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The rise and fall of a Swahili tabloid in socialist Tanzania: *Ngurumo* newspaper, 1959–76

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ABSTRACT

While historians of East Africa have examined the region's rich print cultures in the era of decolonisation, they have viewed newspapers primarily in intellectual terms, rather than as businesses embedded in capital networks. Through the Asian-owned Tanzanian tabloid *Ngurumo*, this article examines the political economy of newspapers and printing during the time of decolonisation in Tanzania. It argues that Randhir Thaker's printing firm played an essential yet overlooked role in sustaining nationalist expansion in the late 1950s, before then entering the newspaper market in a period marked by racial tensions. However, the same undercapitalised business model which allowed *Ngurumo* to become Tanzania's most popular newspaper then constrained its ability to expand its operations. *Ngurumo's* demise in the mid-1970s was not caused by direct government intervention, but by its lack of the infrastructural and financial support which sustained the state- and party-owned press through a time of economic hardship.

ARTICLE HISTORY

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On the evening of 2 November 1965, Randhir Thaker locked up his offices in Dar es Salaam. Thaker was the owner of *Ngurumo*, Tanzania's best-selling daily newspaper. Minutes later, he collapsed and died of a heart attack. At his funeral, which attracted several thousand mourners, President Julius Nyerere himself was deeply moved by the passing of a friend.¹ Other Tanzanian leaders echoed his thoughts. 'We have few men of his type and his passing leaves a large hole,' the minister of home affairs wrote to *Ngurumo*.² At a memorial gathering at the T. B. Sheth Library, another government minister urged Tanzania's Asians to follow Thaker's example in committing themselves to the post-colonial nation. At a time when African politicians frequently depicted Tanzania's Asian minority as a class of parasitical exploiters, such tributes were striking. It reflected the atypical and instrumental role played by Thaker in the success of African nationalism in Tanzania, plus the widespread popularity of *Ngurumo*.³

This article explores the rise and fall of *Ngurumo*, meaning 'Thunder' or 'Roar' in Swahili. It is driven by several interconnected questions. How, in an urban society

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marked by racial tensions, did an Asian-owned newspaper become the ordinary African's daily read of choice? How, in a socialist state in which the ruling Tanganyika African National Union (TANU) dominated the country's print sphere, did an independent newspaper become so popular? Why was *Ngurumo*'s continued existence tolerated – even encouraged – by the party-state? And why, given its success, did it vanish in the mid-1970s?

This history of *Ngurumo* builds upon a growing historiography on “African print cultures,” which explores newspapers as a source of political thought during the era of decolonisation. This literature emphasises the roles of editors, journalists, and readers in print conversations which reshaped identities and public discourse. It rejects notions of the African press as being driven by a modular, anticolonial nationalism by drawing attention to the cosmopolitan voices within newspapers.⁴ This article pushes beyond the printed word itself, to address the circumstances which encouraged the emergence of newspapers, the conditions which sustained them, and the reasons for their demise. Following examples set by more infrastructure-minded histories of the Latin American press,⁵ the focus here is on relationships of patronage and political support, on the technological and financial aspects of a printing operation, and on the vulnerability of small-scale businesses in a socialist state.⁶

Ngurumo has attracted little attention in the literature on the Tanzanian press. At the height of its success, a researcher described *Ngurumo* as a ‘blotchy, bold-typeface tabloid of four pages, with a distinctive (if not distinguished) character all its own.’ He argued that *Ngurumo* owed its popularity to its coverage of ‘domestic quarrels, swindles, “street news”, and humour’ rather than serious news.⁷ Verdicts from Tanzanian media experts have been divided. One simply dismissed *Ngurumo* as ‘a peripheral newsreporting medium.’⁸ Conversely, a prominent Tanzanian journalist remembered *Ngurumo* as ‘the thunder that roared effectively to terrorise the colonialists in the struggle for independence.’⁹ An early historical sketch of the African press in colonial Tanganyika does not mention *Ngurumo* at all, possibly because of its Asian ownership.¹⁰ Another survey misrepresents it as the ‘journalistic voice’ of Tanzania’s Asian community.¹¹ More helpfully, historians have used *Ngurumo*'s columns, cartoons, and letters pages as a window into moral debates about life in post-colonial Dar es Salaam. Moving away from the official rhetoric emanating from government or party newspapers, they use *Ngurumo* as part of what Emily Callaci dubs a ‘street archive’ to recover grassroots experiences of socialism.¹²

Breaking with the accounts of communications scholars, who alternatively dismiss or lionise *Ngurumo*, this article also moves beyond the recent work of cultural historians to excavate what might be called the political economy in which the newspaper functioned. As James Brennan observes with regard to colonial Tanganyika's newspapers, the contents of the press did not simply reflect political opinion, but were ‘the product of a shifting business and patronage terrain.’¹³ *Ngurumo*'s success was due to its ability to weave attractive content with a frugal business model that made it both appealing and affordable to a growing urban readership. However, this same undercapitalised setup also proved its downfall. *Ngurumo*'s experience demonstrates the difficulties of private media houses – like other cultural institutions – to operate in a socialist economy, without preferential treatment or government subsidies.¹⁴

This article begins by situating the emergence of *Ngurumo*'s publisher, Thakurs Limited, in a constellation of political and business interests in late colonial Tanganyika. Tracing lines of credit in the 1950s, it examines the formation of an unusual, informal

alliance between an Asian printer and an African nationalist party. The article then analyses *Ngurumo's* operation at the height of socialist state-building in Tanzania. It argues that in spite of the predominance of “street journalism” in its pages, the newspaper was engaged in the international debates at the time, while receiving vital cash transfers from carrying Cold War propaganda. The final section explains the decline and disappearance of *Ngurumo* in the mid-1970s. It demonstrates how the structural conditions of state socialism and Thakers’ inability to adapt to new economies of scale in a period of material deprivation, rather than political intervention per se, led to *Ngurumo's* collapse.¹⁵

Origins

Printing was a common occupation among Dar es Salaam’s Asian community in the late colonial era. Under the colonnades of the old town’s streets, dozens of printers, typesetters, and stationers plied a small-scale trade in paper goods. These Indian entrepreneurs, whose modest amounts of capital enabled the purchase of rudimentary presses, were essential for the emergence of a Tanganyikan print sphere. Much of their output was in English or Indian languages such as Gujarati. But they also provided services to a small number of African clients as associational life and newsheets grew in popularity during the interwar period.¹⁶

In comparison to neighbouring Kenya, an African press emerged only slowly in Tanganyika.¹⁷ Restrictive colonial registration policies added to the high start-up costs of entering a market which had uncertain returns. The problem of undercapitalisation and reliance on expensive printworks were as great a barrier to the emergence of a robust African press as colonial censorship. Erica Fiah, editor of Tanganyika’s first African-owned newspaper, *Kwetu*, bought a second-hand, manually-operated Japanese press to avoid paying high charges to Asian printers. Yet this proved a slow operation and Fiah’s appeals for African contributions towards buying a modern press were unsuccessful.¹⁸ Nonetheless, by the mid-1950s, Dar es Salaam was gradually developing a vibrant newspaper culture, as an expanding reading public sought more interesting printed matter than the dry government-owned titles. Rising levels of basic literacy encouraged the growth of a more outspoken Swahili press attuned to local interests.¹⁹

