Emma Hunter, Daniel Branch, Ismay Milford, Gerard McCann
Beyond Federation

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Ideas and Practices of East African Regionalism
in a National and Global Age, 1950–1975

DE GRUYTER
OLDENBOURG

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Contents

List of Abbreviations

AAILSC	Afro-Asian Institute for Labour Studies and Cooperation
AAPC	All African Peoples Conference
AATUF	All African Trade Union Federation
AFL-CIO	American Federation of Labor – Congress of Industrial Organizations
ALC	African Labour College
AMSAC	American Society of African Culture
BAKITA	*Baraza la Kiswahili la Taifa* (National Swahili Council of Tanzania)
BBC	British Broadcasting Corporation
CCF	Congress for Cultural Freedom
CIA	Central Intelligence Agency (USA)
CMS	Church Missionary Society
COTU	Central Organisation of Trade Unions (Kenya)
EAC	East African Community
EACSO	East African Common Services Organisation
EAISCA	East Africa Institute for Social and Cultural Affairs
EALB	East African Literature Bureau
EAPH	East African Publishing House
EATUC	East African Trade Union Congress
FES	Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung (Germany)
FUTU	Federation of Uganda Trade Unions
GTUC	Ghana Trades Union Congress
ICFTU	International Confederation of Free Trade Unions
ILO	International Labour Organisation
IMF	International Monetary Fund
IRD	Information Research Department (UK)
ISC	International Student Conference
IUC	Inter-University Council for Higher Education in the Colonies
IUS	International Union of Students
KANU	Kenya African National Union
KBC	Kenya Broadcasting Corporation
KFL	Kenyan Federation of Labour
KFRTU	Kenya Federation of Registered Trade Unions
KNCU	Kilimanjaro Native Co-operative Union
MADU	Mombasa African Democratic Union
NUTA	National Union of Tanganyika Workers
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OUP	Oxford University Press
PAFMECA	Pan-African Freedom Movement for East and Central Africa
PWF	Peace With Freedom (USA)
SOAS	School of Oriental and African Studies (London)
TANU	Tanganyika African National Union
TBC	Tanganyika Broadcasting Corporation
TC	Transcription Centre
TFL	Tanganyika Federation of Labour

TPH	Tanzania Publishing House
TUC	Trade Union Congress (United Kingdom)
TYL	TANU Youth League
UADATU	Uganda African Drivers Association and Trade Union
UDSM	University of Dar es Salaam
UEA	University of East Africa
UFL	Uganda Federation of Labour
UGTAN	*Union Générale des Travailleurs d'Afrique*
UKUTA	*Chama cha Usanifu wa Kiswahili na Ushairi Tanzania* (Swahili Poets Association Tanzania)
UMCA	Universities' Mission to Central Africa
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UPC	Uganda People's Congress
URAU	Uganda Railway African Union
USARF	University Students' African Revolutionary Front
UTUC	Uganda Trade Union Congress
WFTU	World Federation of Trade Unions

Introduction

The middle decades of the twentieth century in East Africa, from the 1940s to the early 1970s, were a time of prodigious intellectual and cultural activity. Political and social change across the region after 1945 led to a transformation in the cultural landscape too. The 1940s and 1950s were characterised by harsh repression and colonial violence but also saw East Africans seize new opportunities, for example to study overseas, which had previously been tightly controlled by colonial states in the region. At home, new and expanded universities both produced an intellectual elite and provided the spaces in which much of this cultural work took place. This reached the wider public through new newspapers, magazines, and the products of new publishing houses. Their audience was created with the development of mass literacy and the foundation of politically engaged civil society organisations, such as trade unions. Critically, much of this activity was funded externally, first as part of late-colonial efforts to remake the British empire and to contain anti-colonial nationalism, then by Cold War actors determined to influence the course of decolonization.

The cultural products of this age have proved to be fertile sources for historians over the past twenty years, as well as, increasingly, for literature scholars. Newspapers in Zanzibar, popular music in Nairobi, women's literature in Kampala, pulp fiction in Dar es Salaam, "small magazines" on university campuses – all these have allowed scholars to reframe histories of decolonization, race, urbanization and nation-making.[1] This book takes inspiration from this work. But by foregrounding initiatives that were explicitly regional – working across Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania – and by placing renewed emphasis on the conditions of cultural production, we make a different argument.

In her study of the Latin American economists of the United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America, the historian Margarita Fajardo writes that they "reclaimed the category of Latin America as a region at [a] moment in which the division of the world into regions was an exercise of geopolitical and intellec-

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1 Jonathon Glassman, *War of Words, War of Stones: Racial Thought and Violence in Colonial Zanzibar* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2011); Andrew Ivaska, *Cultured States: Youth, Gender, and Modern Style in 1960s Dar Es Salaam* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2011); Emily Callaci, *Street Archives and City Life: Popular Intellectuals in Postcolonial Tanzania* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2017); Christopher E. W. Ouma and Madhu Krishnan, "Small Magazines in Africa: Ecologies and Genealogies," *Social Dynamics* 47, no. 2 (2021): 193–209; Anna Adima, "Anglophone Women's Writing and Public Culture in Kenya and Uganda, 1959–1976" (PhD thesis, University of York, 2022); Daniel Heathcote, "Postcolonial Culture in Nairobi's Margins 1963–c.1982" (PhD thesis, University of Edinburgh, 2024).

tual domination".[2] In a similar vein, we argue, East Africans did not only build ethnicities, nations, and cities, but also reclaimed and put into service the very category of East Africa itself. From having been a category which had at different points served the needs of British colonial governance or settler power, East Africa became instead, as the Kenyan writer and intellectual Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o recalled of his student days at Makerere College, Uganda, in the early 1960s, "a place where the impossible seemed possible".[3]

In the post-1945 period, the peoples of Kenya, what is now Tanzania, and Uganda had little choice but to give significant thought to what it meant to be East African. Across the world, federations became a key part of the toolkit of late colonial governance.[4] European policymakers initially saw regional federations as a viable foundation for a new brand of imperialism, allowing for the more effective administration of the constellation of smaller, lightly staffed colonies. As the hubris of a "second colonial occupation" gave way to the realities of decolonization, federations were refreshed both to protect European interests in a postcolonial world and as a vehicle for new leaders to gain standing in a global order stacked against them.[5]

As elsewhere, the experiment in federation in East Africa was stillborn. Incompatible with the demands for sovereignty made by the peoples of the four territories, the formal plans for federation after individual states attained independence were swiftly abandoned by the region's new rulers. Regionalism in other forms survived. The East African Common Services Organization (1961–67) and, most importantly, its successor, the East African Community (1967–77) led efforts to govern shared infrastructure and to enhance regional trade and development.[6] But the Community lasted only a decade before collapsing.[7]

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2 Margarita Fajardo, *The World that Latin America Created: The United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America in the Development Era* (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 2022), 15.

3 Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o, *Birth of a Dreamweaver: A Writer's Awakening* (London: Harvill Secker, 2016), 222, also quoted in Ismay Milford et.al, "Another World? East Africa, Decolonisation, and the Global History of the Mid-Twentieth Century," *Journal of African History* 62, no. 3 (2021): 409.

4 Michael Collins, "Decolonisation and the 'Federal Moment.'" *Diplomacy and Statecraft* 24 (2013): 21–40.

5 Adom Getachew, *Worldmaking after Empire: The Rise and Fall of Self-Determination* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2019), chapter 4; Merve Fejzula, "The Cosmopolitan Historiography of Twentieth-Century Federalism," *The Historical Journal* 64, no. 2 (2021): 477–500.

6 Chris Vaughan, "The Politics of Regionalism and Federation in East Africa, 1958–1964," *The Historical Journal* 62, no. 2 (2019): 519–40.

7 Arthur Hazlewood, "The End of the East African Community: What are the lessons for Regional Integration Schemes?" *Journal of Common Market Studies* 18, no. 1(1979): 40–58.

At first glance then, the fate of the idea of East Africa looks like a typical story of the imagined political communities of decolonizing Africa. As an example of the type of community bigger than the nation described by Frederick Cooper, East Africa appears to fit the now-orthodox approach to the historical study of Africans' experience of the mid- and late-twentieth centuries.[8] From one perspective, it is easy to trace the decline in East African political and economic integration through a story of increasing political authoritarianism and economic decline. From this angle, East Africa was just another of the things that fell apart.[9]

But running alongside this story of declining political and economic integration is a history of ambitious cultural projects designed by their architects in some cases to sustain Western influence in the post-colonial world, in others to assert East Africa's cultural sovereignty.[10] This cultural and intellectual domain of activity is the focus of this book. The book is organised around a set of intellectual and cultural organisations and activities – education, publishing, the print and broadcast media, and the labour movement – which in the late 1940s, 1950s and 1960s in East Africa were all in different ways embedded in a regional as well as a national and global context.

Intellectual activism in each of these spheres was practised by an overlapping, and in some cases tightly connected set of actors, as the example of Bethwell Ogot illustrates. Ogot was simultaneously an academic historian; a public intellectual; an editor of the *East Africa Journal*; an ally of labour and political leader, Tom Mboya; and a publisher. On university campuses, in media houses, in public debate, and in the workplace, Ogot and his contemporaries navigated institutions which were embedded in colonial hierarchies and in "modernization" projects. Those late colonial frameworks continued to shape institutions long after independence and acted as a limiting force on people's ability to turn them to decolonizing ends.[11]

This was the world of individuals such as the Kenyan journalist Francis Khamisi, the Tanzanian poet and Swahili scholar Mathias Mnyampala and the Ugan-

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8 Frederick Cooper, *Citizenship between Empire and Nation: Remaking France and French Africa, 1945–1960* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2014).

9 Robert H. Bates, *When Things Fell Apart: State Failure in Late-Century Africa*, Cambridge Studies in Comparative Politics (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008).

10 Caroline Ritter, *Imperial Encore: The Cultural Project of the Late British Empire* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2021); Daniel Tödt, *The Lumumba Generation: African Bourgeoisie and Colonial Distinction in the Belgian Congo* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2021); Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o, *Decolonising the Mind: The Politics of Language in African Literature* (East African Publishers, 1992).

11 Mahmood Mamdani, "Between the Public Intellectual and the Scholar: Decolonization and Some Post-Independence Initiatives in African Higher Education," *Inter-Asia Cultural Studies* 17, no. 1 (2016): 68–71.

dan magazine editor Rajat Neogy. It was characteristic of many, though by no means all, of the individuals who appear in this book that they had studied at institutions of higher education in East Africa or overseas, that they were mobile, and that they were based in East Africa's growing cities. They were predominantly but not exclusively men. They were individuals who, for different reasons, found languages of ethnic patriotism less compelling than did some of their contemporaries. There are echoes here of the intellectual culture described by the intellectual historian of West Africa Ousmane Oumar Kane, drawing on Kwame Anthony Appiah's term, as "Europhone". Frequently writing in the regional lingua francas of English or what was known as "Standard Swahili" rather than vernacular languages, they were aware of the stakes involved in making this choice.[12] Just as significantly, they consciously wrote, published, and spoke to and on behalf of a wider constituency across contemporary East Africa. The actors that we will meet in this book were not a detached elite. Instead, they shared many characteristics and experiences with their target audiences in the region: mobility; urbanization; at least the aspiration – if not the opportunity – for formal education at the advanced secondary and tertiary level; and employment in organisations connected to the social, political and cultural projects of the decolonizing state.

Individuals such as Ogot embraced nationalisms that encompassed various strands of social democracy, liberalism and pan-Africanism. They knew the ambivalence of funding received from a range of national and international sources, supplied in the context of a battle to win converts to one side or the other in the global Cold War, but at certain points made the decision to rely on funding from such sources to pursue their intellectual and cultural projects.[13] These actors were not utopian in their outlook, even if they were in some of their writings.

Initially, these actors developed their thinking in creative tension with ideas of community, nation, and internationalism espoused by the more radical thinkers and activists to their left, as well as the authoritarian populists and autochthons from the right. But increasingly over the 1960s, the space the actors

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12 Ousmane Oumar Kane, *Beyond Timbuktu: An Intellectual History of Muslim West Africa* (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press), 8; Kwame Anthony Appiah, *In My Father's House: Africa in the Philosophy of Culture* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993). For a contemporary discussion of this point, see Ali A. Mazrui, "The English Language and Political Consciousness in British Colonial Africa," *Journal of Modern African Studies* 4, no. 3 (1966): 295–311. On the making of "Standard Swahili" see Morgan Robinson, *A Language for the World: The Standardization of Swahili* (Athens OH: Ohio University Press, 2022).
13 Peter Kalliney, "Modernism, African Literature, and the Cold War," *Modern Language Quarterly* 76, no. 3 (2015): 333–68.

and institutions we discuss in the chapters below inhabited was occupied by their critics from the left and right. The external connections which had once been a source of strength increasingly were turned against them by their critics. Over the course of the years we explore in this book, the broad and capacious nationalisms of the independence moment, which could encompass a wide variety of ideological orientations, found themselves under increasing pressure, exacerbated by Cold War dynamics and by the diverging political strategies of East Africa's nation-states.[14] Political leaders now encountered former allies, such as trade unionists, as potential threats to their authority and acted to contain them, closing down some spaces and limiting the room for manoeuvre of others. Critical voices asked whether anything had really changed. In 1971, Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o articulated the challenge clearly: "Today, the more blatant racial aspects of our education have been removed. But the actual educational system which aimed at producing subservient minds which at the same time looked down upon the rural peasantry and the urban workers, has not been radically altered. In our schools, in our universities, Europe tends to be at the centre."[15]

This book zooms into the contradictions embodied in these institutions and this moment, to tell a story about region and nation, and about decolonization and its limits in East Africa in the mid-twentieth century, from the 1940s to the 1970s. The case of East Africa shows, as recent scholarship has also shown for other parts of the world, that regions continued to matter after political independence, including in sometimes unexpected ways that we might not see if we focus only on the political and economic dimensions of region-making and un-making.[16]

But more than that, we argue that independent East Africa, understood as a decolonizing category, was forged by East Africans, even as it was also shaped by colonial inheritance and the geopolitics and funding streams of the Cold War. In some cases, the individuals undertaking region-making were the same as those engaged in making nation-states in the same time period, but not always. Rather than understanding themselves to be operating within discrete geographical

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14 The historian Carolien Stolte captures this sense in referring to the "more closed and fractured world" of the 1960s. Carolien Stolte, "Introduction: Trade Union Networks and the Politics of Expertise in an Age of Afro-Asian Solidarity," *Journal of Social History* 53, no. 2 (2019): 344.

15 Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o, "Towards a National Culture," *East Africa Journal* 8, no. 11 (1971): 15.

16 Martin Thomas, *The End of Empires and a World Remade: A Global History of Decolonization* (Princeton NJ: Princeton University Press, 2024), 39–41; Cyrus Schayegh, *The Middle East and the making of the modern world* (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 2017); Yasser Nasser, "Asia as a Third Way? J.C. Kumarappa and the Problem of Development in Asia," in *The Lives of Cold War Afro-Asianism*, eds. Carolien Stolte and Su Lin Lewis (Amsterdam University Press, 2022), 121–42.

layers – the global, regional, national, and local – our sources are insistent on the extent to which lives played out across, between, and within these different registers, in ways that were sometimes complementary and sometimes in tension.

This is not an elegy for a world which might have been. Instead, it is a work of recovery of an intellectual and cultural space produced in a particular moment, the legacies of which persist. We are not suggesting an "origin myth" of contemporary East African regionalism, but the book does help provide an explanation for the revival of regional cultural and governmental institutions in the period from 2000 to the present. Moreover, it sheds new light on the dynamics of nation, region and globe which, while situated in a particular moment, nevertheless echo across space and time.

Mid-Twentieth-Century East Africa in Historical Context

Our focus in this book is on a very particular moment in East Africa's mid-twentieth-century history. But that period cannot be understood in isolation from the deep history of exchange and mobility which preceded it. Archaeologists and historians have traced the interlocking regional systems through which people moved and goods and ideas were exchanged in East Africa's deep and more recent past.[17] From the late eighteenth century, the development of the caravan trade created altered cultures of mobility and exchange with new infrastructural underpinnings.[18] "East Africans" as a distinctive community (or set of overlapping communities) existed first as consumers, enslaved and free labourers, and migrants; only later were they also intellectuals, journalists, broadcasters, and political leaders (to say nothing of police officers, soldiers, and other agents of colonialism). One need only look back a few decades prior to the onset of formal imperial rule to see a range of comparable processes to those described below of the making of an East African regional community.

As Jeremy Prestholdt explains, nineteenth-century East Africa defied easy European categorization, refusing as its peoples did to conform to expected racialised tropes. East Africans instead acted as savvy consumers of European, North American and Indian goods. Through their consumption, the network of trading routes through which products reached their markets, and the opportunities

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17 Stephanie Wynne-Jones, *A Material Culture: Consumption and Materiality on the Coast of Precolonial East Africa* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016).

18 For example, Stephen J. Rockel, *Carriers of Culture: Labor on the Road in Nineteenth-Century East Africa* (Portsmouth NH: Heinemann, 2006); Thomas McDow, *Buying Time: Debt and Mobility in the Western Indian Ocean* (Athens OH: Ohio University Press, 2018).

trade presented for social and cultural exchange, a precedent for a later East Africa cohered through the century.[19] And at the heart of this nascent regional community were the men, women and children of the trade caravans: the porters, the camp followers, and the families that hauled the goods of exchange along the trading routes that connected an incipient East Africa, stretching from the coast to the Great Lakes. They were, in Rockel's characterisation, carriers of culture as well as ivory.[20]

Nineteenth-century East Africa was, as both Rockel and Prestholdt make clear, a cosmopolitan space. But it would be incorrect to assume that histories of cosmopolitanism, mobility and exchange in East Africa were entirely dependent on exposure to global networks and processes. The instinctive cosmopolitanism exhibited by many of the actors in this book had another deep, more regionally rooted history. Approaching questions of mobility and exchange from a very different historiographical perspective – that of environment rather than trade or labour – Richard Waller's account of the nineteenth century in inland territories of the region reveals how these themes were no less integral there than at the coast or along caravan routes. Ecological diversity coupled with the ready availability of land encouraged interaction and migration as household responses to periods of crisis, such as drought. Immediately prior to colonial rule, whether looking at the coastal urban centres, at burgeoning settlements along caravan routes, or along new frontiers of inland migration, one is struck by, in Waller's words, the "high degree of interaction, mobility and cooperation which gave rise to the proliferation of local networks of exchange, linking different economic and social groups, which were a salient feature of 19th century East Africa . . ."[21]

However, much of what Waller describes proved incompatible with the imposition of colonial rule in the late nineteenth century, which acted to freeze patterns of settlement. The establishment of new borders, both internal to states and between states, put a check on certain kinds of mobilities, while at the same time colonialism encouraged (and indeed compelled) other kinds of mobility. In the early years of European rule, this particularly took the form of new routes of labour migration along which young men travelled to earn the money they needed to pay colonial taxes and to marry. Later, young men, and some young women, travelled for education too.

19 Jeremy Prestholdt, *Domesticating the World: African Consumerism and the Genealogies of Globalization* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2008).
20 Rockel, *Carriers of Culture*.
21 Richard Waller, "Ecology, Migration and Expansion in East Africa," *African Affairs* 84, no. 336 (1985): 348.

After the First World War, German East Africa, renamed Tanganyika, came under British rule as a League of Nations Mandate. While the hope of some British politicians that this could create a settler-dominated federation in East Africa was thwarted, and there were significant differences in how colonial rule was practised across Kenya, Tanganyika, Uganda and Zanzibar, nevertheless the infrastructures of British colonialism served to create commonalities and spaces of exchange. As we will explore further in Chapter two, we can see echoes of this in the print media of the time, for example, in the exchange of newspapers between Kenya and Uganda in the early 1920s, the circulation of the Tanganyika Education Department's Swahili-language periodical *Mambo Leo* beyond Tanganyika's borders, and the ways in which the Kenyan government periodical *Habari* reprinted items from *Mambo Leo*.[22]

The period after 1945 inherited the connected region we have traced, but was, at the same time, also distinctive. This was a time which Frederick Cooper rightly framed as characterised by "possibility and constraint".[23] European – and non-European – empires were shaken by the Second World War, but not destroyed. During the war and in its immediate aftermath there was a new urgency to the British colonial project in East Africa, a "second colonial occupation" in the words of D.A. Low and John Lonsdale, the contours of which we will discuss in more detail below.[24] Global decolonization and the Cold War added particular layers to the specificity of this historical moment. And there were wider social and economic changes underway, for example in East Africa, as elsewhere, it was a time of rapid urbanization, which continued in spite of the efforts of colonial government – and in some cases their post-colonial successors – to restrict the ability of East Africans to live in towns.[25]

If our period of interest was distinctive, so too was the geography of East Africa in this historical moment. Had the focus of our research been on *fin de siècle* East Africa, then the centre of cultural gravity would have been Zanzibar. The migration of both free and enslaved labour; trade; integration into global net-

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22 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), 317–330.

23 Frederick Cooper, "Possibility and Constraint: African Independence in Historical Perspective," *The Journal of African History* 49, no. 2 (2008): 167–96. See also Cooper's work more broadly.

24 D. A. Low and John Lonsdale, "Introduction: Towards the New Order, 1945–1963," in *History of East Africa*, vol. 3, eds. Donald Anthony Low and Alison Smith (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1976), 1–6.

25 Andrew Burton, *African Underclass: Urbanisation, Crime and Colonial Order in Dar es Salaam* (Athens OH: Ohio University Press, 2005); Callaci, *Street Archives and City Life*.

works; and the influence of educational establishments tied to both Islam and Christianity meant Zanzibar in that period sat at the heart of East Africa's imagined community.[26] Half a century later, however, and Zanzibar was, if not wholly absent, more peripheral than it had once been in the eyes of the writers of many of the sources on which we rely here. Within Zanzibar, there were fierce debates in the 1950s as to whether, as the historian G. Thomas Burgess writes, the islands were "outposts of the mainland, extensions of East Africa" and "largely an African cultural space", or should be "regarded as part of a multi-cultural Indian Ocean world, with allegiance to Islam being one of its primary distinguishing features?"[27] But meanwhile the hubs of the East African intellectual project had shifted westwards, largely because of where colonial economic and political power was situated in the late colonial period. The infrastructure of print media, intellectuals, cultural producers, and their consumers followed. Critically, the colonial capitals also came to host the key higher education institutions that were the hothouses of the mid-twentieth-century regionalism we explore here.[28] Kampala, Nairobi, Dar es Salaam and not Zanzibar provided the ecosystem in which this book's actors thrived and in which the category of East Africa came to the fore. For these reasons, Zanzibar features infrequently in this book.

With a changed territorial composition of the imagined East Africa and political context, what Prestholdt terms the "taxonomies of East Africa," imposed upon the region by external actors, similarly flexed.[29] The late colonial project in East Africa was refracted through the specificities of how the region was understood, spatially as well as temporally. A sense that East Africa was "behind" other parts of Africa and other parts of the world, and that independence must thus necessarily lie further in the future than was the case for other regions, was embedded in the colonial thinking of the time. Echoes of this way of thinking can be found in the writings of the East African nationalists, trade unionists and intellectuals who were actively engaged from the 1940s in planning for the region's future, and in those of the international foundations and organisations, such as UNESCO, which were also increasingly involved in outlining this future after the Second World

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26 Morgan Robinson, "The Idea of *Upelekwa*: Constructing a Transcontinental Community in Eastern Africa, 1888–96," *Journal of the History of Ideas* 81, no. 1 (2020): 85–106.

27 G. Thomas Burgess, *Race, Revolution and the Struggle for Human Rights in Zanzibar: the Memoirs of Ali Sultan Issa and Seif Sharif Hamad* (Athens OH: Ohio University Press, 2009), 18.

28 Zanzibaris were among those who travelled to Makerere for higher education. For a list of those who studied at Makerere between 1929 and the early 1950s see Roman Loimeier, *Between Social Skills and Marketable Skills: the Politics of Islamic Education in Twentieth-Century Zanzibar* (Leiden: Brill, 2009), 542–543. See also Nathaniel Mathews, *Zanzibar was a Country: Exile and Citizenship between East Africa and the Gulf* (Oakland CA: University of California Press, 2024), 14–15.

29 Prestholdt, *Domesticating the World*, 147.

War. This temporal understanding of East Africa persisted even as the transition to political independence was underway, for example in terms of literature, the idiom of "catching up" was an important theme for participants in the famous Makerere "Conference of African Writers of English Expression" of 1962.

Race and the future of European settlers and South Asian communities loomed large. Visitors who came to East Africa from West Africa were shocked by the segregationist form taken by colonial rule in East Africa.[30] It was not only the British who thought of West and East Africa as distinctive domains. Shobana Shankar describes the way the Indian Council for Cultural Relations, which was created in 1950 charged with "establishing India's soft power in Africa", saw East and West Africa in very different terms. India's divergent strategies towards West and East Africa, she argues, "involved a denigration of East Africa as a region and East Africans as 'unprepared' for certain kinds of transnational projects".[31]

This iteration of a regional moment in East Africa was a product of the very particular conjuncture of political, governmental and economic circumstances of the era of political independence. The institutions which existed at the moment of independence had been shaped in the 1940s and 1950s, when regional modes of governance were understood as a technocratic solution to the challenge of delivering services on a small budget across large geographical distances.[32] This in turn had its roots in an earlier political and governmental moment.

Regional Structures of Governance in the Twentieth Century: From Closer Union to EACSO to EAC

As a political label, by the 1940s "East Africa" carried the baggage of colonial projects aimed at creating a political union in the region which would bring together Kenya, Tanganyika and Uganda.[33] When Tanganyika became a League of Nations Mandate under British administration after the First World War, Leo Amery, appointed Secretary of State for the Colonies in 1924, saw an opportunity to bring together governance of the East African territories now under British rule. This was a prospect welcomed by Kenyan settlers who saw it as a path to settler dominated self-governance but resisted by others for the same reason. A series of ef-

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30 As we will see in Chapter four.

31 Shobana Shankar, *Uneasy Embrace: Africa, India and the Spectre of Race* (London: Hurst, 2021), 72.

32 Vaughan, "The Politics of Regionalism"; Collins, "Decolonisation and the 'Federal Moment'".

33 For a detailed account of regional integration in the colonial period, see Claire A. Amuhaya and Denis A. Degterev, *A Century of East African Integration* (Springer Nature, 2022), 33–47.

forts to create "Closer Union" ended in 1931 with a UK Parliamentary Joint Select concluding that "the time is not yet ripe" for any form of political unification.[34]

But if political union was stopped in its tracks, nevertheless the years which followed saw growing economic integration and an expansion of areas in which the provision of government services took place on a regional basis. In June 1922 it was announced that there would be a shared single currency, the East African Shilling, for Kenya, Tanganyika and Uganda.[35] From 1927, the three territories were also part of a shared customs union. As with the currency, this was a case of adding the League of Nations Mandate of Tanganyika to shared arrangements which already existed between Kenya and Uganda.[36]

In 1926 the Conference of Governors was established. This was an advisory body, which met annually "to discuss such matters as customs tariffs, railway rates and scientific research activities." There was also "a permanent secretariat through which it directed the work of the East African Meteorological Service, the Statistical Department and the East African Inter-Territorial Language (Swahili) Committee".[37]

In 1945, the British Government set out plans for a new body, the East Africa High Commission. While this was in no sense a political union, and the territorial governments continued to have responsibility for "basic administration and police services, health and education, agriculture, animal health and forestry, labour, housing, public works and other subjects", the High Commission represented a new phase in that, as Jane Banfield explains, "[t]he High Commission proper was conceived of as a single authority and not, like the Governors' Conference, as members representing the advisers of the Governors".[38] There was also a growing list of services for which the High Commission was responsible, including new bodies of the post-war era such as the East African Literature Bureau.

As independence approached, services once delivered by the High Commission were transferred to the newly established East African Common Services Organisation (EACSO) as a prelude, many hoped, to a future political union. Having started as a colonial project, this was a moment when regional unity as a political project

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34 Nicholas Westcott, "Closer Union and the Future of East Africa, 1939–1948: A Case Study in the 'Official Mind of Imperialism,'" *Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth history* 10, no. 1 (1981): 68.
35 Karin Pallaver, "From German East African Rupees to British East African Shillings in Tanganyika: The King and the Kaiser side by side," *African Studies Review* 66, no. 3 (2023): 637–655.
36 Westcott, "Closer Union," 68. Kenya and Uganda were in a shared customs union from 1917.
37 Jane Banfield, "The Structure and Administration of the East African Common Services Organization," in *Federation in East Africa: Opportunities and Problems*, eds. C. Leys and P. Robson (Nairobi: Oxford University Press, 1965), 30.
38 Banfield, "The Structure and Administration," 33.

was embraced, with varying degrees of enthusiasm, by East Africa's political leaders. In 1963 Julius Nyerere confidently asserted that "[a] federation of at least Kenya, Uganda and Tanganyika should be comparatively easy to achieve".[39]

This turned out not to be the case. How much had changed in just a few years is captured in the journalist Tony Hughes's 1969 revised edition of his 1963 book *East Africa: The Search for Unity: Kenya, Tanganyika, Uganda and Zanzibar*. Where the 1963 version was optimistic about the prospects of federation, the 1969 edition had a new name: it was now called simply *East Africa: Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda*, and it struck a far more sombre tone about the prospects for regional unity. "Barring some traumatic event which may throw the countries together", Hughes wrote, "there is no near likelihood that an East African Federation will be achieved."[40] Instead, a Treaty of Cooperation was signed in June 1967 to form the East African Community of Tanzania (Tanganyika now united with Zanzibar), Kenya and Uganda. And so, Hughes concluded, "[t]he problem for the foreseeable future will be to ensure that Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania, in spite of political and economic differences, continue to appreciate how important it is to make their Treaty of Cooperation work."

The East African Community was not a political union, nor did it undo the changes which had happened in the preceding years which had undermined economic integration, such as the creation of separate currencies across the three countries.[41] As Nyerere explained in August 1967, "The treaty does not inaugurate federation, neither does it inaugurate an economic utopia. What it does is to lay down a realistic basis for the co-operation, on equal terms, of three sovereign states."[42] What it also did was to provide a home for the remaining services shared across the Community's members, now from headquarters in Arusha in north-eastern Tanzania rather than Nairobi.

For contemporary observers who wished to see more and deeper economic integration, the signing of the Treaty for East African Co-Operation in June 1967 was a hopeful sign. Writing in Bethwell Ogot and J.A. Kieran's edited volume *Zamani: A Survey of East African History*, published in 1968, the economist Dharam

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39 Donald Rothchild, "From Federalism to Neo-Federalism" in *Politics of Integration: An East African Documentary*, ed. Donald Rothchild (Nairobi, East African Publishing House, 1968), 1.

40 Anthony Hughes, *East Africa: Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1969), 260.

41 Kevin Donovan, *Money, Value and the State: Sovereignty and Citizenship in East Africa* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2024), Chapter one.

42 Julius Nyerere, *The Nationalist*, 9 August 1967, 1, cited in Donald Rothchild, "The East African Community," *Papers on the East African Community*, Occasional Paper No. 47, Maxwell Graduate School of Citizenship and Public Affairs, Program of Eastern African Studies, Syracuse University, 17–18.

Ghai wrote that "[p]rior to independence, the East African countries had achieved a degree of economic integration which was unique in Africa", but this co-operation had, he continued, recently been "in retreat".[43] For Ghai, the establishment of the East African Community marked a crossroads, which could see this retreat reversed.[44] In his chapter in the same volume on independent East Africa, Ali Mazrui emphasised that while "[i]n some ways the three countries are drifting apart", he concluded that their different approaches "all go to give East Africa a certain richness and inventiveness", and the potential to learn from each other. He concluded that "[p]erhaps the cause of East African regional integration is not dying after all, it is merely undergoing the pangs and agonies of profound transformation."[45] But just ten years later, this first iteration of the East African Community had collapsed.[46]

Region-making in a Changing World

This history of the high politics and economic policy of East African region-making and unmaking forms part of the background to the story told in this book. So too does the wider international social, economic and political environment which helped to provide the impetus for region-making. In economic terms, in contrast to the 1930s when global economic crisis meant constrained (colonial) budgets, and in contrast also to the renewed climate of austerity that characterised the later 1970s, the quarter of a century after 1945 constituted a time of relative optimism about economic development and about global measures to address economic inequality between richer and poorer nations though redistribution.

The aftermath of the global depression of the 1930s saw a global shift in thinking about economic development, and a new focus on the responsibility of states to deliver this, as the historian Frederick Cooper has emphasised.[47] This gathered pace after the Second World War and was increasingly internationalised, with the establishment of the new post-war international institutions of the

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43 D. P. Ghai, "Contemporary Economic and Social Developments," in *Zamani: A Survey of East African History*, ed. Bethwell A. Ogot and J.A. Kieran (Nairobi: East African Publishing House, 1968), 384–385.

44 Ghai, "Contemporary Economic and Social Developments," 386.

45 Mazrui, "Independent East Africa," 369.

46 Hazlewood, "The End of the East African Community."

47 Frederick Cooper, *Decolonisation and African Society: the Labor Question in French and British Afric*a (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996); Frederick Cooper and Randall Packard, eds. *International Development and the Social Sciences: Essays on the History and Politics of Knowledge* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997).

World Bank and the International Monetary Fund. In colonial contexts, the 1940 British Colonial Development and Welfare Act and the funding it established for activities badged under the banner of "development", as well as the 1946 French establishment of FIDES (Fonds d'Investissements pour le Développement), heralded a new approach to economic development by Europe's colonial states.[48] In the mid-1960s, the idea of a Marshall Plan for Africa, modelled on the Marshall Plan for European reconstruction following the Second World War, was still a refrain in the United States.

With political decolonization processes gathering pace across the world, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, established in 1964, provided a space in which newly independent states could collectively consider what a new kind of economic order could look like. Its counterpart, the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), was convinced that regionalism was an essential prerequisite for the rapid development envisaged by such a new order. To the likes of the Kenyan politician Tom Mboya working within the ECA, with individual states lacking the capital and infrastructure to deliver such development, the pooling of planning, resources and expertise at a regional level seemed to be a matter of economic survival.[49]

Economic development was understood to be fundamentally intertwined with social and political development. For the historian Joanna Lewis, "the Second World War enabled Colonial Office thought and practice on welfare in Africa to be morally and financially rearmed".[50] In the Colonial Office in London, an awareness of a changed international environment and the need to demonstrate concrete actions to work towards self-government was coupled with the impact of the arrival of Labour party politicians in government, perhaps most notably Arthur Creech Jones, Secretary of State for the Colonies from 1946 to 1950. The immediate post-war years saw a focus on social welfare initiatives around, for example, community development, mass education and the development of trade unions, causes close to the hearts, Lewis reminds us, Creech Jones and his colleagues for whom "[m]ass education for citizenship appealed to the collective memory of the origins of the Labour Party."[51] But plans devised in the Colonial

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48 Corrie Decker and Elisabeth McMahon, *The Idea of Development in Africa: A History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2021), 134; 137.

49 Hoover Institution Archives (hereafter HIA), papers of Tom Mboya (hereafter TM) 10/6, Tom Mboya, "Regional Integration: Political and Economic, with Special Reference to East Africa," paper presented at Vienna Institute for Development conference, Vienna, 10–15 June 1968.

50 Joanna Lewis, *Empire State-Building: War and Welfare in Kenya 1925–1952* (Oxford: James Currey, 2000), 360.

51 Lewis, *Empire State-Building*, 314.

Office in London, as Lewis also emphasises, took on a distinctive form in the racially stratified societies of East Africa.

This environment shaped the kinds of institutions which were created in East Africa in the 1940s. A new generation of colonial officials and experts of various kinds, many of them enthused by a desire to contribute to East Africa's "development", in all its dimensions, understood that new ways of doing things were needed. Where institutions such as the East African Swahili Committee, the successor of the Inter-Territorial Languages Committee which had been established under the auspices of the Conference of Governors, had once simply excluded East Africans from membership, they now, in the 1940s and 1950s, sought to incorporate East Africans in the committee, and editors of the Committee's journal anxiously worried about their failure to appeal to potential East African readers.[52]

These anxieties were illustrative of the limited parameters through which these institutions faced changing times after 1945. They sought to incorporate East Africans into existing structures, not to remake those structures. Meanwhile, as the British prepared for independence, they were preoccupied with continuing to influence political and intellectual culture both on their own behalf and, in the context of the growing strains of the Cold War, on behalf of a wider Western world united against communism. In London, the Information Research Department of the Foreign Office carefully monitored the circulation of communist books and newspapers in British colonies and protectorates, and considered how best to place their own anti-communist printed material or support the creation of this material by others.[53]

In turn, a new generation of East Africans both sought to make use of existing institutions while at the same time expressing frustration with the limits of those institutions and the ways in which they remained embedded in colonial ways of thinking, imbued with paternalism and racism. While for some, the mood of this period was one of possibility and opportunity, it was also experienced as anxiety, nervousness or peril as individuals and communities asked themselves what

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52 As explored in Chapter five.

53 Adam LoBue, "'They Must Either Be Informed or They Will Be Cominformed': Covert Propaganda, Political Literacy, and Cold War Knowledge Production in the Loyal African Brothers Series," *Journal of Global History* 18, no. 1 (2023): 68–87. On British anti-communist print material more broadly, see Adam LoBue, "Preventive, Pre-emptive and Educative: Political Literacy, Anti-communism, and Cold War Knowledge Production in East Africa, 1949–1979" (PhD thesis, University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign, 2025). On the IRD and IRD activities in general, see Rory Cormac, "British 'Black' Productions: Forgeries, Front Groups, and Propaganda, 1951–1977," *Journal of Cold War Studies* 24, no. 3 (2022): 4–42.

would happen next.[54] "Our beloved country that is Kenya is at present passing through a critical phase in its history," wrote Shekue Ali, the secretary general of the Kenya African Muslim Political Union, in 1961. "It is a phase full of fears and suspicion, jealousies and rivalries, trouble and turmoil."[55]

It was a time of rapid change, when the world was shifting quickly. East Africans did not have to look far to see examples of how Cold War actors and European neo-imperialism could combine to devastating effect for the cause of African freedom. To the west, the Congo Crisis triggered by Belgian subversion of its newly independent former colony offered one terrifying possible future. As Tom Mboya wrote in 1961 to Thomas Kanza, then the Congo's ambassador to the United Nations, "the Congo situation could easily be repeated in my own country Kenya. We have a lot in common and we share these problems and anxieties".[56] Further south, Europeans were digging in for a fight in the settler apartheid, Anglophone and Lusophone states. "There is no reason for us to suppose that the Kenya settler would be any different if power were handed over to him today," Mboya observed in 1960.[57]

This context helps explain why many individuals actively imagined regions as an important foundation of a new and more equal world order which, they thought, could result from a political project of regionalism. "East Africa" was given new meaning by the political leaders of the independence era who went from organising anti-colonial activity on a regional level to advocating for an East

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54 Cooper, "Possibility and constraint"; Giacomo Macola, "'It Means as if we are Excluded from the Good Freedom': Thwarted Expectations of Independence in the Luapula Province of Zambia, 1964–6," *Journal of African History* 47, no. 1 (2006): 4–5; Ismay Milford, *African Activists in a Decolonising World: The Making of an Anticolonial Culture, 1952– 1966* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2023), 172–207.

55 HIA TM 9/7, Ali to Ngala & Gichuru, 6 May 1961.

56 HIA TM/63/7, Mboya to Kanza, 3 May 1961. This was a fear which the colonial government in Kenya consciously stoked. In November 1960 the Provincial Information Officer for Coast Province wrote to Ian McCulloch, Public Relations Officer in the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting in Nairobi, suggesting that publicity should be given to events in Tanganyika and Congo which "could, but must not be allowed, to happen here." McCulloch replied to say that this was an "excellent suggestion", and that work was already underway to include reports of events in the Congo in Kenya's vernacular newspapers. KNA AHC 1/45, f. 20, Letter from K.J.A. Hunt, Provincial Information Officer, Coast Province to Ian McCulloch, Public Relations Officer, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, 12 November 1960; f. 21, Letter from Ian McCulloch to K.J.A. Hunt, 13 December 1960.

57 HIA WS/15/5, Mboya, "A Message to the People of Kenya," undated but 1960, 4. On these dynamics in the case of Zimbabwe, see Brooks Marmon, *Pan-Africanism Versus Partnership: African Decolonisation in Southern Rhodesian Politics, 1950–1963* (Cham: Springer International Publishing, 2023).

African Federation.[58] The argument that "unity is strength", which was so important for nationalist movements seeking to bind their followers together, was extended to the transnational level as well. A united East Africa, so the argument went, would be greater than the sum of its parts and would allow the region to take its rightful place in the world.

In 1967, the Tanzanian President Julius Nyerere spoke of East Africa as an example of how African unity would be built up step by step, through cooperating with neighbours.[59] He argued that "talk of All-African cooperation and understanding can only too easily degenerate into meaningless cliches", and "[i]f it is to become meaningful it must be put into practice at a neighbourhood level". This was never solely an elite vision. Opinion polls conducted by the Marco Survey Company in Nairobi throughout the early 1960s attested the widespread popularity of East African Federation. In 1963, 96% of Kenyan, 82.5% of Tanzanian and 88% of Ugandan respondents (1,400 people equally spread across the nations in total) judged federation to be "desirable".[60]

We can see the same mood of opportunity coupled with nervousness in terms of the opportunities and risks posed by new funding streams from governments, institutions and agencies around the world at a time when the pursuit of independence ran up against fears of neo-colonialism. For those developing cultural or intellectual projects which required resources, there were new funding possibilities. For those seeking education overseas, there were scholarships from newly independent India, the USA, Israel, and from the USSR and eastern Europe. For those seeking to establish new publishing enterprises, funds flowed from institutions such as the CIA-front organisation Congress for Cultural Freedom (CCF), founded in 1950 to ostensibly promote free cultural expression through anti-communist conferences and publications across the globe.[61] These new sources of funding provided the motor for thinking in imaginative ways, but the actors we study in this book were always aware of the limits and contradictions of this moment and what was at stake in accepting such funding. The revelation in 1967

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58 Ismay Milford, "Federation, Partnership, and the Chronologies of Space in 1950s East and Central Africa," *Historical Journal* 63, no. 5 (2020): 1325–48; Vaughan, "The Politics of Regionalism".

59 Julius Nyerere, "Speech by President Nyerere at the TANU National Conference: Mwanza: 16/10/67," *Mbioni* 4: 5–6 Nov–Dec 1967: 26.

60 Marco, *Public Opinion Poll no. 13, Who Wants an East African Federation?* (Nairobi: Marco, 1965), 1.

61 Thomas William Shillam, "Shattering the 'Looking-Glass World': The Congress for Cultural Freedom in South Asia, 1951–55," *Cold War History* 20, no. 4 (2020): 441–59. Giles Scott-Smith and Charlotte Lerg, eds. *Campaigning Culture: The Journals of the Congress for Cultural Freedom* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2017).

that the CCF's funds in turn came from the CIA was a dramatic moment for East Africa's writers and artists.

By the 1970s, ambitious visions of a new economic order were fading away. The first oil price shock had a dramatic impact on the region's economies.[62] In sharp contrast to what in retrospect were the well-resourced years of the 1960s, funding streams dried up and East Africans now had to undertake "intellectual and cultural work in times of austerity".[63] Institutions such as the East African Literature Bureau disappeared, a victim of the collapse of the East African Community.

Sources and Methods

This book contributes to a growing focus on region in historical scholarship of the twentieth century, both as a framework of analysis and as a focus of study.[64] In his recent book, the historian Kevin Donovan describes a "regional turn" in historical scholarship which, he writes, allows historians to work "at the various scales East Africans produced and subverted in the course of the twentieth century".[65]

In East African historical scholarship, regional and transregional frameworks of analysis have shed new light on the social changes which nationalism and the creation of new nation-states heralded, and the impact this had on individuals whose lives and sense of political community had been shaped by mobility within older imperial geographies.[66] One such disruption can be found in the ways in

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62 George Roberts, "The First Oil Shock: February 1974 and the making of our times", *African Arguments*, 20 February 2024, accessed 4 March 2024, https://africanarguments.org/2024/02/the-first-oil-shock-february-1974-and-the-making-of-our-times/.

63 Emma Park, Derek R. Peterson, Anne Pitcher and Keith Breckenridge, "Intellectual and Cultural Work in Times of Austerity: Introduction," *Africa* 91, no. 4 (2021): 517–531.

64 Which we discuss in Milford et al., "Another World". See also Thomas, *The End of Empires and a World Remade*, 41.

65 Donovan, *Money, Value and the State*, 11.

66 For a West African case study, see Marie Rodet, "Old Homes and New Homelands: Imagining the Nation and Remembering Expulsion in the Wake of the Mali Federation's Collapse," *Africa*, 88, no. 3 (2018); Marie Rodet and Brandon County, "Genre, génération et contrôle de la circulation des personnes entre le Mali et le Sénégal a l'heure de Modibo Keita (1959–1968)" in *Femmes d'Afrique et émancipation: entre normes sociales contraignantes et nouveaux possibles*, ed. Muriel Gomez-Perez (Paris: Karthala, 2018). On nationalism more broadly see illustratively, Gregory H. Maddox and James L. Giblin, eds. *In Search of a Nation: Histories of Authority and Dissidence in Tanzania* (Athens, OH: Ohio University Press, 2005); James R. Brennan, *Taifa: Making Nation and Race in Urban Tanzania* (Athens, OH: Ohio University Press, 2012); Derek R. Peterson, *Ethnic Patriotism and*

which long histories of regional and transregional mobility ran up against the dynamics of border-making, national registration and post-independence nation-building. In his recent study of Zanzibari diasporic nationalism, the historian Nathaniel Mathews draws attention to efforts by the Zanzibar National Party and the Zanzibar and Pemba's People's Party to limit migration from the mainland in the late 1950s, driven by concerns about voter registration and the potential implications for election outcomes.[67]

Labour mobility was not only a characteristic of Zanzibar's economy. In 1961, according to Joseph Nye, 11% of Tanganyika's workers were from outside Tanganyika, of whom 6,000 were from Kenya, while in Uganda nearly 10% of workers were from Tanganyika and Kenya. In both Tanganyika and Uganda trade unions put pressure on post-independence governments to restrict labour migration with consequences for migration patterns.[68] In the Ngara region in Western Tanzania, Jill Rosenthal's interviewees told her that the 1960s was a time when they stopped travelling to Uganda for work in order to build the nation at home instead. The reason, they said, was "*Mwalimu* Nyerere", who taught them that "instead of making money for others in Uganda, we could make money for ourselves. Develop ourselves. Develop Tanzania".[69]

Alongside social histories drawing attention to the ways in which cross-border mobility both continued and changed in the aftermath of political independence, a growing body of work has returned to study the political and economic projects of regionalism in Eastern Africa, first through an attempted East African Federation and later through the East African Community.[70] The institu-

the East African Revival: A History of Dissent, c. 1935–1972 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012); George Roberts, *Revolutionary State-Making in Dar Es Salaam: African Liberation and the Global Cold War, 1961–1974* (Cambridge University Press, 2021); Miles Larmer and Baz Lecocq, "Historicising Nationalism in Africa," *Nations and Nationalism* 24, no. 4 (2018): 893–917; Emma Hunter, "African Nationalisms," in *Cambridge History of Nationhood and Nationalism*, Volume 2, eds. Cathie Carmichael, Matthew d'Auria and Aviel Roshwald (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2023), 280–299.

67 Mathews, *Zanzibar was a Country*, 36–40.

68 Joseph Nye, "The Extent and Viability of East African Co-operation," in *Federation in East Africa: Opportunities and Problems*, eds. C. Leys and P. Robson (Nairobi: Oxford University Press, 1965), 47.

69 Jill Rosenthal, *From migrants to refugees: the politics of aid along the Tanzania-Rwanda border* (Durham NC, Duke University Press, 2023), 57.

70 Julie MacArthur, "Decolonizing Sovereignty: States of Exception along the Kenya-Somali Frontier," *American Historical Review* 124, no. 1 (2019): 108–43; Keren Weitzberg, *We Do Not Have Borders: Greater Somalia and the Predicaments of Belonging in Kenya* (Athens OH: Ohio University Press, 2017); Vaughan, "The politics of regionalism"; Kevin Donovan, "Uhuru Sasa!: Federal Futures and Liminal Sovereignty in Decolonizing East Africa," *Comparative Studies in Society and*

tions of regionalism, such as the infrastructure of railways, harbours and airlines, currencies and banking, customs and markets, their rise and their fall, have a rich and growing historiography.[71]

This book builds on and complements this history, focusing on spaces of intellectual and cultural production, the importance of which in creating the region was well understood at the time. In his contribution to *Zamani*, Ogot and Kieran's history of East Africa which was published in 1968, Ali Mazrui argued that the key question was not, as for many of his contemporaries, that of who was preventing unity from being achieved, but rather of "how that unity came to be there in the first place". Mazrui sought greater recognition of Uganda's role in this, a role which, he argued, had many aspects, not least of which was Makerere's place before independence as "in effect if not in name, the 'University of East Africa'" which "helped to produce a regional intellectual elite."[72] Writing a few years later, in his 1974 PhD thesis entitled "The East African Intellectual Community", Geoffrey Warren Reeves wrote that "There are strong grounds for regarding East Africa as a basic unit for the study of intellectual life", in spite, he continued, "of the fact that East Africa is dismantling its inherited regional economic institutions, and has dropped all serious discussion of political federation".[73]

In its source material, this book is built on deep engagements with both the outputs of the print and intellectual culture of the day and its associated archive. This entails significant engagement with the physical artefacts – the magazines, the newspapers, and other texts – of the time. In foregrounding textual sources, especially material written and published in East Africa during the period, this book is part of an ongoing reappraisal of periodicals, newspapers and magazines, often with a circulation limited in numbers or duration, which goes beyond seeing them as commercial failures or straightforwardly products of their financer or censor.[74]

History 65, no. 2 (2023): 372–398; Geert Castryck, "Bordering the Lake: Transcending Spatial Orders in Kigoma-Ujiji," *The International Journal of African Historical Studies* 52, no. 1 (2019): 109–32.

71 E.g. Donovan, "Uhuru Sasa!"; Donovan, *Money, Value and the State*; Patrick Y. Whang, "Regional Derailment: The Story of the East African Railways," *Journal of Eastern African Studies* 12, no. 4 (2018): 716–734.

72 Mazrui, "Independent East Africa," 355.

73 Geoffrey Warren Reeves, "The East African Intellectual Community" (PhD thesis, University of Edinburgh, 1974), 6.

74 Cassandra Mark-Thiesen, "Neglected Historiography from Africa: The Case for Postindependence Journals," *The Journal of African History* 64, no. 1 (2023): 5–12; Mahvish Ahmad, Koni Benson, and Hana Morgenstern, "Revolutionary Papers: The Counterinstitutions, Counterpolitics, and Countercultures of Anticolonial Periodicals," *Radical History Review* 2024, no. 150 (2024): 1–31; Ouma and Krishnan, "Small Magazines in Africa: Ecologies and Genealogies"; Emma

These texts themselves, some easier to locate and more complete in survival than others, in libraries across Africa, Europe and North America, provide one important strand of source material. This book is, however, also the product of deep dives into institutional archives across those three continents. In East Africa, we consulted state archives, private collections and university library holdings in Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda, institutions sometimes in the process of reconstruction after the period of crisis, austerity and structural adjustment in the 1970s, 1980s and 1990s.[75]

Drawing on official sources and deposits of personal papers such as the Murumbi Africana Collection at the Kenya National Archives (KNA), we observed the weight of colonial structures pressing upon East African citizens in making their new worlds, as well as diverse local and globally connected strategies debated and deployed to build that future. The very existence of such collections of papers in the East African region was itself dictated by the political developments and challenges of the period we study. For example, Joseph Murumbi's weighty benefaction survives in the country of his birth because of his stellar political career as Kenyan foreign minister and vice-president, cultural collector and patron of the KNA.[76] By contrast, much of the correspondence of Rajat Neogy, the editor of Uganda's *Transition* magazine, was confiscated and destroyed by the Ugandan police following his arrest for sedition in 1968 by Milton Obote (see Chapter one).[77] Sparse remnants of Neogy's letters now exist primarily in the archives of his Euro-American sponsors, the CCF – and highlighting what they deemed important to keep – at the University of Chicago in the United States.

Hunter, "Newspapers as Sources for African History," *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of African History*, 2018, accessed 24 October 2018, http://africanhistory.oxfordre.com/view/10.1093/acrefore/9780190277734.001.0001/acrefore-9780190277734-e-228; 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.

75 For example, see the collaborative work of restoring archival collections in Uganda involving colleagues from the University of Michigan, Makerere University, Mountains of the Moon University, Cambridge University, Kabale Univesity, Busoga University, British Institute of Eastern Africa and beyond, accessed 15 January 2024, https://derekrpeterson.com/archive-work/. For a defence of African state archives, see Nana Osei-Opare, "'If You Trouble a Hungry Snake, You Will Force It to Bite You': Rethinking Postcolonial African Archival Pessimism, Worker Discontent, and Petition Writing in Ghana, 1957–66," *The Journal of African History* 62, no. 1 (March 2021): 59–78.

76 Ismay Milford and Gerard McCann, "African Internationalisms and the Erstwhile Trajectories of Kenyan Community Development: Joseph Murumbi's 1950s," *Journal of Contemporary History* 57, no. 1 (2022): 111.

77 Peter Benson, *Black Orpheus, Transition, and Modern Cultural Awakening in Africa* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1986).

