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Tanzania's '68: Cold War Interventions, Youth Protest, and Global Anti-Imperialism

'Many astrologers have predicated a near-doom for the world in 1968', wrote 'Pressman' in his first *Nationalist* column of the new year. He then listed a series of ongoing crises: the economic exploitation of the developing world, war in Indochina, liberation struggles in Africa, and conflict in the Middle East. 'When the astrologers make their dismal forecasts what they are really saying is that a clash between the people and imperialism (and its lackeys) is drawing nearer and nearer. One does not need to be an astrologer to make this prediction', concluded 'Pressman' – *nom de plume* of A. M. Babu.¹

The events of the year which followed might even have surprised Babu himself. Around the world, students and youths took to the streets. While their demands were diverse, their anger shared a common target: an unjust global order, dominated by the super-powers and upheld by ruling elites. The Third World played a central role in shaping these movements. In Europe and North America, protesters condemned the neocolonial interventions of their own governments and the widening economic gulf between the West and the postcolonial world. They pointed to the grim fate of Africa's revolutionaries, especially the martyred Patrice Lumumba, as evidence of the forces of imperialism at work. Lumumba and those who followed him, like Ahmed Ben Bella and Kwame Nkrumah, became, as Jean Allman puts it, 'canaries in the coal mine of postwar global politics'.² The Third World was not just an inspiration behind the events of the 'global 1968', but also a site of protest and dissent itself. Youth activists in

¹ [A. M. Babu], 'Significance of 1968', *Nationalist*, 5 January 1968, 1.

² Jean Allman, 'The Fate of All of Us: African Counterrevolutions and the Ends of 1968', *American Historical Review*, 123 (2018), 731. See for example Sean Mills, *The Empire Within: Postcolonial Thought and Political Activism in Sixties Montreal* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2010); Quinn Slobodian, *Foreign Front: Third World Politics in Sixties West Germany* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2012); Jon Piccini, *Transnational Protest, Australia and the 1960s: Global Radicals* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016).

the postcolonial world voiced their own criticisms of the status quo and articulated visions of alternative futures.³

This chapter situates Dar es Salaam amid this transcontinental landscape of protest and youth politics. As Victoria Langland argues in her study of Brazil, historians 'have tended toward noting the international context without integrating it into the local narrative of 1968'. She calls for greater attention to 'how contemporaneous beliefs, fears, and suspicions about such connections affected the course of local events'.⁴ Dar es Salaam's central position in global revolutionary networks encouraged Tanzanians to speak out against imperialist interventions in distant states. However, unlike the bulk of protests elsewhere in the world, the demonstrations in the capital in 1968 and the broadsides which appeared in the city's press pledged support to their own government, rather than opposition to it. This chapter uses three protests as apertures through which to unpack these dynamics in Dar es Salaam. Two of these – against the United States' war in Vietnam and the Soviet-led invasion of Czechoslovakia – were central to the global wave of activism. The other – in response to Malawi's claims on Tanzanian territory – was a distinctly local affair but bound up in the politics of African liberation struggles.

Rather than take a strictly bottom-up approach to these protests, this chapter shows how they were entangled with the Tanzanian government's practices of state-building and foreign policy. Tanzanian students and youth activists cited examples of 'imperialism' intervention as justification for increased 'vigilance' and unity through TANU. The strength and nature of street protests and newspaper polemics were shaped not only by the government's anti-imperialist world view, but by the nuances of Tanzania's international relations with the super-powers and within Africa. In this way, the transnational motifs and languages which characterised the revolutions of '1968' were tethered to the nation-building and foreign policy aims of the Tanzanian party-state. However, this relationship between youth and state also meant that there were strict limits to the form and content of protest. On occasions, they upset the public image of Tanzanian foreign policy, as

³ Samantha Christiansen and Zachary A. Scarlett (eds.), *The Third World in the Global 1960s* (New York: Berghahn, 2013).

⁴ Victoria Langland, *Speaking of Flowers: Student Movements and the Making and Remembering of 1968 in Military Brazil* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2013), 8–9.

we have already seen in the raucous scenes at the British high commission following Rhodesia's UDI in 1965, for example. At other times, they indirectly challenged the authority of TANU's leadership, which in some cases drew interventions from President Nyerere himself.

The Global Sixties Come to Dar es Salaam

In Africa, student and youth protest was bound up in the structural challenges of decolonisation. Student numbers across the continent expanded rapidly after independence, as states recognised the need to fill the ranks of bureaucracies and develop technical expertise. In turn, students acquired rising expectations of the individual economic prospects which they anticipated higher education would open up to them. This mutually beneficial relationship between students and state broke down in the mid-1960s, as progressive African governments fell prey to coups or abandoned investment in universities in the face of economic difficulties. Students and youths challenged this shift by repossessing and reasserting the revolutionary agenda of the anticolonial struggle. In some instances, the state responded with crackdowns, backed up by violence.⁵ In Tanzania, as Chapter 2 explained, Nyerere responded to demonstrations against the imposition of national service with a mass rustication of the majority of the student body.

However, focusing on students can mask the role played by youth activists who were mobilised through other institutions, especially the militant wings of ruling parties.⁶ From the beginning of the anticolonial campaign, Tanganyika's nationalist leadership recognised the potential of youth politics as a means for mobilising a growing, energetic, and marginalised group. The TANU Youth League was established in 1956. It provided a mechanism for enlisting young Tanzanians in the liberation struggle, but also for exerting top-down control over them, by bringing them under the party umbrella. After independence, the TYL assumed key security functions within the state apparatus. In

⁵ Françoise Blum, Pierre Guidi, and Ophélie Rillon (eds.), *Étudiants africains en mouvements: Contribution à une histoire des années 1968* (Paris: Publications de la Sorbonne, 2016).

⁶ For examples from West Africa, see Ahlman, *Living with Nkrumahism*, 84–114; Jay Straker, *Youth, Nationalism, and the Guinean Revolution* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2009); on Zanzibar, see G. Thomas Burgess, 'The Young Pioneers and the Rituals of Citizenship in Revolutionary Africa', *Africa Today*, 51 (2005), 3–29.

1963, the government wound up the colonial Special Branch security forces. The more informal structures which replaced it were manned by TYL cadres. When the Tanganyika Rifles were disbanded after the mutiny of 1964, recruits to the new TPDF were scrutinised by the TYL.⁷

The student protests of November 1966 brought about a top-down recalibration of the relationship between the state and the student body. The students were not simply rusticated but vilified as unpatriotic in the press. Counterdemonstrations organised by the TYL and other party organisations took place in Dar es Salaam. At the same time as they chastised the students, TANU's spokesmen praised the revolutionary potential of the country's youth. A branch of the TYL was set up at the university in an attempt to tie the students into this party-sponsored youth movement, rather than allow them to pursue more individualist goals that ran counter to the government's development plans.⁸ The Arusha Declaration continued this practice of foregrounding the youth as key actors in Tanzania's national revolution. As Nyerere told the TANU leaders who gathered in Arusha, '[o]ur country is a country of youth; we are all young and our blood is still hot'.⁹ Thousands of young Tanzanians marched from across the country to Dar es Salaam to support *ujamaa*. On the first anniversary of the Declaration in 1968, TYL cadres returned to the capital for an inaugural 'National Youth Festival'. The TYL's activities also stretched beyond the nation. As a consequence of Dar es Salaam's pivotal position in the struggle against colonialism, the TYL was part of a continental network of youth activist organisations. It was appointed with the particular task of liaising between the Pan-African Youth Movement and the Dar es Salaam-based liberation movements.¹⁰

In driving forwards the agenda of *ujamaa* socialism, the TYL drew on strands of anti-imperialist ideology, rhetoric, and praxis emanating

⁷ James R. Brennan, 'Youth, the TANU Youth League, and Managed Vigilantism in Dar es Salaam, 1925–73', *Africa*, 76 (2006), 221–46. See also Lal, *African Socialism*, 81–102.

⁸ Ivaska, *Cultured States*, 145–47.

⁹ Minutes of the TANU NEC Meeting, Arusha, 26–28 January 1967, TNA, 589, BMC 11/02 D, 1.

