

## *Introduction*

Today, Nkrumah Street offers little hint of its illustrious past. Beginning by Dar es Salaam's old railway station, it leads south out of the city centre. Its shabby art deco façades and shaded colonnades exude a certain charm, but nothing more to attract the attention of the casual passer-by. Yet Nkrumah Street and its environs were once the heartbeat of revolutionary Africa. In the 1960s, these same buildings were emblazoned with an alphabet soup of signs: ANC, PAC, SWAPO, ZANU, ZAPU, FRELIMO. The occupiers of these offices were guests of the Tanzanian government. They were unusual guests: exiles from the white minority ruled territories of southern Africa. They were also sometimes troublesome guests, as we will see. By day, the liberation movement leaders organised anticolonial struggles and canvassed for support. By night, the revolutionaries gravitated towards Dar es Salaam's upmarket hotels, where they were regular fixtures at the terrace bars of the Kilimanjaro and New Africa.

The rest of the world took notice. Journalists crowded into press conferences as guerrilla leaders gave updates on their wars of liberation. Cold War diplomats looked for snippets of valuable intelligence and sought to turn the revolutionaries' ears. Despite its peripheral place in the global economy, Dar es Salaam became host to an array of foreign embassies of all geopolitical stripes. One American described the city as 'a real United Nations, as much as the UN Plaza in New York. No-one is riding particularly high, and everyone watches everyone else – civilly, for the most part.'<sup>1</sup> Dar es Salaam became a propaganda battlefield. Chinese booksellers pushed volumes of Marx, Lenin, and Mao. East and West German diplomats engaged in clandestine attempts to besmirch their rivals via the local press or anonymous pamphlets. This revolutionary vibe attracted radical

<sup>1</sup> Pickering to State Dept, 2 July 1969, NARA, RG 59, CFPF 1967–69, Box 2515, POL 15–1 TANZAN.

academics from around the world to the city's university. Meanwhile, Tanzania's postcolonial elite attempted to build a non-aligned 'African socialist' state, rejecting the Cold War poles of capitalism and communism to stake out their own ideological path to modernity.

For some, Dar es Salaam was a city of hope and dreams. A Namibian exile recalled his excitement at the revolutionary possibilities present in this mecca of liberation. 'We had heard much talk about Dar es Salaam while still in Namibia', he wrote. 'It became every Namibian's dream to one day see Dar es Salaam.'<sup>2</sup> The city's lecture halls and newspaper columns buzzed with calls for socialist nation-building that looked to China, Cuba, and Vietnam for inspiration. For others, particularly in the West, the city was a dangerous staging ground for communist penetration – 'a pistol pointing at the heart of African troubles', as one British journalist put it.<sup>3</sup> The Tanzanian government's approach sat somewhere in between. It was without question among the most committed African supporters of the continued struggle against colonialism. The country's first president, Julius Nyerere, spoke powerfully of shining a torch from Mount Kilimanjaro to provide a beacon of hope across the unliberated territories of the continent. But these commitments were tempered with anxieties about their consequences. Nyerere's government feared the destabilising effect of these external forces on the country's politics, especially given the scant respect for Third World sovereignty exhibited by the superpowers and the white minority regimes. 'Vigilance' became a national watchword. The Tanzanian state decried the subversion of its employees and the propaganda wars fought out by foreign powers in Dar es Salaam. In a word which captured his anxiety about the dangerous consequences of loose political gossip, Nyerere dubbed the capital 'Rumourville'.

This book explains how Dar es Salaam became a hive of revolutionary activity in Africa. It examines the politics of Cold War rivalries, African liberation movements, and socialist state-building in a Third World state. These dynamics were thoroughly enmeshed. This created opportunities for furthering political ambition and interests but posed obstacles to their successful pursuit. From cabinet ministers and parliamentarians to journalists and guerrilla leaders, Dar es Salaam's

<sup>2</sup> Helao Shityuwete, *Never Follow the Wolf: The Autobiography of a Namibian Freedom Fighter* (London: Kliptown, 1990), 93–94.

<sup>3</sup> Ronald Payne, 'Russians and Chinese Use Tanzania as Arms Centre', *Sunday Telegraph*, 21 March 1965, 1–2.

African elites brokered relationships with outside powers and projected their own ideological agendas into the Cold War world. At the same time, this book argues that the challenges which these transnational connections posed to Tanzania's fragile sovereignty were a significant factor in the shutting down of political space in the country. It approaches these developments through a multilateral and multiarchival study of revolutionary state-making in Dar es Salaam.