This is then also a story of archival dispersal across the globe, particularly in North America, with all issues of scholarly and passport privilege that entails. In one sense, this dispersal is a product of the very histories we excavate. The fact that Tom Mboya's family entrusted his papers to William Scheinman, Mboya's American friend and ally, ensured that this invaluable set of records survived the efforts by Kenyan state after 1969 to silence Mboya's memory. There are also matters of finance that explain the migration of Africanist documents away from Africa. The records of the *Transcription Center* (TC), housed at the University of Texas-at-Austin, provide a case in point. Founded in 1962, the TC functioned from London as a hub and sponsoring organisation for African writers and artists, most famously the young Wole Soyinka, producing radio programming, advertisement and financial support to amplify African artistic production on the continent and across the world. The CCF also sponsored TC with a small core grant, but the entrepreneurial TC director Dennis Duerden increasingly relied upon commercial arrangements with western institutions such as the West German broadcaster *Deutsche Welle* and numerous American university libraries, which purchased TC outputs, to make ends meet. When the CCF withdrew its grant in 1967, and commercial income also dried up, Duerden faced crippling institutional and personal financial constraints such that he was forced to sell the TC collection to those with the ability to pay and quickly. After prolonged correspondence with UCLA and Northwestern University African studies departments in the 1970s, Durden eventually sold up to UT-Austin, such that one of the most important archival collections on African literature of the 1960s now sits in central Texas.[78]

As Lara Putnam reminds us, there are scholarly and ethical implications in this type of multi-site research.[79] A nuanced physical investigation of these archives remains advantageous, even in a digital world, to draw from the crucial "'grey literature' of international institutions – the reams of memos, reports, paper machinery of organisation and institutions, and sub-strata of bureaucratic documentation – impossible to digitise in their magnitude."[80] Physically inspecting the TC periodical *Cultural Events in Africa* – on its poor-quality paper, the back of its old drafts utilised as office stationery once the foolscap had run out –

78 Harry Ransom Center, "The Transcription Centre: An Inventory of Its Records at the Harry Ransom Center", accessed 18 February 2025 at https://norman.hrc.utexas.edu/fasearch/findingaid.cfm?eadid=00447; Jordanna Bailkin, "The Sounds of Independence? Lessons from Africa and Beyond at the Transcription Centre Archive," *History Workshop Journal* no. 78 (2014): 229–245.

79 Lara Putnam, "The Transnational and the Text-Searchable: Digitized Sources and the Shadows they Cast," *The American Historical Review* 121, no. 2 (2016): 377–402.

80 Afro-Asian Networks Research Collective, "Manifesto: Networks of Decolonization in Asia and Africa," *Radical History Review*, 131 (2018): 176–182.

tells us something intimate about the hand-to-mouth nature of the organisation that a digital reading might not. Holding the documents can matter. More importantly, there is the question of privilege. Hostile visa regimes, costs of travel, and a host of other challenges have resulted in significant injustices and barriers to the engagement of Africa-based scholars with these resources. The fact that we enjoy the privileges that come from employment at relatively wealthy, western universities is not incidental in the writing of a book such as this.

As we delved deeper into the cultural and intellectual spaces which were organised on a regional basis or which crossed national borders, we increasingly came to ask questions about the origins of these institutions, the funding sources which powered them, and the opportunities as well as constraints of the 1950s and 1960s. The challenges of intellectual and cultural production in the era of decolonization demanded entanglement with institutions which had been established to pursue different aims, often at odds with those of the actors we study.

The result is an intellectual history of East Africa, both in the sense that our interest is in the history of ideas and the institutions which enabled the production and sharing of those ideas, and in the sense that this story has at its heart a particular group of mid-century intellectuals. We pay attention to the material underpinnings of intellectual production, as well as the Cold War circuits which shaped the circulation of knowledge and exchange of ideas, as, for example, in the role of the UK Foreign Office's Information Research Department in placing anti-communist materials into circulation in East Africa's public spheres. This focus helps us to bring to life important aspects of the intellectual worlds of East Africa in this period.

The individuals who come to the fore in this book were not solely those who might conventionally attract the label of "intellectual". They did not all work in universities, though many did, often, as in the case of the late Bethwell Ogot, combining a university career with a wider role as a public intellectual. In recent years, individuals like Ogot have turned to memoir to reflect on their lives and the world they built in the 1950s and 1960s.[81] These rich memoirs powerfully capture the intellectual culture of those years, and this book both draws on these memoirs and enters into dialogue with them. We hope by recovering aspects of their activities at the time and the networks of which they were a part we might contribute an additional layer to contemporary conversations. These individuals and their life stories provide a compelling window onto the period in part because they frequently moved between and interacted with multiple institutions, intellectual and linguistic communities, publications, funders, and states – both

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81 Ogot, *My Footprints.*

East African and foreign. At times, they appear as brokers between different (often conflicting) visions for East Africa's future. Attending to these processes of brokering is one way in which we can narrate the constraints that cultural, social and intellectual projects faced.

Although individuals thus feature prominently in this book, institutions play an important part in the way that we structure our analysis. There are several reasons for pursuing this approach. Studies of individual actors – often canonical thinkers and statesmen – have demonstrated the depth and range of ambitions for a society liberated from colonialism. Yet, when relied on too heavily, the writings, speeches and even correspondence of individuals, taken at face value, give a skewed picture of the optimism of the period around independence: this optimism was often performative and pragmatic rather than naïve or short-sighted. Through institutions and the publications that existed around them, we can build a picture of a wider, non-canonical cast of actors (even if the biographies of many are difficult to reconstruct) and see more of the frustrations and anxieties that characterised the labour of trying to make different visions work in practice.

We therefore recognise institutions, as other scholars have, as rich sites for understanding both the weight of the colonial past in the immediate post-independence period and the possibilities that existed for discussing and rethinking everyday politics in practice.[82] Institutional behaviours – the recording of minutes, the creation of committees, the writing of press releases – were central to colonial governance, yet the institutions in this book were far from being simple colonial relics. Intellectuals and organisers viewed reformed or newly created institutions as useful vehicles for their projects. If these institutions at times proved vulnerable to being co-opted or constrained by vested interests, they were also more resilient and more influential than their opponents (in seats of power, for example) assumed. Institutions therefore offer a way to acknowledge the power of both the state and its personality politics – on which important scholarship on East Africa has already focused – but to simultaneously elaborate on societal spaces beyond this. Institutions shaped the thought and work of the people within them as well as the other way round. They thus merit a more prominent space in explanations of why the projects and intentions of these actors were in many cases only partially realised.

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82 Edgar C. Taylor, Katherine Bruce-Lockhart, Jonathon L. Earle and Nakanyike B. Musisi, "Introduction," in *Decolonising State and Society in Uganda: The Politics of Knowledge and Public Life*, eds. Katherine Bruce-Lockhart, Jonathon L. Earle, Nakanyike B. Musisi and Edgar C. Taylor (James Currey, Suffolk, 2022), 9; Katherine Bruce-Lockhart and Jonathon L. Earle, "Researching Institutional Life in Modern Uganda," *History in Africa* 45 (2018): 189.

We should also clarify what we are not doing. This is not primarily a history of the ideological work of imagining an East African federation or of a political project of regionalism, though we have written about this elsewhere and learnt a great deal from other recent work which has focused on these ideas.[83] At times, the individuals, organisations and publications we explore thought explicitly about what East Africa was, and what greater integration might mean, and some of these discussions will feature in what follows. But at other times East Africa was a category which did not need to be defined, and was not linked to a specific political project or predetermined geographical delineation. From its foundation in 1967, the East African Community envisaged expanding beyond Tanzania, Uganda and Kenya to include neighbouring countries, though by the time of its collapse this had not been achieved. This fluidity to what East Africa might mean as an institutional project and a geographical space is important to emphasise. While some used it to mean Tanzania, Uganda and Kenya, others had something more or less expansive in mind.

As this discussion suggests, writing about "region" and region-making can pose challenges. The term "region" is itself often hard to pin down. Writing about the growing attention from scholars of International Relations to the importance of regions in world affairs, Rick Fawn notes that the term is used in different ways in different disciplinary traditions, so that while geographers tend to use the term to mean a space smaller than the nation-state, international relations scholars typically use it to mean a supra-national space or body.[84] Though, Fawn, concludes, "*region* need not mystify". There is, Fawn suggests, scope for flexibility in defining what a region is, and, he emphasises, "[r]egion need not have institutional forms to be one", though the making (and, we might add, unmaking) of such institutional forms is an important object of study.[85] In mid-century East Africa, "region" was similarly used in some contexts to refer to sub-national units, and we will see this usage at some points in this book. In Tanzania after

83 E.g. Vaughan, "The Politics of Regionalism"; Chris Vaughan, Julie MacArthur, Emma Hunter and Gerard McCann, "Thinking East African: Debating Federation and Regionalism, 1960–1977," in *Visions of African Unity: New Perspectives on the History of Pan-Africanism and African Unity Projects*, eds. Matteo Grilli and Frank Gerits (Cham: Palgrave, 2021): 49–75; Marc Matera, "Pan-Africa, African Socialism and the 'Federal Moment' of Decolonization," in *Socialism, Internationalism, and Development in the Third World: Envisioning Modernity in the Era of Decolonization*, eds. Su Lin Lewis and Nana Osei-Opare (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2024), 55–74; Fejzula, "The Cosmopolitan Historiography"; Getachew, *Worldmaking after Empire*.

84 Rick Fawn, "'Regions' and Their Study: Wherefrom, What for and Whereto," *Review of International Studies* 35 (2009): 11.

85 "[H]istorians and political scientists", Fawn notes, "are said to 'know a region when they see one.'" Fawn, "'Regions' and their study", 12. In his recent study of the modern Middle East, Cyrus

independence, for example, the colonial-era administrative structure of provinces was transformed into an administrative structure of regions. In Kenyan political debate around the time of independence, the language of federalism and regionalism was used to refer to a decentralised political model, as advocated by the Kenya African Democratic Union, in contrast to the more centralised vision put forward by the Kenya African National Union (KANU) which ultimately won out.[86] We should also stress that we use the terms "regionalism" and "region-making" loosely, rather than to refer specifically to the building of political, economic or administrative structures of integration.

This book is also not a history of the making or remaking of an East African identity, although this was important to some of the individuals we encounter in this book, sometimes alongside other identities including national ones, sometimes in preference to other identities. In the latter category, Anna Adima has explored the ways in which the British-born writer Barbara Kimenye, who moved to East Africa with her Tanganyikan husband Bill Kimenye, identified as an East African and was in turn claimed in this way by East Africans.[87] A claim to an East African identity was also common among East Africans of South Asian heritage, such as the Ghai family. For those who were, in this era, coming to understand themselves and to be understood by others as members of a "minority" community, East Africanness could be the foundation of a claim to belong in an uncertain world.[88]

Indeed, in many ways, East Africa's South Asians were notable regionalists in our period. East African South Asian political life had from its outset been intrinsically regional in scope. The premier political lobbying group, founded in 1914, was the East African Indian National Congress. Local South Asian Chambers of

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Schayegh borrows from Europeanists the idea of the "historical meso-region", such as Scandinavia or the Balkans, which does not necessarily reflect geographical borders and which might be part of a larger whole. This is not a "mental map", it is, rather, "fluid in space", sharing some of the "structural traits" that constitute it as a region with neighbours. While helpful as a "heuristic device", historians should, Schayegh argues, be careful of not "reifying" such spaces. Schayegh, *The Middle East and the making of the modern world*, 20.

86 David M. Anderson, "'Yours in Struggle for Majimbo'. Nationalism and the Party Politics of Decolonization in Kenya, 1955–64," *Journal of Contemporary History*, 40, no. 3 (2005): 547–564; Anaïs Angelo, *Power and the Presidency in Kenya: the Jomo Kenyatta Years* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2020), 22.

87 Anna Adima, "Mixed-ish: Race, Class and Gender in 1950s–60s Kampala Through a Life History of Barbara Kimenye," *Journal of Eastern African Studies* 16, no. 3 (2023): 355–374.

88 Faisal Devji, "A Minority of One," *Global Intellectual History* 7, no. 6 (2022): 1058–64.

Commerce were intensely regional in organisation from the 1920s to 1960s.[89] The origin of militant trade unionism in East Africa, the 1937 strike of Punjabi artisans, was also consciously organised across Nairobi and Dar es Salaam by a young Makhan Singh.[90] More widely, a plethora of Gujarati, Cutchi, Sindhi, Punjabi and Goan communities spread across urban East Africa during the colonial period, connected by transnational associational life and family businesses that would often comprise linked shops across Kenya, Tanganyika, Uganda and beyond. These communities enjoyed what sociologists described as the "entrepreneurial advantages of belonging" – an economic comparative advantage derived from diasporic networks across the Indian Ocean, but also increasingly across the East African region over the mid-twentieth century.[91] Such connection, oceanic and regional, drove what Gaurav Desai termed an "Afrasian imagination" in the rich genre of East African Asian creative writing that emerged.[92] But, it was also such extraterritoriality, amidst the stark racialised material inequalities of East African cities, that would leave East African South Asians open to the popular condemnations of economic exploitation that would culminate in the 1968 Kenya Asian crisis and ultimately Idi Amin's expulsion of 1972.

Structure

We focus in the book on a number of institutions which, in different ways, had their roots in the late colonial moment, and the intensification – though importantly not creation – of regional networks at that time. The book moves across a series of spaces – print media, universities, trade unions and their associated colleges, publishing houses and language committees – which provided the institutional underpinnings of East Africa's flourishing intellectual and cultural life in the period immediately after independence. Many had late colonial roots but in

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89 Robert Gregory, *Quest for Equality: Asian Politics in East Africa*, 1900–1967 (Bombay: Orient Longman, 1993); Sana Aiyar, *Indians in Kenya: The Politics of Diaspora.* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2015); Robert Gregory, *South Asians in East Africa: An Economic and Social History* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1993).

90 Zarina Patel, *Unquiet: The Life and Times of Makhan Singh* (Nairobi: Zand Graphics, 2006), Chapter four.

91 Stein Kristiansen and Anne Ryen, "Enacting their Business Environments: Asian Entrepreneurs in East Africa," *African and Asian Studies* 1, 3 (2002): 165–186; Gijsbert Oonk, "Gujarati Business Communities in East Africa: Success and Failure Stories," *Economic and Political Weekly* (May 2005): 2077–2081.

92 Gaurav Desai, *Commerce with the Universe: Africa, India, and the Afrasian Imagination* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2013).

the years immediately before and after independence, a new generation of East African intellectuals and cultural producers sought to turn these institutions to anti-colonial ends while also creating new institutions, free of colonial baggage but often much more closely tightly tied to the national and nationalising projects of new states and frequently dependent on external funding.

We start with what is perhaps the most iconic manifestation of 1960s East Africa's intellectual project, the magazine *Transition*. The premier literary journal of Africa's 1960s, *Transition* published almost all East Africa's public intellectuals in the 1960s. But it was just one part of a network of Africanist cultural institutions that shared content, contacts, and funders – most notoriously the CCF – to push the boundaries of post-colonial African cultural production, including the Chemchemi Cultural Centre in Nairobi, Nommo Art Gallery in Kampala or *Black Orpheus* in Ibadan. The writers and artists on these stages and in these places were tied into colonial-origin structures even as new endeavours like the University campus journals *Busara*, *Nexus* and *Penpoint* Africanised at pace. This chapter describes a close-knit but combustible world of people and venues at the cutting edge of defining the shape of future intellectual East Africa. *Transition* and the intellectual networks it sustained proved short-lived.

The second chapter takes a step back from the singularity of *Transition* by introducing regional circuits of news and current affairs – especially in print, as well as broadcast media. There was nothing unique about *Transition's* regional distribution or ability to attract authors and readers from across East Africa. Writers, editors and readers had been forging a regional print culture for many decades already by the time Neogy's journal attracted international attention, whether through commercial, government or religious publications. These regional circuits, we show, were embedded in the structures of the colonial (and later post-colonial) state and in international flows of capital. Focusing on two case studies of publications which could, in different ways, be understood as regional, the newspaper *Baraza* and the periodical *East Africa Journal,* we trace their material, political and personal underpinnings from the late colonial period to the 1970s. Newspapers and periodicals constituted a space of public deliberation, and some looked to regional ventures as a way to rethink news and current affairs amid the demands and expectations of decolonization, but a changed political and financial landscape made the picture look very different by the late 1970s.

Chapter three turns to the university, both as an institution that (re)produced a regional intellectual elite, and as one site where this elite sought to put regionalism into practice. The chapter spans colonial-era Makerere University College, the short-lived University of East Africa (1963–70), and post-independence campus politics and intellectual life in its constituent colleges in Dar es Salaam, Nairobi

and Kampala. Colonial visions for organising higher education along federal lines placed multiple constraints on the nature of the institutions that emerged, and arguments in favour of national universities were present from the outset. We argue, however, that the constitutional life of the federal university is only one part of the story. East African universities continued to be spaces where academics and students alike pursued East Africa as an intellectual project: a regional perspective was central to discussions about the level of state involvement in universities, and about how to make higher education relevant to the realities of post-independence Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda. This wider purview complicates a narrative of a regional university doomed by its colonial foundations and inevitably closed down by the nationalist ambitions of new states.

The fourth chapter considers a dimension which is often forgotten in histories of intellectual and cultural life in East Africa, but which captures important elements of our story. This chapter explores the development of a distinctive East African trade unionism, told through the figure of Tom Mboya and with a specific focus of the short-lived regional institution of the African Labour College. In his memoir of life at Makerere in Uganda in the 1950s, Sidney Colman recounted efforts by colonial officials to stop Tom Mboya speaking at Makerere. Colman recalled that they "argued that if he were to be allowed to lecture, against their wishes, we should restrict him to trade unionism and not permit him to wander into 'politics'." They had, Colman continued, failed to grasp that trade unionism "was an unavoidable part of East African politics".[93] As we explore in this chapter, trade union connections were one very important way in which ideas circulated and regional connections were forged in the 1950s and into the early 1960s.

Transition was published in English, though the question of whether intellectual and cultural liberation was possible in a colonial language was repeatedly tackled in its pages. If the 1960s saw the flourishing of an Anglophone intellectual and cultural world, it also saw a new phase in the development of Swahili as a language of intellectual and cultural production and as a regional lingua franca. Chapter five situates these developments in the context of long-running arguments over the question of whether Swahili should serve as a regional language, a question which both united and divided culture brokers across the region.

The sixth chapter explores the institutions and actors who undertook to remake infrastructures of book publishing as an essential building block of East Africa's future. The world of publishing that supported East Africa's intellectual and cultural life was both vibrant and fragile. Efforts to transform colonial-era

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93 S.J. Colman, *East Africa in the fifties: a view of late imperial life* (London: Radcliffe Press, 1998), 121.

institutions, such as the East African Literature Bureau, and to create new publishing houses, such as the East African Publishing House, faced multiple challenges, from the threat of foreign-owned commercial publishers to the difficulties of distribution in a landscape shaped by colonial under-investment. Here, we explore debates over the definition of "indigenous" publishing and then follow these debates into concrete attempts to counteract the weight of foreign competition through state intervention in the publishing process, from printing to distribution. With the closure of the Kenya-Tanzania border, regional initiatives faltered, but some of the publishing infrastructure they had sustained outlived them.

Chapter 1
East African Pasts, Presents and Futures in *Transition* and its Network

Recalling his days as a student at Makerere University College in Kampala in the early 1960s, the Kenyan novelist Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o expressed his sense of bliss as a young man. For Ngũgĩ was alive in Kampala, beginning to make his way in the world. Makerere "was a place where we felt we could challenge the best at any university in the world – Cambridge, Oxford, Harvard, you name it – had to offer . . . It was a place where the impossible seemed possible. Makerere was a place of dreams."[1] There, Ngũgĩ achieved his first break within a new, vibrant community of cultural production in early 1960s Kampala, one operating within, but eager to interrogate, the late colonial structures through which literary production operated in East Africa. Encouraged by the British expatriate lecturer in English at Makerere, David Cook, Ngũgĩ entered a short story into a 1961 open writing competition bankrolled by the Congress for Cultural Freedom (CCF). He won and his piece, *The Return*, was published in the third issue of *Transition*, a new literary magazine edited by the ambitious Ugandan Indian intellectual Rajat Neogy and, from 1962, also under the CCF financial umbrella.[2] A place within these networks secured Ngũgĩ a seat at the 1962 Makerere Conference for Anglophone African writers, an event also sponsored by the CCF, on which he reported for *Transition's* fifth edition. At the conference, Ngũgĩ was starstruck by attending African-American and Caribbean authors such as Langston Hughes and Arthur Drayton. He hit the nightclub with Neogy and networked with Chinua Achebe from Nigeria, who would help Ngũgĩ secure his first book contract for *Weep Not Child* with the Heinemann African Writers Series just two years after *The Return*.[3] Things moved fast in East Africa's literary 1960s.

The importance to Ngũgĩ of the opportunities presented by *Transition* was far from unique. Indeed, by curating debates about the contours of new potential East Africas through its bold mix of literary, artistic and political output, the firebrand *Transition* published almost all of East Africa's public intellectuals in the 1960s. Moreover, the journal was just one part of a network of flourishing Africanist cultural institutions that shared content, contacts and funders to push the

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1 Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o *Birth of a Dream Weaver* (London: Harvill Secker, 2016), 222.

2 James Ngugi, "The Return," *Transition*, no. 3 (1962).

3 James Currey, *Africa Writes Back: The African Writers Series and the Launch of African Literature* (Athens OH: Ohio University Press, 2008).

boundaries of post-colonial African cultural production. Some such as the Chem-chemi Cultural Centre (Nairobi), Transcription Centre (London) and *Black Orpheus* (Ibadan) became formally linked through the CCF. Others like the Nommo Art Gallery (Kampala) and Paa ya Paa Gallery (Nairobi) existed independently of such overseas funding but drew on the network to support their work. The writers and artists on these stages and in these places were, like Ngũgĩ at Makerere, tied into colonial-origin structures even as endeavours like the allied literary campus journals *Busara*, *Nexus* and *Penpoint* Africanised at pace. The network was also linked to new dynamos of public debate such as *East Africa Journal* (see Chapter two) and the East African Publishing House (see Chapter six), whose writers were reviewed in and wrote for *Transition.*

Transition therefore makes an ideal starting point for this book. It is, after all, the best-known (and today, thanks to JSTOR and ProjectMUSE, the most readily accessible) cultural artefact of East Africa's print cultures of the 1960s. It was an exemplar of East Africa's engagement with the external agencies and actors at work in the global 1960s.[4] With roughly half its contributors and readership drawn from Europe and the USA, *Transition* deliberately set out to engage a global audience with its mix of acerbic commentary, prose, and poetry.[5]

For all its fame and critical reception abroad, *Transition* is more important for our purposes for three reasons. First, it was itself a critical node in the networks that connected the minds and pens of the region's intellectuals with external funders and consumers in order to bring East Africa into being. Through the pages of the journal we can start to describe the close-knit world of people and venues – a zone of affinity and connection – at the cutting edge of defining the shape of future intellectual East Africa. *Transition* was part of a historically rooted set of networks of East African and international persons and institutions that was a catalyst of change: a community of thinkers who rubbed shoulders, hustled and disagreed about what would and should make a new East Africa. More specifically, *Transition* brings into relief the pillars that supported this intellectual community. Its history demonstrates the ways in which the worlds of media, publishing, higher education, and both national and global politics coalesced in East Africa to incubate a distinctive, regional intellectual and print culture. On its pages, trade unionists sat alongside playwrights; politicians alongside academics; and artists alongside journalists. Indeed, within this ensemble its ac-

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4 Monica Popescu, *At Penpoint: African Literatures, Postcolonial Studies, and the Cold War* (Durham, NC; Duke University Press, 2020).

5 Peter Benson, *Black Orpheus, Transition, and Modern Cultural Awakening in Africa* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1986).

tors often played multiple roles – cultural critics, students, creative writers, journalists, or political activists – simultaneously, as exemplified by Ngũgĩ in the opening of this chapter.

The second key claim to significance here for *Transition* lies in its provision of space for intellectuals to contest and forge the meaning of East Africa. Within its covers, East African writers and artists grappled with urgent questions about how to work within and break free from colonial-era institutions and worldviews. They reckoned with the challenges and exploited the opportunities to secure support in other parts of the African continent, Europe, North America and Afro-Asia. They argued about the relationship between "modernising" nations or region and "decolonising" public culture. Finally, they raged about how to hold new African statesmen to account in an era of growing authoritarianism and austerity into the later 1960s. Despite personal conviviality and even intimacy within this East African and wider pan-African community of affinity, there was certainly no consensus to be found. Indeed, this chapter is concerned with contestation – different visions – on these grand public questions. Such print cultural and other artistic fora provided platforms for *debate.* They allowed editors like Neogy, or artists like Elimo Njau, as will be seen below, to *curate* divergent ideas about how future East African life should be informed: by drawing on deep African pasts or, conversely, driven by cleaner breaks from pre-colonial heritage and colonial history. Through the pages of elite literary magazines, student journals, political quarterlies and pamphlets, East Africans sought to remake their nations, region and world as they remade themselves after empire. Nairobi, Dar es Salaam and Kampala in the 1960s became exciting hubs of intense cultural production on the pulse of local and global conversations about freedom and modernity.[6]

Last, *Transition* serves an important function in this chapter in setting the narrative arc of the book. Most obviously, as Ngũgĩ's bliss gave way to Neogy's personal despair, the chapter illustrates how mounting authoritarianism and its suspicion of any subversive cultural activity put *Transition's* future in jeopardy. As *Transition*'s contributors jostled with one another in arguments about East Africa's past and future, so they encroached into increasingly fraught political terrain occupied by insecure rulers. The fate of the journal and Neogy thus became intertwined with the rise of authoritarian statehood in the late 1960s. But, at the same time as the conflict between the journal and the Obote state was being fought in the public gaze, other, hitherto more obscure structural constraints on

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6 This is a world evocatively captured by Carey Baraka, drawing on interviews with a number of key participants. Carey Baraka, "Remembering Kampala," *The Republic* (6 April 2024), accessed 24 May 2024, https://rpublc.com/april-may-2024/remembering-kampala-literary-history/.

the creativity and impact of *Transition* were also at work. Structures of finance, market forces, and other material factors influenced who could be consumed and who could not in this period. For example, the continuing power of British commercial presses (see Chapter six) – with their own ideas of the palatable and saleable – exerted patriarchal influence over who was published long after formal colonial power withdrew.[7] Competing Cold War institutions active in the decolonising world – with their own preconceptions about acceptable notions of dissidence shaped by anti-communism especially – could mould the artistic landscape to a significant degree.[8] The agendas of external actors, the lingering influence of colonial institutions, and the febrile political atmosphere at large in East Africa combined by the late 1960s to close off many paths forward that seemed to have been open to cultural practitioners earlier in the decade.

Nevertheless, the challenges of capital and patronage notwithstanding, throughout the print culture and artistic worlds of East Africa's 1960s there was a dogged determination on the part of (often young) actors not to be boxed in by the legacies of colonialism, financial pressure or, soon, dictatorial post-colonial statesmen. As the brash *Transition* folded in the late 1960s under pressure from the Ugandan state, the 1970s witnessed the rapid diversification into more popular print culture forms. This chapter reassesses the work of an array of East African writers, editors and artists over the 1960s. In a period when the application of East African history to East African futures was vocally contested, these individuals offered a multitude of answers to the question of what East Africa should look like.

The Birth of *Transition* and its Network

Transition was an exciting and experimental novelty when it emerged in Kampala in 1961 under the ambitious young Neogy. Born in Kampala in 1938 to Bengali immigrant parents, Neogy studied at Old Kampala Secondary School in the city until 1955, and Regent's Street Polytechnic and SOAS in London until 1961 (with an 8-month break in 1958 to return to Kampala to work within Ugandan nationalist politics). His early life dictated comfort in both East African and British cultural milieux. As for so many of the individuals we will meet through the rest of this book, cosmopolitanism described Neogy's outlook, rather than being a theory through which we can analyse him. His new journal added to an existing

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7 Caroline Ritter, *Imperial Encore: The Cultural Project of the Late British Empire* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2021).

8 Bhakti Shringarpure, *Cold War Assemblages: Decolonization to Digital* (New York: Routledge, 2019), 136–8; 164–6.

literary scene in the city, particularly around publications like the *Uganda Journal*, founded in 1934 by the Uganda Society, and a plethora of publications coming out of Makerere by the 1950s.[9]

Dominated by British expatriate staff and dignitaries, the likes of the Uganda Society echoed the paternalistic, developmental endeavours of the British colonial state, with a concern for fundamental, depoliticised African education, a seeming anachronism in an era of nationalist mobilisation and mounting student discontent, as represented in the 1952 Makerere food strike, itself linked to regional anti-colonial politics.[10] As Chapter three explains, universities – both as the sites in which actors forged ideas and networks, and as places in which the politics of intellectual life were practiced – were critical to the world we describe in this book. Makerere and its associated university colleges in Nairobi and Dar es Salaam – unified in 1963 under the University of East Africa (UEA) – continued to uphold colonial practices well into the 1950s against the tide of opinion in much of the student body. For example, in 1966, the mercurial writer Taban Lo Liyong lambasted the absurdity of his European style curriculum in a satirical faux autobiographical snippet:

> It would have grieved me much to discover that criticism killed Keats. I wonder if some critics will be so unfair to me as the barbarous *Quarterly* was to Keats. I will write an article one of these days and send it to Rajat Neogy – I wonder whether that name has more iams than trochees in it? It would be good to find out. That Professor of Literary Criticism who changes his two pairs of spectacles at every sentence should know. Last week he taught prosody, so I was told. I had to cut classes in order to study my French for an impending examination.[11]

By 1972, resistance to these Eurocentric epistemologies reached a more radical zenith in Ngũgĩ's manifesto *On the Abolition of the English Department* at the University of Nairobi, a landmark postcolonial intervention. However, in the decade before, the constituent parts of the soon-to-be UEA created a less theoretically radical *regional* elite who transformed East Africa's capitals into hothouses of ar-

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9 On the Makerere College University Society newsletter, produced by the long-serving drama lecturer and Makerere biographer Margaret Macpherson, see Margaret Macpherson, *They Built for the Future: A Chronicle of Makerere University College* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009). See also Anna Adima, "Anglophone Women's Writing and Public Culture in Kenya and Uganda, 1959–1976" (PhD thesis, University of York, 2022).

10 Milford, *African Activists*, 27–33; Frederick K. Byaruhanga, *Student Power in Africa's Higher Education: A Case of Makerere University* (New York: Routledge, 2013), 42–9; David Mills, "Life on the Hill: Students and the Social History of Makerere," *Africa: Journal of the International Africa Institute* 76, no. 2 (2006): 257.

11 Taban Lo Liyong, "The Education of Taban Lo Liyong," *Transition* 24 (1966): 16.

gument and intellectual possibility. *Transition* was at the centre of this movement, the most read journal of East Africa's literary 1960s.

Mobility across the region and conviviality on campus across nationality and ethnicity were crucial to this sense of possibility on the pages of *Transition* and allied journals. Campuses constituted remarkable transnational spaces that alumni and faculty alike sought to replicate in print. The Ugandan Asian novelist Bahadur Tejani, a classmate and friend of Ngũgĩ at Makerere from 1959–64, recalled that "we saw each other almost every day . . . one felt that if a person who was a close friend could shatter the barriers of silence, we could do it as well."[12] This energy was translated into action at speed on campus, in student publications such as *The Makererean* and *Penpoint*, both edited by the young Ngũgĩ. Moreover, as Tejani's comments suggest (and Ngũgĩ's subsequent career exemplified, with projects such as the Kamiriithu community theatre project), East Africa's emergent intellectuals had no fear of straying beyond the ivory tower. Instead, they embraced the challenge of engaging with society at large. Neogy's key aim was to empower the elite cultural community to which Tejani and Ngũgĩ belonged to shatter the "barriers of silence" imposed through colonialism. Intellectuals were, in other words, at the heart of the great political and social project of the day. In the introductory editorial, Neogy explained his experimental mission:

> this journal appears when East Africa is undergoing various and exciting changes. It is a time when idealism and action merge with various degrees of success. It is also a time for testing intellectual and other preconceptions and for thoughtful and creative contributions in all spheres. One of the questions this journal will address itself to is: 'What is an East African culture?'[13]

The decolonization of knowledge was, in Neogy's mind, key to the political struggle for freedom and not a separate process to be picked up at a later point.

Over the next decade, Neogy would marshal the interconnected institutions of East African literary spheres and Cold War funding to attempt to answer this knotted question about the definitions of East African culture. He would, in the process, present the world with a curation of the best of East African cultural production. In 1966, around half of *Transition*'s 12,000 copies per issue were shipped overseas, especially to Europe and North America. For Neogy, the success of these cultural endeavours as exercises in nation and region-building depended on East Africa's willingness to open itself up to world currents and permissive influences.

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12 Anne K. Koshi, "An Interview with Bahadur Tejani," *Ufahamu: A Journal of African Studies* 21, no. 3 (1993): 44.
13 Editorial, *Transition* 1, no. 1 (1961).

He argued that progressive cultural change relied on "how hospitable it is to ideas from outside, and how freely it delves into itself" as a result.[14] *Transition* stood at the interface of local and global in East Africa as a creative centre – a sorting house – where different scales of belonging with new nation-states, East African regionalisms and pan-African networks were very publicly contested. It was a microcosm of broader debates occurring throughout East African educational and creative venues, but also an exemplar of a particular liberal, cosmopolitan vision of the region that its proponents believed would define East Africa in the post-colonial, Cold War world.

In the 1960s-70s, *Transition* ran for 50 issues, 37 published from Kampala between 1961 and 1968, and a further 13 from Accra, Ghana, from 1971–74. It formed a central node in an ecosystem of local cultural institutions in the environs of East Africa's university towns. Ngũgĩ reminisced about the parties at Neogy's house in Kololo and the "mysterious", "beautiful" private secretary to the Kabaka, Barbara Kimenye, who would later become one of East Africa's most famous journalists and writers through her *Moses* series of children's books with Oxford University Press.[15] *Transition* was also, however, a conduit for something bigger than beau monde Kampala. It stood for a globally extraverted, pan-African community of feeling (and its allyship) which looked abroad for inspiration and comradeship. Alongside Ugandan poet Okot p'Bitek or the Kenyan journalist Hilary Ng'weno in the pages of *Transition* was Martin Luther King Jr, Langston Hughes, James Baldwin, J. P. Clark, Wole Soyinka, and the cream of pan-African letters.

Yet, in another sense, early *Transition* was not a total departure from the past represented in the *Uganda Journal* and expatriate world of Makerere. In scrambling to sustain his journal in its first three years, a large proportion of the content solicited from overseas came through networks of white academics, writers and journalists in Britain and the USA.[16] At a time in which European farmers, government officials and their families were otherwise leaving the region, many white intellectuals and administrators connected to the projects described in this book bucked the trend. As with some of the magazines and publishing houses discussed in later chapters, western authors often outnumbered African writers – by

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14 Rajat Neogy, "Do Magazines Culture?" *Transition* 24 (1966).

15 Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o, *Birth of a Dream Weaver,* 124; Anna Adima, "Mixed-ish: Race, Class and Gender in 1950s–60s Kampala Through a Life History of Barbara Kimenye," *Journal of Eastern African Studies* 16, no. 3 (2023): 355–374.

16 Harry Ransom Center (Hereafter HRC), Transcription Centre (TC) Collection, Box 17.17, R. Neogy circular to potential advertisers, 5 August 1963.

three to one in the inaugural issue of *Transition.* On a lesser scale, the recruitment of Neogy's acquaintances in the Anglo-American world continued throughout *Transition's* existence, for example with Neogy's close friend and extra-mural lecturer in English at Makerere, Paul Theroux who, in 1967, wrote an angry response to anti-Asian racism he saw on the street and in the East African press.[17] *Transition* and the other avowedly anti-colonial publications and organisations in this book ironically helped remake the notion of white expertise for a postcolonial East Africa.

The multi-racial cosmopolitanism pronounced by Neogy and others throughout the following chapters allowed them to accommodate, on some level, the tensions between their rhetoric of decolonization and the disproportionate influence of white allies. Less easily reconciled were the cultural projects' avowed claims to sovereignty and the external sources of funding on which so much of what we write about here came to depend. In every chapter of this book, the East African organisers of cultural activity had to confront the blunt economic legacies of colonial rule. Salaries for African workers were too low – and there were too few workers employed in the formal, salaried sector – to make trade union subscriptions the basis of a viable, locally-funded labour movement. For the same reason, newspapers and magazines could not be sustained solely through sales. Nor could African-owned businesses, at first at least, make up the difference through advertising. Academic research and cultural production were of low priority in the economic planning of both colonial governments and their successors, even when considerable thought was given to their importance. And publishers lacked the capital necessary to invest in printing equipment. To address all these needs essential to the foundation of a vibrant intellectual life, East Africans had little option but to look outside the region for funding. This in turn forced them to engage with the protagonists in the cultural Cold War; with British efforts to continue to exert influence over former colonial territories; and with the cultural diplomacy of a host of other states and organisations looking to curry favour with decolonising states and societies.

Neogy was no different in this regard. He struggled to maintain enough advertising revenue – largely from local East African Asian businesses – to keep early *Transition* afloat, so looked beyond East Africa's borders to the wider Anglophone world in

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17 Paul Theroux, "Hating the Asians," *Transition* 33 (1967). Theroux served as an Associate and Contributing Editor of the magazine in the late 1960s and early 1970s. Earlier members of the editorial team included the British social anthropologist Raymond Apthorpe, Dennis Williams of Guyana, George (later Kofi) Awoonor-Williams of Ghana, Chris Okigbo of Nigeria, and East Africans Ali Mazrui, Benjamin Mkapa, Francis Kasura and Ganesh Bangchi. Secretarial and advertising work from 1963-67 was carried out by four British and American women: Prudence-Rowe-Smith, Leigh Buchanan Bienen, Judy James and Valerie Hume.

which he was so comfortable. In 1962, on the recommendation of Seth Spaulding of the US Office of Education, who had served on a UNESCO mission in Kampala, Neogy asked the prominent American poet James Laughlin to finance *Transition* through Laughlin's experimental New Directions press in order to "find and encourage East African writing . . . [and] also to provide a link to international cultural streams, to widen perspectives and exchange ideas and not get stuck in an East African community alone".[18] Neogy would eventually find a steady income, and the ability for *Transition* to become sustainable, having secured a grant from the CCF through its second Africa director, the exiled South African author, Ezekiel Mphahlele (known as Es'kia from 1977). Such grants were not generous. In January 1963, Neogy wrote to the CCF director in Paris, John Hunt, to complain that his £2000 annual grant barely covered half his expenses.[19] But, persistent financial grumblings aside, the CCF link placed *Transition* more formally in a network of cultural projects that had the possibility of cooperating with one another.

The closest publication and initial inspiration for *Transition* was *Black Orpheus*, the publication of the Nigerian Mbari cultural clubs founded in Ibadan in 1957 and first CCF sponsored institutions in Africa. The CCF's African portfolio included the anti-apartheid *New African* and *The Classic*, exiled from Cape Town and Johannesburg to London.[20] Neogy, Ulli Beier, the German editor of *Black Orpheus*, and Neville Rubin, editor of the *New African*, corresponded copiously and met in person at the 1962 Makerere conference. John Hunt also encouraged the network to advertise the CCF's flagship magazine, London's *Encounter*, and other CCF publications with mixed success.[21] British publishing houses, such as Heinemann, André Deutsch and Cambridge University Press, were quick to snap up and market contributors to these publications and provide advertising revenue.[22] *Transition's* network also benefited from close collaboration with a local CCF sponsored institution, Nairobi's Chemchemi Cultural Centre. Established in 1963 under Mphahlele, who had worked in West Africa with the exemplar Nigerian Mbari clubs from 1957–61, Chemchemi promoted four aspects of East African cultural life: visual arts, music, theatre and creative writing.

18 Wole Soyinka Papers, Harvard University, MS Am 2077 (1839), Africa Correspondence, folder 1, R. Neogy to J. Laughlin, 18 February 1962.

19 HRC, TC 17.17, R. Neogy to J. Hunt, 23 January 1963.

20 Peter Benson, *Black Orpheus, Transition, and Modern Cultural Awakening in Africa* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1986); Randolphe Vigne and James Currey, *The New African: A History* (London: Merlin Press, 2015).

21 International Association for Cultural Freedom (IACF), Box 38, E. Mpahahlele to R. Neogy, 5 August 1963; J Hunt to R. Neogy, 22 May 1963.

22 James Currey, "Literary Publishing After Nigerian Independence: Mbari as Celebration," *Research in African Literature*s 44, no. 2, (2013): 8–16.

Through workshops, use of its studios, theatre facilities and reference library, Chemchemi attempted to grow creative art in the region from the bottom up.[23] In October 1965, Mphahlele resigned as Chemchemi director claiming he was, as planned, stepping back to enable a Kenyan to take the reins.[24]

A final allied CCF institution was the London Transcription Centre, "that dependable haven to passing African writers", founded in 1962 by Dennis Duerden, a former BBC Hausa service producer and soon key node in the transnational Anglophone African writers and artists community.[25] Duerden placed Neogy on the Transcription Centre advisory committee within the year, alongside Professor W. E. Abraham from the University of Ghana, Edward Shils of Cambridge University and T. W. Chalmers, special assistant to the head of overseas and foreign relations at the BBC.[26] The London Transcription Centre specialised in radio broadcasts of interviews with prominent African and Caribbean writers and cultural figures in its "Africa Abroad" weekly strand, edited by the renowned South African author (and *Transition* contributor) Lewis Nkosi from March 1962, a programme broadcast on the continent in Zambia, Ghana, Nigeria, and Sierra Leone. Duerden also acted an agent, promoter, purveyor of loans and administrative trouble-shooter for a range of African cultural figures, such as the South African jazz musicians Dollar Brand and Chris McGregor who found themselves in financial straits in London. In collaboration with Mbari and *Transition*, from December 1964 Transcription produced a monthly information bulletin, *Cultural Events in Africa*, which brought news of new books, productions, exhibitions and shows to a world audience. Duerden's activities were "insistently multivocal, placing Africans from different countries in dialogue".[27] It was partially through this dialogue and place within the network that Neogy was able to populate the editions of his magazine and himself connect East African cultural figures with other cultural players within the pan-African world.

The window for such experimentation ultimately proved to be narrow. In 1967, the revelation of CIA backing for the CCF created consternation in the decolonising world. The CCF reduced and soon withdrew financial support from institutions like the Transcription Centre, which soon withered away. But, as for other similar ven-

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23 Ezekiel Mphahlele, "Chemchemi Creative Centre, Nairobi," *The Journal of Modern African Studies* 3, no. 1 (1965): 115–117.

24 "Chemchemi Director Resigns," *Daily Nation*, 12 October 1965; Mphahlele, *Afrika, My Music*, Chapter 2.

25 Wole Soyinka, *You Must Set Forth at Dawn* (London: Methuen, 2008), 85; For a brief history of Transcription Centre activities see Gerald Moore, "The Transcription Centre in the Sixties: Navigating the Narrow Seas," *Research in African Literatures* 33, no. 3 (2002).

26 HRC, TC 17.17, D. Duerden to R. Neogy, 22 January 1963.

27 Jordana Bailkin, "The Sounds of Independence? Lessons from Africa and Beyond at the Transcription Centre Archive," *History Workshop Journal* no. 78 (2014): 233.

tures discussed below, the true costs of Neogy's dependence on CCF funding became apparent as the authoritarian political opponents of the proponents of the liberal, cosmopolitan brand of East African regionalism stepped up their attacks. Amidst the scandal over Neogy's indirect receipt of CIA funds, the Ugandan government of Milton Obote seized the opportunity to silence the criticism published in *Transition*, banning the magazine in 1968 and imprisoning Neogy. In 1971 – and with Neogy now in exile – the overthrow of Obote by Idi Amin augured a military authoritarianism that "scattered Makereans and Ugandans to the four corners of the world: no social sector was spared. To Amin and his soldiers, Makerere was the site of an educated elite to be humiliated and made to serve the soldiers".[28] Yet for a decade before, the institutions that existed alongside and within *Transition's* ecosystem were energetic in discussing how East African intellectual, political and creative futures should be built. It is to the ideas and debates in their pages and on their canvasses that the chapter now turns.

Past and Present

In his scathing review of the 1962 Makerere Conference in issue four of *Transition*, the Nigerian writer Obi Wali concluded that "African literature as now defined and understood leads nowhere . . . African literature as now understood and practiced is only a minor appendage in the mainstream of European literature. Both creative writers and literary critics read and devour European literature and critical methods." Pre-figuring Ngũgĩ of 1972, Wali argued that in failing to anchor writing in African languages and cultural traditions – over allegiance to "western midwives" – African literary production was doomed from its outset.[29] The question of how the African past should be reckoned with in the postcolonial present became a first order question in early *Transition* and the literary works it helped birth. Ngũgĩʻs own first publication, the aforementioned 1962 short story "The Return", narrated the life a newly released Mau Mau detainee in Kenya who lamented that the world had moved on without him.[30]

Although hitting public consciousness through *Transition*, "The Return" had first been published in *Penpoint*, the student journal of the Makerere English Department student, which Makerere graduate Ali Mazrui later argued could claim to have honed "more creative writers in English than any other Department, at

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28 Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o *Birth of a Dream Weaver*, 222.
29 Obiajunwa Wali "The Dead End of African Literature," *Transition* 4, no. 10 (1963): 13–15.
30 James Ngugi, "The Return," *Transition* no. 3 (1962).

home and abroad".[31] The supervisor of *Penpoint*, and mentor to the young Tejani and Ngũgĩ, was the British literature lecture David Cook, who oversaw a group of young writers engaged in experimental prose, poetry and scripts that wrestled with themes of the priorities of Africanisation in the context of their Eurocentric learning.

In 1965, Cook edited *Origin East Africa*, an anthology of short stories, plays and poems by 25 Makerereans associated with *Penpoint* over its foundational years.[32] For Simon Gikandi, like Wali, the alienation of African history under colonial knowledge production was abundant in *Origins*. Across in the History Department, Bethwell Ogot recalled that African history was not incorporated into the syllabus until 1959. However, Gikandi also noted how new Africanising creative spaces emerged to repurpose such western forms to new decolonial ends. On *Origin East Africa*, he wrote "that what strikes the reader most is not their imitation of European form, but the ways in which their mastery of the Great Tradition would enable them to introduce African topics into their poetry or prose . . . a vague and tentative attempt to recuperate a precolonial African tradition in literary discourse."[33] A key conflict in Africa's literary sphere emerged. Should East African writers centre African languages and traditions as the beating heart of cultural production, or should they offer up pragmatic solutions to overcoming colonial legacies that made best use of what was left after independence towards Africanising ends? Before 1972's *Abolition of the English Department*, this was an open question.

The Ugandan Asian writer Peter Nazareth's contribution to *Origin*, the play *Brave New Cosmos*, underlined the sense of dispute about the relationship between new and old ways amongst East Africa's young intellectuals as three Ugandan students, Karanja, Kiwanuka and Kaggwa, sparred about the relationship between modernity and their lives as students:

> KARANJA: Don't be ridiculous! Sit under a *tree?* What is the library for? All the books one needs are in the library. And it has a wonderful atmosphere for studying. Only an idiot would think of studying in the open.

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31 Ali Mazrui, *The Trial of Christopher Okigbo* (London: Heinemann, 1971), 41–42.

32 David Cook (ed.) *Origin East Africa. A Makerere Anthology* (London: Heinemann, 1965); Carol Sicherman, "Ngugi's Colonial Education: 'The Subversion of the African Mind,'" *African Studies Review* 38, no. 3 (1993): 11–42.

33 Simon Gikandi, "East African Literature in English," in *The Cambridge History of African and Caribbean Literature,* ed. Simon Gikandi & F. Abiola Irele (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 428.

KIWANUKA: But at least *you* believe in reading in the open! Surely you must if you read Wordsworth!

KAGGWA: Why should one study in the open? Yes, I read Wordsworth, but that doesn't mean I should study like a caveman instead of a modern civilised human being!

[KIWANUKA *stares at* KAGGWA, *amazed. Then shrugs*][34]

In the pages of *Penpoint* and *Dhana* in Kampala and the University of Nairobi English department publication, *Busara*, young African writers appealed to the communal past to assert freedom from colonial institutions and create artistic practices more applicable to East African contexts over the 1960s.[35] For instance, Mary Kimori's 1969 article in *Busara* "What Future Drama?" noted the lack of "authentically East African" plays and, like Nazareth's Kiwanuka, proposed reanimating outdoor communal viewings – "popular village opera" – faithful to historical entertainment practices. "We need not wait until we have a magnificent stage with elaborate lighting effects and other aids [. . .] we are already in a position to use our bodies and voices – the most important tools for dramatic activity – for popular entertainment."[36] Several of these young students found their experimental essays and short stories published in *Transition*, which sponsored creative writing competitions locally, and thus opened up East Africa's creative scene to a global audience and scrutiny. In 1968, a member of the editorial board of *Penpoint* echoed Neogy to note the purpose of the magazine to help those "who feel restricted by traditional patterns of literary expression – who feel that what they have to say can be put differently and must be put so".[37]

Faith in the necessity of looking back critically to, and further beyond, the colonial era to make sense of the present pervaded much literary output produced by EAPH or Heinemann, the outputs of which were carefully reviewed in *Transition* and the Transcription's "Africa Abroad" radio shows. Historical fiction – with the mission to explain the contemporary world as parts of larger historical processes – proved one of the most important genres of East Africa's elite literary production and review. This diachronic approach characterised Ngũgĩ's early novels from *Weep Not Child* (1964) to *Petals of Blood* (1977), which narrated in increasingly radical ways how the experience and legacies of the Mau Mau

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34 Cook (ed.), *Origin East Africa*, 177.

35 For a recent study of *Busara* see Madhu Krishnan, "Citizenship, Responsibility and Literary Culture in the University Periodical in Eastern Africa: Spaces of Social Production in *Busara* and its Networks," in *The Edinburgh Companion to British colonial periodicals*, eds. David Finkelstein, David Johnson and Caroline Davis (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2024), 531–541.

36 Mary Kimori, "What Future Drama," *Busara* 2, no. 3 (1969): 35–37.

37 Editorial, *Penpoint*, no. 24 (1968): 1.

war related to the failed hopes of independence as the Kenyatta regime grew in power and repression over the late 1960s and 1970s. The Mau Mau novel provided a more widely used tool with which to debate nation-building and its relationship to Kenya's past. Such themes were prominent, for example, in Charity Waciuma's autobiographical novel *Daughter of Mumbi* (1969) which grappled with issues of allegiance to Kikuyu tradition against alternative forms of modernity. Similarly, Grace Ogot's *The Promised Land* (1966) concerned the alienation of migrant Kenyan Luo workers in colonial Tanganyika, narrated through ideas of Luo mysticism, and was "one of the first East African novelists in English to represent tradition as a bulwark against modern alienation".[38]

Most famously, in Uganda, Okot p'Bitek – a frequent and outspoken *Transition* contributor – published the epic satirical poem *The Song of Lawino* (1966), a passionate historically attuned attempt to deploy Acholi language and cultural pride to reject colonial frames, becoming "highly critical of attempts to interpret African religions and philosophies in terms of European and Christian ideologies".[39] The protagonist Ocol, fascinated with European ways, was soon "captured" by ghosts to become a "walking corpse" such that his wife Lawino calls him "a dog of the white man":

> *He cannot hear*
> *The insults of foreigners*
> *Who say*
> *The songs of black men are rubbish!*
> *When the master is eating*
> *They* [dogs] *lie by the door*
> *And keep guard*
> *While waiting for left-overs.*[40]

In 1980, p'Bitek recalled:

> all my writings, whether they are anthropological monographs, studies of religion, essays, songs, poems or even traditional stories and proverbs such as I am collecting now, all of them are ammunition for one big battle: the battle to decide where we here in Africa are going and what kind of society we are building.[41]

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38 Simon Gikandi, "East African Literature in English," 428. Charity Waciuma, *Daughter of Mumbi* (Nairobi: East African Publishing House, 1969); Adima, "Anglophone Women's Writing," 95–8; Grace Ogot, *The Promised Land* (Nairobi: East African Publishing House, 1966).

39 Tim Allen, "The Rage of Okot P'Bitek: Colonial Perspectives on a Failed Oxford Doctorate", accessed 28 February 2024. https://blogs.lse.ac.uk/africaatlse/2019/07/12/rage-okot-pbitek-colonial-perspectives/.

40 Okot p'Bitek, *The Song of Lawino* (Nairobi: East African Publishing House, 1966).

41 Bernth Lindfors, *Mazungumzo: Interviews with East African writers, publishers, editors and scholars* (Athens OH: Ohio University, 1980), 143.

Such questions about past and future emerged forcefully too in the visual art scene in East Africa, at the university and in the three cooperative regional galleries: Kibo (Marangu), Nommo (Kampala) and Paa ya Paa (Nairobi). At the so-called Foundation course at the department of Art and Architecture at University College Nairobi during the mid-1960s, Selby Mvusi and Derek Morgan sought to generate a new "realization of time-consciousness" through radical pedagogy for students from across East Africa.[42] Formal art and art historical training had been part of East Africa's university landscape since the foundation of the Margaret Trowell School at Makerere in 1937. Debates about Trowell's influence as a champion of indigenous African aesthetic practices against her attachment to colonial pedagogies continue.[43] But, in the 1950s, as Africanisation debates gathered momentum, disputes broke out between Trowell's students the Ugandan sculptor Gregory Maloba and Tanganyikan painter Sam Ntiro over the value of "mythologising African pasts".[44] Maloba was eager to push away from Trowell's insistence on subordinating technique to local subject matter. "For me, there is no art without abstraction if during my moments of high artistic practice I said to myself 'Now I am going to produce something African' I would just come to a standstill".[45] Here Maloba clashed with Ntiro whose work *Men Taking Banana Beer to Bride by Night* (1956) presented a a simple, striking and idealised Chagga past set against the verdant slopes of southern Kilimanjaro to signal the direction of the future.[46] As Africanisation imperatives intensified into the 1960s, local artists in the region gravitated to Ntiro and Trowell over Maloba according to the art historian George Kyeyune.[47]

Beyond the campus, the development of artistic capacity became a priority for parts of the CCF network, in particular Dennis Duerden's Transcription Centre, which used its links with the Institute of Contemporary Art in London and the 1964 Commonwealth Festival in Cardiff to commission and sell works of Afri-

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42 Daniel Magaziner, "The Foundation: Design, Time, and Possibility in 1960s Nairobi," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 60, no. 3 (2018): 599–628.

43 Emma Wolukau-Wanambwa, "Margaret Trowell's School of Art or How to Keep the Children's Work Really African," *The Palgrave Handbook of Race and the Arts in Education*, ed. Amelia M. Kraehe et. al. (London: Palgrave, 2018), 85–101.

44 George Kyeyune, "Art in Uganda in the Twentieth Century" (PhD thesis, Makerere University, 2003).

45 "Gregory Maloba Talks About His Childhood and His Growth as a Sculptor," *Transition* no. 11 (1963): 22.