¹⁰ 'Ripoti ya Mjumbe wa TANU Youth League katika Mkutano wa Kamati Maalum ya Kutayarisha Mkutano wa Pili wa Pan African Youth Movement, 25–29 Mai 1967, Algiers', TNA, 589, BMC 11/012.

from elsewhere in the Third World.¹¹ In particular, it took inspiration from the language and tactics of Maoist China. Even as Nyerere insisted that Tanzania was not in Beijing's pocket, the TYL modelled itself on Chinese practices. Its uniformed members were known informally as the 'Green Guards', replacing the red of the Cultural Revolution's youth activists with the TANU colours. They were to perform a similar function in mobilising the population and defending the country against imperialism and its collaborators. But the deployment of Maoist symbols or slogans should not be taken for wholesale embrace of Chinese socialism and the Cultural Revolution. Rather, it was the boiled-down, anti-imperialist rhetoric of Maoism that was attractive to the Tanzanian youth.¹² They discussed the teachings of Mao alongside those of other revolutionary icons, like Che Guevara, Ho Chi Minh, and the African liberation movement leaders.

Curious students and party activists had no difficulties in accessing such revolutionary ideas. The city's public sphere was saturated with radical literature. Tanzanians encountered a barrage of anti-imperialist headlines that screamed from the *Peking Review*, a Chinese propaganda magazine. Even more popular was Mao's *Little Red Book*. As Alexander Cook notes, Mao's sayings were a 'flexible and dynamic script for revolution' which 'travelled easily from its contingent and specific origins to a great many different kinds of places'.¹³ In Tanzania, they were harnessed towards the building of *ujamaa* socialism. Perhaps just as powerful an influence on Dar es Salaam's youth was the *cri-de-cœur* for Third World revolution of Frantz Fanon's *The Wretched of the Earth*.¹⁴ The language of the liberation movements, whether in their in-house publications or speeches made by their

¹¹ For similar dynamics elsewhere, see Claire Nicholas, 'Des corps connectés: les Ghana Young Pioneers, tête de proue de la mondialisation de Nkrumahisme (1960–1966)', *Politique africaine*, 147 (2017), 87–107.

¹² Priya Lal, 'Maoism in Tanzania: Material Connections and Shared Imaginaries', in Alexander C. Cook (ed.), *Mao's Little Red Book: A Global History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 96–116.

¹³ Alexander C. Cook, 'Introduction: The Spiritual Atom Bomb and Its Global Fallout', in Cook (ed.), *Mao's Little Red Book*, 19.

¹⁴ Alamin Mazrui, 'Fanon in the East Africa Experience: Between English and Swahili Translations', in Kathryn Batchelor and Sue-Ann Harding (eds.), *Translating Frantz Fanon Across Continents and Languages* (New York: Routledge, 2017), 76–98.

leaders, drew heavily on such revolutionary ideas and stoked these radical fires further still.

The events of 1968 were an urban phenomenon. As elsewhere in the global sixties, Dar es Salaam provided concrete spaces for the distribution of this radical literature and a public sphere in which it was discussed.¹⁵ Bookshops and embassy libraries formed access points to Marxist texts, which were then explored in student discussion groups and the pages of local newspapers. The National Library, which opened in the city centre in December 1967, sold Swahili translations of the ubiquitous *Little Red Book*.¹⁶ Next to the Canton Restaurant on Nkrumah Street, the Chinese-run Tanganyika Bookshop offered literature on topics like 'The Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution in China', 'American Crimes in Vietnam', and communism in Laos.¹⁷ A rival retailer, the African Bookshop, opposite the TYL headquarters in Kariakoo, advertised 'books from the world's biggest reading nation', distributed by the Soviet literature export house, Mezhdunarodnaya Kniga.¹⁸ University students recalled visiting the Chinese, Cuban, and Soviet embassies to collect such print material or consult it in reading rooms.¹⁹ There was no shortage of radical literature in the Cold War city – much to the chagrin of Western observers.

The contrast with Tanzania's northern neighbour here is instructive. As the Kenyan government moved towards the West, it became concerned about Chinese activities in the country, especially through Beijing's supposed connections with President Jomo Kenyatta's rival, Oginga Odinga. Sino-Kenyan relations became fraught.²⁰ In response, the Kenyan government cracked down on Chinese propaganda activities. It banned the *Little Red Book*, together with all publications by Beijing's Foreign Language Press and North Korean periodicals. It also tried to prevent material from entering the country via Tanzania. In 1968, several Kenyans were imprisoned for bringing Maoist literature across the border. According to a journalist for the *Guardian*, the Tanganyika Bookshop in Dar es Salaam had been 'identified as a well

¹⁵ Mills, *Empire Within*; Piccini, *Transnational Protest*. ¹⁶ Lal, 'Maoism', 97.

¹⁷ Stuart to Ministry for External Affairs, 25 March 1968, NAA, A1737, 3107/40/184, 256.

¹⁸ Advertisement, *Nationalist*, 2 July 1968, 6.

¹⁹ Interview with Juma Mwapachu, Oyster Bay, Dar es Salaam, 12 June 2015; interview with Salim Msoma, Oyster Bay, Dar es Salaam, 2 July 2015.

²⁰ Jodie Yuzhou Sun, "'Now the Cry Was Communism': The Cold War and Kenya's Relations with China, 1964–70", *Cold War History*, 20 (2020), 39–58.

of political poison'.²¹ In Dar es Salaam, these same publications circulated freely, and thereby provided ideological inspiration for a Tanzanian youth increasingly engaged with the politics of Third World liberation, especially the long-running war in Vietnam.

Vietnam

As elsewhere in the West, the Eastern Bloc, and the Third World, the conflict in Vietnam performed a central role in spurring anti-imperialist protest and organisation in Tanzania.²² In Africa, shocking images of the war may not have reached television screens as they did in Europe and North America, but they found expression in newspaper columns and Cold War propaganda. The conflict contained a mixture of ingredients that made it a protest cause *par excellence* in Tanzania: a superpower interfering in the decolonisation of a small, poor state; a revolutionary guerrilla movement, led by the iconic Ho Chi Minh; and a sense of Afro-Asian and Third World solidarity. The Tet Offensive of early 1968 was celebrated as a deep, albeit only fleetingly successful, strike at the heart of American imperialism. These sentiments were shared by not only youth protesters, but also party and government leaders.

For the United States' enemies in Dar es Salaam, Vietnam was fertile soil. In particular, China reaped the propaganda value from this manifestation of violent American imperialism and the virtue of the Vietcong guerrillas. In November 1967, a touring Chinese dance troupe performed a politically inspired ballet, which depicted the 'heroic Vietcong' triumphing over 'American aggressors'.²³ The following month, John F. Burns, the American ambassador, complained to the Tanzanian Ministry of Foreign Affairs that North Vietnamese representatives were allowed to show anti-American 'atrocities films' at the university, while Tanzanian censors had prevented the United States from screening a film explaining the historical context of the

²¹ John Fairhall, 'Mr Moi Opens Attack on KPU', *Guardian*, 14 July 1969, 3; see also Lal, 'Maoism', 109.

²² See for example Slobodian, *Foreign Front*; James Mark, Péter Apor, Radina Vučetić, and Piotr Oseka, "'We Are with You Vietnam": Transnational Solidarities in Socialist Hungary, Poland and Yugoslavia', *Journal of Contemporary History*, 50 (2015), 439–64.

²³ Burns to State Dept, 20 November 1967, NARA, RG 59, CFPF 1967–69, Box 1511, CSM TANZAN.

conflict.²⁴ These incidents accompanied a steady drip of printed Chinese and North Vietnamese propaganda about the war. Officials responsible for policing this material often turned a blind eye to the activities of Beijing and its friends. When Burns raised the issue with Nyerere, the president acknowledged the problem and said that the perpetrators would continue to be admonished, though he accepted that this had hitherto had little impact.²⁵

Nyerere himself was a stern critic of the United States' war in Vietnam. As we saw in Chapter 2, during his speeches to TANU leaders in Arusha in January 1967, he used the Democratic Republic of Vietnam as an example of a small state that stood up to imperialist aggression and exploitation. In October that year, Nyerere delivered a major speech on foreign policy to the TANU National Conference in the northern city of Mwanza. After setting out the basis of Tanzania's non-alignment, the president turned to specific issues, including the conflict in Indochina. Nyerere described Vietnam as 'probably the most vicious and all-enveloping war which has been known to mankind'. He called for an 'immediate and unconditional' end to the American bombing of North Vietnam and for a peace settlement on the basis of the Geneva Accords of 1954.²⁶ Nyerere's Mwanza speech represented an intensification of his criticism of the Vietnam war, which had emerged as a motif in his statements on foreign affairs over preceding years. In June 1965, Nyerere had refused Tanzania's participation in a Commonwealth peace mission to Vietnam on the grounds that the plan was simply an instrument of British foreign policy and thereby condoned American aggression.²⁷

Behind closed doors, Nyerere's relations with the United States suggested a more constructive approach. In January 1968, Nyerere reached out to the United States in his own peacemaking efforts. In a letter to President Lyndon B. Johnson, he conveyed the danger to the world of escalating conflict in Indochina and expressed his belief that North Vietnam genuinely desired peace. Nyerere called on the United States to live up to the responsibility which superpower status

²⁴ Burns to State Dept, 8 December 1967, NARA, RG 59, CFPF 1967-69, Box 1511, CSM TANZAN.