Among Tanganyika’s Asian print entrepreneurs was Bhanushanker Thaker, who migrated from Gujarat to Dar es Salaam in 1930, where he set up a printing press. Bhanushanker went into business with Vrajlal Ramji Boal, who two years earlier had launched an Anglo-Gujarati newspaper, the *Tanganyika Herald*.²⁰ Bhanushanker’s son, Randhir, was born in Dar es Salaam in 1921. After finishing school in Tanganyika, Randhir was sent to India in 1939. He graduated from Gujarat College in Ahmedabad in 1949 and then trained as a policeman. In 1952 or 1953, Randhir took leave to visit his family and then settled in Dar es Salaam. He declined a position in the Tanganyikan Police and instead followed his father into the printing trade. In 1953, he founded Thakers Limited, a printing and stationery firm, based on Selous Street (later Zanaki Street) in the city’s central business quarter.²¹

The establishment of Thakers Limited preceded by a year the transformation of the Tanganyika African Association into the more explicitly anticolonial TANU. As Brennan notes, in ‘an inversion of Benedict Anderson’s well-known argument, it was

nationalism that created conditions for a new print capitalism in East Africa.²² This meant not just newspapers, but other forms of printed matter. TANU quickly became a major client of Thakers, which printed flyers to advertise public rallies, copies of the party's constitution, and party membership cards.²³ The latter were a particularly important tool in TANU's expansion: eager to attract new members, it concentrated on selling cards and did not press for subsequent payments.²⁴ This meant that the rising expense of administering and promoting the party's activities, including in terms of printing, was not matched by increased revenue from subscriptions.

The result was that TANU's rapid growth came at considerable monetary cost. By May 1957, the party's finances were in a parlous condition. 'Printing expenses are a great load on the Union,' stated a TANU report. 'The present situation is frightening.' TANU's headquarters diagnosed that the problem lay in the failure of branches to pay for the printed materials distributed to them.²⁵ Some of TANU's creditors began legal proceedings against the party.²⁶ But while other printers pursued their debts in court, Thaker remained flexible.²⁷ By June 1958, TANU owed 48,000 shillings to Thakers, out of a total party debt of 77,000 shillings.²⁸ At the party's Tabora Conference that year, delegates agreed that 'all TANU publications should be printed on their own press.' Yet the indebted party lacked the capital to do so.²⁹ In these circumstances, Thaker's credit and his tolerant attitude towards its slow or non-repayment proved a financial lifeline for TANU.

Despite these arrears, Thaker continued to cooperate with TANU. He allowed the party to use his office as a meeting place, collected donations on its behalf, and appeared on the platform with Nyerere at a party meeting. According to colonial intelligence, he also acted as an intermediary between TANU and the Indian high commissioner in Nairobi, who tracked the emergence of the region's nationalist movements with interest.³⁰ In fact, Thaker deepened his financial commitments to Tanganyikan nationalism. In September 1957, Thakers printed the first issue of *Mwafrika* ('The African'), a weekly newspaper published by the Tanganyika African Newspaper Company, which was closely linked to TANU.³¹ *Mwafrika*'s initial circulation of 4,000 copies per week rose to a remarkable 17,000 after eight months – but did so while the Company developed a large debt to its printers. Thaker was less sympathetic to *Mwafrika* than to the party. In May 1958, Thaker alleged that he was owed more than 30,000 shillings for printing the newspaper, a figure which the Company disputed.³² The Company tried to make itself independent from Thakers by obtaining its own press. But one machine donated to TANU by the Asian Socialist Conference was never put to work, while another purchased from the Kanti Printing Works proved to be worn out.³³

Thaker's engagement with Tanganyikan nationalism came at a time when the country's Asian community was increasingly uncertain about its future and divided over political strategy. In 1951, a group of professionals established the Asian Association, which Thaker joined. The Asian Association declared itself in favour of a non-racial Tanganyika and channelled financial assistance to TANU. Other Asians supported the idea of 'multi-racialism' proposed by the colonial government, which was designed to protect European and Asian interests.³⁴ TANU's sweeping victories in Legislative Council elections in September 1958 and February 1959 brought these tensions to the boil. The Asian Association's leadership worked with TANU in supporting a raft of candidates across three electoral lists, separated along racial lines. Thaker himself unsuccessfully tried to gain

a place on the Asian Association's slate as a pro-TANU candidate. However, as some African leaders advanced a more exclusive, racially-defined nationalism – including via the pages of *Mwafrika* – this formal electoral support for TANU generated apprehensions among Tanganyikan Asians. Thaker was uneasy at the behaviour of the organisation's leadership. At a post-election meeting, he urged the Association to ensure that the Asian community 'did not stagger behind' as the 'caravan' of the independence struggle rolled on.³⁵

Ngurumo emerged out a confluence of interests in Tanganyika's fraught racial politics. Influential TANU figures worried about the risks of the sort of racial invective in which *Mwafrika* dealt. Having been overlooked in the elections by the Asian Association's powerbrokers, with whom he had then fallen out, Thaker spotted an opportunity. His firm ceased to print *Mwafrika* in March 1959, probably due to its unpaid bills, leaving the press machinery unused.³⁶ Thaker, with unofficial support from TANU's leadership, entered the newspaper market himself.³⁷ The first issue of *Ngurumo* appeared on 15 April.³⁸ *Ngurumo* allowed Thaker to commit himself towards the nationalist struggle, while also providing an alternative pro-TANU voice to *Mwafrika*. The newspaper sought to generate support for TANU by informing and mobilising the masses. *Ngurumo* argued that newspapers represented 'one of those things that are essential for the life of man, from the illiterate to the educated.'³⁹ *Ngurumo* balanced support for TANU with a commitment to multiparty democracy rather than a single-party state – a hot topic of debate in Tanganyika's late colonial public sphere.⁴⁰ It stressed the necessity for a rival party to TANU. 'Where is tomorrow's opposition,' *Ngurumo* asked, 'and if it does not exist where is democracy?'⁴¹

Ngurumo was an immediate success. Three months after its launch, the colonial government estimated its circulation at 6,000 copies per day.⁴² *Ngurumo*'s cover price, at 10 cents to *Mwafrika*'s 30 cents, was surely a key factor in its rise, even if it was a shorter newspaper. In June, *Mwafrika* acquired its own, more modern press from West Germany, which enabled it to publish as a daily title like *Ngurumo*. In a clear barb towards his rival, *Mwafrika*'s editor proudly announced that his was the first African company to own a printing press in Dar es Salaam.⁴³ But even then, *Mwafrika*'s estimated circulation was just 3,000 – half of that of *Ngurumo*.⁴⁴ *Mwafrika* did not take kindly to the emergence of an Asian-owned rival. Three days after *Ngurumo* appeared, *Mwafrika* responded to a reader who wanted to know whether *Ngurumo* was 'the newspaper of the African.' No, answered *Mwafrika*, '*Ngurumo* is not the newspaper of the African, it is a newspaper which is published by an Indian-owned company.'⁴⁵ Another reader's letter, inquiring why there were minor discrepancies in reporting between the two newspapers, received a terse reply. 'Don't stir a hornets' nest [*usikoroge nyuki*],' the editor warned, 'since when has MWAFRIKA been NGURUMO?'⁴⁶ Doubtless angered by these taunts – and keen to recover unpaid bills – Thaker brought a legal claim for £2,500 against *Mwafrika*'s owners in February 1960.⁴⁷