46 Gabriella Nugent, "Memories of Chagga Country: Sam Ntiro," *Post. Notes on Art in Global Context*, 23 March 2022, accessed 26 February 2025, https://post.moma.org/memories-of-chagga-country-sam-ntiro.

47 Kyeyune, "Art in Uganda".

can visual artists. This provided a material lifeline to enable creators like Jimi Okolo of Nigeria to concentrate on their creative process over taking a lay job.[48] This was a fact acknowledged by East Africa's most famous artist, Elimo Njau, in his correspondence with Duerden.[49] Njau, like Maloba, had concerns about the dearth of technical skills in East Africa's art world. As such, Njau and Duerden arranged for the South African art and architecture professor, Julian Beinart, to travel to Nairobi in 1965 to provide the art summer school he had run at Mbari in Nigeria, Mozambique and South Africa to sixty students at Chemchemi. Beinart hoped to encourage his students there to "regard art less as an esoteric profession than as a popular and communal endeavour" that might plug into the longer-term projects of Chemchemi to grow local artistic production and consumption within communities.[50] While in Kenya, Beinart also did interviews for the Kenya Broadcasting Corporation and the East African Institute of Social and Cultural Affairs (EAISCA) not least about his other passion – South African and American jazz – on which another Chemchemi seminar was held.

As with *Transition*'s authorship and readership, and the fixing role of men like Duerden, East Africa's art scene of the 1960s involved the interaction of Black East Africans and sojourning white cultural organisers. The first director of Kampala's Nommo Art Gallery, founded in 1964 after the donation of a building by the Buganda government, was Barbara Brown, a former American model, curator, fundraiser and later second wife to Neogy.[51] However, the ideas germinated in these new spaces aligned with Beinart's call for more "communal" attitudes to visual art and African culture. In *Transition* in November 1963, Njau introduced the new Kibo gallery in Marangu, Moshi, Tanganyika as:

> like a mango tree; too slow in growth to compete with ephemeral fashions of the art world; but with roots too deep in the soil to be uprooted by any shallow wind of 'civilisation'. We dedicate it to the young generation who claim to be true sons of Africa in hope that they will face the challenge to live truly in the poor circumstances of their homes in the villages, deserts of countryside and uplift the old Africa to new spiritual heights and depths unknown to modern materialistic world![52]

Njau elaborated on East Africa's cultural wealth in an article for an earlier issue of *Transition*, where he argued that African artists must reject western cultures

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48 HRC, TC Collection: 12.11, Jimi Akolo.

49 HRC, TC Collection: 12.10, E. Njau to D. Duerden, 15 September 1965.

50 HRC, TC Collection: 12.10, J. Beinart "Report on Visit to East Africa and Europe – December 1964 – March 1965, Sponsored by the Farfield Foundation."

51 "Barbara Kimenye Talks to the Busiest Girl in Town," *Daily Nation* 3 November 1964.

52 Elimo Njau, "Kibo Art Gallery," *Transition* no. 11 (1963): 13.

and "pool all our resources to restore the soul of this vital man – the artist. If he has no soul, Africa has no soul, if he has a split personality the African personality also gets split."[53] He called on East African governments to enact copyright legislation not only to protect contemporary art works but their seed: "traditional folklore".[54] For many at the Chemchemi Centre, where Njau worked as visual director before Kibo, the mission was to "search for the broken threads of traditional idioms of culture". But this was a search for the past in dialogue with the contemporary. "Chemchemi wants to remind itself that a tradition that stays put like a monument to a past and cannot be shifted and made to bear on the present-day problems remains mere history", wrote Mphahele as director.[55] Images of Njau's art, like those of many contemporaries peppered most editions of *Transition*. Debates about "authentic" African heritage and its relationship with the modern world, produced in environments indebted to Euro-American finance and time, remained a meta question which pervaded every issue throughout the 1960s.[56]

Local and Global: Scales of Belonging

The exploration into the relationship between ethnically patriotic pasts and the post-colonial present in *Transition* and its allied institutions coalesced into contentious debate about African autochthony over the mid-1960s. The running questions of who could belong as an East African, and how, raged. Much of its controversy in these sources derived from the location of the labour and creativity underpinning *Transition* and its contributors: the multicultural city. As mentioned, the participants in Neogy's editions were notable for their multiracial composition: from British lecturers to American poets, East African Asian political scientists and Black African novelists. Several early issues of the magazine addressed the nature of tense race relations in the East African city in rather dry academic fashions, analysing colonial taxonomy for example.[57] But few pieces truly grappled with the visceral populist, material African urban grievances that

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53 Elimo Njau, "Copying Puts God to Sleep," *Transition* 9 (1963): 17.

54 KNA MAC/EAU/25, Elimo Njau, "Some Talking Points for the Symposium on Art," 16 September 1963 at "The Machinery of Planning" Public Policy Conference, University of East Africa, Kampala, 15–21 September 1963.

55 *Chemchemi African Creative Centre presents Paintings and Sculptures by Elimo Njau* (Nairobi: Chemchemi publishing, 1964), 2.

56 An even more integrated visual art component marked *Black Orpheus*. P. Benson, "'Border Operators': Black Orpheus and the Genesis of Modern African Art and Literature," *Research in African Literatures* 14, no. 4 (1983): 431–473.

57 E.g. J.E. Goldthorpe, "Race Relations in East Africa," *Transition* 1, no. 1 (1961).

had sparked conflagrations like the anti-Asian protests in Buganda in 1949, and continued to form a key strand of more muscular urban African nationalisms across the region in the 1950s.[58]

Neogy's early life was rooted in this multicultural city. As a teenager, he was involved in advocacy for a non-racial public sphere and common roll through the Asian Uganda Action Group, an uneasy ally to the Uganda National Congress. In 1959, Neogy called for "an intellectual breakaway from the feudalism of Asian thinking in Uganda in the past" through new print cultures "not restricted on racial lines".[59] This represented a progressive strand of East African Asian thought, largely amongst second and third generation community members, that called for accommodative Afro-Asian change in the 1960s. In Kenya, the Ghai brothers "acknowledged that Asians will have to accept radical, at times painful, changes in their present positions, attitudes, and behaviour" at the same time as Africans should recognise the various forms of positive Asian economic contributionism as opposed to base populist accusations of Asian neocolonial vampirism.[60]

The early editions of *Transition* dealt with this "general problem of modernisation, which implies not only economic development but also the adjustment of social institutions and attitudes to the exigencies of the modern world".[61] Neogy himself took the lead. In his 1966 editorial "Do magazines culture?" he argued that interventions like *Transition* could drive forward an accommodative, dynamic East Africa to expunge the remnants of colonialism. He drew a dichotomy between "do cultures" and "don't cultures". The latter were "akin to frustrated spinsters in a family. They are censorious, opinionated, smug, complacent, and intent on preserving the 'tradition' . . . indicative of a dying out phase". He celebrated East Africa's new "do culture", which was "permissive, experimental, vigorous and challenging".[62] At its foundation, he declared that "I do not like to think of it [*Transition*] as a magazine which has even to think in terms of or be conscious of the racial composition of its contributors."[63] His fellow Kampala resident, and former classmate of Ngũgĩ at Makerere, Bahadur Tejani took forward

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58 Edgar Taylor, "Claiming Kabale: Racial Thought and Urban Governance in Uganda," *Journal of Eastern African Studie*s 7, no. 1 (2013): 143–163; James R. Brennan, *Taifa: Making Race and Nation in Tanzania* (Athens: Ohio University Press, 2012).

59 "Party seeks those who 'believe in Uganda'," *Uganda Argus*, 13 February 1959.

60 Dharam P. Ghai & Yash P. Ghai, "Asians in East Africa: Problems and Prospects," *Journal of Modern African Studies* 3, no. 1 (1965): 35–51.

61 Abiola Irele, Review of *Transition*, no. 1–3 in *Journal of Modern African Studies* 3, no. 3 (1967): 442–447.

62 Neogy, "Do magazines culture?"

63 Interview with R. Neogy for African Writers Club (BBC radio), c. 1962, available at http://sounds.bl.uk/.

such ideas into more dramatic literary ground. His novel, *The Day After Tomorrow*, written in 1967 and published by EAPH in 1971, presented a sexually charged vision of a new edenic East African civilisation, free of racial inhibition.[64] Through throwing off the shackles of social divisions by intimate cross-racial relationships (a culturally embellished version of the Ghai brothers' arguments) a more harmonious East Africa could be constructed.

A similar call to disentangle race from East African belonging was voiced by Peter Nazareth in the pages of *Transition* in 1965:

> no African who writes about society in present-day Africa can avoid being committed and political, not in a sense of party-politics, but in the sense that every attempt to reorganise society in Africa is a move which affects everybody, the figures at the top and the bottom. I would think that the African writer who condemned colonialism . . . because it led to exploitation and the loss of human values, is hardly likely to be satisfied with the old systems are retained with the only difference that Africans have replaced Europeans.[65]

An attempt to minimise ethnic divisions, which Neogy asserted had been exacerbated under colonialism, marked such attempts at politicised social engineering in the context of Afro-Asian tensions of old.

The literary critic Michael Echureo noted that figures such as Neogy tended to "ignore what he regarded as the petty issue of race and nationhood".[66] But despite the inclusion of many essays on African ethnic pasts in *Transition* – for example Okot p'Bitek's dissection of Acholi love in issue 17 – the editorial insistence on downplaying the salience of deeply rooted ethnicised pasts – the concerns of Okot p'Bitek – ran into vocal opposition. Despite being rooted in the cosmopolitan space of Kampala, for Echureo Neogy's "Africa was not really Africa at all. He was attached to Uganda, but it might just as well have been Kenya or Zambia. Neogy was equally at home in Kampala as he was in Paris or Ghana. For him and for Mazrui, nationalism and culture were valid as long as they were not tied to locality and ethnicity: to a people and to a history."[67] This sat uncomfortably with populist African nationalist movements in Uganda and across the region. Tejani's expulsion with the Uganda Asian community in 1972 by Idi Amin proved, as for Nazareth and many others, to be an emotively painful experience, one rooted in conflicting

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64 Dan Ojwang, "The Half-Caste and the Dream of Secularism and Freedom: Insights from East African Asian Writing," *Scrutiny2: Issues in English Studies in Southern Africa* 13, no. 2 (2008): 33–34. Stephanie Jones, "The First South Asian East African novel: Bahadur Tejani's Day after Tomorrow." *Contemporary South Asia* 17, no. 1 (2009): 33–46.

65 Peter Nazareth, "The African Writer and Commitment," *Transition* 4, no. 19 (1965): 6.

66 Michael J. Echureo, "From Transition to Transition," *Research in African Literatures* 22, no. 4 (1991): 138.

67 Ibid.

perceptions of race and the right to belong within East African nation-building. Tejani left for the USA, declaring in *Transition* that "being a Ugandan was a birthright. Not a privilege. To be handed certificates of citizenship was allowing us to kick a mother: the soil on which one grew up, the school walls on which we wrote our first four-letter words, the clamour of first stolen kisses, the fear of sex, parents, race, the dead under the ground."[68] Not everyone agreed on this birthright.

Another route to overcome the artificial divisions of the colonial past was the framing of a distinctly East African community, a method abundantly apparent in *Transition* and its network. A variety of opinions were contained in the issues on East Africa's regional moment. In 1961, Makerere economics lecturer Semei Nyanzi surveyed the prospects of the East African Common Market, sceptical about the inequalities between Kenya, Tanganyika and Uganda and calling for, at best, a limited and "loose agreement" to let each nation chart its own course into independence.[69] This was taken up more sternly in Grace Ibingira's "obituary" of East African unity in 1965, a lament at power politicking in the respective ruling parties whose leaders would not pool sovereignty to sufficient degrees to make a federation work.[70]

Beyond the individual articles on political and economic affairs, however, a profound sense of regional connection bound *Transition* together. Neogy himself framed his categorisations of the intellectuals in his network as "East African" and rarely by nationality. "Persuasion, not confrontation, has always been the East African intellectual's mode of operation".[71] He made a conscious effort to represent all three East African territories in his issues. What might not work in the corridors of political power could in East Africa's regional cultural community. During Neogy's interview on Transcription's "Africa Abroad" in 1963, producer and presenter Lewis Nkosi introduced Neogy as "an Indian, though I doubt if he would take kindly to such classification. He certainly regards himself merely as a citizen of East Africa. No more no less".[72] This regionalist sensibility pervaded the making of literary anthologies throughout the period. In 1971, the EAPH collection *Poems from East Africa,* edited by David Cook and David Rubadiri, consciously included 50 contributors – most of whom had written for *Transition* – relatively equally from across Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda, including Taban Lo Liyong (Uganda)

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68 Bahadur Tejani "Farewell Uganda," *Transition* no. 45 (1974). John Scheckter, "Peter Nazareth and the Ugandan Expulsion: Pain, Distance, Narration." *Research in African Literatures* 27, no. 2 (1996): 83–93.

69 Semei Nyanzi, "The East African Market: For Better or Worse," *Transition* no. 2 (1961): 20.

70 Grace Ibingira, "Political Movements and their Role in Promoting Unity in East Africa," *Transition* no. 20 (1965): 37–42.

71 Rajat Neogy, "On Being an African Intellectual," *Transition* no. 123 (2017): 49–50.

72 Bailkin, "The Sounds of Independence?": 234.

and John Mbiti (Kenya), alongside numerous East African South Asian-origin writers Jagjit Singh (Kenya), Yusuf Kassam (Tanzania) and Tejani (Uganda).[73]

As arguments about the role of history, region and nation-building rumbled on within East Africa, so too did debates about bigger scales of sovereignty within decolonising pan-African contexts. Duerden had long hooked up continental African writers with their diasporan comrades at the Transcription Centre, while Neogy regularly invited Caribbean and African-American figures into his journal both as contributors and, above all, readers. Mbari remained the centerpiece of the network for Duerden and the CCF, but an institution fraternally linked to *Transition*. Ghanaian poet George (later Kofi) Awoonor-Williams sat on Neogy's editorial team from 1963-64 and again from 1966-68. Nigerian poet Christopher Okigbo, an attendee of Makerere 1962 and the West Africa contact for Oxford University Press, became *Transition's* West Africa correspondent.[74]

But, true to the feel of contestation apparent within *Transition* and its network, there was no simple story of reinforcing comfortable pan-African cosmopolitanisms. The famous clash between Kwame Nkrumah and Julius Nyerere on the sequencing and magnitude of pan-African organisation – a conflict on the extent to which national sovereignty should be pooled on a continental scale over the 1960s – was the tip of the iceberg in thinking (and disagreeing) about pan-Africanism in East Africa's 1960s.[75] Fissures quickly formed within the network between East Africa and West African views on race and liberty. Mphahlele was outspoken against *négritude* in argument with his predecessor as CCF Africa Director, the African-American scholar, Senghor expert and later US diplomat in Francophone West Africa, Mercer Cook.[76] By 1963, Mphahlele responded angrily to what he perceived to be repetitive attacks on him at the "Conference on African literature and the university curriculum" in Dakar, Senegal, by "fire-eater", "proselytyzing" activists association with *Présence Africaine*, "paralysing a sense of African solidarity".[77] The South African, Lewis Nkosi

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73 David Cook and David Rubadiri, *Poems from East Africa* (Nairobi: East African Publishing House, 1971).

74 Obi Nwakanma, *Christopher Okigbo, 193–67* (Oxford: James Currey, 2010).

75 Issa Shivji, "Nationalism and Pan-Africanism: Decisive Moments in Nyerere's Intellectual and Political Thought," *Review of African Political Economy*, 39, no. 131 (2012): 103–116; Chambi Chachage, "African unity – Feeling with Nkrumah, Thinking with Nyerere," *Pambazuka News*, 9 April 2009.

76 M. Cook and E. Mphahlele "The African Personality – Two Views," *The New Leader* (New York), 24 October 1960; G. Massé, "Cold War and Black transnationalism: Aimé Césaire and Mercer Cook at the first International Congress of Black Writers and Artists," *Palimpsest: A Journal on Women, Gender, and the Black International* 4, no. 2 (2015): 115–34.

77 Ezekiel Mphalele, "Confidential Report on the Conferences on African Literature in French and English and the University Curriculum," 26 March to 8 April 1963.

(Duerden's second in command at Transcription and *Transition* contributor) saw the spat as "the result of emotional entanglements rather than "genuine disagreement", a product of Mphahlele's experiences of the racial oppressions in apartheid South Africa and a certain reductive interpretation of the restrictions on Black writers writing against colonial structures.[78] Neogy agreed with Mphahlele: "Negritude as a concept I'm afraid cuts absolutely no ice in East Africa".[79] Despite his commitments to pan-African networking through his magazine and beyond, true to his views on East African autochthony, racially exclusive ideas had no place for Neogy.

The Political Turn in the Late 1960s

Transition's content and the texts reviewed within became bolder, brasher and more locally politicised into the latter 1960s. *Transition* had always included overtly political content in its early years both to fill column inches in the absence of enough literary criticism, academic commentary and creative writing, but also to air the topical issues of the moment. Top ranking East African politicians used the magazine, and its significant readership at home and overseas, as a soapbox. Kenneth Kaunda theorised about democracy in Africa as he became president of Zambia; Julius Nyerere extolled the virtues of one-party government; Tom Mboya published an essay in 1963 on "African socialism", a piece bursting with his confidence in the ability to control economic and developmental liaisons with now post-colonial western partners.[80]

This provoked questions within the network about what exactly *Transition* was for. In 1965, a discussion on "Africa Abroad" between John Nagenda, Bethwell Ogot, Erisa Kironde, and Ali Mazrui on the purpose of *Transition* asked whether it should remain a literary and creative journal above all (like *Black Orpheus)*, and leave political commentary to the press or *East Africa Journal* (see Chapter two), or remain a mix of both. The latter emerged as the pragmatic consensus.[81] *Transition's* political analysis went from strength to strength. In his 1965 review of the

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78 Lewis Nkosi, *Tasks and Masks: Themes and Styles in African Literature* (Harlow: Longman, 1979), 16–19.

79 Interview with R. Neogy for "Africa Abroad" (BBC radio), c. 1962, available at http://sounds.bl.uk/.

80 Kenneth Kaunda, "The Future of Democracy in Africa," *Transition*, no. 15 (1964): 37–39; Julius Nyerere, "One Party Government," *Transition* no. 2 (1961): 9–11; Tom Mboya, "African Socialism," *Transition* no. 8 (1963): 17–19.

81 HRC, TC Collection, 24.4 "Appendix A – Discussion of Transition with John Nagenda, Bethwell Ogot, Kironde and Ali Mazrui."

first 32 issues, F. Abiola Irele announced that "what is really gratifying is the amount of discussion in its columns provoked by theories about Africa. They are analysed, queries commented upon, queried, turned inside out as it were – and sometimes more closely scrutinised in the correspondence section than in the main columns"[82] Again, *Transition* curated a public discussion about the nature of democracy and statehood in Africa for the local intelligentsia and the hundreds of academic, governmental and private subscribers around the world.

This mission to platform debate, as at Transcription's "Africa Abroad" round-tables, made way for something more direct in *Transition* into 1966 and 1967. As Peter Kalliney argues, Neogy and many others in his network such as Okigbo had in their poetry long "repurposed modernist versions of aesthetic autonomy to declare their freedom from colonial bondage, from systems of racial discrimination, and even from the new postcolonial state."[83] Upset by the direction of authoritarian creep, Neogy commissioned a series of articles that did not pull their punches on Kalliney's last point. Ali Mazrui was the most provocative responder, writing several articles in 1967 critiquing the "Tanzaphilia" of the international left in praising Nyerere's one-party state and, particularly provocatively, lampoooning Nkrumah as a "Leninist Czar" after his deposition. "Both essays were incendiary, reinforcing *Transition's* prestige as a magazine that set no store by orthodoxies."[84] In 1968, the *New York Times* applauded that "a questing irreverence breathes out of the pages of every issue."[85]

This thinking chimed with other work published within the network community. Ngũgĩ's 1967 novel *Grain of Wheat* lamented that the fruits of Uhuru were not enjoyed by those who had fought colonial oppression, rather avaricious new elites:

> But now, whom do we see riding in long cars and changing them daily as if motor cars were clothes? It is those who did not take part in the movement, the same who ran to the shelter of schools and universities and administration. At political meetings you hear them shout: Uhuru, Uhuru we fought for. Fought where? They were uncircumcised boys. They knew suffering as a word.[86]

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82 F. Abiola Irele, Review of *Transition*, no. 1–23 in *Journal of Modern African Studies,* 3, no. 3 (1967): 442-447.

83 Peter Kalliney, "Modernism, African Literature and the Cold War," *Modern Language Quarterly* 76 no. 3 (2015).

84 Mahmood Mamdani, "The African University," *London Review of Books*, 10, 14 (2018); Ali Mazrui, "A Reply to Critics," *Transition* 32 (1967): 48-52.

85 Alfred Friendly, "Slick African Magazine Gains a Wide Following," *The New York Times*, 11 August 1968, 3.

86 Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o, *A Grain of Wheat* (London: Heinemann, 1967), 60–61.

Inequality and the unequal distribution of the fruits of freedom emerged as a key theme of Oginga Odinga's 1967 autobiography *Not Yet Uhuru*, as the Kenyatta government, like others in the region, clamped down on political opposition.[87]

As we will see throughout this book, the restrictions on liberty imposed independently (and at different times) by the governments of Kenya, Uganda, and Tanzania had significant repercussions for the intellectual, cultural and print cultures of the region as a whole. The region's new political leaders were well versed in the power of the press; after all, many had been writers or editors as part of their practice of a broad repertoire of anti-colonial politics prior to independence. Okot p'Bitek wrote in *Transition* in 1967 that "The most striking and frightening characteristic of all African governments is this, that without an exception, all of them are dictatorships [. . .] by the educated for the educated".[88] As Tom Mboya, a notably frequent contributor to the local and international press both before and after independence, put in a speech reprinted in *Transition*, "The Press needs to recognise that it has a duty in our society as well as its normal and popular functions and service." This duty was clear to Mboya and his fellow leaders: to "join us in the task of nation-building," by which he meant support for the governments of independent states. "These things it must do, or face the charge of traitor."[89]

Neogy's demise in this context was swift. In 1967, a global exposé revealed covert CIA support for the CCF much to the consternation of Neogy, who denied knowledge of the link.[90] The revelation dictated that the CCF began to reduce and soon terminate funding of the Transcription Centre too, which had all but atrophied by the time Neogy came to trial the following year for sedition. Neogy was jailed for publishing two articles by the opposition MP, Abu Mayanja, which lambasted the repressive turn of Uganda's government. At a sensational trial, covered by the global press thanks to CCF lobbying and Neogy's global celebrity as an Amnesty International Prisoner of Conscience for 1968, prosecutors stressed the neocolonial threat underpinning *Transition*. Obote decreed Neogy a foreign agent after the discovery of a Swiss bank account in the name of Neogy's wife Barbara.[91] At the trial, it also emerged that Neogy had not officially renounced his UK citizenship, acquired by his Indian descent under the 1948 British Nationality Act,

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87 Angelo, *Power and the Presidency in Kenya*, Chapter five.

88 Okot p'Bitek, "Indigenous Ills," *Transition* 32 (1967): 47.

89 Tom Mboya, "Relations Between the Press and Governments in Africa," *Transition* no. 4 (June 1962): 11–14, quote from 14.

90 "Rajat Neogy on the CIA," *Sunday Nation* (Nairobi), 11 June 1967.

91 International Association of Culture Freedom (IACF) Archive, University of Chicago, box 384b, B. Neogy to S. Stone, 27 October 1968.

due to an oversight. British officials noted Obote's emotional "morbid preoccupation" with the case when he publicly castigated *Transition* as "manned by non-Ugandan interests and citizens" and during a gruelling seven-hour private meeting with Barbara Neogy about Rajat's future.[92] *Transition* was the victim of state repression, an argument made by Neogy's lawer, Sir Dingle Foot, in *The Guardian.*[93] By February 1969, the chief magistrate rejected the prosecution's assertion that Mayanja's intervention had "a subversive effect on the mass of the Ugandan population", and Obote eventually released a brutalised Neogy from Luzira prison.[94] CCF relationships proved critical to Neogy's defence, notably through family friend and CCF officer David Goldstein, who liaised with Amnesty International to secure a legal team.[95]

Such conceptions of Neogy's youthful "do culture" were not shared by Uganda's leadership. This is not to suggest that Obote's castigation of *Transition*'s foreignness sprang from the shunning of internationalism. As *Transition* was proscribed, Obote welcomed Tiny Rowland's Lohnro conglomerate, which bought the Standard Group newspapers in 1967 and gave favourable coverage of the government for profit.[96] Obote's condemnations of *Transition* served as proxies for differing visions of Ugandan state and society – for example on the role of capital or ethnicity within nation building. They also revealed the multiplicity of competing internationalisms at play, with certain forms of cultural connection and literary output increasingly throttled by authoritarian states. In the 1970s, repression under Idi Amin's regime compelled poet Taban Lo Liyong – who studied at Howard University, was the first African graduate of the (CCF funded) Iowa Writers' Workshop, and wrote provocatively in *Transition* in the mid-1960s – to find haven at the University of Nairobi over Makerere. Neogy bitterly criticised the state of Ugandan intelligentsia after the trial as he left Uganda for good to settle briefly in Ghana and then the USA in the mid-1970s. "One of the banalities of the authoritarian situation is the way in which otherwise intelligent people become inordinately suffused with humility when a morsel of recognition is shown them from above".[97]

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92 "President's open letter," *Uganda Argus*, 23 Jan. 1969; UKNA FCO 31/491, W. Wenban-Smith, British High Commission, Kampala to East African Department, Foreign and Commonwealth Office, 13 March 1969; E. Le Tocq, East African Department, Foreign and Commonwealth Office confidential memorandum, 25 March 1969.

93 "Uganda Takes "Lesson" From Colonialists," *Guardian*, 1 January 1969, 2.

94 "Acquittals in Uganda," *The Times* (London), 2 February 1969.

95 IACF box 50, D. Goldstein to B. Neogy, 12 December 1968.

96 Spencer Mawby, *The End of Empire in Uganda: Decolonization and Institutional Conflict*, 1945–79 (London: Bloomsbury, 2020), 120.

97 Neogy, "On Being an African Intellectual," 44–61.

For the writers, publishers and academics that remained in East Africa into the decades of authoritarianism, state contraction, social service collapse and less robust debate on the questions of history, regionalism and political critique which had characterised the 1960s, the changed political and economic circumstances demanded different cultural responses. A new range of magazines addressed the preoccupations of East Africa's urban citizens. For example, *Joe*, active between 1973 and 1979, acted as a public mouthpiece for an African middle class in Nairobi with a humorous combination of text and illustration. The titular character, Joe, often lost in conversation in the bar, acted to express the concerns of Kenya's urban citizens on gender relations, employment, leisure, housing and socialisation to city life. In December 1973, on the 10-year anniversary of independence, in the article "Uhuru and the Common Man", Joe listed the boons of independence: "bottled beer, land redistribution, African owners in River Road."[98] In novels published by Heinemann, EAPH and beyond, authors often dealt in the dark tones of urban decay, disillusionment and suffering represented in works like Meja Mwangi's *Going Down River Road* (1976).

Conclusion

For obvious reasons, efforts to explain *Transition*'s impact on East Africa's intellectual life and its rapid demise typically centre on Neogy and his own tragic fate. The magazine's breadth and ambition seemed best understood as the expression of the personality of its founding editor. In the words of his wife Barbara, Neogy

> lived, effortlessly, on a grand scale and he insisted that those around him rise to a higher measure of their own – perhaps as yet unrecognized – nobility. He insisted that we are all better – far better – that we imagine ourselves to be. In his presence one always felt more alert, more alive. Life was robust, vital. Courage was easy. Those days in his beloved Uganda were happy days.[99]

For Paul Theroux, *Transition* was the outward expression of its editor's personality: "Transition was more than a magazine; it was a movement, a vehicle for change."[100] It is certainly true that the magazine bore its editor's imprint. Ques-

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98 Bodil Folke Frederiksen, "*Joe*, the sweetest Reading in Africa' in *Readings in African Popular Fiction,* ed. Stephanie Newell (Oxford: James Currey, 2002), 94. The River Road point alluded to the Africanisation of one of central Nairobi's major commercial streets which hosted mainly East African Asians' shops during the colonial period.

99 Barbara Lapcek, "Rajat Neogy Remembered," *Transition* 106 (2011): 87.

100 Paul Theroux, "More than a magazine," *Transition* 106 (2011): 12.

tions of the tenacity of history in the formation of the post-colonial future, what could be discarded and what must be kept, the importance of thinking across nation and state without losing an intrinsic "East Africanness" – these topics all aminated Neogy and others to engineer their new worlds after empire.

But as Neogy would have been the first to admit, *Transition* was home to multiple visions of East Africa's past, present, and future, not just his own. This is to say nothing of the visions exhibited on the stages, galleries, and pages of parallel cultural initiatives that were part of the wider cultural network to which *Transition* belonged. *Transition* is unique in the scale of its global network of readers and contributors, and the longevity of its fame and influence. Otherwise, it was a magazine that was very much of its place and time. While its literary, political and aesthetic innovations are relatively well known, this chapter has emphasised the extent to which *Transition* was embedded in the broader political and social worlds we examine in this book. The magazine was one part of a community of East African and international persons and institutions that constituted a vehicle of change, a community of thinkers who rubbed shoulders, hustled and disagreed about what would and should make a new East Africa. The members of this community were not just to be found on the pages of *Transition*, but also in publishing houses, broadcasters, newspapers, trade unions, and on university campuses, as the following chapters illustrate.

Equally, some of the dynamics that worked against the survival of *Transition* in Kampala, under Neogy's editorship, will reappear elsewhere in this book: the dependence on external Cold War-generated funding, and on the so-called "expertise" of white intellectuals and organisers; the challenges of breaking out of an elite, urban, university-centric network of contributors; the political executive's reduced tolerance for criticism and dissent in the late 1960s. Yet, as Neogy's personal trajectory suggests, there was no pre-defined fate for the intellectual project of East Africa: these dynamics will play out differently, and with different timetables, in the chapters that follow. And, as *Transition*'s own trajectory in Ghana and the United States up to the present-day attests, endings were not final. To better understand the structural constraints that East Africans worked under, it is necessary to step further back in time, before the birth of *Transition*, to examine the foundations laid by late colonial print and broadcasting. As the next chapter argues, these foundations had a decisive impact on the possibilities of regional circuits of news and ideas.

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

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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-

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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]

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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

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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.

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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]

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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

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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

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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

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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

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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

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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-

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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

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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 newssheets 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-

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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 began 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]

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71 "Mheshimiwa Khamisi Amezuru 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-

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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 Septem-

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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]

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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

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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

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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

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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 (EAISCA), 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.

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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 EAISCA 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 EAISCA. 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 EAISCA 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 EAISCA, 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 EAISCA 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 EAISCA'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 Oginga Odinga'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

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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 Bejamin 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-Pinycwa 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-

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121 Anthony Gingyera-Pinycwa, "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.

respondence 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

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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 *EAJ*. From the outset, the *EAJ* 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 *EAJ* 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 *EAJ* 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-

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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 Murumbi, 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 EAISCA 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 EAISCA.[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.

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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

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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-

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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

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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

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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.

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

Chapter 3
Universities, East African Scholarly Networks and Knowledge Production

In 2018, Mahmood Mamdani published a powerful article in the *London Review of Books* recalling the fierce ideological debates which took place in and around the University of East Africa in the 1960s.[1] He evoked the world of the radicals of Dar es Salaam, epitomised by the Guyanese historian Walter Rodney, on the one hand, and that of Ali Mazrui, the champion of an East African liberalism at Makerere, on the other. Responding to Mamdani's article in the next issue, Colin Leys drew on his own memories of the time to point to the absence, in Mamdani's account, of the wider context of that time – the different academic models that the academics of that era turned to in building a new institution of the future, the power of external funding, neo-colonialism and the Cold War context.[2]

This chapter revisits the broader, regional context that Leys alluded to, asking how academics and students sought to build a university and wider research and knowledge infrastructure for an independent East Africa, amid constraints both historical and external. The short-lived University of East Africa (1963–70), which for a time coordinated the activities of its constituent sister university colleges in Kampala, Nairobi, and Dar es Salaam is one obvious thread in this story. Existing histories of the institution have already shown that it was more than simply a failed integration project.[3] We follow this scholarship in emphasising the colonial foundations of the university and various pressures for the development of *national* universities from the outset. However, as in other chapters, our argument about the role of the university, as an institution, in practices and ideas of regionalism extends beyond formal, constitutional arrangements. We demonstrate that academics continued to debate and pursue the intellectual project of East Africa through forums like the East African Academy and annual Social Science conferences, in defiance of the dynamics of high politics that saw the break-up of the

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1 Mahmood Mamdani, "The African University," *London Review of Books*, 18 July 2018, 29–32, accessed 26 February 2025, https://www.lrb.co.uk/the-paper/v40/n14/mahmood-mamdani/the-african-university.

2 Letter from Colin Leys, *London Review of Books*, 2 August 2018, accessed 26 February 2025, https://www.lrb.co.uk/the-paper/v40/n15/letters.

3 Michael Mwenda Kithinji, *The State and the University Experience in East Africa: Colonial Foundations and Postcolonial Transformations in Kenya* (Pretoria, South Africa: UNISA Press, 2019); Bhekithemba R. Mngomezulu, *Politics and Higher Education in East Africa from the 1920s to 1970* (University of Johannesburg Press, 2012).

University of East Africa. In doing so, we add an analytical layer to accounts of East African higher education doomed by its colonial roots and dealt the ultimate blow by authoritarian nationalism.

In many respects, higher education remained an elite project following political independence in East Africa, and for historian Michael Kithinji this aspect of continuity spells a failure to decolonise the university.[4] While echoing this observation, we give renewed attention to the sustained and heterogeneous discussions across the period in question about how to make universities relevant to the social, political and intellectual realities of post-independence East Africa. Some of the proposals voiced were put into practice, often through new opportunities for external funding. More importantly, the *debate* about universities extended far beyond the institution itself. While schooling (itself coordinated in an East African framework at various moments) obviously touched the lives of more East Africans, university education retained a disproportionate role in the national and regional imagination, as will become clear. In this chapter, the university therefore plays a dual role. As an institution, it (re)produced the regional intellectual elite who populate the pages of this book – and for this reason we give space here to students as well as staff, nodding to an intergenerational process and building on extensive scholarship on radical campus politics. In tandem, it was a site of regional practices, like publishers or trade unions, through which thinkers and organisers refashioned East Africa as a category.

We begin by situating the growth of Makerere in the 1950s in its late colonial context. Regional planning and infrastructure were fundamental, but the regional and the national co-existed from an early stage. Tracing the work of education commissions, we suggest that a federal structure was a matter of pragmatism as much as ideology, guided by a sense of urgency and by constrained resources. There were always limits to the extent to which a formal federal structure was embraced, and this continued into the lifetime of the University of East Africa from 1963 to 1970. But, as we go on to discuss in the second part of this chapter, this regional structure underpinned a particular intellectual culture up to the late 1960s, in which different flavours of anti-colonial thought co-existed, ranging from various forms of liberal cosmopolitanism on the one hand, to a more radical leftist anti-colonialism on the other, which itself was profoundly transnational.[5] Both were anti-colonial and rooted in a desire to create something new. But over

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4 Kithinji, *The State and the University Experience in East Africa*, 201–5.

5 Andrew Ivaska, "Movement Youth in a Global Sixties Hub: The Everyday Lives of Transnational Activists in Postcolonial Dar Es Salaam," in *Transnational Histories of Youth in the Twentieth Century*, eds. Richard Ivan Jobs and David M. Pomfret (London: Palgrave Macmillan UK, 2015), 188–210.

time, as we discuss towards the end of the chapter, this became hard to sustain. The external funds that supported this intellectual culture were taken as evidence of neo-colonialism and Cold War machinations at work. Moreover, East Africa's governments and ruling parties were increasingly anxious to control potentially unruly university campuses.

Colonial Visions for Regional Education

In the aftermath of the Second World War, Makerere College in Uganda was a central plank in Britain's late colonial rush to establish new institutions of higher education and in doing so both prepare colonial territories for self-government and shape the cultures of colonized societies beyond the end of formal colonial rule. As the historian of Britain Miles Taylor writes, "[n]o other former colonial power tried as hard as Britain to influence the future of its ex-colonies through exporting its own system of higher education".[6] Foundations for organising higher education along regional lines were laid in this late colonial context, but given the perceived urgency in preparing for self-government with limited resources, and a changing international playing field for study opportunities, there was significant contingency involved.

Makerere had been established in 1922 as a technical school and was initially under the control of the Uganda government, with most students coming from Uganda, and more specifically the Kingdom of Buganda. In 1937, the de la Warr Commission set out plans to develop Makerere as a Higher Education College of East Africa.[7] This was given renewed impetus by the wartime Commission on Higher Education in the Colonies chaired by Cyril Asquith.[8] Its report, published in 1945, concluded that there was an urgent need to provide higher education

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6 Miles Taylor, "Utopian Universities of the British Commonwealth," in *Utopian Universities: A Global History of the New Campuses of the 1960s*, eds. Jill Pellew and Miles Taylor (London: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2020), 269.

7 David Mills, "Life on the Hill: Students and the Social History of Makerere," *Africa* 76, no. 2 (2006): 252.

8 The Commission was established in 1943 "to consider the principles which should guide the promotion of higher education, learning and research and the development of universities in the Colonies; and to explore means whereby universities and other appropriate bodies in the United Kingdom may be able to co-operate with institutions of higher education in the Colonies in order to give effect to these principles." Colonial Office, "Report on the Commission of Higher Education in the Colonies" (London HMSO, 1945), 2. For further analysis on the Asquith Commission, see Apollos O. Nwauwa, *Imperialism, Academe and Nationalism: Britain and University Education for Africans, 1860–1960* (London: Frank Cass, 1997), 134–56.

across the colonial empire. Universities were understood by the Commission as a means of producing "men and women with the standard of public service and capacity for leadership which self rule requires".[9] But for the Commissioners, this was not solely a question of creating new elites. More than that, they wrote, "universities serve the double purpose of refining and maintaining all that is best in local traditions and cultures and at the same time of providing a means whereby those brought up under the influence of these traditions and cultures may enter on a footing of equality into the world-wide community of intellect."[10] A series of new University Colleges would be established, which would award degrees from the University of London. They would be managed by the Inter-University Council for Higher Education in the Colonies (IUC) which described its mission in its 1955 annual report as "training the heirs of empire". The foundation of the IUC created a tight link between universities in the metropole and those established in the colonial empire.[11]

As Kithinji has argued, the foundations for organising higher education along regional lines had now been laid.[12] If the Asquith Commission spoke to a sense of urgency across the British empire as a whole, the sense of being behind and needing to very quickly develop local higher education was particularly marked in relation to East Africa. And so, despite the misgivings of some staff members at Makerere, in 1949 Makerere was granted the status of a University College with degrees awarded by the University of London.[13] The new University College was, like others established at the same time, intended to be unitary in the sense of operating from one site but federal in the sense of having a regional remit, mirroring contemporary British colonial thinking about political federation as a model for decolonization.[14] This was a model of higher education that assumed the number of students would be relatively small, and that asking each colonial administration to contribute to a single institution would be cheaper than having separate institutions in each territory.

As was the case with other aspects of post-war colonial development planning, the speed of change over the decade and a half after the end of the second world war is striking. Already by the early 1950s, only a few years after Maker-

9 Colonial Office, "Report on the Commission of Higher Education in the Colonies," 10.

10 Colonial Office, "Report on the Commission of Higher Education in the Colonies," 10–11.

11 Taylor, "Utopian Universities," 272.

12 Michael Mwenda Kithinji, "An Imperial Enterprise: The Making and Breaking of the University of East Africa, 1949–1969," *Canadian Journal of African Studies / Revue Canadienne Des Études Africaines* 46, no. 2 (2012): 195–214.

13 Mills, "Life on the Hill," 256. The Principal, Lamont, resigned and was replaced by De Bunsen.

14 Taylor, "Utopian Universities".

ere's transition to a University College, it was clear that Makerere would soon not meet demand or satisfy national aspirations. This sense of urgency was given added impetus by colonial anxiety that East African students would find means of satisfying their demand for higher education by going outside British imperial structures. In 1953, Makerere Principal Bernard De Bunsen told the Kenyan Department of Education that he was "rather perturbed by a trickle of students away from Makerere in the middle of their courses which might well develop into a flood if overseas facilities were known to be available".[15] The question of higher education demonstrated the contradictions of colonial policy making at the time. The desire to control the ways in which East Africans could access higher education was set against the inability of colonial states to resource the kind of expansion that would be needed to meet demand or accept a shift away from a model which offered higher education only to a tiny elite.

In 1954, the East Africa High Commission appointed a working party to consider the needs of East Africa in relation to Higher Education. The reports of the working party, as well as the white paper that accompanied it, reveals some of these contradictions. The working party was charged with thinking about the ten years ahead. With this brief, they stated that "we wish to emphasise with all the strength at our command that the provision of university education in East Africa should continue to be the concern of the three territories acting together." The major reason was financial. "The time has not yet come", they continued, "when each of the three territories could support its own university institution, and until that time it would be the height of folly to cripple the development of Makerere College by the diversion of funds, now needed to build up that College, to the foundation of new institutions for which financial support would be inadequate."[16] But looking to the future also meant thinking about provision for national universities. The report recognised that "there are three territories, each with growing territorial consciousness and consequential ambitions", and one of "these ambitions is that of possessing a university institution, especially suited to the racial and other characteristics of each territory and capable of giving expression to its awareness of itself." They were therefore, they wrote, "not surprised to learn that the Governor of Tanganyika has announced the setting aside of a sum of about £700,000 as the nucleus of a fund for the foundation of a university college in that territory."[17] They were rather more surprised to discover that Nairo-

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15 Archives of Makerere University (hereafter using reference AR/MAK), AR/MAK/5/7, Bernard De Bunsen to N. Larby (Education dept. Nairobi) 22 April 1953.

16 East Africa High Commission, *Report of the Working Party on Higher Education in East Africa* (Entebbe: Government Printer, 1958), 44.

17 East Africa High Commission, *Report of the Working Party*, 45.

bi's Royal Technical College, due to open in 1956 through Colonial Development and Welfare funding, was intending to award degrees, despite an agreement between the three territories that it would only provide technical training.[18] The working party's report thus pointed both to ongoing close collaboration and to national institutions. This was endorsed by the East African governments in the ensuing white paper, which both urged further consideration of the potential advantages of a "single University of East Africa, of which all present and future colleges territorially situated would be constituent units", and in the meantime welcomed the report's support for establishing a University College in Nairobi and working towards a University College in Dar es Salaam.[19]

There were dissenting voices too. Over the course of 1956, the TANU activist Edward Barongo, who would go on to a post-independence ministerial career and also author one of the most important early histories of TANU, *Mkiki Mkiki wa Siasa Tanganyika (The Political Struggle in Tanganyika)*, wrote a series of letters to the newspaper *Baraza*, arguing the nationalist case on behalf of TANU against efforts by the colonial government in Tanganyika and the Capricorn Society to promote a politics of multi-racialism in the territory. One of his letters focused on the Tanganyika government's decision to put funds aside for a new university college. For Barongo, this was a poor use of money at a time when funds were short and there was a much greater need for school level education. And who, he asked, would staff such a College – surely it would be expatriates. His preference was for the money to be used to pay for scholarships to support study overseas, rather than for a local institution. Similar arguments, as we will see, would recur in the 1960s.[20]

The Working Party's discussion of study overseas revealed tensions between a commitment to higher education as an opportunity to move beyond national or imperial confines for, they wrote, "[h]igher education cannot be a self-contained system within territorial boundaries", and a desire to ensure that these opportunities were contained, suggesting that proposed "Queen's Scholarships" to support overseas study be offered only "to graduates for study in East Africa or at any university in the United Kingdom".[21] The question of money, and of what proportion of limited funds should be spent on higher education, framed what could be done. The East African Governments concluded their White Paper by emphasising that they recognised "the urgency of the many problems of higher education which confront East Africa today" and emphasised that they were "anxious to ex-

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18 East Africa High Commission, *Report of the Working Party*, 46.

19 East Africa High Commission, *Report of the Working Party*, 5.

20 Letter from E.B. M. Barongo, "Chuo Kikuu Tanganyika," *Baraza*, 24 March 1956, 3.

21 East Africa High Commission, *Report of the Working Party*, 71.

pand the facilities for higher education in East Africa", but, they continued, "limited funds dictate the scale on which progress can be made and it is important to ensure that all branches of education develop in proportion to one another and in proportion to the other social services for the community as a whole."[22]

One answer to this was funding from overseas foundations, which would become increasingly important in the coming years. One student, W. J. Makene, claimed at Makerere's 1958 Pan-African Student Conference that the colonial administration had actively blocked information about scholarships for studying overseas that should have been available to East African students through the structures of the UN.[23] Possibilities for studying in India, for example, grew in the 1950s within the framework of Nehru's foreign policy, to which anti-imperialism and non-alignment were central.[24] The Indian High Commissioner in Nairobi, Apa Pant, was responsible for recruiting students from across British-administered or governed East and Central Africa – often to the displeasure of the colonial education departments.[25] Colonial anxieties could sometimes mean the concentration of students in unlikely destinations that were not deemed a security concern, but which nevertheless turned out to be sites of active student politics. One such location was Cuttington College in Liberia, where Kingunge Ngombale Mwiru studied in 1958–61 with a scholarship from a US Christian organisation, before being expelled together with a group of other East African students for involvement in a protest.[26]

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22 East Africa High Commission, *Higher Education in East Africa* (Entebbe: Government Printer, 1956?), 18.

23 National Union of South African Students, "Report of the first Pan-African Students' Conference," 11 August 1958, Papers of Allard Lowenstein, online through JSTOR Struggles for Freedom, accessed 3 March 2022, www.jstor.org/stable/10.2307/al.sff.document.low141_97_04.

24 Gerard McCann, "From Diaspora to Third Worldism and the United Nations: India and the Politics of Decolonizing Africa," *Past and Present* 218 (2013): 258–80.

25 Gerard McCann, "The Trumpets and Travails of 'South-South Cooperation': African Students in India since the 1940s," in *India's Development Diplomacy & Soft Power in Africa*, eds. Kenneth King and Meera Venkatachalam (Oxford: James Currey, 2021), 169–84; Gerard McCann, "Where Was the Afro in Afro-Asian Solidarity? Africa's "Bandung Moment" in 1950s Asia," *Journal of World History* 30 no. 1–2 (2019): 89–123.

26 Interview with Kingunge Ngolmbale Mwiru, Dar es Salaam, 1 December 2017, conducted by Ismay Milford.

Students and Their Worlds

Students at 1950s Makerere were not simply the recipients of colonial education policies: they also articulated the college's regional remit and tested the liberal pretensions of the institution at a time when both territorial administrations and actors abroad recognised the growing importance of the university. This importance, of course, was because of a shared assumption about the positions of power that the students of the 1950s would occupy. Despite new opportunities to study abroad, Makerere continued to be the training ground of a regional elite. As student numbers at Makerere expanded dramatically after World War Two, the balance of students shifted, making the institution look more "East African" than ever. In 1937, 100 of Makerere's 160 students came from Uganda; in 1958–59, those from Uganda numbered 259, from Kenya 285, and from Tanganyika 209, along with much smaller numbers from Zanzibar, Nyasaland (Malawi), Northern Rhodesia (Zambia), Somalia and Ethiopia. In comparison, during that same year of 1958–59, the number of Ugandan students in the USA was 29 and in the UK 80–90, the number of Kenyan students in the USA 73 (and 7 in Canada) and in the UK 40, and there were 22 Tanganyikan students in the USA and 26 in the UK.[27] Similar numbers, in the tens, were in India, Egypt, and Eastern Europe in the late 1950s.[28]

As student numbers at Makerere rose, societies along ethnic, religious and territorial lines abounded – most with their own publication. These societies self-consciously worked through questions of inclusion and exclusion, rather than taking for granted essentialist characteristics: the Western Uganda Students Union was open to Makerere students "coming from Western Uganda" or "having cultural or tribal affinity to the Western Province"; meanwhile, Bukedi Students Union celebrated having "members from as many as five tribes".[29] An eagerness to pin down social and geographical roles, through multiple parameters, was palpable. In 1955, one student conducted (with a humorous tone, under a penname) "A survey of students on a territorial basis", noting anecdotal differences between students from the largest national groups, Kenya, Tanganyika and Uganda: "A stranger would think twice before he spoke to a Kenya student, whereas he would think only once before he approached the average Tanganyika student". Most of the article's observations cut across territorial boundaries, grouping stu-

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27 Reeves, "East African Intellectual Community," 6, 142; Mills, "Life on the Hill," 252.

28 Eric Burton, "Decolonization, the Cold War, and Africans' Routes to Higher Education Overseas, 1957–65," *Journal of Global History* 15, no. 1 (March 2020): 169–91.

29 AR/MAK/61/3, constitution of Western Uganda Students Union, c. 1959; AR/MAK/61/1, 'The Bukedi Student: The magazine of Bukedi Makerere Students Union' [n.d. 1961/62], 3.

dents in bordering regions: "students from the Coast Province [of Kenya] are more akin to Tanganyika students", while those from Uganda's Western province "are similar to those from the Bukoba area of Tanganyika" who were themselves "a quieter sort" who "speak less Swahili" than other Tanganyika students.[30]

Student societies provided forums for their members to reflect on the relationship between institution, region, and globe. When the student *Muslim Journal* launched in 1958, it stated four aims: "First, to accept articles which aim at correcting any misconceptions about Islam. Second to accept articles that give information with regard to our problems and activities on the hill. Third to publish articles which draw attention to problems and activities of the Muslim community of East Africa. Fourth to accept articles which present genuine views of any writer so as to encourage free discussion and mutual correction."[31] The society was small – only thirty Muslim students passed through Makerere in the period 1955–60 – but its aims demonstrate how students could understand life "on the hill" as both a microcosm of global currents, and a place that could shape its immediate East African surroundings.

At times, this kind of activity intervened very directly in local politics in ways that were not always welcomed, as in the second half of the 1950s when the Makerere Chagga Students Society found itself in conflict with Kilimanjaro's Paramount Chief, Thomas Marealle, and its leaders were forced to apologise, a humiliating experience which fuelled opposition to Marealle in Kilimanjaro. The activities of the Society intersected with oppositional politics in Kilimanjaro.[32] The liberal paternalism of Bernard De Bunsen, in which students were invited to look critically at the world without proposing radical change, made space for student initiatives to exist while banning student journalism when it was deemed to challenge authority at Makerere itself.

Even while Kampala remained the hub for East African students in the 1950s, there was already significant concern about the extent of Makerere's independence from each colonial administration, and its vulnerability to foreign influence. Student mobility pushed this question to the foreground. The early

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30 AR/MAK/159/6, "A survey of students on a territorial basis", by "social observer", *New Hall Times*, Vol 1 No 8, 31/10/55.

31 AR/MAK/61/13, *The Muslim Journal: The magazine of the Makerere College Muslim brotherhood* No 1, Oct 1958, 4–5.

32 UKNA, FCO 141/17864, 25 April 1959, f. 10, Commissioner of Police to Ministerial Secretary, "Makerere College Chagga Society." It was reported in 1959 that the Society's magazine, filled with its members' arguments for the urgency of political change in Kilimanjaro, was circulating widely in Moshi, Kilimanjaro. For more detail see Emma Hunter, *Political Thought and the Public Sphere in Tanzania: Freedom, Democracy and Citizenship in the Era of Decolonization* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 169 and 184–185.

Cold War saw the emergence of competing student internationals broadly allied with the Eastern and Western blocs. The International Union of Students (IUS), an attempt to coordinate national unions of students, founded headquarters in Prague in 1946 and soon came under Soviet influence. Echoing many other spheres of social organisation in the early Cold War, the International Student Conference (ISC) was founded in 1950 as a response, largely financed by the United States. Makerere students were soon invited to participate in the events of these groups, given that both organisations saw expansion into colonial territories as a priority. In 1953, Student Guild president Arthur Wina travelled to Copenhagen for an ISC meeting and received a parallel invitation for an IUS meeting in Helsinki. The UK Government's Student Liaison officer in London advised Wina to turn down the IUS invitation, and wrote to Makerere principal Bernard De Bunsen that the trip was "rapidly developing into a battle with the IUS".[33] The Guild's positive neutralism – its active engagement with both the ISC and IUS – was written into its constitution, and a Vice President for External Relations was elected in 1955.[34]

These growing ties with the international student movement caught the attention not only of Makerere staff but of territorial administrations, who sought to coordinate a response at a regional level. In June 1955, two students, Mark Bomani and James Nesbitt, travelled to Britain at the invitation of the British Council, timed to coincide with an ISC conference in Birmingham. At the conference, Latin American students led what De Bunsen described as an "anti-anti-communist" bloc within the national student unions.[35] Like the case two years previously, Bomani and Nesbitt also received an invitation from IUS, this time to visit the organisation's headquarters in Prague. De Bunsen warned that accepting the invitation would make the government less likely to give passports to students in the future and would "generally set the clock back".[36] The Prague trip went ahead, covertly. As De Bunsen feared, the news reached the Uganda colonial secretariat.[37]

There were existing tensions between De Bunsen and the region's secretariats regarding Makerere policy towards student participation in international events. The Tanganyika Secretariat asked in early 1955 that Makerere extend their responsibility for students' movements beyond term time and into college vacations, a suggestion that the college Vice Principal considered to raise "a very diffi-

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33 AR/MAK/5/7, R.E. Wraith to Arthur Wina (copied to De Bunsen with additional note), 13 January 1953.