### Revolutionary Cities, Cold War Cities

The rise of 'global' and 'transnational' approaches to history has profoundly altered the way in which we think about the longue durée process of decolonisation in Africa. Breaking with nationalist narratives, these new histories have shown how struggles against imperialism and postcolonial state-making projects were shaped by the movement of people, texts, and ideas. Although these approaches have helped us to move beyond the containers of empire and nation-state, they come with their own potential pitfalls. Tracing transnational dynamics reveals a world in motion, but also brings teleological dangers in following individuals and ideas across the globe while disconnecting them from the physical spaces which they occupied along the way. As Tim Harper reminds us, 'rather than solely looking for connections – as the pursuit of the transnational seems to impel us constantly – it is equally important to recreate the neighbourhood itself'.<sup>4</sup> In this light, this book joins a growing number of works which explore the potential for cities to serve as a geographic lens for writing political histories which ground global and transnational dynamics in local contexts.

The Dar es Salaam of the 1960s and 1970s took its place in a long genealogy of globally connected revolutionary cities. Their rise and fall were shaped by the processes of colonisation and decolonisation, underpinned by technological and infrastructural change. During the high tide of European colonialism around the turn of the twentieth century, global networks linked imperial peripheries with metropolitan capitals to turn growing cities into incubators of new forms of political

<sup>4</sup> Tim Harper, 'Singapore, 1915, and the Birth of the Asian Underground', in Tim Harper and Sunil Amrith (eds.), *Sites of Asian Interaction: Ideas, Networks, and Mobility* (Delhi: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 33.

dissent. In East Asia, the late nineteenth-century communications revolution in marine transport, the telegraph, and the rise of the press gave rise to politicised, multicultural colonial publics.<sup>5</sup> These same infrastructural transformations turned cities as distant as New York and Beirut into sites of radical and anarchist activity.<sup>6</sup> In early twentieth-century London and Paris, interactions between imperial subjects encouraged the formation of anticolonial nationalisms, black internationalism, and nascent Third World solidarities.<sup>7</sup>

The double helix formed by the twin dynamics of decolonisation and the Cold War sustained these older cosmopolitan nodes, while also creating new urban centres of vibrant revolutionary activity. As the colonial world became the Third World, cities that lay on the fault lines of international geopolitics and anti-imperial struggles became hives of intellectual and political activity. Another revolution in global communications, particularly the expansion of air travel, facilitated intercontinental movement between urban centres. Rangoon briefly established itself as a pivotal city in the coordination of socialist organisation across Asia and Africa.<sup>8</sup> Hong Kong functioned as a grey zone in the Cold War in East Asia, through which capital was channelled between communist China and the West, as well as a base for superpower intelligence operations.<sup>9</sup> Having been an outpost of espionage during the Second World War, Mexico City became a key Cold War battleground in Central America.<sup>10</sup> These ‘Cold War cities’ were not just the site of diplomatic

<sup>5</sup> Harper and Amrith (eds.), *Sites of Asian Interaction*; Su Lin Lewis, *Cities in Motion: Urban Life and Cosmopolitanism in Southeast Asia, 1920–1940* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016).

<sup>6</sup> Tom Goyens, *Beer and Revolution: The German Anarchist Movement in New York City, 1880–1914* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2007); Ilham Khuri-Makdisi, *The Eastern Mediterranean and the Making of Global Radicalism, 1860–1914* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2010).

<sup>7</sup> Jennifer Anne Boittin, *Colonial Metropolis: The Urban Grounds of Anti-Imperialism and Feminism in Interwar Paris* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2010); Michael Goebel, *Anti-Imperial Metropolis: Interwar Paris and the Seeds of Third World Nationalism* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2015); Marc Matera, *Black London: The Imperial Metropolis and Decolonization in the Twentieth Century* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2015).

<sup>8</sup> Su Lin Lewis, ‘Asian Socialism and the Forgotten Architects of Post-Colonial Freedom, 1952–1956’, *Journal of World History*, 30 (2019), 55–88.

<sup>9</sup> Priscilla Roberts and John M. Carroll (eds.), *Hong Kong in the Cold War* (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2016).

