

Chapter 2

East African Circuits of News and Current Affairs in Print

In 1947, African Press Ltd proposed to launch *Picha*, a fortnightly illustrated magazine in English and Swahili for African readers, to be distributed across Kenya, Uganda and Tanganyika, sold at thirty cents a copy. *Picha*'s "African, Indian and European stakeholders" envisaged a commercially successful regional publication that would appeal to literate and semi-literate readers at the same time as gaining the support of the colonial state and distributing agents, such as mission schools and bookshops.¹ It would employ "African staff" to produce regular features including agricultural, industrial, and sports sections, a women's page with cooking and childcare guidance, collectable English lessons, a section on local government to "instil in the readers a sense of their civic responsibilities", and a letters page with "a lively and controversial correspondence" including "criticism and hints from the literate African population of all three territories".²

This was not the first time that a regional publication had been proposed, but *Picha*'s ambitions were rooted in the post-1945 moment. The publication's political ambivalence, at least based on the archival material accompanying the proposal, masked what would appear in hindsight to be a number of contradictions. Controversy and criticism brought by East African editors and readers would surely be constrained by a nervous colonial state and by prescriptive ideals of "civic responsibility" and multi-racial representation. Meanwhile, *Picha* was imagined to be a commercially viable venture, relying not on government or missionary subsidies but rather on the disposable income of interested, literate East African consumers. It would be "published on good paper" using "up-to-date machines" and distributed through a regional network of agents. In Nairobi, the Chief Secretary's office applauded the project, declaring *Picha* to be a "considerable influence for good" which would "provide reading material for the African without any danger of its becoming a vehicle for seditious propaganda, as is unfortunately so often

1 UNRCA Chief's Secretary's Office, File 8037, C. H. Thornley (Nairobi) to all district commissioners 5 May 1947; Conference of East African Governors to H. S. Potter (Secretariat Entebbe) 19 May 1947, f. 1.

2 UNRCA Chief's Secretary's Office, File 8037, "Picha: aims and objectives" [no author, no date], loose document.

the case with African newspapers”.³ In Kampala, the colonial Public Relations officer was reluctant to be involved: sending news items to Nairobi consumed resources, so he suggested *Picha* employ a correspondent for Uganda and organise its distribution without government assistance.⁴

Picha never took off, but in 1947 it did not appear unfeasible. There certainly was growing demand for news and current affairs periodicals. Crucially, the imagined success story that would please all and cause no trouble would be, without justification, explicitly regional – East African. As the first part of this chapter explains, this was no surprise, given the longer history of East African print mobility in religious and colonial government publications. Having set the scene for post-1945 developments, we will then explore two publications that *did* take off in the decades that followed, analysing the material, political and intellectual underpinnings of regional circuits of print and broadcast media from the Second World War to the 1970s. Print is the focus here, but we also attend to the increasingly multi-media landscape of news and current affairs in the post-war period.

Print and broadcast media were critical building blocks of the connected East African intellectual and cultural space we explore in this book – a space co-constituted by local, national, and global media initiatives, rather than necessarily in conflict with them. As was the case with *Picha*, print media was embedded in the structures of the colonial (and later post-colonial) state and international capital, but was also a means for East African editors, columnists and letter writers to create space for reflection, provocation and comparative thinking across borders.

The first case study is *Baraza*, the originally Swahili-English and later fully Swahili-language newspaper, whose trajectory is tied to that of the journalist, politician and editor Francis Khamisi. As was the case with other institutions we explore in this book, *Baraza*’s roots lie in the tightening of colonial power in the context of the Second World War and its aftermath. Its history was inseparable too from the history of international capital, as the newspaper’s proximity to state power and its ability to mobilise advertising revenue enabled geographical reach beyond what was possible for the many African-owned newspapers which were launched in those years. This same proximity to state and economic power was reflected in its editorial line. In the 1950s this manifested itself in sharp hostility to African nationalism and to communism. While its position on African na-

3 UNRCA Chief’s Secretary’s Office, File 8037, C. H. Thornley (Nairobi) to all district commissioners 5 May 1947; Conference of East African Governors to H. S. Potter (Secretariat Entebbe) 19 May 1947, f. 1.

4 UNRCA Chief’s Secretary’s Office, File 8037, T. Parry (Public relations) to Mary Sayer (African Press Ltd.) 18 July 1947, f. 4a. Along with Mary Sayer, the other name mentioned in relation to African Press Ltd is W. G. Nicol.

tionalism was very different in the 1960s, the anti-communist framework remained.

The chapter's second case study is the *East Africa Journal [EAJ]*, the pre-eminent current affairs journal of the 1960s, edited for much of its existence by the historian Bethwell Ogot. Launched in April 1964, initially under the editorship of Odinge Odera before Ogot took over in 1965, it was part of a stable of prominent cultural activities hosted by the East African Institute of Social and Cultural Affairs. The *EAJ* was intended, in the words of Ogot, "to fill the wide gap between highly academic journals and popular news-style magazines."⁵ Unapologetic in its focus on political, academic and business elites across the region, the *EAJ* deliberately set out to shape the contours of key political debates across the region in the years immediately following the independence of the respective territories. Although it framed itself as a manifestation of the decolonization of East Africa's intellectual and cultural spaces, like *Transition* discussed in the previous chapter, the *EAJ* relied on funders explicitly engaged in the cultural Cold War across the decolonizing world.

Though very different types of publication, what both these case studies have in common is their periodicity and their use of print. In different ways, they hosted a curated sphere of public deliberation and exchange across regional borders. Through these case studies, we can see the ways in which print media – in dialogue with broadcasting – served as a means of building and sustaining transnational connections across the region, particularly in English and Swahili, though through other languages too. Importantly, these cases also suggest when and why East African circuits of news and current affairs constituted through print media fractured.

The Regional Ecology of Print Before 1939

Writing in the 1990s, Ali Mazrui and Alamin Mazrui remarked that

one reason for the popularity of East African newspapers across their own boundaries concerned the limits of censorship within each of the partner states. There were occasions when the most candid news about Kenya could only be read in a Tanzanian newspaper. And there were certainly occasions when the most candid news about Uganda could be obtained in Kenyan newspapers.⁶

⁵ Bethwell Ogot, "East African Institute of Social and Cultural Affairs, Nairobi," *Journal of Modern African Studies* 3, no. 2 (1965): 285.

⁶ Ali Al'Amin Mazrui and Alamin Mazrui, *Swahili State and Society: The Political Economy of an African Language* (Nairobi, London: East African Educational Publishers; James Currey, 1995), 96.

While Mazrui and Mazrui had the recent past in mind, there was a deep history to this border crossing.

In contrast to West Africa, where there was a vibrant independent press from the nineteenth century, in East Africa newspaper publishing in the late nineteenth and first half of the twentieth century was tightly controlled by colonial states. Newspaper publishing was also, in contrast to West Africa where there was a powerful Anglophone and Francophone press, highly segmented along linguistic lines. While Swahili served to some extent as a regional lingua franca in East Africa, in ways we will discuss further below, Kikuyu, Luganda and other African languages were equally important as languages of print. Yet this did not prevent newspapers from crossing the borders of colonial territories, as well as crossing imagined borders within those territories.

The early 1920s saw the emergence of a vibrant anti-colonial press in Kenya and Uganda. But while newspapers were animated by very local debates, they also crossed borders. The newspaper *Sekanyolya* was published in Luganda and intervened very directly in debates specific to the kingdom of Buganda, but its place of publication was Nairobi in neighbouring Kenya.⁷ Government newspapers, created by colonial states with didactic intent, crossed borders too. *Mambo Leo*, published by the Education Department in colonial Tanganyika from 1923, was widely read beyond Tanganyika's borders.⁸ In the early 1930s, colonial officials from across East Africa discussed the idea of having one Swahili-language newspaper for all of East Africa. This was strongly resisted by officials in Tanganyika, who emphasised that local news was essential to the success of *Mambo Leo*, which nevertheless attracted readers beyond Tanganyika, particularly in Kenya.⁹

Text also crossed borders through reprinting. In 1925, for example, the Kenyan government periodical *Habari*, published in Swahili and English, reprinted a speech by the Ghanaian pan-Africanist James Aggrey which had previously been

7 James Scotton, "Growth of the Vernacular Press in Colonial East Africa: Patterns of Government Control" (PhD thesis, University of Wisconsin, 1971), 101; Adam Ewing, *Age of Garvey: How a Jamaican Activist Created a Mass Movement and Changed Global Black Politics* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2014), 100.

8 Emma Hunter, "Print Media, the Swahili Language and Textual Cultures in Early Twentieth-Century Tanzania," in *Indigenous Textual Cultures*, ed. Tony Ballantyne, Angela Wanhalla and Lachlan Paterson (Durham NC: Duke University Press, 2020).

9 Emma Hunter, "Colonial Government Periodicals in 1920s East Africa: *Mambo Leo* and *Habari*," in *The Edinburgh Companion to British Colonial Periodicals*, eds. David Finkelstein, David Johnson and Caroline Davis (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2024), 324.

published in *Mambo Leo*.¹⁰ After ceasing publication in the mid-1920s, *Habari* was relaunched with a clear mission to develop Swahili-language publishing, and at that point the reprinting of material from *Mambo Leo* increased. For example, the book *Uraia*, which had initially been serialised in *Mambo Leo* and then published as a book to be used in Tanganyikan schools, was reviewed in *Habari* in 1928 and then a series of extracts were published in *Habari* in the following issues.¹¹

The spatial dynamics of regional media were also a function of religious mobility. From the 1930s, Islamic reformers like al-Amin al-Mazrui were publishing booklets and periodicals in the Swahili language to reach East African Muslims across the region, connecting them with currents of reformist thought in the Middle East and elsewhere.¹² The Protestant Swahili-language periodical *Ufalme wa Mungu* explicitly addressed a Swahili-reading Christian public across Tanganyika, Kenya and beyond. Its first issue stated its aim as being to: “awake the love of the Kingdom of God everywhere the Swahili language is used, on the coast and island and inland in all parts of Tanganyika Territory and Kenya Colony, to the country of Uganda, and Rwanda and Burundi, and Nyasa and Congo and elsewhere.”¹³ And it stressed that contributions in all versions of Swahili were welcome, as long as they could be understood in inland areas. The distinction drawn between “coast” and “inland” mapped on to imagined internal borders, across which print could connect. The first issue of the Catholic newspaper *Rafiki Yangu* in 1910 proclaimed that “[t]o people of the interior” the newspaper will “send news of the coast, to people of the coast news of the interior”.¹⁴

Editors moved across the region too, bringing new ideas and approaches. The editor of *Kwetu*, the first independent newspaper in 1930s Tanganyika which was able to survive more than a couple of issues, was Erica Fiah from neighbouring Uganda. The technology of print contributed to the movement of ideas, and comparisons with the situation in neighbouring territories appeared frequently, alongside comparisons with places further afield. From the 1940s, a new generation of writers, editors and broadcasters situated themselves in relation to that older history, but also departed in new directions.

10 “Hotuba ya Dr Aggrey (Speech by Dr Aggrey),” *Mambo Leo*, February 1925, 7; “Hotuba ya Dr Aggrey (from Mambo Leo),” *Habari*, May 1925, 21–22.

11 Hunter, “Colonial Government Periodicals.”

12 Kai Kresse, *Swahili Muslim Publics and Postcolonial Experience* (Bloomington IN: Indiana University Press, 2018), 62.

13 Editorial, *Ufalme wa Mungu*, March 1927, 1.

14 “Kwa Wasomaji,” *Rafiki Yangu*, January 1910, no page but 1.