34 AR/MAK/159/6, "The Guild Constitution," *New Hall Times*, Vol 1 No 7, 17 October 1955, 2.

35 AR/MAK/54/4, De Bunsen to Langlands, 6 August 1955, with reference to the *Economist* article.

36 AR/MAK/54/4, De Bunsen to RA Frost British Council, 7 July 1955.

37 AR/MAK/54/4, De Bunsen to Andrew Cohen, 4 November 1955.

cult principle".[38] Because IUS events sometimes took place in Western Europe, the mere destination of a conference was not enough to raise the suspicion of immigration services, making De Bunsen's cooperation vital: the Uganda Chief Secretary wrote in March 1956 to make De Bunsen "aware" that a Guild representative had been invited to an IUS conference in Copenhagen, "in case there is any interest [among students] in visiting Scandinavia next month".[39] De Bunsen was no more keen to see students attend communist-sponsored events than was government, but his approach was a typically paternalistic one: he remarked on the "innocent idealism" which informed the Student Guild's "fence-sitting" policy and considered the priority being to avoid suspicion among students, or the emergence of underground propaganda, and especially to avoid making political martyrs of those who engaged with communist bloc politics – "we cannot in any case keep our chaps isolated from the world".[40]

Bomani used his lengthy letters of apology for the secret Prague trip to make the case for the *colonial* interest in a liberal policy towards the international student movement. The first letter was to the Immigration Officer in Kampala. Bomani apologised for the "anxiety" his trip had caused, and continued:

> I was very proud to correct a number of wrong points of information about East Africa and I hope I succeeded in showing a number of Czech students that things out here are not as bad, if anything, as they seem to think! On the other hand, I was least impressed by the political and economic systems obtaining there – especially the incredible literary repression.[41]

Bomani's letters to the Chief Secretaries in Entebbe and Dar es Salaam took the same line. He said that it was "curiosity more than anything" that had led him to visit Prague, without the knowledge of De Bunsen, or of his older brother Paul Bomani, a member of the Tanganyika Legislative Council. Bomani concluded that the trip "had no effect at all" on his political beliefs, only that he was "now in a position to understand what [the] 'disguised slavery', we hear so much about, is". He insisted there was no sympathy for communism within the student body, and that although some students were "critical of some actions of some governments in East Africa", it would be "completely wrong and unfortunate to attribute this attitude to anything like communism".[42] In this way, students pushed the issue of

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38 AR/MAK/54/4, Makerere Vice President to the Secretariat, Dar es Salaam, 10 February 1955.

39 AR/MAK/54/4, Chief Secretary Entebbe to De Bunsen, 27 March 1956.

40 AR/MAK/54/4, De Bunsen to RA Frost (British Council) 7 July 1955; De Bunsen to Langlands, 6 August 1955; De Bunsen personal notes, dated 9 August 1955.

41 AR/MAK/54/4, Mark Bomani to Immigration Officer Kampala, 3 November 1955.

42 AR/MAK/54/4, Mark Bomani to Chief Secretaries, Entebbe and Dar es Salaam, 25 February 1956.

access to connections abroad into the discussion of the limits of political liberalism in an East African institution. These early Cold War negotiations would prove prescient to debates in the 1960s.

A University for East Africa

As independence approached, the pressure for university colleges for each territory continued to grow. A second Working Party on Higher Education, which in 1958 produced the Lockwood report, put forward plans for a University of East Africa to be established in 1966 and exist for around ten to fifteen years. The structure envisaged saw it having a relatively weak centre with power in large part sitting in its constituent colleges at territorial level. The working party's report was accepted by the East African governments in 1959.[43]

But in the meantime, for the nationalist parties across the region which were preparing to move into government, having a university had, as Bethwell Ogot recalled in his memoirs, "become an important symbol that each East Africa country wanted to acquire before attaining independence."[44] In concrete terms, this meant speeding up plans for Tanganyika's University College to launch in 1961, rather than 1964 as planned for in the Lockwood report.[45] It also meant giving thought to the kind of University College which should come into being. Tanganyika's Legislative Council Member responsible for education, Solomon Eliufoo, wrote a memorandum in 1960 spelling out what Tanganyika's distinctive identity meant for the question of what its university should teach and where it should be situated. "Tanganyika", he wrote, "is an agricultural country and the sooner its University reflects this (in the form of a Faculty of Agriculture), the better." And this meant too that there was no need for it to be situated in a large town or capital city. Arguing in favour of Arusha as the site for Tanganyika's university, he proposed that "Arusha and Moshi towns are quite sufficient to give the University the amount of urbanity it needs."[46]

The question of funding continued to loom large. Political independence opened up new opportunities. For example, when educational patron Joseph Murumbi returned to Kenyan after a trip to Moscow in 1964, he reported plans for an

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43 Kithinji, *The State and the University Experience*, 64–72.

44 Ogot, *My Footprints*, 130.

45 Ogot, *My Footprints*, 129.

46 CCM, NP003 Education General, Accession 1, f. 55, Solomon Eliufoo, M.L.C. "Memorandum on Choice of Site for a University in Tanganyika," 25 April 1960, 2.

entirely Soviet-funded technical college in Kenya for a thousand students.[47] The possibility of obtaining significant financial backing for education had grown dramatically, but the political undercurrents that allowed this flow of cash were ever clearer. As Miles Taylor argues, these years saw Britain, America and Canada using "financial aid for higher education as a weapon to stifle Soviet and Chinese influence, and also to temper the explicit socialism of new post-colonial regimes."[48]

The annual reports of Tanganyika's Ministry of Education show the importance of funding from overseas foundations in the slow task of building up the new University College. The 1964 report contained a long list of benefactors and their gifts, with figures ranging from substantial sums, such as £500,000 from the UK Department of Technical Co-Operation for the science school and hall of residence funding, and $320,000 from the Ford Foundation for the Law Building, to smaller amounts, such as £250 each from BP Tanganyika and Shell Tanganyika to spend on library books.[49]

For major American foundations such as Ford, Rockefeller and Carnegie, supporting higher education in Africa, Asia and Latin America was a way of contributing to the building of new nations through educating their leaders. The powerful role which elites could and should play was, as Edward Berman emphasises in his study of the Rockefeller, Ford and Carnegie Foundations, a centrepiece of United States development thinking of the era, as articulated in W.W. Rostow's 1960 book *The Stages of Economic Growth: A Non-Communist Manifesto*.[50] The Rockefeller Foundation's approach was to select a small number of institutions to support, and one of these was the University of East Africa.[51] Both Carnegie and Ford also had a previous history of supporting institutions in the region, in particular the East African Institute of Social Research at Makerere. The three foundations were actively involved in the development of plans for the University of East Africa from 1961, and in 1963 a major conference which brought representatives from the East African governments and colleges, the British Department of Technical Cooperation and the Inter-University council, the World Bank, the US

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47 KNA, MAC/KEN/89/7, Anonymous report on Kenya delegation's visit to the Soviet Union, April 1964.

48 Taylor, "Utopian Universities," 270.

49 Ministry of Education (Tanzania), *Annual report* (1964), 14–15.

50 Edward H. Berman, *The Ideology of Philanthropy : The Influence of the Carnegie, Ford, and Rockefeller Foundations on American Foreign Policy* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1983), 67.

51 Berman, *Ideology of Philanthropy*, 71.

Agency for International Development, and several British foundations together with the three foundations and the Africa Liaison Committee to discuss plans to support the new University was held at the Rockefeller's Villa Serbelloni on Lake Como.[52]

For our purposes, what is striking is the strong emphasis which the foundations placed on creating a strong centralised University of East Africa. Edward Berman notes that this was in contrast to the "loosely federated structure that was favored by several of the African representatives".[53] The rationale was similar to that of their British predecessors, citing a desire to avoid duplication, but they also, Berman suggests, "recognized that their funds would be able to exert a greater degree of leverage on the direction of university development if they could work through a centralized rather than a diffused administrative structure."[54]

Money from foreign states, international organisations and foundations flowed into the University of East Africa throughout its existence and shaped conflicts over the direction it should take.[55] The financial support given by the Rockefeller Foundation was considerable, and involved a commitment of around $1.5 million over three years.[56] For East African scholars returning from doctoral training overseas, like the historian Bethwell Ogot, external funding provided opportunities for academic posts beyond what was planned for in the development plans which had been prepared for each territory's university college. There were supernumerary posts supported by the Rockefeller Foundation which, Ogot recalled, were a "temporary form of assistance" which were offered on the expectation that their occupants might move into "established posts as they became vacant".[57] The Rockefeller Foundation also funded mobility beyond East Africa. For example, Wilbert Chagula, later President of the University College in Dar es Salaam and President of the East African Academy, spent time in the United States and the Caribbean as a Rockefeller Foundation Fellow.[58] At the same time, there continued to be a strong expatriate British presence among academic staff across East Africa, sustained by the IUC. This was the environment in which the short-lived University of East Africa was formally inaugurated in 1963.

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52 Berman, *ideology of Philanthropy*, 77.

53 Berman, *Ideology of Philanthropy*, 77.

54 Ibid.

55 Carol Sicherman, *Becoming an African University: Makerere, 1922–2000* (Trenton, NJ: Africa World Press, 2005), 58.

56 Berman, *Ideology of Philanthropy*, 78.

57 Ogot, *My Footprints*, 130.

58 W.K. Chagula, "The Role of the Elite, the Intelligentsia and Educated East Africans in the Development of Uganda, Kenya and Tanzania," *The East African Academy: The Second Foundation Lecture*, 20 Sept 1966, Kampala, Uganda., n.p.

Reflecting on the short life of the University of East Africa, Ogot, one-time University of East Africa professor, reflected that, in the case of this regional university, "Regional planning [was] outpaced by national aspirations".[59] The formation of the university in 1963 brought together three university colleges: Makerere, University College Nairobi (founded as the Royal Technical College in 1956), and University College Dar es Salaam, the newest of the institutions, established in 1961 on the eve of Tanganyika's independence. The rise and fall of the institution might appear at first glance as a high point in regionalism in relation to higher education in East Africa. As Bhekithemba Richard Mngomezulu has suggested in his study of the institution, however, a simple chronology of a post-independence golden age of regionalism followed by collapse is misplaced: the institution was based on plans made in the colonial period and was always envisaged as a temporary umbrella to support the development of three national universities.[60] When this happened, in 1970, "no one grieved".[61]

In essence, the differing visions of East African states could not be buried beneath a technocratic language of planning and manpower requirements. As plans for the university were drawn up, decision-making power was concentrated in the constituent colleges – and the states in which they were based. The University Development Committee (on which Ogot sat) was repeatedly overruled by territorial governments. The opening of the new University College of Dar es Salaam was, as we have seen, brought forward, with the Tanganyika (and then Tanzanian) government determined that the young institution could live up to the reputations of the older Makerere and the University of Nairobi (previously the Royal Technical College, which had opened in 1956).[62] In this competitive environment, agreements about not duplicating specialist training were breached. Given Makerere's longer history, there was inevitable unevenness between the three 'sister' colleges. Yet the view from Uganda sometimes implied that Uganda was benefitting least from the arrangement, given its university college had the most to share in terms of experience. As early as 1965, Uganda's Minister of Education, J. S. Luyimbazi-Zake, was calling for the dissolution of the University into its three

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59 Ogot, *My Footprints*, 176

60 Bhekithemba Richard Mngomezulu, "A Political History of Higher Education in East Africa: The Rise and Fall of the University of East Africa, 1937–1970" (PhD thesis, Rice University, 2004), especially 324.

61 Sicherman, *Becoming an African University*, 57.

62 Andrew Ivaska, *Cultured States: Youth, Gender, and Modern Style in 1960s Dar Es Salaam* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2011), Chapter three.

colleges, noting that the existing arrangement was fuelling "jealousies", "lots of arguments" and "movements that now carry a flavour of the underhand".[63]

None of this is surprising, in light of what we saw in the previous section of this chapter. The sense that a nation should have its own university was deeply embedded in the politics of the 1950s, and the University of East Africa came into existence alongside three institutions which were developing distinctive characters and which in all cases were tightly bound to the nations they were a part of. Bethwell Ogot recalled that Kenyan academics at Makerere were encouraged to "come home to build 'their' university."[64] But beyond the questions of university constitutions and formal structures was an intellectual commitment which was transnational in scope and approach, and it is this we turn to trace in the next section.

Home-Grown Research and The East African Academy

In his opening speech to the East African Academy's third symposium, held in Dar es Salaam in 1965, Amon J. Nsekela, then Principal Secretary in Tanzania's Ministry of Industries, captured a sense of the importance of academic research at that moment, for both "intellectual" and "practical" reasons. "The growth of a people's intellectual and spiritual stature is every bit as important as that of its physical wellbeing", he said, "and to favour one at the expense of the other can only lead to an imbalance which would, at best, interfere with the overall process of improvement". His vision of progress was one in which East Africa's universities had a crucial role to play. He suggested that perhaps a School of Development Management could be established. This would, he suggested "present a major opportunity to the University to chart out an entirely new field of studies, one which would not only take account of our own experience and needs in East Africa but draw on the work which is being done in other institutions of higher learning throughout the world, and here I think particularly of the great colleges of France, the universities of the socialist countries, and the major schools of business administration in the United States." For, he emphasised, "[n]o one tradition I believe can provide an effective solution to the problems which confront us in

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63 Ogot, *My Footprints*, 175; Mngomezulu, "A Political History of Higher Education in East Africa," 410–15, 434.

64 Ogot, *My Footprints*, 130.

East Africa – we must rather match the experience of divergent traditions to our needs and our own requirements."[65]

The 1960s ended with fierce arguments about universities in East Africa's public sphere, lambasting their colonial structures and dependence on external funding.[66] It is tempting to view the preceding decade through this lens. But it is important to go back to the earlier moment captured in Nsekela's address, when, as Nsekela told his audience, "so little has been done, so much left to do, that the field is enormous – almost unlimited", and think about how a new generation of East African leaders and intellectuals sought to build a new ecosystem of intellectual life, navigating difficult questions of external funding and support as they did so. Far from simply accepting inherited colonial structures, they sought to rethink the place of the university in their new states and the meaning of an East African intellectual community tackling shared problems in ways which often crossed national borders in practice even when formal federal university structures proved limited.[67]

It is important first and foremost to remember the international character of student intake. In the second year of Dar es Salaam's law school, for example, of the thirty-four new students admitted to the law course only twelve came from Tanganyika.[68] The international nature of the three colleges was, of course, fundamental to their inter-territorial nature. But it was also a product of student demand. The historian Andrew Ivaska has highlighted the attraction of Dar es Salaam to left-wing students from across East Africa, drawn to an internationalist left-wing scene in and around the university campus.[69] The university's reputation was so great that some arriving students were disappointed to find that the student body as a whole was not as radical as hoped – like in the case of the young Yoweri Museveni, who famously arrived from Uganda and became founder and chair of the University Students' African Revolutionary Front, for a time the beating heart of leftist internationalism on campus.[70]

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65 Amon J. Nsekela, "Opening Address," in D.F. Owen, ed., *Research and Development in East Africa: Seven Papers presented at a plenary session at the third Symposium of the East African Academy, Dar es Salaam, September 1965* (Nairobi: East African Publishing House, 1966), 14.

66 Reeves, "East African Intellectual Community," 194–209.

67 On shared ideas across student publications in the university, see Anna Adima, "Anglophone Women's Writing and Public Culture in Kenya and Uganda, 1959–1976" (PhD thesis, University of York, 2022), Chapter 1.

68 Ministry of Education and Information Services (Tanganyika Territory), *Annual report* (1962).

69 Ivaska, "Movement Youth," 188–210.

70 Yoweri Museveni, "Activism at the hill", reproduced in *Cheche: Reminiscences of a Radical Magazine,* ed. Karim F. Hirji (Dar es Salaam: Mkuki na Nyota, 2010).

Staff also moved across the region, with a staff exchange programme seeing academic staff frequently teaching at sister colleges.[71] East Africa-wide structures provided spaces for intellectual exchange, for example through the Annual Social Science conferences which were once hosted by the East African Institute of Social and Economic Research at Makerere but after 1966 were taken on by the Inter-University Council of East Africa.[72] A sense of the role regional conferences played in driving forward research comes through in the publications and bulletins of the time. In January 1971 *Tanzania Zamani* reported on the 1970 Universities of East Africa Social Science Conference which had been held in Dar es Salaam in December, with history papers focusing in particular on "trade and production, development and under-development, both in recent and earlier African history, some of them with specific reference to Tanzania." Readers of *Tanzania Zamani* eager to see the latest research which had been presented were informed of the likely publication of some of the papers, and directed to bound volumes containing the history papers from the 1968 conference in Makerere and the 1969 conference in Nairobi.[73] As well as providing an opportunity to share research, conferences further developed and cemented personal connections and produced new initiatives. Bethwell Ogot recalled in his autobiography that it was meetings between the departments of History at Makerere, Nairobi and Dar es Salaam held at one such conference in 1968 which led to the founding of the *Transafrica Journal of History*. Departments of Literature from the three institutions met in a similar way to discuss curricula and pedagogy.[74]

But beyond the formal structures of the university, a new infrastructure of academic exchange across the region developed in those years. One important dimension of this was the East African Academy of Arts and Sciences, at whose third symposium Nsekela delivered the address with which we opened this section. The East African Academy was established in 1963 and had branches in Kenya, Uganda, Tanganyika and Zanzibar. As L.K.H. Goma, Chairman of the Uganda Branch and Vice-President of the Academy wrote in 1963 in the introduction to the proceedings of its first Symposium, its aim was to be "not only a forum for East Africa's research workers and scholars of all disciplines, but also a body

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71 Sicherman, *Becoming an African University*, 71. On the East African Special Lectureship Scheme, see Ogot, *My Footprints*, 131.

72 Ogot, *My Footprints*, 144; TNA, Acc 597, S. 111 FA/E90/7 Part E, Call for the 1976 Social Science Conference of the East African Universities.

73 "Conferences: The 1970 Universities of East Africa Social Science Conference," *Tanzania Zamani*, no. 8 January 1971, 15.

74 Reeves, "East African Intellectual Community," 8.

that will be in touch with the general public."[75] In January 1964 it was officially recognised by the East African Common Services Organisation as an "indigenous East African Learned Body".[76] The Academy organised seminars and conferences that brought together academics from across the region.[77] And academics travelled together on behalf of this emerging East African intellectual community, for example when Shihabuddin Chiraghdin, as delegate for Swahili and East African history, travelled with six other delegates from Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania on behalf of the Academy to the Peking Scientific Symposium in August 1964.[78]

To return to Nsekela's 1965 speech, it is striking that he explicitly reflected on the East African nature of the gathering. He told the delegates that "as you yourselves assemble here, you are almost a perfect example of East African co-operation. The problems you discuss, the ideas you disseminate, are to a great degree concerned with all the countries which separately and together constitute the East African confederation . . . The existence of bodies such as the East African Academy of Arts and Sciences is a vital constituent of the cement which binds our countries together."[79] Nsekela's pride at being able to host the meeting in the "brand new" buildings of the University College in Dar es Salaam was coupled with his enthusiasm for what could be achieved by researchers working together across the region.[80]

At the same time, new ventures which were linked to universities but not necessarily part of them – for example the *East Africa Journal* – also helped consolidate a strong network of East African academics, whose names reappear on the list of advisory boards and editorial boards in those years. As we saw in Chapter two, its editor from 1965 until it closed at the end of 1972 was the Nairobi historian Bethwell Ogot, with the Dar es Salaam historian Isaria Kimambo an associate editor.[81]

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75 L.K.H. Goma, "Introduction," *Proceedings of the East African Academy; First Symposium, Makerere June 1963* (Nairobi: Longmans, 1963).

76 J.M. Robertson, "Report on the East African Academy," 18 February 1965, UNESCO Archives, Catalogue number 0000158080: 69.

77 Reeves, "East African Intellectual Community," 8.

78 Latifa S. Chiraghdin, *Shihabuddin Chiraghdin: Life Journey of a Swahili Scholar* (Nairobi: Asian African Heritage Trust, 2018), 102. Academy members also visited Moscow and India in the Academy's first two years of operation. J.M. Robertson, "Report on the East African Academy", 18 February 1965, UNESCO Archives, Catalogue number 0000158080: 5.

79 Nsekela, "Opening Address," 11–15.

80 Ibid., 13.

81 Reeves, "East African Intellectual Community," 280. The journalist Philip Ochieng was Ogot's assistant. Bethwell Ogot and Isaria Kimambo both played an active role in the UNESCO General

This activity was, as we saw in the first part of this chapter, heavily dependent on foreign funding and, as Edward Barongo had predicted in his 1956 letter to *Baraza*, expatriate academics remained a powerful and visible presence. As late as 1971, two-thirds of the academic staff at Makerere were expatriate, though the nature of this expatriate presence had changed: where in the 1950s they had primarily come from Britain, they were now just as likely to be from America or elsewhere in the world.[82]

External funding and academic networks of mobility shaped the contours of disciplinary research and teaching. In Nairobi, Rockefeller funded the Institute for Development Studies which, Geoffrey Reeves argued in his 1974 thesis, constituted a highly effective form of academic gate-keeping, shaping the study of development in Nairobi along Western lines.[83] In Dar es Salaam, where there was a noticeable uptick in the presence of academic staff who had been trained in the communist world after 1966, those staff were particularly concentrated in the departments of Sociology, Statistics, Economics and the Economic Research Bureau.[84]

Members of East Africa's intelligentsia also worked closely with new governments. The example of the History departments of Dar es Salaam and Nairobi provide an example of what this meant in practice. In his reflections on the early years of the Department of History at the University of Dar es Salaam, the historian Isaria Kimambo recalled the close relationships the department had with the Institute of Education and the Ministry of National Education.[85] The urgency of conducting new research into Tanzania's pre-colonial history and getting that research into schools comes through clearly both in memoirs and reminiscences and in the documents of the time. A critical role in linking the University to this wider community was played by the Tanzania Historical Association. Kimambo recalled that *A History of Tanzania*, which he edited with A. J. Temu and which was published in 1969, and "was the first publication to demonstrate to the public that the study of pre-colonial history of the country was possible", was first "dis-

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History of Africa project, on which see Larissa Schulte Nordholt, "What is an African Historian? Negotiating Scholarly Personae in UNESCO's General History of Africa," in *How to be a Historian: Scholarly Personae in Historical Studies, 1800–2000*, ed. Herman Paul (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2019), 182–200.

82 Reeves, "East African Intellectual Community," 143.

83 Reeves, "East African Intellectual Community," 158.

84 Reeves, "East African Intellectual Community," 179.

85 Isaria N. Kimambo, *Three Decades of Production of Historical Knowledge at Dar Es Salaam* (Dar es Salaam: Dar es Salaam University Press, 1993), 6.

cussed in a conference of history teachers and members of the Historical Association in 1967".[86]

In his autobiography, Bethwell Ogot recounts the roots of the Kenya Historical Association (KHA) which was founded in 1966. The idea of establishing a Historical Association was first discussed at a conference in 1966, sponsored by the Ministry of Education and the Department of History in Nairobi.[87] As in Tanzania, revising the school curriculum was a central concern, and the KHA was rooted in a close relationship with schoolteachers and the ministry. Benjamin Kipkorir, who became Honorary Secretary of the Association in 1970, recalled in his autobiography that

> [b]ecause of the developmental role that the association played, the Ministry of Education supported the annual conferences with small grants. It was my duty each year to make a formal request to the Director of Education (for many years the position was held by Herbert Kanina, one of the most enlightened professionals in the civil serviced that I ever met). Both the Government Chief Inspector of Schools, J.N.B. Osogo, himself a noted historian and author, and Keith Hardyman, the History Inspector, used to attend the conference in person.[88]

In both cases, the intellectual excitement which was captured by Nsekela in the quotation we started this section with is very clear. And it reached beyond universities and schools to a wider public. Looking back from the vantage point of the early 1990s, Kimambo recalled the huge public enthusiasm for historical research in the 1960s, a sense of which comes through in the pages of the journal *Tanzania Zamani* which began life in 1967 as a "bulletin on pre-colonial history", though later expanded its chronological reach. Alongside reports detailing the research which doctoral researchers and members of the History department were undertaking – a 1971 issue referred to department member Walter Rodney's recent archival research in the Seychelles – there were reports of local history societies, often tied to schools.[89] A section on "School Magazines" in a 1968 issue described the research content of recent issues of the magazine *Our Past*, published by the Likonde Seminary, and of the *The Old Moshi Historical Magazine*, published by Old Moshi School.[90] At the same time, *Tanzania Zamani* captures the exchange between historical research and other forms of cultural production,

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86 Kimambo, *Three Decades*, 1, 4.

87 Ogot, *My Footprints*, 145.

88 B. E. Kipkorir, *Descent from Cherang'any Hills: Memoirs of a Reluctant Academic* (Nairobi: Macmillan Kenya, 2009), 239.

89 "Current Research by Members of the History Department, University of Dar es Salaam, Teaching Staff," *Tanzania Zamani*, No. 8, January 1971, 3.

90 "School Magazines," *Tanzania Zamani*, No. 3, July 1968, 19.

noting that Ebrahim Hussein's play *Kinjeketile* was "partly inspired by the Paper No. 4 of the Historical Association of Tanzania, *Records of the Maji Maji Rising, 1905–1907*".[91]

Its Kenyan sibling also sought to reach out to a wider public. In the first editorial of the *Kenya Historical Review*, published in 1973, William Ochieng traced the origins of the journal through the Kenya Historical Association. It had, he explained, long been an ambition of the Association to "publish a journal". A start had been made with a cyclostyled magazine, edited by M.T. Wang'ombe and shared with members, but "it was always the point of the Association that it should disseminate historical knowledge and ideas to as many people as are interested in Kenya's past and future. It is with such sentiments in mind that the Editor hails the birth of this Journal."[92] As Priscilla Asiimire has shown, Makerere's outreach programmes thrived under the University of East Africa and continued after its dissolution.[93] But at the same time, in a rapidly changing political, economic and social context, major questions about the role of universities in East Africa were being asked.

In the Service of Nation and State

In March 1967, the University College in Dar es Salaam hosted a "Conference on the Role of the University College, Dar es Salaam, in a Socialist Tanzania". This conference has been much studied. For some, it is read in the context of the dramatic events of 1966 which saw Tanzanian students protesting against National Service sent home from the University of Dar es Salaam, and the Arusha Declaration of February 1967 which marked Tanzania's turn to socialism. It was indeed a critical moment in the life of the Tanzanian nation, as Andrew Ivaska's work has emphasised.[94] Others have focused on its place in the history of the left in Tanzania and in East Africa more broadly, and in cementing a divide between a 'liberal' model of the University, personified by Mazrui, at Makerere, and a socialist model at UDSM.[95] In recent years, the curriculum work which was central to the conference, in particular proposing political education as an essential part of

91 "Publications: Books," *Tanzania Zamani*, No. 8, January 1971, 11.

92 "Editorial", *Kenya Historical Review*, 1 (1973), no page.

93 Priscilla Asiimire, "University Adult Education at Makerere, 1953–2006" (PhD thesis, Makerere University, 2025).

94 Ivaska, "Movement Youth."

95 Mamdani, "The African University."

teaching, has featured in discussions about what it means to "decolonize" university education.[96]

But for some of those who spoke at the conference, it was important to stress that the University College was not disengaging from its neighbours. In his opening address, the Principal, Wilbert Chagula, expressed the hope that the conference would not be seen as being "parochial in outlook" and sought to put the conference in a wider context.[97] "Although it is true to say that this conference would probably not have been held if the student demonstration against certain aspects of National Service had not taken place on 22nd October, 1966", he told delegates, "it is *not* true that we have asked you to this conference so that you could assist us in solving our domestic problems connecting with or arising from that regrettable incident of 22nd October, 1966." Rather, he continued,

> we have invited you to this Conference so that all of us can discuss the various ways in which Colleges such as this one can be fully incorporated into the social and political fabric of the nation so that their contribution to the social, economic and political development of the countries in which they are situated could justify the large amounts of money that have been invested in them by the people.[98]

The theme of what this could and should mean was a powerful thread running through the discussions at the conference.

In this sense, the conference was firmly situated in wider transnational discussions of what the purpose of a university should be, building on conversations that had been taking place over the preceding decades. These debates brought together questions about how to move beyond the structures inherited from colonial rule and build something new, and what kinds of higher education should be prioritised in a context where the resources to support education were very limited indeed. In his own speech, Tanzania's education minister Solomon Eliufoo combined his support for the work of the university with the argument that from his perspective the purpose of the university was to fulfil a manpower need, and

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96 Bheki R. Mngomezulu and Sakhile Hadebe, "What would the decolonisation of a political science curriculum entail? Lessons to be Learnt from the East African Experience at the Federal University of East Africa", *Politikon*, 45, no. 1 (2018): 66–80; Roger Southall, "The Decolonisation of the Political Science Curriculum in East Africa: A reply to Mngomezulu and Sakhile Hadebe," *Politikon* 46, no. 2 (2019): 240–251; Eric Burton, "A Marxist-Leninist Tanzanian Economist: Kassim Guruli, East Germany, and Struggles over Socialism at the University of Dar es Salaam," *The International Journal of African Historical Studies* 54, no. 3 (2021): 239–307.

97 CCM.570, Wilbert Chagula, "Opening," Conference on the Role of the University College, Dar es Salaam, in a Socialist Tanzania, 3.

98 CCM.570, Chagula, "Opening," Conference on the Role of the University College, Dar es Salaam, in a Socialist Tanzania, 5–6.

education for education's sake would have to wait until after the economic take-off which the development theory of the time confidently predicted.[99] Students, too, were debating this question. *Dialogue*, the student magazine of the University of East Africa, had recently published contrasting takes on the subject alongside one another: one contribution argued that students constituted a "special class" and that employing them to undertake general labour was "sheer wastage of skilled manpower"; another proposed to "Keep Africa classless" and criticised the high salaries of graduates in general, and Tanzanian students unwilling to contribute to the National Service Fund in particular.[100]

The question of foreign funding, and expatriate staff, was a central concern of the Dar es Salaam conference. Committee Four, which was tasked with discussing the curriculum, moved quickly from the question of whether teaching staff need themselves have socialist commitment to the wider question of recruitment and finance. Criticising current recruitment processes, the committee "felt that the Inter-University Council and the Overseas Education Service were inadequate, and that any dependence upon Overseas Foundations and other sources (both for recruitment and salaries) should be carefully reconsidered." On the question of how specifically to take East Africanisation forward, "one recommendation was that the East African governments should be asked to support the East African Special Lectureship programme, whose present method of financing may be about to lapse." The committee discussed the importance of recruiting "East Africans conducting their post-graduate research locally" and asked the College to "take particular note of the possibility of recruiting from among the East Africans studying in socialist countries". While the focus of the discussion was on "East Africanisation", "a number of participants wanted to be clear that 'East Africanisation' was not a process designed to entirely exclude other nationalities, particularly Africans from other parts of the continent."[101] The draft recommendations which concluded the conference included the clear statement that "[t]he Confer-

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99 CCM.570, S. N. Eliufoo, "Conference on the Role of the University College, Dar es Salaam, in a Socialist Tanzania." Though as Eliufoo wrote in the *East Africa Journal* later that year this should not be understood as a threat to research work. He argued that "We must accustom ourselves to the idea that the University is a *Service institution*, fashioned and guided by the actual circumstances and requirements of this part of Africa . . . the essential liberties of a university, namely, the freedom to study and to teach and to follow the truth wherever it may lead, can survive such planned intervention [as controlled student numbers per course] unimpaired." S. N. Eliufoo, "Education for service-men only," *East Africa Journal* 4 no. 8 (1967), 23–4. Italics in original.
100 BM Kimulson, "Students in Society" and Tom Amasira-Kecha, "A rising National Bourgeoisie," *Dialogue* no. 3 (1966), 9–11.
101 CCM.570, "Conference on the Role of the University College, Dar es Salaam, in a Socialist Tanzania," Committee 4, "Recommendations," 2.

ence is of the opinion that in future less reliance should be placed by the College on overseas agencies or foundations for both recruitment and salaries of staff."[102]

While Chagula sought to stress that the conference was not simply concerned with Tanzania's domestic problems, it did indicate the growing challenge of a multi-national university in an age of nationalism. In his own lecture, the Vice-Principal R.C. Honeybone explicitly drew attention to the challenge of nation-building in a multi-national institution. "It is not widely realised", he told his audience, "that for the first few years the Tanzanian students were a minority. The students union was run largely by non-Tanzanians so that nation building attitudes were more difficult to develop." This, however, was now changing. "Last session", he continued "for the first time Tanzanians formed the large majority of the student body and we can now use this new situation to ensure that their commitment to national development is sharpened without running the risk of reducing the value of a multi-national college." This did not mean, he hastened to add, that non-Tanzanians were any less welcome, it "merely means that in future this college in Tanzania will achieve the maturity of having most of its students from Tanzania."[103]

In his speech, he drew attention to the ways in which the University and its Institutes worked closely with government, and the role its students played in their local communities, echoing what we saw earlier in relation to Kenya and Tanzania's History societies. But he also indicated the challenges it faced in its relationships with mainland Tanzania's ruling party, TANU. These were the issues which, as Andrew Ivaska has emphasised, ultimately led TANU to assert greater control over the university and its students, reasserting a limited national scope for campus activism.[104] No less importantly for the capacity of faculty and students to think and act on a regional than national scale was the trend from 1967 towards closer alignment between the University's mission with the development policies of national government, most notably through manpower planning.[105] On 1 July 1970, the Tanzanian University Act declared the object of the University of Dar es Salaam was to "preserve, transmit and enhance knowledge for the benefit

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102 "Draft recommendations of the Conference on the Role of the University College, Dar es Salaam, in a Socialist Tanzania held on 11th and 12th March, 1967," 2.

103 CCM.570, R.C. Honeybone, "The organization, operation and plans of the University College, Dar es Salaam," Conference on the Role of the University College, Dar es Salaam, in a Socialist Tanzania, 15.

104 Andrew Ivaska, "Movement Youth," 205.

105 Abdullah Ismail Kanduru, "The Implementation of the National Manpower Policy by Tanzanian Universities from 1962 to 1994" (PhD thesis, University of Toronto, 1994), 111.

of the people of Tanzania in accordance with the principles of socialism accepted by the people of Tanzania."[106]

Conclusion

Despite Ogot's reflection on the limited power of the University of East Africa's development committee, when compared to the three contributing states, the regional character of the university did preserve a certain amount of independence from government. The official formation of three national universities paved the way for greater state control over the institutions. In Uganda, for example, almost immediately after the dissolution of the University of East Africa, Obote's government began to replace people in senior positions at Makerere, like the Vice-Chancellor, with individuals close to the president.[107] In some ways, universities remained spaces of regional mobility in the 1970s precisely *because* East African states sought to contain the role of national institutions, pushing staff and students to move within the region in search of improved freedoms or salaries when political tides turned against them. The mass exodus of Ugandans (an estimated 85% of all teaching staff) to neighbouring countries (and further afield) under Idi Amin is only the most extreme example.[108]

Meanwhile, East African students still protested against university and government policy, and still debated what their role in society should be. University of Nairobi students in the late 1970s saw themselves as a vanguard of a second liberation, for example, but they were invested in defining who was a worthy *Kenyan* anti-imperialist, rather than how a regional academic sphere could pursue its vision to mark a break with its colonial origins.[109]

A regional institution was part of the discussion that this chapter has traced about what role a university and its students should play in society. In the late colonial period as in the early independence period, East African leaders could agree on the maxims that universities should be "relevant" to "African" society. What this meant in practice was far less clear. A regional university represented a possible answer both for pragmatic and ideological reasons. Like Makerere in

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106 Reeves, "East African Intellectual Community," 177.

107 Mngomezulu, "A Political History of Higher Education in East Africa," 432.

108 This figure refers to staff in schools as well as universities. Olong-Atwoki, quoted in Sicherman, *Becoming an African University*, 105.

109 Duncan Omanga and Kipkosgei Arap Buigutt, "Marx in Campus: Print Cultures, Nationalism and Student Activism in the Late 1970s Kenya," *Journal of Eastern African Studies* 11, no. 4 (2017): 571–89.

the 1950s, the University of East Africa in the 1960s was a more efficient use of limited resources than multiple national institutions, particularly when planning for a rapid increase in skilled labour supply was a political priority. And, like Makerere in the 1950s, preserving a certain amount of academic freedom, or independence from colonial or national governments, was easier through an institution with a regional executive board. Aspirations toward pan-African exchange and solidarity could fit comfortably within the project of a regional university, but these were not the driving force. On the contrary, the University of East Africa relied on foreign funding that precluded radical visions of what a learning institution could look like (like those that animated the TANU's Kivukoni College, for instance).[110]

This chapter provides an insight into how and why many of the forms, structures and characteristics of the late colonial regional project were carried into the post-independence era and with what consequences. Despite being charged with the missions of Africanisation, nation-building and supporting the economic and social transformation of East Africa after independence, the colonial origins of the university limited the extent to which higher education became a site of radical change. Moreover, this contradiction between the liberating and constraining effects of the university on intellectual life in East Africa and ideas of the region had an impact beyond the campus. The centrality of East Africa's universities to the region's intellectual ecosystem, notably the activities of the East African Academy, ensured that debates about the operation of the universities had a disproportionate impact on wider networks of knowledge production.

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110 Eric Burton, "Forging the Vanguard of African Socialism: Nationalism, Respectability and Ideological Struggles at Kivukoni College, Tanzania," in *Socialism, Internationalism, and Development in the Third World: Envisioning Modernity in the Era of Decolonization*, eds. Su Lin Lewis and Nana Osei-Opare (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2024), 193–214.

Chapter 4
The African Labour College and East African Trade Unionism

Between June and September 1959, Pauline Clerk from Ghana joined 34 other students from across Africa at the second residential course at the African Labour College (ALC) in Kampala. East Africans were well represented: one Zanzibari, two Ugandans, six Tanganyikans, and four Kenyans.[1] Like her fellow students, Clerk was a senior trade union official: she was both the national organiser for the Broadcasting Workers' Union in Ghana and the national women's organiser for the Ghana Trades Union Congress (GTUC).[2]

The African Labour College was run by the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU). Founded in 1949 as an anti-communist breakaway from the World Federation of Trade Unions (WFTU), the ICFTU represented itself publicly as a (qualified) supporter of anti-colonialism.[3] The African Labour College (ALC) was established and then deliberately located in Kampala at the heart of decolonizing Africa to give expression to such sentiments. But it was also located in the city to in order benefit from the vitality of intellectual and political life centred on the Makerere campus.[4] The ALC is therefore illustrative of the way in which the key ideas and debates within intellectual culture discussed throughout this book seeped into wider political discourse. This is not surprising. After all, in Chapter one the determination of Neogy, Ngũgĩ, and their contemporaries to engage with society at large was established. And the trade unions were a particularly effective and obvious route towards such engagement. Not only was the labour movement the largest form of mass participation in public debate besides nationalist politics, but its leaders and institutions played a key role in the networks discussed throughout this book. This was most obviously personified by Mboya, who in addition to his trade union and political leadership was also a patron of the arts, most notably Es'kia Mphahlele's Chemchemi Cultural Centre and

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1 International Institute of Social History (IISH), papers of the ICFTU 4021b, ICFTU African Labour College, "Second Course," 1959.
2 UKNA CO 859/1208, Fockstedt, "Principal's Report on Second Course – 1st June to 25th September 1959" no date but 1959, 3.
3 IISH ICFTU 4479b, ICFTU, "The ICFTU's Uncompromising Fight for Economic and Social Development and Self-Determination," 29 March 1956, 2.
4 IISH ICFTU 3981, Lewis, "Some Considerations of the ICFTU African Labour College," December 1958, 8.

Elimo Njau's Paa ya Paa art gallery.[5] Other trade union leaders also engaged with similar activities. In June 1960, for example, Clement Kanama and Rashidi Kawawa were invited to Philadelphia to attend the annual conference of the CIA-backed American Society of African Culture.[6] Moreover, the labour movement was the subject of one of the first seminars held at the EAISCA, and the focus of books from the EAPH and articles in *East Africa Journal*.[7] In other words, the trade unions were an integral part of the East African cultural and political landscape. The labour movement was, moreover, a setting in which intellectual culture was put into dialogue with popular politics, and one of the primary arenas in which being East African was practiced.

Outwardly, the College appeared to be an example of "anti-imperial spaces" created by the labour movement across the globe where late-colonial subjects and then citizens of new independent states accessed education, inspiration and networks of similarly minded individuals.[8] But Pauline Clerk's experiences in Kampala ran contrary to this mission. Travelling from independent Ghana to late-colonial East Africa, Clerk felt she had stepped back in time. Ghana had been independent for a little over two years, but this was a long enough period for Clerk to be shocked by the realities of life for Uganda's African population under colonial rule. As she wrote in the GTUC's newspaper, *The Ghanaian Worker*, after her return home, "As you walk the streets of Ghana, free and alive, think of those who are not allowed this feeling, are forbidden in the so-called white areas, are unable to walk into any shop they wish to buy things." To Clerk, the racism that influenced every aspect of working lives in East Africa meant the region was indistinguishable from apartheid South Africa. "I must now step out into the streets of Accra and in its bustling

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5 For Mboya's correspondence with Mphahlele, see HIA TM/28/9. For his correspondence with Njau see HIA TM/28/10.

6 UKNA FO 141/17773, Commissioner of Police to Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Security & Immigration, 20 May 1960.

7 For a communique from the seminar, see "East African Labour Policies," *East Africa Journal* 1, no. 7 (1964). For examples of other labour-related publications see Michael Kamaliza, "Tanganyika's View of Labour's Role," *East Africa Journal* 1, no. 7 (1964); Clement Lubembe, "Trade Unions and Nation Building," *East Africa Journal* 1, no. 2 (1964); Roger Scott, "Labour Legislation and the Federation Issue," *East Africa Journal* 1, no. 7 (1964); Scott, *Development of Trade Unionism*; Singh, *History of Kenya's Trade Union Movement*.

8 JoAnn McGregor, "Locating Exile: Decolonization, Anti-Imperial Spaces and Zimbabwean Students in Britain, 1965–1980," *Journal of Historical Geography* 57 (2017).

happiness try and lose for a few minutes the stench of South, Central and East Africa," she concluded.[9]

Clerk's sense of the distinctiveness of East Africa and her unease in Kampala was compounded by the international and Pan-African politics of the labour movement. By the time of Clerk's arrival in Kampala, this political context meant Clerk's home organisation, the Ghana Trade Union Congress, was at odds with her ICFTU hosts at the African Labour College and many of her East African counterparts. Through the influence of the Kenyan trade unionist and politician Tom Mboya and his range of international connections, the East African labour movement of the late 1950s had come to occupy a very different position within transnational debates about labour and its place within the processes of decolonisation than did Clerk and the GTUC.

With the space for more radical forms of labour activism restricted by the colonial regimes in the region, the East African labour movement, for a brief period in the late 1950s and early 1960s, appeared to its members and foreign observers to be characterised by a distinctive combination of policy positions.[10] First, while overtly anti-colonial, under Mboya's influence East Africa's main trade union federations were for a short but critical period tied to global anti-communist networks. Second, inspired by European social democracy, the East African labour movement in this period encouraged significant improvements to the living standards of its members while seeking to maintain positive working relationships with employers. As such, under Mboya's leadership the East African labour movement occupied a distinctive position on the ideological spectrum of political actors engaged with decolonization, the Cold War, and late colonial and early post-colonial development policies.[11] This set it against unions from other parts of the continent, most notably Ghana. These differences played out in arguments about the region's place with a Ghana-led initiative to create an All-African Trade Union Federation. As the example of Clerk suggests, education and training establishments were key to the emergence of this brand of East Africa labour regionalism.

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9 UKNA CO 859/1560, Pauline Clerk, "Brutality Their Pay, Misery Their Recreation," *The Ghanaian Worker*, 5 December 1959, 2.

10 For general, contemporary accounts of trade unions and their wider significance in this period, see William Friedland, *Vuta Kamba: The Development of Trade Unions in Tanganyika* (Stanford CA: Hoover Institution Press, 1969); Roger Scott, *The Development of Trade Unionism in Uganda* (Nairobi: East African Publishing House, 1966); Makhan Singh, *History of Kenya's Trade Union Movement, to 1952* (Nairobi: East African Publishing House, 1969).

11 Paul Tiyambe Zeleza, "Pan-African Trade Unionism: Unity and Discord," *Transafrican Journal of History* 15 (1986); Paul Tiyambe Zeleza, "Trade Union Imperialism: American Labour, the ICFTU and the Kenyan Labour Movement," *Social and Economic Studies* 36, no. 2 (1987).

Ideas of the Afro-Asian world; the Third World; global socialism; anti-communism; Pan-Africanism; and the residual British world all came to the fore in the Eastern African labour movement in the 1950s and 1960s through the participation of trade unionists in various educational programmes and the political debates about them.[12] This is not surprising. Labour organisations were influential participants in decolonization across the globe in this period, as a recent body of scholarship has clearly demonstrated.[13] Rachel Leow's work is particularly influential on this chapter. As she shows, the classroom of training institutions and what she terms the "pedagogical work" of trade unions in this period provide revealing insight into the intersection of the politics of decolonisation and the Cold War. Trade union educational programmes were the locations in which grassroots trade unionists confronted nationalism, communism, and anti-communism, as well as their respective international champions.[14] This chapter follows Leow by considering the importance of labour training and education to the creation of a distinctive conception of East Africa in the age of decolonisation.

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12 Immanuel Harisch and Eric Burton, "The Missing Link? Western Communists as Mediators Between the East German FDGB, the World Federation of Trade Unions (WFTU), and African Trade Unions in the Late 1950s and Early 1960s," *International Labor and Working-Class History* 103, no. 1 (2023); Yevette Richards, "African and African-American Labor Leaders in the Struggle over International Affiliation," *The International Journal of African Historical Studies* 31, no. 2 (1998); Carolien Stolte, "Introduction: Trade Union Networks and the Politics of Expertise in an Age of Afro-Asian Solidarity," *Journal of Social History* 53, no. 2 (2019).
13 Mathilde von Bülow, "Irving Brown and ICFTU Labor Diplomacy during Algeria's Struggle for Independence," in *American Labor's Global Ambassadors: The International History of the AFL-CIO During the Cold War*, ed. Robert Anthony Waters and Geert van Goethem (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013); Gareth Curless, "'The People Need Civil Liberties': Trade Unions and Contested Decolonisation in Singapore," *Labor History* 57, no. 1 (2016); Gareth Curless, "The Triumph of the State: Singapore's Dockworkers and the Limits of Global History, c.1920–1965," *The Historical Journal* 60, no. 4 (2017); Harisch and Burton, "Missing Link."; Leslie James, "'Essential Things Such as Typewriters': Development Discourse, Trade Union Expertise, and the Dialogues of Decolonization Between the Caribbean and West Africa," *Journal of Social History* 53, no. 2 (2019); Rachel Leow, "Asian Lessons in the Cold War Classroom: Trade Union Networks and the Mulltidirectional Pedagogies of the Cold War in Asia," *Journal of Social History* 53, no. 2 (2019); Su Lin Lewis, "'We Are Not Copyists': Socialist Networks and Non-Alignment from Below in A. Philip Randolph's Asian Journey," *Journal of Social History* 53, no. 2 (2019); Spencer Mawby, "Workers in the Vanguard: The 1960 Industrial Relations Ordinance and the Struggle for Independence in Aden," *Labor History* 57, no. 1 (2016).
14 Leow, "Asian Lessons." The importance of pedagogy in African trade unionism is further developed in Immanuel Harisch, "Great Hopes, False Promises. African Trade Unions in the World of Organized Labor. Institutions, Networks, and Mobilities during the Cold War 1950s and 1960s" (PhD thesis, University of Vienna, 2023).

The chapter has four parts. It first considers the ways in which the East African labour movement was initially shaped by late colonialism. Moderate trade unionism was undoubtedly a colonial project. Moreover, metropolitan officials initially saw strictly controlled international connections through the ICFTU and its provision of training opportunities as a way in which the activity of trade unions in East Africa and elsewhere could be contained to the workplace rather than a broader field of political action. However, this alliance between local and global labour took the role of the trade unionism and regional activism far beyond the scope imagined for East Africans by the colonial authorities. In the second part of the chapter, we will see how African agency and international support made regionalism and trade unionism credible anti-colonial projects. In the third section we turn to the educational efforts of the ICFTU and AFL-CIO, which put East African trade unionists into regular contact with one another and allowed for the consolidation of regional distinctiveness. This took place in locations such as the ALC. However, the use of education as a way of consolidating the alignment of the labour movement with the ICFTU and the American labour movement, and the rejection of Pan-African integration were by no means unanimously supported among trade union activists. In the final section of the chapter, we will see how rows over the international alignment of the region's trade unions were of fundamental importance to factionalism among trade unionists and subsequent efforts by East Africa's new rulers to curtail the power of the labour movement.

Labour, Late Colonialism, and The Cold War

Up to and immediately after the Second World War, various European colonies across the globe were shaken by strikes and other forms of protest by urban workers. In much of colonial Africa, striking workers angered by low wages, poor housing, and insecure forms of employment forced their rulers to reassess the social foundations of colonial society. In a reversal of previous policies, urbanisation was recognised (belatedly) by colonial rulers as a reality rather a temporary condition. They thus set about constructing new forms of control over urban subjects. Moderate trade unions operating on terms set by the colonial state appeared to European officials to be one way that could be achieved.[15] At the same time more radical forms of labour activism were to be crushed, as the example of Uganda illustrates. The first trade union there, the Uganda African Drivers Associ-

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15 Frederick Cooper, *Decolonization and African Society: The Labor Question in French and British Africa* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 18–9.

ation and Trade Union (UADATU), pre-dated post-war efforts by colonial governments to found and control a moderate labour movement. Formed in 1939, the UADATU was linked to Bugandan nationalism and anti-colonial protests throughout its lifespan. In response, its leaders were first deported by the colonial authorities and then the organisation itself was closed in 1949.[16] In its place emerged a different, state-sanctioned, moderate brand of trade unionism. Between 1948 and 1955, a wide range of new trade unions serving the agricultural, education, transport, and public sector were established, most significantly the Uganda Railway African Union (URAU). By the close of 1960, nearly 20,000 workers were members of 33 different trade unions, of which URAU was the largest with 5,000 members.[17] A similar account can be provided for Kenya and Tanzania too.

In its efforts to promote moderate trade unionism in East Africa and elsewhere around the imperial world, the British government assumed it would have an ally in the new ICFTU. After all, as Colonial Secretary Lennox-Boyd wrote in June 1957, the anti-communist ICFTU was "a friendly and well-disposed organisation . . ."[18] That confidence was based on the presumed influence of the British Trades Union Congress (the TUC) on the ICFTU. The TUC had been instrumental in the split of the ICFTU from the WFTU in 1949. Since its foundation in 1945, British and other Western labour federations had criticised the WFTU for being beholden to communist influence. Unable to enact internal reform of the WFTU, the TUC and other Western-aligned federations instead founded the ICFTU.[19] Alongside its antipathy to Communism and support for the founding of the ICFTU, the TUC's other key post-war global stance was its support for British colonial labour policy. The TUC was an active partner of the Colonial Office in the latter's efforts to promote stable industrial relations in East Africa.[20] Moreover, the TUC had no appetite for encouraging colonial trade unions to become a platform for wider political agendas, particularly anti-colonialism.[21] As it transpired, however, the TUC struggled to exert any control over the ICFTU's activities towards East Africa.

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16 UKNA FCO 141/18437, Security Liaison Officer, "Subversion in the Trade Union Movement in Uganda (1950–1959)," no date but sent under cover of Security Liaison Officer to Le Poidevin, 15 August 1961, 4–5.

17 UKNA FCO 141/18437, Security Liaison Officer, "Subversion in the Trade Union Movement in Uganda (1950–1959)," no date but sent under cover of Security Liaison Officer to Le Poidevin, 15 August 1961, 4–5.

18 UKNA CO 822/1625, Lennox-Boyd to Twining, 26 June 1957.

19 Anthony Carew, "Conflict Within the ICFTU: Anti-Communism and Anti-Colonialism in the 1950s," *International Review of Social History* 41, no. 1 (1996).

20 Paul Tiyambe Zeleza, "Colonialism and Internationalism: The Case of the British and Kenyan Labour Movement," *Ufahamu* 14, no. 1 (1984).

21 IISH ICFTU 4476, TUC, "Kenya Trade Unions and Mau Mau," 30 December 1954.

These activities gathered pace following a tour of the region in 1951 by an ICFTU delegation. In its report, the delegation recommended to the organisation's secretariat in Brussels that a representative be appointed to the British colonies of East and Northeast Africa.[22]

Two developments mitigated against the TUC dictating the terms of the ICFTU's engagement with East Africa trade unionists. The first was factionalism within the ICFTU following the merger in 1955 of the two American labour federations, the American Federation of Labor (AFL) and the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO). Under its moniker of the AFL-CIO, the newly combined giant federation immediately became the main financial contributor to the ICFTU. In stark contrast to the TUC, the AFL-CIO's president George Meaney and his colleagues were convinced that colonialism provided the perfect conditions for communism to bloom among colonial subjects.[23] As part of its wider anti-communist support of American Cold War foreign policy, the AFL-CIO adopted an avowed anti-colonial stance towards African trade unions and expected the ICFTU to do the same. Even as Lennox-Boyd waxed lyrical about the alignment of the ICFTU's views of the Cold War with British foreign policy, he warned governors of British colonies across the continent that "In relation to Africa, the activities of the ICFTU must be watched carefully."[24]

More important still for the involvement of the ICFTU in East Africa than the AFL-CIO was the agency of Kenyan labour leaders, most notably Tom Mboya.[25] Mboya and other moderate Kenyan trade unionists recognised that the ICFTU represented a possible solution to the predicament they found themselves in with the onset of the State of Emergency in October 1952. Declared by the British authorities to deal with the Mau Mau insurgency, the State of Emergency also provided an opportunity for the security forces to mount a crackdown on radical trade unionists. For nearly two decades previously, activists like Makhan Singh, Fred Kubai, Chege Kibachia, and Bildad Kaggia had been at the forefront of both the labour movement and anti-colonial politics. Having organised the 1947 Mombasa dock strike, in 1949 Singh, Kubai, Kibachia, and Kaggia formed the East Afri-

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22 Wisconsin Historical Society, President's Office Files, William Green Papers, 1934–1952, Series II, File C of U.S. Mss. 117A, American Federation of Labor Records (accessed via https://congressional.proquest.com/histvault?q=002038-015-0817), ICFTU Emergency Committee, "Report of the Delegation to Egypt, the Sudan and East Africa," 25 February 1952, 14–16.

23 University of Maryland Special Collections (UMD), papers of the AFL-CIO Record Group (RG) 98–5/1/6, interview with Irving Brown, conducted by Frank Sullivan, October 1979, 5.