²⁵ Burns to State Dept, 5 January 1968, NARA, RG 59, CFPF 1967-69, Box 2517, POL TANZAN-US.

²⁶ 'Policy on Foreign Affairs', in Nyerere, *Freedom and Socialism*, 369-71.

²⁷ Niblock, 'Aid', 342-46.

conferred upon it. 'No one really doubts that America could bomb North Vietnam out of existence and exterminate all of its people', he wrote. 'The real question now is whether the United States is powerful enough to be able to talk with the small nation which has defied it.'²⁸ Burns thought the letter contained an implicit offer from Nyerere to act as an intermediary in negotiations. With the Sino-Tanzanian relationship deepening, Nyerere's 'credentials in communist Asia' seemed an asset worth pursuing.²⁹ Moreover, Burns thought that Nyerere's initiative presented an opportunity for improving the United States' position in Tanzania. The letter, he thought, had 'set the stage for an exchange which could have a lasting impact on our understandings with him and our future relations'. He pressed Washington to send a special emissary to Tanzania to deliver Johnson's response.³⁰ However, Washington deemed a written reply from Johnson sufficient.³¹ This simply recapitulated the United States' position: it was willing to end the bombing campaign and pursue peace talks if it received sufficient guarantees that North Vietnam would abide by a truce.³² The short-lived diplomatic opening had no lasting consequence. Nonetheless, it demonstrated Nyerere's commitment to constructive diplomacy and contrasted sharply with the uncompromising language of party journalists and activists.

Vietnam was rarely out of the local headlines in Tanzania in 1968. TANU's newspaper, the *Nationalist*, carried a series of anti-American editorials. One particularly vitriolic feature condemned 'the most criminal war of aggression in history waged by the United States imperialists against the Vietnamese people'.³³ Newspapers carried front-page photographs of visiting Vietnamese delegations meeting Tanzanian officials. In March 1968, TANU participated in a 'Solidarity with Vietnam Week', which was 'being observed throughout the progressive

²⁸ Nyerere to Johnson, 2 January 1968, LBJL, NSF, SHSC, Box 52, Tanzania, 19m.

²⁹ Burns to State Dept, 3 January 1968, NARA, RG 59, CFPF 1967-69, Box 2517, POL TANZAN-US.

³⁰ Burns to State Dept, 4 January 1968, NARA, RG 59, CFPF 1967-69, Box 2517, POL TANZAN-US.

³¹ Rusk to US emb., Dar es Salaam, 5 January 1968, NARA, RG 59, CFPF 1967-69, Box 2517, POL US-TANZAN.

³² Johnson to Nyerere, 15 January 1968, LBJL, NSF, SHSC, Box 52, Tanzania, 19b.

³³ Nsa Kaisi, 'Heroic Vietnam', *Nationalist*, 19 March 1968, 4.

world'. It sent a message to Ho Chi Minh, which stated that '[t]he people of Tanzania are immensely encouraged by the staunchness and bravery of the Vietnamese people in standing as the greatest pillar of liberation in modern times'.³⁴ The TANU Youth League was at the forefront of these expressions of solidarity. In April, it donated a consignment of tinned beef to the 'youth and people of Vietnam' in their 'just struggle against imperialism aggression'. The cans were delivered to North Vietnam by Benjamin Mkapa, the *Nationalist* editor.³⁵ Kingunge Ngombale-Mwiru, a TYL leader, recalled how he had close relations with the North Vietnamese diplomats in Dar es Salaam. 'I learned quite a lot about the Vietnamese and the way they were facing the giants of the world – the Americans', he said. 'We were opposed to American aggression in solidarity with the Vietnamese people.'³⁶

On 20 July, the TYL held a march in Dar es Salaam to mark the fourteenth anniversary of the Geneva Accords, which demarcated the division between the north and southern parts of Vietnam.³⁷ This was the first public protest in the capital since the student demonstration of 1966. It was organised by the University College branch of the TYL and led by its chairman, Juma Mwapachu. Between 100 and 150 Tanzanians participated, joined by members of the American community in the city, including Peace Corps volunteers. They ran through the streets of central Dar es Salaam, waving branches of foliage and placards with slogans like: 'In every grave will rise a raging ricefield', 'Long live Uncle Ho and the heroic people of Vietnam', and '*Marekani washenzi*' ('Americans are savages'). Burns refused to meet a student delegation in the presence of what he condescendingly described as 'a Roman circus' of reporters, photographers, and sound crew. Instead, he invited them in for tea. The protesters rejected this, asking, 'How can

³⁴ 'Tanu Greets Viet Week', *Nationalist*, 19 March 1968, 1, 8.

³⁵ 'T.Y.L. Gift to Vietnam Militants', *Nationalist*, 20 April 1968, 1; Benjamin William Mkapa, *My Life, My Purpose: A Tanzanian President Remembers* (Dar es Salaam: Mkuki na Nyota, 2019), 64.

³⁶ Interview with Kingunge Ngombale-Mwiru, Victoria, Dar es Salaam, 26 August 2015.

³⁷ This account of the protest is based on 'Militant Youth Protest Against US', *Nationalist*, 22 July 1968, 8; Burns to State Dept, 20 July 1968, NARA, RG 59, CFPF 1967–69, Box 2513, POL 2 TANZAN; Burns to State Dept, 20 July 1968, NARA, RG 59, CFPF 1967–69, Box 2516, POL 23 TANZAN; Naudy to MAE-DAL, 23 July 1968, CADN, 193PO/1/31 AII32; Markle, *Motorcycle*, 85.

you offer us tea when your hands are dripping with the blood of the people of Vietnam?’³⁸ The demonstrators settled on a note of protest, which called for the unconditional withdrawal of ‘Yankee and their satellite troops from South Vietnam’, condemned the use of napalm, and ‘utterly abhorred the bestiality and callousness like castration, disembowelment, cutting of [sic] women’s breasts committed in the name of American democracy and western civilisation’. Singing songs in praise of Ho and Nyerere, the protesters departed for the North Vietnamese mission. The demonstration may have been small scale, but its language and repertoire set a precedent for subsequent protests. Marches against the United States and in support of the North Vietnamese became regular features of Dar es Salaam’s public life.

Czechoslovakia

A month later, the protesters were back on the streets of Dar es Salaam, and in greater numbers. This time they directed their anger at Moscow. On the night of 20–21 August, the forces of the Warsaw Pact invaded Czechoslovakia, bringing a swift end to Alexander Dubček’s period of socialist reform. While the intervention reasserted Soviet control over Eastern Europe, it was a public relations disaster for Moscow and manna for its enemies, especially China. The Soviet Union, which touted itself as the vanguard of the struggle against imperialism across the world, appeared to have scant respect for independent governments in its own neighbourhood. As Jeremi Suri notes, ‘[w]hile Mao Zedong’s followers waved a “little red book” pledging power to the masses, the Kremlin could only offer the so-called “Brezhnev Doctrine” – a commitment to use force in defence of the status quo’.³⁹

As news of the invasion filtered through to capitals around the world, governments and political parties scrambled to formulate a response. Geopolitical and ideological inclinations shaped their reactions to the Soviet Union’s actions. Some socialists resorted to particularly contorted rhetorical gymnastics in justifying Moscow’s decisions. But Tanzania’s response to the invasion was immediate and unambiguous.

³⁸ Robert Carl Cohen, *Black Crusader: A Biography of Robert Franklin Williams* (Secaucus, NJ: Lyle Stuart, 1st ed., 1972), 344.

³⁹ Jeremi Suri, ‘The Promises and Failure of “Developed Socialism”: The Soviet “Thaw” and the Crucible of the Prague Spring, 1964–1972’, *Contemporary European History*, 15 (2006), 156.