<sup>10</sup> Renata Keller, *Mexico’s Cold War: Cuba, the United States, and the Legacy of the Mexican Revolution* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2015);

and intelligence activity. Rather, their radical politics were driven by interventions and claim-making from beyond the state. For example, Saigon became a centre not just for American military organisation, but challenges to the South Vietnamese state from students, religious leaders, and other urban opposition movements.<sup>11</sup> In South America, a peripatetic mixture of intellectuals and revolutionaries migrated from one city to another – Montevideo to Santiago to Buenos Aires – as a chain of coups brought to power military regimes that cracked down on the left.<sup>12</sup>

In independent Africa, radical governments turned their capitals into continental centres for revolutionary thinking, organisation, and mobilisation. Situated at a geographic and ideological crossroads between Europe, Africa, and the Middle East, Cairo was the first of these cosmopolitan cities to emerge. The city's strategic location and Gamal Abdel Nasser's presence at the forefront of the pan-African and pan-Arab movements attracted aspiring political figures from across the region.<sup>13</sup> In Ghana, Kwame Nkrumah's government seized the torch of African liberation. Accra drew anticolonial leaders from across Africa and the diaspora to major conferences and provided institutional support for the continent's liberation movements as they began to organise armed struggles.<sup>14</sup> In Algiers, groups advocating for a diverse range of radical and emancipatory causes, such as Palestinian independence, Brazilian democracy, and Black Power, operated missions alongside revolutionaries from southern Africa.<sup>15</sup>

Eric Zolov, *The Last Good Neighbor: Mexico in the Global Sixties* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2020).

- <sup>11</sup> Heather Marie Stur, *Saigon at War: South Vietnam and the Global Sixties* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2020).
- <sup>12</sup> Aldo Marchesi, *Latin America's Radical Left: Rebellion and Cold War in the Global 1960s*, trans. Laura Pérez Carrara (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2018).
- <sup>13</sup> Zoe LeBlanc, 'Circulating Anti-Colonial Cairo: Decolonizing News Media and the Making of the Third World in Egypt, 1952–78', PhD diss. (Vanderbilt University, 2019).
- <sup>14</sup> Meredith Terretta, 'Cameroonian Nationalists Go Global: From Forest *Maquis* to a Pan-African Accra', *Journal of African History*, 51 (2010), 189–212; Jeffrey S. Ahlman, 'Road to Ghana: Nkrumah, Southern Africa, and the Eclipse of a Decolonizing Africa', *Kronos*, 37 (2011), 23–40; Matteo Grilli, *Nkrumahism and African Nationalism: Ghana's Pan-African Foreign Policy in the Age of Decolonization* (Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, 2017).
- <sup>15</sup> Jeffrey James Byrne, *Mecca of Revolution: Algeria, Decolonization, and the Third World Order* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015); Elaine

If Algiers was, to cite two recent book titles, a ‘mecca of revolution’ and ‘Third World capital’, then Dar es Salaam became a similar entrepôt of anticolonial liberation south of the Sahara. Even before Tanganyika attained independence in 1961, the city had developed a reputation as a meeting place for the region’s political movements. Independence, as well as Dar es Salaam’s location on the ‘frontline’ in the fight against minority rule, quickened the pace of this influx of exiles and refugees. To an even greater extent than Algiers, Dar es Salaam was also a contact zone in which this revolutionary politics was enwrapped in local state-making practices, as the ruling Tanganyika African National Union (TANU) attempted to construct an African socialist society. By the mid-1960s, Cairo, Accra, Algiers, and Dar es Salaam were Africa’s major urban sites of anticolonial mobilisation. They were part of a global network which spanned the former metropolitan centres, the capitals of the communist world, and other revolutionary cities across the Third World. This urban anticolonial archipelago was held together by a mobile cast of politicians, intellectuals, and other activists who possessed the means to obtain an air ticket. They were tracked by the agents – declared and undeclared – of the superpowers, their allies, and the white minority states.

The Cold War was a global conflict, entwined with the *longue durée* process of decolonisation. Across the Third World, the superpowers promoted their ideological models of modernity, proffered aid packages, intervened in liberation struggles, and became entangled in the civil and regional wars which often followed.<sup>16</sup> Away from these zones

Mokhtefi, Algiers, *Third World Capital: Freedom Fighters, Revolutionaries, Black Panthers* (London: Verso, 2018).