24 UKNA CO 822/1625, Lennox-Boyd to Twining, 26 June 1957.

25 Gerard McCann, "Possibility and Peril: Trade Unionism, African Cold War, and the Global Strands of Kenyan Decolonisation," *Journal of Social History* 53, no. 2 (2019).

can Trade Union Congress (EATUC). The EATUC refused to comply with the colonial government's efforts to limit the scope of its activities, most notably the requirement for any trade union to disavow itself of any involvement in politics. Following a general strike in Nairobi in 1950 and in the context of increasing militancy in the city, Singh was arrested and the EATUC disbanded.[26] When the Emergency began two years later, radical trade unionists were among the first targets for arrest and detention.[27] Kubai and Kaggia were captured during the first wave of arrests following the declaration of the State of Emergency in October 1952. Over the following eighteen months, the radical leadership of the trade union movement was detained or imprisoned as part of the British counterinsurgency campaign.[28]

The more moderate Kenya Federation of Registered Trade Unions (the KFRTU) attempted to fill the vacuum left by the disbandment of the EATUC and arrest of its leaders. Registered with the government less than a month after the start of the Emergency, the KFRTU had no qualms about accepting the conditions of registration rejected by the EATUC.[29] Led initially by Aggrey Minya, Tom Mboya rapidly assumed control of the KFRTU.[30] Nevertheless, the moderate KFRTU also found itself caught up in the Emergency. With the colonial authorities demonstrating their characteristic unwillingness to distinguish between actual militant supporters of the insurgency and the wider African population of Kenya, the entire labour movement was subjected to great pressure from the authorities. This included the arrest of nearly 40 moderate trade union leaders during one security operation in April 1954.[31] The ICFTU was one of the few avenues by which the KFRTU could attempt to publicise the plight of moderate trade unionists. Once in office as general secretary of what was to become the Kenya Federation of Labour (KFL), Mboya intensified the relationship with the ICFTU. He pleaded with the ICFTU to "save the situation by taking a strong stand against the way the Emergency is being handled in Kenya today."[32] Mboya's plea was received with interest. The ICFTU sup-

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26 McCann, "Possibility and Peril," 353–6; Zarina Patel, *Unquiet: The Life and Times of Makhan Singh* (Nairobi: Zand Graphics, 2006).

27 Frank Furedi, "The African Crowd in Nairobi: Popular Movements and Elite Politics," *Journal of African History* 14, no. 2 (1973): 284.

28 Kenya National Archives (KNA) HAKI/24/4, Kenya Intelligence Committee, "Trade Union Activities in the Last Year," May 1955, 1–2.

29 IISH ICFTU 4479a, KFRTU, "Application for Affiliation," 12 November 1952.

30 David Goldsworthy, *Tom Mboya: The Man Kenya Wanted to Forget* (London: Heinemann, 1982), 21; Zeleza, "Trade Union Imperialism," 155–6.

31 Tom Mboya, *Freedom and After* (London: Andre Deutsch, 1963), 37–8.

32 IISH ICFTU 4479c, Mboya, "Memorandum to the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions," July 1954, 2.

ported the KFRTU's efforts to force the government to reopen the cases of detained trade unionists. By mid-September 1954, seven of the 39 trade union officials arrested during Operation Anvil had been released.[33] Further support swiftly followed from the ICFTU for the KFL, under Mboya's leadership.

Mboya had an important ally in Jim Bury, the inaugural ICFTU representative in East Africa who took up his post in 1954. Bury worked from a joint ICFTU and KFL office funded by the ICFTU.[34] Bury organised training sessions, toured the country to advise unions on basic organisation and management, and attended a host of conferences and meetings arranged by the KFL's affiliates to explain the role of the ICFTU.[35] Money followed as the KFL was entrusted with the effective organisation of the Kenyan labour movement so as to avoid its re-radicalisation. ICFTU funds quickly became essential to the survival and then revival of the labour movement.[36] The funds also supported striking dockworkers in Mombasa in 1955.[37] The relationship between the ICFTU and the KFL served both parties well. The ICFTU's support meant the KFL could become "the voice of the African people, in the absence of any other African organizations to speak for them."[38] This in turn gave the ICFTU the credibility to gain a vital foothold in East Africa.[39]

Buoyed by his success in Kenya, Mboya encouraged the formation of the Uganda Trade Union Congress (UTUC) in 1955 by persuading the individual trade unions to affiliate to the national centre, which in turn received and distributed funds from the ICFTU.[40] He did much the same in Tanganyika. There too, the post-war period witnessed a surge in trade union activity, with a small number of locally focused unions formed in the early 1950s. These unions were brought together under the umbrella of the Tanganyika Federation of Labour (TFL) in 1955, following a visit by Mboya to Tanganyika in his capacity as regional representative of the ICFTU.[41]

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33 Anthony Clayton and Donald Savage, *Government and Labour in Kenya 1895–1963* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2016), 389–90; Goldsworthy, *Tom Mboya*, 32–3.

34 IISH ICFTU 4479a, KFRTU, "Minutes of the General Council," 18 September 1954, 2.

35 IISH ICFTU 4479a, KFRTU, "Newsletter No.8," 13 April 1955.

36 IISH ICFTU 4476, Newman to Oldenbroek, 27 August 1956.

37 KNA HAKI/24/4, Kenya Intelligence Committee, "Trade Union Activities in the Last Year," May 1955, 2.

38 Mboya, *Freedom and After*, 35.

39 McCann, "Possibility and Peril."

40 UKNA FCO 141/18437, Security Liaison Officer, "Subversion in the Trade Union Movement in Uganda (1950–1959)," no date but sent under cover of Security Liaison Officer to Le Poidevin, 15 August 1961, 12.

41 UKNA CO 822/1625, Marsh to Greenhough, 15 October 1957; William Friedland, *Vuta Kamba: The Development of Trade Unions in Tanganyika* (Stanford: Hoover Institution Press, 1969), 21–2.

At first, Mboya hoped his efforts towards encouraging moderate trade union-ism in Kenya, Uganda, and Tanganyika would result in pan-East African labour organisations, either at the individual trade union level or a regional federation. He raised these ideas in some of his very first trips abroad in 1954, first with the colonial authorities in Tanganyika and again in London with the Colonial Office. He was rebuffed by both.[42]

In truth, the idea of single unions operating across Eastern Africa or a feder-ated regional body had little appeal to other trade union leaders or members. There were, as representatives of the KFL, TFL, and UTUC agreed at their first ever formal meeting in September 1956, more urgent priorities.[43] Examples of co-ordinated regional industrial action were spectacular, such as the 1959 and 1960 strikes by railway unions, but extremely rare.[44]

Nevertheless, Mboya had helped forge a distinctive East African labour move-ment by the mid-1950s. As acting regional representative in 1955 and then again from December 1956 to mid-1958, Mboya was the public face of the ICFTU across the region.[45] Although he then stepped back from operational duties as his politi-cal career in Kenya took off, Mboya remained an important voice for and within the ICFTU as chairman of its Area Committee for East, Central and South Africa. Mboya took his role with the ICFTU seriously, pushing for ever greater budgets so as to enable him to meet his promises to his Ugandan and Tanganyikan col-leagues to visit, run training courses, and advocate for their interests with colo-nial governments in the region and with the British authorities in London.[46] UTUC and TFL leaders in turn became key allies for Mboya and the KFL on the international stage, supporting for example Mboya's push for an African regional committee within the structures of the ICFTU.[47]

Internally, the three organisations had much in common too. They shared a moderate stance towards government and employers, organisational structures, and a dependency on external support. Low levels of formal employment and low wages limited the viability of small, occupation- or location-specific trade unions. Instead, the Eastern African labour movement was built upon large, amal-

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42 Hoover Institute Archives (Hereafter HIA), papers of Tom Mboya (TM) 38/4, Gottfurcht to Mpangala, 2 August 1956.

43 IISH ICFTU 4479d, Newman, "Report on the Inaugural Meeting of Representatives of the Kenya Federation of Labour, Tanganyika Federation of Labour and the Uganda Trade Union Con-gress," 19 September 1956.

44 David Hyde, "The East African Railway Strike, 1959–60: Labour's Challenge of Inter-Territorialism," *Labor History* 57, no. 1 (2016).

45 IISH ICFTU 4479b, Bury, "Talks with Mr. Oldenbroek," 1 June 1955.

46 IISH ICFTU 4479c, Mboya to Oldenbroek, 6 July 1955.

47 UKNA CO 822/1623, extract from Tanganyika Intelligence Report, December 1959.

gamated unions which spanned entire sectors of the economy.[48] Furthermore, those individual unions were, in this model, to be led and supported by strong, national centres to a far greater extent than was the case in, say, Britain. Because of the same basic economic realities, the national centres were, in turn, to be closely integrated into the ICFTU, which was to provide much of the day-to-day funding required for the survival of the labour movement. Dependence on the ICFTU's finances was absolute. In Tanganyika, for example, the trade unions were in a parlous state in 1957: "all were bankrupt" reported Albert Hammerton, an ICFTU official, as he settled their debts.[49]

The relationship of East African labour leaders with the ICFTU was not solely about money, nor was it always cordial. Indeed, at the Arusha meeting of the three federations held in 1958, the general secretaries of the TFL, UTUC, and KFL each expressed their frustration about their lack of influence over the ICFTU's decision-making relating to Africa.[50] But at this stage, all three federations recognised that the benefits of ICFTU affiliation outweighed any discontent with the international body. This was for several reasons. One was the opportunity ICFTU affiliation presented East African trade unionists to build regional and international networks. The ICFTU, particularly after the formation of its Eastern, Southern, and Central Africa committee, provided ample opportunity for the consolidation of ties between the East African leaders. Moreover, the leaders themselves took the initiative to try wherever possible to combine their own federation's conferences with ICFTU events, in turn helping to strengthen their regional networks and to encourage the design and delivery of coordinated policies and practices at territorial and regional level. The ICFTU's regional conference in July 1958 was, for example, adjourned for a day to allow its delegates to join a TFL general meeting held in the same venue to take place.[51] But it was the opportunities for training that was the most attractive aspect of the ICFTU's support for the Mboya-led East African labour movement.

Education

Labour leaders – not least because of personal experience – knew all too well that a lack of investment by colonial governments in education meant that they

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48 Friedland, *Vuta*, 46.

49 IISH ICFTU 4608, Hammerton to Krane, 19 February 1957. See also UKNA CO 859/762, "Extract from the Tanganyikan Intelligence Report," October 1956.

50 UMD AFL-CIO RG 18–7/8/24/7, "Report of the General Secretaries Conference," 15 February 1958.

51 UKNA CO 822/1623, extract from the Tanganyika Intelligence Report, July 1958.

lacked the skills and knowledge necessary to organise and manage the trade union movement. Moreover, colonial-sanctioned trade union training programmes were marked, first, by their narrow focus on pay and conditions and, second, by their insistence on being delivered in-country. This was a none-too-subtle effort by British officials to try to restrict the global networks of labour activists and to limit the range of trade union activity to the workplace rather than wider politics.[52] Kenya's minister for labour, John Stow, told the delegates at the first government-run residential trade union training course in 1954 that the colonial authorities envisaged such training opportunities as a method by which the labour movement could be depoliticised ahead of a post-Emergency era in which "sound trade unions will play their part."[53] The British authorities begrudgingly permitted East Africans to attend overseas training operated by the ICFTU from that point. For example, from December 1954 the ICFTU and University College of Gold Coast provided courses for trade union officials, including those from East Africa.[54] But viewed from both East Africa and the United States, such programmes were unambitious and too limited in scale. In an effort to resist this narrowing of labour activism, East Africa's trade unionists attempted to take every possible opportunity to put pressure on the colonial authorities to ease restrictions on the opportunities of labour leaders to take up training opportunities offered abroad. The TFL, for instance, resolved in 1956 to insist upon government provision of both local educational opportunities as well as further assistance to enable trade unionists to take up training outside of the country.[55] The TFL and other labour organisations appealed to external supporters to "help in the war that we, the people of Africa, have waged against poverty, disease and ignorance."[56]

For their part, the ICFTU and AFL-CIO were similarly concerned about education and trade union leadership in East Africa, albeit for different reasons than those motivating Mboya and his peers. First, the provision of educational opportunities was an extension of the Cold War competition with the WFTU for the alle-

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52 KNA ABK/19/5, Colonial Office, "Conference of Heads of Labour Departments: Trade Union Education and Training," August 1951, 1.

53 KNA ABK/8/297, *East African Standard*, "Kenya Eager for Sound Trade Unions," 16 November 1954. See also KNA ABK/8/297, "Address by Minister of Education, Labour and Lands to the Trade Union Officials at Opening of Study Course in Jeannes School," 6 September 1954.

54 IISH ICFTU 4023, Mwilu, "The Role of the African Labour College in Labour Education," no date but 1968, 2.

55 HIA TM/38/4, Gottfurcht to Mpangala, 2 August 1956.

56 UKNA FCO 141/17773, Kawawa "Speech Given by [sic] the DGB Congress, Stuttgart, Germany," 10 September 1959, enclosed with Director of Special Branch to Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Security and Immigration, 21 September 1959.

giances of trade unionists across the decolonizing world. Put simply, the ICFTU and AFL-CIO had to keep up with initiatives such as the WFTU's training courses for African and Asian trade unionists held in Romania, Hungary, and the Soviet Union in 1958–61, and plans to open institutes in Budapest, Brazzaville, and Conakry.[57] Both the ICFTU and AFL-CIO were sensitive to any hint of efforts by the WFTU or Communist states to, in the words of the American labour and civil rights leader A. Philip Randolph, lure "African native leaders into the camp of the Kremlin."[58] But there was a deeper logic – one incidentally shared with the WFTU – to the interventions in trade union education made by the ICFTU and AFL-CIO. As Leslie James argues, much of the ICFTU's efforts to shore up trade unions across the decolonizing world "hinged upon discursive efficiency, mechanically and systematically applied using modern technology."[59] Training by the ICFTU and AFL-CIO (or the WFTU for that matter) was not primarily ideological or political but rather intended to boost the administrative effectiveness and organisational capacity of local trade unions typically led by poorly educated officials. "The African peoples need information and light and help from the free trade movement, especially our AFL-CIO," Randolph argued.[60] Effectively organised and well-funded trade unions could, from this perspective, repel the influence of Communist and WFTU activity. By implication, however, chaotic and impoverished labour movements were highly vulnerable.

The resulting investment in education and training by the ICFTU and AFL-CIO was very welcome in East Africa. Initially, the most eye-catching educational provision by the ICFTU – or at least that enabled by the engagement of African labour leaders with the ICFTU's networks – was the opportunity for individuals to take up training opportunities outside the region. Mboya's travels to the ICFTU Labour College in India and then Oxford are the best-known examples of these initiatives.[61] But Mboya was not the only trade unionist to exploit such opportunities. His TFL counterpart Rashidi Kawawa used a visit to Britain in 1956 to attend a study conference to make a stopover in Brussels to meet with ICFTU officials. This led to the first opportunities for Tanganyikan trade union leaders to participate in international events. Kawawa subsequently secured a handful of scholarships for a trade union course in Japan and a technical college in Scotland. Maynard Mapangala, Kawawa's assistant secretary at the TFL, was selected to travel

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57 Leow, "Asian Lessons," 432–3.

58 Amistad Research Center (ARC), papers of the American Committee on Africa (ACOA) 9/6, Randolph to Meany, 8 June 1956.

59 James, "Essential Things," 392.

60 UMD AFL-CIO RG1–27/9/2/54/12, Randolph to Meany, 6 February 1956.

61 Mboya, *Freedom and After*, 56–7.

to Mexico for a seminar funded by the ICFTU.[62] Similar opportunities also arose for UTUC's leaders.[63]

Various schemes supported by the ICFTU, and AFL-CIO were soon in operation in East Africa and beyond. Within the region, the ICFTU's representative in Kenya in 1954 and 1955, Jim Bury, organised a series of training courses held over weekends in Nairobi, Mombasa, Kisumu, Nakuru, Kericho and Eldoret. The emphasis in each course were the local challenges trade unionists faced when trying to organise in the area. But the courses also provided an opportunity for the KFL to distribute educational pamphlets provided by the ICFTU college in Calcutta, show films, and play recordings of American protest songs.[64] This programme – delivered in-country and seen by the labour office in Nairobi as a moderating influence on Kenya's trade unionists during the Emergency – had the blessing of the colonial authorities.[65] The activities of the AFL-CIO were another matter.

Announced in the 1957, the AFL-CIO's American Trade Union Scholarship Program proved to be the first major flashpoint in the arguments between, on one side, the TUC and the Colonial Office and, on the other, the AFL-CIO and the East African labour leaders.[66] The American scheme was designed "for bringing African workers to the United States for training in workers' education courses in the schools, colleges and universities for trade union leadership in Africa."[67] The programme was underpinned by "the belief that free democratic trade unionism is a bulwark against Communism and a peaceful method of raising the standard of living of workers in any democratic country."[68] The scholarship included the condition that recipients would return back to their home countries and be involved in the organisation of trade union activities. The AFL-CIO paid for their salaries for one year after their return.[69] That the programme was led by Maida Springer

62 UKNA CO 859/762, Twining to Lennox-Boyd, 7 September 1956.
63 UKNA FCO 141/18437, Security Liaison Officer, "Subversion in the Trade Union Movement in Uganda (1950–1959)," no date but sent under cover of Security Liaison Officer to Le Poidevin, 15 August 1961, 12.
64 IISH ICFTU 4479c, KFL, "Newsletter No.16," 9 August 1955; Clayton and Savage, *Government and Labour*, 382.
65 IISH ICFTU 4475, Bury to Oldenbroek, undated but March 1954.
66 Anthony Carew, "Charles Millard, A Canadian in the International Labour Movement: A Case Study of the ICFTU 1955–61," *Labour* 37 (1996): 134–5.
67 UMD AFL-CIO RG18-7/8/24/7, AFL-CIO, "Plan for Training African Workers for Leadership of African Trade Unions" undated but 1957.
68 UMD AFL-CIO RG18-7/8/24/7, Brown to Anon., undated but September or October 1957.
69 UMD AFL-CIO RG1-27/9/2/54/12, Springer to Schnitzler, 3 March 1959; Yevette Richards, *Maida Springer: Pan-Africanist and International Labor Leader* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2000), 130–4.

was an additional source of concern to both the TUC and the colonial authorities in East Africa. Born in Panama, Springer was one of a few prominent African American trade unionists within the upper echelons of the AFL-CIO and its most prominent champion of closer ties to African labour organisations.[70] Even before helping establish the AFL-CIO's scholarship programme, Springer had strong links to Kenyan and Tanganyikan trade union leaders.[71] She cemented this relationship by hosting Mboya on his 1956 tour of the United States.[72] When she set out to East Africa in October 1957 to recruit the first cohort of scholars, the British government was, the Colonial Office conceded, "seriously worried over the Maida Springer business."[73] Indeed, such was the ferocity of British opposition to the AFL-CIO programme and the threat it posed to the unity of the ICFTU, the American organisation quickly but begrudgingly suspended its new initiative. As it did, however, the AFL-CIO extracted the commitment from the ICFTU that the Brussels-based body would adopt a more overtly anti-colonial line in its future policies towards Africa.[74]

There were two immediate outcomes of the deal struck by the ICFTU with the AFL-CIO in return for the closure of the American scholarship programme. One, which is beyond the purview of this book, was the foundation by the AFL-CIO and the Israeli labour federation, the Histadrut, of the Afro-Asian Institute for Labour Studies and Cooperation (AAILSC). Including training courses run by the Histadrut before the opening of the AAILSC, 1,116 African and Asian trade unionists and cooperative leaders were trained in Israel in the ten years from 1958.[75] Of greater relevance for our purposes, however, was the foundation of the ALC in Kampala, the second of the AFL-CIO's responses to the cessation of its scholarship programme.[76]

70 Richards, *Maida Springer*; Yevette Richards, *Conversations with Maida Springer: A Personal History of Labor, Race, and International Relations* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2004).

71 UMD AFL-CIO RG1-25, reel 3, Africa Misc. folder, Springer to Meany, 7 December 1955; UKNA CO 822/1625, "Tanganyika Intelligence Summary for January 1957"; Gerald Horne, *Mau Mau in Harlem?: The U.S. and the Liberation of Kenya* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), 162–3.

72 ARC, papers of Maida Springer Kemp (MSK) 1/15, Mboya to Springer, 13 October 1956.

73 UKNA CO 859/1133, Anon., "Brief for the Secretary of State's Meeting with Sir Vincent Tewson: Mrs Maida Springer," 22 November 1957.

74 Richards, *Maida Springer*, 144–55.

75 UKNA LAB/13/2006, Skinner to Oates, 7 February 1967.

76 Carew, "Millard," 136–41.

The African Labour College

With the begrudging agreement of colonial government in place, the African La-
bour College opened in Kampala in 1958. Sven Fockstedt, the Swedish founding
principal, neatly summarised the purpose of the College as "an international
training institute, trying, within a limit of [four] months, to give our students the
basic tools for effective organising and building of free and democratic trade
unions and at the same time to give our students an idea of the economic, social
and political problems facing Africa and her emerging working class today."[77]
Graduates of the College should, Fockstedt believed, return "to their local commu-
nities as better union administrators, better negotiators, and better organizers."[78]
It was focused on Anglophone Africa; a similar venture eventually opened in
Abidjan for Francophone labour leaders.

The ALC's foundation was illustrative of the balance of power in a decoloniz-
ing, Cold War world. The TUC was side-lined in the discussions about the estab-
lishment of the ALC.[79] Nor were the British authorities in London and Entebbe
included in the planning process.[80] However, the authorities in Entebbe could not
be ignored entirely; after all, the basic operational requirements of the ALC, for
example entry visas for non-Ugandan faculty and students, required a degree of
cooperation between the government and the ICFTU. An agreement was therefore
struck between the colonial government and the ICFTU by which the latter prom-
ised that the ALC's staff and students would not be involved in local trade union
activities or Ugandan politics. Moreover, the colonial government reserved the
right to refuse entry or deport any individual that it feared would represent what
its officials believed constituted a threat to security.[81]

Predictably, most of the scrutiny applied to the ALC by the authorities under
this provision was directed towards the activities of the ALC's Black faculty. Ini-
tially, the most notable of these faculty members were the African American
George McCray and Kenyan Joseph Odero-Jowi. "We would like to see both of
these people go," wrote Uganda's labour minister in 1960, "but it is difficult to pin
anything specific on them."[82] McCray's unapologetic support for African national-

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77 IISH ICFTU 4019, Fockstedt to Millard, 1 October 1959.

78 IISH ICFTU 4021a, Fockstedt, "Report for the First Course at ICFTU African Labour College,
Kampala," 4 March 1959, 8.

79 Carew, "Millard," 136–41

80 UKNA CO 859/1560, Anon., "Brief for the Secretary of State's Visit to Uganda: ICFTU Labour
College, Kampala," no date but 1959.

81 UKNA CO 859/1560, Cartland to Webber, 15 January 1960.

82 UKNA CO 859/1560, Cartland to Webber, 15 January 1960.

ism was a major source of concern.[83] In the words of one Colonial Office civil servant, McCray had a "blatantly racialist outlook" and "leanings towards "anti-imperialist politics.""[84] Odero-Jowi's involvement in an arbitration case on behalf of an Ugandan union provoked particularly fierce British criticism.[85] But with the march of decolonization accompanied by an Africanisation of the ALC's faculty, by April 1964 the entire teaching staff was Black. Indeed, except for McCray, all were by then from the continent. G.O. Mettle (Sierra Leone) and Wogu Ananaba (Nigeria) joined the Ugandans George Muwonge and Francis Luyimbazi on the faculty.[86]

Students were drawn from across Anglophone Africa from the outset. Of the 33 students in the first intake there were 4 from each of Kenya, Uganda, and Tanganyika: but also 4 from both Ghana and Nigeria too. The remainder of the students were from Gambia, Aden, Mauritius, Northern Rhodesia, Nyasaland, Somalia, and Sierra Leone.[87] Although Kenyan and Tanzanian disaffiliation from the ICFTU (see below) later halted recruitment from both countries, the ALC had a significant impact on the labour movement in East Africa: 61 Kenyans; 42 Tanzanians; and 124 Ugandans participated in the residential courses run at the institution.[88] By the time of the eighteenth and final intake at the ALC in 1968, it had trained 665 African students in total. Among them were some of the most prominent leaders of the labour movement in East Africa; Clement Lubembe and John Reich from Kenya and Uganda respectively were, for example, part of the cohort in residence between June and September 1959.[89] Students were selected by the ALC's staff from a pool nominated by the applicants' own trade unions or national federations. However, standing within territorial labour federations or links to international trade secretariats counted for a great deal during the final

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83 Yevette Richards, "The Activism of George McCray: Confluence and Conflict of Pan-Africanism and Transnational Labor Solidarity," in *Black Power Beyond Borders: The Global Dimensions of the Black Power Movement*, ed. Nico Slate (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012).

84 UKNA CO 859/1560, Anon., "Brief for the Secretary of State's Visit to Uganda: ICFTU Labour College, Kampala," no date but 1959.

85 IISH ICFTU 3981, Millard to Marsh, 18 September 1959.

86 IISH ICFTU 3990, ICFTU African Labour College, "List of Lecturers from November 1958 to October 1964," 1964.

87 IISH ICFTU 3981, ITS Liaison Committee, "ICFTU Labour College in Kampala," 5 January 1959 [note paper incorrectly dated 1958].

88 IISH ICFTU 4014, ICFTU African Labour College, "Distribution of Students by County 1st to 18th International Courses," no date but 1968.

89 UKNA CO 859/1208, *The African Labour Organizer*, "Students Attending Labour College June-Sept. 1959," July 1959, 5.

deliberations of applications at the ALC.[90] Funding for their scholarships was provided by the AFL-CIO and various other Western affiliates of the ICFTU.[91] Participants spanned the labour movement, as the example of the second residential course held in 1959 illustrates. The East Africans in attendance came from unions representing postal, industrial, transport, distribution, agricultural, and civil service workers.[92] In terms of gender, however, the student intake to the ALC was anything but diverse. Just two of the 35 students in one early intake were women.[93]

For many of the students, the ALC represented the pinnacle of their education. Of 81 past and present students surveyed in 1962, fifteen had not attended secondary school and just twelve had any sort of previous post-secondary education.[94] While they took great pride in their selection, it is not surprising that many students struggled with the curriculum.[95] The residential courses were attended by roughly 30 students at a time. These were taught intensively. Classes were spread across three sessions per day from Monday to Friday, as well as a half day on Saturday.[96] Developed initially in Brussels, in the early years of the ALC the subjects and teaching matter proved challenging to students lacking fluency in English or familiarity with the contexts referred to in the course literature. Lewis estimated two thirds of the first intake in 1958 struggled with even the most basic material provided to the ALC by the ICFTU. Students took on impromptu translation duties for one another to try and help their colleagues cope with the requirements of the course.[97] The ALC's library holdings were similarly

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90 UKNA CO 859/1208, Fockstedt, "Principal's Report on Second Course – 1st June to 25th September 1959" no date but 1959, 4.

91 IISH ICFTU 3981, International Solidarity Fund Committee, "Kampala College Progress Report," 22 June 1959.

92 UKNA CO 859/1208, Fockstedt, "Principal's Report on Second Course – 1st June to 25th September 1959" no date but 1959, 1–3.

93 UKNA CO 859/1208, *The African Labour Organizer*, "Progress at the Labour College," July 1959, 1. For an analysis of women trade unionists and gender dynamics at the ALC see Harisch "Great Hopes, False Promises," 90–94; Immanuel Harisch, "La formation des syndicalistes africaines au sein des mouvements syndicaux inter/nationaux: Une histoire sous contrainte," *Revue d'histoire contemporaine de l'Afrique,* no. 6–7 (2024): 57–76.

94 IISH ICFTU 3982, ICFTU International Solidarity Fund Committee, "ICFTU African Labour College," papers for January 1963 meeting, 2–3.

95 IISH ICFTU 3983, Mwilu, "ICFTU African Labour College – 5th Course: Economics and Social Studies," no date but 1962.

96 IISH ICFTU 4021a, ICFTU Africa Labour College, "Time-Table," 1958.

97 IISH ICFTU 3981 Lewis, "Some Considerations of the ICFTU African Labour College," December 1958, 4.

orientated. Many of the books and other materials were donated by Western governments and trade union organisations.[98] The library held precious little about Africa (or the socialist world) and almost nothing authored by Africans. It did, however, contain a comprehensive collection of official publications from the ICFTU, the International Labour Organisation (ILO), the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD).[99]

As principal, Odero-Jowi did a great deal to try and reorientate the curriculum towards the needs and interests of the African student body. His classes and assignments emphasised the application of what was taught in the classroom to the conditions and issues faced by the students in their home countries. He made more use of African-focused reading material, particularly the documents produced by the ICFTU's African representatives. The result was a nuanced and broad curriculum. During its latter years, students left the ALC with a familiarity with the impact of social trends on the labour situation in a range of African countries, a knowledge of various international organisations involved in labour issues in Africa, and a detailed grasp of the ICFTU's conceptualisation of the global economy and politics in the age of the Cold War. But they also had a practical understanding of basic organisation and management of trade union activity.[100]

Similar themes dominated the ALC's extra-mural programme. Given far less publicity at the time than the residential courses, the extra-mural programme arguably had a greater impact on trade unionists across East Africa. Delivering short training courses at locations across the region, the extra-mural programme allowed the ALC – and by extension, the ICFTU – to expand its reach beyond trade union leaders to local, branch-level labour activists. The extra-mural programme meant the ALC had "an immediate influence on the course and conduct of union affairs." At its peak between August 1961 and July 1962, the ALC was able to reach more than 500 trade union officials, mostly at the branch level. Although active in eight Anglophone countries, the extra-mural programme spent most of its time and attention on East Africa, with training delivered in towns and cities across the three territories.[101]

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98 IISH ICFTU 4021b, Fockstedt, "ICFTU African Labour College: Principal's Report on Second Course – 1st June to 25th September 1959," 1959, 10.
99 IISH ICFTU 4018, ICFTU ALC, "Library Register," no date but 1968; UKNA FCO 141/18437, Anon., "Trade Union Training – ICFTU College – Kampala," no date, enclosure to Governor of Uganda to Secretary of State for the Colonies, 17 February 1962.
100 IISH ICFTU 3983, Odero-Jowi, "ICFTU African Labour College Essay Assignments," no date; ICFTU African Labour College, "Syllabuses for the Four Months Course," no date.
101 IISH ICFTU 4021d, McCray to Odero-Jowi, no date but 1962.

The 12-day long course delivered by the ICFTU in Tanga in mainland Tanzania in July 1963 was typical of the extra-mural programme. The course was run for 34 officials in plantation workers' unions from across East Africa. It was led by George McCray and Wogu Ananaba, soon to be principal of the college, in conjunction with the International Federation of Plantation, Agricultural and Allied Workers.[102] Much of the emphasis was on practical questions of union organisation, which as we have already seen was commonly thought within the ICFTU and its leading international members to be the most effective barrier against African unions being attracted by agents of communist influence. But the course also included a significant effort to explicitly engage the delegates with the key political challenges confronting their own countries and the international labour movement. Delegates were encouraged to think about the "The meaning of Free Trade Unionism and the role of the Free Trade Unions in Africa." Similarly, they were invited to consider how best to develop "an African Personality which would serve more effectively the interests of the Nation and of the workers." The course – held after Tanganyika's independence – emphasised the need for unions to work in cooperation with government and political parties, and to embrace a wide role within efforts towards social and economic development rather than a narrow focus on wages and conditions in particular workplaces.[103]

Whether as participants in the extra-mural programme offered in locations across East Africa or the longer, residential course run from Kampala, for most of the participants the ALC provided a unique opportunity to develop skills and acquire knowledge that could not be accessed in any other way. Mbwana Mhando from Tanganyika, a member of the inaugural residential cohort, attributed the group discussions between students from across the continent for his increased knowledge of trade unionism and improved ability "to think immediately . . ."[104] The residential programme gave participants a rare chance to gain the qualifications and recognition necessary for career advancement. With the growth of the trade unions over the 1950s, a career within the labour movement was now a viable option for appropriately credentialed leaders. As Gideon Mutiso wrote, "As a labour leader, it has widened my trade union knowledge. It has taught me the essential things which a labour leader ought to know, and has given me the necessary material which I am proud of because I am determined to make Trade

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102 James, "Essential Things."

103 KNA ABK/10/3, McCray & Ananaba, "Report on the East African Plantation Workers' Seminar at Tanga, Tanganyika," 15–27 July 1963. See also IISH ICFTU 4021d, McCray, "The African Labour College – Extra-Mural Department: Teaching Guide No.2," no date.

104 IISH ICFTU 4021a, "Answers Submitted by Students at the First Course on the Following Question Raised by the College," enclosure to Fockstedt to Hammerton, 2 July 1959.

Unionism as my profession."[105] Completion of the ALC course was typically followed by swift promotion within the labour movement in their home country. Only 9% of participants in the first three courses returned to take up the same post that they had held before leaving for Kampala. The others were either promoted to higher office within the labour movement or used the ALC as a platform to launch new careers in politics or government.[106]

The ALC's graduates acquired more from their experience in Kampala than just the bureaucratic and technical skills needed to run a modern trade union. Like Mutiso and Mhando, Isaac Rwakira, the treasurer of Uganda's Railway African Union, was part of the first residential cohort at the ALC. And like his Kenyan and Tanzanian counterparts, he recognised that his knowledge of trade unionism and ability to provide leadership had improved because of his experiences in Kampala. But Rwakira also recognised that his levels of political engagement had also increased while at the ALC. He was, he testified, "a very strong political minded boy now . . ."[107] It is to politics, therefore, that we will now turn.

Pan-Africanism and Regional Labour Politics

One of the primary aims of the ALC was to foster "a sense of solidarity and communion between trade unionists from various parts of the African continent." However, as the ALC's first principal acknowledged, this was hard to achieve in practice.[108] The ALC consolidated regional bonds rather than continental Pan-African ties. Participants in the courses run at the ALC tended to divide themselves in and out of the classroom according to their region of origin and reflecting the splits within the Pan-African labour movement that became readily apparent shortly after the institute opened. The differences between the West and East African students were pronounced.[109] As Odero-Jowi reported of the third intake,

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105 IISH ICFTU 4021a, "Answers Submitted by Students at the First Course on the Following Question Raised by the College," enclosure to Fockstedt to Hammerton, 2 July 1959.
106 IISH ICFTU 3982, ICFTU International Solidarity Fund Committee, "ICFTU African Labour College," papers for January 1963 meeting, 2.
107 IISH ICFTU 4021a, "Answers Submitted by Students at the First Course on the Following Question Raised by the College," enclosure to Fockstedt to Hammerton, 2 July 1959.
108 UKNA CO 859/1208, Fockstedt, "Principal's Report on Second Course – 1st June to 25th September 1959" no date but 1959, 8.
109 IISH ICFTU 3981, Lewis, "Some Considerations of the ICFTU African Labour College," December 1958, 6.

> After a period of [three] weeks a definite grouping of the students in West and East had taken place with a more or less critical and hostile attitude towards each other. Students from the West felt themselves superior to students from East and Central Africa and sometimes took the opportunity to demonstrate their superiority in class and elsewhere.[110]

The ALC clearly reinforced the position of East Africans towards the ICFTU in the context of the arguments around disaffiliation and consolidated the position of moderate trade unionists in their struggles for influence with their more radical compatriots. Washington Malemo, a Kenyan student at the ALC, was one such figure. Studying at the ALC at the height of both battles between radical and moderate trade unionists at home and the disputes with the Pan-African labour movement about the ICFTU, Malemo's time in Kampala only served to confirm his views on such questions. As Malemo wrote, "one wonders at seeing some African countries, which have attained their ultimate goal peacefully, leaning to the East where you find the worst form of imperialism called Communism."[111]

Malemo's criticism was targeted at Ghana, where the GTUC had undergone a dramatic shift in its international alignment over the previous three years. Like Mboya, the KFL and their colleagues in Uganda and Tanganyika, Ghanaian labour leaders had initially been strong allies of the ICFTU. Indeed, Ghana hosted the ICFTU's inaugural African regional conference in January 1957 with the overwhelming support of both Kwame Nkrumah and the general secretary of the GTUC, John Tettegah.[112] Alliances between, on one hand, African political and labour leaders and, on the other, the ICFTU, were (with some exceptions) part of the mainstream of anti-colonial politics across much of the continent. As the leaders of each of the East African labour federations met in February 1958, therefore, their ties to the ICFTU seemed uncontroversial. Although the leaders of the KFL, TFL, and UTUC recognised the risks to their agency and sovereignty created by extreme dependence on the funds of any external partner, they did not need to consider whether the ICFTU itself was a neo-colonial organisation.[113] By the end of the year, however, they were given pause for thought.

The trigger was the All-African People's Conference (AAPC) in December 1958, at which trade unionists constituted a significant proportion of the delegates.

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110 IISH ICFTU 4021b, Fockstedt, "ICFTU African Labour College: Report on the Third Course – March to June 1960," 3 July 1960, 4.

111 IISH ICFTU 3982, Washington Malemo, "Mr Tettegah and AATUF," *Labour College News*, December 1961, 3.

112 IISH ICFTU 3888, ICFTU African Regional Conference, "First Report of the Steering Committee," 15 January 1957.

113 UMD AFL-CIO RG18-7/8/24/7, "Report of the General Secretaries Conference," 15 February 1958.

Over a series of meetings held alongside the formal proceedings, the trade union representatives from across the continent agreed to create the All-African Trade Union Federation (AATUF), a new Pan-African labour body. But the delegates were divided on a proposal from Guinea, Egypt, and Nigeria that membership by national federations of the AATUF would require disaffiliation from the ICFTU.[114] Led by Mboya, the East Africans mounted a defence of continued ICFTU affiliation. In doing so, they were at first supported by the GTUC. Mboya's argument for not requiring members of the new AATUF to renounce ties to the ICFTU was simple: African trade unions could not afford to reject offers of assistance for anti-colonial activities from whatever source they came.[115] Trade union leaders left Accra with the matter left undecided.

Within weeks, however, the question of ICFTU affiliation was brought to the fore again. Guinea's president, Sékou Touré, had long been suspicious of the ICFTU because of the role of the French government in the Brussels-based organisation's formation.[116] At the Union Générale des Travailleurs d'Afrique Noire (UGTAN) conference in Conakry in early 1959, Touré encouraged its members to push ahead with the formation of the AATUF and to insist on ICFTU disaffiliation as a requirement for membership.[117] With 200,000 members, mainly from Guinea and Senegal, UGTAN was among the most important African trade union bodies. Touré encouraged the delegates at the UGTAN conference to liberate "themselves from the metropolitan trade-union structures to which they had been previously affiliated in order to create their own unity."[118] John Tettegah, the GTUC leader, attended the Conakry meeting as an observer and was persuaded by Touré's argument. The GTUC formally disaffiliated from the ICFTU later in the year.[119] At this critical juncture, the KFL, TFL, and UTUC chose to maintain their support for

114 IISH ICFTU/3875, "Extract from Report of Trade Unionist A," appendix to Meany to Olden-broek, 13 February 1959.

115 IISH ICFTU/3875, "Extract from Report of Trade Unionist B," appendix to Meany to Olden-broek, 13 February 1959; Dawson, "All-African People's Conference," 16 December 1958.

116 Elizabeth Schmidt, *Cold War and Decolonisation in Guinea, 1946–1958* (Athens OH: Ohio University Press, 2007), 61–2.

117 Cooper, *Decolonization*, 408–24; Schmidt, *Cold War*, 117–8.

118 Cooper, *Decolonization*, 441; Immanuel Wallerstein, *Africa: The Politics of Unity* (New York: Vintage, 1967), 189.

119 HIA TM/19/4, Oldenbroek to Mboya, 10 April 1959; Dawson to Millard, 6 April 1959; Millard to Mboya, 10 April 1959; Robert Anthony Waters, "Kwame Nkrumah and the All-African Trade Union Federation: Labour and the Emancipation of Africa," in *Visions of African Unity: New Perspectives on the History of Pan-Africanism and African Unification Projects*, ed. Matteo Grilli and Frank Gerits (Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, 2020); Richards, *Maida Springer*, 195–7.

the ICFTU. Distinctive East and West African blocs were readily apparent to all involved.

Springer, an astute and knowledgeable observer, explained the split in the Pan-African labour movement with reference to the respective trajectories of decolonisation and the very different understandings in play about the threats posed by neo-imperialism to different parts of the continent. In West Africa, particularly once independence was secured, the debates about neo-imperialism and American influence were about foreign investment (or lack thereof) and military and strategic relationships between the region's states and Western powers.[120] Of particular concern was the issue of French nuclear testing in the Sahara and its effects on neighbouring states.[121] To Nkrumah and his supporters, such episodes were really about efforts by the American-led Western alliance to retain a foothold on the continent and hence constrain the sovereignty of the new independent states. In East Africa – at least as far as Mboya and his supporters believed – fears of hidden American influences seemed remote and abstract when compared to the much more imminent threat of continued settler domination. Moreover, Mboya was unconvinced that Nkrumah's approach and ideas were as relevant in the context of the settler colonies as they had been in West Africa. To Mboya it seemed that the non-violent West African experience of the path to independence was vastly different from the violent context of the struggle for freedom in East Africa.[122] As Mboya put it during a speech to African trade union leaders in September 1961, "Nobody in Africa can teach Kenya people how to fight for freedom, because on the contrary, we have shown the whole of Africa that we can fight and die for freedom. Eight years of our history are a testimony to this."[123] This view was manifested in the stance taken by the East African trade union federations in the dispute over the AATUF and affiliation to the ICFTU. It was well understood among the students at the ALC. "Kenya's problems are quite different from Ghana's, politically, socially and economically," wrote Washington Malemo.[124]

In the two years after the AAPC, the East Africans kept up their public support for the right of African national federations to maintain their affiliation to

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120 UMD AFL-CIO/RG18-3/2/69/39, Springer to Ross, 25 April 1960.

121 Abena Dove Osseo-Asare, *Atomic Junction: Nuclear Power in Africa after Independence* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019), 19–48.

122 HIA TM/18/5, Mboya to Springer, 4 October 1959.

123 ARC MSK/2/1, "Speech made by Brother Tom Mboya on 6th September 1961."

124 IISH ICFTU 3982, Washington Malemo, "Mr Tettegah and AATUF," *Labour College News*, December 1961, 3.

the ICFTU while also joining the AATUF.[125] Mboya did much by way of shuttle diplomacy to maintain consensus among the East African organisations.[126] The shared experiences at the ALC among trade union leaders and the consolidation there of a common sense of regional community doubtless assisted Mboya's efforts to maintain East African unity on this issue. The dispute reached a climax in May 1961 as African trade union leaders gathered in Casablanca to attempt to resolve the question of international affiliation. With the conference's decision to form an AATUF that required member federations to drop any international affiliations, the effort by East African labour leaders to defend their links to the ICFTU while also remaining part of the Pan-African mainstream finally failed.[127] The TFL and UTUC joined Mboya's KFL in leaving the conference floor before the crucial vote on the AATUF was taken.[128] Although an ICFTU-aligned, rival Pan-African body, the African Trade Union Confederation, was formed in the aftermath of the Casablanca conference, for the reasons set out below East African engagement with it was minimal.[129]

Just as the AATUF debate pushed the East Africans to the periphery of Pan-African labour politics, so it also broke the dominance of the Mboya-inspired financial model for the region's labour movement. In Ghana, the Nkrumah government and GTUC became ever more ardent in their opposition to the ICFTU in the period following their own decision to disaffiliate from the international organisation. Tettegah eventually threatened "total war" on national bodies like the KFL, TFL, and UTUC who maintained their connections to the ICFTU: "We shall isolate them and enter their countries, break them and form AATUF unions there."[130] Invitations to attend conferences and other forms of funding were offered as inducements to potential dissident members of the East African labour movement to break with their ICFTU-aligned leaders. As Mboya recognised, this was a deliberate effort by the Ghanaians to create an alternative international

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125 Clayton and Savage, *Government and Labour*, 436–7; Goldsworthy, *Tom Mboya*, 160–3 & 86–7; McCann, "Possibility and Peril," 357–67; Alan Rake, *Tom Mboya: Young Man of Africa* (New York: Doubleday, 1962), 186–98; Richards, *Maida Springer*, 176–214; Richards, *Conversations*, 206–28; Zeleza, "Pan-African."

126 UKNA CO 822/1623, extract from Tanganyika Intelligence Report, December 1959.

127 Goldsworthy, *Tom Mboya*, 186–7.

128 UKNA FCO 141/18437, Security Liaison Officer, "Subversion in the Trade Union Movement in Uganda (1950–1959)," no date but sent under cover of Security Liaison Officer to Le Poidevin, 15 August 1961, 15.

129 The best account of this debate remains Zeleza, "Pan-African."

130 Quoted in HIA TM/20/1, ICFTU East, Central, and Southern Africa Committee, "Item 3: Tettegah's Total War," papers for committee meeting, 4–6 September 1961. See also Clayton and Savage, *Government and Labour*, 437.

platform for the East African labour movement.[131] At the same time, other sources of funding from communist states were becoming available. When in London in January 1960 for the first round of constitutional negotiations, Oginga Odinga accepted an invitation to travel from the British capital to East Germany; the first step in the establishment of his own transnational network of funders that was deliberately constructed in order to rival Mboya's.[132]

These new opportunities for mobility and training were met with enthusiasm by sections of the East African labour movement that had long felt unease with the direction of the Mboya-led model. East African delegates were, for instance, among the five or six hundred in Cairo at the 1957 Afro-Asian People's Solidarity Conference who passed a resolution that called for the creation of an Afro-Asian labour organisation.[133] Financed through either Ghana or the Communist powers, these connections to the socialist world intensified in the years following the AAPC. The Moscow Peace Congress in July 1962, for instance, allowed Jumah Boy, leader of the dockworker's union in Mombasa, to meet with Rwegasira of the TFL and Muhammad Mfaume Omar and Khamis Masud of the Zanzibar and Pemba Federation of Labour.[134]

Faced with these competing external forces, the labour movement in each of the three territories was pulled apart. In Tanganyika in 1961, the TFL's leadership abandoned its earlier support for the ICFTU position and announced its aspiration to join the AATUF.[135] But not all the TFL's members agreed with this stance. In Uganda, the UTUC had long been courted by aspiring allies. In March 1959, the All-China Federation of Trade Unions invited a UTUC delegation to Beijing. After consulting with the ICFTU, UTUC's leadership declined the invitation.[136] But in the context of the battle over the AATUF and international affiliation, such invitations became more frequent and harder to ignore. John Reich, vice president of UTUC from 1959, was a central figure in this phase. Well-known for his limited patience for staid orthodoxy and the hitherto moderation of the Ugandan labour movement, Reich was greatly impressed by the promise of the AATUF after visiting

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131 HIA, Jay Lovestone papers (JL) 551/6, KFL, "Mr Mboya Replies to *Ghana Times*," 27 January 1960, 2.

132 UKNA FCO 141/7140, Special Branch, "The Communist Offensive Against Kenya: A Review of the Period December 1957–October 1962," 29 November 1962, 4–8.

133 IISH ICFTU 3884, ICFTU, "The Afro-Asian People's Solidarity Conference," 3 February 1958, 2.

134 IISH ICFTU 1892, ICFTU, "List of Delegates to the Moscow Peace Congress from African Trade Unions," July 1962.

135 UKNA CO 822/2673, "Extract of Tanganyika Intelligence Report," February 1961.

136 UKNA FCO 141/18437, Security Liaison Officer, "Subversion in the Trade Union Movement in Uganda (1950–1959)," no date but sent under cover of Security Liaison Officer to Le Poidevin, 15 August 1961, 10.

Accra in November 1959 to attend a preparatory meeting for the new Pan-African body. Reich returned with a promise of funding from the Chinese embassy in Ghana if UTUC disaffiliated from the ICFTU and joined the AATUF.[137] Humphrey Luande, UTUC's president and railway union leader, disagreed. When Reich and his colleague, Angelina Banyanga, attended a further meeting of the AATUF in Accra in December, they were expelled from the UTUC on their return. Reich established the Uganda Federation of Labour (UFL) in March 1961 as a rival to the UTUC.[138] Through the AATUF, Reich connected the UFL to both the GTUC – most notably through Jacob Ferguson, the labour attaché at the Ghanaian embassy in Khartoum – and the East German labour movement.[139] The UFL maintained its connections to the AATUF, for instance by hosting a delegation in 1962.[140]

A similar sequence of events occurred in Kenya too. Frustrated by the KFL's stance on the ICFTU and AATUF, in November 1959 Tettegah set about identifying and supporting Mboya's domestic opponents within the labour movement and in wider politics. Tettegah invited Oginga Odinga to Accra to attend a meeting of the working group attempting to establish the AATUF.[141] Similar invitations were issued to Mboya's critics within the labour movement.[142] The KFL responded bitterly, expelling its members who travelled to Accra and denouncing Ghana for practising "Black African Imperialism."[143] The GTUC was unrepentant and increased its financial support to the new Trades Union Congress (TUCK), formed by Mboya's chief rival within the KFL, Arthur Ochwada. This was a deliberate effort by the Ghanaians to create an alternative international platform for the Kenyan labour movement outside of the KFL's orbit.[144] Mboya was furious, accusing Nkrumah of having a "desire to dominate over Africa . . ."[145] Ghanaian efforts to

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137 UKNA FCO 141/18437, extract of Uganda Intelligence summary, June 1960.

138 UKNA FCO 141/18437, Security Liaison Officer, "Subversion in the Trade Union Movement in Uganda (1950–1959)," no date but sent under cover of Security Liaison Officer to Le Poidevin, 15 August 1961, 6–7.

139 UKNA FCO 141/18437, Le Poidevin to Security Liaison Officer, no date but August or September 1961.

140 IISH ICFTU 3992, Nakibinge to Becu, 30 October 1962.

141 IISH ICFTU 3890, ICFTU Executive Board, "Second African Regional Conference," paper for meeting of 30 November to 2 December 1959, 3. See also Oginga Odinga, *Not Yet Uhuru* (Nairobi: East African Educational Publishers, 1967), 165–6.

142 HIA TM/17/5, Tettegah to Mboya, 14 December 1960; IISH ICFTU/3910, De Jong to Savage, 2 March 1961.

143 IISH ICFTU 4480c, Kibisu, "Press Release," 3 January 1961.

144 HIA JL/551/6, KFL, "Mr Mboya Replies to *Ghana Times*," 27 January 1960, 2.

145 ARC ACOA/89/13, Mboya to Houser, 25 November 1959.

undermine Mboya and the KFL continued regardless.[146] Mboya's model of a unified East African labour movement that had found expression at the ALC was in tatters.

Labour and Independence

As independence approached across East Africa, workers sought to match political progress with the improvements to pay and conditions that befitted the country's turn away from the economic structures of settler colonialism. Employers were hesitant in their response, with predictable results. The Kenyan example is illustrative of the situation. By mid-1962 the country was caught up in what the *Nation* newspaper called "strike fever."[147] There were nearly 100 strikes in the first six months of the year.[148] Industrial action by disgruntled workers reached every part of the economy, from agriculture to printing. Foreign assistance was vital to the success of the strikes as few trade unions had sufficient cash reserves to support striking workers for any significant period.[149] Moreover, the climate of conflict was exacerbated by the tensions within the union movement that had their origins in the disputes over the ICFTU and AATUF.[150]

The nationalist leadership of the three territories looked on aghast at the factionalism within the labour movement, at the foreign funding of strikes, and the scale of industrial action. At a KANU rally in 1962, Kenyatta denounced labour leaders as "insects." Kenyatta was concerned with the access of trade unions to sources of funding outside of the control of government and ruling party.[151] But Kenyatta and his counterparts in Uganda and Tanganyika were no less concerned by the fact that late colonial trade unions in East Africa were marked by "a spirit of militancy, independence, and conflict, and fitted with the ethos of political self-development that developed concurrently; after independence, this spirit clashed

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146 IISH ICFTU 3850, Brown to Becu, 30 January 1961; IISH ICFTU 3948, ICFTU, "All African Trade Union Conference, Casablanca, 25–31 May 1961," June 1961, 1–2; IISH ICFTU 4481, Mboya to Becu, 8 March 1962.

147 *Sunday Nation*, "Mboya Clears Up the Strike Fever," 10 June 1962, 1. See also Clayton and Savage, *Government and Labour*, 437; Goldsworthy, *Tom Mboya*, 199–201.

148 IISH ICFTU 4477e, cutting of *East Africa and Rhodesia*, "Thousands on Strike in Kenya," 14 June 1962.

149 See for example, IISH ICFTU 4495, Tofahrn to Becu, 11 April 1962; UMD AFL-CIO/RG18-4/2/28/ 1, Karebe to Tofahrn, 17 January 1962.

150 IISH ICFTU 4477e, cutting of *The Reporter*, "More Labour Unrest," 23 June 1962.

151 *East African Standard*, "Union Leaders Call for Explanation by Mr. Kenyatta," 16 August 1962, 5.

increasingly with the orientations of the new African government."[152] For East Africa's first independent governments, the solution to the disruption of strike action, factionalism, and the flows of foreign money was greater state control of the labour movement.[153]

Many of the region's trade unionists instinctively agreed with such sentiments. Most understood independence to be a form of freedom achieved through government, rather than in opposition to it.[154] As Mboya wrote shortly after *uhuru*, "The nationalist government of an independent African state is the father in a family of which one of the elder sons is the trade union movement."[155] McCray noted that many (but not all) labour leaders accepted the need for restrictions on the freedoms of the trade unions as long as it was "matched by equal sacrifices from management and government as an employer and so long as reasonable methods are provided for discussion and equitable adjustment of differences."[156] Bringing the trade unions under the greater control of the state provided critics of ICFTU affiliation further material with which to pursue their campaign to see East Africa's labour federations break ties with the global body. With trade unions operating under the purview of the state rather than acting as independent organisations, the ICFTU's critics argued that it was the government's responsibility to ensure that labour federations acted like other state-run bodies and adhered to the principles of non-aligned foreign policy under which all three territories became independent.[157]

This process of increased state control of the labour movement tied to a reduction in international engagement and the breakdown of any regional cohesion was first evident in Tanganyika. This is not surprising given in 1961 the TFL was the first of the national federations to give serious consideration to disaffiliation from the ICFTU. As Nyerere later claimed, "reform of the labour movement" was necessary to make it "appropriate for the conditions of Tanzania . . ."[158] This first entailed a fierce response to efforts by the TFL to maintain its ability to criticise

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152 Friedland, *Vuta*, 1.