Meanwhile, Thaker continued to carve out a public position distinct from the majority of other pro-independence Asians in Tanganyika. Ahead of municipal elections in early 1960, *Ngurumo*'s African executive editor, Stephen Mhando, wrote to the *Tanganyika Standard* to complain about the gerrymandering of electoral wards designed to return European and Asian councillors. 'This is a grand opportunity for those Europeans and Asians who have joined the local cry of "Uhuru" to show their mettle [...] that they

are genuine democrats, by confounding the tricks of those who thrive on [racial] parity', even 'at the risk of being considered braying jackasses.'⁴⁸ Thaker echoed his employee. 'Mr. Stephen Mhando has thrown down a challenge to those champions of democracy,' he wrote in the same newspaper. 'Will those concerned show the courage of their convictions and pick up the gauntlet?'⁴⁹ Thaker charged the Asian Association's leaders with simply talking of freedom to gain access to public office, but otherwise caring little about race relations, African welfare, or the 'Asian common man.'⁵⁰ The Association in return accused Thaker of making 'malicious and baseless accusations.'⁵¹

Ngurumo's origins lay in the paper-based opportunities which nationalist activity created in Tanganyika. Thakers not only produced TANU's stationery, but became its major creditor. In not pursuing his client's debts, Randhir Thaker played an instrumental role in TANU's remarkable expansion. As the constitutional steps towards independence advanced, political differences inside TANU and the Asian Association created a juncture in which Thaker launched a newspaper of his own, which was welcomed by Dar es Salaam's growing Swahili-language reading public. Randhir Thaker's political stance isolated him from the majority of Dar es Salaam's Asian community: his brother, Surendra, later estimated that 'eighty to ninety percent of Asians hated us.'⁵² But Randhir still had to make the most of these conditions. In a series of bold decisions – first to extend credit to TANU and to not call in its debts, and later to break with the Asian Association and found *Ngurumo* – Randhir demonstrated significant acumen in assembling a print infrastructure that linked his small business to nationalist politics in order to secure his own future in uncertain times. As the response of the country's leadership to his death showed, Thaker's gambits were an indisputable success.

Zenith

As Tanganyika attained independence in 1961 and then united with Zanzibar to become Tanzania three years later, *Ngurumo* cemented its position as the country's best-selling newspaper. *Mwafrika* lost the fight over the Swahili-language news market and ran into financial difficulties. It published its final issue in 1965. Meanwhile, TANU established an official weekly newspaper in 1961. *Uhuru* ('Freedom' or 'Independence') became *Ngurumo*'s main competitor, especially after the former became a daily in 1964. Two surveys from around 1967 found that *Ngurumo* claimed a circulation of 14,000 copies – a figure officially matched by *Uhuru*, though its circulation was more realistically around 9,000–10,000. If sales figures are difficult to accept with confidence, then assessments of readership – with multiple readers per copy – represent little more than guesswork. In the mid-1960s, Surendra Thaker estimated that *Ngurumo* was read by around 50,000 people.⁵³ Even if these numbers are treated as indicative rather than definitive, it seems safe to state that *Ngurumo* was Dar es Salaam's most popular newspaper in the 1960s.

There were few trained African journalists in Tanganyika at independence. *Ngurumo*'s staff learnt on the job. Randhir and later Surendra Thaker, who took over as editor after his brother's death, headed a small team. The newspaper's first executive editor, Stephen Mhando, had been TANU's secretary-general before being charged with embezzling party funds in 1957.⁵⁴ Joseph Mzuri replaced Mhando in 1960 and held the post until *Ngurumo*'s closure. Several of *Ngurumo*'s fledgling journalists became senior figures in

the local media as the state expanded its control of Tanzania's information apparatus. Mhando later edited TANU's newspapers. Others worked at Radio Tanzania, the Ministry of Information, and Shihata, the national news agency established in 1976.⁵⁵ Surendra Thaker's claim that *Ngurumo* trained 80% of Tanzania's journalists and printers may have been an overstatement, but it certainly played a key role in developing a post-colonial generation of media professionals.⁵⁶

Independence posed new questions of the media. Tanzanian politicians, newspapermen, and public intellectuals debated the purpose of the press after empire. Despite *Ngurumo*'s earlier misgivings, TANU instituted a one-party state in 1965. This was in part predicated on the belief that Tanzania could not afford to waste time and energy on divisive multiparty politics. Similar attitudes informed the stance of party leaders towards the media. Newspapers and radio were to facilitate national development, rather than engage in counterproductive gossip. Some journalists and politicians rejected the concept of the "freedom of the press" as a Western construct, which camouflaged the capitalist and imperialist interests involved in the privately-owned media.⁵⁷

Ngurumo bucked the trend. As a small business, Thakers could hardly be accused of acting as a tool for imperialism, especially given its track record of support for TANU. *Ngurumo* continued to back the party, but also emphasised its editorial freedom. Mzuri described *Ngurumo* as being 'completely independent' of the government. 'We will criticise wrong and praise right,' he told an interviewer. 'We do this regardless of who is involved. There is no limit to anything except the law.'⁵⁸ When the government legally empowered itself to ban newspapers which carried subversive material in 1968, *Ngurumo* insisted that there was nothing to fear in the new legislation, since it was a vocal supporter of the TANU government.⁵⁹

Ngurumo's success had less to do with any political stance and more with its lively Swahili-language content and affordable cover price. Each issue consisted of a single sheet folded into four pages. The front page carried world and national news (Figure 1). Page two carried the day's editorial, alongside a popular forum of readers' letters. More in-depth reporting and readers' poetry featured on page three. The back page contained reports on local football and other news snippets. The recipe was simple and unfussy. There were rarely photographs, but *Ngurumo* compensated for this absence through its popular cartoons, which caricatured urban stereotypes and poked fun at the city's elites.⁶⁰ *Ngurumo* presented itself as the defender of the interests of the ordinary urban Tanzanian. In particular, it acted as a price watchdog for basic consumer goods and foodstuffs in the Dar es Salaam's markets. It also reported unusual or gossip-worthy occurrences from the city's streets, with a certain amount of mystique. When one reader asked *Ngurumo* to how it obtained information about incidents occurring at night while most people were asleep, the editor simply replied 'Ngurumo alikuwapo' – 'Ngurumo was there'.⁶¹ Another reader responded by describing the newspaper as 'the eyes of the world'.⁶²

Ngurumo's embrace of a slangy form of Swahili made it accessible to a wider public than the drier prose of *Uhuru* or the English-language broadsheets. This also resonated with the government's desire to divest Tanzania of the colonial imposition of English and develop Swahili as a national language.⁶³ As Derek Peterson and Emma Hunter observe, *Ngurumo* was an 'engine for the development of Swahili orthography and grammar.' The letters page became a forum in which readers debated spellings and argued about

NGURUMO

S I K U

ADA YA MJA KUNENA—MWUNGWANA NI KITENDO

No. 2858
DAR ES SALAAM
IUMAA
SEPTEMBER 22, 1967 BEI SENTI 10

KIMA CHA SHS. 330/-

BW. KAMALIZA ATAHUTUBIA WAFANYAKAZI WOTE

Chama cha Nuta kinetoa taarifa maalum hapo jana jioni kwamba, Mwandishi Mkuu wa Chama hicho Bwana Michael Kamaliza, atahutubia mkutano wa hadhara kwa Wafanyakazi wote, kuhusu madai ya Nuta ya kima cha chini cha Shs. 330/- kwa mwezi.