On the evening of 21 August, a government statement condemned 'a betrayal of all the principles of self-determination and national sovereignty'. It accused Warsaw Pact states of showing total disregard for the UN charter and reiterated that 'Tanzania opposes colonialism of all kinds, whether old or new, in Africa, in Europe, or elsewhere.'⁴⁰ Having made his position clear, Nyerere then turned towards a public manifestation of the strength of Tanzanian feeling. He privately instructed student leaders to organise a demonstration.⁴¹

On 23 August, around 2,000 people marched to the Soviet embassy on Bagamoyo Road in Dar es Salaam. The crowd comprised student groups and members of the TANU Youth League. They chanted and waved placards emblazoned with slogans like 'To hell with the Warsaw Pact' and 'Russians are Hitler's hench men'. The demonstration then took an unexpected turn. Led by two government ministers who also held leadership positions in the TYL, Lawi Sijaona and Chediell Mgonja, protesters jumped over the fence of the embassy compound. They pelted the building with torn-up scraps of Soviet propaganda, which they had brought along in wheelbarrows. There were reports of thrown stones and smashed windows. In a moment of alarm, the protesters pounded on the roof of a diplomatic car carrying the Soviet flag, which had chosen an unfortunate moment to pass through the embassy gates. Tanzanian police officers looked on, unmoved. The students thrust a note through a grill to diplomats inside the embassy which described the invasion as 'a naked contravention of the sacred principles of international socialism'. After twenty minutes, the crowd crossed the Selander Bridge to the nearby Czechoslovakian embassy, where the chargé d'affaires gratefully accepted a letter of solidarity. Behind them, the shrubbery outside the Soviet embassy lay strewn with the shredded propaganda.⁴²

⁴⁰ 'Tanzania Deplores Occupation', *Nationalist*, 22 August 1968, 1.

⁴¹ Interview with Juma Mwapachu, Oyster Bay, Dar es Salaam, 12 June 2015.

⁴² This account of the protest is based on 'Massive Protest March', *Nationalist*, 24 August 1968, 1, 8; 'Angry Students, TANU Youths in Demonstration', *Daily Nation*, 24 August 1968, 24; Pickering to State Dept, 23 August 1968, NARA, RG 59, Czechoslovakian Crisis Microfilm, Reel 2; Naudy to MAE, 24 August 1968, CADN, 193PO/1/27 AII27; Lessing to Kiesewetter, Kern, and Schüssler, 24 August 1968, BA-B, SAPMO, DY 30/98137, 190–91; Lessing to Kiesewetter, 27 August 1968, BA-B, SAPMO, DY 30/98137, 183–85; 'Czechoslovakia: Its Impact on Independent Africa', CIA, October 1968, cia.gov/library/readingroom/docs/CIA-RDP78-03061A000400030018-7.pdf;

The particularly assertive Tanzanian response to the invasion of Czechoslovakia must be understood in the context of its rapidly deteriorating relations with Moscow. This was in part the inevitable consequence of Dar es Salaam's strengthening friendship with Beijing. In June 1968, Nyerere paid a second visit to China, where he restated his admiration for Mao. Nyerere asserted that he had 'no reason to believe that friendship between Tanzania and China will not continue indefinitely, and grow stronger as time passes'.⁴³ At a banquet held in Nyerere's honour, Chinese premier Zhou Enlai outraged Soviet diplomats by remarking that Moscow and Washington had invented 'nuclear colonialism'. Representatives of the Soviet Union, other Warsaw Pact states, and Mongolia walked out of the dinner in protest.⁴⁴ The 'Hands Off' editorial in the *Nationalist*, which appeared just a week before the invasion of Czechoslovakia, served as further evidence of Nyerere's impatience with the behaviour of the Eastern Bloc in Tanzania.⁴⁵

These Soviet-Tanzanian tensions were sharpened by their contrasting stances towards the ongoing war in Nigeria. Against the backdrop of coups and ethnic violence, the eastern region of Biafra had declared its independence from Nigeria in May 1967. The Federal Military Government in Lagos responded by imposing a blockade and then launching an armed intervention to end the secession. In April 1968, Tanzania broke rank with other African states when it announced the recognition of Biafra, citing the region's right to self-determination in the face of oppression from the federal government. This was a surprising move by Nyerere, given the OAU charter's pledge to maintain the borders inherited from colonial rule.⁴⁶ Moscow's decision to provide military support to Lagos therefore met with a bitter reaction in the TANU press. In March 1968, a *Nationalist* leader on 'Anglo-Soviet Collusion' in Nigeria, described the 'line of thinking of the Russians' as 'tantamount to the reasoning of the Americans with regard to Vietnam'.⁴⁷ This simmering animosity informed the strong

Reuters, 'Tanzania: Hundreds of Students March on Soviet Embassy in Czech Protest Demonstration', film report, 24 August 1968, BPRHC.

⁴³ 'Equality in Sovereign Relationships', in Nyerere, *Freedom and Development*, 41.

⁴⁴ 'Walkout at Banquet for Mwalimu', *Standard*, 20 June 1968, 1. The incident went unmentioned in the *Nationalist*.

⁴⁵ See Chapter 3. ⁴⁶ Lal, 'Tanzanian *Ujamaa*', 376–77.

⁴⁷ 'Anglo-Soviet Collusion', editorial, *Nationalist*, 16 March 1968, 4.

Tanzanian reaction to events in Czechoslovakia. Both press and protesters drew parallels between the Soviet Union's behaviour in Czechoslovakia and Nigeria. 'Hands off Biafra, down with Russian aggression', declared one placard at the embassy demonstration. Babu reminded the readers of his *Nationalist* column that 'as we shudder at the invasion of Czechoslovakia let us not forget the indirect invasion of the Biafran people'.⁴⁸

In keeping with his desire to cut a statesmanlike figure who commanded international respectability, Nyerere's own response to the invasion was more measured. He was embarrassed by the scenes at the Soviet embassy, especially as he himself had ordered the demonstration. In a meeting with the Soviet chargé d'affaires, Nyerere calmly listened to Moscow's explanation for the intervention, which stated that the invasion had taken place at the request of the Czechoslovakian leadership. Nyerere then rejected this version of events and cited the overriding authority of the UN charter and the principle of national sovereignty, pointing to Tanzania's stance towards Vietnam.⁴⁹ The following morning, the *Nationalist* ran a leader entitled 'Pity the Ambassador'. It was written, though not signed, by Nyerere himself. Without naming states or individuals, it sympathised with the 'poor Ambassador', who was duty-bound to convey the views of his own government, no matter how preposterous. 'If his Government tells him it has decided that in future the sun will rise in the West and set in the East he must solemnly go to the Head of his host Government and report the decision', the editorial mused.⁵⁰ Nyerere here sought to take the heat off the local Soviet representatives, who were still reeling from the protest at the embassy three days beforehand, while also mocking Moscow's party line. In another attempt to defuse the situation, an anti-Soviet demonstration planned by NUTA, the party-affiliated trade union, was called off.⁵¹ As Chapter 3 showed, relations between the Soviet Union and Tanzania quickly recovered, due to Nyerere's concern not to appear too close to Beijing or alienate a potential aid donor,

⁴⁸ [A. M. Babu], 'The World's So-Called Policemen', *Nationalist*, 23 August 1968, 4.

⁴⁹ Arkadi Glukhov, 'The Fateful August of 1968: Hot Summer in Dar es Salaam', in Russian Academy of Sciences Institute of African Studies, *Julius Nyerere: Humanist, Politician, Thinker*, trans. B. G. Petruk (Dar es Salaam: Mkuki na Nyota, 2005), 42–49.

⁵⁰ 'Pity the Ambassador', editorial, *Nationalist*, 26 August 1968, 4.

⁵¹ Naudy to MAE-DAL, 1 October 1968, CADN, 193PO/1/27 AII27.

especially as Soviet aid for Dar es Salaam's African liberation movements expanded in the late 1960s.