153 IISH ICFTU 4480d, Kamaliza, Mboya & Obama, "Meeting of Ministers Responsible for Labour in Kenya, Uganda and Tanganyika," 20 August 1962.

154 Emma Hunter, *Political Thought and the Public Sphere in Tanzania: Freedom, Democracy and Citizenship in the Era of Decolonization* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 148.

155 Tom Mboya, "Trade Unions and Development," *Venture*, 16, 1 (1964), 13.

156 IISH ICFTU 3949, McCray, "Memorandum on the Conference of the East, Central and Southern Africa Area Committee, 19–21 October 1962," 1.

157 Ochola Ogaye Mak'Anyengo, "Ideas Remain," letter to editor, *Daily Nation*, 13 August 1964, 6.

158 Julius Nyerere, *Freedom and Development / Uhuru na Maendeleo* (Nairobi: Oxford University Press, 1973), 274.

government policy.[159] The TFL was particularly critical of plans by the government to halt the Africanisation of public services.[160] Throughout 1963, Nyerere clashed with the TFL's leadership over government policy, the issue of the autonomy of the labour movement, and the connections between the trade unions and a nascent opposition to TANU.[161] TFL president, Victor Mkello, and fellow union leader Christopher Tumbo were the public faces of defiance from within the labour movement, which culminated in a rejection by the TFL of the government's proposal to dissolve the body and absorb it into the Ministry of Labour.[162]

Matters came to a head over the tumultuous few days in January 1964 which witnessed army mutinies across East Africa and the revolution in Zanzibar. The Tanganyikan government claimed that trade union leaders were linked to the army mutiny and involved in plotting a further coup attempt planned for 27 January.[163] Around 200 trade union officials were arrested, encompassing both the national and branch level of the labour movement. Among them were Mkello and various other senior figures.[164] Tumbo was arrested while in exile in Kenya a few weeks later and extradited to Tanganyika, where he went into detention.[165] Some of his colleagues remained in detention until July 1966 and even after their release were subjected to various restrictions on their movement and ability to find employment.[166] The TFL was immediately dissolved in the aftermath of the mutiny and the National Union of Tanganyika Workers (NUTA) created by the government to take its place. Michael Kamaliza was appointed as both the minister of labour and NUTA's general secretary. Nyerere was unrepentant.[167] With its dis-

159 IISH ICFTU 4605, Bavin, "Report on Mission to Kenya to Investigate Recent Events in Tanganyika February 2nd Thur 9th 1964," 17 February 1964, 6–7.

160 IISH ICFTU 4605, Tandau, "Memorandum of TFL Presented to His Excellency the President of the Republic on His Circular," no date but January 1964.

161 IISH ICFTU 4605, Townsend, "Report on the Arrests of Tanganyika Trade Union Leaders," 12 February 1964, 5.

162 IISH ICFTU 4606, ICFTU Executive Board, papers for meeting 1–3 February 1966, "Trade Union Situation: Tanzania: Detained Trade Union Officials and NUTA Policies," January 1966.

163 IISH ICFTU 4605, Wicken to Beck, 26 February 1964.

164 IISH ICFTU 4605, Townsend, "Report on the Arrests of Tanganyika Trade Union Leaders," 12 February 1964, 1.

165 IISH ICFTU 4605, Townsend, "Report on the Arrests of Tanganyika Trade Union Leaders," 12 February 1964, 5.

166 IISH ICFTU 4606, de Jonge to Tofharn, 23 December 1966.

167 IISH ICFTU 4609, cutting of *The People*, "Nyerere Clears His Country's Stand Over Strikes," 3 April 1965, 9.

solution, the TFL's affiliation to the ICFTU lapsed and NUTA instead affiliated itself immediately to the AATUF.[168]

The Kenyan government followed its Tanzanian counterpart. Under significant pressure from a government anxious to exert control over any potential source of dissent and disunity, in November 1964 the KFL disaffiliated itself from the ICFTU.[169] When this failed to bring labour factionalism to a halt, in 1965 the government dissolved the KFL and replaced it with the government-sanctioned Central Organisation of Trade Unions (Kenya) (COTU). All existing affiliations between labour organisations in Kenya and international organisations were immediately voided and could not be re-established without the explicit permission of the government.[170] This absolute ban on international affiliations imposed by the government remained in place until 1968, when unions were able to affiliate with organisations overseas but only with explicit permission from the authorities.[171] By 1971, with the trade unions no longer a political threat, ICFTU activities had resumed in Kenya, with the country hosting residential training programmes offered by the organisation.[172]

As in Kenya and what became Tanzania, Ugandan independence in October 1962 occurred in the context of a wave of strikes. The new government blamed nefarious external agents for the industrial unrest, with a particular focus on the ICFTU given the presence of the ALC. The College was put on notice within months of independence. In a press conference in April 1963, Obote publicly criticised the ALC, identifying it as one of the sources of suspected foreign support for labour unrest, which was – Obote claimed – intended to destabilise the independent government. "The College is supposed to be there to teach leaders of the movement. If there are too many strikes the Government is entitled to say that the College is not doing its job properly or is actually engineering strikes."[173] Obote must have had in mind the fact that John Reich was an alumnus of the College, so casting doubt on the ICFTU's claims of the college supporting the growth of moderate trade unionism.[174] Moreover, the ALC's connections to the Ugandan trade union movement had

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168 IISH ICFTU 4606, ICFTU Executive Board, papers for meeting 1–3 February 1966, "Trade Union Situation: Tanzania: Detained Trade Union Officials and NUTA Policies," January 1966.

169 IISH ICFTU 4478c, cutting of *East African Standard*, "Friendly Ties Not Severed by KFL," 16 November 1964.

170 Republic of Kenya, *The Policy on Trade Union Organization in Kenya*, (Nairobi: 1965).

171 KNA ACW/2/8, minutes of Committee of Officials Appointed to Look into COTU Affairs, 12 July 1968.

172 IISH ICFTU 4633, Pedersen to Olowo, 15 June 1971.

173 IISH ICFTU 3982, ICFTU Executive Board meeting papers, "Agenda Item 5: ICFTU African Labour College, Kampala (Uganda)," 30 November – 3 December 1964, 3.

174 IISH ICFTU 4021b, ICFTU African Labour College, "Second Course," 1959.

grown closer, with William Nakibinge, UTUC's general secretary, briefly also holding a teaching role.[175] Nakibinge notably dissented from greater government interference in the labour movement, likening Ghana's state control over trade unions to communism.[176]

Over the next five years, the disputes among the trade unions continued, with a succession of efforts made by critics of the UTUC to form a rival organisation. Attacks by UTUC's opponents typically included reference to the neo-colonial influence of the ICFTU. Launching the new Federation of Uganda Trade Unions (FUTU) in 1964, Eliab Kibuka described the ICFTU as "the most venomous agent of colonial subjugation and suppression."[177] He and Reich affiliated FUTU with the AATUF.[178] The FUTU thus enjoyed some financial support from the WFTU.[179] FUTU's different set of global connections provided it with an international platform to rival that of UTUC. For example, Kibuka used a visit to Yugoslavia in May 1965 to use UTUC's links to the ICFTU as evidence of the former's disinterest "in the Uganda people's struggle for economic development and consolidation of national independence."[180]

As Obote's politics shifted left, so government accusations of ICFTU nefariousness increased in frequency and ferocity. Any hint of involvement by ALC staff members in the internal labour politics of Uganda produced an immediate and severe public criticism from the government.[181] At first, the Ugandan authorities shied away from closing down the ALC. In 1964, George Magezi, then the minister of labour and housing, told parliament that a banning order was unnecessary as he expected the ALC to "die a natural death" once the KFL and TFL disaffiliated from the ICFTU.[182] At the same time, the government insisted upon closer scrutiny of the appointment processes for staff, effectively preventing any new appointments of non-Ugandan tutors, and oversight of the award of scholarships to stu-

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175 IISH ICFTU 3992, Nakibinge to Becu, 30 October 1962.

176 UKNA FCO 141/18437, Tomley-Evans to Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Home Affairs, 21 April 1962.

177 IISH ICFTU 4619, cutting of *Daily Nation*, "'Free Uganda Workers from Imperialists,'" 30 September 1964.

178 IISH ICFTU 4014, ICFTU, "Development of Trade Unions in Uganda," no date but 1968, 2–3.

179 IISH ICFTU 4027, Kanyago to Bavin, 21 August 1965.

180 IISH ICFTU 4619, ICFTU, "Information from Communist Sources: Ugandan Anti-ICFTU Statement in 'Rad,'" 1 June 1965.

181 IISH ICFTU 4013, Anon., "Events Leading up to 1965 Mission and Report on the Results of that Mission," no date but 1967.

182 IISH ICFTU 4014, cutting of *Uganda Argus*, "Government Views on the Press," 11 December 1964.

dents.[183] Eventually, with no sign of labour politics abating and a reformulation by Kibuka of the ICFTU's capacity for foreign subversion, the government finally closed the ALC in 1968.[184] In the short-term, the ALC's activities were shifted to temporary venues in Ethiopia.[185] A nineteenth and final residential course was run there, but without any Kenya, Ugandan, or Tanzanian students.[186] By the end of 1968, the African Labour College was permanently closed and the premises seized by the government.[187] Final confirmation of the government's requirement for the Ugandan labour movement to fully disaffiliate from the ICFTU was made in 1970.[188]

ICFTU interest in Uganda was temporarily raised after Idi Amin's successful coup initially seemed to open up the possibility of a resumption of international trade union activity.[189] But with the nature of Amin's rule all too quickly apparent, ICFTU activities were postponed "until the political situation has clarified itself."[190] If any prospect remained of a speedy return to Uganda for the ICFTU, it was destroyed by the murder in August 1973 of William Nakibinge, the former UTUC general secretary and ALC faculty member who later served as mayor of Kampala. Just weeks before his death, he had been falsely accused of theft from the sugar factory where he worked as a senior manager and paraded on television in handcuffs. Although that charge was dropped, the Amin regime enacted its punishment through extra-judicial means.[191]

It would be a mistake to read Nakibinge's fate as symbolic of that of trade unionism across East Africa after independence. As the example of Kenya demonstrates, trade unions continued to be important actors within post-colonial politics and society. Unions operating wholly or mainly in the formal sector in Kenya, for instance, were still successfully able to lobby government for wage rises after independence.[192] Union membership, most notably among women, continued to

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183 IISH ICFTU 3996, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Housing and Labour to General Secretary, 27 February 1965; Mwilu to Becu, 15 July 1965.

184 IISH ICFTU 4012, Lubowa, "The Commission of Enquiry Act: A Commission," 27 April 1968.

185 IISH ICFTU 4012, Buiter to Ananaba, 16 August 1968.

186 IISH ICFTU 4021c, Otieno & Muwonge to Paladino, 8 January 1969.

187 IISH ICFTU 4012, Bataringaya to Ananaba, 27 August 1968.

188 IISH ICFTU 4622, cutting of *Uganda Argus*, "Verdict on the Labour Congress Inquiry," 23 April 1970.

189 IISH ICFTU 4633, Senkezi to Minister of Labour, 19 October 1971.

190 IISH ICFTU 4633, Pedersen to Bavin, 18 August 1972.

191 IISH ICFTU 4622, Kanyago to Maier, 12 September 1973.

192 Gavin Kitching, *Class and Economic Change in Kenya: The Making of African Petit-Bourgeoisie* (New Haven CT: Yale University Press, 1980), 392.

rise over the first two decades after COTU's formation. Individual unions became financially more secure.[193]

Moreover, trade unions continued to be connected to international bodies. Although notable by their absence from Tanzania and Uganda, the AFL-CIO's African-American Labor Center's field staff continued to work in Nairobi long after the formation of COTU, while in 1966 the headquarters of AATUF moved from Accra to Dar es Salaam.[194] The rows between the ICFTU and WFTU continued to rumble on.[195]

And (occasionally) the labour movements of the three territories of East Africa continued to meet and discuss issues of common concern. The three, government-sanctioned trade union federations came together in Kampala in late September 1967, for example, and agreed to work cooperatively, with a specific focus on the regional impacts on workers of East African economic and political integration. Less explicit was a hope on the part of the Ugandan and Kenyan participants that such a body could intercede with the Tanzanian government to encourage a change of policy towards trade unions in the latter territory. The question of international affiliation was not addressed during the meeting.[196]

But as the narrow frame of the discussions in September 1967 suggests, the transnational engagements of the latter half of the 1960s were significantly more constrained than had been the case a decade earlier. Tightly controlled by the new national governments and harnessed to their respective state-building agendas, the potential for these limited engagements between East African trade unions with international actors and among themselves to be the platform for reimagined ideas of political community was vanishingly small.

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193 Paul Tiyambe Zeleza, "The Labour System in Independent Kenya," in *An Economic History of Kenya*, ed. William Ochieng' and Robert Maxon (Nairobi: East African Educational Publishers, 1992), 358–66.

194 IISH ICFTU 3852, Anon., "Address List of AALC Field Staff," 27 June 1973; HIA, Paul Lubeck papers, box 4, file 17, cutting of *African Labour News*, "New Asylum for AATUF," January 1967, 3. Eventually in 1973, the AATUF and its rival, the African Trade Union Congress, merged under the auspices of the Organisation of African Unity to form the Organisation of African Trade Union Unity.

195 Romano Imanywoba, general secretary of Uganda's National Union of Plantation and Agricultural Workers, spent three weeks in Egypt at a seminar organised by the UAR Federation of Labour. The seminar was, he claimed, a cover for a WFTU-led effort to encourage the remaining ICFTU affiliates to break all ties with the ICFTU and to take over its facilities. IISH ICFTU 4625, Imanywoba to Bavin, 19 June 1967.

196 IISH ICFTU 4621, Kailembo, "Brief Report on the Meeting of the Three East African National Centres 29–30 September 1967," 3 November 1967.

Conclusion

Writing from a time in which trade unions have declined in stature and influence globally, it is easy to overlook the role which the labour movement played in reclaiming the category of East Africa in the late colonial period.[197] As we have seen in this chapter, for the leaders of East Africa's trade unions, men like Tom Mboya, Rashidi Kawawa and others, working across East Africa's borders was a normal part of labour movement work. But they also, as we have seen, represented East Africa outside the region's borders. The East Africa they spoke for was not the East Africa which Pauline Clerk encountered on the streets of Kampala, but an East Africa in which they were working to dismantle colonial power structures and create new possibilities in their place. But which new possibilities?

For a brief moment in the later 1950s and early 1960s, the labour movement was a crucial space in which rival visions of an independent East Africa played out. As was the case with other institutions we have explored in this book, late colonial regimes across the region in the 1940s and into the 1950s succeeded in containing the more radical labour politics seen elsewhere in the decolonizing world at that time. In this context, Tom Mboya developed a distinctive form of anti-colonial labour activism which was both anti-communist and in dialogue with European traditions of social democracy. But the opening up of the late 1950s prompted the appearance of rival, more radical modes of labour organising. As new independent states took power across the region between 1961 and 1964, trade unions increasingly came to be seen as a threat to be contained, rather than allies, their transnational connections sources of suspicion rather than relationships to be encouraged and cultivated.

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197 And the role of trade unions in policy debates about the future. Whether discussing foreign policy, development, or African socialism, trade unions at first occupied a central role within these debates rather than being an aside. Erisa Kironde, "Towards a Definition of Foreign Policy," *Transition* 5 (1962); Mark Sansumwa, "Foreign Investment and the Dilemma of African Socialism," *Transition* 18 (1965).

Chapter 5
The Swahili Language between Nation and Region

In November 1961, in his last public lecture, the Tanzanian poet Shaaban Robert spoke at Makerere University in Uganda of the power of Swahili as a unifying language for East Africa. He began by recognising the many languages spoken in East Africa, and the pride that all individuals feel in their own language. But to seek unity with others was also natural. He asked rhetorically whether this unity could follow from "the same religion or political aspiration", and answered "No, my good friends; no, my good friends, no." "It is", he said, "a common language, to my way of thinking, that has the influence and potency of bringing races and people into unity. Have we got that sort of language in East Africa? Yes. That language is Swahili, if we must not isolate ourselves from one another and disappear as a nation or nations."[1] While "foreign overlordship has always been busy to advocate, through schools, churches or official positions, English to be the *lingua franca* in East Africa", Swahili was, Robert argued, "already the *lingua franca* and political weapon in East Africa. It is a proved fact".[2]

At the moment when he gave this speech, Shaaban Robert had just been elected Chairman of the East African Swahili Committee (EASC). The Committee, which had long worried about a lack of funding, was celebrating the award of significant external support to allow it to employ a Research Fellow and move forward on a more stable footing.[3] And news that Tanganyika – on the eve of political independence which would take place in December 1961 – was setting up an organisation of its own on the use of Swahili as a result of its "conviction of the unifying influence of Swahili in achieving independence and its desire to see

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1 Shaaban Robert, "Swahili as a Unifying Language," *Swahili: Journal of the East African Swahili Committee* 33, no. 1 (1962–1963): 11. Morgan Robinson discusses Shaaban Robert's essay *"Lugha ya watu wote Afrika Mashariki" or* "The Language of all East African people" in Morgan Robinson, *A Language for the World: The Standardization of Swahili* (Athens OH: Ohio University Press, 2022), 180.
2 Robert, "Swahili as a Unifying Language": 12.
3 "Minutes of the Twenty-Fifth Annual General Meeting of the East African Swahili Committee held in University Hall, Makerere University College, Kampala, Uganda, on Tuesday, 14th and Wednesday, 15th November, 1961, beginning at 9am on Tuesday 14th November," *Swahili: Journal of the East African Swahili Committee* 33, no. 1 (1962–1963): 139.

Swahili increasingly used in official and semi-official business", was greeted warmly by the Committee members.[4]

Shaaban Robert died not long after his election as Chairman of the East African Swahili Committee, and was replaced by the British former colonial official and Swahili scholar J.W.T. Allen, who had been Honorary Secretary of the Committee since 1958. But the sense of optimism persisted. In 1963, the Committee's journal *Swahili* reported that Zanzibar, too, had established an organisation similar to that set up in Tanganyika and situated the growth of the language firmly in the context of political federation, writing: "[w]ith the advent of the Federation of East Africa later this year, the need for a common language becomes imperative. This is realized by all people and the accent is on education, but to get that education quickly there must be a common teaching medium and it has been proved that Swahili will and must be the language of the people."[5]

Federation, which seemed so close in 1963, did not happen, and the language policies of Kenya, Tanganyika, Uganda and Zanzibar increasingly diverged. As Lyndon Harries wrote in 1968, while at independence "it was widely believed that the East African countries Tanzania, Kenya and Uganda would form a political federation, in which case the value of a common language, Swahili, would be greatly enhanced", since then "the prospect of federation has receded further and further" with implications for Swahili's role as a regional language.[6] While in 1961 the Committee had celebrated the election of Shaaban Robert as Chairman, when Tanzania's community of Swahili scholars and advocates for the language looked back from the vantage point of 1970, they were struck by the limited extent to which the Committee and its successor, the Institute for Swahili Research, had freed itself from its colonial origins. That same year saw Kenya's *Daily Nation* newspaper celebrating what its 18 April 1970 editorial column described as "a national language fever" which was "catching on fast all over East Africa", with KANU having "recently started a four-year campaign to popularise Kiswahili" and signs that "Uganda seems to be thinking seriously about its potential." But, the editorial continued, Kenya and Uganda had a long way to go, with a generation of

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4 "Minutes of the Twenty-Fifth Annual General Meeting," 140.

5 J. Knappert, "Editorial," *Swahili* 33, no. 2 (1963): 1.

6 Lyndon Harries, "Swahili in Modern East Africa," in *Language Problems of Developing Nations*, eds. Joshua A. Fishman, Charles A. Ferguson and Jyotirindra Das Gupta (New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1968), 421–422. Harries continued: "It seems unlikely that Uganda will ever take official action to make Swahili the national language. With federation, this might possibly have happened, but Uganda is no doubt the chief opponent of federation. In Kenya, the matter is in abeyance, for although the use of Swahili is encouraged, English is becoming more deeply entrenched in education and government." Harries, "Swahili in Modern East Africa," 422.

young people who had not learnt Swahili at school. "The result of this blunder is now seen in the fact that we have many young intellectuals who cannot express themselves in Kiswahili and whose natural tendency is to favour English."[7]

Yet, as the editorial suggests, the ideas expressed by Shaaban Robert in his 1961 speech, that Swahili should assert its place as a global language and as a lingua franca for East Africa remained important as an intellectual project. As Morgan Robinson notes in the final chapter of her recent history of the development of Standard Swahili, *A Language for the World*, the early 1960s saw Swahili, and particularly "Standard Swahili", increasingly tied to a Tanzanian national project, embodied in the move of the institution which had once been concerned with standardisation across the East African region to Dar es Salaam. Nevertheless, "the *idea* of Swahili as a regional, Pan-African, and/or diasporic lingua franca remained seductive into the postcolonial period."[8]

We began this book by exploring East Africa's 1960s intellectual culture through the lens of the magazine *Transition*, published in English, though with its pages playing host to vigorous debates about the question of language.[9] In many ways, the 1960s marked an exceptional flourishing of intellectual culture in Swahili, with new opportunities to publish in the language, both in newspapers and in book form. But there was also a fragility to this flourishing. Arguments that had continued over many years about different conceptions of Swahili as a language of the coast or the interior, tensions between advocacy for "Standard Swahili" and those who argued that this was a destructive European colonial imposition, and the question of whether East Africa's countries would or should adopt Swahili as a national language, persisted through the 1960s and beyond. But these older arguments were inflected by new debates: did East Africa need a shared – global – language in order to assert its place in the world and build an African modernity, and should that language be Swahili? Was there a tension between that aim and the goal of building national languages? Or should English be a lingua franca and a global language for East Africa?

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7 Wilfred Whiteley papers, Editorial, "Learning Kiswahili," *Daily Nation*, 18 April 1970, no page. The editorial set out some of the concrete ways in which it was contributing to the development of Swahili in Kenya, for example by printing "popular lessons" of the "well-known Kiswahili radio instructor, Mr Walter Mbotela", each Monday, and offering a page in English and Swahili in the Friday edition of its sister paper, *Taifa Leo*, the work of a "joint effort by our newspaper group, Unesco and the Adult Literacy Department of the Ministry of Co-operatives and Social Services."

8 Robinson, *A Language for the World*, 173.

9 Obiajunwa Wali, "The Dead End of African Literature," *Transition*, 10 (1963): 330–335; Peter Benson, *Black Orpheus, Transition, and Modern Cultural Awakening in Africa* (Berkeley CA: University of California Press, 1986), 133–139.

This chapter explores the East African dimensions of this intellectual project and its limits, through the figures of some of East Africa's leading proponents of the development of Swahili, which included, prominently, Tanzania's President Julius Nyerere, translator into Swahili of the Shakespeare plays *Julius Caesar* and *The Merchant of Venice.* But there was a much wider cast of characters who were also devoted to this project, including Shaaban Robert, Sheikh Amri Abedi, Mathias Mnyampala, and Shihabuddin Chiraghdin, individuals who worked with or alongside the institution of the East African Swahili Committee and its postcolonial successors, as well as its journal (which in this period was initially the *Bulletin* of the Committee, then *Swahili*, later *Kiswahili*).[10] The chapter begins by exploring the ways in which Swahili language work and the project of Swahili as a lingua franca for East Africa both *was* and *was not* a decolonizing project in the early 1960s, exploring the late colonial institutional structure of the East African Swahili Committee in the context of a dynamic field of language work beyond those structures. The second part explores what happened after independence, interrogating the narrative that Swahili language and research work increasingly became part of a national Tanzanian story by thinking about the ways in which nation and region-making intersected. Finally, we explore the persistence of the idea of Swahili as a language for East Africa, against powerful forces set against it, and the way in which this was in part a result of the wide range of people and projects to whom the idea held an appeal.

Colonialism, Regionalism and The East African Swahili Committee

The question of language played a central role in arguments about what decolonization could and should mean in early 1960s East Africa. For some, adopting Swahili as a national language for individual countries and as a lingua franca for the region was seen as a powerful tool in the aim of liberation from colonialism. It could be understood as reclaiming a language from colonial states, and in doing so reclaiming too as a democratizing project, a means of including people in the production and sharing of knowledge who would have been excluded by the use

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10 On the commercial success of Nyerere's translations see Saida Yahya-Othman, *The Making of a Philosopher Ruler*, volume 1 of *Development as Rebellion: A Biography of Julius Nyerere* (Dar es Salaam: Mkuki na Nyota, 2020), 195.

of English. For Julius Nyerere, the leader of mainland Tanzania's nationalist movement, and first President of Tanzania, this meant in particular, as Saida Yahya-Othman emphasises, that it had to be a form of Swahili which was accessible to ordinary people.[11]

Others were deeply sceptical of what they perceived as a colonial project to create and impose a standardised and reduced version of the language, and argued instead for English as a lingua franca, or a renewed focus on vernacular languages. We saw the powerful arguments which the question of language provoked in the pages of *Transition* in Chapter one of this book.

To understand the different forces at work, we start by returning to Shaaban Robert and the East African Swahili Committee. Shaaban Robert was born in Tanga district in Tanzania, then German East Africa, in 1909.[12] He worked for the colonial government in Tanganyika, but he was also one of a group of poets and intellectuals who regularly contributed to the colonial government periodical *Mambo Leo*, carefully navigating the limits of what it was and was not possible to publish in the context of a colonial public sphere.[13] In this way, Shaaban Robert played an important part in the story of the development of Standard Swahili as a shared language of East Africa as it has recently been told by Morgan Robinson. As Robinson argues, this was not simply a top-down story of colonial language-making, but "[s]tandardization was a shared goal and an acknowledged impossibility, driving the actions of real people across more than a century of East Africa's history, all of whom sought, and achieved, linguistic commensurability."[14]

Shaaban Robert joined the Inter-Territorial Language Committee (ILC), predecessor of the EASC, as an "Assistant Reader" in the immediate aftermath of the Second World War. The Committee itself had started life in 1930, concerned with language policy in general but specifically in relation to Swahili, with a mission to produce a standardized spelling and grammar for Swahili-language publishing.[15] The dynamics of the ILC reflected disagreements among East Africa's colonial

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11 Yahya-Othman, *The Making of a Philosopher Ruler*, 187.

12 John Mugane, *The Story of Swahili* (Athens OH: Ohio University Press, 2015), 172; M. M. Mulokozi ed., *Barua za Shaaban Robert 1931–1958, zilikusanywa na kuhifadhiwa na Yusuf Ulenge* (Dar es Salaam: Taasisi ya Uchunguzi wa Kiswahili, Chuo Kikuu cha Dar es Salaam, 2002); Robinson, *A Language for the World.*

13 Mulokozi, *Barua za Shaaban Robert*; Fabian Krautwald, "The Bearers of News: Print and Power in German East Africa," *Journal of African History* 62, no. 1 (2021): 5–28.

14 Robinson, *A Language for the World*, 222.

15 Robinson, *A Language for the World*; Derek Peterson, "Language Work and Colonial Politics in Eastern Africa: The Making of Standard Swahili and 'School Kikuyu,'" in *The Study of Language and the Politics of Community in Global Context*, ed. D. Hoyt and K. Oslund, (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2006), 185–214.

governments on the topic of language. The initial question of which version of Swahili to privilege had itself been controversial, with stark divides between those advocating for the Mombasa Kimvita Swahili and those arguing for the Zanzibar Kiunguja Swahili, which ultimately won out.[16] But there were differences too over whether Swahili should have any reach beyond Tanganyika, Zanzibar and Kenya's coast. There were some in Kenya, such as the colonial official Oscar Watkins, who advocated strongly for Swahili. As we saw in Chapter two, Watkins put huge efforts in the early 1920s into the periodical *Habari*, published in both English and Swahili, though lack of support from the Kenya Government made its failure almost predetermined, and it disappeared for good in the early 1930s. In Uganda, meanwhile, colonial officials offered very little support for Swahili.

Nevertheless, in his role as Chairman of the Languages Board for Kenya Colony, Watkins could still confidently proclaim in his foreword to Rev. B.J. Ratcliffe and Sir Howard Elphinstone's *Modern Swahili* that "[i]t is probable that to posterity the moment at which we stand may appear as that epoch in the history of the East African peoples in which their literature was born. We have had in the past books and translations and collections of stories and proverbs in the various dialects of Swahili, but now at last a serious attempt is to be made to develop that lingua franca into a great educational medium for the spread of knowledge and civilisation throughout the four colonies."[17]

The Inter-Territorial Language Committee saw itself as part of that project. In the interwar years, it was dominated by European men like Ratcliffe. But like other institutions explored in this book, the end of the Second World War was accompanied by a shift in perspective and a sense that the previous make-up of the Committee could not continue into the post-war years. The Committee stopped meeting during the Second World War, and its 1946 meeting was its first in-person since 1939. The ILC's journal *Bulletin* recorded a drastic changeover in membership, with only two of those who had served on the Committee from its origins in 1927 now present: "Each Director of Education – ex-officio members of the committee – was new in his territory and so attended for the first time." But, more importantly, the *Bulletin* also reported that "Assistant readers took their place for the first time in the meeting and so from the territories represented on

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16 Peterson, "Language Work". In Zanzibar, the periodical *Mazungumzo ya Waalimu* celebrated the fact that it was the Zanzibar version of Swahili which had been chosen to be the version for all East Africa. "Barua ya Mwezi," *Mazungumzo ya Waalimu*, February 1938.

17 O.F. Watkins, "Foreword" in Rev. B.J. Ratcliffe and Sir Howard Elphinstone, *Modern Swahili* (London, 1932), vii.

the committee Africans for the first time were taking their part in dealing with the problems of their mother tongue as submitted to the meeting."[18]

Although it had started life within the framework of the East African Governors structure and then the East Africa High Commission, in 1952 the ILC moved to Makerere University and was attached to the East African Institute for Social Research (not to be confused with the EAISCA introduced in earlier chapters).[19] For members of the Committee, the 1950s saw the question of language increasingly tied to broader questions about independence, nationalist politics, and the search for funding to continue research into the Swahili language and its development. The Committee itself remained deeply embedded in colonial structures, but it was also becoming a hub in a network of knowledge production and associational culture which extended beyond those structures.

We can see traces of those networks in the pages of the Committee's *Bulletin*, the journal which would later be renamed the *Journal of the East African Swahili Committee* (1954), *Swahili* (1959) and then *Kiswahili.*[20] In the 1950s, the Committee remained dominated by European Swahili scholars. The driving force behind the Committee for much of the 1950s was the British scholar Wilfred H. Whiteley. Whiteley had studied anthropology before going to Tanganyika, initially as Government Anthropologist, where he became increasingly interested in linguistic research. When the Committee moved to Makerere in 1952 he became its Secretary.[21] With the ILC's base at Makerere, it was increasingly focused on research rather than language policy, and the *Bulletin* provided a home for the publication of some of this research.

But the *Bulletin*'s pages also began, tentatively, to provide a space which reflected some of the wider dynamics of East African language debates around Swahili. In 1954, the Kenya Legislative Council decided in favour of English as the primary language for Kenya. This prompted a strong response from advocates for Swahili, including a long letter published in the *Bulletin* from the Makerere-based Tanzanian scholar Oswald Bernard Kopoka setting out the case for Swahili rather than English to be "the lingua franca of East Africa – including Kenya".[22] The following year, the *Bulletin* printed a submission to the 1954 UN Visiting Mission

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18 "Editorial", *Bulletin No. 20, Inter-Territorial Language (Swahili) Committee*, July 1947, 1.

19 Wilfred Whiteley, *Swahili: The Rise of a National Language* (Aldershot: Gregg Revivals, 1993) [first published London: Methuen, 1969], 79–90; Shihabuddin Chiraghdin together with Mathias E. Mnyampala, *Historia ya Kiswahili* (Nairobi: Oxford University Press, 1977), 61.

20 Whiteley, *Rise of a National Language*, 92.

21 John Kelly, "Introduction" in Whiteley, *Swahili: The Rise of a National Language*, no page.

22 Letter from O.B. Kopoka, "English as a Lingua Franca in Kenya," *Bulletin No. 24 of the East African Swahili Committee*, June 1954: 76–81, 78.

to Tanganyika from the *Jumuia ya Taaluma ya Kiswahili Tanganyika* (the Association for the Study of Kiswahili in Tanganyika).[23] In its submission, the Association argued for Swahili as the only language which could bring all East Africa's communities together. "East Africa", they wrote "cannot develop without Swahili."[24] They expressed regret at moves in Kenya to shift away from the language, though they emphasised that English should also be taught alongside Swahili, given its importance in terms of accessing higher education. From Makerere, Michael Sanga, a Tanzanian student who was active in nationalist student politics at the College, shared news of the establishment of the Makerere College Swahili Language Propagation Society.[25] In a letter to the *Bulletin*, Sanga explained that the Society had been founded in 1954

> at a time when there was a heated argument as to whether Swahili or English should be the national language of Kenya. The triumph for the latter language caused a great alarm amongst the members of the Society and they at once decided to found the Society which would not only prevent this unfortunate step from being taken elsewhere in E. Africa, but also explore the possibility of making the Kenya people reverse their policy.[26]

In the same letter Sanga welcomed the existence of the *Jumuia ya Taaluma ya Kiswhili* and wrote that "[i]t is indeed gratifying to find out that there are, among the E. Africans, people, who are already aware of the need of fighting for the cause of Swahili even at that level – for what else can be done when there are forces within E. Africa fighting for legislations to the contrary!"[27]

The ILC's successor organisation, the East African Swahili Committee, also increasingly supported historical work to recover and preserve Swahili manuscripts, through its new History Sub-Committee, established in 1958.[28] While Secretary Wilfred Whiteley framed the drive to undertake work in this area and seek funding from overseas foundations as being about making the many "historical documents in Swahili, both published and unpublished" available to both

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23 "Aridhlihali ya Jumuiya ya Taaluma ya Kiswahili Tanganyika kwa Ujumbe wa Mataifa ya Umoja Uliotembelea Tanganyika Mwezi Septemba, 1954," *Journal of the East African Swahili Committee No. 25*, June 1955: 40–43.

24 "Afrika Mashairiki haiwezi kuendelea bila Kiswahili," Ibid, 42.

25 Milford, *African Activists in a Decolonising world*, 43.

26 Letter from Michael M. Sanga, *Bulletin No. 26 of the East African Swahili Committee*, June 1956: 88–91

27 Letter from Michael M. Sanga, *Bulletin No. 26 of the East African Swahili Committee*, June 1956: 88–91.

28 Mss.Afr.s.1705, ff. 8–11, "Minutes of the 22nd Annual General Meeting of the East African Swahili Committee held in Mombasa, September 9th-11th, 1958," 4.

"the professional historian and the interested layman", for others this was a work of recovery of coastal history and identity.

For a new generation of East African scholars active in the EASC and its History Committee, the scholar Shihabuddin Chiraghdin explained at the Peking Scientific Symposium in 1964:

> It is accepted that Swahili is the lingua franca of East Africa and has played an important part in bringing about the national consciousness of these areas. Swahili is indigenous to East Africa, although it owes a lot from outside sources in Asia. But the Europeans have set out to show that it is foreign. This belief may have come from the idea held by the colonialists that 'Africa had no history of its own'. But contemporary evidence shows otherwise. Swahili is an old language with no less than fifteen dialects.

But colonial administrators had stifled the language. And for Chiraghdin, "[t]hat is why the accusation of inadequacy of thought, vocabulary, and idiom could be levelled against Swahili. In fact, there was a certain amount of opposition to it being the lingua franca of East Africa."[29]

As these examples suggest, there were many groups and individuals committed to furthering the goal Shaaban Robert described in the speech we started the chapter with. Not all agreed with each other politically, and the communities they belonged to ranged widely. Some were members of old Swahili families of the coast, for whom the Swahili language was intimately tied to the history of their community. Others, like Mathias Mnyampala, had adopted Swahili as a second language, and actively defended their claim to it against those who sought to limit true ownership of the language to the people of the Swahili coast.[30]

One individual who was a passionate advocate and scholar of the Swahili language was Sheikh Amri Abedi. Born in 1924 in Ujiji, on the shores of Lake Tanganyika, his language work was bound up with his commitments to Islam and to anti-colonial nationalism in Tanganyika and in East Africa more broadly.[31] Sheikh Amri Abedi's career represented the ways in which language was, for many Tanzanians far beyond intellectual circles, fundamental to anti-colonial politics. Already from 1955, TANU was calling for Swahili to be used in the Legislative Council.[32] One indicator of the power of TANU's language policies among a wide public can be found in B.R. Omori's popular column in *Baraza* "Panapo Moshi . . ."

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29 Chiraghdin, *Life Journey*, 103.

30 Gregory Maddox, "Introduction: the Ironies of *Historia, Mila na Desturi za Wagogo*" in Mathias Mnyampala, *Historia, Mila na Desturi za Wagogo*, translated, introduced and ed. Gregory Maddox (Armonk, N.Y.: M.E. Sharpe, 1995), 3.

31 See Obituary in *Swahili*, March 1965, for more details.

32 Yahya-Othman, *Philosopher Ruler*, 188.

in September 1956. Omori reported the rumour that the schools which TANU was planning to establish would use Swahili, and that TANU representatives would seek to raise the standing of Swahili by addressing meetings in the language when they visited Europe or America.[33]

As might be expected in a Swahili-language newspaper read across borders, the letters pages of the newspaper *Baraza* regularly included letters from correspondents calling for more East Africans to embrace Swahili. Such letters called attention both to the potential for Swahili as a unifying force in the region, and the extent to which hesitancy about Swahili in Uganda limited this potential. A certain J.P. Mwafwalo in Dar es Salaam, for instance, complained in a letter in January 1964 that Swahili broadcasts had not yet begun in Uganda, despite the fact that many people spoke the language there. Mwafwalo offered to help the Ugandan authorities if the problem was a lack of announcers, as, he explained, making sure that everyone in East Africa could speak and understand Swahili would make uniting the region much easier than if it were divided by language.[34] *Baraza*'s editor, Francis Khamisi, was himself an active promoter of Swahili, as we saw in Chapter two. This extended beyond his work as a newspaper editor: in the early 1960s he presented a radio programme called "Ubingwa wa Lugha", described in the *Daily Nation* radio listings as a quiz programme "aimed at promoting Swahili vocabulary fluency and African culture in general".[35]

As independence approached, some external observers predicted a future for Swahili as a regional language, and as in earlier periods, they saw its potential as a means of pursuing their own political agendas. Officials in London thinking about anti-communist activities in the region suggested that more should be published in Swahili as a rising regional language, including the idea of a Swahili-language anti-communist newspaper, as we saw in Chapter two.[36] For the Swahili scholar Lyndon Harries, the development of "broadcast programs in Swahili from Washington, London, Moscow, Peking, and New Delhi [was] evidence of the East African presence in world affairs."[37]

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33 B.R. Omori, "Panapo Moshi," *Baraza,* 15 September 1956, 4.

34 Letter from J.P. Mwafwalo, DSM, "Kiswahili katika Radio Uganda," *Baraza*, 16 January 1964, 4.

35 Radio Listings, *Daily Nation*, 8 December 1964, 15.

36 FCO 168/615, no f, "Memorandum: Counter-Subversion in Zanzibar," 12 May 1962, 3

37 Harries, "Swahili in East Africa," 416. In her study of Britain's assertion of cultural power in East Africa after independence, Caroline Ritter traces the ways in which the BBC Swahili service was developed and reached growing audiences across East Africa. Based in London, the Swahili service offered training for young East African journalists but in turn deprived East Africa's radio stations of personnel, often for long periods. Caroline Ritter, *Imperial Encore: The Cultural Project of the Late British Empire*, (Berkeley CA: University of California Press) 2021, 123.

However, the pages of the *Bulletin* only hint at this wider context, and it remained largely limited to a European readership. In volume 29, the then editor, Wilfred Whiteley, expressed concern that the journal, now called *Swahili*, reached so few East African readers.[38] The 1961 volume, now under the editorship of Jan Knappert, addressed this issue head on, under the heading "A change of wind requires a change of tack". Knappert informed his readers that "[i]n view of the changing circumstances both inside and outside the Committee, a thorough revision of our work is indispensable".[39]

Issues published the following year better reflected the dynamic environment outside the Committee. While the loss of Shaaban Robert was felt deeply, there was nevertheless much to celebrate, in particular, funding from the Portuguese Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation, built on the wealth of an oil magnate, to appoint Jan Knappert as Research Fellow. Knappert's report of his activities during his first year of appointment spoke both to the excitement of the moment, and to diverging paths. Knappert celebrated the fact that "[t]hree of the Governments of East Africa have expressed views in favour of making Swahili the national language, and all are emphatic that it must be spoken well". But at the same time, Tanganyika was pressing ahead with its own national structures. On his visit to Dar es Salaam, Knappert met Sheikh Amri Abedi, then mayor of Dar es Salaam and also incoming chair of the Tanganyika Swahili Committee.[40]

The changing power dynamics at work were clearly expressed at the Committee's annual meeting in 1963 in an opening address by Abedi, who now also served as Minister of Justice in Tanganyika. This was, he began by saying, "a particularly important meeting as you have come here from Kenya, Uganda and Zanzibar, to discuss with those who represent this country, not only your annual estimates for the year 1963/64, but also to examine the future plans and functions of the East African Swahili Committee during the next five years." In a lengthy speech he praised the proud history of the Committee, and the work of its members. He went on to address explicitly the question which, he was sure, all those present were asking themselves: "Where do we go from here?" What would be the EASC's relationship with the new Department of Languages and Linguistics at the University College in Dar es Salaam, and with the new Swahili Academy in the process of being set up? Abedi set out a vision of the future for the Committee as a "research body, with an interest throughout East Africa, responsible for the collection and correlation of research work in all East African countries, and in

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38 W.H. Whiteley, "Editorial," *Swahili* 29, no. 1 (1959): 5.

39 Editorial, *Swahili* 32, no. 1 (1961): no page.

40 J.K. Knappert, "Report of the Senior Research Fellow," *Swahili* 33, no. 2 (1963): 3.

other countries where Swahili is spoken and is spreading." The tone of the speech made clear how much has changed. As a government minister of an independent country, Abedi expressed thanks to the Committee on behalf of "the people of East Africa" for "all that it has done to help develop the rapid growth and use of the Swahili language, which in itself has provide of inestimable assistance in bringing into being not only the nation of Tanganyika but the other nations of East Africa and elsewhere". He praised the "Committee's work and the work of others", through which the "people of Tanganyika have become conscious during the last decade, through study of their own language, of so much of their national heritage, which was previously known only to a few." But this gratitude for past work went alongside a clear expectation that the primary role in taking forward the development of the language would now sit with national governments.[41]

The Many Roles of Swahili in a Decolonising World

At a 1971 UNESCO meeting of experts for the promotion of African Languages in Eastern and Central Africa, George A. Mhina of the University of Dar es Salaam described "a period of 'Renaissance'" on the continent. "The African people", he continued, "are recovering from the great humiliation inflicted to their culture by those who colonized them for years." But cultural renaissance, Mhina continued, had to recognise "that culture goes with languages". For Mhina, Swahili was "an African language that has exploded," and which should be supported to "play its appropriate role as an effective tool for educational cultural and economic developments in East Africa."[42]

When in 1961 Shaaban Robert had insisted that no one could doubt Swahili's position as East Africa's lingua franca, he drew on a long tradition of making precisely this argument, an argument which, as we have seen, had been made by European language experts as well as by East African advocates of Swahili. But the reality was that already in 1961, before independence, very different national language policies were developing across the region.

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41 Draft minutes annual meeting 1963, Appendix A, "Speech by the Hon Sheikh Amri Abedi, M.P., Minister for Justice to the Republic of Tanganyika, to the East African Language Committee on the Occasion of its Annual Meeting held on 30th September, 1963, at Dar es Salaam," *Swahili: Journal of the East African Swahili Committee* 34, no. 1 (1964): 5–8.

42 George A. Mhina, "Problems being faced in the process of developing African languages with special reference to Kiswahili," UNESCO Meeting of Experts for the promotion of African Languages in Eastern and Central Africa, Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, 15–21 December 1971, 4.

Within the Kenyan colonial government, Oscar Watkins's pro-Swahili advocacy had always been at the margins. Writing in 1956, Wilfred Whiteley referred to Swahili's declining position in both Uganda and Kenya, and predicted that "[o]nly in Tanganyika and Zanzibar does it seem likely to retain its importance for some years, and in the urban areas throughout East Africa some form of Swahili will probably persist."[43]

The shift towards English which Whiteley identified can be seen in developing Colonial Office thinking in the early 1950s. In 1951 a Study Group travelled to East and Central Africa on behalf of the Colonial Office. The resulting report firmly rejected Swahili in favour of a combination of the vernaculars and English. The report's authors wrote: "Historically it had its origins as a means of communication between Arab slavers and African enslaved. Some African tribes therefore are unwilling, even when they know Swahili, to speak it and most unhappy when it is taught to their children", though they did admit that "it has inspired a little good poetry and some original stories."[44] The preference of the report's authors for English, rather than Swahili, was, they argued, threefold: "as a *lingua franca*; as a road to the technical knowledge of modern inventions; and a means of contact with world thought." The technical language of English was presented as the solution to poverty, drought and famine, and enhanced trade. In cultural terms, for the report's authors, "knowledge of English introduces the reader to the vast storehouse of English literature, for more foreign books have been translated into English than any other language. Now broadcasting and films penetrate into the remotest parts and can only be fully enjoyed by those who understand English." English was presented as no less than the route to a new morality. With missionary zeal, the report argued that "[t]he African needs English today in the same sense and to the same degree as the Renaissance European needed Greek or Greek thought in Latin form. English thought could come to Africa with all the liberating power of Greek thought to Europe. Language carries with it the spiritual values on which it is based." In this way, they argued, "[a] better, wider, and deeper knowledge of English would mean a better understanding of European thought, and some steps would be taken towards that synthesis of African and European ideas which must be the basis of a firm moral and social order."[45]

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43 W.H. Whiteley, "The Changing Position of Swahili in East Africa," *Africa* 26, no. 4 (1956): 352.

44 "Report of the East and Central Africa Study Group" In Nuffield Foundation and Colonial Office, *African Education: A Study of Educational Policy and Practice in British Tropical* Africa (Oxford: University Press, 1953), 81.

45 "Report of the East and Central Africa Study Group" In Nuffield Foundation and Colonial Office, *African Education: A Study of Educational Policy and Practice in British Tropical* Africa (Oxford: University Press, 1953), 82.

In May 1952, a circular sent to the East African Governors from London expressed the view that English should become the lingua franca for East Africa. The letter recognised that "there are many, including probably some administrative officers, who may not share this view." Yet, it continued,

> in spite of certain obvious political difficulties which it may create it does seem to us that in the long run it is most desirable in East Africa, as we believe it has proved useful in India, that English should be the common language. It seems to us that this is so not only from the point of view of strengthening the British connection but also that it is clearly to the advantage of the Africans themselves that their common language should be one that is in worldwide use rather than one which is confined to East Africa and also by no means suitable as an instrument for use in connection with modern economic developments.[46]

The language question, however, looked very different from Dar es Salaam. Accepting the aim of developing English as a lingua franca, Bruce Hutt, Tanganyika's Chief Secretary from 1951 to 1954, emphasised that even if English were to develop as a lingua franca, this was unlikely to make Swahili less important. At a recent meeting of Tanganyika's Provincial Commissioners, Hutt reported back to the Colonial Office in London, the question of language had been discussed, and the Provincial Commissioners had "recommended that Government policy should be to concentrate on Swahili and through Swahili to English." This was not, he wrote, a consequence of their "prejudice in favour of Swahili", but rather "they were recognising that at the present time Swahili is the natural lingua franca of the territory."[47]

And so as independence approached, East Africa's leaders adopted a range of positions on the question of language. In Kenya, Swahili had played an important role in anti-colonial activism, notably in the trade union movement.[48] But as Kenya's new leaders moved into government, they combined warm words for the importance of Swahili with, in practice, a continued commitment to English which per-

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46 UKNA CO 822/679, f. 3, "Letter to all Governors," 4 April 1952.

47 UKNA CO 822/679, f. 10, Letter from Bruce Hutt to P. Rogers, 10 July 1952: 1.

48 George Ireri Mbaabu, "The Impact of Language Policy on the Development of Kiswahili in Kenya, 1930–1990", (PhD thesis, Howard University, 1991), 72; Chege Githiora, "Kenya: Language and the Search for a Coherent National Identity," in *Language and National Identity in Africa*, ed. Andrew Simpson (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 241. As an example, Makhan Singh's memorandum to the Mombasa Labour Inquiry, which followed the Mombasa African workers' general strike of 1939, was translated into Swahili by Francis Khamisi and "widely circulated among workers by the union after copies were cyclostyled in English and Swahili". Makhan Singh, *History of Kenya's Trade Union Movement to 1952* (Nairobi: East African Publishing House, 1969), 93.

sisted through the 1960s. The 1964 Ominde Commission on Education for instance recommended the teaching of English from the first day of primary school.[49] There were a number of moments when the Kenyan government evinced stronger support for Swahili, notably in 1970 when Robert Matano, Acting Secretary General of KANU, Kenya's ruling party, set out ambitious plans for the development of Swahili, prompting the *Daily Nation* editorial discussed earlier.[50] But there were strong voices against Swahili too, famously the Attorney General Charles Njonjo who spoke forcefully against Swahili both publicly and in correspondence within Government.[51]

Beyond the voices of individuals, the example of the *East African Standard*'s short-lived effort to publish provincial news in Swahili in 1970 gestures to the ways in which everyday political culture in Kenya worked against efforts to support the use of Swahili. As the *Standard* explained, this measure had been introduced "as a genuine attempt to encourage the use of Swahili in line with the policy explained by Mr. Matano, for the Kanu Governing Council." But it had not worked. Complaints were many and varied. Some asked why if there was news in Swahili there could not also be news in Duluo or Kikuyu, while others criticised the translation. There were also complaints "by politicians and others who failed to find their own items in the paper". Although they were told the item was there, in the Swahili pages, "very often they replied 'but we don't want them there – we want them in English so that everybody can read them'."[52]

In Tanganyika, and, from 1964, in the United Republic of Tanzania, in contrast, Swahili was swiftly embraced as the national language. Already before independence, plans were underway for Swahili to be taught in all schools from January 1962, and for Swahili to increasingly be used in Government business.[53] The Institute for Swahili Research moved to the University of Dar es Salaam in 1964. It was attached to the University College, with a new name,

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49 On the Ominde Commission, George Ireri Mbaabu, "The impact of language policy on the development of Kiswahili in Kenya, 1930–1990" (PhD thesis, Howard University, 1991), 87–93; On Kenya's approach more broadly, Henry Chakava, *Books and Reading in Kenya* (Paris: UNESCO, 1982), 2.

50 PP MS. Whiteley Box 4, SL55, Kenya High Commission, London, Kenya Digest, "Drive to introduce Swahili as Official Language," Number 128, 30 April 1970.

51 PP MS. Whiteley Box 4, SL55, "Using Swahili 'would stagnate progress,'" *East African Standard*, 26 July 1969.

52 PP MS. Whiteley Box 4, SL55, No author, "The news in Swahili," *East African Standard*, 11. 7.70.

53 E.g. "Minutes of the Twenty-Fifth Annual General Meeting of the East African Swahili Committee held in University Hall, Makerere University College, Kampala, Uganda, on Tuesday, 14th and Wednesday, 15th November, 1961, beginning at 9am on Tuesday 14th November," 140.

the *Chuo cha uchunguzi katika lugha ya Kiswahili* or Institute of Kiswahili Research.[54]

The Swahili scholar Ireri Mbaabu concluded, that, following its move to Dar es Salaam, the Institute increasingly "operated its affairs as a national rather than an East African institute", and this is the point at which Morgan Robinson ends her story of the development of "Standard Swahili".[55] But the story of the Institute for Swahili Research after its move to the University of Dar es Salaam also captures some of the ways in which nation and region interacted in the area of Swahili language research and knowledge production.

The East African dimension remained important to the way the Institute thought about its work. Its 1965 constitution described its aim as being to "contribute to the education and well-being of the people of Eastern Africa by providing opportunities for the study of the Swahili language in all its aspects".[56] As was the case with other institutions we have explored in this book, the Institute benefited both from government funding from East Africa's newly independent states and from the opportunities for external funding offered by international foundations. In September 1965, Wilfred Whiteley described the sources of funding which supported the Institute, which had come into being since his last editorial. Kenya and Tanzania each provided £800 a year, and there was a grant from the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation and the UK Ministry of Overseas Development for 1964–1967. The Zanzibar Ministry of Education had seconded J.A. Tejani for two and a half years to work on the Swahili dictionary, while Rockefeller Foundation funding paid for J. W. T. Allen to serve as Honorary Research Associate engaged in collecting Swahili literature.[57]

Whiteley's editorial outlined a direction for the Institute which would see it rooted in East Africa but also embedded in transnational circuits of knowledge exchange. He expected, he wrote, "to hand over to an East African" when his contract ended. And he expressed the Institute's hopes for "close and fruitful cooperation between all persons, Institutions and Governments concerned with the use of Swahili." It was, he continued "a joy to note that the contributors to the

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54 Robinson, *A Language for the World*, 208.

55 Cited in Robinson, *A Language for the World*, 208.

56 TNA 622/S5/8, f. 17, Muhsin M.R. Alidina, Acting Director of the Institute of Swahili Research, "The Institute of Swahili Research: Its Composition, Activities and Collaboration with Kenya and Uganda," Appendix to Minutes of the Thirteenth meeting of the board of the Institute of Kiswahili Research held on Saturday 24th August, 1974," 5.