Baraza, the Second World War and The Late Colonial Information Struggle

Baraza was a child of wartime. Across East Africa during the Second World War, a heightened demand for information was accompanied by efforts to control it by British colonial governments, both in print and on the airwaves. In his autobiography, the Kenyan political leader and intellectual Hyder Kindy recalled that when the war broke out “everyone was eager to get news – hot news” and as he was “one of a very few people in Mombasa to own a radio set”, listeners came from far and wide to hear “the Arabic announcer, Yunus El-Bahry, from Berlin” detailing British losses in the war.¹⁵

The demands of wartime recruitment and propaganda drove a range of colonial newspaper and broadcasting initiatives.¹⁶ In 1939, a new Ministry of Information was established in London, with a remit that included Britain’s overseas empire.¹⁷ Local Information Offices were established across East Africa. The Zanzibar government Information Office, established on 3 September 1939, oversaw three newspapers and a rudimentary broadcasting service, consisting of a van equipped with a public address system providing war news to listeners in the town and in the countryside.¹⁸ The Information Office in Tanganyika established *Habari za Vita* or “News of the War”, which it distributed free of charge, as a complement to the long-running Swahili-language monthly *Mambo Leo*.¹⁹ Twice-weekly news broadcasts from Nairobi in Swahili began in 1939 and Kenya’s colonial Information Office opened soon after, briefly publishing *Kenya Kwetu*.²⁰

15 Hyder Kindy, *Life and Politics in Mombasa* (Nairobi: East African Publishing House, 1972), 116; James R. Brennan, “A History of *Sauti Ya Mvita* (Voice of Mombasa): Radio, Public Culture, and Islam in Coastal Kenya, 1947–66,” in *New Media and Religious Transformations in Africa*, eds. Rosalind I. J. Hackett and Benjamin F. Soares (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2015), 19–38.

16 Including the establishment of regular broadcasting services in Kenya and Northern Rhodesia, for example, but not in Tanganyika or Uganda. Bodil Folke Frederiksen, “Censorship as Negotiation: The State and Non-European Newspapers in Kenya, 1930–54,” *Itinerario* 44, no. 2 (2020): 391–411.

17 Bodil Folke Frederiksen discusses the tensions between MoI and CO in Frederiksen, “Censorship as Negotiation,” 398.

18 Lawrence Ezekiel Yona Mbogoni, “Censoring the Press in Colonial Zanzibar: An Account of the Seditious Case against Al-Falaq,” in *In Search of a Nation: Histories of Authority & Dissidence in Tanzania*, eds. Gregory Maddox and James Leonard Giblin (Athens OH: Ohio University Press, 2005), 200.

19 Martin Sturmer, *Media History*, 59.

20 Kabarole District Archives (hereafter KDA), Mountains of the Moon University, box 279 file 4, Max Nurock (Nairobi) to Provincial Commissioners in Uganda, 11 September 1939.

While there was some effort to act on a regional basis, this proved challenging in practice. Cable and Wireless Ltd, which financed broadcasting in Kenya, sought to extend their service to Uganda and Tanganyika in 1941 by moving an Italian installation from Mogadishu to Nairobi, which would allow for the use of a wave-length that could reach the whole East African region.²¹ But the Ugandan Government, despite recognising the cost saving that would come from regional broadcasting, rejected the idea, not only for fear of handing control to a commercial company (and the Kenyan government), but on the grounds that “no broadcast in a local language would be translated as satisfactorily in Nairobi as in Kampala”.²²

This was the context in which *Baraza* was established, but *Baraza* differed from other wartime newspapers such as *Habari za Vita* in Tanganyika in being published not by the Kenyan government but by the *East African Standard*, the English-language commercial paper representing settler business interests. *Baraza* was supported, from 1939 to 1942, by a government commitment to subsidise losses up to £500.²³ For the Kenya colonial government, the aim of supporting *Baraza* was to bring wartime news and propaganda to a Swahili reading public, both at home and abroad. For Managing Director Claude Anderson and the directors of the *East African Standard*, who had previously considered publishing a newspaper aimed at African readers but were concerned that it might not be financially viable, the government subsidy made the venture possible.²⁴

Baraza was also sent to troops stationed abroad. Recruits from across East Africa were often stationed together and Swahili was the common language of the army. *Baraza* was shipped to troops overseas with hopes that carefully selected content would “improve morale.”²⁵ It sat alongside wider efforts to bring news from home to troops overseas. In July 1943, more than forty people from districts across Kenya, Uganda and Tanganyika travelled to Nairobi to record broadcasts to be aired to East African troops stationed in Madagascar, with costs

21 UNRCA Chief Secretary's Office file 11507, Information officer (Kampala) to Chief Secretary, 11 June 1941; “Broadcasting to Africans,” undated anon. memo, sent from Information officer (Kampala) to Chief Secretary, 8 April 1941; handwritten note (signature illegible), 22 April 1941.

22 UNRCA Chief Secretary's Office file 11507, Information officer (Kampala) to Chief Secretary, 12 July 1941; “Broadcasting to Africans,” undated anon. memo; Max Nurock to Chief Secretary, 12 August 1941.

23 KNA BWI/1/93, f. 113 Claude Anderson to Chief Native Commissioner, 1 May 1942; Musandu, *Pressing Interests*, 245; Frederiksen, “Censorship as Negotiation”.

24 Musandu, *Pressing Interests*, 240.

25 KNA BWI/1/93, f. 148, Letter from Director of Intelligence and Security to Chief Secretary, “*Baraza*,” 16 February 1943 for expressions of concern that a report published in *Baraza* would be damaging to morale.

largely borne by the Army. The would-be broadcasters were selected to represent the most widely spoken vernacular languages among troops and to provide “first-hand information about the villages of the soldiers” in what the East African Command described as a “great experiment in vernacular broadcasting”, involving an unprecedented level of regional coordination.²⁶

But if the immediate context for the foundation of *Baraza* lay in the specific concerns prompted by global war, it also had deeper roots in Kenya’s twentieth-century history. *Baraza* brought together two individuals, Oscar Watkins and Francis Khamisi. In an issue from 1941, Lt. Col. O.F. Watkins was described as “Supervising Editor” and Francis J. Khamisi as “African Editor”.²⁷ In practice, as Francis Khamisi later recalled, he was the person who carried out the day-to-day work of editing the newspaper.²⁸

In the early 1920s Oscar Watkins had been the editor of *Habari*, the small bilingual newspaper which, as we saw earlier, never managed to get the support it needed from the Kenya government to survive and thrive, in sharp contrast with the Tanganyika government’s periodical *Mambo Leo*. *Habari* ceased publication in 1926, and although it resumed publication a year later, under the auspices of the Education Department rather than the Native Affairs Department, it ceased publication for good in 1931. Yet in important ways, *Baraza* took up and developed what *Habari* had begun.

In contrast, Francis Khamisi’s path to *Baraza* had taken him from the coast to Nairobi. Khamisi was born in Rabai in 1913, to parents who had been enslaved in what was then Nyasaland, modern day Malawi.²⁹ In Nairobi he initially worked for the Meteorological Service, but at the start of the Second World War he joined the Kenya Information Service as its first African broadcaster, before moving to *Baraza*.³⁰ He brought to *Baraza* another member of the Freretown and Rabai Christian community, Tom Mbotela who became, as the historian Joseph E. Harris

26 This served as a partial response to complaints such as that of Sylvester K. N. K. Zanzahya who in 1942 wrote to the colonial Information Officer in Kampala asking why he never read any news of his hometown Toro (western Uganda) in *Baraza* and other distributed periodicals. He also referred to *Matalisi* and *Ebifu*. KDA, box 279 file 4, Information Office Kampala to G. M. Fletcher (including extract of Zanzahya’s letter), 26 March 1942 and 24 March 1942. On the initiative to broadcast to troops in Madagascar, see UNRCA Chief Secretary’s Office file 11507, East African Command to Information officer (Nairobi), 4 August 1943; Williams to Chief Secretary, 10 August 1943; Archer (East African command) to Ward (Kampala), 15 July 1943.

27 KNA, BWI/1/93, f. 40A *Baraza*, 13 September 1941, 1.

28 “Baraza: The End of an Era in Kenya,” *The Weekly Review*, 11 January 1980.

29 Joseph E. Harris, *Repatriates and Refugees in a Colonial Society: The Case of Kenya* (Washington D.C.: Howard University Press, 1987), 113.

30 Harris, *Repatriates and Refugees*, 103.

explained, “an administrative officer of the paper, responsible for the assignment of staff, payments, securing advertisements, and handling general questions relating to the publication of *Baraza*.”³¹

As Francis Khamisi’s son Joe later recalled, Francis Khamisi’s background as a descendant of freed slaves informed his political and intellectual life. A commitment to East and Central African pan-Africanism was a consistent theme across his interlinked careers in politics and journalism. But Khamisi’s background also contributed to what Justin Willis and George Gona have described as his “outsider” status in mid-twentieth-century Kenya.³²

Baraza was shaped in its early years by the context of the colonial settler state at war and the resulting lack of competition from other newspapers. As Francis Khamisi recalled in a 1977 article looking back at the establishment of *Baraza* in 1939, “[w]hen the war was still on, most of the vernacular newspapers were banned, together with all political parties.” The government subsidy meant that it could be sold for 10 cents a copy, and it was sold at this price both in Kenya and in northern Tanganyika.³³ Wartime implied constraints which were not only political, but material too. In the summer of 1942, *Baraza* had to be reduced in size in response to a worldwide shortage of paper that UNESCO would later describe as a “world newsprint famine”.³⁴

Despite this, Watkins and Khamisi, supported by Claude Anderson in his capacity as Managing Director, challenged the very limited focus on wartime propaganda which the colonial government had envisaged for the newspaper and insisted on publishing complaints in the letters pages about all manner of aspects of

31 Harris, *Repatriates and Refugees*, 124. The solidarities and networks of this community provided practical support too. For example, the newspaper *Mwalimu* which Khamisi launched after leaving *Baraza* was initially printed by the printing firm owned by James Jones, son of the Rev. William Jones. Joe Khamisi, *Dash Before Dusk: A Slave Descendant’s Journey in Freedom* (Kenway Publications: Nairobi, 2014), 247. On Rev. William Jones and the community of liberated Africans in coastal Kenya, see Samuel Nyanchoga and Michelle Liebst, “Rethinking Liberated Africans as Abolitionists: Bombay Africans, Resistance, and Ritual Integration in Coastal Kenya, 1846–1900,” *Esclavages et Post-Esclavages/Slaveries and Post-Slaveries* 10 (2024).

32 Cited in Khamisi, *Dash before Dusk*, 249; George Gona and Justin Willis, “Pwani C Kenya? Memory, Documents and Secessionist Politics in Coastal Kenya,” *African Affairs* 112, no. 446 (2013): 56; See also Jeremy Prestholdt, “Politics of the Soil: Separatism, Autochthony, and Decolonization at the Kenyan Coast,” *The Journal of African History* 55, no. 2 (2014): 259.

33 Musandu, *Pressing Interests*, 241.

34 KNA, BWI/1/93, f. 130, “Minute: ‘Baraza,’” 5 November 1942; *UNESCO Courier*, Vol V No I (1952), front cover and 2.

life, in ways similar to other newspapers of the time across the region.³⁵ As Khamisi continued in the same 1977 article, while “it could be argued that, at that stage of the development, the role of “Baraza” was more or less to act as an agent of Government policy,” nevertheless “the notion of a Press, free to report and criticize the Government, did prevail and was allowed to do so by the colonials.”³⁶

The publication of such letters was, as the historian Phoebe Musandu has emphasized, important for the commercial interests of the *Standard*, but it was an ongoing source of frustration for the colonial government which, as in other British colonies, sought to balance a rhetoric of advocating the normative ideal of a “free press” with tight control of the press in practice.³⁷ In a letter to Watkins in November 1941, the Kenya colonial government’s Chief Native Commissioner Ethelbert Bernard Hosking wrote that “[w]hile there is no Press Censorship in this Colony and it is in no way wished to exercise a rigid censorship over letters or other matters before publication in ‘Baraza’, thereby stultifying its value as a free and open forum, it is considered that the uncontrolled publication of complaints and allegations, many of them ill-founded and from irresponsible sources, does more harm than good.”³⁸ The solution which Hosking proposed was that Watkins should “refer to the District Commissioner concerned any letter of a doubtful nature prior to publication.”³⁹

But tensions continued, and at a meeting in April 1942 between the *Standard*’s Managing Director Claude Anderson and the Chief Native Commissioner, the latter expressed his views in bold terms, stating, the minutes recorded, that “the government paid this £500 and received nothing in return and possessed no real control whatsoever over Baraza”.⁴⁰ The government confirmed its wish to end its

35 Elizabeth Watkins, *Oscar from Africa: The Biography of Oscar Ferris Watkins, 1877–1943* (London: Radcliffe, 1995), 231.