<sup>16</sup> The key foundational text is Odd Arne Westad, *The Global Cold War: Third World Interventions and the Making of Our Times* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005). On the Cold War in Africa, see for example Piero Gleijeses, *Conflicting Missions: Havana, Washington and Africa, 1959–1976* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2002); Piero Gleijeses, *Visions of Freedom: Havana, Washington, Pretoria and the Struggle for Southern Africa, 1976–1991* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2013); Sergey Mazov, *A Distant Front in the Cold War: The USSR in West Africa and the Congo, 1956–1964* (Washington, DC: Woodrow Wilson Center Press, 2010); Lise Namikas, *Battleground Africa: Cold War in the Congo, 1961–1965* (Washington, DC: Woodrow Wilson Center Press, 2013); Nancy Mitchell, *Jimmy Carter in Africa: Race and the Cold War* (Washington, DC: Woodrow Wilson Center Press, 2016); Radoslav A. Yordanov, *The Soviet Union and the Horn of Africa During the Cold War* (Lanham, MD: Lexington, 2016).

of hot conflict, African capitals became sites of ideological competition and information gathering. After Tanganyika became independent, the Cold War powers and their allies rushed to set up embassies in Dar es Salaam. The Soviet Union and China sized up the credentials of guerrilla leaders and sought to influence the direction of Tanzanian socialism. The United States, forever on the defensive against a local stream of accusations of neo-imperialism, attempted to counter these communist advances. Among these bigger beasts of the Cold War, a host of smaller states pursued their own agendas. East Germany and West Germany turned Dar es Salaam into their own Cold War battlefield, as Chapter 3 shows. This politics was not solely the preserve of accredited diplomats. It was practised by a host of intermediaries, including news agency correspondents and journalists, who built transnational connections with local powerbrokers.

The Cold War powers descended on Dar es Salaam in such numbers because of the presence of the anticolonial movements in the city. At their offices, hotel bars, and embassy receptions, the revolutionaries made use of the grey diplomatic spaces which existed in Dar es Salaam to seek aid and arms from the superpowers. Like their comrades elsewhere in the Third World, African guerrilla movements became key actors in the local political scene which they encountered in Dar es Salaam.<sup>17</sup> Their activities were influenced by Tanzanians who occupied powerful gatekeeping roles in the state apparatus. Just as Christian Williams has shown in the case of training camps in inland Tanzania, exile was an experience characterised by tension as much as unity.<sup>18</sup> Whereas the guerrilla rank-and-file and other refugees experienced the austerity of camp life, in Dar es Salaam their leaders fraternised with diplomats and journalists from across the Cold War world in the capital's upmarket hotels. These encounters were vital in mobilising international support for the liberation struggles, but they could also open up divisions within movements, as shown by the case of the assassination of Mozambique's Eduardo Mondlane in Chapter 4.

<sup>17</sup> Paul Thomas Chamberlin, *The Global Offensive: The United States, the Palestine Liberation Organization, and the Making of the Post-Cold War World* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012).

<sup>18</sup> Christian Williams, *National Liberation in Post-Colonial Southern Africa: An Ethnographic History of SWAPO's Exile Camps* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015).

Africa's 'Cold War cities' were the product not just of a vibrant political cosmopolitanism, but also of the geopolitical anxieties of the era. The states inherited by Africa's first generation of post-independence leaders were mostly fragile constructions. The dramatic events in Congo reminded Africa's elites of the precarious nature of their authority. The fate of Patrice Lumumba, murdered in 1961 by his Katangese enemies with the aid of American intelligence and Belgian mining interests, cast a long shadow. The 'hidden hand' of the CIA or its communist counterparts seemed to lurk around every corner. The spate of coups which took place across the continent provided further cause for alarm. The consequence was the emergence of what Priya Lal has dubbed a 'Cold War political culture', which left its mark on both the conceptualisation and implementation of socialism in Tanzania.<sup>19</sup> Official discourse was replete with fears of foreign subversion and an incantation for citizens to remain vigilant at all times. Nyerere himself was aware that this was verging on paranoia. 'It is perfectly true that many of us in Africa are in danger of getting a phobia about foreign plots and of attributing to foreign machinations all the evils we suffer from', he admitted. But, at the same time, 'no intelligent and knowledgeable person would deny that outside forces do take advantage of African division for their own benefit'.<sup>20</sup> It was this Cold War political culture that also provided the justification for the increasingly authoritarian approach of the Tanzanian state in the enforcement of socialism into the 1970s.

The Cold War became inscribed into the urban politics of Dar es Salaam. The Tanzanian government developed an obsession with the subversive activities of rumourmongers and foreign spies in Dar es Salaam. It portrayed bars and cafés, particularly cosmopolitan locations like the New Africa and Kilimanjaro hotels, as sites where enemies of the nation might elicit or overhear idle chatter that endangered national security. It tried to crack down on the foreign propaganda which was pumped into the city's public sphere by the Cold War powers. This suspicion of political gossip and subversion drew on a broader disdain for urban life which characterised the official

<sup>19</sup> Priya Lal, *African Socialism in Postcolonial Tanzania: Between the Village and the World* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 67–69.