Malawi

Another month, another protest in Dar es Salaam. The numbers involved also grew once more. On 26 September, a crowd estimated at between 5,000 and 10,000 people marched through the capital. On this occasion, their grievances came not from some distant superpower intervention in Indochina or Central Europe, but a threat much closer to home: claims by Hastings Banda, president of Malawi, to a swathe of territory in southwestern Tanzania. The protesters again brandished placards: 'Banda – Africa will never forgive you', 'Malawians overthrow Banda regime', 'Down with Banda'. They chanted 'traitor, traitor' and dragged an effigy of Banda, which was then violently decapitated at the feet of Rashidi Kawawa, the Tanzanian second vice-president. TYL members carried a coffin that proclaimed 'Banda, we are burying you today'. Also present at the march was a small group of Malawian dissidents who had taken up residence in exile in Dar es Salaam.⁵²

The dispute that triggered these protests ostensibly concerned the contested location of the border between Malawi and Tanzania, which had its origins in colonial-era ambiguities. But it was turned into such a heated issue by a number of interwoven political bones of contention between the two states that bridged international and domestic affairs. Principal among these was the presence of the Malawian exiles in the Tanzanian capital. In September 1964, long-running rivalries among Malawi's political elite, which had simmered away during the liberation struggle, burst out into the open once the collective cause of winning independence ceased to provide cohesion. A number of Banda's opponents inside cabinet fled into exile. Yatuta Chisiza and Kanyama Chiume were granted refuge in Dar es Salaam, where they became integrated into the local political scene. Chiume, who had grown up in Tanganyika, joined the staff of the *Nationalist*. In 1966,

⁵² 'Put Gunboats on L. Nyasa – NUTA', *Nationalist*, 27 September 1968, 1, 8; 'Dar Challenge to Banda', *Daily Nation*, 27 September 1968, 1, 40; Burns to State Dept, 27 September 1968, NARA, RG 59, CFPF 1967–69, Box 2513, POL 2 TANZAN; Reuters, 'Anti-Banda Demonstration in Dar-es-Salaam', film report, 27 September 1968, BPRHC.

the exiles were joined by another ex-minister, Henry Chipembere, who had led a failed attempt to overthrow Banda the previous year and then fled to the United States. From Dar es Salaam, Chipembere canvassed support for his Panafrican Democratic Party (PDP), which campaigned against Banda, while also teaching at Kivukoni College, the TANU training school. Both Chiume and Chipembere were close childhood friends of Oscar Kambona, who was of Malawian descent. Kambona provided them with a contact point at the centre of power and, most likely, their jobs in party institutions.⁵³

The Malawians became members of Dar es Salaam's exile scene, although they occupied an anomalous position within it. Unlike the likes of FRELIMO and the ANC, they were campaigning for the overthrow of an independent African government, rather than the liberation of a territory still under the colonial yoke. The Tanzanian government therefore treated their arrival with circumspection. In 1964, it announced it had granted asylum to the Malawians, but underlined that it would not tolerate them 'abusing our hospitality and undertaking any political or other campaign against the Malawi Government'. Despite this, the TANU press threw its support behind the dissidents. The *Nationalist* described Banda as a 'tin pot Cromwell'.⁵⁴ The exiles' supporters received military training in Tanzania and elsewhere in the socialist world. Banda repeatedly warned of the dangers of an attack from Tanzanian soil. Such fears were not without basis. In September 1967, Chisiza and his supporters launched an invasion of Malawi. But the mission, which ended in Chisiza's death, was a total catastrophe and illustrated the weakness of the ex-ministers' position. Exile life, as the previous chapter showed, was marked by division as much as solidarity. Chipembere and Chiume had cautioned Chisiza against his invasion, while the PDP was riven with factionalism and distrust.⁵⁵

These tensions came against the backdrop of a fundamental cleavage between Malawi's and Tanzania's foreign policies. In contrast to Tanzania's hard-line opposition to Africa's white minority regimes,

⁵³ Colin Baker, *Revolt of the Ministers: The Malawi Cabinet Crisis, 1964–1965* (London: IB Tauris, 2001); Kanyama Chiume, *Autobiography of Kanyama Chiume* (London: Panaf, 1982); Kanyama Chiume, *Banda's Malawi: An African Tragedy* (Lusaka: Multimedia Publications, 1992).

⁵⁴ Quoted in Philip Short, *Banda* (London: Routledge, 1974), 231.

⁵⁵ Chiume, *Autobiography*, 237–42.

Malawi took a much more conciliatory approach. In pursuit of a *modus vivendi* with his powerful neighbours, Banda embraced negotiation rather than armed conflict. He recognised that a close relationship with Portugal would give landlocked Malawi access to the port of Beira in Mozambique. Banda reciprocated by restricting FRELIMO's operations on Malawian territory. This was, of course, anathema to Tanzania. In 1965, the OAU attempted to patch up these differences by recommending that Malawi be given a seat on its Liberation Committee. Nyerere reacted angrily. In return, Banda refused to commit funds to the Liberation Committee's work as long as its headquarters was located in the capital of a state which allegedly supported the Malawian dissidents. By the end of 1967, Malawi had signed trade and labour agreements with Portugal and Banda had announced his intention to establish diplomatic relations with South Africa.⁵⁶ The Malawi-Tanzania argument was also coloured by the two states' contrasting stances towards communist China. During the cabinet crisis of 1964, Banda had accused Chiume and other ministers, at a meeting with the Chinese ambassador in Dar es Salaam, of accepting a 'bribe' in agreeing to receive £18 million in aid in exchange for Malawi's recognition of China. Banda attacked China in public, claiming that Mao was seeking to resurrect the Mongol Empire. He also opened diplomatic relations with Taiwan.⁵⁷ Banda's allegations that communist countries were propping up the ex-ministers were not entirely baseless, since Chisiza had received military training in China prior to his ill-fated invasion in 1967.⁵⁸

The interconnected matters of the anti-Banda dissidents, the geopolitics of anticolonial liberation, and Cold War tensions thus turned a cartographic technicality into a major international confrontation between Malawi and Tanzania. The lack of space here precludes a full exposition of the details of the border debate, which were the outcome of the confusion caused by multiple colonial regimes operating under different legal norms. Between independence and the Malawian cabinet crisis of 1964, the government in Dar es Salaam accepted the existing frontier, which ran along the Tanganyikan shoreline of Lake Nyasa⁵⁹

⁵⁶ Banda's foreign policy awaits archive-grounded historical analysis, but see Short, *Banda*; Carolyn McMaster, *Malawi: Foreign Policy and Development* (London: Julian Friedman, 1974).

⁵⁷ Short, *Banda*, 236–37. ⁵⁸ Baker, *Revolt*, 274.

⁵⁹ The lake is known as Lake Malawi in Malawi and Lake Nyasa in Tanzania.

and therefore set its waters within Malawian jurisdiction. But the tensions which arose over Malawi's stance towards the white minority regimes and the perceived threat of a Portuguese invasion propelled Tanzania to revisit the matter, possibly with the encouragement of the Malawian exiles. In January 1967, pointing to inconsistencies in earlier maps, the Tanzanian government now claimed that the median line between the lake's two shores would be a just border. The actual legal foundations for the Tanzanian case, notes James Mayall, were 'weak' and the decision to publicise the call for the relocation of the border 'hardly prudent' given the geopolitical context. Banda responded by arguing that colonial boundary-drawing had already separated Malawians living in contemporary Mozambique, Tanzania, and Zambia from the territory of the postcolonial state of Malawi.⁶⁰

The crisis came to a head in September 1968, when Banda offered his own, more radical reinterpretation of the border's location. At a rally in northern Malawi, Banda talked about restoring the country's 'natural frontiers', including swathes of southwestern Tanzania. Amid the broader tensions between the two states, these comments received an immediate rebuke from Nyerere. He warned that Banda 'must not be ignored simply because he is insane. The powers behind him are not insane.' Banda hit back by calling Nyerere 'a coward and a communist inspired jellyfish', as well as a 'betrayal' of the cause of African unity.⁶¹ The liberation movements rallied to the defence of Tanzania, as the ANC, FRELIMO, ZANU, and ZAPU all condemned Banda.⁶² Chipembere accused Banda of having 'grandiose designs of territorial self-aggrandisement'.⁶³ TANU then organised its own response. Unlike the Vietnam and Czechoslovakia protests, which had been led by students and members of the party's youth wing, the anti-Banda demonstrations were called by the trade union. NUTA's Executive Council decided to organise countrywide protests and alleged that Banda was being 'used by colonialists, imperialists and fascists to disrupt peace in Tanzania'.⁶⁴ The relatively large size of the Dar es Salaam march may

⁶⁰ James Mayall, 'The Malawi-Tanzania Boundary Dispute', *Journal of Modern African Studies*, 11 (1973), quotation on 624.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 619. ⁶² 'Reaction to Claim', *Nationalist*, 14 September 1968, 1.

⁶³ 'Banda's Land Claims Come Under Attack', *Daily Nation*, 20 September 1968, 11.

⁶⁴ 'Nuta to Organize Anti-Banda Demonstration', *Nationalist*, 21 September 1968, 8.

well have been indicative of both the broader base of the organisation and the nature of the threat against which the workers mobilised: a supposed 'puppet' of the white minority regimes across Tanzania's southern frontier felt like a more visceral danger to the body politic than superpower interventions on distant continents. Yet the anti-Banda protesters shared the same language of anti-imperialism with the students and youth activists who had demonstrated outside embassies in previous months.