36 Francis Khamisi, “The Birth of Baraza,” *The Standard*, 6 April 1977, XII.

37 Musandu, *Pressing Interests*, 243. On the wider British imperial context see Stephanie Newell, *The Power to Name: A History of Anonymity in Colonial West Africa* (Athens OH: Ohio University Press, 2013).

38 KNA BWI/1/91 f. 105, E.B. Hosking to Colonel O. F. Watkins, 18 November 1941.

39 KNA BWI/1/91 f. 105, E.B. Hosking to Colonel O.F. Watkins, 18 November 1941. This seems to have had the desired effect. Consulted again in January 1942, the Provincial Commissioner for Nyanza Province Sidney Herbert Fazan wrote that he considered the Editor was making an effort to “prevent the publication of untrue or unfair statements and criticisms”, and his main criticism now was that “it causes the waste of a great deal of time spent in investigating all sorts of statements by all sorts of persons, which we cannot easily spare from work more essential to the War effort.” KNA BWI/1/91, f. 121, Provincial Commissioner, Nyanza to Hon. Chief Secretary, 19 February 1942.

40 KNA BWI 1/93, f. 111, “Record of a Meeting held at the Secretariat on the 9th of April. Present: Hon. C.N.C., D.F.S., Kenya Information Officer, Captain Anderson (E.A. Standard).”

financial relationship with the newspaper, but asked for a “gentlemen’s agreement . . . whereby the person occupying the post of editor of *Baraza* should be subject to the approval of Government.”⁴¹ While the Directors of the East African Standard agreed to take over the financial responsibility for *Baraza*, they were not able to accept the proposal that the government should approve the appointment of future editors, though they did agree that “careful consideration will be given to Government representations regarding the person occupying the post of Editor.”⁴²

Oscar Watkins died on 27 December 1943. Khamisi resigned not long afterwards when the *Standard* imposed a new white editor-in-chief.⁴³ As Joe Khamisi recalled in his memoir, “[t]he year I was born, my father resigned from *Baraza* and joined Eliud W. Mathu and others to form the Kenya African Study Union (KASU), a quasi-political group aimed at sensitising Africans on their freedom rights.”⁴⁴ Khamisi also turned to newspaper publishing in his own right, setting up the newspaper *Mwalimu* (Teacher). In doing so, Khamisi was taking advantage of the easier environment for independent newspapers in Kenya that came with the end of the Second World War. The historian Bodil Folke Frederiksen has described the years from 1945 to 1952 as the “Golden Age of the independent non-European press” in Kenya, and *Mwalimu* was one of a number of new newspapers launched in those years – another was Henry Muoria’s Kikuyu and English-language *Mumenyereri* (The Guardian).⁴⁵

But the preoccupation of colonial states with newspapers and the control of information did not end. Newspapers and print media more broadly stood at the nexus of three post-war concerns of colonial governments, which were, broadly, a concern with social and economic “development”, the drive to contain anti-colonial nationalism, and anti-communism. This was, as we discussed in the Introduction, the time of what has been described as the “second colonial occupation”, when colonial governments simultaneously sought to re-establish control and to

41 KNA BWI 1/93, f. 111, “Record of a Meeting held at the Secretariat on the 9th of April. Present: Hon. C.N.C., D.F.S., Kenya Information Officer, Captain Anderson (E.A. Standard).”

42 KNA BWI/1/93, f. 113, Claude Anderson to Chief Native Commissioner, 1 May 1942.

43 Watkins, *Oscar*, 238; “Baraza: The End of an Era in Kenya,” *The Weekly Review*, 11 January 1980.

44 Khamisi, *Dash before Dusk*, 29. Bildad Kaggia claimed KASU was “under the thumb” of the colonial state, Bildad Kaggia, *Roots of Freedom, 1921–1963: The Autobiography of Bildad Kaggia* (Nairobi: East African Publishing House, 1975), 54.

45 Frederiksen, “Censorship,” 393; On the postwar boom in press ventures in Kenya more generally see Wangari Muoria-Sal et al., *Writing for Kenya: The Life and Works of Henry Muoria* (Leiden: Brill, 2009); Musandu, *Pressing Interests*, 201–226; Fay Gadsden, “The African Press in Kenya, 1945–1952,” *The Journal of African History* 21, no. 4 (October 1980): 515–35; Durrani, *Never be Silent*, 70–74.

institute new and intrusive policies aimed at colonial “development”, within a framework of a weakened imperial system which nevertheless had ambitious reformist goals.⁴⁶ There were often tensions, as Caroline Ritter has recently emphasised, between the aims of the Colonial Office in London which “stressed long-term economic and political development” and colonial governments in Africa which “prioritized programs that would pacify resistance and make it easier to maintain control.”⁴⁷ In this context, newspapers and print media more broadly constituted a challenge to colonial states, and a potential opportunity.

These opportunities and challenges were often discussed in a regional framework. In 1945 Elspeth Huxley was commissioned to carry out a study of needs in relation to popular literature and came to the view that newspapers and periodicals would play a critical role in post-war East Africa. This role, Huxley argued, lay both in shaping political culture and spreading what she termed “welfare propaganda”. At that point, Huxley estimated the newspaper-buying public across Tanganyika, Kenya and Uganda to be approximately 121,000 of a total population of around 13 million. Estimating an average readership of around ten people per copy, she concluded that newspapers were reaching around one million people, and thus that the “news and views expressed in these papers percolate all through the territories and the influence of newspapers in future will certainly grow.”

Huxley’s view was that the existence of government-funded or supported newspapers, amongst which she included *Baraza* in Kenya, alongside *Matalisi* in Uganda and *Mambo Leo* in Tanganyika, had meant that East Africa had avoided what she saw as an “irresponsible” press. But she went on to say that she saw signs that East Africa’s press “may develop along the same lines as the West African press, and that its political influence, undoubtedly growing, is proving stronger than that of the unofficial European newspapers”. Censorship or suppression was not, for Huxley, the full answer to this challenge; rather it should be tackled “by seeing that the truth – objectively, simply and forcibly stated – is made available to the people on the widest possible scale.”⁴⁸

Colonial governments understood the growth of radio and the press simultaneously within a broad framework of post-war development as a necessary part of “modernization”, and as a threat which should be countered by legal means. Both elements were underpinned by a growing concern with global communism which led colonial officials to prioritise the development of media but also to

⁴⁶ Low and Lonsdale, “Introduction: Towards the New Order,” 1–6.

⁴⁷ Ritter, *Imperial Encore*, 82.

⁴⁸ Tanzania National Archives [hereafter TNA] 32525, Elspeth Huxley, *Literature for Africans*.

limit their potential as a vector of communist ideas, and took shape in a context in which – from Beijing to Cairo to Washington – new international allies and sources of funds were available to East African reformers. While colonial states had long sought to control the circulation of print from overseas, these efforts were increased amidst the political tensions of the years after 1945 and the development of the Cold War. Publications from the People's Republic of China, as well as the publications of youth organisations linked to the communist world such as the World Federation of Democratic Youth, were banned in 1950s Uganda.⁴⁹ The presence of communist literature in their offices formed a key part of the 1954 sedition trial against the Arab Association newspaper *Al Falaq* in Zanzibar.⁵⁰

Colonial states therefore combined repressive press laws targeting the independent press with a new attention to government publications and broadcasting, with the further development of public relations departments and information departments, new radio stations, daily territory-wide newspapers and less frequent local newspapers. The state increased its printing output significantly: the Ugandan Government Printers, for example, doubled the number of pages printed between 1950 and 1954, from around 22 million to 45 million pages annually.⁵¹ Some of these pages ended up in the four local government newspapers published, respectively, in Luganda, Runyoro/Runyankore (alternating), Lwo and Ateso, with total circulation of around 100 000 by 1955.⁵² A newly constructed Broadcasting House in Kampala was headquarters of the Information Department as well as the Uganda Broadcasting Service, indicative of visions for a coherent multimedia information infrastructure. New information policies – and new media – sometimes met with resistance: in 1955, a group of Ugandan newspaper editors successfully demanded that the practice of reading news from the papers on state radio was discontinued because it was “threatening newspaper reading”.⁵³

In Kenya, the end of the formal relationship between the government and *Baraza* in 1942 meant that the former depended instead on the Kenya Information Office news-sheet *Pamoja* (Together). A new Advisory Committee on African Publicity and Information began meeting in 1946. In a sign of changing times, it included among its membership Francis Khamisi, then General Secretary of the Kenya African Union or KAU, and the journalist and editor of *Mumenyereri*,

49 Spencer Mawby, *The End of Empire in Uganda: Decolonization and Institutional Conflict, 1945–79* (London: Bloomsbury, 2020), 130.

50 Mbogoni, “Censoring the press,” 205.

51 Uganda Protectorate, *Annual Report of the Printing Department* (1954), 8.

52 Uganda Protectorate, Department of Information, *Annual Report* (1954), 6.

53 Uganda Protectorate, Department of Information, *Annual Report* (1955), 2.

Henry Muoria.⁵⁴ Charles Granston Richards, who at that time was running the Church Missionary Society (CMS) Bookshop in Nairobi but would go on to become Director of the East African Literature Bureau, was another member of the Committee.⁵⁵ One question tackled by the Advisory Committee was whether *Pamoja* should be expanded, amid material constraints and disagreements as to how best to develop government newspaper publishing within Kenya. It was only with the declaration of Emergency in October 1952 and the closing down of much of Kenya's vibrant African press that *Pamoja* was expanded and substantial sums were invested in government information and propaganda.⁵⁶ In 1955, according to Shiraz Durrani, the Kenyan "colonial Department of Information distributed about seventeen million copies of over four hundred publications."⁵⁷ Government district newspapers attacked Mau Mau and sought to instil loyalty to the colonial Government.⁵⁸ In Tanganyika there were so-called "district newspapers" too, produced by local government district offices: in 1953, thirty-two periodicals produced in different parts of the territory were in circulation, most in Swahili, with a combined circulation which almost equalled that of the national periodical *Mambo Leo*.⁵⁹

While officials in London envisaged a network of regional level Information Offices to complement those at territorial level, the better to coordinate anti-communist activity across East and Central Africa, a regional approach consistently proved challenging to adopt in practice.⁶⁰ A 1955 meeting of Information Officers from across the East Africa region led to a series of resolutions regarding activities that could best be done at a regional level, for example the creation of an East African newsreel and coordinated action on censorship. There was some exchange in this vein following the meeting: for example, a letter from the Director of Information in Nairobi to his counterpart in Kampala sharing their "confidential guide" to the press and requesting "some of your factsheets and the confi-

54 Joanna Lewis, *Empire State-building: War and Welfare in Kenya, 1925–52* (Oxford: James Currey, 2000), 257.

55 Anthony Olden, "Obituary – Charles Granston Richards, OBE (1908–2001)," *African Research and Documentation*, 86 (2001): 45–46. We discuss the East African Literature Bureau in Chapter six.

56 On Kenyan approaches to government newspaper publishing between 1945 and 1952, see Musandu, *Pressing Interests*, 245–252 and KNA CS 2/8/122.

57 Durrani, *Never be Silent*, 126. Government spending on publishing newspapers had also increased dramatically, from £7000 in 1947 to £33,150 in 1952. Durrani, *Never be Silent*, 126.

58 Durrani, *Never be Silent*, 126–129.

59 *Annual Report of the Public Relations Department* (1953). For more detail on district newspapers in Tanganyika see Hunter, "Komkya," 290–294.

