinary standards. Commanders who are not part of these networks are reluctant to enforce discipline for fear of reprisals from the backers of the politically connected foot soldiers. Most studies on African militaries and recent literature on African civil-military relations tend to focus on how these armed forces affect their societies through the orchestration of coups and their support of civil wars or repressive governments. However, African militaries are also a reflection of their host societies; they are impacted by socio-political developments that penetrate the barracks and affect internal dynamics. Future studies on African militaries may find it rewarding to take socio-political developments and their implications as a point of departure.

Notes

1. One could, however, argue that the Ghanaian constitution, by giving the president the power to appoint military leaders, opens an avenue for political interference in the military's affairs. The codes of conduct that forbid active participation in partisan politics are stated in instruments such as the Armed Forces Regulations Volume Two, which deals specifically with discipline (there are also Volumes 1, 3, and 4, which deal respectively with administration, finance, and civilian employees). There are also documents, such as the Command and Staff Instructions and Procedures (CSIPs, Volumes 1-6) and Ministry of Defence Instructions (MDIs) that guide soldiers' conduct.
2. Ghanaweb; <https://www.ghanaweb.com/GhanaHomePage/NewsArchive/I-have-sent-over-1-000-peoplefrom-my-constituency-to-security-agencies-govt-companies-Kennedy-Agyapong-1086103>. Accessed June 20, 2022.

3. Business Ghana; <https://businessghana.com/site/news/general/182393/Akufo-Addo-to-present-50-Ankaibuses-to-Ghana-Armed-Forces-tomorrow>. Accessed June 17, 2022.
4. Interview with a soldier, Burma Camp, Accra, Ghana (July 5, 2014).
5. Non-Akans in Ghana; https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Demographics_of_Ghana, (accessed September 23, 2020). Akan tribe in Ghana; https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Akan_people; <https://www.amesall.rutgers.edu/languages/128-akan-twi> (accessed September 23, 2020).
6. Interview with Lt. Col. Y.M., Burma Camp, Accra, Ghana. (September 9, 2014).
7. Interview with Lieutenant Colonel L.D., Burma Camp, Accra, Ghana (June 8, 2014).
8. Informal conversation with Lieutenant Colonel D., Burma Camp, Accra, Ghana (August 20, 2019).
9. Ibid.
10. Interview with Lieutenant A., Burma Camp, Accra, Ghana (April 4, 2014).
11. NPP government’s projects in the barracks; <https://www.graphic.com.gh/news/general-news/bawumia-cutssod-for-ghana-armed-forces-inner-roads-construction.html>; <https://www.thepublisheronline.com/bawumiacuts-sod-for-gaf-sports-complex/> (accessed September 23, 2020).
12. 3 News, <https://3news.com/akufo-addo-fulfils-campaign-pledge-to-peacekeepers-increases-allowances-from-31-to-35/> (Accessed July 6, 2021).
13. Ghanaweb, <https://www.ghanaweb.com/GhanaHomePage/NewsArchive/Akufo-Addo-inspects-work-on-500-bed-Military-Hospital-Kumasi-Airport-project-1071790>; see also Business Ghana, <https://businessghana.com/site/news/general/182393/Akufo-Addo-to-present-50-Ankai-buses-to-Ghana-Armed-Forces-tomorrow>; See also: <https://www.modernghana.com/news/1004097/bawumia-cuts-sod-forarmed-forces-inner-roads-cons.html> (accessed September 23, 2020).
14. NPP Projects Bureau; <https://ne-np.facebook.com/NPPProjectsBureau/posts/the-naval-barracks-at-the-eastern-naval-command-tema-for-the-servicemen-construc/865488667370984/>.
15. Presidency of Ghana website: <http://presidency.gov.gh/index.php/briefing-room/news-style-2/1589-vicepresident-bawumia-cuts-sod-for-ghana-armed-forces-inner-roads-construction> (accessed September 20, 2020).
16. NDC projects for the Ghanaian military, PeaceFm Online, <https://www.peacefmonline.com/pages/local/news/201411/223294.php> (accessed September 23, 2020).
17. Sammy Gyamfi, NDC’s National Communications Director; on the security agencies: <https://dailyguidenetwork.com/ndc-threatens-security-agencies-with-purging/>; <https://www.modernghana.com/news/1018940/apj-berates-ndc-over-sammy-gyamfi-threats-on-secur.html> (accessed September 23, 2020).
18. Elections message from the NDC to its supporters in the barracks; <https://www.johnmahama.org/news/amesage-to-personnel-of-the-security-services-of-ghana-from-john-dramani-mahama-presidential-candidate-of-the-national-democratic-congress>.
19. Adom FM, <https://www.adomonline.com/manassehs-book-ec-chair-sought-permission-from-military-before-declaring-akufo-addo-president/>. Despite these sorts of negotiations, it must be noted, though, that today Ghana is regarded as one of Africa’s stronger democracies, insofar as there have now been a number of