57 W.H. Whiteley, "Editorial," *Swahili* 35 no. 2 (1965): 1.

present issue write from such diverse places as India, the Soviet Union, the United States, England and Germany, as well as East Africa."[58]

But over the course of the 1960s financial and institutional developments as well as dynamics internal to the country conspired to shift the Institute's centre of gravity towards Tanzania. At the point at which the Institute moved to Dar es Salaam in 1964, contributions to its annual budget still came from across the region, with Kenya contributing 17,560 Shs, Tanganyika 16,000 Shs, Uganda 15,800 Shs and Zanzibar 3,125S Shs. But funds were nevertheless in short supply. Committee minutes record the limitations of staff and budgets, and few subscribers to the Committee's journal regularly paid their subscriptions.[59]

Despite all the good news for the Institute in 1964, this year also brought the blow of the news that, from then on, Uganda would no longer contribute to the work of the Committee or its successor, and that Kenya would not increase its commitment beyond existing levels.[60] In 1967/8 when Kenya was asked to match a substantial increase in funding from Tanzania and Zanzibar (up to 14,000 Shs from Zanzibar and 63,000 Shs from Tanzania), Kenya declined.[61]

The Institute was reconstituted in 1970 following the University of Dar es Salaam Act of that year, and it had an increasingly national element to it, with representation from the University of Dar es Salaam, Tanzania's Ministry of Education and other Tanzanian bodies, including the recently established BAKITA or *Baraza la Taifa ya Lugha ya Kiswahili*, Tanzania's National Swahili Council. Its inauguration and opening day celebration in June 1970, preserved in a pamphlet in Swahili and English, captured this sense of national mission. Tanzanians were encouraged to "play your part" in establishing and developing our National Language".[62] The reference to a wider East African mission was still there, with the constitution stating that "[t]he Institute of Swahili Research shall be concerned with the study and furtherance of the Swahili language in all its aspects, with spe-

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58 W.H. Whiteley, "Editorial," *Swahili* 35 no. 2 (1965): 1.

59 In his 1965 news-letter, the Committee's secretary Wilfred Whiteley lamented the lack of subscriptions to the Committee's Journal. He wrote, "a breakdown of our current subscribers shows that only 35 individuals paid their 1964 subscriptions."

60 Rhodes House Library [hereafter RHO] Mss.Afr.s.1705, f. 39, East African Swahili Committee, University College, *News-Letter Number Two*, 24 February 1965.

61 TNA 622/S5/8, f. 17, "The Institute of Swahili Research: Its Composition, Activities and Collaboration with Kenya and Uganda," Appendix to Minutes of the Thirteenth meeting of the board of the Institute of Kiswahili Research held on Saturday 24 August 1974, 2.

62 Chuo Kikuu cha Dar es Salaam, "Mzinduo na Siku ya Kufungua Jumamosi 19 Agosti 1970 Chuo cha Uchunguzi wa Kiswahili." The Swahili part of the pamphlet, though not the English part, included a section emphasing that the Swahili to be promoted was 'Standard Swahili', which was a language shared by all.

cial reference to the support of current and long term development plans in the United Republic of Tanzania, in East Africa and elsewhere, and in the university of Dar es Salaam."[63] But at this point the shift in terms of the balance of financial support was reflected in the representation from the other East African governments. After the Institute was reconstituted in 1970, the Kenya government sent an initial representative, but they sent apologies rather than send a representative to the third meeting and subsequent meetings. When Kenya was asked to nominate a new representative in 1973/74 they declined to do so.[64]

Meanwhile, the foundation of BAKITA had institutionalised Tanzania's focus on Swahili as a national language. The decision to establish the Council was taken in 1967, the same year that Tanzania's government determined that henceforth Swahili would be the medium of instruction in primary schools and for government communication. Tanzania's long-term goal was for it to be the medium of instruction in secondary schools and universities too, a position maintained – if not fully achieved – until 1983.

The National Swahili Council was created in a context in which new voices were building on the earlier advocacy and promotion of Swahili that we traced in the late 1950s. In 1963, when the civil society organisation the *Jumuiya ya kustawisha Kiswahili* (Association for the Advancement of Swahili) was established, its aims included work on grammar, orthography and usage, as well as to "translate and write books".[65] Its members used the pages of Tanzania's Swahili-language newspapers to advocate for the language, to develop it, and to instruct in its usage, as did members of the *Chama cha Usanifu wa Kiswahili na Ushairi* (Society for the Enhancement of the Swahili Language and Verse), founded in 1964 by the poet Mathias Mnyampala.[66] The Catholic newspaper *Kiongozi*, for example, had a

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63 TNA 622/S5/8, f. 17, "The Institute of Swahili Research: Its Composition, Activities and Collaboration with Kenya and Uganda," Appendix to "Minutes of the Thirteenth meeting of the board of the Institute of Kiswahili Research held on Saturday 24th August, 1974," 5.

64 TNA 622/S5/8, f. 17, "The Institute of Swahili Research," 2.

65 Whiteley, *Rise of a National Language*, 110.

66 Whiteley, *Rise of a National Language*, 111. In February 1965 the newspaper *Ngurumo* reported that the two associations were joining forces. "Vyama vyaungana kustawisha Kiswahili," *Ngurumo* 9 February 1965, 2. This followed an expansion of the activities which the Chama cha Usanifu wa Kiswahili na Ushairi was planning to take to set up a special committee to correct what it deemed to be bad Swahili in the pages of newspapers and on the radio, which would not only include poets but also individuals such as Stephen Mhando, Juma Ali of the East African Literature Bureau and Mohamed Azaz of University College Dar es Salaam and the East African Swahili Committee. See "Kamati ya Kusahihisha Swahili," *Ngurumo*, 7 January 1965, 4.

long running series of articles focusing on the Swahili language by Mamala.[67] There were heated newspaper arguments about the Swahili language which re-formulated and recast long-running debates over whether Swahili's origins were as an Arabic or Bantu language and which languages, if at all, new vocabulary should be borrowed from.[68] Such newspaper debates appeared not only in *Kiongozi* but also, for example, in *Ngurumo*, an independent newspaper widely read by urban Tanzanians, and the TANU party newspaper *Uhuru*.[69]

Nyerere himself contributed to the poetry pages of Tanzania's Swahili news-papers in the 1960s, but it was his translation of Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar* which particularly captured the sense of possibility of the time.[70] Nyerere's biog-rapher Saida Yahya-Othman describes queues outside bookshops when the first edition was published.[71] Beyond his own translation work, Nyerere promoted the development of the language through the support he offered to new Swahili pub-lications, by, for instance, providing a foreword. His introduction to the econom-ics textbook *Uchumi Bora* published in 1966 (re-published in English in 1969 as *From Poverty to Prosperity: an introduction to economics*) is an example of this in practice, and shows the importance Nyerere attached to the use of Swahili to bring key concepts and ideas to a wider public than might be reached through English.[72]

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67 For example, PP MS. Whiteley Box 4, SL55M.E. Mnyampala, "Taaluma ya Kiswahili," *Kiongozi*, 1 May 1966, 3.

68 In his recent social history of the Swahili language, John Mugane distinguishes between what he terms "Swahili purists" and "Afrocentric purifiers", with the former suggesting that no bor-rowing was appropriate, and the latter a "lingual hierarchy" whereby, in the words of Chiragh-din and Mnyampala in Mugane's translation, words could be borrowed from "Bantu and other African languages followed by Arabic and English". Mugane, *The Story of Swahili*, 223–224.

69 Whiteley, *Rise of a National Language*, 111. There was for example, a long running debate in the letters pages of the Tanzanian newspaper *Ngurumo* in early 1965.

70 An interview which Geoffrey Reeves conducted with the Tanzanian publisher Walter Bgoya in 1973 provides a sense of the importance of the poetry pages in Tanzania's Swahili newspapers. Bgoya told Reeves that the poetry pages in the newspaper *Ngurumo* and *Uhuru* made it less es-sential than it would otherwise have been for the Tanzania Publishing House to publish stand-alone books of poetry in the Swahili language. Reeves, "The East African Intellectual Commu-nity," 214.

71 Yahya-Othman, *Philosopher Ruler*, 185.

72 Julius Nyerere, "Introduction" in Peter Temu, *Uchumi Bora* (Nairobi: Oxford University Press East Africa Branch, 1966). See also, though without Nyerere's introduction, Peter Temu, *From Poverty to Prosperity: an introduction to economics* (London: Oxford University Press, 1969). Saida Yahya-Othman describes the many requests which authors of both English and Swahili books made for Nyerere's endorsement, and the careful choices he made in deciding which books he would endorse. Yahya-Othman, *Philosopher Ruler*, 191.

As this wider context suggests, the ambitions of the National Swahili Council were very different from the ambitions which had led to the creation of the Inter-Territorial Language Committee back in the 1930s. In a 1970 speech, the Honourable C. Y. Mgonja, Minister for National Education, the department responsible for the Council at that time, recalled the forces which had led to BAKITA's foundation. He described its aim as being to remove one of the shameful legacies of colonialism, the idea that "every good thing comes from outside of Africa, and in particular Europe. They tried to make us believe that even the greatest scholars of the language of Kiswahili, whose home is in Tanzania and East Africa in general, were Europeans or those who were educated by Europeans."[73]

The Council's aims were very similar to those of the organisations which preceded it. First and foremost, it was to "promote the development and usage of the Swahili language throughout the United Republic".[74] Initially, it was housed within the Ministry for Regional Administration and Rural Development, before moving to National Education in 1969.[75] That original location indicates the focus on the integration of Tanzania's regions as a part of a Tanzanian nation, with Swahili as a central part of this nation-building project.

A sense of national mission pervades the archival record for the Council's early years. In his first report as Chair in 1969, future Tanzanian president Ali Hassan Mwinyi, who had replaced the first chair Stephen Mhando, expressed the Council's thanks to the government for its initial support and asserted the huge importance of the language work that they would undertake.[76] Building the national language was a project of nation-making, for having a national language was a way for people to know one another and to come together as one.[77] BAKITA started small, in an office with just one room and just three members of staff, which Mwinyi emphasised was far from sufficient for a National Council. Its first secretary was S.M. Kombo, who in March 1969 was replaced by Clement Nkunga,

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73 "Kujitegemea katika Lugha ya Kiswahili. Hotuba Iliyotolewa na Mhe. C.Y. Mgonja, Waziri wa Elimu ya Taifa, akifunga Semina ya Kiswahili, Chuo Kikuu cha Dar es Salaam, Tarehe 9/6/70," in *Taarifa ya Semina ya Kiswahili*, ed. Jamhuri ya Muungano wa Tanzania, 90.

74 Whiteley, *National language*, 112.

75 Andrea S. Dunn, "Swahili Policy Implementation in Tanzania: The role of the national Swahili council (BAKITA)," *Studies in the Linguistic Sciences* 15, no. 1 (1985): 34.

76 TNA 622/UT/C4/2, f. 45, Ali Hassan Mwinyi, "Taarifa ya Shughuli za Baraza la Taifa la Lugha ya Kiswahili katika Mwaka 1968/1969," December 1969. Mwinyi went on to serve as Tanzania's second President, from 1985–1995. On Mwinyi's time as Chairman of BAKITA see Ali Hassan Mwinyi, *Mzee Rukhsa: safari ya Maisha yangu* (Dar es Salaam: Mkuki na Nyota, 2020), 92.

77 TNA 622/UT/C4/2, f. 45, Ali Hassan Mwinyi, "Taarifa ya Shughuli za Baraza la Taifa la Lugha ya Kiswahili katika Mwaka 1968/1969," December 1969.

previously editor of the Council's journal *Lugha Yetu* (Our Language).[78] The Council's report did not explicitly refer to Swahili as a regional language, instead emphasising that the work they were doing to develop Swahili would not only help Tanzanians, but also others "in Africa who use Swahili", and indeed the whole world because "it is said that Swahili is now the seventh largest language in the world."[79]

BAKITA's leadership went out into Tanzania's regions to talk to teachers and students about the Council's work, but also to take questions, and it is clear that they took seriously the feedback they received. In April 1972, Clement Nkungu visited Shinyanga and Tabora, and one of the requests he received was for a radio programme about the Swahili language to be started.[80] Just five months later, Nkungu was able to announce that the Council would be launching a radio programme called "Lugha ya Taifa – Kiswahili", to discuss aspects of the development and correct usage of Swahili.[81]

Representatives were often pressed on what they were doing to ensure that the Council was connected to the regions. On the visit to Shinyanga and Tabora, for example, the Council was encouraged to establish branches in the regions and hold meetings and seminars.[82] On the same visit, Nkungu was told that a new history of the language was urgently needed to correct the idea, which foreigners had brought, that Swahili was a foreign import. Reflecting on this visit, Nkungu was struck by the greater presence of street signs in Swahili, as opposed to English, compared with what he was used to in Dar es Salaam. As he saw it, the "colonial mindset" which led some to hold Swahili in contempt was much reduced in the countryside, even if it had not fully disappeared.[83]

But questions were also raised about the implications of Tanzania's language policies on relations with its neighbours. During a visit to the Coast region in 1970

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78 One of the Council's priorities had been setting up the journal *Lugha Yetu*, as a way of promoting the use of correct Swahili, but also to develop pride in the language.

79 TNA 622/UT/C4/2, f. 45, Ali Hassan Mwinyi, "Taarifa ya Shughuli za Baraza la Taifa la Lugha ya Kiswahili katika Mwaka 1968/1969," December 1969, 6.

80 TNA 622/UT/C4/2, f. 86, Attachment "Taarifa ya Ziara ya Ujumbe wa Baraza la Taifa la Lugha ya Kiswahili katika Mikoa ya Shinyanga na Tabora Tokea Tarehe 15–28 Aprili, 1972".

81 TNA 622/UT/C4/2, f. 90, C.M.N. Nkungu, "Taarifa: Kipindi cha Kiswahili katika Redio Tanzania," 4 October 1972.

82 TNA 622/UT/C4/2, "Taarifa ya Ziara ya Ujumbe wa Baraza la Taifa la Lugha ya Kiswahili katika Mikoa ya Shinyanga na Tabora Tokea Tarehe 15–28 Aprili, 1972."

83 TNA 622/UT/C4/2, f. 86, Attachment "Taarifa ya Ziara ya Ujumbe wa Baraza la Taifa la Lugha ya Kiswahili katika Mikoa ya Shinyanga na Tabora Tokea Tarehe 15–28 Aprili, 1972".

Nkungu was asked how Tanzania would work with Kenya and Uganda to "ensure that Kiswahili is accepted and used in all the countries of East Africa". He was also asked what the implications would be for East African examinations if "we Tanzanians use Swahili and Ugandans and Kenyans use a different language."[84] Local language officers conducted research into regional languages, both as a way to enrich Swahili and as a means of national integration within Tanzania. For Tanzanian politicians and leaders of BAKITA, this national mission was a key part of Council's work. Language was indeed understood as a way of bringing Tanzanians together, but leaders also drew on theories of nationalism which linked language and culture as a way of articulating differences between nations.[85]

In theory, BAKITA and the Institute for Swahili Research simply had different remits. But the collected papers from a seminar held at the University of Dar es Salaam in 1970 also hint at tensions and the ways in which their different histories shaped how they understood themselves and each other. In the seminar papers, the colonial baggage of the East Africa Swahili Committee's successor, the Institute for Swahili Research, looms large.[86] Speakers were critical of the role of European experts in its early years, and the limited extent to which this changed after 1945. There were passionate pleas to return archives such as that of the Universities Mission to Central Africa (UMCA) which had been taken from East Africa and were now only available in foreign repositories.

If the 1970 Seminar revealed some of the tensions between the Institute and BAKITA, while also clearly setting out the Tanzanian Government's vision for Swahili as a decolonizing and democratizing force, it also shows the extent to which arguments for Swahili as national language would also support connections across the region, a positive effect that was emphasized by a much wider range of actors than a focus on political leaders or institutions might suggest,and it is to this theme that we turn next.

People, Networks, and a Language for East Africa

In this final section, we briefly explore the ways in which the idea that Swahili could and should be a lingua franca for East Africa persisted in part because of the individuals and networks for whom, for different reasons, this idea was pow-

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84 TNA 622/UT/C4/2, f. 27, "Visit to Mkoa wa Pwani."
85 Jamhuri ya Muungano wa Tanzania, *Taarifa ya Semina ya Kiswahili Iliyofanywa Tarehe 5–9 Juni, 1970, Chuo Kikuu, Dar es Salaam*, Baraza la Taifa la Lugha ya Kiswahili: Dar es Salaam, 1970.
86 Jamhuri ya Muungano wa Tanzania, *Taarifa ya Semina ya Kiswahili.*

erful. The community of intellectuals and scholars who engaged with the question of Swahili language research and advocated for it as a language of literature and intellectual life in East Africa extended beyond national governments, and often included individuals who were themselves at the margins of national politics. The power of regional circuits of movement, both in terms of attending meetings and longer-term assignments, comes through clearly in the biographies of two Kenyan Swahili language experts, Shihabuddin Chiraghdin and Abdullahi Nassir.

In her biography of her father, Shihabuddin Chiraghdin, Latifa S. Chiraghdin evokes how this community functioned in practice. She describes her father returning from the Peking Scientific Symposium of August 1964, which he had attended as a representative of the East African Academy as a delegate for Swahili and East African History, and immediately travelling to Dar es Salaam for a meeting of the East African Swahili Committee.[87] Chiraghdin was a founding member of the Kenya Swahili Academy and would become chairman of the Swahili panel of the Kenya Institute of Education, but he also continued to play an active part in broader East African networks. He travelled regularly between Mombasa and Nairobi, Dar es Salaam and Kampala, serving variously as external examiner for the University of Dar es Salaam and senior examiner for the East African Examinations Council.[88] When the Tanzanian poet and Swahili scholar Mathias Mnyampala died in 1969, before being able to complete his *Historia ya Kiswahili*, it was Chiraghdin who took over the project and brought it to publication, though Chiraghdin in turn died before the book could be published. The obituary for Chiraghdin published in the journal *Kiswahili* showed both the importance of his role as a "proud and patriotic member" of the Swahili community and how this drove his scholarship, and the way in which his activities inspired "devotion in his former pupils and others all over East Africa with whom he came into contact."[89]

For his part, the Kenyan former politician and member of the Legislative Council, Abdullahi Nassir, who became Oxford University Press's first Swahili editor in 1967, played a key role in developing OUP's Swahili publishing in Tanzania

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87 Latifa S. Chiraghdin, *Life journey of a Swahili scholar*, Asian African Heritage Trust, 2018, 102, 106. The paper which Chiraghdin presented at the Symposium was entitled "The Place of Swahili in the National Consciousness, Unity and Culture of the East African States". In it, as we have seen, he attacked the stifling effect which colonial administrators had had on the language and the view put forward by Europeans that it was a foreign import. Chiraghdin, *Life Journey*, 103.
88 Chiraghdin, *Life Journey*, 144.
89 Caroline Agola, "Shihabuddin Chiraghdin: An Appreciation," *Kiswahili*, Volume 46/2 September 1976, 1–2. Mnyampala died in June 1969, shortly before Tom Mboya was assassinated. The poems page in the 24 July 1969 issue of *Baraza* carried poems written in tribute to both men. "Marehemu Mboya na Mnyampala", *Baraza*, 24 July 1969, 3.

from its Dar es Salaam office.[90] When the Kenya Government declined to send a representative to Board meetings, the Kenyan Swahili scholar Professor Abdulaziz, present by invitation, expressed surprise and insisted "that the Kenya Government and the people of Kenya fully supported the furtherance of Swahili language in all its aspects."[91]

Newspapers which crossed national boundaries also reflected and produced these regional connections. Kelly Askew has described the way in which poets produced a "transnewspaper East African collective of *washairi* (poets)".[92] And as in other areas of intellectual and cultural life that we explore in this book, regional comparisons drove institutional innovation. Recalling the foundation of the Kenya Swahili Academy from the vantage point of 1967, its President Sheikh Hyder El Kindy "recalled that the Academy was formed by a few people who were anxious to see that Swahili was developed, maintained and made progress at the Coast." Referring, perhaps, to the establishment of the *Jumuiya ya kustawisha Kiswahili* (Association for the Advancement of Swahili), which was established in Tanzania in 1963, he added: "The idea was to follow the example of our neighbouring country, Tanzania, which had started an organisation to promote Swahili."[93] While the focus on the future of Swahili in coastal Kenya is unsurprising at a time, in 1963, when fears of the region's political marginalisation ran high, it is also not surprising that the Academy was careful to frame its ambitions both national and regional terms.[94] At the time of the Academy's founding, the *Daily Nation* reported Sheikh Hyder El-Kindy as saying that it would "have

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90 Dawn D'arcy Nell, "Africa," in *History of Oxford University Press*, Volume 3, ed. Wm. Roger Louis (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 747. See Yahya-Othman, *Philosopher Ruler*, 217 on his relationship with Nyerere and OUP's role in the publication of Julius Nyerere's translations of Julius Caesar and The Merchant of Venice into Swahili. In 1967 Abdullahi Nassir was elected to the Kenya Swahili Academy's executive. No author, "Swahili Academy Officials Returned," *Daily Nation*, 1 June 1967, 14.

91 TNA 622/S5/8, f. 34, "Minutes of the 15th meeting of the board of the Institute of Swahili Research held on Tuesday 21st January, 1975," 5.

92 Kelly Askew, "Everyday poetry from Tanzania: Microcosm of the Newspaper Genre," in *African Print Cultures: Newspapers and their Publics in the Twentieth Century*, ed. Derek R. Peterson et. al. (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2016), 207.

93 No author, "Swahili academy officials returned," *Daily Nation*, 1 June 1967, 14. On the *Jumuiya ya Kustawisha Kiswahili* see Wilfred Whiteley, *Swahili: The Rise of a National Language*, 110 and Hashim I. Mbita, "Jumuiya ya Kustawisha Kiswahili," *Kiongozi* 1 October 1964, p. 4 in PP MS. Whiteley Box 4, SL55.

94 James R. Brennan, "Lowering the Sultan's Flag: Sovereignty and Decolonization in Coastal Kenya," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 50, no. 4 (2008): 831–861.

branches throughout Kenya" and that the "promotion of Swahili learning in East Africa is one of its objects".[95]

The journal which had started life as the *Bulletin of the Inter-Territorial Language Committee* itself continued to seek to speak to an East African, Swahili-phone regional public. Its one-time Editor Wilfred Whiteley had set as an objective the creation of "a Journal which will appeal not only to the educational world, nor solely to the academic world, but reach out to many sections of the East African reading public". While this ambition may not have been realised, nevertheless the journal continued to provide a forum of exchange, both within the region and with Swahili scholars around the world. In an interview in 2023 conducted by Zamda Geuza, the Tanzanian Swahili scholar and publisher Professor M. M. Mulokozi described *Kiswahili*, with its long history dating back to 1930, as "probably the oldest academic journal in Tanzania and possibly East Africa."[96]

Conclusion

At the Institute of Swahili Research Board meeting in 1973, a point was raised concerning a "[m]ove to place the Institute under the Inter-University Council/East African Community" which had apparently been reported in the *Daily News*, Tanzania's government-owned national English-language newspaper.[97] This report serves as a reminder of the Institute's origins and its own sense of its mission in the 1960s and early 1970s – a regional mission. This aspect can be lost when we focus on the ways in which Swahili became a Tanzanian national project in the years after independence. The use of Swahili as an instrument of nation-making was always accompanied by its use as an instrument of region-making. But as we have seen, this story also reaches beyond politics and institutions, through the individuals whose political and intellectual projects we have explored here.

From George A. Mhina to Shihabuddin Chiraghdin, thinkers introduced in this chapter recognised and insisted that language was central to claims about culture and history. It would be Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o who articulated most clearly and most famously the case for using African languages, rather than English, as a medium for cultural and intellectual production, but many of his contemporaries

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95 No author, "The accent is on Swahili," *Daily Nation*, 19 October 1963.

96 Zamda Geuza, "Interview with Professor M.M. Mulokozi: Writing and Publishing in Post-Independence Tanzania," in *Print, Press and Publishing in Tanzania*, eds. Zamda R. Geuza, George Roberts and Emma Hunter, forthcoming.

97 TNA C9/5, f. 6, "Minutes of the Tenth meeting of the board of the institute of Swahili research held in the Council Chamber on 1st September 1973," 6.

across East Africa were grappling with similar questions.[98] For those advocating for the growth of Swahili as a regional lingua franca, language was never merely a neutral pragmatic medium of communication or education. The promotion of Swahili was never a straight-forwardly anti-colonial project, however. As this chapter has explained, the colonial foundations of the Institute of Swahili Research were one reason why its legitimacy across the region waned as the 1960s progressed.

In a book concerned with how ideas and practices of regionalism were expressed on the page, the project of a regional language is clearly central. And yet, many of the regional publications introduced in other chapters used English, either in whole or in part, with several important exceptions. As well as telling the story of Swahili in its own right, this chapter gives one perspective on why this was the case. There was certainly recognition of the potential for Swahili as a powerful, regional lingua franca. But the language project – like other initiatives and institutions we explore – needed funding and broad political backing. Contributions from national governments for regional projects were increasingly difficult to secure as the political project of East African federation became unattainable. This was especially true in the case of Swahili, given the strength of opposition coming from some political contingents of Kenya and Uganda in particular. Again, this meant the search for external funds, which carried with them the connotations of precisely the image that the Institute of Swahili Research was trying to shake of: that of a colonial institution out of step with the politics of independence.

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98 Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o, *Decolonizing the Mind: The Politics of Language in African Literature* (London: James Currey, 1986).

Chapter 6
Infrastructures of Book Publishing in East Africa

In 1967, the East African Institute of Social and Cultural Affairs (EAISCA) hosted a roundtable on East African book publishing, with a live audience in Nairobi.[1] Z. Okong'o, who worked in the recording studio of the EAISCA, chaired a discussion between three men who represented different parts of the regional publishing sector: John Nottingham, director of the East African Publishing House (EAPH), a subsidiary of the EAISCA itself; Noah Sempira, director of the East African Literature Bureau, the government-subsidised publisher of the nascent East African Community (albeit with a longer history); and Chris Strong, representing Longmans Kenya, a subsidiary of the British multinational firm.

All three had long experience in the world of East African publishing. Yet it is telling that their expectations of what the coming decade would look like differed substantially. Nottingham was optimistic: he anticipated that foreign, commercial publishers (like Longmans) would become redundant in the face of a growth in the number of East African publishers – he included EAPH in this category despite not being East African himself. There would be twenty such publishers in a decade's time, Nottingham imagined. In contrast, the Longmans' representative, Strong, saw no conflict: he claimed that foreign companies would find a sustainable niche alongside new publishers, in healthy competition with local publishers. Sempira, a Ugandan and the only Black panel member, was less optimistic: such was the monopoly of foreign companies in East African publishing, he argued, that only with heavy state subsidies would indigenous publishing even *exist* by the late 1970s.

This chapter seeks to make sense of the dynamics that made the future of East African publishing look so unpredictable in 1967, through a particular focus on the EAPH. We situate East African publishing against a colonial history of state, missionary and commercial initiatives, and within the landscape of Cold War competition and finance. We are interested not only in the relationship between foreign and indigenous, or external and internal, but especially in how East African regional initiatives met the national frameworks of independent Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania in the 1960s and 1970s. All three publishers represented at the roundtable operated on an explicitly regional basis, but it was perhaps no coincidence that the discussion took place in Nairobi. In this chapter as elsewhere, regionalism proved a way to address the challenges of ongoing colo-

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1 "Copyright and All That: A Roundtable Discussion", *East Africa Journal* 4, no. 6 (1967), 25–30.

nial influence in the publishing sector. By focusing of the practical questions of production and distribution, however, we can see that it was far from a simple or sustainable solution.

Scholars of African literature during the Cold War have made visible some of the political and economic structures that dictated the forms that the publishing industry took. Much of the defining work in this field questioned the extent to which African writers, editors and publishers knew about and were moulded by the Cold War underpinnings of the funding they received.[2] It is increasingly apparent, however, that this was not simply a sliding scale from control to freedom. Which styles of writing reached publication, which authors were able to make a living, and which texts solidified their reputation as part of a literary canon were all contingent upon processes of gatekeeping, self-censorship and personal relationships.[3] Certainly Cold War competition was an important factor in these processes, but a broader range of historical approaches has demonstrated other factors at play, notably the continuing influence of (British) colonial institutions and commercial interests on the continent.[4] Meanwhile, the accounts of leading figures in different national publishing traditions reveal the regional specificities of this wider Cold War and post-colonial story, especially in terms of changes in government and political conflicts at the national and regional level, as well as the attempts of individuals to defy these constraining events and structures.

This chapter brings these various perspectives together by thinking through East Africa as a region and emphasising the specific, unequal relationships that regional projects had with their commercial and Cold War backers. Our subject of enquiry here, then, is not the body of texts written and published in East Africa but rather the ecologies that underpinned them: the actors, institutions and infrastructures of publishing.[5] In particular, we bring to light factors that limited efforts to remake the publishing industry for an independent East Africa.

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2 Frances Stonor Saunders, *Who Paid the Piper?: The CIA and the Cultural Cold War* (London: Granta Books, 1999).

3 Caroline Davis, *African Literature and the CIA: Networks of Authorship and Publishing* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2020); Francesca Orsini, Neelam Srivastava, and Laetitia Zecchini, *The Form of Ideology and the Ideology of Form: Cold War, Decolonization and Third World Print Cultures* (Open Book Publishers, 2022); Monica Popescu, *At Penpoint: African Literatures, Postcolonial Studies, and the Cold War* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2020).

4 Caroline Ritter, *Imperial Encore: The Cultural Project of the Late British Empire* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2021).

5 On print ecologies, see Christopher E. W. Ouma and Madhu Krishnan, "Small Magazines in Africa: Ecologies and Genealogies," *Social Dynamics* 47, no. 2 (2021): 193–209.

The history of East African publishing, and that of EAPH in particular, is a revealing lens through which to examine the period because its chronology suggests a peak that extends beyond that of some of the other themes discussed in this book. EAPH was in ascendency in the second half of the 1960s and continued to thrive in the first half of the 1970s, after the University of East Africa ceased to be, for example. East African poet Taban Lo Liyong spoke of the region's "literary barrenness" in 1965, but this image would not have chimed with actors in the publishing industry five or even ten years later.[6] During the 1970s, East Africa was regarded as the leading region on the continent in terms of African-language publishing.[7] Publisher Henry Chakava remembered the 1970s in Kenya as the "fat years" of Kenyan publishing, while Walter Bgoya recalled that the print run for a good novel in Tanzania in 1977 – 10,000 – could not have been justified in the years before or after.[8] In the era of the bestseller, the proliferation of popular crime thrillers and romance magazines ensured financial security for some publishing houses. Charles Mangua's *Son of a Woman* (EAPH, 1971) – a thriller combing sex, urban scandal, crime and redemption – went through six reprints between 1972 and 1987.[9] Heinemann created the *Spear Series* of pacy urban crime thrillers to compete with the buoyant market for American pulp fiction in the 1970s.[10] The hugely popular *Sugar Daddy's Lover* (1975) by Rosemarie Owino "offered advice and solutions" to young urban Kenyans navigating issues of gender and romance in the late 1970s.[11]

Yet, by the end of the 1970s, the situation looked very different: the impact of worsening relations between the three governments of the region, and the responses of foreign donors, began to look more intractable for the publishing industry. The chronologies of the "golden era" of East African publishing thus sug-

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6 Tabon [Taban] Lo Liyong "Can we correct literary barrenness in East Africa?" *East Africa Journal* 2, no. 8 (1965), 5–13.

7 S. I. A. Kotei, *The Book Today in Africa* (Paris: UNESCO, 1981), 132.

8 Henry Chakava, *Publishing in Africa: One Man's Perspective,* (Chestnut Hill, MA; Bellagio Publishing Network, 1996), 11; Walter Bgoya, *Books and Reading in Tanzania* (Paris: Unesco, 1986), 10; Maria Suriano, "Dreams and Constraints of an African Publisher: Walter Bgoya, Tanzania Publishing House and Mkuki Na Nyota, 1972–2020," *Africa* 91, no. 4 (2021): 581.

9 Kathleen Greenfield, "Self and Nation in Kenya: Charles Mangua's 'Son of Woman.'" *The Journal of Modern African Studies* 33, no. 4 (1995): 685–698.

10 Raoul Granqvist, "Storylines, Spellbinders and Heartbeats," in *Readings in African Popular Fiction,* ed. Stephanie Newell (Oxford: James Currey, 2002), 86.

11 Catherine Muhomah, "Romancing the Sugar Daddy in Rosemarie Owino's *Sugar Daddy's Lover,*" *Social Dynamics* 30, no. 2 (2004): 154–164.

gest the extent to which the global economic crises of the 1970s played out only in combination with distinctly regional and local concerns.

The EALB and The World of Publishing before EAPH

Of the three bodies represented at the 1967 roundtable, EAPH was the relative newcomer, formed two years previously in 1965. It was launched into a world shaped by the colonial history of the publishing sector, characterised by significant cooperation between colonial state, mission and business interests. British commercial publishers – competing among themselves in a scramble for East African consumers – had established a foothold in colonial Kenya over the previous decades. The Colonial Office in London acted as a gatekeeper for these publishers, who then supplied the colonial education system with teaching resources, especially English-language course books, which were stocked in missionary bookshops.[12] With Kenyan independence in 1963, companies including Longmans, Heinemann and Oxford University Press saw the growing potential of the East African market, notably in textbooks, and looked to launch sister companies or subsidiaries in the newly independent state in the mid-1960s (like Longmans Kenya), with the intention of exporting to, and sometimes printing in, Uganda and Tanzania too – thus profiting from regional customs agreements.[13] During the late 1960s, their output remained overwhelmingly English, less out of ideological conviction than because they deemed books in African languages to be unprofitable and because their mainly expatriate workforce lacked the skills to edit work in other languages.[14]

Like the commercial companies, Sempira's EALB had foundations in a colonial publishing system in which Christian missionaries and the state both played important roles. On the recommendations of Elspeth Huxley's report, which we discussed in Chapter two, the EALB was formed in 1948, under the auspices of the East Africa High Commission and largely financed from the Colonial Development and Welfare Fund. Again, educational publishing was at its core. EALB was a product of the postwar international atmosphere that placed emphasis on education (especially mass literacy) as a means to justify the continuation of colonial rule by demonstrating to international bodies like the UN investment in the socio-economic development of colonial territories. Headquarters in Nairobi were to

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12 Ritter, *Imperial Encore*, 62.

13 Henry Chakava, *Books and Reading in Kenya* (Paris: UNESCO, 1983), 8–9.

14 There were exceptions, like Nyerere's Swahili translation of Shakespeare's Julius Ceasar, published by OUP. See Ritter, *Imperial Encore*, 67–70.

work with branches in Kampala and Dar es Salaam, and each shared a broad remit under five sections: textbooks; libraries; periodicals; general literature and African authorship; publishing and distribution.[15] The man approached to act as director was Charles Granston Richards who we met in Chapter two when he was working as Literary Secretary of the Church Missionary Society and responsible for its publishing arm, Ndia Kuu, which published short ethnographic surveys in Kenya during the 1940s, with adult literacy programmes in mind.[16] In keeping with the importance attached by the late colonial state to bringing East African representation into key committees, the three territorial governments were instructed that of the three representatives which each government was permitted to nominate, one should be African. For Tanganyika, it was the poet Shaaban Robert who was appointed.[17]

As Morgan Robinson has argued, the EALB under the colonial state tended to prescribe needs as much as responding to demand.[18] It was explicitly not a commercial publisher. With money tight in the late 1950s, the Director's response to a suggestion that it produce more "profitable" titles was that this would be "against the terms of reference for the Bureau which were that it should never compete with the publishing and bookselling trades".[19] The EALB's production of periodicals for general readers, in African languages, distinguished it from the bulk of publishing ventures solely focused on educational and religious material.[20] This was part of the colonial push for vernacular reading material discussed earlier. Its Swahili-language magazine *Tazama* (which had a Luganda-language sister publication, *Tunuulira*) was initially intended to provide material for rural communities to maintain literacy skills after leaving school.

There was sometimes tension between this educational ideal and reader preferences, however. In 1953, EALB had to confront the fact that *Tazama* readers were more interested in reading material that was "frankly political in charac-

15 C.S. Sabiti, "The work of the East African Literature Bureau", *East African Library Association Bulletin* 13 (July 1972), 144–152; Ritter, *Imperial Encore*, 54–62.

16 Chakava, *Publishing in Africa*, 7; Ritter, *Imperial Encore*, 50–51; Morgan J. Robinson, *A Language for the World: The Standardization of Swahili* (Ohio University Press, 2022), 129. Shiraz Durrani notes that 'In 1946–47 Ndia Kuu Press produced a total of 350,000 books in eight different languages', see Shiraz Durrani, *Never Be Silent: Publishing & Imperialism in Kenya, 1884–1963* (London: Vita Books, 2006), 61.

17 Archives of the East African Community, Dodoma [hereafter EAC] Acc. 39/1002, f. 68A, C. B. A. Darling, 'The East African Literature Bureau Advisory Council: Notice of those appointed'.

18 Robinson, *A Language for the World,* Chapter five.

19 EAC Acc. 39/1006, f. 55. East African Literature Bureau, "Minutes of Meeting of the Advisory Council, 1 December 1958," 6.

20 Kotei, *The Book in Africa*, 132.

ter". The magazine quickly shifted its focus to a readership that EALB described as "the sophisticated urban African".[21] By 1955, much of its circulation of 6500 was concentrated in coastal towns and cities and it resembled a lifestyle magazine – a "home" magazine as its (all white) editorial board described it.[22] *Tazama* and *Tunuulira* featured beauty competitions, comic strips and serialised detective stories such as "Rita" (who was soon battling communists in the Indian Ocean, despite initial fears that the stories could "glamorise" crime).[23] Results of the rebranding were mixed: there was a large and interested readership, despite European employers and school headteachers cancelling their orders, and commercial newspapers resenting the new competition. But there were also challenges: *Tazama* and *Tunuulira* struggled to reach readers outside of urban centres, due in part to difficulties in building a network of distributors and agents. The East African Standard took over "financial responsibility for production and distribution" of *Tazama* on 1 January 1956, and of *Tunuulira* on 28 February 1958.[24]

The question of EALB's role under the newly elected East African governments of the 1960s was a matter of debate. In 1964, questions were raised about it in the Central Legislative Assembly of the East African Common Services Organisation. What role could a colonial institution which had supplied literature to Kenya's detention camps in the 1950s possibly have in an independent state? What steps would be needed to turn it into an organisation which could truly "provide an outlet for the writings of promising young African writers"?[25]

But change was underway. That same year, in 1964, Noah L. M. Sempira, previously employed by the Anglican Uganda Bookshop Press, took over from Richards as the first African director, maintaining the organisation's links with the Christian press. The EALB's activities expanded as it was transferred to the East African Common Services Organisation, and then to the East African Community in 1967.

The EALB was bolstered by the optimism of the early 1960s. Its 1961 novel competition received just 23 entries in English, 20 in Swahili and 5 in Luganda, the majority not considered suitable for publication. But soon after, in a twelve

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21 East Africa High Commission, *East African Literature Bureau Annual Report 1953* (Nairobi, 1954), 17.

22 EAC Acc. 39/1304, f. 82. Minutes of the Meeting of the Joint Editorial and Management Board of Tazama and Tunuulira, 2 March 1956.

23 EAC Acc. 39/1304, f. 83. Minutes of the Meeting of the Joint Editorial and Management Board of Tazama and Tunuulira, 29 June 1956.

24 East Africa High Commission, *East African Literature Bureau Annual Report 1955–56* (Nairobi, 1956), 6; East Africa High Commission, *Annual Report* (1957–58), 9.

25 East African Common Services Organization, *Proceedings of the Central Legislative Assembly Debates* (1964), 370.

month period during 1962–63, EALB published a record ninety-one books. It continued to produce around fifty new titles annually in at least a dozen languages[26] The EALB saw its role as actively contributing to the wider intellectual life of the region. In the introduction to his historical biography of the nineteenth-century Nyamwezi leader Mirambo, John Kabeya gave a special thanks to Juma Ali of the East African Literature Bureau in Dar es Salaam for the encouragement and support which had brought the book to fruition. Juma Ali, Kabeya wrote, had told him that "the Government wanted its citizens to write about African heroes like Mirambo in order to preserve the traditions of our elders", and that his institute would be willing to "publish books of this sort".[27]

The EALB's growing emphasis on African authorship and vernacular publishing in the 1960s was accompanied by an emphasis on quality and scholarly appeal. Its 1968–69 report referred to the "Johari za Kiswahili Series", published in English and Swahili, which the EALB saw as "beginnings of criticisms in Swahili literature, a step towards a national literature."[28] The 1970 report noted a "decisive shift from small saddle-stitched literacy readers to hardcased volumes of scholarly materials that command international attention."[29] It also referred to the Bureau's expansion into the field of academic "journals and literary magazines for local and overseas markets", including *East African Research and Development Journal*, biannually; *The African Journal of Tropical Hydrobiology and Fisheries*, biannually; *Busara*, the literary magazine of Nairobi University, quarterly; and *Dhana*, the literary counterpart at Makerere University, biannually.[30] They would also be undertaking translations into Swahili of "internationally famous works such as 'False Start in Africa', 'The Wretched of the Earth', and Russian, French, English and American Classics", with the aim to "not only assist the development of Swahili", but also to "introduce local readers into the highly interesting and enlightening sphere of world literature."[31] The approach was one of "rapid expansion", with the aim of benefiting the "wananchi [citizens] the Bureau was established to serve".[32]

26 Kotei, *The Book Today*, 132.

27 John B. Kabeya, *Mtemi Mirambo: Mtawala shujaa ya Kinyamwezi* (Kampala: East African Literature Bureau, 1966), vi. An English translation was published a decade later.

28 Kenya National Archives, Nairobi (hereafter KNA), RW/5/2, f. 29. East African Community Annual Report 1968/69, 1.

29 East African Community Annual Report 1970, 1.

30 East African Community Annual Report 1970, 2.

31 East African Community Annual Report 1970, 3–4.

32 East African Community Annual Report 1970, 3.

The EALB's position was recognised internationally. Speaking at a conference on Publishing and Book Development held at the University of Ife in 1973, S. I. A. Kotei, Senior Lecturer in the Department of Library Studies at the University of Ghana, described the EALB as "the most successful vernacular literature publishing house in Africa, in both the economic and literary sense". This, Kotei suggested, was a consequence of Swahili having "become the lingua franca of East, and certain parts of Central Africa".[33] The low uptake for the 1961 novel competition was unimaginable by the late 1960s, when writing workshops, advanced royalties and outreach into the three campuses of the University of East Africa saw "Manuscripts keep pouring in".[34]

The EALB's emphasis on distribution also grew during the 1960s. Richards had described the organisation's work in 1962 as "half a very busy publishing concern[,] half a lending library service", noting the lack of a bookselling trade as an obstacle to the bureau's work.[35] EALB's library services, which built on local initiatives and included a successful postage system, were transferred to national library services after independence.[36] In their place, EALB launched a Mobile Book Distribution Scheme for lending and selling books to rural areas. Three vans, in Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania, each visited over twenty towns and villages on regular tours.[37] The vans, provided by the Swedish government, through UNESCO, stocked a range of publications, not limited to those of the EALB itself, as the Bureau's Senior Book Production Officer emphasised.[38] Apparently unique on the African continent, these bookshop vans catered to readers outside of major urban centres.[39] The vans were aimed in particular at new adult readers, who thus had access to a shared corpus of reading material, either in translation into particular vernaculars or in a lingua franca such as Swahili, Luganda or English.

33 S. I. A. Kotei, "Some Cultural and Social Factors of Book Reading and Publishing in Africa," in *Publishing in Africa in the Seventies: Proceedings of an Internat. Conference on Publishing and Book Development, Held at the Univ. of Ife, Ile-Ife, Nigeria, 16–20 Dec. 1973,* ed. Edwina Oluwasanmi (Ile-Ife: Univ. of Ife Press, 1975), 196.

34 Sabiti, "The work of the East African Literature Bureau"; KNA RW 5/2, f. 29. East African Community Annual Report 1968/69, 1.

35 SOAS, C. G. Richard Papers. Richards, "Lecture for Makerere College Faculty of Education," 29 November 1962.

36 On EALB library services before independence, see Robinson, *A Language for the World*, chapter 6.

37 "Library Books by Post Gain Popularity in Uganda", *Uganda Argus*, 9 January 1956, 3.

38 Sabiti, "The Work of the East African Literature Bureau," 151.

39 Kotei, *The Book Today in Africa*, 191.

Between 1965 and 1967, around 35 000 books were sold through this scheme. Among the most popular books (by sales) in Kenya and Uganda, most were in English, including various English dictionaries and course books, an EALB publication *Know yourself: A guide for adolescent girls* (popular in both countries), *About marriage* and *Venereal diseases*, as well as the Luganda novel *Zinunula omunaku* by E. K. N. Kawere and a Runyankore translation of the bible. The most popular books in Tanzania were all in Swahili, including *Demokrasi katika Africa (Democracy in Africa), Ndoa na talaka (Marriage and divorce)* and Shaaban Robert's novel *Kusadikika.*[40] The significance of the book vans for literate adults can be imagined by way of the thousands who paid for these books from slim salaries – the scheme reported better sales at the beginning of the month, when more cash was available. While the project relied on the three-year funding from UNESCO, efforts to replace the vans with small bookshops in each of the towns it visited saw some success.[41]

The flourishing of the EALB in the 1960s benefitted from the long-standing readerships sustained by countless other smaller ventures in vernacular publishing, many of which did not received comparable official authorisation. In 1952, for example, a group in north-central Uganda formed the Lango Literature Bureau and sought recognition from the colonial governor.[42] The group envisaged a multilingual project centred around the Lango language (part of the Luo group of languages) with the intention to "encourage the printings and publications of books in Lango district [. . .] translate and publish books from other languages to Lango [and] write and publish books in Lango language". They had support from missionaries in the district but anticipated resistance from "the enemies of our language or even the enemies of the Lango people themselves". To bolster the case for government recognition, the group cited British linguists who were advocating literacy skills in the mother tongue prior to learning to read and write in English.[43] Lango Literature Bureau was characteristic of the publishing scene in the late colonial period, driven by the demand for educational materials in lan-

40 UNESCO, "A report on the mobile distribution scheme, October 1966 – June 1967", Catalog Number 0000160065, accessed 12 February 2021, https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000160065?posInSet=179&queryId=820d0da7-d55d-4ad3-83a2-5d51767ed8ad.

41 Ibid. See also Kotei, *The Book Today in Africa*; Sabiti, "The work of the East African Literature Bureau".

42 Uganda National Records Centre and Archives (hereafter UNRCA), CSO 13461, no folio. Letter from Lango Literature Bureau to Governor, 14 January 1953.

43 Ibid.

guages other than English. This was not only a missionary-led enterprise: at Makerere, students organised a Vernacular Literature Society in the same period.[44]

Religious publishing, meanwhile, branching from its missionary roots, took on new forms after independence. In the mid-1960s, the Kenya-based Christian periodical *Target* and its Swahili equivalent *Lengo*, which circulated across the region, advertised the Church Missionary Society (CMS) bookshop in Nairobi alongside publications of the newly formed All Africa Council of Churches. From the late 1960s, the ecumenical movement in the Eastern Africa region (extending to Zambia and Malawi in particular) emphasised that a coherent communication and publication strategy was vital to its survival.[45] Charles Granston Richards, who had left his role as Director of EALB to build up the East Africa operations of Oxford University Press, moved again in 1965 to become Director of a new Christian Literature Fund, established by the World Council of Churches to support the development of "a thriving, well-co-ordinated indigenous Christian literature activity of high quality, largely self-sustaining, and capable of spontaneous growth".[46]

The EAPH was thus formed in a moment when the publishing field was expanding rapidly. The multiplicity of publishing and distribution ventures was, in the late 1960s and first years of the 1970s, characteristic of this vibrant publishing scene, and not always a threat to it. Books were often written, published, printed and distributed by a combination of the EALB, EAPH, commercial publishers and government departments.[47] An overlapping group of writers, editors and publishers worked across these organisations: Y. N. Okal, for example, worked as a salesman for Longmans before setting up his own Equatorial Publishers in 1965; Abdillahi Nassir from Mombasa was the Swahili editor for the Oxford University Press branch in Nairobi during the 1960s and then left to start an independent publishing company.[48]

At times, the extent of cooperation between commercial and state operations seemed to favour the expansion of foreign business interests, however: Chakava

44 Latifa S. Chiraghdin, *Life Journey of a Swahili Scholar* (Nairobi: Asian African Heritage Trust, 2018), 48.

45 E. C. Makunike, *Christian Press in Africa: Voice of Human Concern* (Lusaka: Multimedia Publications, 1973).

46 SOAS, C.G. Richards collection, Box 3. Extract from Ecumenical Press Service release cited in Letter from Elizabeth and Charles Richards to friends, Christmas Day 1964.

47 Sabiti, "The Work of the East African Literature Bureau," 147.

48 On Okal, John Ndegwa, "History and Development of Printing and Publishing in Kenya", *East African Library Association Bulletin* 14, (Sept 1974): 41–52; Nassir obituary online, accessed 26 February 2025, https://en.abna24.com/news//sheikh-abdillahi-has-left-behind-thriving-shia-community-in-kenya-abdul-qadir-nasir_1220633.html.

contended that the EALB, under Richards' directorship, undermined its own work by commissioning foreign publishers like Oxford University Press to publish (and profit from) teaching material that the EALB had developed in cooperation with government education departments.[49] This was a result of EALB's explicitly non-commercial principles: it took on projects it deemed worthwhile for reasons other than profit, and passed these by prior arrangement to commercial publishers who otherwise may never have considered publication viable.[50] The policy ensured that EALB's operations functioned, but it looked increasingly problematic when foreign commercial publishers began to be seen as the source of the publishing sector's challenges.[51]

Nevertheless, rivalry between publishers sometimes appeared to boost the sector. In early 1970s Dar es Salaam, for example, publishers were competing for the manuscripts of academics at the university: EALB staff reported that Oxford University Press had a monopoly on texts coming out of the Geography department, while EAPH had a monopoly in History and Social Science.[52] In short, the effects of the relationship between private (foreign) firms, state (national and regional) subsidies, and the central role of religious institutions were not obvious: it was no wonder that Nottingham, Sempira and Strong imagined different trajectories for the sector.

Who Pays for Books?

In 1966, shortly after its founding, Bethwell Ogot described EAPH as "the first truly indigenous publishing company in East Africa".[53] Looking back, however, he would later describe the tug of war over decision-making, much of which stemmed from a lack of clarity about the role of the various groups, individuals and funds involved in its founding.[54] Behind Ogot's descriptor of "indigenous", which followed UNESCO in distinguishing between "foreign" and "indigenous"

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49 Chakava, *Books and Reading*, 11. Chakava also cites J. W. Chege on this position.

50 Robinson, *A Language for the World*, 131.

51 Ritter, *Imperial Encore*, 54–62, 67.

52 KNA RW/1/1, f. 1 and 3, N.G. Ngulukulu (EALB), Report on visit to Dar es Salaam branch, 27 January – 1 February 1970.

53 Hoover Institute Archives (hereafter HIA), RG/TM, Newspaper cutting quoting Ogot, from *Daily Nation*, 23 February 1966.

54 Bethwell Ogot, *My Footprints on the Sands of Time: An Autobiography* (Victoria: Trafford, 2003) 212–25. See also the debate, citing Ogot, in Hilary Ouma, "Indigenous Publishers Need Government Aid," *Weekly Review*, 18 August 1975, 25.

publishing, was a host of complex relationships with individuals and organisations beyond East Africa.[55] Cold War flows of finances played a prominent role.

EAPH opened in 1965 as a joint venture with British publisher André Deutsch, who had attended the 1962 Makerere Writers Conference in search of commercial opportunities, and the Lagos-based African Universities Press.[56] EAISCA soon bought out its foreign partners, who wanted more control over publication choices than the EAISCA wanted to give.[57] It was thus locally owned by 1966, which is not to say that either its staff or funding at the time came solely from East Africa.[58] Nottingham's own definition of an "indigenous" publisher was "a firm the majority of whose ownership, production, personnel and profits are African".[59] Ogot, alongside his duties at the EAISCA, the *East Africa Journal* and his full-time university post, was made chairman of the EAPH. He, in turn, appointed as his publishing director John Nottingham, an ex-colonial official who had made his life in independent Kenya as a teacher, and who Ogot described as a "radical".[60] Nottingham was highly critical of the role of commercial publishers in the region and saw EAPH as a challenge to their monopoly, as his roundtable contribution suggested. Writing shortly after the formation of EAPH in 1966, he objected to the claims that British multinationals could serve East African needs:

> You do not create a local industry merely by a wave of the expatriate wand appointing one or two Africans to a 'board' that hardly ever meets or as junior sales representatives, or by tacking on the country's name in brackets to the title of your firm – these are mere business men's gimmicks and should no longer deceive us.[61]

These opinions saw British publishers in Nairobi view him as a "black sheep" who was "letting the side down".[62]

The initial injection of capital for EAPH came primarily from the West German Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung (FES) and the US foundation Peace with Freedom

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55 See e.g. UNESCO, *Book Development in Africa: Problems and Perspectives* (UNESCO: Paris,1969), online at https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000059548?posInSet=272&queryId=820d0da7-d55d-4ad3-83a2-5d51767ed8ad [accessed 22 January 2020]; Oluwasanmi, *Publishing in Africa in the Seventies.*

56 HIA RG/TM, Agreement signed on 26 February by Deutsch, Nottingham, Ogot and Garver.

57 John Nottingham, "Establishing an African Publishing Industry: A Study in Decolonization," *African Affairs* 68, no. 271 (1969): 140.

58 HIA RG/TM, Gabor, "East African Publishing House," February 1966.

59 Nottingham, "Establishing an African Publishing Industry," 143.

60 Ogot, *My Footprints,* 213.

61 John Nottingham, "The Book Trade in East Africa," *East Africa Journal* 2, no. 9 (1966), 25–29; quote at 27.

62 Nottingham, in "Copyright and All That".

(PWF). As we saw in Chapter two, funding for a publishing house was part of the larger agreement for the formation of EAISCA, first set out when George Githii (close assistant to Jomo Kenyatta and soon to become Editor in Chief at *The Nation*) met representatives of FES and PWF during a 1963 trip to Germany.[63] Both FES and PWF were associated with a social-democratic camp within the Cold War West, broadly supportive of state intervention and economic redistribution, but equally as concerned about communism as their more right-wing compatriots. Founded in 1925, FES was Germany's first "party-affiliated foundation", associated with, but independent from, the German Social Democratic Party, which itself was an active member of the Socialist International, an alliance of social-democratic parties in the "free world", including the British Labour Party and Israeli Mapai. PWF's history was more closely tied to the Cold War: it was the successor of the anti-communist International Features Service, run by Robert Gabor, exiled from his native Hungary, where he had opposed Soviet occupation, just as he had Nazi occupation before it.