60 UKNA CO 875/23/3, f. 92, K.W. Blackbourne to Watkins-Pitchford, 26 February 1948.

dential guide to your Press” in return. In practice, however, each territory had its own approach, and few of these ideas survived the return of Information Officers to their respective territories.⁶¹

In this environment, censorship and sedition laws coupled with the challenges of mobilising capital made it difficult for editors to establish and sustain newspapers. The Ugandan intellectual, politician and newspaper editor Eridadi (E.M.K.) Mulira recalled that when he left his job at the East African Institute of Social Research at Makerere in 1952 and decided to set up the newspaper *Uganda Empya* (*New Uganda*) he was confronted with the fact that “journalism required a lot of capital, and I had none of it”.⁶² For Mulira, starting a newspaper entailed taking out a bank loan of 10,000 shs. Nor was there easy access to the infrastructure of printing. He struggled to find a printer, finding that “all the printing presses in those days were so ill-equipped that none of them was able to undertake an extra job of that kind”. At the same time, “the fear of the law of libel which was merciless” meant that “the European and Asian firms could not trust an African nationalist editing a paper without running foul with Government.” Distribution posed further challenges, and over time he found himself “steadily going into debt”.⁶³

This echoed some of the challenges Francis Khamisi had faced when he established his own newspaper *Mwalimu* after leaving *Baraza*. The letterhead at the top of the new stationery which Khamisi used to correspond with colonial officials declared *Mwalimu* to be a “monthly African newspaper that is exclusively African”.⁶⁴ His son Joe Khamisi recalled in his memoir that its goal was to “champion African interests”.⁶⁵ But without the advertising revenue which *Baraza* was

61 KNA AHC 8/15, Letter from Director of Information, Nairobi to Director of Information, Kampala, 14 April 1955, no folio. Tanganyika’s Public Relations Officer, G.K. Whitlamsmith, had encouraged the idea of meeting but on returning to Dar es Salaam expressed a general reluctance to undertake activities at regional level. UKNA CO 1027/53, f. 14, Letter from G.K. Whitlamsmith, Public Relations Officer, Dar es Salaam to S. H. Evans, Information Department, Colonial Office, 6 May 1955.

62 From Mulira’s autobiography, in Cambridge University, Centre of African Studies, Mulira papers, EMK Gen 1/1: 211. Mulira studied at King’s College Budu and then at Makerere between 1930 and 1933. From 1946–1947 he was Editor of *Ebifu mu Uganda*. Reeves, “East African Intellectual Community,” 742.

63 EMK Gen 1/1, Mulira, “Autobiography,” 221.

64 KNA BY 26/5, f. 111, Francis J. Khamisi, Editor, “Mwalimu” to Honorary Director of Medical Services, Nairobi, 7 May 1945.

65 Khamisi, *Dash before Dusk*, 30.

able to attract, it was impossible to create a newspaper on a similar scale and *Mwalimu* lasted only two years.⁶⁶

Across 1950s East Africa, a diverse range of institutions and individuals – Asian, European and African – launched small-scale newsheets and periodicals, many of which had short lives. While this pattern was repeated across the region, it was often episodes in particular localities that prompted the greatest demand for news: in Buganda, for example, the exile of the ruling Kabaka in 1953 prompted the growth of the recently founded Luganda weekly *Eyogera*, making it one of few commercially viable African-managed press ventures in East Africa at the time.⁶⁷ As this example makes clear, there was strong demand for local news. When it was suggested that the Uganda government Gujarati paper *Samachar* was redundant given the circulation of Kenyan equivalents, objections were raised about the Kenyan papers being more expensive and lacking Ugandan news, and a survey of readers showed that *Samachar* was still valued, justifying its continuation.⁶⁸

The opening up of space for party politics in Kenya in the later 1950s saw the creation of new newspapers linked to those parties. In 1955 Francis Khamisi was one of the founders of the Mombasa African Democratic Union (MADU) and like other political leaders he supported his political activities through the party's newspaper *Sauti ya MADU*. His son Joe recalled being drafted in to sell the newspaper as a teenager, selling "several hundred copies of the six-page paper within a matter of hours".⁶⁹ *Sauti ya MADU*'s primary audience was the coastal electorate, but in its advocacy of African rights it espoused a regional pan-Africanism. Khamisi was, in the late 1950s, actively engaged in East African affairs, as a member of the East African Assembly from 1957, and as founding Chairman of the Pan-African Freedom Movement for East and Central Africa (PAFMECA). Elected as Chair at PAFMECA's founding meeting in Mwanza in September 1958, Khamisi welcomed what he described as the "co-ordination of the East and Central African countries in throwing out the imperial yokes".⁷⁰ Many of those present had al-

66 "Baraza: The End of an Era in Kenya," *The Weekly Review*, 11 January 1980; Durrani, *Never be Silent*, 58.

67 Henry Lubega, "Uganda: A Look Back At the 119-Year Journey of Uganda's Newspapers," *The Monitor*, 20 May 2019, accessed 16 January 2023, <https://allafrica.com/stories/201905200157.html>.

68 UNRCA, CSO 8392, Public Relations Officer to Chief Secretary, 14 February 1950. 124 of 150 readers who were sent a questionnaire returned it requesting that the publication continue.

69 Khamisi, *Dash before Dusk*, 47.

70 Archives of the Chama cha Mapinduzi, Dodoma [Hereafter CCM], Box 123 File PAFMECA DP/P/34, 1 "Minutes of the Pan-African Conference". On PAFMECA see Milford, *African Activists*, 125–33; Vaughan, "The politics of regionalism."

ready met as students at Makerere, but PAFMECA was the most successful regional meeting of political actors to date. Readers of *Sauti ya MADU* could follow news of PAFMECA's missions to Zanzibar and Uganda, as members sought to unite various nationalist parties.⁷¹ The newspaper also included a great deal of coverage of news from Tanganyika and commentary addressed specifically to Tanganyikans resident in Mombasa. In contrast, *Sauti ya MADU*'s anti-communism and anti-Arab positioning was manifested in criticism of links between Zanzibari politicians and Egypt for, among other things, bringing communism into East Africa.⁷²

News items were read across political and linguistic divides as well as territorial ones. When Eridadi Mulira wrote an article for the Luganda Herald-owned weekly *Matalisi* on citizenship for Asians and Europeans after Ugandan independence, the piece "caused a stir" among settler communities in Kenya and prompted discussion in *Comment*, the Nairobi-published English-Afrikaans organ of the settler Federal Independence Party.⁷³ Editors of commercial newspapers also had regional trajectories. In 1953, after some years of editing *The Citizen* in Nairobi, Saifu Patwa made plans to launch a daily English-language newspaper in Uganda, which would be edited by a former Zanzibar schoolteacher who had experience working on one of Pakistan's leading newspapers, *Dawn*.⁷⁴ The administration in Entebbe welcomed the move, based on the recommendation of a colonial Press Officer in Kenya who claimed that Patwa had "introduced a bright form of journalism to Kenya" and had "no particular axe to grind".⁷⁵ Patwa would bring with him a flat printing press from Nairobi. There was less enthusiasm in Entebbe for a proposed Gujarati-language newspaper, *Nootan Africa*, to be run by Bhupat Mehta. "Morally, he is said to have a poor reputation" but posed no problem from "the security angle", the Commissioner of Police concluded.⁷⁶ Kampala-born Mehta had also begun his journalism career in Nairobi, as editor of the *Colonial Times* Gujarati section. Mehta explained that "[t]he proposed newspaper (rather magazine) is formed to be Social[,] Economical and Political", including "where and when necessary World News", reassuring the Chief Secretary in Entebbe that it would give "full considerations to the Newspaper Act of the protectorate".⁷⁷

71 "Mheshimiwa Khamisi Amezurur Zanzibar," *Sauti ya MADU*, 29 November 1958, 3.

72 Harris, *Repatriates and Refugees*, 104.

73 Mulira papers, EMK Gen 1/1, Autobiography, 207–8. On *Comment*, see Durrani, *Never Be Silent*, 253.

74 UNRCA, CSO File 14437, Horace White to Chief Secretary Entebbe, 8 September 1953 and 10 November 1953, ff. 1–2.

75 UNRCA, CSO File 14437, Horace White to Chief Secretary Entebbe, 8 September 1953, f. 1.

76 UNRCA, CSO File 8397, Bhupat D. Mehta to Chief Secretary, 8 January 1951; Commissioner of police to Chief Secretary, 15 February 1951.

77 UNRCA, CSO File 8397, Mehta to Chief Secretary, 8 February 1951.

The newspaper *Baraza* in the 1950s was part of this media landscape, and reflected the place in that landscape of large well-capitalised European-owned newspapers, close to the colonial state, which crossed borders. The importance of reading across borders was noted in a 1945 essay competition held in Uganda in which entrants were asked to describe the “ideal chief”: the winning entry by Sepriya Kisauzi Masembe, noted that the ideal chief “reads books and newspapers, not only of his own country, but of others too”.⁷⁸ Memoirs of students at Makerere in the 1950s emphasised the importance attached to reading a range of newspapers. In his autobiography, the future journalist, and future President of Tanzania, Benjamin Mkapa recalled of his time at Makerere that he read *Baraza* in Swahili alongside the *Uganda Argus* in English, and that *Baraza* “could be very political”.⁷⁹

What did he mean by this? *Baraza*, at this time, was a long way from being “political” in the common sense of the time of being an anti-colonial or nationalist publication. The Kenyan nationalist Bildad Kaggia recalled that in mid-1952 *Baraza*’s persistent attacks on the Kenya African Union (KAU) led the KAU to call for a boycott, with the result that “[t]he sales of *Baraza* quickly started to fall, and we enjoyed seeing the *Baraza* vans return thousands of copies to the publishers every week.”⁸⁰ But *Baraza* did cover Tanganyikan news extensively and the letters’ page offered a space for animated political debates concerning politics, for example over the future of the Paramount Chief of the Chagga, Thomas Marealle, and the political struggle between the nationalist party TANU, led by Julius Nyerere, and the United Tanganyika Party, promoted by Tanganyika’s colonial Governor Edward Twining. More generally, coverage of news from across the region helped to give a sense of the dynamic changes underway as the pace of political reform increased over the 1950s, and the letters pages of *Baraza* as of other newspapers point to the ways in which regional news coverage encouraged comparative thinking about political change.

Movement of publications, news stories and editors during the 1950s meant increased awareness of, and comparison with, news publishing in neighbouring territories. *Taifa* and *Weekly News*, both published in Nairobi, circulated in late-

⁷⁸ Carole Summers, “Slander, Buzz and Spin: Telegrams, politics and global communications in the Uganda Protectorate, 1945–55,” *Journal of Colonialism and Colonial History* 16, no. 3 (2015), <https://doi-org.eux.idm.oclc.org/10.1353/cch.2015.0034>, fn. 34.

⁷⁹ Benjamin W. Mkapa, *My Life, my purpose: a Tanzanian President remembers* (Mkuki na Nyota: Dar es Salaam, 2019), 30.

⁸⁰ Cited in Durrani, *Never be Silent*, 59. Kaggia concluded that “*Baraza* was only saved by the declaration of the State of Emergency. Otherwise it would have been forced to closed down within a few months.”

1950s Uganda. *Baraza* in turn continued to grow, and although in practice its circulation was largely focused on Kenya, northern Tanzania and parts of Uganda, it explicitly addressed a general East African audience, proclaiming in May 1957, on the occasion of its shift to Friday publication, that “wherever you are in East Africa” it should be possible to get a copy on the day of publication.⁸¹ Growth in circulation led to it becoming, as it frequently reminded readers, the largest circulating African-language newspaper on the continent. For a period in the late 1950s, there were separate Kenyan, Ugandan and Tanganyikan editions.⁸² In the pages of the newspaper from those years, the space taken up by advertisements was considerable. These included advertisements for products such as alcoholic drinks and cigarettes which not all readers were happy to see in its pages. But when readers requested an end to the advertisements, editors were quick to respond that it simply would not be possible to produce the newspaper at an affordable price without them.

There were important ways in which newspapers both reflected and helped to constitute a sense of East Africa as a shared space whose citizens were confronting similar issues. We see this in the correspondence columns of *Baraza* in 1956. The Kenyan journalist H.S. Gathigira had a weekly column entitled “Behind the Headlines” which often sparked controversy and prompted responses from readers across the region. On 8 September 1956 he attacked the strategy adopted by Tanganyika’s nationalist party TANU, targeting in particular TANU’s Organizing Secretary, Stephen Mhando. He described “TANU’s reaction to the latest constitutional fireworks in Tanganyika” as “very unfortunate”. And, he continued, “as this is no time for cranky politics in any of the East African territories, it is important that TANU should reconsider its attitude if its sole intention is to serve the good cause of the African people of Tanganyika as a whole, and not to indulge in sordid manoeuvres.” Ultimately, he argued, “[c]onstitutional development must of necessity remain gradual, and until the African people are convinced that they have more well-educated men and women to man the wheels of democracy, it would be suicide to keep on roaring for the impossible.”⁸³

Mhando wrote to TANU’s leader, Julius Nyerere, expressing his frustration with what he called Gathigira’s “mudslings”, and enclosing a copy of the letter he proposed to send to *Baraza* in response, which was duly published on 29 September.