- peaceful transitions from one party to another as a result of elections. Such alternation of power is rare in the African context.
20. Interview with a Regimental Sergeant Major, Burma Camp, Accra Ghana (April 4, 2014).
 21. Considering the history of the Ghanaian military, with its incursions into the body politic of the country, some observers say it is understandable that politicians appoint officers they believe are going to be loyal to them. Most politicians and military officers attended secondary schools and universities together. Politicians through this background not only have an idea of the political leanings of their officer counterparts but also know who is trustworthy and will be loyal and who has a dark side to his character. (Informal conversation with Colonel D., April 2015). The appointments are based on Article 201, Article 203 (1), (2) and (3) of the 1992 Constitution of Ghana (Aning 2008:323).
 22. Journalist Attacked by National Security Operatives; <https://www.graphic.com.gh/news/politics/criticismsmount-on-journalists-assault-by-national-security-operatives.html>.
 23. The Fourth Estate; <https://thefourthstategh.com/2021/05/24/national-security-director-sacked-over-calebkudah-assault-given-top-military-appointment/>. (Accessed June 20, 2022).
 24. Commanders as consultants for Political Parties. <https://www.ghanaweb.com/GhanaHomePage/NewsArchive/NDC-clarifies-appointment-of-Ex-CDS-in-Mahama-campaign-team-998674>.
 25. Interview with a soldier, Burma Camp, Accra, Ghana (July 5, 2014).
 26. Protocol is synonym for especially ministers, and members of parliament. My interlocutors who have instructed at the Ghana Armed Forces Recruit Training Centre claim that they have at times received a list of people who were to be trained, while these people have not gone through the rigorous selection process.
 27. Interview with Lt. Col. A., Burma Camp, Accra, Ghana (June 2014).
 28. Politicians filling the Ghanaian military with foot soldiers; <https://www.ghanaweb.com/GhanaHomePage/NewsArchive/I-have-sent-over-1000-people-from-my-constituency-to-security-agencies-govt-companies-Kennedy-Agyapong-1086103> (accessed November 1, 2020).
 29. Ghana's political actors since independence have had a fixation for the military institutions. The twofold reasons for that, according to military interlocutors, are due to the Ghana Armed Forces' murky past of coups and their associated societal unrest. In post-independence Ghana, soldiers have executed five successful coups (besides numerous unsuccessful attempts) that have not only toppled democratically elected governments, but also generated societal unrest and excessive human rights violations and bloodletting both within and outside the Ghanaian barracks (Baynham 1994; Nugent 1995; Hutchful 1997; Oquaye 2004; Agyekum 2019), and the military's growing societal reputation as a trustworthy and incorruptible institution in recent years (Agyeman-Duah 2002). These reasons not only make the military a serious adversary to reckon with in the political arena due to its ability to conduct coups, but also its corporate image of incorruptibility makes the political class look bad in the court of public opinion.
 30. Interview with Lt. Col. D., Otu Barracks, Teshie, Accra, Ghana (August, 2014).
 31. Ibid.
 32. Interview with Warrant Officer Class I N., Burma Camp, Accra, Ghana (April 2, 2014).