CIA money flowed into Peace with Freedom through various proxies.[64] This was the subject of rumour in Kenya long before it was established in the US press in 1969, but there were mixed feelings about whether and why the origin of the funding mattered. East Africans running the EAISCA were alert to the risks of accepting foreign funding but equally convinced that it need not define their activities, as long as decision-making power remained with the group of East African board members whose visions were at the core of EAISCA's foundation.

The idea that EAPH could be an "indigenous" publisher at the same time as receiving indirect CIA funding must be understood in the context of a publishing sector where Cold War power play was openly acknowledged. For example, between 1964 and 1979, the Foreign Languages Press in Peking published over a hundred books and pamphlets in Swahili.[65] A significant proportion were the speeches and writings of Mao Zedong, or celebratory accounts of the Chinese Communist Party and its global significance, such as *Vipi China imefaulu kujitosheleza kwa nafaka? [How did China achieve self-sufficiency in grain?]* (1977) and *Watu wa Vietnam watefanikiwa! [The people of Vietnam will succeed!]* (1966). Many of the earliest publications, however, were fiction aimed at children and new literates. These included an extract from Gao Yubao's famous account of life

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63 HIA TM/51/6, Githii & Hughes, "Memorandum for the Hon T.J. Mboya on the Proposed East African Institute of Social and Cultural Affairs," no date but July/August 1963.

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

65 The (possibly incomplete) range of titles can be found by searching "Uchapaji wa lugha za kigeni" on Worldcat.org.

under Japanese occupation, published as *Nilitaka kwenda schule [I wanted to go to school]* in 1964, *Kilitokea katika shamba la minazi [It happened on a coconut farm]* in 1965, and a 1964 prize-winning story by Kuo Hsu about Chinese and Korean orphans who resisted Japanese occupation, *Watoto wakurugenzi wa askari Mkuu Yang [Commander Yang's young pioneers].* Although the circulation of these books and their unnamed translators is difficult to trace, Walter Bgoya recalls that there was ready demand for them, because few other publishers were producing children's books in Swahili.[66] Likely they were available to browse at the Tanganyika Bookshop in Dar es Salaam, run by a Chinese agent Ho Lin.[67] That these publications were concentrated in the late 1960s and 1970s is not simply a story of Cold War propaganda. It also supports the picture of a growing and thriving Swahili-language book culture – the existence of the lively market for novels that Bgoya described in the 1970s.

While newly opened foreign embassies in East Africa's capitals increasingly looked to gift books to schools and libraries, East African governments faced a dilemma. Rapid, affordable acquisition of books, especially in languages other than English, was necessary to support literacy and education targets, but allowing embassies to supply schools directly opened up the education system to considerable outside influence at a time when emphasis was being placed on curricula relevant to East African realities. Governments arrived at different systems of vetting educational books: in Kenya in 1966, the Ministry of Education insisted that this system could be further tightened, regardless of the "huge stocks of books [. . .] piling up at the American Embassy". As one minister reflected: "Though many headmasters will accept these books with the best intentions, it would not be safe nor educationally sound for a local school to rely on a library where stock is mainly foreign and possibly from one generous donor".[68]

The Ministry was given the responsibility of deciding which books were suitable, but sometimes schools and individuals requested books directly from embassies and thus expected to receive them – or would discover that they had been withheld by the government. In 1967, for example, the Soviet embassy sent 24 boxes of books that had apparently been requested by schools to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, who deemed them unsuitable for use but nevertheless passed

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66 Bgoya, *Books and reading*, 44; Yu Xiang, "Socialist Dreams in Print: Chinese Swahili-Language Publications in the Time of the Cultural Revolution," in *Print, Press and Publishing in Tanzania*, eds. Zamda R. Geuza, George Roberts and Emma Hunter, forthcoming.

67 George Roberts, *Revolutionary State-Making in Dar Es Salaam: African Liberation and the Global Cold War, 1961–1974* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2021), 54, 178.

68 KNA, AHC/9/1, C.G. Maina (Education) to Permanent Secretaries, Ministry of Home Affairs and Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, 7 November 1966.

them onto the Ministry of Education as agreed, noting the potential embarrassment if schools realised that gifts made directly to them were being vetted by government.[69] The list comprised educational books in Swahili and English, including *Utotoni na Ujanani mwa Lenin* [*Lenin's childhood and youth*] and *Struggle for Socialism in the World*.[70] Needless to say, the criteria for vetting books differed across the 1960s and 70s, and from state to state. *The Origins and Development of World Socialism*, which British intelligence suspected to have been funded by East Germany, was distributed to all secondary schools by the Tanzanian National Ministry of Education in 1971.[71] In early 1972, the Ugandan Ministry of Education publicly thanked the Soviet Ambassador for a donation of 582 books and 1499 magazines, mainly of an educational character.[72]

Books were provided to other institutions too. The United Kingdom's anti-communist Information Research Department (IRD) put considerable effort into getting books into circulation – often covertly – which offered a different perspective to that contained in books supplied by China or the USSR. In 1970, for example, books were sent to the Tanzanian National Assembly, TANU Headquarters, Kivukoni College and NUTA, the National Union of Tanganyika Workers, among other institutions. Many of those requested, from a carefully curated list, focused on parliaments, democracy and democratic socialism.[73] In other cases, books were sent directly to libraries with compliments from the publishers.[74] In contrast to books supplied from the Eastern bloc, the IRD only supplied books in English.[75]

Within a year of its founding, the EAPH had made a significant impact on the local publishing scene, publishing a diverse range of books, from academic his-

69 KNA, AHC/9/1, L.N. Mwangi (Foreign Affairs) to Ministry of Education, 10 May 1967.

70 KNA, AHC/9/1, List of books from Soviet Embassy, attached to L.N. Mwangi (Foreign Affairs) to Ministry of Education, 10 May 1967.

71 National Archives of the United Kingdon (hereafter UKNA), FCO 168/4516, f. 3, 1 July 1971, Minute by D. N. Biggin.

72 "Books gift from Russia", *Uganda Argus*, 29 January 1972, 5.

73 See correspondence in UKNA FCO 95/806.

74 UKNA FCO 168/3752, e.g. note from D. E. Tack to Miss Virtue, "Books for the Tanzania University Library," 3 March 1969, requesting books to be sent "by open letter post, as if from the London publishers *The Bodley Head*, i.e. using the attached compliments slips to The Librarian, The University of Tanzania, Dar es Salaam".

75 For a discussion of this and recognition of the consequence being a significant amount of material circulating in Swahili from communist countries, see e.g. UKNA FCO 168/4094, no f. "Report on a visit to Tanzania by Mr. D.M. Biggin of IRD, 22–25 June 1970."

tory and political science texts through to tourist guides.[76] Through the 1960s and into the early 1970s, the EAPH's existence was an essential part of the dynamic and creative spurt in intellectual activity that accompanied the opening and rapid expansion of universities across East Africa. The cooperation between different parts of the EAISCA defined how the EAPH functioned, with a close-knit group of East African intellectuals involved in multiple projects under the same umbrella – the roundtable cited at the beginning of this chapter, chaired by an EAISCA technician, inviting an EAPH representative, and published in the *East Africa Journal*, is one such example. From September 1966, the *East Africa Journal* produced a bi-yearly special literary issue of short stories and poems, titled from 1968 as *Ghala* (granary, reservoir, repository). Many of those contributing content to *Ghala,* such as Sam Mbure and B. Onyango-Ogutu, also worked for the EAPH sales and publicity departments.[77] The distinction between writers and publishers blurred.

Despite EAPH's breadth of activities and the successes that characterised its first decade, there was concern about its long-term financial viability. There was no lack of a market for books written and published in East Africa, but this market was numerically weighted towards school textbooks, rather than academic texts with a specialist readership, or novels for adults. Textbook publishing made up 85 per cent of the book market and British publishers dominated: Longmans and Oxford University Press enjoyed a third of the market each.[78] At the EAISCA roundtable, Nottingham and Sempira both criticised the monopoly of British publishing companies in publishing material developed by governments, pointing out that Britain would hardly allow a foreign publisher to start publishing books for British schools.[79] Strong denied this, insisting that Longmans was working in the interests of a healthy, competitive publishing sector, which could not exist if state monopolies were in place. This debate mapped onto broader discussions at the nexus between the Cold War and postcolonial state-making. As many of the intellectuals involved in EAISCA argued, a "free" and competition-driven market could not spontaneously emerge in contexts where foreign companies (notably those of the ex-colonial power) had controlled the flow of capital for several generations.

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76 "Adventurous Start for East African Book Enterprise," *East African Standard*, 18 February 1966, cutting in HIA RG/TM.

77 "Notes on contributors," *East Africa Journal* 8, no. 1 (1971), 2.

78 Ayo Ojeniyi, "The Dominance of the Textbook in African Publishing," in *Coming of Age: Strides in African Publishing, Essays in Honour of Dr Henry Chakava at 70*, eds. Kiarie Kamau and Kirimi Mitambo (Nairobi: East African Educational Publishers, 2016), 73–6; HIA TM/36/5, Jomo Kenyatta Foundation, "First Annual Report by the Secretariat to the Board of Governors," 1967, 2; Ruth L. Makotsi and Lily Nyariki, *Publishing and Book Trade in Kenya* (East African Publishers, 1997), 26.

79 "Copyright and all that," 29.

Nor could such a market respond to the needs and desires of the population. It was on the basis of these arguments that the intervention (financial or otherwise) of the state could be justified, in the publishing sector as in many others, precisely what Sempira advocated in the roundtable.

These difficulties of overcoming the structural aspects of the global publishing industry were not only about money: they came into further focus with the question of legal structures like copyright. In explaining the limits on East African publishing, Bgoya and Chakava both emphasised the obstacle of copyright legislation.[80] As Chakava saw it, this was a global problem of existing international agreements which worked to the detriment of newly independent countries. Copyright was also a key discussion point at the 1967 roundtable. The conversation between Sempira, Nottingham and Strong followed a recent amendment to the Berne Convention on copyright law, a move pushed by UNESCO and passed at an Intellectual Property Conference in Stockholm. The amendment stipulated that "developing countries" could republish books for education purposes without paying copyright fees. Sempira was broadly in favour of any measure that reduced the costs of textbooks, but Nottingham considered the move short-sighted, arguing that these countries would end up with irrelevant and outdated textbooks, instead of encouraging East African writers to author these.[81]

Moreover, Nottingham was critical of delegates from countries such as India who had advocated the move. The Indian publishing sector had expanded dramatically following the country's own independence, and Indian publishers were asking what role they could play in the East African market. By 1980, the Indian Institute of Foreign Trade believed that the expansion of Indian publishing was "reaching a stage when it can challenge the primacy of Anglo-American publishing in several Afro-Asian countries and match their efforts in these areas".[82] The alliance among decolonising countries in UNESCO did not always reflect common challenges in these countries nor lend itself to supporting local writers and publishers. During the 1970s, this became more apparent: at the 1972 UNESCO general conference, Ugandan delegate J.D. Turyagenda joined other African delegates in opposing a proposal to allow educational sound recordings for radio to be traded

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80 Bgoya, *Books and Reading in Tanzania*; Chakava and UNESCO, *Books and Reading in Kenya*. For a more detailed analysis of the copyright question, see John Waruingi Chege, *Copyright Law and Publishing in Kenya* (Nairobi: Kenya Literature Bureau, 1978).

81 "Copyright and all that".

82 *Market Survey of Books and Publications in Kenya, Nigeria and Tanzania* (New Delhi: Indian Institute of Foreign Trade, 1980).

tax-free because one factor working in favour of local production (with all its wider cultural benefits that Turyagenda perceived) was precisely the potential to save costs.[83]

All under One Roof: Regional Readers and National Distribution

By the time EAPH branches opened in Kampala and Dar es Salaam (the latter under Zanzibari manager and journalist Ali M. Ali) in 1969, all three EAC member states had founded national publishing houses – with many of the same personalities and funders behind them.[84] These national projects did not directly compete with, or prove detrimental to, the EAPH. Instead, emerging in the same context of an expanding regional publishing sector, national and regional publishing ventures appeared initially mutually supportive. In Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda, there were significant differences in the relationship between publishing and the state, but all shared a point of emphasis. Like EAPH, national publishing houses were preoccupied with building infrastructures of publishing that supported relationships between the education system, writers, publishers, printers and distributors. This concern saw an increasingly complex entanglement of organisations and actors develop by the early 1970s.

Distribution was a topic of discussion at the 1967 roundtable. Sempira highlighted the inability of the existing publishing market to distribute its books where there was demand, notably outside of urban centres. The system, he insisted, needed a "complete overhaul", to address the "bottlenecks" currently limiting it. This question was not a merely technical one: it had implications for how to imagine independence from foreign commercial publishers – in other words, how to imagine a more fundamentally East African publishing sector. There was no use publishing books that could not effectively reach their readers, and a "free", competitive market economy could not guarantee this. At the same time, the ability of regional organisations (the EAC and EAISCA alike) to coordinate the various branches of their publishing enterprises was strained by their inherently multi-sited projects. National publishing initiatives, meanwhile, came with the real possibility of coordinating every stage of the book production process, from writing to distribution, all physically under one roof.

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83 Archives of the Uganda Broadcasting Corporation (hereafter UBC) (uncatalogued), Box "1966–70 Ministry of Information", File "Seminars and Special training conferences", J.D. Turyagenda, summary of Communication commission at UNESCO general conference October 1972, February 1973.

84 On Ali M. Ali, see "Appointed Manager," *The Nationalist*, 13 January 1970.

In Kenya and Uganda, national publishing houses operated under non-profit Foundations, the Jomo Kenyatta Foundation and Milton Obote Foundation. The driving concern behind these was the local development and production of teaching materials, meaning they shared an agenda with the government-subsidised EALB. These two foundations were thus formed to supplement government efforts, but with legal independence from government – comparable to the FES and PWF who, as in the case of the EAISCA, provided funding and sat on advisory boards.[85] Both Heinz Putzrath of the FES and Robert Gabor of PWF were on the list of Obote Foundation "members", along with Makerere historian Kenneth Ingham and Per Aasen of the International Union of Socialist Youth.[86] These foundations had government approval, but they were devised with some amount of distance from the state: recalling the Kenyatta Foundation opening in 1965, Ogot noted the dismissive attitude of government, who doubted that the new set up had the skills and equipment to compete with commercial publishers like Oxford University Press or Longmans.[87]

The Obote Foundation typifies the interest in late 1960s East Africa in the coordination of the entire publishing process, precisely as a way to challenge the monopolies of foreign firms. The Obote Foundation took physical shape with the construction of a building in 1967, intended to house several subsidiary companies, a printing press and a chalk factory, with the idea that the entire book production process could happen under one roof. Among these subsidiaries were Uganda Publishing House, launched in 1966 with the primary aim of textbook self-sufficiency, Ugationers stationery company, Uganda Press Trust, Uganda School Supply Limited (distributors), and *The People* newspaper – which shared the foundation's tagline, "[f]or and by Ugandans", but quickly came to be seen as a mouthpiece for the governing UPC. Germany, Norway and the USA donated "machinery, capital and technical staff" to the Obote Foundation in the late 1960s.[88] Both the funding landscape and the appointment of one John Archer as general manager might explain some scepticism about the foundation's ability to live up to its tagline. According to its own newspaper, "[m]any people were at first opposed to the publishing house because they feared it would be used as a propaganda medium".[89]

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85 On the Milton Obote Foundation, see UBC (uncatalogued), Box "Old documents," F.X.B. Mugeni (MOF) to Emelio Rossetti (Ministry of Information), 14 July 1988.

86 Ibid.

87 Ogot, *My Footprints*, 223.

88 "Obote Foundation Stone Laid 'For and by Ugandans'," *The People,* 12 August 1967, 20

89 "Assistance to Authors", *The People,* 18 November 1967.

The Foundation also invested in generating publishable work. Soon after the headquarters had been erected, the Uganda Publishing House announced that it would offer office space, secretarial services and a reference library to Ugandan writers.[90] The logic was that a shortage of resources and institutions supporting authors was a hindrance to the expansion of book production. But this assumption was not universally shared. One reader of *The People* newspaper felt that the scheme had been "bred by people without the slightest notion of what a book is or how authors go about writing books".[91] In a letter titled "How NOT to encourage authors", they continued:

> writing a book, with all due respect to Uganda Publishing House, is not like making a *busuti* or growing *matoke*, both of which can be simplified with machines and helpers. No one can help the writer . . . The Marquis de Sade wrote nearly all his books while he was in prison, some books have been written by blind men.

For this letter-writer (identified only by the initials "P. T."), the writer's struggle was universal, noble, aloof from worldly conditions. The Uganda Publishing House had completely the opposite idea: "machines and helpers" were crucial to a sustainable publishing sector that could eventually work independently of foreign finance and that could work in the interest of society rather than being dictated by the market.

Despite the focus on school textbooks, Uganda Publishing House also published books with a more specialist readership and novels for an adult readership – meaning its remit began to overlap with that of EAPH as well as EALB. By 1972, it had published seven general interest books in Luganda and ten in English. The Milton Obote Foundation had, by this time, been renamed, following the coup that brought Idi Amin to power in 1971, but there was continuity for some time afterwards in the activities of its subsidiaries. In 1973, for example, Uganda Publishing House published two important academic works, Assefa Mehretu's *Regional Integration for Economic Development of Greater East Africa* and Grace Ibingira's *Forging of an African nation: The political and constitutional evolution of Uganda from colonial rule to independence, 1894–1962*.

There was no equivalent foundation in Tanzania, not only because Nyerere was famously reluctant to have foundations named after him, but because his government favoured parastatals as a route towards economic self-sufficiency, es-

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90 Ibid.

91 "How NOT to encourage authors," *The People*, 25 November 1967, 3.

pecially following the 1967 Arusha declaration.[92] The Tanzania Publishing House was formed as a parastatal in 1966.[93] Ownership was under the government National Development Corporation (60%) and the private multinational Macmillan Educational Publishers (40%), the latter withdrawing by the early 1970s.[94] Similar to the foundations in Kenya and Uganda, though, the National Development Corporation also oversaw printing, through the National Printing Company (*Kiwanda cha Uchapaji cha Taifa*) and distribution, through Tanzania Elimu Supplies, charged with supplying the nation's schools with government-sanctioned books and touted at its 1967 formation (under a British manager) as "one of the landmarks on the road to cultural independence".[95]

These different approaches to the state's involvement in national publishing came to the fore when the possibility emerged for locally-owned, regional, commercial distribution to challenge the monopoly of foreign publishers and their pre-existing distribution networks. In 1964, two Kenyan citizens, M.J. Rughani and S.V. Shah, founded the Text Book Centre, as a school supplier and publisher's distributor, "all under one roof".[96] Bethwell Ogot was invited to sit on yet another governing board, along with others in the publishing sector like J. Mwangi. When EAPH was founded a year later, the Text Book Centre made an arrangement to distribute its books.[97]

In 1969, the Text Book Centre approached the EALB to form a similar agreement – this was two years after its director, Sempira, had raised the problems of distribution at the roundtable. EALB accepted based on an assessment of the Text Book Centre's agenda and the credentials of its board members: they were "people who have education deep in their hearts" and moreover, "[a]ll are Kenyans and in TBC it is Kenyans who make the decisions".[98] This marked a partial break with the EALB's missionary foundations: until this point its books had been largely distributed in Kenya by a Christian bookshop that was the successor of the Church Missionary Society bookshop in Nairobi, and by its rural book vans.[99]

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92 On Nyerere, see Issa G. Shivji, Saida Yahya-Othman, and Ng'wanza Kamata, *Development as Rebellion: A Biography of Julius Nyerere, 3 Vols* (Dar es Salaam: Mkuki na Nyota, 2020), preface. On parastatals, see Roberts, *Revolutionary State-Making in Dar Es Salaam*, 239.

93 For more detail on TPH, see Suriano, "Dreams and Constraints".

94 Bgoya, *Books and Reading*, 28.

95 On Elimu Supplies, see Che Ng'ombo "Venture in books distribution," *The Nationalist*, 17 May 1967.

96 KNA RW/1/3, M.J. Rughani to EALB, 1 December 1969.

97 Ibid.

98 KNA RW/1/3, Notes for Mr. N.L.M. Sempira on importance of distribution and Text Book Centre, 13 December 1969.

99 This was called ESA bookshop.

The Text Book Centre was already selling books published by companies like Macmillan, and now added sixty-eight of EALB's titles to its list, ranging from Mohammed Saleh Farsy's *Kurwa na doto* [Kurwa and Doto] to J.J. Oloya's *Some aspects of economic development.*[100]

The agreement was deemed cause for celebration: an event was organised with a drinks reception and a speech by EAC Secretary General Joseph Muchemi.[101] There were elements of political performance in the celebration, and some reflection about precisely what was being celebrated. Muchemi's drafted and edited speech is preserved in the archives of the EALB, although it is not clear who did the drafting and editing – perhaps Sempira was involved. A point about the Text Book Centre being owned by "Africans" was replaced with "Kenyans", perhaps conscious of the South Asian heritage of Rughani and Shah. Criticism of "cruel" foreign publishers was toned down in the edits too. There was a hint of tension about who had the upper hand in the agreement between EALB and the Text Book Centre: a reference to the latter becoming the "bride" of the former was changed to "bridegroom". In its final version, the speech praised the agreement between "two wholly indigenous Organizations" that "signifie[d] the spirit of Harambee". Muchemi added that the agreement would allow the EALB to "survive in the face of fierce competition from foreign companies".[102]

Nevertheless, the agreement was so far limited to Kenya – and indeed there was little evidence of the EALB's regional character in Muchemi's speech. To some extent, this reflected Kenya's prominent position in the organisation: the EALB had seventy staff in its Nairobi office, compared to only around eight each in Dar es Salaam and Kampala, who sometimes faced problems communicating with – and receiving salaries from – Nairobi.[103] With a view to smoothing out the regional operation, Sempira travelled to Tanzania and Uganda in March 1970 to seek agreements with the distributing branches of the two national publishing houses. This, of course, meant further overlap with the infrastructures of the EAPH, especially in the case of the Uganda Publishing House. Sempira's intention was to gain more control for EALB over the distribution process by purchasing equity in the distribution wings of the two national publishers, just as it hoped to in the Text Book Centre – it was an EAC principle to pursue such agreements in parallel. In Kampala, Sempira talked with Erisa Kironde, Milton Obote Foundation board

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100 KNA RW/1/3, EALB book list.

101 KNA RW/1/3, M.J. Rughani to EALB, 1 December 1969. See also clippings from *Standard* and *Nation* in same folder.

102 KNA RW/1/3, Draft speech for the Secretary General, 16 December 1969.

103 KNA RW/1/3, Sempira to Berger, 24 April 1970; KNA RW/1/1, f. 1+3, N.G. Ngulukulu (EALB), Report on visit to Dar es Salaam branch, 27 January – 1 February 1970.

member and Makerere lecturer who, after discussion with the board, agreed to sell EALB 300,000 shillings worth of shares in Uganda School Supply Limited.[104]

In Dar es Salaam, however, Sempira found that it would be impossible to buy equity in Elimu Supplies (the distributing subsidiary of Tanzania Publishing House), because it was, by 1970, 100% owned by the Tanzanian State.[105] Instead, the idea was raised that the EALB would buy out Macmillan in the ownership of TPH as a whole (which was 40% at its founding). Discussions began with the National Development Corporation, who wanted to know how EALB imagined the future relationship with TPH, how its finances worked, what its aims were, whether it was externally financed, and whether TPH could benefit from the free paper that the Canadian state supplied to EALB.[106] Sempira assured them that the EALB, as an EAC department, was not profit-making, had no shareholders, and had no agreement with overseas publishers.[107] The eventual outcome of the question on shares is unclear in the EALB archives, but agreements on distribution were made, paving the way for closer cooperation between EALB and the distribution apparatus in the three EAC member states.[108]

The shifting entanglements between states, private firms, parastatals, subsidiaries, and the overlapping set of actors who acted as board members and negotiated purchase of shares, presents no straightforward conclusion. But an overarching narrative is clear: publishers were thinking creatively about how to make the industry both financially viable and societally useful. The question of distribution was more critical than it might first appear, and those making decisions in EALB and EAPH recognised this: control over distribution was as much a part of making publishing East African as was authorship. Foreign companies continued to exert power, especially as shareholders, but there was room for new agreements with locally-owned firms – agreements with symbolic and political value as well as practical value. The existence of national publishing houses was not an indication of a failed regional project. Nevertheless, the different relationships that each had to the state did make regional standardisation of distribution more complicated. As the 1970s progressed, these national arrangements, with the whole process under one roof, proved more resilient than regional organisations to some of the challenges that appeared, but arguably more vulnerable to others.

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104 KNA RW/1/3, f. 40, Kironde to Sempira, 18 May 1970

105 KNA RW/1/3, J.S. Malecela, EAC Committee of Ministers secret memo on purchasing shares in Text Book Centre, Tanzania Publishing House and Uganda Publishing House, 30 March 1970.

106 KNA RW/1/3, J.D. Hough (NDC) to Mr Sheraly (EALB) 3 April 1970; M.S. Berger to Sempira, 26 March 1970.

107 KNA RW/1/3, Sempira to Berger, 24 April 1970.

108 KNA RW/1/3, f. 89, N.G. Ngulukulu to Text Book Centre, 26 March 1974.

Global Supply Chains and The End of the Golden Era

In 1975, EAPH celebrated its tenth anniversary. John Michuki, chairman of the board, commended that fact that the publisher was now entirely under African control, both on the directorial board and at a managerial level. Its international reputation was secured and it had published over ten million books – one for every three East African citizens at the time.[109] It was apparently receiving around twenty unsolicited manuscripts a week.[110] Reports on the anniversary were optimistic: sales and profits were stronger than ever and the strategy for the coming years was to guarantee long term financial stability by moving into textbook production, rather than the academic specialist books that EAPH had become known for.[111] Less apparent at the anniversary event was the fact that EAPH in the 1970s was a regional organisation largely in name only. In 1969, its board of six directors was made up of three Kenyans, one Uganda, one Tanzanian, and one Zambian, but later that year the EAPH was moved to the Kenyan Ministry of Education.[112] This followed the collapse of the EAISCA the previous year and the transfer of shares to the East African Cultural Trust, the expulsion of Gabor and Putzrath (and, with them, funding from FES and PWF), and the assassination of Tom Mboya, who had been critical to the relationship between the organisation's East African board and its foreign funders.[113]

The story of a mid-1970s high point for East African publishing is therefore one that demands some qualification. Nottingham's vision for the multiplication of East African publishers partly came to bear fruit at a national scale, but EAPH no longer existed in its original form – and Nottingham himself had moved on to set up his own private firm, Transafrica Press, which continued to publish the academic and political works that EAPH had, but did not have the same group of regional scholarly personalities behind it. He viewed the greatest impediment to the growth of the East African publishing industry to be capital, noting that publishing required larger initial investments and longer to see returns, when com-

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109 John Michuki, "Chairman's Address," *Daily Nation,* supplement on East African Publishing House, 17 October 1975, cutting in HIA, Gabor papers.

110 "Key Exercise Towards Decolonising the Mind", Book supplement (paid EAPH advertisement) in *Kiongozi*, November 1973.

111 "A Search for Quality and Relevance," *Daily Nation*, 17 October 1975, cutting in HIA, Gabor papers.

112 Nottingham, "Establishing an African Publishing Industry," 142.

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

pared to other industries that attracted capital with more ease in the later 1960s. It is no surprise, then, that the global economic fallout of the 1974 oil shock affected the publishing industry.[114] Most obviously, book publishing relied on imported paper and machinery, and distribution relied on imported fuel; foreign currency was scarce.[115] In Uganda, the constrained economic landscape predated the oil shock: Ugandan industry had stalled following Idi Amin's expulsion of South Asian Ugandans in 1972 (including many factory managers) and consumers had faced worsening shortages of basic commodities ever since. All three states suffered from the rising costs and severe shortage of raw materials in the late 1970s, especially after the collapse of the East African Community in 1977. The closure of the border with Kenya was particularly harmful for Tanzania, and the economic situation deteriorated with the imposition (initially resisted by Nyerere) of IMF recovery plans.

These factors will be familiar to those who have read other chapters of this book, or other accounts of East Africa's 1970s. They certainly mattered for East African publishers. The more difficult question to answer is how far these factors determined the trajectories of individual publishing initiatives. Part of this assessment needs to take account of the shaky foundations of arrangements like the EAPH. As early as 1968, those involved in the initiative were privately remarking on poor management, especially financial management: Wilbert Chagula wrote to Ogot that the publisher was "run on exactly the same 'ad-hoc' manner as the [EAISCA] having only a 'façade' of Directors who never see its Audited Accounts and Balance Sheets."[116] Difficulties thus predated the 1970s.

Equally, some parts of the publishing sector proved resilient in the face of political and economic upheaval. Being subsidised by the EAC, the EALB was better protected from economic uncertainty of the mid-1970s than commercial private firms. The publishing wing had taken on the role of the EAC's central printing services in the late 1960s, meaning it had an important place in the EAC for publishing reports.[117] It was publishing on average one new book a week in the mid-1970s, and the titles were more diverse than ever, from technical handbooks to poetry, now that national institutes for adult education had assumed some of

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114 Emily Brownell, "Reterritorializing the Future: Writing Environmental Histories of the Oil Crisis from Tanzania," *Environmental History* 27, no. 4 (2022): 747–71.

115 Walter Bgoya and Mary Jay, "Publishing in Africa from Independence to the Present Day," *Research in African Literatures* 44, no. 2 (2013): 11.

116 HIA TM/40/2, Chagula to Ogot, 26 March 1968.

117 KNA RW/5/1, Annual report of the EALB for 1968.

the work of publishing adult literacy primers: its best sellers were Wilson's *Simplified Swahili* and Faraji Katalambulla's crime thriller *Simu ya Kifo* (Death Call).[118] Through agreements with national library boards, these were distributed to public libraries in towns across the region – Kabarole public library in Western Uganda issued around 140 books daily in 1970, including EALB material, mainly to school pupils.[119] Library services had followed different directions in the three EAC member states, however, and in 1972 members voted to disband the East African Libraries Association, whose colonial origins as a social club for expats had, according to some members, never been shaken off.[120]

The break-up of the EAC in 1977 was unsurprisingly a critical blow for the EALB. In Kenyan plans for assuming responsibility for EAC institutions following disintegration (either on the basis of a majority of Kenyan personnel or on the basis of them being physically located in Kenya), the EALB is presented as an unproblematic case of transfer to Kenya, with preference for retaining it as an institution under the Kenyan government, rather than merging it with the Kenyatta Foundation.[121] It officially became the Kenya Literature Bureau in 1979.[122]

Meanwhile, the Text Book Centre, the Kenyan distribution firm, proved able to pose a legitimate competition to foreign rivals, despite the structural advantages the latter possessed. Under Ogot's chairmanship, it organised a 1976 event, Bookfare, working with the Kenya Library Association and Kenya Writers Association with the intention of "taking books to the people". It was deemed a success, but one aspect of feedback received was that it should have been more regional. The impression that Kenya benefitted from the changes in regional publishing must take into consideration the perceived loss of a regional remit. Eventually,

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118 KNA RW/5/1, Annual report of EALB sent to EAC, dated 19 March 1975, referring to either 1973 or 1974.

119 Kabarole District Archives (KDA), Box 226, File 2, Kabarole Public Library Annual report for 1970–71. See also Ismay Milford, "Information for Development: Lantern-Bearers and Self-Reliance At Kabarole Public Library Since Ugandan Independence", in *Past Futures, Present Realities: New Perspectives on Development as 'Future-Making' in Africa*, eds. Jonathan M. Jackson and Mads Yding (Brill, forthcoming).

120 Gertrude Kayaga Mulindwa, "Management of National Libraries in Africa: A Case of Uganda," *Library Management* 31, no. 6 (2010): 427–39; Bgoya, *Books and Reading in Tanzania*, 38–43; Ezekiel E. Kaungamno and C. S. Ilomo, *Books Build Nations. 1, Library Services in West And East Africa* (London, Dar es Salaam: Transafrica, 1979), chapter four.

121 KNA AHC/10/5, Office of the President, Secret report WP (1) 77, "Future structure and functions of EAC institutions", 1 February 1977.

122 Chakava and Unesco, *Books and Reading in Kenya*. Grace Ogot was one of its directors, see Grace Ogot, *Days of My Life: An Autobiography* (Kisumu: Anyange Press Ltd., 2012), 149.

the sort of Africanisation of foreign firms that Nottingham had advocated in 1969 did take place. In the mid-1980s, a scheme of loan guarantees from the Dag Hammarskjöld Foundation allowed Kenyan publishers to establish new businesses and buy out their foreign-owned rivals.[123]

Conclusion

The audience members who listened to the 1967 roundtable on East African Publishing in Nairobi would not have left with a sense that the challenges facing the sector were insurmountable. The more optimistic among them might reasonably have imagined that a regional, multilingual publishing ecology would not only sustainably meet the needs of the education sector, but that it would thrive in a way that individual national agreements with foreign commercial publishers would not allow, given those agreements rested on unequal economic and legal foundations. In many ways, the following decade proved this conviction to be correct. But these intellectual achievements happened hand in hand with the achievement of managing production and distribution in a region shaped by colonial underinvestment in education and transport. This took place in global economic circumstances that obliged publishing entrepreneurs to accept funding from organisations whose interests were not their own – and who were soon struggling for cash themselves.

Publishing infrastructures mattered, and those involved in organisations like EAPH and EALB knew this. These organisations never operated under any illusion that it was enough to simply have quality manuscripts by East African writers and a growing, interested readership. The process that connected these readers and writers was complex, expensive, and dominated by foreign firms. But East African publishers approached these challenges creatively. Some of the solutions described in this chapter include the model of non-profit foundations, adjacent to but independent from the state, able to attract foreign capital at the same time as operating under a board of local directors and laying out plans to transfer finance and management entirely into local firms. Another innovation was the idea of coordinating distribution, printing and schools supplies with the activities of a publishing house: these initiatives had the potential to prove that bringing all operations under one roof, under one board of directors, and closer to the reader-

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123 Ruth Makotsi and Lily Nyariki, *Publishing and Book Trade in Kenya* (Nairobi: East African Educational Publishers, 1997), 101–3.

ship, was more efficient and more viable than relying on foreign supply chains and free market distribution.

Perhaps more than any of other cases discussed in this book, publishing reveals the possibilities and constraints, to use Frederick Cooper's phrase, of East African regionalism in this period. As we have seen in this chapter, local and global economic trends threatened the commercial viability of the region's publishers, and the prevailing political climate was no more conducive to their success. These conditions exacerbated the challenging context in which the publishers operated. Structural dependence on external funding of often dubious origin conflicted with the publishers' stated public missions to support the decolonization of the region's knowledge production. In hindsight, the surprise is not that publishing came to struggle in the 1970s but rather that it thrived for as long as it did. Much of the credit for that success is due to the publishers themselves. They devised skilful strategies that, for a time, successfully squared the circle of their dependence on foreign funding whilst maintaining a credible Africanisation agenda. They artfully developed cross-subsidisation business models connecting the publishing of literature to that of textbooks and school supplies and made innovative use of foundations to provide some protection from state interference.

Undoubtedly, the publishers were further assisted by the quality of the material that rolled off the presses. The fiction and non-fiction writing produced by often young authors simultaneously inspired by the conditions of freedom and concerned by the challenges facing the newly independent states and societies of East Africa caught the imagination of audiences at home and abroad. Even as the formal institutional East African regional integration project stalled and then reversed in the 1970s, the region came alive on the pages of the books and journals produced by its publishing houses. Despite the EAC's collapse, East African publishing constituted a single market of ideas and creativity with far greater longevity and societal impact than its associated political institutional projects.

Conclusion: Another Region, World, and Nation

Practising East Africa

Writing in 1968, the Ugandan academic, novelist and poet Okello Oculi surveyed East African intellectual life from his temporary vantage point in Britain as a postgraduate student at the University of Essex. Setting aside arguments about indigenous forms of intellectualism, Oculi tackled the narrowly constituted field of academics and writers that had, until recently, been dominated by Europeans. They had, Oculi argued, worked in the region during the colonial period as "partners with the colonial administrators and other functionaries, working within the same system, supported by the system, and with a collective vested interest in maintaining the system." This situation was, however, transformed from the 1950s onwards by the "'Africanisation' of learning" that was "assertive, rebellious, bold, optimistic, and clinical."

The new intellectuals of East Africa had, Oculi concluded, several distinguishing characteristics. One was an easy relationship with political leaders. Another was a determination "to capture the essence or the substance of what might be lost by the interferences of change and abandonment." Summarising the impact of this ethos across the humanities and social sciences, Oculi characterised the very best examples of this new intellectualism as sharing a common central theme: "Africa meeting other cultures." Two notable arguments were implicit in Oculi's essay. The first was that East Africa self-evidently existed despite the absence of federation. In an essay otherwise driven by an effort to categorise scholarship, Oculi felt no need to define East Africa. There was clearly no need to do so. Oculi (rightly) assumed that the great majority of his readers would take as natural an intellectual community that encompassed the three territories, centred on the respective capital cities and other major towns and cities. Moreover, implicit to Oculi's argument was an idea of East Africa centred on the three constituent parts of the University of East Africa: Nairobi, Dar es Salaam, and, especially, Makerere.[1] Similar urban geographies became visible to us in a visualisation of biographic data created by Anna Adima as part of the research project from which this book grew.

The second argument implicit in Oculi's essay was that East Africa was not primarily an identity or a territorial space, but rather a "cultural construct" that, as Peter Burke writes of early modern Europe, "became a thing in the sense of

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1 Okello Oculi, "East African Intellectuals Remain Trapped at the Surface Layer of Current Events," *East Africa Journal* 5, no. 3 (1968).

being treated as natural and influencing later behaviour."[2] Oculi's East Africa, not just its constituent nation states, was created in print, in broadcast media, and in the lecture hall.[3] His East Africa was globally connected, characterised by its relaxed cosmopolitanism, moved by the great energy of its Europhone young writers and thinkers, but dependent on unsustainable financial models connected to the global Cold War. Oculi urged his compatriots to think (with his own emphasis) "*Whose money will support your research?*"[4] This East Africa came of age in a time of a rapid growth in literacy; significant expansions in higher education; new publishing ventures; a wide range of foreign funders, and the emergence of outstanding, creative intellectual talent. To publish, to write, to read, and to debate was to be East African. The region constituted a distinctive space of intellectual freedom, dissent, and vibrant print cultures that enabled at least the literate to think and engage with range of different global influences and actors. Notably, this East Africa existed despite the failure of the federation project that was supposed to accompany independence in the region. The longer-lasting East African Community certainly smoothed the path of the East African intellectual project, but the imagining of East Africa as an intellectual and cultural space was not contingent on economic or political integration. As elsewhere, regionalism in East Africa was an intellectual practice as much as a political one.[5]

Oculi's East Africa seemed in 1968 to be a region on the rise. Oculi's account of East African intellectual life captured a sense of the confidence and power of the actors, networks and cultural organisations that constituted this regional cultural eco-system. A vibrant news media, successful young universities, and publishing houses with burgeoning lists of East African books and authors all pointed towards the imminent further integration of the region's cultural activities.

Hindsight, however, reveals that Oculi was writing at the apogee of this particular moment in East Africa's cultural history, not (as he thought at the time) in the early stages of the emergence of a nascent intellectual movement. Issues such as that of dependence on external funding he perceptively identified proved to collectively constitute the hidden constraints that acted upon intellectual and cul-

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2 Peter Burke, "How to Write a History of Europe: Europe, Europes, Eurasia," *European Review* 14, no. 2 (2006), 237.

3 Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso, 1983).

4 Oculi, "East African Intellectuals".

5 Rosaria Forlenza, "The Politics of the *Abendland*: Christian Democracy and the Idea of Europe after the Second World War," *Contemporary European History* 26, no. 2 (2017).

tural life in the region in the years following Oculi's intervention. East Africa, like other regions of the continent, became defined by such hidden constraints.[6]

The political tides were already turning. The Arusha Declaration of 1967 signalled Tanzania's turn to the politics of self-reliance amid a tightening of Nyerere's grip on power. At the time of it publishing Oculi's article, the *EAJ* was already operating under intense pressure following the banning from Kenya of the journal's German and American principal financial supporters. Restrictions on more radical figures in politics were even more severe as the Kenyatta government sought to exert control in the face of the challenge from the new Kenya People's Union. Across the border in Uganda, the African Labour College was closed down later in the same year amidst the early stages of Obote's "Move to the Left" and more exclusionary brand of nationalism. Neogy was arrested within months of Oculi's article appearing in the *EAJ*. Familiar landmarks in the history of East Africa's move towards greater authoritarianism and economic crisis soon followed: Mboya's assassination; Amin's coup and subsequent tumultuous violence; the expulsion of Uganda's Asian community; forced villagisation in Tanzania; the oil crisis; the collapse of the EAC; war between Tanzania and Uganda; the triumph of Moi's brand of conservative authoritarianism in Kenya; the return of Obote and civil war in Uganda; and economic crisis in Tanzania. As Frederick Cooper writes, "[t]he era of decolonization was a time when the range of political possibilities seemed to open up, only to close down again."[7]

In her explanation for the closure of the space open to Africa's world-makers, Adom Getachew rightly emphasises external factors, most notably policy changes in the United States towards the newly independent states of the world and the pernicious effects on sovereignty of processes such as structural adjustment.[8] We do not disagree. However, our emphasis on the category of East Africa and its practice reveals much about the domestic consequences of global politics and economics. The winnowing of the possibilities for global engagement by the citizens of East Africa should not be mistaken for a retreat from the world by the states and governments of the region. Far from it. The economies and political institutions of the independent nation states became ever more dependent upon finance and power sourced elsewhere. This resulted in the states and societies of East Africa exhibiting a high degree of vulnerability to external shocks – most notably the oil crisis and, later, structural adjustment – that in turn had profound effects

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6 Frederick Cooper, "Possibility and Constraint: African Independence in Historical Perspective," *Journal of African History* 49, no. 2 (2008).

7 Frederick Cooper, *Decolonization and African Society: The Labor Question in French and British Africa* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 1.

8 Getachew, *Worldmaking*, 176–81.

on political ideas and imaginations, as well as on the nature and form of intellectual and cultural production.[9] Within East Africa, what Atieno Odhiambo and Cohen refer to in reference to Kenya as duelling spheres of internationalism emerged. One – which can be expanded from Atieno and Cohen's interests in institutions to include the cultural activities discussed in this book – constituted the progressive and creative networks in which "the values of shared African interests could be turned to the advantage of Africa." Previously the dominant of the two, as the post-colonial period progressed this first sphere became dwarfed by the second, "in which virtually any international initiative – from development to monetary reform to debt consolidation to structural adjustment – could be turned to the financial advantage of Kenya's most powerful citizens."[10]

Adapted to incorporate the region at large, Atieno and Cohen's concept can usefully illustrate how the conduct of post-colonial governance by East Africa's rulers promoted particular international relationships based on investment, aid, and military assistance that increased the prospects of regime survival. Among the costs of these relationships were the global cultural and intellectual networks that allowed the region's peoples to re-imagine a different kind of world and their place within in. The idea of East Africa, which had been such a powerful vehicle for such re-imaginings, was lulled. It was only to be reawakened in the late 1990s with the re-establishment of the East African Community in an era of political and economic homogeneity, an effort that continues to this day. When the EAC was resurrected, it was notably under a cadre of leaders – Benjamin Mkapa, Mwai Kibaki (both graduates of Makerere) and Yoweri Museveni (University of Dar es Salaam) – who had studied in precisely the setting that our book explores. In 1996, Francis Muthaura, then Secretary-General of East African Cooperation evoked a shared past in explaining the rationale for reviving the Community. "The East African region", he told the *Financial Times*, "is unique – we're talking about three countries which for a long time were managed as one federal

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9 Emily Brownell, "Reterritorializing the Future: Writing Environmental Histories of the Oil Crisis from Tanzania," *Environmental History* 27, no. 4 (2022); George Roberts, "The First Oil Shock: February 1974 and the making of our times", *African Arguments*, 20 February 2024, accessed 4 March 2024, https://africanarguments.org/2024/02/the-first-oil-shock-february-1974-and-the-making-of-our-times/; Emma Park, Derek R. Peterson, Anne Pitcher and Keith Breckenridge, "Intellectual and cultural work in times of austerity: Introduction." *Africa* 91, no. 4 (2021): 517–531.

10 David William Cohen and Elisha Stephen Atieno Odhiambo, *The Risks of Knowledge: Investigations into the Death of the Hon. Minister John Robert Ouko in Kenya, 1990* (Athens OH: Ohio University Press, 2004), 187–8.

state which more or less speak the same language, whose citizens went to the same schools. These countries feel they have to be united."[11]

There are, as in the earlier period, striking cultural and intellectual projects running alongside this renewed effort towards regional integration. It is not difficult to trace a thread connecting ventures such as *The East Africa Journal* and *Transition* to *The East African* weekly newspaper or the *Eastern African Literary and Cultural Studies* journal. In 2017, the Makerere College of Humanities and Social Sciences relaunched *Mawazo*, a highbrow academic journal founded in June 1967 by Ali Mazrui and others. When Rodney Muhumuza founded *The Weganda Review* in 2023, he considered it "scream-worthy that in a country that was producing intellectual journals by independence in 1962, until today there has been practically nothing to speak of". He noted *The Uganda Journal*, founded a century previously, as one precursor to what he intends will be "the most instructive journal of its kind south of Khartoum", its "roots in Uganda" paired with "pan-African ambitions", but *Transition* could certainly also feature in its genealogy.[12]

However, in its current guise, the making of contemporary East Africa is tied much more explicitly to institutions and the formal process of integration than in the period we discuss in this book.[13] Without the same wider cultural notion of being, thinking, and writing as East Africans as in the 1950s and 1960s, print media in the present day has struggled to promote any great sense of regional consciousness.[14]

The winnowing of the global engagement that produced such coherent and cogent notions of East African consciousness in the 1950s and 1960s was not, however, solely about governance. It was also about nationalism. Much studied by historians for the period up to and including independence, some but too little thought has been given to the changes in nationalist thought into the post-

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11 Cited in Peter O'Reilly, "African regionalism, economic nationalism and the contested politics of social purpose: the East African Community and the 'new developmentalism,'" *Journal of Modern African Studies* 61, no. 1 (2023), 58.

12 Rodney Muhumuza, "The Weganda Imperative", *The Weganda Review: A journal of culture, art and ideas* 1 (July-Sept 2023): 2–4.

13 Korwa Gombe Adar et al., eds. *Popular Participation in the Integration of the East African Community: Eastafricanness and Eastafricanization* (London: Rowman & Littlefield, 2020).

14 Ceaser James Odhiambo Oranga, "The Role of the Print Media in Regional Integration: The Case of the East African Community," (PhD thesis, University of Nairobi, 2014).

colonial period.[15] The fate of the many regional projects discussed here tells a great deal about how nationalism changed from the broad, inclusionary project of the late colonial period to more autochthonous, exclusionary strands of political thought less compatible with global and regional consciousness.[16] The ideas and practices of the region discussed throughout the book were initially formed in creative tension with those of the nation and wider world. There is no better intellectual illustration of this creative tension than in the work of Bethwell Ogot, a historian of Pan-Africanism; the continent; the region; the nation; and his own Luo-speaking peoples.[17] But as the demise of Ogot's ventures with the EAISCA shows (see above), this intellectual endeavour was incompatible with the prevailing political culture of independent Kenya. The region came to be set against the nation in, for ideas of East Africa, "repressive antagonism."[18]

Despite the fate of the regional intellectual project amidst the triumph of the second of Atieno and Cohen's international spheres, the idea of East Africa at large in the age of decolonisation and the wider contemporary global engagement by East Africans tells us much of value, and it is some of these wider implications which we turn to now.

The Region in Time and Place

The imagination of African historical actors were not corralled neatly within the abstract confines of the global, the regional, the national, and the local as defined retrospectively by professional historians working largely with Eurocentric no-

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15 Miles Larmer and Baz Lecocq, "Historicising Nationalism in Africa," *Nations and Nationalism*, 24, 4 (2018): 893–917; Emma Hunter, "African Nationalisms" in Cathie Carmichael, Matthew d'Auria and Aviel Roshwald, eds. *Cambridge History of Nationhood and Nationalism*, Volume 2 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2023).

16 Glassman, *War of Words*; Brennan, *Taifa*; Jeremy Prestholdt, "Politics of the Soil: Separatism, Autochthony, and Decolonization at the Kenyan Coast," *The Journal of African History* 55, no. 2 (2014).

17 Among the many relevant examples of Ogot's work, see Bethwell Ogot, *History of the Southern Luo* (Nairobi: East African Publishing House, 1967); Bethwell Ogot and William Ochieng', eds. *Decolonization and Independence in Kenya: 1940–93* (London: James Currey, 1995); Bethwell Ogot, *Africa and the Caribbean* (Kisumu: Anyange Press, 1997). and his leading role in UNESCO International Scientific Committee for the Drafting of a General History of Africa, ed., *General History of Africa*, 8 vols. (London: James Currey, 1981–).

18 Frederick Cooper, "Conflict and Connection: Rethinking Colonial African History," *American Historical Review* 99, no. 5 (1994): 1519.

tions of space.[19] Instead, actors and historical forces ranged across these different levels of historiographical categorisation with remarkable ease in the 1950s and 1960s. Our purpose in writing this book is not to suggest that the region trumped all other spatial arenas in which East Africans operated in this period, but rather that its significance to political consciousness has been missed in other efforts that concentrate solely on the local, the national, or (more recently) the global.

The importance of East Africa as a region to its peoples, particularly its intellectuals, in the 1950s and 1960s, does not just tell us about imagined space but also about time. As the literary theorist Pheng Cheah argues of the "world", an apparently geographical term such as "region" also needs to be understood as a "temporal category."[20] The idea of the East African region enacted by the individuals and organisations we discuss in this book was shaped profoundly by the historical period in which they were at work. The colonial origins of notions of East Africa identified throughout the book helps explain why the boundaries of this imagined East Africa were relatively uncontroversial: few of our subjects seem to have questioned the logic that East Africa comprised of the Anglophone former British colonies of Kenya, Tanzania, and Uganda. In other words, the very definition of the territory of East Africa was a product of the historical moment of the mid-twentieth century in which it took shape.

Periodisation is important to us for other reasons too. The history of the idea of East Africa and its place within the wider global engagement by the peoples of the region reminds of the contingency and fragility of transnational political imaginaries. Writing in 1968, Oculi did not entertain the possibility that the world of East African intellectualism he was describing was at risk. This is not surprising. After all, he was writing after a quarter of a century in which the tide of history towards regionalism and other transnational projects seemed to be flowing in only one direction. Transnationalism was, he and others were soon to discover, not a permanent condition but rather a temporary one, shaped by a coincidence of different historical trends and processes. The fate of East Africa's regional thinkers and actors reminds us again, as we have written elsewhere, that transnational connections – be they global or regional – "are fragile, that they can exist

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19 Steven Feierman, "African Histories and the Dissolution of World History," in *Africa and the Disciplines: The Contributions of Research in Africa to the Social Sciences and the Humanities*, eds. Robert Bates, Valentin-Yves Mudimbe, and Jean O'Barr (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993); Richard Reid, "Time and Distance: Reflections on Local and Global History from East Africa," *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society* 29 (2019).
20 Pheng Cheah, *What is a World? On Postcolonial Literature as World Literature* (Durham NC: Duke University Press, 2016), 2.

unevenly across and between national contexts, and that they can disintegrate, even in very short periods of time."[21]

Intellectual Cultures in a Cold War World

Over the course of this book, we have seen the ways in which East Africa's intellectual culture in the 1960s was shaped both by late colonial legacies and by the very present reality of a Cold War world. Journals and public talks were supported by international institutions which sought to create intellectual cultures which would marginalise radical ideas. The clandestine – and not so clandestine – activities of Western governments served to promote the circulation of anticommunist liberal and social democratic ideas, just as the texts from the Soviet Union, China and elsewhere in the communist world also circulated through East Africa's public spheres. The term liberalism itself carried a particularly stinging charge in East Africa, associated as it was with late colonial efforts to thwart African nationalism and pan-Africanism through political projects framed in terms of "multi-racialism". One of many charges set against Rajat Neogy was that he was a "liberal". Arguments about the future of the University between Dar es Salaam on the one hand and Makerere on the other in the late 1960s similarly turned on the charge of a misplaced liberalism which served only to replicate the institutional structures of the colonial, or neo-colonial, university, with all that meant in terms of Eurocentric and racialised hierarchies of knowledge production.

In part, perhaps, as a consequence of this trajectory, liberalism has not attracted the kind of historiography of other political ideas generated in the region, and in dialogue with the world, such as African socialism and Marxism. But this book brings into the spotlight intellectual discourses situated in a broadly liberal tradition, discourses alert to the potential excesses of state power, that prioritised plurality, individual freedoms, the separation of powers and to some extent the free movement of capital. This strain of intellectual and political thought was strongly critiqued at the time and since, but never squeezed out entirely. In shining a spotlight on the institutions and ideas we have explored here, one theme which comes through strongly is the importance of an East African liberal tradition which deserves further study.

This in turn leads us to think about what revisiting this moment in East Africa's intellectual and cultural history means for contemporary debates about

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21 Milford et al., "Another World", 409.

knowledge production and the decolonizing of knowledge.[22] Reading the debates of the 1960s, there are sharp echoes of the arguments of our own time. In the years immediately before and after political independence, a new generation of writers, journalists, academics and other culture brokers sought both to turn colonial-era institutions to new ends and create new ones. And yet, in so many spheres what happened was that the structures were not overturned and colonial-era hierarchies which privileged expatriate, often white, expertise were consolidated. The role played by external funding, and the limits on transformation which this imposed, has been a theme throughout this book. Revisiting this time period captures an earlier moment of possibility, but also helps us see when and why change proved hard to achieve.

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22 Sabelo J. Ndlovu-Gatsheni, *Epistemic Freedom in Africa: Deprovincialization and Decolonization* (New York: Routledge, 2018); Olúfẹ́mi O. Táíwò, *Against Decolonisation: Taking African Agency Seriously* (London: C. Hurst and Co, 2022).

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