<sup>20</sup> 'Stability and Change in Africa', in Julius K. Nyerere, *Freedom and Development: A Selection from Writings and Speeches, 1968–1973* (Dar es Salaam: Oxford University Press, 1973), 111.



language of socialist Tanzania. Government rhetoric and street discourse presented the capital's inhabitants as a parasitical class, which diverted human and financial resources away from TANU's revolution. In a similar vein, Dar es Salaam's public sphere echoed with criticisms of the liberation movement leaders for leading indulgent lifestyles in the city rather than fighting at the front alongside the rank-and-file.

However, Dar es Salaam's political life was not always viewed in such a negative light. As a revolutionary capital, the city produced more optimistic visions of a postcolonial future. The liberation movements contributed to a more dynamic, forward-looking political scene marked by the language of pan-Africanism and Third World solidarity. The popular euphoria which greeted TANU's landmark 'Arusha Declaration' of 1967 tapped into this feeling of postcolonial possibility, even as its proponents recognised the challenges which they faced in fulfilling their aims. Just as students elsewhere in the world struck out against imperialism and injustice, Dar es Salaam's youth condemned superpower interventions from Vietnam to Czechoslovakia. Its university established an international reputation as a centre for radical scholarship in Africa. Chapter 5 examines the elaboration of youth protest and mobilisation in an urban context, as the government attempted to channel the popular forces of the 'global sixties' towards its socialist political goals.

Like other African cities, Dar es Salaam's population grew rapidly in the twentieth century. In 1900, it was estimated at around 20,000, rising to 93,000 by 1957, and then trebling in size again to 273,000 by 1967.<sup>21</sup> The city has been the subject of a range of historical studies linked to this phenomenon of urbanisation. These histories recognise that the city's human landscape represented dangers for governments seeking to maintain control over this expanding population, as well as opportunities for citizens to bend the urban order towards their own agendas. Andrew Burton investigates colonial-era policing practices for managing these expanding numbers. James Brennan explores how city planning and the provision of social services were enwrapped in the formation of national and racial identities. Andrew Ivaska examines

<sup>21</sup> James R. Brennan and Andrew Burton, 'The Emerging Metropolis: A History of Dar es Salaam, circa 1862–2000', in James R. Brennan, Andrew Burton, and Yusuf Lawi (eds.), *Dar es Salaam: Histories from an Emerging African Metropolis* (Dar es Salaam: Mkuki na Nyota, 2007), 26, 53.

the postcolonial government's attempt to develop and define a 'national culture'. Recent work has pushed beyond the colonial and immediate postcolonial years to reflect on the urban histories during the period of acute economic crisis from the late 1970s onwards. Emily Callaci addresses the contribution of 'popular intellectuals' to Dar es Salaam's public sphere amid the breakdown of socialism. Chambi Chachage traces the trajectories of the city's African entrepreneurs from colonial origins to the neoliberal present. Emily Brownell shows how the capital's inhabitants responded creatively to environmental degradation and commodity shortages.<sup>22</sup> Breaking with the focus on urbanisation but still informed by its plural experiences in Dar es Salaam, this book transposes these fruitful approaches to the plane of high politics in the capital.

### Anticolonial State-Making After Empire

Tanzania fashioned itself as a spearhead of Third World revolution. Whereas many of Africa's postcolonial governments were fearful of rattling the cages of stronger powers, Tanzania routinely adopted the most radical stances towards questions of anticolonial liberation on the international stage. Revolution beyond its borders went hand in hand with revolution within them, as TANU embarked on an 'African socialist' path to development. The idea of *ujamaa* ('familyhood') located the basis for socialist development in the supposed communal traditions of the African peasantry rather than Marxist theories of class antagonism. Following the blueprint set out in the Arusha Declaration, TANU emphasised rural transformation over heavy industrialisation. The most striking of the state's subsequent interventions was the mass

<sup>22</sup> Andrew Burton, *African Underclass: Urbanisation, Crime and Colonial Order in Dar es Salaam* (London: British Institute in Eastern Africa, 2005); James R. Brennan, *Taifa: Making Nation and Race in Urban Tanzania* (Athens: Ohio University Press, 2012); 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); Chambi Chachage, 'A Capitalizing City: Dar es Salaam and the Emergence of an Entrepreneurial Elite (c.1862–2015)', PhD diss. (Harvard University, 2018); Emily Brownell, *Gone to Ground: A History of Environment and Infrastructure in Dar es Salaam* (Pittsburgh, PA: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2020). See also the essays in Brennan, Burton, and Lawi (eds.), *Dar es Salaam*.