Taarifa hiyo hiyotolewa na idara ya utangazaji ya Nuta, imeleza kama ifuatavyo:

NUTA imeamua kuitisha Mkutano wa hadhara kwa Wafanyakazi wote wa Jiji la Dar es Salaam utakaofanyika tarehe 27/9/67 saa 10 jioni kwenye awana wa Jumba la Arnantoglu.

Madhumuni ya mkutano huu ni kuwaeleza Wafanyakazi maoni ya Nuta juu ya madai yake ya kima cha chini cha Shs. 330/- kwa mwezi.

Msemaji Mkuu katika Mkutano huo atakuwa Mwandishi Mkuu wa Nuta, Ndugu M.M. Kamaliza M.P.

Kaokota pembe za tembo

Mwanafunzi mmoji wa shule ya primari ya Kilema, Didis Charles hivi majuzi aliokota pembe mbili za tembo zenye uzito wa ratili 45 zilizo kuwa zikielea mtoni wakati alipokuwa akilima kando yake.

Mwanafunzi huyo alipipeleka pembe hizo Serikalini akisema kuwa wanayama wa mwitu ni mali ya Serkali kwa hivyo pembe zao hazina budi kuwa za Serkali.

Kwa uaminifu wake mtoto huyo alipewa zawadi ya Shilingi 180/-.

MASHINDANO YA INSHA

Gazeti la Ngurumo lina fahari kuwarufu wasomaji wake wote kwamba linataka kufanya mashindano ya kuandika INSHA ambayo itawaruhusu wote kushiriki. Kwa hivyo, wasomaji wote wanaulikwa kuandika juu ya moja katika mambo haya matatu yafuatavyo:—

1. Kazi yango katika Ujamaa wa Vijijini.
2. Vipi ulitaweza kujitengea.
3. Vipi ulitaweza kutenda la Arusha.

Insha itakayondikwa isizidi maneno 3000. Insha tatu au nzi zitachaguliwa na kuchapwa katika gazeti la hizi Ngurumo. Na Insha moja itakayokuwa nzuri kuliko hizo tatu itapata zawadi ya tikititi ya bure ya kwenda na kutarudi kwa Bus au Gari la Moshi kutoka mahali anaporudi kwa Bus au Gari la Moshi kutoka mahali anaporudi kwa Bus au Gari la Moshi hadi Dar es Salaam, ishi mshindi huyo (hapa Tanzania) hadi Dar es Salaam, basi ikiwa mshindi wa Insha hiyo anashii Dar es Salaam, basi ikiwa mshindi wa Insha hiyo kwenda na kurudi kutoka Dar-es-Salaam hadi Arusha wakati wa sherehe za Jemhuri. Gharama zote zisirohuka na tikititi hiyo kama vile chakula, mahali pa kulala na kadhalika zitalipwa na mtu mwenyewe binafsi. Wakati utako chukuka juu ya safari hiyo kufika mahali penye utakuwa juu ya mtu mwenyewe kuamua. Insha hizo zitakazo andikwa na wasomaji zinatakiwa kufika hapa Ngurumo tarehe 16 mwezi wa Oktoba, 1967. Orodha ya wasomaji itatajwa baadec.

Peleta kuponi hii pamoja na makala yako kwa Ngurumo, ananai, Sanduku nambari 937, Dar es Salaam.

Jina _____

Anuani _____

Nakubali kuwa unamui wa waamuzi ndio wa mwisho. _____

sahibi _____

Tafadhali andika makala yako kwa mwandiko mzuri na msafi katika upande mmoja wa karatasi.

Barua ya wazi kwa mwandishi mkuu wa NUTA

Ndugu mwananchi Kamaliza,

Tungekuomba kutoa matamshi ya siasa yaliyosawa utakapo hutubia ndugu wafanya kazi tarehe 27 Septemba mwezi huu. Tafadhali angalia kwamba usiotele wasi wasi au hali mbaya utakapotoa hotuba hivo.

Hii, ndugu mpenzi ni ombi maalum kutokana na sisi, kwa sababu tunafikiri kwamba katika hali hii ya haja ya mapinduzi ambayo inaletwa na mapinduzi ya hali ya maisha lazima iote.

Kulitele kwa utaratibu na busara.

Ndugu, kama tunavyoona, inasonyesha wazi kwamba umeeleka kuonyesha ndoto kwa ndugu zetu wafanya kazi wakati wanapokuwa wameshaanza kufanya kazi kwa juhudi kufuatana na mwito wa kiongozi mpenzi mpendu wa Mwalimu Julius K. Nyerere.

Ikiwa utanza kuleta matumaini wakati unapojua hema kwamba Tanzania hiviweze kuchukua mzigo wote, uletalet machafuko. Na haya machafuko hapano shaka yataangukia katika ghiera zetu, ujuzi na hamu ya kufanya kazi kwa bidii.

Kumbuka Ndugu, maendeleo yanabidi kupatikana kwa hali ye yote. Hatua ye yote ya haraka itazua maendeleo hayo.

Shs. 279/- kwa kilimo

Wanafunzi wa shule ya primari ya Irgana, wamejipitia Shs 279/- inaadeclea uk. 1

Figure 1. Front page of Ngurumo, 22 September 1967. East Africana Collection, University of Dar es Salaam Library. Photograph by George Roberts.

whether Arabic-derived words in Swahili belonged in the lexicon of an African nation.⁶⁴ This commitment to Swahili drew public praise from government ministers.⁶⁵ Indeed, *Ngurumo*'s advocacy for Swahili at times outpaced the authorities' own. When the government announced in 1967 that official business would henceforth be conducted in Swahili, *Ngurumo* held it to its word. A journalist who visited TANU's headquarters reported a long list of signs on office doors which were still in English and declared that *Ngurumo* would continue its investigation because 'we want action.'⁶⁶ The following month, an editorial expressed displeasure that 'nothing at all has changed.' It noted that workers could still be observed painting 'stop' signs on the road. Even TANU was still known by an English name.⁶⁷