However, the rationale of the Tanzanian response to the threat from Malawi was more complicated than its stance on Czechoslovakia and Vietnam. In these other examples, Tanzania's criticism had been based on the fundamental principle of national sovereignty against imperialist encroachment. But in demanding the end to Banda's regime, Tanzania's response went beyond simply the defence of its own territory. In doing so, it shared the aims of Chipembere and Chiume, who themselves participated in the demonstration. 'Malawians overthrow Banda', read one placard. Such calls were difficult to reconcile with the enshrined principle of non-interference into member states' internal affairs which underpinned the OAU's continental order. This tension was evident in an ambivalent and contradictory editorial in the *Nationalist*. 'It is not for us in Tanzania to solve the Banda problem. That is clearly the task of the Malawi [sic] people', it recognised. Yet the newspaper also called on Tanzanians 'to join hands with our Malawi brothers in any revolutionary task that they may undertake to deal with reactionary sell-out forces that want to take them back to the forgotten dark ages of slavery'.⁶⁵ This was, in effect, the organ of a ruling party in an African state explicitly calling for the overthrow of the government of its neighbour. By claiming that Malawi was in the hands of white racist puppeteers, TANU was implying that the Banda regime had relinquished its own sovereign claims.

The September demonstrations were the high-water mark in tensions between Malawi and Tanzania. Banda never followed through on his threats and the uproar in Tanzania died down, even as the Malawian president was still castigated as an imperialist stooge. Nonetheless, the incident serves as an example of the vulnerability which Tanzania felt from its powerful enemies to the south, lubricated by Nyerere's personal animosity towards Banda. At the height of the crisis, Nyerere had

⁶⁵ 'Dare Not Dr. Banda', editorial, *Nationalist*, 18 September 1968, 4.

stated that Banda's words 'do not scare us and do not deserve my reply', but the numbers that rallied to the Tanzanian cause on the streets of the capital revealed more widespread anxieties.⁶⁶ The American embassy thought that the Tanzanian government was genuinely concerned about Banda, with unconfirmed reports of cancelled military leave and the dispatch of troops to the border.⁶⁷ Meanwhile, the threat posed to Banda's regime from the dissidents in Dar es Salaam quietly fizzled out. Chisiza was already dead, while Chipembere and Chiume had lost their major sponsor in Tanzanian political circles following Kambona's own flight into exile. Chipembere was reportedly disillusioned with exile life and feared assassination in Dar es Salaam. Shortly after the death of his friend Eduardo Mondlane in 1969, he returned to California to pursue a doctorate and take up a university teaching position.⁶⁸ The problem of the boundary debate has been more enduring. Although the issue fell dormant after the conflagration of 1968, the discovery of fossil fuel reserves under the lake's waters has recently increased the stakes for both sides.⁶⁹ In the short term, the lasting material impact was much more symbolic: in October, the Dar es Salaam City Council voted to rename Banda Close in Oyster Bay as Chisiza Close, in memory of the 'Malawian freedom fighter Yatuta Chisiza'.⁷⁰

Nationalising Transnational Protest

In recent years, it has become commonplace to characterise the revolutions of the 1960s as a transnational phenomenon. Indeed, texts and ideas produced elsewhere in the world circulated through Dar es Salaam's public sphere and shaped local responses to events abroad. Concepts of Afro-Asian solidarity, Maoism, and Third Worldism animated protests outside embassies and provided ideological fuel for newspaper columns. Yet whereas youth protesters across the world

⁶⁶ 'Expansionist Banda Warned', *Nationalist*, 14 September 1968, 1.

⁶⁷ Burns to State Dept, 4 October 1968, NARA, RG 59, CFPF 1967–69, Box 2513, POL 2 TANZAN.

⁶⁸ Baker, *Revolt*, 274; David Martin, 'Bitter Chipembere Leaves Africa', *Guardian*, 20 December 1969, 3.

⁶⁹ Tiyanjana Maluwa, 'Some Aspects of the Boundary Dispute Between Malawi and Tanzania over Lake Malawi', *Michigan Journal of International Law*, 37 (2016), 351–420.

⁷⁰ 'Banda's Name Struck Off', *Nationalist*, 23 October 1968, 1.

levelled their criticisms at the nation-state, their Tanzanian contemporaries rallied to it. Their primary vehicles for these mobilisations were TANU and its organs. The Tanzanian state was thus able to marshal protest in support of its foreign and domestic policies. It essentially nationalised the transnational dynamics of the 'global 1968'.

Despite the obvious differences between the geopolitical circumstances of the situations explored here – the war in Vietnam, the invasion of Czechoslovakia, and the dispute with Malawi – their language drew on a common world view structured by anti-imperialism. Tanzanian interlocutors sought to connect each incident with a wider pattern of imperialist violations of national sovereignty. 'We believe that imperialism is a global phenomenon', said Lawi Sijaona when opening an exhibition of photographs on the Vietnam conflict in June 1968. 'Vietnam is only one theatre where this struggle is going on.'⁷¹ In the *Nationalist*, Babu stated that '[t]he horror of intervention in Czechoslovakia should remind us of the continuing horror and the larger scale of destruction of property, extermination of human life, and abuse of the dignity of a people, which describes the American oppression and occupation of Vietnam'.⁷² The placards brandished by the demonstrators also made reference to powerful actors deemed to be at the root of the imperialist threat. 'U.\$ Imperialism Hold Your Dogs', read one at the Malawi march – despite the United States having little directly to do with the dispute. Addressing the protest, second vice-president Kawawa drew parallels between the Malawian situation and the case of Biafra, alleging that in both cases imperialists were arming puppet regimes to set Africans against one another.⁷³ Almost totally lacking from this discourse was the language of East-West rivalry, despite the Cold War context of the Vietnam and Czechoslovakia examples.

Whereas in Western Europe and North America the protests of 1968 were arraigned against the state, in Dar es Salaam they were marshalled by the organs of the ruling party. The government's decision to permit demonstrations to take place (and even encourage them) represented a shift in approach. Since the ugly scenes at the British high commission following UDI in 1965 and the student protests against national service the following year, there had been no youth protests in the capital. When assessing the Vietnam demonstration in July, the French

⁷¹ 'Sijaona Slates US on Vietnam', *Nationalist*, 5 June 1968, 8.

⁷² [A. M. Babu], 'The World's So-Called Policemen', *Nationalist*, 23 August 1968, 4.

⁷³ 'Put Gunboats on L. Nyasa – NUTA', *Nationalist*, 27 September 1968, 1, 8.

ambassador noted that the most significant aspect of the protest, given its small size, was that it had been allowed to take place at all.⁷⁴ More explicit evidence of this dynamic comes from the Czechoslovakia march. Juma Mwapachu, chairman of the university branch of the TYL, remembered receiving a telephone call from Nyerere. Nyerere told Mwapachu that the students were to lead a demonstration against the Soviet Union. ‘*Mwalimu* was very clever’, Mwapachu recalled. ‘Instead of using state authority to say, “we don’t agree with you”, he allowed the youth movement to perform that particular task’. In Nyerere’s concern not to aggravate Tanzania’s already strained relations with Moscow, the country would speak through its youth rather than via official diplomatic channels. ‘It was not spontaneous on our part’, said Mwapachu. ‘It was very much state driven.’⁷⁵ The state recruited the youth, via the party’s apparatus, to express Tanzania’s discontent with distant imperialist interventions.

This was the critical difference between Dar es Salaam’s protesters and radicals in 1968, and most of their contemporaries elsewhere in the world. As in Western Europe and North America, superpower interventions were the target of Tanzanian protests. But whereas students elsewhere turned their anger against their own governments, in Dar es Salaam, the state, students, and youth shared similar world views.⁷⁶ The Arusha Declaration and the principle of ‘self-reliance’ were predicated on a similar critique of an unjust global economic order to that advanced by student protesters in the global North. For this reason, Nyerere himself was heartened by news of unrest in Europe. In his annual New Year’s address to foreign diplomats in January 1969, he lauded the world’s youth for their struggle against injustice and inequality.⁷⁷ The following year, Nyerere told Erhard Eppler, the West German minister

⁷⁴ Naudy to MAE-DAL, 23 July 1968, CADN, 193PO/1/31 AII32. The French report noted the irony that just two hours before the demonstration, Burns had signed an agreement under which the United States would give a \$13 million loan to cover the construction of a road connecting Tanzania and Zambia – the American counterpunch to the Chinese-funded railway.

⁷⁵ Interview with Juma Mwapachu, Oyster Bay, Dar es Salaam, 12 June 2015.

⁷⁶ Compare with the situations in Congo-Brazzaville and Senegal, where youth activists criticised their governments for remaining dependent on French neocolonial support: Matthew Swagler, ‘Youth Radicalism in Senegal and Congo-Brazzaville, 1958–1974’, PhD diss. (Columbia University, 2017).