⁸¹ *Baraza*, 18 May 1957, 1.

⁸² Though the majority circulated in Kenya. According to January 1958 circulation figures, of a total circulation of 41,605 copies, 29,287 “were sold in Kenya”. See KNA AHC 8/20 f. 20; Letter from R.G. Chilton, Publications Officer, to Deputy Secretary, “Provincial Newspapers”, 24 October 1959.

⁸³ H.S. Gathigira, “Behind the Headlines,” *Baraza*, 8 September 1956, 3.

ber.⁸⁴ “Much as I hate to have to cross political swords with a fellow African”, Mhando began, “I am obliged to say, and this is the least I could say in the present circumstances, that yours is a very irresponsible brand of political journalism.”⁸⁵ Gathigira, Mhando charged, failed to understand the differences in political climate between Tanganyika and Kenya and “that much of the suspicion under which African nationalism in East Africa falls today is a direct result of the irresponsible behaviour of our brothers to the north of us.” While he expressed a hope that the artificial boundaries which currently divided Tanganyika and Kenya would soon be dissolved, he ended with a call to “[p]ut your own house in order first, brother Gathigira, and do not force us to put the political clock back in Tanganyika just because your own pendulum does not swing with ours.”⁸⁶ This response cut little ice with Gathigira, whose response was that “[t]he only person who can put the clock back in Tanganyika is the African ‘leader’ on the spot whose political philosophy (lack of it) makes him believe in ‘people’s courts,’ communist-fashioned ‘boycotts’ and senseless mob oratory.”⁸⁷

Regional Openings in Baraza and EAJ

As self-government and then full political independence were timetabled across the region from 1958, colonial governments and incoming post-colonial leaders alike asked what the news sector would look like. The importance of establishing an African-owned press was emphasised by nationalist politicians such as the Kenyan politician Oginga Odinga. In July 1958, *Sauti ya MADU* published an appeal from Odinga “to all the sons and daughters of Africa . . . to support a national press for Africans of this colony and East Africa.” “The foreign-owned press”, Odinga stated, “is catering primarily for a non-African market and is bound to give little space for matters of purely African interests. We must alter this situation and at the same time break the monopoly of trade which the foreign press is enjoying in East Africa.”⁸⁸

⁸⁴ CCM, Accession 1, Julius K. Nyerere, Personal File.

⁸⁵ Letter from Stephen Mhando, “Advice to TANU,” *Baraza*, 29 September 1956, 3.

⁸⁶ Stephen Mhando, “Advice to TANU,” *Baraza*, 29 September 1956, 3.

⁸⁷ Reply from H.S. Gathigira, *Baraza*, 29 September 1956, 3.

⁸⁸ “An appeal by Hon. A. Oginga Odinga M.L.C. to Africans,” *Sauti ya MADU*, 27 July 1958, 3. The appeal was printed in both English and Swahili. On Odinga’s campaign through the African Elected Members Organisation to develop an African-owned and controlled press, see Oginga Odinga, *Not yet Uhuru* (Heinemann: London, 1967), 191.

Regional ventures could address this goal. Odinga later sat on the editorial board of *Pan Africa*, a short-lived press venture which voiced the same criticism of the foreign-owned press in its first issue, published during the Kenyan election campaign of 1963.⁸⁹ Under British editor Douglas Rogers, a friend of Joseph Murumbi, the publication was able to openly back KANU in the elections, but its editorial line was explicitly pan-African, with an emphasis on East African integration, as well as on regional distribution and contributions. By early 1964, the editorial board's commitment to East African Federation was so firm that Rogers was forced to resign for his insistence that the debate around federation should remain open in *Pan Africa's* pages, including giving space to Kwame Nkrumah's position that federation was a neocolonial plot.⁹⁰

Baraza and the *East Africa Journal* are, like *Pan Africa*, evidence of how regional news and current affairs initiatives co-existed with and sometimes challenged the story of a growing nationalist grip on the media. Certainly, political independence meant reckoning with the relationship between the state and the media, given the infrastructures inherited from the colonial administration. Even within the Kenyan colonial government, some questioned whether the colonial model of government-funded, vernacular newspapers for circulation in small areas was financially or politically expedient in an era of nation-building.⁹¹ New governments took over and expanded the ministries and departments responsible for information. Their remits included not only government publications but national broadcasting, news agencies and soon, in some cases, the publication of national newspapers that sought to monopolise the sector. This trajectory, however, happened in a broader regional and global context.

The urgent question of who would supply the news, for example, brought regional coordination to the fore. As independence approached in Kenya, there were conversations in London within the anti-communist Information Research Department (IRD) section of the Foreign Office about pre-empting plans which Odinga was apparently making for an East African News Agency with Eastern bloc support by themselves creating an All-East African News Agency.⁹² The idea

⁸⁹ "Why Pan Africa?" *Pan Africa*, no. 1, 19 April 1963. Thank you to Nick Rogers for sharing issues of *Pan Africa*.

⁹⁰ Douglas Rogers personal archive, property of Nick Rogers, Rogers to Odinga, 16 March 1964.

⁹¹ KNA AHC 1/45 f. 27, Minutes of meeting of Kenyan Provincial Information Officers, 16 May 1961, discussing a copy of a 1961 report (f. 44) by British diplomat Robert Marett on the future of the Kenyan information services. This report was still being discussed in 1968, see AHC 1/45, f. 156, Memorandum by J. M. Mwakio.

⁹² UKNA FCO 168/680, C.F.R. Barclay, "Minutes: Kenya News Agency," 2 December 1963; James Brennan, "The Cold War Battle over Global News in East Africa: Decolonization, the Free Flow of Information and the Media Business, 1960–1980," *Journal of Global History* 10, no. 2 (2015):

floundered, and instead the British turned their attention to smoothing the path for Reuters to expand its services in the region.⁹³ In Zanzibar, with the British losing control over government media, the suggestion was put forward of encouraging the establishment of a “new non-Government Swahili-language paper for Zanzibar.” An IRD memorandum cited the lack of a “respectable mouthpiece for responsible non-Communist views” in the territory but was “uncertain whether a commercial interest such as the Roy Thompson group would be prepared to embark on such a venture, both because of their commitment to African nationalism and because of the heavy loss which would be involved in the virtual absence of advertising revenue.”⁹⁴

Indeed, commercial media groups were moving with the political tide, and independence appeared an opportunity for consolidating a regional market. The Nation Group, founded in 1959 with the financial backing of the Aga Khan, had bold ambitions for a group of linked newspapers catering to an East African readership on the brink of political independence, especially in the region’s urban centres. Their first step was to buy a small Kenyan weekly Swahili-language newspaper which had been published by Charles Hayes and Althea Tebutt since 1958, and turn it into a daily.⁹⁵ The new daily edition needed an expanded staff, and a number of *Baraza*’s leading writers left for *Taifa*, including Joram Amadi, John Abuoga and George Mbugguss.⁹⁶ The Nation Group expanded rapidly. It bought shares in pre-existing Swahili and Luganda newspapers, *Mwafrika* and *Taifa Empya*, launched the Swahili weeklies *Taifa Tanganyika* and *Taifa Uganda* to correspond with the growing Kenyan *Taifa*, later renamed *Taifa Leo*, and *Taifa Weekly*, and began English newspapers including the *Uganda Nation*, all targeting the reading publics of the independence period, eager to keep up to date with

333–356; John Jenks, “The Scramble for African Media: The British Government, Reuters, and Thomson in the 1960s,” *American Journalism* 33, no. 1 (2016): 2–19.

93 The Kenya News Agency which was ultimately established had Kenya as its focus, though the proposal for the KNA drawn up in the summer of 1963 suggested that while it was to be a national agency it could quickly expand to become an “East African organisation” as plans for political federation advanced, and could even be the basis of a pan-African Agency. The potential “economies of scale” that would result from Uganda and Tanganyika joining the enterprise were emphasised. KNA AHC 9/9 f. 241, “Memorandum”, 9 July 1963: 3, 9.

94 FCO 168/615, no folio, “Memorandum: Counter-Subversion in Zanzibar”, 12 May 1962: 3.

95 Hayes saw *Taifa* as stepping into “a gap that the *Standard* and *Baraza* were leaving. *Taifa* was brighter than anything else on the market and our policy was to support Kenyan independence in a reasoned way and to show a new way of living was possible.” Cited in Gerard Loughran, *Birth of a Nation: The Story of a Newspaper in Kenya* (London: IB Tauris, 2010), 23.

96 Loughran, *Birth of a Nation*, 26; Liz Gitonga-Wanjohi, *The Fifth Columnist: A Legendary Journalist* (Nairobi: Longhorn Publishers, 2015), 60.

constitutional negotiations.⁹⁷ The Aga Khan envisaged the group expanding into Zambia, Malawi, and Rwanda.⁹⁸ At one stage, it was even rumoured that the Nation Group was exploring buying the *Standard*, the long-time mouthpiece for settler business interests which also published *Baraza*.⁹⁹ Instead, as we saw in Chapter one, the *Standard* was eventually taken over by the Lonhro Group.¹⁰⁰

As in the 1950s, journalists and editors moved between newspapers, between commercial and state media ventures, and across the region. The Kenyan journalist Philip Ochieng recalled in his memoirs that Kenyan journalists in the early 1960s often started on the Swahili-language newspapers *Baraza* and *Taifa*, before moving to their English-language sister papers, and Ochieng's own career took him back and forth between Kenya and Tanzania.¹⁰¹ The first journalism courses to launch in the early 1960s, in Nairobi and Mwanza, explicitly catered for journalists from across the region, many of whom would move between media organisations in more than one East African state.¹⁰²

The regional ambitions of *Baraza* and the *EAJ* in the 1960s were partly a reflection of the individuals who drove them. In 1961, following the collapse of his political career, Francis Khamisi was asked to return as editor of *Baraza*.¹⁰³ As editor in the 1960s, Khamisi's transnational pan-Africanism was directed towards advocating regional integration, and *Baraza*'s editorial columns castigated East Africa's leaders for holding back greater political integration and dividing East

97 The Group also purchased the long-running Tanganyikan periodical *Mambo Leo*. Loughran, *Birth of a Nation*, 53.

98 Despite running at a loss, the group pumped money into its Kampala and Dar es Salaam offices during the first years of the 1960s with support from the Thomson group, and invested heavily in printing equipment. As losses continued, a German consultant was invited to advise the company and concluded that expansion across East Africa had come at the price of consolidation. The Swahili-language editions were predicted to grow, but both folded by the early 1970s. Loughran, *Birth of a Nation*, 53–56; Jenks, “The Scramble for African Media”.

99 FCO 168/680, Letter from J.B. Ure to J.G. McMinnies, 20 November 1963.

100 Chibuike Uchi, “The Nationalization of Lonhro's Business Interests in Postcolonial Tanzania,” *Itinerario*, 40, no. 1 (2016): 126–148.

101 Gitonga-Wanjohi, *The Fifth Columnist*, 60.

102 On the Nairobi course, see Ismay Milford, “Journalism Training in 1960s East Africa, or the Transferability of a Stapler”, in *Educational Internationalism in the Cold War: Plural Visions, Global Experiences*, ed. Damiano Matasci and Raphaëlle Ruppen Coutaz (London: Routledge, 2024), 230–231. On Nyegezi Social Training Institute, see Eginald P. Mihanjo, Gaudence Talemwa, Ismay Milford, Elizabeth K. Sebastian and Osmund Kapinga, eds. *Twenty-Five Years of Saint Augustine University of Tanzania* (Songea: Peramiho Printing Press, 2024).