33. Ibid.

34. Interview with an SNCO, Burma Camp, Accra, Ghana (March 15, 2014).

References

- Aboagye, Festus B. 1999. *The Ghana Army: A Concise Contemporary Guide to Its Centennial Regimental History, 1897–1999*. Accra: Sedco Publishing Limited.
- Addae, Kojo S. 2005. *A Short History of Ghana Armed Forces*. Accra: Ministry of Defence of Ghana Armed Forces.
- Agyekum, Humphrey A. 2019. *From Bullies to Officers and Gentlemen: how notions of professionalism and civility transformed the Ghana Armed Forces*. New York: Berghahn Books.
- . 2021. “Complicating Entanglements: Societal Factors Intruding in the Ghana Armed Forces’ Civil–Military Relations.” *Armed Forces & Society* 48 (4): 917–35.
- Agyeman-Duah, Baffuor. 2002. “Civil-Military Relations in Ghana’s Fourth Republic.” *CDD-Ghana Critical Perspectives*, No. 9. Accra: Ghana Centre for Democratic Development.
- Aning, Kwesi. 2008. “Managing the Security Sector.” In *Ghana: Governance in the Fourth Republic*, edited by Baffuor Agyeman-Duah, 316–32. Accra: Ghana Centre for Democratic Development.
- Ansa-Koi, Kumi. 2007. “The security agencies and national security in a decade of liberalism.” In *Ghana: One Decade of the Liberal State* edited by Kwame Boafo-Arthur, 188–205. Dakar: CODESRIA Books.
- Arkin, William, and Lynne R. Dobrofsky. 1978. “Military Socialization and Masculinity.” *Journal of Social Issues* 34: 151–68.
- Atkinson, Rowland, and John Flint. 2001. “Accessing hidden and hard to reach populations: Snowball research strategies.” *Social Research Update* 33: 1–4.
- Austin, Dennis, and Robin Luckham. 1975. *Politicians and Soldiers in Ghana 1966–1972*. London: Routledge.
- Awedoba, Albert K., Edward Salifu Mahama, Sylvanus M.A. Kuuire, and Felix Longi. 2010. *An Ethnographic Study of Northern Ghanaian Conflicts: Towards A Sustainable Peace*. Accra: Sub-Saharan Publishers.
- Awuni, Manasseh Azure. 2019. *The Fourth John: Reign, Rejection & Rebound*. Hawthorne: GF Book.
- Baynham, Simon. 1978. “Civilian Rule and the Coup d’Etat: The Case of Busia’s Ghana.” *Royal United Services Institute for Defence Studies* 123 (3): 27–32.
- . 1994. “The Gold Coast Military Forces: Origins, Composition and Structure.” *Africa Institute of South Africa Occasional Paper* No. 59: 1–20.
- Bratton, Michael, and Nicholas van de Walle. 1999. *Democratic Experiments in Africa: Regime Transitions in Comparative Perspective*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Clapham, Christopher. 1985. *Third World Politics*. London: Helm.
- . 1992. *Constitution of the Republic of Ghana*. 1992. Ministry of Justice. Allshore Co.
- Curry, Lesile, Lauren Taylor, Peggy Guey-Chi Chen, and Elizabeth Bradley. 2012. “Experiences of leadership in healthcare in Sub-Saharan Africa.” *Human Resources for Health* 10: Article 33.
- Duursma, Allard. 2022. “State Weakness, a Fragmented Patronage Based System, and Protracted Local Conflict in the Central African Republic.” *African Affairs* 121 (483): 251–74.

- Erdmann, Gero, and Ulf Engel. 2007. "Neopatrimonialism Reconsidered: Critical Review and Elaboration of an Elusive Concept." *Commonwealth & Comparative Politics* 45 (1): 95–119.
- Finer, Samuel E. 1962/1988. *The Man on Horseback: The Role of the Military in Politics*. Boulder: Westview Press.
- First, Ruth. 1970. *The Barrel of a Gun: Political Power in Africa and the Coup d'état*. London: Penguin Books.
- Ghana Statistical Service (GSS). 2014. *Ghana Living Standards Survey. Round 6 (GLSS 6), Labour Force Report*. Accra: Ghana Statistical Service.
- Glawion, Tim, and Lotje de Vries. 2018. "Ruptures revoked: why the Central African Republic's unprecedented crisis has not altered patterns of governance." *The Journal of Modern African Studies* 56 (3): 421–42.
- Gutteridge, William. 1966. "Military Elites in Ghana and Nigeria." *African Forum* 2 (1): 31–41.
- Gyampo, Ransford E., Edward Graham, and Bossman E. Asare. 2017. "Political Vigilantism and Democratic Governance in Ghana's Fourth Republic." *African Review* 44 (2): 112–35.
- Huntington, Samuel P. 1957. *The Soldier and the State: The Theory and Politics of Civil Military Relations*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press.
- Hutchful, Eboe. 1983. "The Development of the Army Officer Corps in Ghana, 1956–1966." *Journal of African Studies* 12: 163–73.
- . 1997. "Military Policy and Reform in Ghana." *The Journal of Modern African Studies* 35 (2): 251–78.
- Hyden, Goran. 2016. "Beyond the Liberal Democracy Paradigm: A Fresh Look at Power Institutions." *African Studies Review* 53 (3): 169–80.
- Israel, Adrienne M. 1992. "Ex-Servicemen at the Crossroads: Protest and Politics in PostWar Ghana." *Journal of Modern African Studies* 30 (2): 359–68.
- Janowitz, Morris. 1960. *The Professional Soldier. A Social and Political Portrait*. New York: The Free Press.
- Kemp, Kenneth W., and Charles Hudlin. 1992. "Civilian Supremacy Over the Military: Its Nature and Limits." *Armed Forces & Society* 19:7–26.
- Khisa, Moses, and Christopher Day. 2020. "Reconceptualising civil-military relations in Africa." *Civil Wars* 22 (2–3): 174–97.
- , eds. 2022. *Rethinking Civil-Military Relations in Africa: Beyond the Coup d'État*. Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner.
- Kitschelt, Herbert, and Steven I. Wilkinson. 2007. *Patrons, Clients and Policies: Patterns of Democratic Accountability and Political Competition*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Marcus, George. 1995. "Ethnography in/of the world system: the emergence of multi-sited ethnography." *Annual Review of Anthropology* 24: 95–117.
- Miscoiu, Sergiu, and Louise-Marie Kakdeu. 2021. "Authoritarian Clientelism: The case of the president's 'creatures' in Cameroon." *Acta Politica* 56: 639–57.
- Nugent, Paul. 1995. *Big Men, Small Boys and Politics in Ghana: Power, Ideology and the Burden of History: 1982–1994*. Westport, Connecticut: Praeger Publishers.
- Ocran, Albert K. 1977. *Politics of the Sword: A Personal Memoir on Military Involvement in Ghana And of Problems of Military Government*. London: Rex Collings.
- Oostrom, Marjoke, and Simbarashe Gukurume. 2022. "Ruling Party Patronage, Brokerage, and Contestations at Urban Markets in Harare." *African Affairs* 017: academic.oup.com/afraf/article/121/484/371/6612981.