⁷⁷ Pickering to State Dept, 2 January 1969, NARA, RG 59, CFPF 1967–69, Box 2512, POL.

for economic development, that he believed that the 'spirit of the youth in the industrialised world' gave hope to the poorer countries of the global South.⁷⁸ This revolutionary 'spirit' of 1968 was folded back into TANU's nation-building attempts. One Tanzanian studying in London wrote to the *Nationalist* to argue that the country's youth should channel their energies towards the national revolution. 'Whereas students here [in Europe] feel frustrated because they do not have a chance to contribute to the betterment of humanity, in Tanzania the country is full of opportunities at all levels.'⁷⁹ The lessons of '1968' were inflected back onto national politics, in ways which both evoked the sense of possibility in the postcolonial state and warned against the threats it faced in pursuing its socialist ambitions.

This task was taken up enthusiastically by the TANU Youth League, as it turned its activism towards more conservative ends on the streets of Dar es Salaam. In October 1968, the TYL announced its plans for 'Operation Vijana', a campaign against 'indecent dress'. The wearing of miniskirts or tight trousers was deemed antithetical to Tanzania's 'national culture' – TANU's reclamation of an African heritage which had been trampled on by colonialism and risked corruption by a decadent cosmopolitan modernity. Lawi Sijaona, as the TYL's chairman, emphasised that the enforcement of the ban would be concentrated on Dar es Salaam, since 'the people whose minds have been enslaved by dehumanising practices are confined into the urban areas'. As Andrew Ivaska has argued, this move brought together official state policy towards promoting 'national culture' and anti-Westernism with masculine vulnerabilities bound up in shifting gender roles in a time of rapid urbanisation.⁸⁰ After the introduction of the ban in January 1969, TYL members patrolled the streets of the capital in search of any sartorial transgressions. Fearful that the TYL's vigilante-style approach might be counterproductive, Nyerere himself reined in the TYL during Operation Vijana, by ordering that cadres involved must carry identification cards and only carry out arrests with police assistance. These restrictive measures meant that the campaign soon fizzled out.⁸¹

⁷⁸ Extracts from report on Eppler's visit to Tanzania and Kenya, April 1970, enclosed in BA-K, B213/7673.

⁷⁹ M. L. N. Baregu, letter to the editor, *Nationalist*, 3 June 1968, 4–5.

⁸⁰ Ivaska, *Cultured States*, quotation at 62.

⁸¹ Burns to State Dept, 31 March 1969, NARA, RG 59, CFPF 1967–69, Box 2513, POL 2 TANZAN.

Operation Vijana demonstrates how the image of a global moment of revolutionary activism might obscure the less cosmopolitan – indeed, anti-cosmopolitan – politics of local youth activists. Slightly paradoxically, the same youth activism that built internationalist bridges with the Vietcong and other Third World struggles had a more insidious, conservative manifestation in the realm of cultural politics. Tanzania's experience of the 'global 1968' encapsulated the sometimes-paradoxical nature of TANU's socialist project, which presented itself as a part of a pan-African and Third World revolutionary movement that stretched across borders while adopting a more intolerant, insular agenda within its own frontiers. Whereas much of the recent literature on 1968 presents youth activists as creating a transnational community beyond the state, Tanzanian youths were Third World nationalists who mobilised themselves through the structures of the ruling party.

The Limits to Activism

The alignment of the world views of the TANU leadership with the nation's youth did not give the latter unbridled freedom to pursue their political activism in attacking Tanzania's 'imperialist' enemies. There were limits to protest, in two main ways. First, such activities were expected to be carried out through the growing institutional apparatus of TANU, rather than autonomous grassroots movements. Second, there was a fine line between condemning instances of imperialism abroad and needlessly antagonising foreign powers, with the potential to upset Nyerere's carefully crafted foreign policy.

Critical to the government's endorsement and even encouragement of these protests was the condition that they took place under the party umbrella. The demonstrations at the American and Soviet embassies, as we have seen, were arranged through the TYL, while the anti-Banda protest was the work of NUTA. The relationship between the TYL's leadership, its university branch, and other student groups was complicated. Jenerali Ulimwengu, then a radical student, recalled that at times their positions overlapped. 'Sometimes they fused', he said. 'For instance, when the Prague Spring was crushed, both the TANU Youth League and the students' bodies condemned the Soviet Union.' Yet whereas the TYL was 'controlled and directed by the party', the students 'engaged on a broader line, with a freer spirit that engaged with the rest

of the world in a more liberal manner'.⁸² The party increasingly demanded a monopoly over youth politics. In December 1968, the University Students' Union tried to arrange a Pan-African Students Conference in Dar es Salaam. The *Nationalist* responded by accusing the students of challenging the TYL's 'exclusive right and power to speak for the entire youth of the country in both internal and international affairs. . . . Those who oppose this fact are enemies of the Tanzanian Youth, and the youth will not hesitate to smash them.'⁸³

The state-backed dominance of the TYL was confirmed by developments on campus. As Luke Melchiorre argues, the 1970s witnessed the institutionalisation of TANU control over the university, subsuming previously autonomous student organisations into the party and eliminating dissenting groups.⁸⁴ The case of the University Students' African Revolutionary Front (USARF) is instructive. USARF was founded in November 1967 by a small but vocal group of students.⁸⁵ They were ardent Marxists, possessing an intellectual edge that they were prepared to turn not only against imperialists and superpowers abroad, but also against the Tanzanian government. USARF set up a journal, *Cheche*. It invited leftist intellectuals from around the world to the campus, including Samir Amin, Angela Davies, and C. L. R. James. Although the basic causes of Third World revolution and African liberation were common to both movements, USARF's more internationalist Marxism was at odds with the TYL's nationalist commitment to *ujamaa*. Ulimwengu recalled that this 'dichotomy' always brought about a 'dynamic of tension' between these two youth groups.⁸⁶ When *Cheche* carried an extended Marxist critique of Arusha socialism written by Issa Shivji, Nyerere banned USARF. He reasoned that since the TYL was a 'revolutionary organisation' with a monopoly on political activity in all Tanzanian educational

⁸² Interview with Jenerali Ulimwengu, Oyster Bay, Dar es Salaam, 18 August 2015.

⁸³ 'Youth Organisation', editorial, *Nationalist*, 18 December 1968, 4.

⁸⁴ Luke Melchiorre, "'Under the Thumb of the Party": The Limits of Tanzanian Socialism and the Decline of the Student Left', *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 46 (2020), 635–54.

⁸⁵ On USARF, see Ivaska, *Cultured States*, 147–62; Markle, *Motorcycle*, 75–103; Karim F. Hirji (ed.), *Cheche: Reminiscences of a Radical Magazine* (Dar es Salaam: Mkuki na Nyota, 2010).

⁸⁶ Interview with Jenerali Ulimwengu, Oyster Bay, Dar es Salaam, 18 August 2015.

institutions, USARF was redundant.⁸⁷ Youth movements and student groups were brought under the exclusive auspices of TANU. These trends intensified further following the TANU *Mwongozo* of 1971, as Chapter 7 explains.

A second brake on protest was Nyerere's concern that public vitriol would tarnish Tanzania's international image. Firstly, it risked undermining the credibility of the country's principled stance in the global arena, which Nyerere had cultivated with so much care and consistency. In the cases of the Vietnam war and the invasion of Czechoslovakia, Nyerere's behind-closed-doors diplomacy was marked by a tone of moderation. The foreign media was already awash with claims that Tanzania was under the thumb of the Chinese. Maoist outbursts about imperialism and its running dogs were only grist to the mill for Tanzania's critics. Second, there was little to be gained from needlessly antagonising potential aid donors. As we have seen, Nyerere and a number of more economically minded cabinet ministers stressed that Tanzania's commitment to self-reliance did not mean that it rejected foreign aid. If anything, external support was essential for driving forward its socialist revolution. The government was therefore aware that unbridled attacks on the West could be counterproductive. Finally, there were basic issues of international respectability: facing an ambassador soon after his embassy had been showered with the confetti of torn-up propaganda was not a particularly appealing task.

These concerns brought the TANU Youth League's leaders under the microscope. The antics of Sijaona and Mgonja, who had led protesters into the Soviet embassy grounds, embarrassed Nyerere. In the president's eyes, their behaviour was deemed hardly befitting of responsible adults, let alone government ministers. Nyerere told the American ambassador that he had been 'stunned' by Mgonja's and Sijaona's actions. 'We still have a lot of growing up to do', he remarked.⁸⁸ Soon after the Czechoslovakia demonstration, the pair were moved to less politically sensitive roles in more technocratic ministries. Sijaona became minister for health and housing; Mgonja, having previously been minister of state for foreign affairs, was appointed minister of

⁸⁷ Ivaska, 'Movement Youth', 726.