103 Both *Baraza* and the *Standard* were at this point owned by Consolidated Holdings. “Baraza: The End of an Era in Kenya,” *The Weekly Review*, 11 January 1980. Harris, *Repatriates and Refugees*, 117.

Africa's peoples. *Baraza's* stance in favour of greater unity was put forward on the basis of an imagined past before colonial borders in which people across the region had mixed freely. In this account, it would only be when a united East Africa was created that full and meaningful independence would be achieved.¹⁰⁴ *Baraza* claimed to be speaking for ordinary people who, it argued, suffered from the artificial barriers placed in their way by national borders and restrictions on movement to work or do business in neighbouring countries.¹⁰⁵

The East African who guided *EAJ's* early regional politics was Kenyan trade unionist Tom Mboya. Charismatic, multilingual and at ease across all the newly independent East African states, Mboya was of a younger generation than Khamisi, but regionalism was a space in which their politics converged. This was especially through the activities of PAFMECA, mentioned above, whose founding meeting both men attended in September 1958, when the organisation stated its intention to coordinate the political campaigns of parties across East Africa.¹⁰⁶ The *EAJ* formally launched in 1964 as the journal of the East African Institute of Social and Cultural Affairs (EASICA), but Mboya's relationship with its funders had a longer history, as did his own journalistic ambitions.

Through the late 1950s and early 1960s, Mboya sought external funding for a number of efforts to set up a newspaper under the auspices of either the Nairobi People's Convention Party or the Kenya Federation of Labour (KFL), both of which he led. A short-lived weekly newspaper, *Uhuru*, was launched in 1959 but swiftly closed again under the Emergency regulations kept in place by the British authorities to tackle the Mau Mau insurgency. A breakthrough in establishing a model for an externally supported publication came two years later, with the State of Emergency over, when Mboya successfully launched *Mfanyi Kazi* (The Worker) as the KFL's newspaper.¹⁰⁷ *Mfanyi Kazi* was a joint venture between Mboya and two key foreign supporters, Robert Gabor of the American not-for-profit organisation Peace With Freedom (PWF) and Heinz Putzrath of the German Friedrich Ebert Foundation (FES). PWF was, as was widely suspected at the time, a CIA front organisation.¹⁰⁸ Both Gabor and Putzrath were initially determined to bolster Mboya's authority as a national and regional labour leader.

¹⁰⁴ Editorial, "Twadai Shirikisho Leo," *Baraza*, 1 June 1972, 4. These themes are discussed further in Vaughan et al, "Thinking East African."

¹⁰⁵ Editorial, "Hatua ya kurudi nyuma," *Baraza*, 17 June 1965, 4.

¹⁰⁶ Khamisi was born in 1913; Mboya in 1930.

¹⁰⁷ Daniel Branch, *A Man of the World: Tom Mboya, the Cold War and Decolonization in Kenya* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, forthcoming).

¹⁰⁸ Dan Schechter, Michael Ansara, and David Kolodney, "The CIA as an Equal Opportunity Employer," *Ramparts* (1969): 29.

However, as Kenyan independence approached, Mboya's political role as a leading member of KANU and likely future prominent minister became more relevant to decisions about which cultural activities Gabor and Putzrath would support.

The region came quickly to the fore in discussions of what would come next for Mboya's relationship with Putzrath and Gabor, not least because, as constitutional affairs minister in the months leading up to Kenya's independence in December 1963, Mboya held the government portfolio responsible for implementing Kenya's position within the East African federation once independence was achieved. Firm plans for what would become the EAISSA were laid during these same months, in a meeting held in West Germany in July 1963. It barely needed stating that a subtle brand of anti-communism – the ideological bond that connected Gabor and Putzrath, and the foreign policies of their respective home countries – and the politics of economic and social moderation would be a key part of the EAISSA. Mboya's politics were of great appeal to Gabor, Putzrath – both avowed social democrats – and other luminaries of what was referred to at the time as a global non-communist left.

The *EAJ* was part of the vision that arose for the EAISSA as a leading cultural institution that would define what regionalism meant domestically and to communicate that to wider audiences. In the very early stages of developing an agenda for the EAISSA, this meant support for the federation project. This vision was elaborated at the West Germany meeting by George Githii, then a close ally of Mboya, and Tony Hughes, KANU's press secretary, who together represented Mboya in his absence. It was quickly put into practice in the months that followed. Putzrath and Gabor diverted existing investments away from the labour movement to provide the capital. But as the federation failed to materialise, the focus of the EAISSA and the *EAJ* instead quickly shifted to sustaining the regional networks that supported Mboya's politics.

This regional venture had links to national-level projects. An overlapping group of funders sponsored the Milton Obote Foundation in Kampala and its publication of the Ugandan newspaper *The People*, which was initially founded by a group of leftist intellectuals, becoming a mouthpiece for the Uganda People's Congress by the mid-1960s. But the *EAJ* would be something distinct, not a newspaper as such, but a high-quality forum of public deliberation on current affairs, embracing education, intellectual life, political ideology and, especially, development strategies. Consciously addressing an Anglophone intellectual elite, the *Journal* was only one of the EAISSA's activities. As well as organising public roundtables in Nairobi, and running the publishing house described in Chapter six, they also worked closely with the East African Academy discussed in Chapter three, sup-

porting the latter's newsletter and sharing office space.¹⁰⁹ The EAISCA also ran a radio station, conscious of the rapid growth in radio listening.¹¹⁰ Yet it was print media, in the form of the *EAJ*, that arguably became the EAISCA centrepiece.

Quickly a group of personalities – mainly men, some East African and some foreign – came together and came into conflict around the periodical. The founding editor, Odinga Odera, had studied journalism at South Dakota University under Richard Garver, who it later turned out was working for the CIA.¹¹¹ Odera had little sympathy for Mboya's politics, however, and was in post for just one year before he was fired after writing a controversial article in the *East African Standard* criticising the Kenyan government's stance towards Southern Rhodesia. He later became Odinga Odera's speechwriter.¹¹² The vacancy was filled by Bethwell Ogot, then a historian at Makerere University College and close friend and confidant of Mboya. Ogot was later assisted by Philip Ochieng, who was also part of Mboya's orbit. Mboya had paid for Ochieng's school fees, supported the younger man's efforts to study abroad, and served as patron of the student newspaper at University College Nairobi that Ochieng edited.¹¹³ Another key editorial figure, John Okumu, was yet another close supporter of Mboya; indeed, Okumu lost his academic post as a result of this relationship.¹¹⁴

Under Ogot's editorship the *EAJ* deliberately printed a range of subject matter and a plurality of opinions. Its articles could infuriate those in high office. Following a series of articles criticising the government's development policies, one senior civil servant bemoaned the "militant and reactionary intellectuals" who seemed "to be engaging in a deliberate smear campaign against Kenya."¹¹⁵ Ogot's own forthright editorials – published under the pen name of Iconoclastes – became hallmarks of the journal. One of Okumu's fellow assistant editors, Dharam Ghai, was a public and consistent critic of Mboya's development policies, not least

109 *Academy Outlook: Newsletter of the East African Academy*, Vol. 1, No. 1 (November 1965), 3; UNESCO Archives, Catalogue Number 0000158080, J.M. Robertson, "Report on the East African Academy," 18 February 1965, 6.

110 For example UNRCA, CSO File 16235, Report on the Uganda Radio Exhibition, January 1955; Uganda Protectorate, Department of Information, Annual Report (1955), 14–16; James R. Brennan, "Communications and Media in African History," *The Oxford Handbook of Modern African History*, eds. John Parker and Richard Reid (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 501.

111 HIA TM/51/6, Garver to Mboya, 29 January 1964. See obituary in "Richard Garver," *Journalism and Mass Communication Educator* 66, no. 4 (2011).

112 Odinge Odera, *My Journey with Jaramogi: Memoirs of a Close Confidant* (Nairobi: African Research and Resource Forum, 2010), 16–8.

113 HIA TM/40/3, Mboya to Ochieng, 3 January 1966; Gitonga-Wanjohi, *The Fifth Columnist*, 78.

114 David Throup, "Joel Barkan and Kenya," *African Studies Review* 59, no. 3 (2016): 117.

115 KNA AHC 9/37, Gachathi to Kariithi, 5 April 1969.

on the pages of the journal itself. Isaria Kimambo, the Tanzanian historian, and Terry Hirst, the British-born cartoonist and artist involved in Paa ya Paa, made up the other members of the editorial staff, so it is no surprise that both history and the arts were also well represented, and that the *EAJ* had a significant impact on these fields. The periodical itself provided ample evidence in support of Benjamin Kipkorir's argument in the November 1967 issue that "[i]t is no longer necessary for East Africans to depend on foreigners for their histories."¹¹⁶ Particularly during Philip Ochieng's tenure as assistant editor (1967–9), the journal also did much to showcase new literature; its *Ghala* special issues devoted to creative writing – some co-edited by Ochieng – were landmark contributions to East African fiction in their own right.¹¹⁷ For academics tied to the University of East Africa (explored in Chapter three) the *EAJ* was a space to voice opinions beyond the confines of the university. Although dominated by the humanities and social sciences, the journal did, from time to time, publish pieces by scientists, such as the Makerere geneticist J. Reuben Olembo on the place of science in development strategies.¹¹⁸

By the same token, the *EAJ* defined and maintained a particular version of a regional intellectual elite. Kenyan historian E.S. Atieno Odhiambo, an occasional contributor and winner of the journal's essay prize in 1965, described the journal as "the heart of East African intellection" and "the marketplace for ideas in the eight years of its existence".¹¹⁹ "Virtually everyone who became [an] academic anybody cut their teeth via published essays in its pages," he continued, and certainly the *EAJ* fostered the careers of some budding public commentators.¹²⁰ The November 1967 issue is particularly striking in this regard. Articles on monarchism in Uganda by A.G.G. Gingyera-Pinyewa and the Cold War politics of international scholarships by Joseph Okello-Oculi, and book reviews by the likes of Kimambo and Kipkorir, were all excellent examples of the ways in which new

116 Kipkorir, "Replica," 35.

117 Gitonga-Wanjohi, *The Fifth Columnist*, 75–6.

118 J. Reuben Olembo, "Science, Scientists and Society: Bridging the Development Gap Through Science," *East Africa Journal* 5, no. 3 (1968), 13–20.

119 Elisha Stephen Atieno Odhiambo, "Introduction: Bethwell A. Ogot and the Crucible of East African Scholarship, 1964–1980," in *The Challenges of History and Leadership in Africa: The Essays of Bethwell Allan Ogot*, ed. Toyin Falola and Elisha Stephen Atieno Odhiambo (Trenton NJ: Africa World Press, 2002), xv; Emilia Ilieva and Hilary Chakava, "East African Publishing and the Academia," in *Coming of Age: Studies in African Publishing, Essays in Honour of Dr Henry Chakava at 70*, ed. Kiarie Kamau and Kirimi Mitambo (Nairobi: East African Educational Publishers, 2016), 109.

120 Atieno Odhiambo, "Introduction," xix.

voices and individuals were emerging to shape their fields for decades to come.¹²¹ However, it is also striking just how many pieces by non-East African authors were published in the journal. In the August 1968 issue, for example, all four of the major articles were written by non-African authors, including British historian Terence Ranger and archaeologist John Sutton, who both worked at University College Dar es Salaam.¹²² Articles by women, especially Black women, were few and far between. Only in the July 1967 issue were women writers (and the topic of women) prominent: lead articles by Pumla Kisosonkole, Grace Ogot and (First Lady) Miria Obote, offered contrasting takes on motherhood and the changing role of women.¹²³

For some years in the mid-1960s, then, Nairobi was the site of publication of two very different organs which in different ways can be said to have had a regional agenda – and with contributors and readers from across the region. In *Baraza*, a striking proportion of coverage was devoted to East African politics and institutions, especially when compared with, for example, the Tanzanian Swahili-language newspaper *Ngurumo* at the same time, which much more straightforwardly addressed a Tanzanian national, and particularly urban, audience.¹²⁴ Readers of *Baraza*, in contrast, were regularly updated on the meetings of East African leaders. The assassination of Tom Mboya in July 1969 prompted an outpouring of sorrow, with particular attention paid to his commitment to developing the East African Community.¹²⁵ Major political events in the region, such as the Arusha Declaration in Tanzania in February 1967 or Idi Amin's seizure of power in Uganda in January 1971 prompted reflection in editorials and in the cor-

121 Anthony Ginyera-Pinyewa, "Monarchism an Anachronism: The Republicans Outlaw the Royalists in Uganda," *East Africa Journal* 4, no. 7 (1967); Isaria Kimambo, "Making Oral Traditions Scientific: A History of the Abaluyia of Western Kenya by G.S. Were," *East Africa Journal* 4, no. 7 (1967); Benjamin Kipkorir, "Replica of an English Public School: King's College Budo: The First Sixty Years, by G.P. McGregor," *East Africa Journal* 4, no. 7 (1967); Joseph Okello-Oculi, "Motives of Foreign Scholarships: The Race for Cold War Infiltration of African Politics," *East Africa Journal* 4, no. 7 (1967): 15–19.