- Oquaye, Mike. 2004. *Politics in Ghana 1982–1992: Rawlings, Revolution and Populist Democracy*. Accra: Tornado Publications.
- Paalo, Sebastian A. 2017. "Political Party Youth Wings and Political Violence in Sub-Saharan Africa: A Case of Ghana." *International Journal of Peace and Development Studies* 8 (1): 1–14.
- Parsons, Timothy H. 2003. *The 1964 Mutinies and the Making of Modern East Africa*. Westport, Connecticut: Praeger.
- Ravanilla, Nico, Dotan Haim, and Allen Hicken. 2022. "Brokers, Social Network, Reciprocity and Clientelism." *American Journal of Political Science* 66(4): 795–812.
- Sørensen, Birgitte R. 2011. "Entanglements of Politics and Education in Sri Lanka." In *Tryst with Democracy Political Practice in South Asia*, edited by Stig Toft Madsen, Kenneth Bo Nielsen, and Uwe Skoda, 215–37. London: Anthem Press.
- Utas, Mats. 2012. "Introduction: Bigmanity and network governance in African conflicts." In *African conflicts and informal power: Big men and networks*, edited by Mats Utas, 1–31. New York: Zed Books.
- Van de Walle, Nicholas. 2007. "Meet the new boss, same as the old boss? The evolution of political clientelism in Africa." In *Patrons, Clients and Policies: Patterns of Democratic Accountability and Political Competition*, edited by Herbert Kitschelt and Steven I. Wilkinson. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Vlavanou, Gino. 2016. "An uncertain transition: security, violence and neopatrimonialism in Central African Republic." *Revue Tiers Monde* 226 (4): 121–42.
- Wienia, Martijn. 2009. *Ominous calm. Autochthony and sovereignty in Konkomba/Nanumba violence and peace, Ghana*. Ph.D. dissertation, African Studies Centre, Leiden University.
- Welch, Claude E. 1970. "The roots and implications of military intervention." In *Soldier and State in Africa: A Comparative Analysis of Military Intervention and Political Change*, edited by Claude E. Welch, 1–61. Evanston: Northwestern University Press.
- Welsh, E. 2002. "Dealing with data: Using NVivo in the qualitative data analysis process." *Forum Qualitative Social Research* 3: 1–10.
- Woods, M., T. Paulus, D.P. Atkins, and R. Macklin. 2015. "Advancing qualitative research using qualitative data analysis software (QDAS)? Reviewing potential versus practice in published studies using ATLAS.Ti and NVivo, 1994–2013." *Social Science Computer Review* 34: 597–617.
- Wulff, Helena. 2000. "Access to a closed world: methods for a multilocal study on ballet as a career." In *Constructing the Field: Ethnographic Fieldwork in the Contemporary*, edited by Vered Amit, 147–61. London: Routledge.