⁸⁸ Burns to State Dept, 13 December 1968, NARA, RG 59, CFPF 1967-69, Box 2517, POL US-TANZAN.

education. The following year, Mgonja's successor, Stephen Mhando, acknowledged to an American diplomat that there had been a change in approach. He admitted that while Tanzania still had its 'radicals and extremists', they were now 'buried bureaucratically but effectively' in new posts. Mhando stated that his government sought only friendly relations with the West. Tanzania was now 'less inclined to look for opportunities to antagonize countries which might wish to help them'.⁸⁹

Nonetheless, the polemical tone of Tanzanian commentary on global affairs continued to attract complaints from foreign embassies. In July 1969, the United States protested to the Tanzanian Ministry of Foreign Affairs about various recent attacks on Washington made by Sijaona, who was still a cabinet minister, at TYL rallies. At one event, he proclaimed the inevitability of a North Vietnamese victory and described the United States as a 'rampant abomination inflicting death tears on humanity'.⁹⁰ At another rally, Sijaona shouted 'slaughter Nixon'.⁹¹ This triggered the complaint from the American embassy. At an audience with American diplomats, a Tanzanian official at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs 'winced' at the mention of Sijaona's name and distanced the government from the TYL's activities. Attempting to placate the Americans, he mentioned that the organisation was 'specifically for children (*watoto*)' and so 'some of its actions were inclined to be childish (*utoto*) and had to be overlooked'. He added that the United States was not without its own problems with its youth.⁹² Similar dynamics characterised the relationship between the government, diplomats, and the TANU press, as the following chapter shows.

His patience exhausted, Nyerere issued a pamphlet on foreign policy entitled *Argue Don't Shout*. It contained little new concerning Tanzania's actual foreign relations but represented Nyerere's attempt to rein in some of the ideologues in the media, the TYL, and even his own cabinet. Nyerere called for Tanzanians to show a more mature attitude towards foreign states and nationals. He opened by drawing an

⁸⁹ Leonhart to State Dept, 17 October 1969, NARA, RG 59, CFPF 1967-69, Box 2514, POL 7 TANZAN. Leonhart was the former American ambassador to Tanzania. For more on Mhando's appointment, see Chapter 3.

⁹⁰ 'Youths Hail Heroic Fight Against US Aggressors', *Nationalist*, 31 March 1969, 8.

⁹¹ 'Hill Students Denounce U.S. Imperialism', *Nationalist*, 22 July 1969, 1.

⁹² Memcon (Mfinanga, Tunze, Mwandaji, Pickering), 24 July 1969, NARA, RG 59, CFPF 1967-69, Box 2517, POL US-TANZAN.

analogy between a family, which must live and cooperate with its neighbours, to a state like Tanzania in an increasingly interdependent world.⁹³ 'Any word or action of ours which changes a potential friend or neutral into an active opponent of our policies is the word or action of a saboteur or a fool', he argued.⁹⁴ Nyerere encouraged Tanzanians to argue from the basis of their country's well-defined policy positions, rather than resorting to insults. 'Of course', he wrote,

it is much more difficult to present a reasoned argument than to shout slogans like 'imperialism', 'communism', or 'racism', and there is sometimes less immediate emotional satisfaction. But temper tantrums are the reaction of children; adults who speak for their country should have better control over themselves.⁹⁵

Nyerere noted that although Tanzania had always claimed a non-aligned position, 'our manner of expressing policies in the past has not always made this claim sound very convincing'.⁹⁶ This sort of behaviour was not just tarnishing Tanzania's image abroad but was also undermining its credentials to serve as a mediator in international crises. 'No country can help in this work if it has shown an unremitting hostility towards half of the world on the grounds that it disagrees with the internal policies of that half, or even if it has allowed its disagreements on particular issues of external policy to colour its whole approach to the countries concerned.'⁹⁷ Previously, Nyerere had called upon his critics abroad to judge Tanzania by what it did, rather than said in the international sphere. Now he acknowledged that words mattered, too. Whereas most of Nyerere's public foreign policy addresses were delivered to an external audience, this was intended for domestic consumption. Here, Nyerere embraced his role as *Mwalimu*, lecturing this local foreign affairs commentariat for its infantile disposition. His scolding words did not go down well with this target audience. One staff member at the TANU press privately described it as 'nonsense', which would sap Tanzania's 'revolutionary vitality'.⁹⁸ The gulf between the priorities of government leaders and party polemicists was clear.

⁹³ Julius K. Nyerere, *Argue Don't Shout: An Official Guide to Foreign Policy by the President* (Dar es Salaam: Government Printer, 1969), 1.

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, 2. ⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, 11. ⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, 14. ⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, 15.

⁹⁸ Pickering to State Dept, 1 August 1969, NARA, RG 59, CFPF 1967-69, Box 2512, POL.

Sijaona's own demise demonstrated the degree to which youth protest, international affairs, and African liberation politics were all embedded within the power structures of the TANU party-state. Having been a key activist during Tanganyika's independence struggle, Sijaona's intemperate rhetoric now endangered the credibility of the government's foreign policy. In addition, Nyerere came to recognise that the TYL had become too powerful, in no small part because of its highly visible street presence, whether demonstrating against superpower imperialism or cracking down on improper attire. Sijaona's hostility towards Eduardo Mondlane became another mark on his card, especially after the assassination of the FRELIMO president in 1969, as we saw in the previous chapter. Sijaona was finally forced from his leadership position in the TYL in 1971, after the introduction of new age limitations for office holders, which Nyerere pushed through against opposition from the party membership.⁹⁹ Overall, the TYL's autonomy from central party organs declined over the 1970s.

The state's involvement in Tanzania's experience of '1968' meant that the protests were entwined with the *ujamaa* project, the tenets of the government's foreign policy, and the world view which tied them together, predicated on anti-imperialism and a defence of national sovereignty. There was therefore a direct relationship between the party-state's nation-building policies and its official international relations on the one hand, and the popular mobilisations and revolutionary rhetoric on the other. But TANU's increasingly monopolistic approach to political life meant that the latter were only permitted to take place under the aegis of party institutions, like the TANU Youth League. Even within the structures of the party, Nyerere in particular was sensitive to the danger of its polemicists discrediting Tanzania's position in the international sphere. In doing so, they risked damaging Tanzania's ability to speak out on the same questions of Third World liberation that inspired the protests in the first place, while hindering the country's chances of attracting donor aid.

Conclusion

The shift towards transnational or global approaches to the study of 1968 has been a fruitful one. But we should not overlook how such

⁹⁹ Brennan, 'Youth', 240–41; interview with Kingunge Ngombale-Mwiru, Victoria, Dar es Salaam, 26 August 2015.

dynamics could be subsumed into state-directed ideological projects that also offered little room for dissent. Experiences of the 'global 1968' all came with their own local dynamics. In Tanzania, youth activists, students, and journalists interpreted Cold War interventions abroad through the teachings of the likes of Fanon, Mao, and Ho Chi Minh, which they encountered through Dar es Salaam's propaganda-pumped public sphere. However, whereas their contemporaries in the global North challenged the political legitimacy of their government, in Tanzania party activists rallied to Nyerere's regime. The state – more precisely, TANU's party-state – was the solution, not the problem. Public attacks on 'imperialism' fed into a national discourse emphasizing the need for vigilance and unity in order to fulfil the revolutionary goals set out in the Arusha Declaration. Africa's vulnerability to Cold War interventions and the dangers involved in supporting armed liberation movements, rendered all the more visceral by Banda's claims to Tanzanian territory, enabled the lessons from distant conflicts to be refracted back onto local affairs. The government encouraged youth activists to take to the streets and largely permitted a diet of anti-imperialist polemics in the party press as alternative voices of protest beyond formal diplomacy.

However, this same relationship between anti-imperialist protest and the party-state also defined the limits to the means and tone of the former's language. In common with other one-party states across the Third World, at an institutional level TANU set about seeking to create a monopoly over public life. On a level of content and tone, the engagement of protesters, journalists, party leaders, and even government ministers with international questions such as Vietnam or Czechoslovakia risked upsetting the carefully balanced foreign policy that Nyerere had constructed in Tanzania. Non-alignment was not just a question of 'official' foreign relations, but their everyday practice in Dar es Salaam's public sphere. Ransacking embassy grounds or penning gratuitous tirades, even if they overlapped with the ethos of Nyerere's clearly articulated world view, were deemed counterproductive. Similar dynamics were at play in Dar es Salaam's newspaper sector, as the next chapter shows.