Ngurumo responded to new market opportunities and the political imperatives of nation-building across mainland Tanzania. At its launch, Randhir Thaker had declared that *Ngurumo* would give 'territorial wide coverage' of affairs.⁶⁸ Yet a survey conducted in the mid-1960s found *Ngurumo*'s readers were overwhelmingly located in Dar es Salaam. To remedy this, *Ngurumo* advertised for ad hoc regional correspondents and established sales agents in towns such as Arusha and Mtwara.⁶⁹ However, *Ngurumo* remained most successful in coastal areas: a survey in 1968 found that 57% of total sales were in Dar es Salaam, with a further 32% in Tanga.⁷⁰ The newspaper reached further north, across the Kenyan border. A reader celebrated *Ngurumo*'s arrival in Mombasa with a poem venerating the newspaper – a testament to its resonance with a regional Swahili reading public.⁷¹

Given the target readership of *Ngurumo*, it might be expected to have been a parochial newspaper. Historians who have utilised *Ngurumo* as part of Dar es Salaam's 'street archive' have emphasised its concern with urban gossip and scandal.⁷² Certainly, *Ngurumo*'s stories were less preoccupied with the affairs of state which dominated Tanzania's English-language broadsheets. However, even if international news took up fewer column inches, *Ngurumo* was strikingly engaged in world affairs. This reflected Tanzania's prominent role in Third World liberation struggles, which turned Dar es Salaam into an oasis for exiled anticolonial movements.⁷³ Global news made *Ngurumo*'s front-page headlines; inside, it carried the liberation movements' press releases. This engagement was shaped by limited capital. *Ngurumo* could not afford expensive international agency wire services. Instead, it recycled material from foreign radio broadcasts, a technique which had been used by earlier Asian-owned newspapers.⁷⁴

Dar es Salaam's emergence as a "mecca of liberation" in East Africa led to its newspapers becoming drawn into Cold War rivalries. Foreign diplomats recognised that despite its less well-educated readership, *Ngurumo* was potentially useful. An East German diplomat compared *Ngurumo* to the 'tabloids which appear in capitalist countries,' yet noted that given the newspaper's wide circulation, its influence should not be underestimated.⁷⁵ Foreign powers curried influence by sponsoring visits by Tanzanian journalists abroad. *Ngurumo*'s journalists took advantage of opportunities to travel abroad for training, including to Israel, East Germany, and an American Press Institute seminar in New York.⁷⁶ Moreover, for *Ngurumo*, these Cold War clients were essential sources of paid content. In the late-1960s, it regularly carried supplements provided by the North Korean embassy, usually on the themes of American neoimperialism in Korea or Vietnam. These jargon-filled and densely-packed columns sometimes ran for ten or

more additional pages – more than twice the length of the actual newspaper. Surendra Thaker regarded North Korea as *Ngurumo*'s best “advertisers,” especially as they paid cash up front.⁷⁷

Following the lead of the Tanzanian government, *Ngurumo* was committed to a non-aligned position in the Cold War.⁷⁸ Yet this did not mean it avoided the international issues of the day. Animated by the same credo as the government, *Ngurumo* attacked imperialism and neocolonialism in all its forms. This criticism was mostly reserved for the United States and its allies. But *Ngurumo*'s anti-imperial invective was also occasionally turned against the Eastern Bloc. Like the Tanzanian government, *Ngurumo* condemned the Soviet-led invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968. It declared that ‘Russia will be mocked even by children without teeth’ for claiming that it had entered Czechoslovakia by invitation from the regime in Prague.⁷⁹ A month later, *Ngurumo* – presumably in return for payment – gave the Soviet embassy space to present its own account of the intervention.⁸⁰ However, this transaction did not buy a shift in *Ngurumo*'s stance. The following day it accused the Soviet Union of telling stories of ‘chickens which lay seven eggs per day [...] We want the truth.’⁸¹ *Ngurumo* presented itself to Tanzanians as a credible source of information in a world awash with Cold War propaganda – material which the newspaper often published itself for financial reasons.

Demise

The Arusha Declaration of 1967 signalled the beginning of Tanzania's socialist revolution. In the following years, the number of nationalised firms and parastatals mushroomed, while the opportunities for private business diminished. These trends also affected Tanzania's newspapers. By 1972, there were just three dailies in circulation: the *Daily News*, owned by the government; *Uhuru*, owned by TANU; and *Ngurumo*, owned by Thakers. Yet in many ways, this was a propitious time for the newspaper business, as its potential market continued to grow rapidly. Swahili literacy rates climbed, in part thanks to a pioneering adult education programme. But the simultaneous growth of the state's reach into all areas of the national economy, including into the publishing industry, foreclosed pathways in an inclement political environment for independent newspapers. In 1976, the last issue of *Ngurumo* rolled – or, perhaps better, creaked – off the press. *Uhuru* could draw on the state's financial support and the infrastructural resources of parastatal printers to meet popular demand. By contrast, *Ngurumo*'s prospects were restricted by an inability to accumulate or access fresh capital in an era of state socialism.

The Arusha Declaration listed the ‘news media’ as among the sectors of the economy that should be under the control of the workers and peasants, through the government and co-operatives.⁸² There was growing opposition to the *Standard*, once the colonial newspaper of record, which was bought by the multinational conglomerate Lonrho in 1967 and considered a tool of neoimperialism in Tanzania. In 1970, the government bowed to popular demand and nationalised the *Standard*. This left *Ngurumo* as the only independently-owned daily newspaper in Tanzania. In response, *Ngurumo* sounded a word of caution. An editorial which did not directly mention the takeover rendered more abstract questions about the press into an everyday example to which readers could relate by drawing an analogy with the problem of the availability of staple

foodstuffs at the market. Just as citizens required reliable information to know where foodstuffs were for sale in times of scarcity, so they needed free access to information about the government in order to make considered choices about their leaders.⁸³

While *Ngurumo* was at the height of its popularity, its healthy circulation masked deeper financial problems. From the outset, Thakers had made *Ngurumo* as affordable as possible. The newspaper marked its ninth “birthday” in 1968 by celebrating the fact that despite increases in printing costs, the cover price remained 10 cents. It was for this reason that the owner had resisted appeals from readers for the newspaper to carry additional pages.⁸⁴ Yet cover sales had to account for most of *Ngurumo*’s revenue. The Thaker brothers rarely carried advertising for cigarettes and never for alcohol on ethical grounds.⁸⁵ Most of the paid notices were for small local businesses, whereas the English-language newspapers were able to attract large advertisements for luxury goods and international airlines – products far too expensive for *Ngurumo*’s typical reader. In any case, advertising was kept to a bare minimum, since space was already at a premium in the newspaper’s four tabloid-sized pages. ‘I want to give my readers a real ten cents worth, not a lot of adverts,’ explained Surendra Thaker.⁸⁶ In 1969, he reluctantly increased the cover price for the first time, to 15 cents.⁸⁷ By this time, *Ngurumo* was in serious financial difficulty and dependent on North Korean advertorials.

The challenge for *Ngurumo* of remaining commercially viable on a day-to-day basis precluded any attempt to resolve the fundamental problems of its business model. Although production moved from Zanaki Street to the industrial suburb of Chang’ombe in 1968, Thakers continued to use the same press on which Randhir Thaker had first produced *Mwafrika*.⁸⁸ This meant a slow process: it took six hours to print 15,000 copies; often printing started a whole day before the newspaper went on sale, meaning that stories had been overtaken by events by the time it reached vendors. Readers complained about news being a day or two late, such as reports on sports matches.⁸⁹ *Ngurumo* had reached its maximum capacity and could not satisfy demand. Surendra Thaker hoped to move the newspaper to a new printing plant, in order to double sales.⁹⁰ Yet he lacked the necessary capital to make this kind of investment. The cost of a new press – as much as \$75,000 – was well beyond Thakers’ means.⁹¹ Meanwhile, the hand-driven letterpress fell into disrepair, slowing down production and reducing the newspaper’s quality.