122 Terence Ranger, "The Church in the Age of African Revolution," *East Africa Journal* 5, no. 8 (1968); John Sutton, "Archaeology, East African History and the Public," *East Africa Journal* 5, no. 8 (1968).

123 Pumla E. Kisosonkole, "African Women in International Society," *East Africa Journal* 4, no. 4 (1967): 7–10; Grace Ogot, "Family Planning for African Women," *East Africa Journal* 4, no. 4 (1967): 19–23; Miria Obote, "Woman in a Changing Society," *East Africa Journal* 4, no. 4 (1967): 29–32. For more analysis of the latter two articles, see Adima, "Anglophone Women's Writing," 173–6.

124 George Roberts, "The Rise and Fall of a Swahili Tabloid in Socialist Tanzania: *Ngurumo* Newspaper, 1959–76," *Journal of Eastern African Studies* 17, no. 1–2 (2023): 1–21.

125 Vaughan et al, "Thinking East African," 66.

response columns on what the event would mean for East African unity. In the addresses on the letters pages, Kenyan addresses appeared most frequently, but Ugandan and Tanzanian addresses were common too.

Controversy, Cold War and Closures

The specificity of both *Baraza* and the *EAJ* in the late 1960s was not simply that they allowed for polemics, debate and controversy in their pages, but rather that regional infrastructure allowed critique to move across borders, precisely at moments when domestic debate was less tolerated by the state. *Baraza* provided a space in which, for example, Tanzanians critical of Nyerere's *ujamaa* policies could publicly reflect on those policies in ways that could be difficult to do in Tanzanian newspapers. The coming to power of Idi Amin in 1971 and the subsequent years saw debates in *Baraza's* letters pages about the legitimacy of the coup itself and about his controversial policies.¹²⁶ Meanwhile in Uganda itself, a brief period of opening up of the country's newspapers after Amin came to power ended quickly. Just a year after Amin's coup the editor of the Catholic newspaper *Munno*, Father Clement Kiggundu, was killed as were a number of other journalists.¹²⁷ The *Uganda Argus* was replaced in December 1972 with the *Voice of Uganda* envisaged by Amin as a medium to "address, exhort, and summon the Ugandan public."¹²⁸

This type of cross-border critique was becoming increasingly difficult in all the region's major commercial papers, perhaps most starkly in Tanzania in the aftermath of the famous 1968 Tanzanian Newspaper Ordinance (Amendment) Bill that gave the state the authority to shut down newspapers.¹²⁹ That same year, a

¹²⁶ E.g. Letter from Peter Inyangala, "Mapinduzi ya Uganda," *Baraza*, 4 February 1971, 4.

¹²⁷ Bernard Tabaire, "The Press and Political Repression in Uganda: Back to the Future?" *Journal of Eastern African Studies* 1, 2 (2007): 193–211; Frank Barton, *The Press of Africa: Persecution and Perseverance* (London: The Macmillan Press, 1979), 98–102.

¹²⁸ Derek Peterson and Edgar C. Taylor, "Rethinking the State in Idi Amin's Uganda: the Politics of Exhortation," *Journal of Eastern African Studies* 17, no. 1 (2013): 64.

¹²⁹ Jenks, "The Scramble for African Media"; Roberts, *Revolutionary State-Making*, Chapter 6. In post-revolutionary Zanzibar, more than twelve newspapers were closed down and replaced by *Kweupe* which, G. Thomas Burgess writes, "served as the regime's printed mouthpiece from January 1964 to October 1970". As in Idi Amin's Uganda, *Kweupe* was not an "open-ended forum", but rather a way to "exhort islanders to participate in the declared national awakening." G. Thomas Burgess, "The Concept of Cultural Revolution, and its Indian Ocean Travels during the Cold War," *Monsoon* 1, no. 2 (2023), 99.

journalist from the Kenyan *Daily Nation* was arrested and the group's newspapers banned in Tanzania.¹³⁰ Relations between the Nation group and the Tanzanian state had been tense for some time, but the immediate reason for the ban was that a *Daily Nation* reporter had published a story on political opposition to the government in north-eastern Tanzania – again indicative of the role which newspapers played in creating space for critique across the region by publishing across borders.¹³¹ In its editorial response to the ban, the *Daily Nation* expressed its particular disappointment given “the Nation Group’s consistent policy to provide an East African forum for the exchange of news and views between friendly and sister States whose decision to form the East African Community is a shining example and a nucleus of African unity and understanding.”¹³² The foundations for a regional print ecology were changing too. The once-regional journalism schools in Nairobi (funded by UNESCO and the anti-communist International Press Institute) and Mwanza (funded by the Catholic Church) were, by the end of the 1960s, increasingly training journalists from the individual host countries, destined to work for state newspapers and broadcasters.¹³³

In the same period, entanglements with both the cultural Cold War and with Kenyan domestic political power struggles were increasingly felt in *EAFJ*. From the outset, the *EAFJ* had staked out its claim to be the primary site in print for the debates about development across the region. Mboya used the journal to defend his development strategy, but there was a range of prominent political voices showcased.¹³⁴ The first edition of the *EAFJ* set the tone for the years that followed. As well as pieces on the place of trade unions within national development strategies and public health planning, the two lead articles by Ogot and John Kakonge engaged with the competing ideas about the practice, policies, and ideas of African Socialism. At the time, Ogot was a lecturer in the history department at Makerere; his appointment as editor of the *EAFJ* and general secretary of the EAISCA was confirmed shortly afterwards. His article set out with typical authority and verve a brief history of the contingency of socialism in its different forms and contexts, hence making the argument that significant adaptation of socialist ideas to differ-

130 “Tanzania Bans Four Papers,” *Daily Nation*, 21 October 1968, 3. See also Loughran, *Birth of a Nation*.

131 Mytton Papers, Institute of Commonwealth Studies, MP ICA 115-1-1, Graham Mytton interview with K.J.N. Ridley, Editor of *Tanzania Standard*, also G.K. Haji Manager, 26 September 1967.

132 “Editorial,” *Daily Nation*, 21 October 1968, 6.

133 Milford, “Journalism Training in 1960s East Africa,” 237; Mihanjo, Talemwa, Milford, Sebastian and Kapinga, eds. *Twenty-Five Years of St Augustine University of Tanzania*.

134 Tom Mboya, “Sessional Paper No. 10: It is African and it is Socialism,” *East Africa Journal* 6, no. 5 (1969). For example, Milton Obote, “Dr Obote on Student Power,” *East Africa Journal* 6, no. 8 (1969).

ent African contexts was both inevitable and desirable.¹³⁵ Kakonge, the secretary general of Milton Obote's Uganda Peoples' Congress, instead argued for African adoption of Marxist-inspired scientific socialism.¹³⁶

The debate initiated by Ogot and Kakonge intensified after the publication of the Kenya government's Sessional Paper No.10, its flagship development strategy authored by Mboya, and in which private enterprise and foreign investment were to play a prominent role. As explained in the front matter of the July 1965 issue, unsolicited critiques of the policy document flooded into the offices of the *East Africa Journal*. In his capacity as editor, Ogot selected one such piece, written by Barack Obama, as representative of a groundswell of criticism. Then a little-known but highly-skilled, Harvard-trained economist, Obama had long been a friend of Mboya. Mboya acted as Obama's mentor prior to the latter's departure to the United States for study. Obama had also been a political supporter of Mboya's in the late 1950s.¹³⁷ However, once in the United States, Obama became more sympathetic to Odinga and towards socialist ideas.¹³⁸ In his piece for the *EAJ*, Obama questioned the evidential basis for the development strategy's emphasis on private land ownership and foreign investment.¹³⁹ For obvious reasons, Obama's critique of Mboya's policy has subsequently become the most famous and closely read of any of the *Journal's* articles.¹⁴⁰ Obama paid a high price for his public criticism of the government's key policy. He was, in the words of his biographer, "blackballed for his aggressive critique of Sessional Paper No. 10," and sidelined by the Kenyatta government despite his Harvard PhD and great ambition.¹⁴¹

Ogot made no secret of his views of figures such as Obama. As he wrote in 1964, socialist ideology belonged to the realm of "cant and dogma" rather than reasoned, informed debate.¹⁴² Nevertheless, as Obama's intervention demonstrates, the *EAJ* was never a closed shop. In 1967 responding to a review of *Not Yet Uhuru* in the journal, Odinga, for instance, used his right of reply to criticise

135 Bethwell Ogot, "Deviationism is Inherent," *East Africa Journal* 1 no. 1 (1964).

136 John Kakonge, "Scientific Socialism in Africa," *East Africa Journal* 1, no. 1 (1964).

137 Sally Jacobs, *The Other Barack: The Bold and Reckless Life of President Obama's Father* (New York: Publicaffair, 2011), location 1131, 209 & 279.

138 Jacobs, *The Other Barack*, location 2089 & 118.

139 Barak Obama, "Problems Facing Our Socialism," *East Africa Journal* 2, no. 4 (1965).

140 David William Cohen, "Perils and Pragmatics of Critique: Reading Barack Obama Sr's 1965 Review of Kenya's Development Plan," *African Studies* 74, no. 3 (2015).

141 Jacobs, *The Other Barack*, location 3737.

142 Bethwell Ogot, "Answer to Okelo," *East Africa Journal* 1, no. 8 (1964).

the “self-interested” and “self-identified” leaders [who] are in power.”¹⁴³ Drawing on such examples, Ogot deployed an “end-of-ideology” discourse that was common to participants in the global politics of anti-communism to claim political neutrality.¹⁴⁴ “I refuse to believe, for example, *East Africa Journal* has supported any individual or ideology,” he claimed in 1968.¹⁴⁵ In truth – as Ogot knew all too well – the *EAJ* was inextricably tied to both the elite politics of post-colonial Kenya and the wider Cold War by virtue of its place in Mboya’s orbit.

The nature of the funding for the EASICA and *EAJ* had long been the subject of rumour and suspicion, even among Mboya’s friends in politics. Joseph Mumbi, for example, warned Jomo Kenyatta as early as in 1964 of the risks of being seen to be too closely tied to Gabor.¹⁴⁶ But in the wake of revelations published in the American press of CIA funding for a whole range of cultural activities in the United States and beyond, more pointed accusations of Mboya’s ties to such covert funds through the EASICA were made by his critics. In July 1967, MPs of the Kenya People’s Union publicly accused Gabor of being Mboya’s link to the CIA.¹⁴⁷ Nevertheless, the decisive blow was struck from the right rather than the left of Kenyan politics. By late 1967, Mboya was engaged in a fierce struggle with Vice President Daniel arap Moi to succeed Kenyatta in the event of the elderly president’s death. Mboya was, at the time, actively fundraising for his political campaign from the same individuals who backed the *EAJ* and EASICA.¹⁴⁸ Moi, as minister of home affairs and hence in control of the immigration and security apparatus, had several advantages over Mboya. In December 1967, Moi had publicly warned Kenyans against seeking financial support from foreign sources, a clear indicator of his determination to undermine Mboya’s efforts to maintain external funding.¹⁴⁹ Gabor, Putzrath, Garver and Erno Kiraly, who worked for Gabor, were all deported from Kenya on 29 January 1968 and declared prohibited immigrants just over a week later.