As *Ngurumo* struggled on, the political environment made Surendra Thaker’s position more and more precarious. In the post-Arusha years, Asian-owned businesses came under increasing pressure in Tanzania. Stories about Asians engaging in illegal economic activities abounded. Four Asian brothers who owned the Kanti Printing Works were accused of fraud, placed in detention, and forced to sell the firm in order to pay income tax.⁹² Thaker bemoaned that Tanzania’s depleted Asian community had ‘lost our patience too early’ and maintained a sense of racial superiority. ‘Wherever I go my eyes and my heart are for Tanzania,’ he told a researcher.⁹³ Yet his public comments hinted at the problematic implications of racial inequalities in the workplace. Interviewed by the *New York Times* in 1973, he said that ‘it will be another 10 or 15 years before there are enough trained Africans to run the economy.’ He added that ‘Asians, I believe, have a greater affection for Dar than do Africans.’⁹⁴

Friction between Asian-run businesses and African workers reached its height after TANU’s *Mwongozo* (‘Guidelines’) in 1971, a revolutionary statement which imbued

the economic blueprint of the Arusha Declaration with a sense of political militancy. Workers seized on the document to demand greater say in the running of their firms and to put an end to abusive bosses. A wave of strike action and lock-outs followed. TANU's long-time motto of '*uhuru na kazi*' ('freedom and work') and the tropes of 'parasites' feeding off hard labour gave expression to tensions over workplace hierarchies. These often carried a racial dimension, since the companies' owners were frequently Asians.⁹⁵ Such conflicts were not confined to the factory floor. At the *Standard*, African employees criticised the leadership of their Asian editor, the South African-born Frene Ginwala.⁹⁶

Amid these strikes, *Ngurumo*'s African employees challenged the authority of Surendra Thaker. In mid-1972, the executive editor, Joseph Mzuri, wrote on behalf of *Ngurumo*'s staff to several senior figures in the party-state with a scathing denunciation of Thaker. Mzuri stated that Thaker had announced that he wanted *Ngurumo* to become a weekly rather than a daily title, due to newsprint shortages. The workers interpreted this as a move to wind down *Ngurumo* altogether. Mzuri recalled that Thaker had tried to close *Ngurumo* before, during the financial troubles of 1969. The workers had rejected that decision and the matter had reached President Nyerere, who had told Thaker that every effort must be taken to keep *Ngurumo* running. The workers claimed that this burden had fallen on themselves; they had taken wage cuts and worked overtime, while the printing press had not been repaired. *Ngurumo*'s employees demanded that the newspaper be brought under their control. Thaker might have been the editor, they stated, but he was 'unable to write even a single paragraph.'⁹⁷

This dispute concluded in 1974, when Thaker and his workers agreed to form the Habari Printers Co-Operative Society, which took control of both the newspaper and the printworks. Mzuri became *Ngurumo*'s new editor. Thaker subsequently put a positive gloss on this process. 'We proved that *Ngurumo* really belonged to the workers and it set an example of practising what we preached – support for the co-operative movement,' he recalled.⁹⁸ Yet the original complaints made by his workers indicate a more acrimonious development. Furthermore, their statement suggests that Nyerere was committed towards the continued existence of *Ngurumo* in 1969. *Ngurumo* remained a popular source of entertainment, a vehicle for the Swahili language, and an example to which the government could point in response to accusations that it was intolerant of independent media.

While *Ngurumo* struggled on, the government acquired rival newspapers as well as – crucially – the infrastructure involved in their production. This provided greater security for the state-owned press, which could ride out economic upheavals and tap into an expanding market of readers. When the government nationalised the *Standard* in 1970, it did not also immediately acquire Printpak, the firm which produced the newspaper.⁹⁹ This meant that the printing operations of a government newspaper, which was supported by public funds, were benefitting a privately-owned firm. Almost a year later, the government still had not completed its planned takeover of Printpak. *Ngurumo* questioned this delay. It observed that 'there is no such thing as something called the *Standard* or *Sunday News* until the point when customers encounter these newspapers at the street vendors.' The production of a newspaper involved ink, paper, journalists, other staff, and news from foreign countries. In particular, *Ngurumo* drew attention to the value of the printer. 'Right now, citizens do not know how much the

government is paying for having its newspaper printed,' it concluded. 'If only they knew, they would immediately want the government to nationalise Printpak.'¹⁰⁰

Days after *Ngurumo's* editorial, the government announced the acquisition of Printpak.¹⁰¹ Whether *Ngurumo's* intervention catalysed the takeover or whether it got wind of an imminent government decision is unclear. Regardless, the government placed the Printpak under the umbrella of the National Development Corporation (NDC). In 1972, the *Standard* merged with TANU's English daily, the *Nationalist*, to create the *Daily News*. *Ngurumo* aside, Tanzania's daily newspapers were now owned by the party or government and printed by parastatals. The *Daily News* and *Sunday News* were produced by Printpak. *Uhuru* and *Mzalendo*, a Sunday edition which launched in 1972, were owned by the party's Mwananchi Publishing Company and printed by the National Printing Company (NPC), another NDC parastatal. These arrangements gave these newspapers privileged access to the material and financial resources of the socialist state. By the mid-1970s, 76% of printing presses in Tanzania were owned by the government. In contrast, the figure for Kenya was just 10%.¹⁰²

In these circumstances, *Ngurumo* struggled to cope with the repercussions of global upheavals which placed its independent, shoestring business under severe strain. First, *Ngurumo* had to ride out a global shortage of paper, which began in 1973. In October 1974, *Ngurumo* temporarily reduced its page run because of a lack of newsprint.¹⁰³ These problems were compounded by the oil crisis. Third World states like Tanzania, which imported all of its newsprint and faced serious foreign exchange shortages, were hit hardest by these developments. The cost of newsprint imported to Tanzania rose almost threefold, from around 1,600 shillings per ton in 1974 to 4,480 shillings in 1976.¹⁰⁴ Obtaining newsprint was not just expensive, but a time-consuming bureaucratic process involving importer, exporter, and the government.¹⁰⁵ The parastatal printers were not immune to these challenges, but in their case the process was streamlined by government arrangements. During the paper shortage, the NPC was able to use an import grant arranged by the Treasury with the Swedish government, which eliminated the need for direct payment to suppliers.¹⁰⁶ *Ngurumo* was also hamstrung by the cost of transportation. In 1975, it responded to an increase in the price for rail freight by pointing out that these prohibitive costs would mean that news would not be able to reach the villages. In contrast, it complained, some newspapers – i.e. the party- and government-owned titles – received preferential rates for air transportation.¹⁰⁷

While *Ngurumo* struggled, *Uhuru* drew upon state-backed credit to expand its operations. As a parastatal, the NPC was able to make major investments in modern presses. In 1971, using a loan from the Tanzania Investment Bank, the NPC purchased a new web offset press for 800,000 shillings. This gave *Uhuru* a fresh new look and allowed it to grow from 6 to 8 pages (soon increasing to 12), with only a slight rise in cover cost.¹⁰⁸ Sales for *Uhuru* grew rapidly. By 1974, they had reached 70,000 per issue. The NPC estimated that this would double again by 1977.¹⁰⁹ To meet this readership, the NPC secured a second loan to finance another new press, to be bought from a Chicago-based firm for 2.5 million shillings. This was made possible by the guarantee of future business for the next seven years from Mwananchi Publishing.¹¹⁰ All the while, Mwananchi Publishing struggled to keep up its payments to the printers. By March 1976, it owed the NPC 1.7 million shillings. However, the tight web which bound together party, state, and parastatals meant that the NPC could tolerate such deficits.¹¹¹ Propped up by these credit facilities and

privileged access to scarce materials, *Uhuru* took advantage of a booming market for Swahili news.

The slick new presses used by *Uhuru* at least gave its diet of party announcements a contemporary feel, with eye-catching graphic design, modern typefaces, and numerous photographs. By contrast, the rough-and-ready appearance of *Ngurumo* felt out of date. As Hadji Konde noted, ‘the last copy of “Ngurumo” issued on November 30, 1976 looked almost the same as the first issue of “Ngurumo” of April 15, 1959.’ By this point, circulation was just 2,000 copies, some editions failed to materialise, and the newspaper was running at a deficit of 6,000 shillings per month. According to Konde, there were plans to revive the newspaper in 1977, using facilities at Printpak. Nothing seems to have come of these initiatives.¹¹²

We can only speculate about the reasons for the Tanzanian state’s reluctance to save *Ngurumo*. Economically, resources were tight: subsidising the flagship newspaper of a dominant party was one thing, propping up a small co-operative was another altogether. The 1970s witnessed the rising influence of a more ideologically dogmatic wing inside TANU, with overspill into the sphere of the media through the ideas of “developmental journalism” that characterised the official newspapers. Just days before the final issue of *Ngurumo* appeared, the government newspaper declared that it was a ‘necessity’ that the ‘press belongs to the Party and forms an important part of its organisational machinery.’¹¹³ In an era of economic and political austerity, there was little space for the sort of street gossip or suggestive editorials at which *Ngurumo* had excelled. More prosaically, *Ngurumo*’s dwindling circulation meant that by 1976 there was little worth saving: people would not suddenly miss something they had ceased to read. Thakers continued to function as a stationer and small-scale printer in Dar es Salaam into the mid-1990s.

Even at the height of Tanzania’s economic crisis, private print media continued to play an important part in cultural life. As Uta Reuster-Jahn has explained, popular entertainment magazines offered alternative, more lively reading matter to the offerings of the party-state. Into the 1980s, several African-edited magazines were funded by Tanzania’s few remaining Asian entrepreneurs.¹¹⁴ In Dar es Salaam, as Emily Callaci has shown, a cohort of ‘briefcase publishers’ navigated an increasingly precarious publishing landscape to offer pulp fiction commentaries on urban life in a time of economic collapse.¹¹⁵ In both situations, editors and authors battled the same material scarcities, inability to access capital, and bureaucratic blockages that had led to the demise of *Ngurumo*. If the successes of this improvised publishing scene attest to the creativity of Tanzania’s print entrepreneurs, their ephemeral nature also highlight the difficulties they faced to get their work to press.

Conclusion

Ngurumo and Randhir Thaker played an underappreciated role in financing and publicising the astonishing rise of TANU. From the mid-1950s, the credit which Thaker extended to TANU provided the party with a print infrastructure which permitted its rapid expansion across the territory. After falling with out his political allies in the Asian Association at a contententious moment, he identified a niche for an affordable newspaper which espoused a more racially inclusive form of nationalism and chimed with the popular interests of a growing urban Swahili readership. After independence, *Ngurumo* flourished as a

forum in which Tanzanians thrashed out the moral economies of *ujamaa* and embraced Swahili as a language of nation-building and cultural decolonisation. While the ownership of the media came under close scrutiny in post-colonial Tanzania, *Ngurumo's* success demonstrated that there was no straightforward opposition between privately-owned and state- or party-owned media. Indeed, the official expressions of grief at Randhir's death, plus Nyerere's apparent insistence on *Ngurumo's* continued existence when it first encountered financial problems, reflect the high esteem in which it was held by the top strata of government.

Yet *Ngurumo's* integral role in Tanzania's print culture masked problems behind the scenes. Despite the Thaker brothers' support for TANU, *Ngurumo's* Asian ownership became a bone of contention at the height of Tanzania's socialist revolution. More serious for *Ngurumo* were the barriers to accessing capital and procuring material supplies under a socialist regime faced with an escalating financial crisis. Paid content from Cold War powers covered cash flow problems, but little more. *Ngurumo's* commitment to maintaining an affordable cover price meant that it struggled to stay afloat, let alone invest in new technology which would allow it to meet rising demand. By contrast, the state-owned media benefited from the parastatal printers' credit facilities and ability to access imported materials which permitted *Uhuru* to expand even during severe economic hardship.

The story of *Ngurumo* helps us to move beyond simplistic contemporary debates about press freedom. Since the economic and political reforms of the neoliberal era, Tanzania has re-developed a vibrant newspaper culture. Newsstands teem with titles, even in an age where digital content is the preferred medium of younger generations.¹¹⁶ Yet comment is not free: bans on newspapers deemed to infringe the government's sensibilities have proliferated in recent years. However, while formal bans, repressive legislation, and violence against journalists attract local and international outcry, we must understand issues of "press freedom" in broader terms. Pressure on the press comes in less eye-catching forms – for example, in the denial of revenue from government advertising.¹¹⁷ As Seithy Chachage observed during the 1990s, '[f]orums on press and press freedom which concentrate on threats to the press from the state, leaving untouched the question of coercion from within the media (due to patterns of ownership, mechanisms of information control, pressures for profit and money making in general) are misguided.'¹¹⁸ The rise and fall of *Ngurumo* sheds historical light on these hidden limitations and financial bottlenecks which continue to shape East African public spheres today.

Notes

1. *Ngurumo*, "Rais amesimama akitazama kwa masikitiki," 6 November 1965, 4; *Daily Nation*, "President at funeral of Dar editor," 5 November 1965, 19.
2. Sijaona, handwritten letter, 4 November 1965, reproduced in *Ngurumo*, 6 November 1965, 4.
3. *Ngurumo*, "Waasia igeni mfano wa Randhir Thaker," 8 November 1965, 1.
4. Peterson, Hunter, and Newell, eds, *African Print Cultures*. For Tanganyikan and Zanzibari examples, see Glassman, "Sorting Out the Tribes"; Hunter, "Our Common Humanity"; Hunter, *Political Thought*.
5. Cane, *Fourth Enemy*; Smith, *Mexican Press*; Freije, *Citizens of Scandal*.
6. On the media and publishing industry in Tanzania, see Suriano, "Dreams"; Sturmer, *Media History*.