143 Oginga Odinga, “Letter to the Editor: ‘A Clear Exposition of My Book’,” *East Africa Journal* 4, no. 7 (1967).

144 Giles Scott-Smith, *The Politics of Apolitical Culture: The Congress for Cultural Freedom, the CIA and Post-War American Hegemony* (London: Routledge, 2002), 440–41.

145 HIA TM/51/7, Ogot to Chagula, 15 February 1968.

146 HIA TM/51/7, Githii to Kenyatta, 17 August 1964.

147 Republic of Kenya, *National Assembly: House of Representatives Official Report*, 14 July 1967, 2252–4.

148 HIA TM/72/1, Gabor to Mboya, 26 September 1967; HIA RG/TM, Gabor to Mboya, 30 September 1966.

149 *Africa Confidential*, “East African Shadows,” 16 February 1968 (clipping in IISH ICFTU 4478c).

Gabor and Putzrath's funding to the EAISCA ceased immediately after their expulsion; the complete dependence of the organisation on their funding became apparent.¹⁵⁰ Even after the EAISCA was closed, the *EAJ* nevertheless stumbled on. Indeed, landmark issues published after the expulsions included the memorial edition after Mboya's death in 1969 and an edition guest-edited by the economics department at University College Nairobi on Kenya's second development plan.¹⁵¹ But it was readily apparent to regular readers that the journal was floundering without external support; first, the page size of the paper stock on which the journal was printed shrunk by the second half of 1968; and second, by 1970 the glossy, illustrated card covers were abandoned for flimsy but still striking paper covers. But the *EAJ* was not sustainable without external financial backing. It finally closed in 1972.

In the case of *Baraza*, growing regional difficulties over the course of the 1970s had consequences for *Baraza's* sales. In the mid-1970s, paper shortages made *Baraza's* production increasingly difficult, and the closure of the border between Kenya and Tanzania in February 1977 saw its sales collapse from c. 60,000 to c. 20,000. The newspaper increasingly addressed a Kenyan, rather than an East African, audience. It finally ceased publication two years later and Khamisi retired, bringing to an end the long relationship between the man and the newspaper. The Kenyan periodical the *Weekly Review* quoted Khamisi as saying that "Its demise has been a great blow to me", and described his regret that "*Baraza* died as he was also retiring; he is not leaving a visible bequest to the coming generations – a monument to all the years he has been in journalism."¹⁵²

Despite the very different attitudes to the press across the three East African states, by the 1970s, ruling parties broadly shared an increasing hostility to independent press ventures. Hilary Ng'weno, the first African editor of Kenya's *Daily Nation*, noted that, despite the lack of overt censorship laws and a consistent disavowal of anything resembling neocolonialism, East African governments exploited restrictive colonial censorship laws to muzzle the press.¹⁵³ In Kenya, the frustrations which Odinga had expressed about a foreign-owned press did not go away. Although Kenya eschewed the sort of public ownership that accompanied

150 HIA TM/40/5, East African Institute of Social and Cultural Affairs, "Draft Statement of Affairs for the Period 1st January, 1968 to 30th November, 1968"; Bethwell Ogot, *My Footprints on the Sands of Time: An Autobiography* (Victoria: Trafford, 2003), 224.

151 *East Africa Journal* 6, no. 9 (1969) and 7, no. 3 (1970).

152 "Baraza: The End of an Era in Kenya," *The Weekly Review*, 11 January 1980.

153 Hilary B. Ng'weno, "The Nature of the Threat to Press Freedom in East Africa," *Africa Today* 16, no. 3 (1969): 2.

the aforementioned Newspaper Ordinance Bill in Tanzania, nevertheless officials acted quickly when they considered editors to be insufficiently supportive of Kenya's government. The relationship between the permanent secretary of the Ministry and the *Standard* editor Kenneth Bolton was particularly fraught.¹⁵⁴ The government also sought to install key allies as editors and executives of the major newspapers, most notably with the appointment of Udi Gecaga, Kenyatta's brother-in-law, to the board governing *The Standard* and George Githii, the president's former private secretary, as editor of *The Nation*.¹⁵⁵ The consequences of this indirect form of governmental interference were most apparent in 1975, with the seeming complicity of *The Nation* in the efforts to obscure the state's very likely involvement in the assassination of J.M. Kariuki, one of the government's most vocal critics in parliament.¹⁵⁶ As Bernard Tabaire has detailed, the Obote government's attitude towards the Ugandan press hardened in the wake of the constitutional crisis of 1966. Not content with the ruling party's direct ownership of *The People* newspaper, the government also expelled expatriate journalists working for Kenyan newspapers, closed down another Luganda-language newspaper, and ensured that all other journalists understood that their jobs (at the very least) were at risk if they dared publicly criticise Obote's regime.¹⁵⁷

Consumption of media across borders certainly did not completely end in the 1970s. Both in print and on the airwaves, East Africans continued to tune into regional circuits of news and current affairs. In a survey of almost 5000 people in rural and urban Tanzania conducted in 1974, Voice of Kenya and Radio Uganda emerged as the second- and third-most-listened to stations, after Radio Tanzania itself.¹⁵⁸ Over 25% of the Tanzanian listeners reported frequently tuning into Ken-

¹⁵⁴ The idea of a Government newspaper for Kenya seems to have been considered in 1964 – the East African Standard offered its services in producing and distributing such a newspaper, as the Standard group was doing in Uganda at the same time – but this route was not ultimately taken in Kenya. KNA AHC 9/15, f. 124, Managing Director East African Standard to E. Achieng Oneko, Minister for Information, Broadcasting and Tourism, 17 September 1964. But there were frequent tensions between the Ministry and the two English-language newspapers, the *East African Standard* and its long-serving British Editor Kenneth Bolton, and the *Daily Nation* throughout the 1960s and into the early 1970s. See for example KNA 11/3, f. 111, 11 April 1968, Letter from Minister for Information and Broadcasting J.C.N. Osogo to Kenneth Bolton. Osogo noted that “there seems to be developing a very unhappy relationship between my Ministry and your Paper which we should both try to eliminate as quickly as possible.”

¹⁵⁵ Loughran, *Birth of a Nation*, 92 on appointment of Gecaga, and 84 on appointment of Githii.

¹⁵⁶ Branch, *Kenya*, 114.

¹⁵⁷ Tabaire, “The Press and Political Repression in Uganda,” 200.

¹⁵⁸ *Analysis of Radio Audience Survey in Mainland Tanzania* (Dar es Salaam, 1974). The survey of 6441 people, chosen for a distribution of age, wealth and location, of which 4831 were radio listeners, was conducted by Associated Business Consultants, Beirut.

yan state radio, far more than listened to the external Swahili broadcasts of the BBC, *Deutsche Welle*, or Radio Moscow.¹⁵⁹ Nevertheless, there was a fundamental difference between simply reading or listening across borders, when compared to the regional foundation of the *East Africa Journal* where bringing contributions from across the region into conversation was central to the very function of the periodical.

New current affairs periodicals such as the *Weekly Review*, launched in 1975 under the editorship of Hilary Ng'weno, suggest a thread of continuity in the world of print media. Ng'weno belonged firmly to the same world and networks as did the likes of Ogot. He was one of the early participants in Mboya's airlift of East African students to the United States, graduating with a degree in physics from Harvard. As noted above, on his return to Kenya he became the first Kenyan editor of the *Daily Nation*, having declined the opportunity to edit the *EAJ* prior to Ogot's appointment.¹⁶⁰ Ng'weno nevertheless maintained his connection to the *EAJ*'s circle, founding in 1973 with Terry Hirst the satirical magazine *Joe* which was discussed in Chapter one. But it was the *Weekly Review* that was Ng'weno's greatest achievement and most revealing about the changing position of East Africa within the news media by the second half of the 1970s.

In the *Weekly Review*'s early years, the demise of the EAC and the rising tensions between the governments of the region was one of its dominant stories, regularly featuring as the lead on the magazine's striking covers dominated by full page photographs. The nature of the magazine's coverage of the slow break-up of the EAC said much about how ideas of the region had changed by the time of the *Weekly Review*'s emergence. Ng'weno's editorials on the retreat from regionalism exhibited little regret for the fate of the EAC. In the midst of the fracturing of the regional corporations that controlled railways, harbours, post and airways in 1976, the *Weekly Review* urged the region's rulers to accept that the EAC itself was finished.¹⁶¹ There was, moreover, a strikingly nationalist tone to the *Weekly Review*'s coverage of regional affairs. Ng'weno positioned himself and his magazine firmly on the side of Kenya's leaders in their disputes with counterparts in Tanzania and Uganda. On one spat between the Kenyan and Tanzanian governments over the collapse of East African Airways in 1977, Ng'weno pronounced that "Kenyans expect their government to stop bending over backwards to accommodate itself to the display of tantrums which of late have become Tanzania's idea of cementing good

¹⁵⁹ Table 2.2. 25.7% listened to Voice of Kenya and 7.7% to Radio Uganda; 1.8% listened to the BBC, 3% to Deutsche Welle, 0.2% to Radio Moscow, 0.2% to Radio Peking. It is unclear how much this was shaped by the quality of signal, compared to preference.

¹⁶⁰ HIA TM/51/6, Ng'weno to Mboya, 4 January 1964; Mboya to Kenyatta, 7 February 1964.

¹⁶¹ "E.A. Community Starts to Crumble," *The Weekly Review*, 26 July 1976, 4.

neighbourly relations in East Africa.”¹⁶² This was unashamedly nationalist coverage of the collapse of the institutions and practices of regionalism.

Conclusion

Print media powered the regional circuits that this book explores. During the 1960s, arguably the high point of the regional projects introduced here, newspapers and periodicals forged a space of public deliberation across national borders, as political projects of regional integration and nationalisms ebbed and flowed. Editors, journalists and financial backers, many of them with personal trajectories spanning Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania, drove this print ecology, which was regional in its scope, even if explicitly regional publications, like the proposal for *Picha* which this chapter opened with, were only rarely successful.

As the first part of this chapter demonstrated, there were solid foundations to build upon. The movement and translation of printed news in English, Swahili, Kikuyu, Luganda, Gujarati and other languages, across territorial borders, underpinned East Africa’s colonial public spheres. This pattern was boosted by the concerns of the Second World War and in interaction with new possibilities of radio broadcasting. Many factors worked against regional initiatives, especially those with the interests of East Africa’s majority in mind. Colonial attempts to control the news sector were based on a narrow conception of civil society and on fears of dissenting nationalist and communist voices, and there was no agreement between the territorial governments about how to best manage the press. Legal frameworks, the (un)availability of capital, and technological infrastructures for printing and distributing all determined what was printed and how it moved across borders. Yet the case of *Baraza* shows how an opening for regional debate emerged at the intersection of government funding, commercial infrastructures, strong reader demand, and an individual editor skilled at convening his readership while the political tides allowed it.

Compromised politics defined the life of the *EAJ* too. Addressing an exclusive intellectual elite, and committed to high quality production, the *EAJ* by necessity required initial investment. The capital injected by PWF and FES did not dictate which opinions and authors could be published (if anything the personal political feuds of Mboya’s close circle were more determining) and a plurality of views and critiques appeared in the periodical. But ultimately this funding arrangement prevented the *EAJ* being able to defend itself as an independent, East African

162 Hilary Ng’weno, “For Goodness Sake, Call It Quits,” *The Weekly Review*, 14 February 1977, 4.

voice, and it certainly was not conducive to bringing marginalised sections of society into the pages of the journal. Political scientist Michael Chege has described the *EAJ* as part of “a world of intellectual flourish that we have lost, to our own detriment.”¹⁶³ But the *EAJ* was also an example of the extent to which the politics of post-colonial state-building and the Cold War left their mark on that same intellectual world.

As a practice of regionalism, circuits of news and current affairs were tied to the other sites and forums this book explores. Many of the same individuals, funders, possibilities and constraints will reappear when we turn to book publishing, trade union training, and debates on language. Perhaps most importantly, periodicals, especially the *EAJ*, were one of the most effective ways for East African academics to influence public debate beyond the confines of the University. This strong relationship between current affairs commentary and academic life is one of the key components of the world that this book seeks to recover. These scholarly networks that formed around East African universities are the subject of the next chapter.

163 Michael Chege, Foreword, in Odera, *My Journey*, 4.