7. Condon, "Nation Building," 335.
8. Ng'wanakilala, *Mass Communication*, 18n13.
9. Konde, *Press Freedom*, 43.
10. Scotton, "Tanganyika's African Press."
11. Ochs, *African Press*, 57–8, who erroneously writes that "[f]rom 1958 [sic] to 1964 [sic], the Swahili daily *Ngurumo* [sic] was owned and published by an Asian, R.B. Thacker [sic]."
12. Ivaska, *Cultured States*; Callaci, *Street Archives*.
13. Brennan, "Politics and Business," 44. See also Brennan, "Print Culture."
14. For another study of the connections between business, politics, and media in Tanzania, see Fair, *Reel Pleasures*.
15. Through the collections at the Tanzania National Library, the University of Dar es Salaam, and the Library of Congress, I have consulted around ninety percent of issues of *Ngurumo* from 1964 to 1976. I located some earlier copies from 1959–63 which are enclosed in various archival records or available at the School of Oriental and African Studies.
16. Brennan, "Politics and Business."
17. On the political economy of newspapers in colonial Kenya, see Gadsden, "African Press"; Frederiksen, "Print"; Musandu, *Pressing Interests*.
18. Scotton, "Tanganyika's African Press," 5; Westcott, "East African Radical"; Brennan, "Constructing Arguments", 216.
19. Leslie, *Survey*, 195–200.
20. Gregory, *Quest for Equality*, 181; Brennan, "Print, Reading, and Patronage," 373.
21. Gregory, *Quest for Equality*, 181; United Kingdom National Archives, Kew (UKNA), FCO 141/17862, Tanganyika Special Branch, *Asian "Who's Who,"* entry for "Randhirkumar Bhanushanker Thaker," September 1958.
22. Brennan, "Print Culture," 114.
23. UKNA, FCO 141/17809/180, advertisement for TANU meeting, enclosed in Commissioner of Police to Chief Secretary, 8 August 1955; UKNA, FCO 141/17801/60, copy of TANU constitution, 1955.
24. UKNA, FCO 141/17809/126, Commissioner of Police to Chief Secretary, 9 June 1955.
25. UKNA, FCO 141/17804/6, TANU Headquarters, "Financial Report for the Period Commencing October 1956 to April 1957," translated and enclosed in Commissioner of Police to Chief Secretary, 8 May 1957.
26. UKNA, FCO 141/17804/165, TANU Headquarters to Provincial Secretaries, translated and enclosed in Commissioner of Police to Ministerial Secretary, 28 August 1957.
27. UKNA, FCO 141/17805/23, Commissioner of Police to Ministerial Secretary, 27 October 1957.
28. UKNA, FCO 141/17806/194, Commissioner of Police to Ministerial Secretary, 4 June 1958.
29. UKNA, FCO 141/17806/101, Minutes of Annual General Meeting of TANU, Tabora, 20–5 January 1958, enclosed in Commissioner of Police to Ministerial Secretary, 31 January 1958.
30. UKNA, FCO 141/17862, Tanganyika Special Branch, *Asian "Who's Who,"* entry for "Randhirkumar Bhanushanker Thaker," September 1958; UKNA, FCO 141/17804/15, Commissioner of Police to Chief Secretary, 15 May 1957. Thakers' ability to sustain such large debts raises the possibility that it was receiving subsidies from a third-party source, potentially the Indian high commission – but this can be no more than speculation.
31. *Tanganyika Standard*, "Printer claims £2,500 from Mwafrika," 2 February 1960, 3.
32. UKNA, FCO 141/17806/162, Commissioner of Police to Ministerial Secretary, 12 May 1958.
33. UKNA, FCO 141/17805/23, Commissioner of Police to Ministerial Secretary, 27 October 1957; UKNA, FCO 141/17807/188, Commissioner of Police to Chief Secretary, 19 May 1958.
34. Brennan, "South Asian Nationalism," 32–3. More generally, see Brennan, *Taiifa*.
35. Jhaveri, *Marching with Nyerere*, 65–6, 114–6.
36. *Tanganyika Standard*, "Printer claims £2,500 from Mwafrika," 2 February 1960, 3.
37. Stephens, *Political Transformation*, 110.
38. *Tanganyika Standard*, "New paper", 16 April 1959, 1.
39. UKNA, FCO 141/17950, *Ngurumo*, "Vita baridi," editorial, 11 April 1960, 2.

40. Hunter, *Political Thought*, ch.7.
41. UKNA, CO 822/1363/270, extract from Tanganyika Intelligence Report, August 1959.
42. UKNA, FCO 141/17959, min. 212, Acting Permanent Secretary, Office of the Chief Secretary, to Director of Public Relations, 21 July 1959.
43. UKNA, FCO 141/17959, min. 167, Senior Public Relations Officer, 8 June 1959.
44. UKNA, FCO 141/17959, min. 188, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Security and Immigration, to Minister of Security and Immigration, 17 July 1959.
45. *Mwafrika*, 18 April 1959, 1.
46. UKNA, FCO 141/17959/212, R. H. K. Mbilinyi, letter to the editor, *Mwafrika*, 7 August 1959, 2.
47. *Tanganyika Standard*, "Printer claims £2,500 from Mwafrika," 2 February 1960, 3. The outcome of the case is unclear.
48. Stephen Mhando, letter to the editor, *Tanganyika Standard*, 7 October 1959, 2.
49. R. B. Thaker, letter to the editor, *Tanganyika Standard*, 13 October 1959, 2.
50. Ramdhir [sic] B. Thaker, letter to the editor, *Tanganyika Standard*, 25 January 1960, 2.
51. S. Sarda and H. P. Shangvi, letter to the editor, *Tanganyika Standard*, 9 February 1960, 2.
52. Gregory, *Quest for Equality*, 108.
53. Condon, "Nation Building," 336; Mytton, "Role of the Mass Media," 250. Konde (*Press Freedom*, 43) put Ngurumo's peak circulation at 40,000. This figure is cited by both Ivaska (*Cultured States*, 30) and Callaci (*Street Archives*, 32), but is impossibly high given the limitations on production explained here.
54. On Mhando, see Roberts, "TANU's Bombay Delegates."
55. Konde, *Press Freedom*, 42.
56. Gregory, *Quest for Equality*, 181.
57. See Roberts, *Revolutionary State-Making*, 218–9.
58. Quoted in Mytton, "Role of the Mass Media," 245–6.
59. *Ibid.*, 217.
60. See examples in Ivaska, *Cultured States*.
61. Juma Pole, letter to the editor, *Ngurumo*, 28 March 1961, 2.
62. S. N. Mkwawa, letter to the editor, *Ngurumo*, 6 April 1961, 2.
63. Abdulaziz, "Ecology."
64. Peterson and Hunter, "Print Culture," 31.
65. *Ngurumo*, "Babu asifu Ngurumo wajua uandishi," 1 September 1969, 1.
66. *Ngurumo*, "Lugha ya kiswahili:– 'tunataka vitendo,'" 26 January 1967, 4.
67. *Ngurumo*, "Kiswahili," editorial, 28 February 1967, 2.
68. *Tanganyika Standard*, "New paper," 16 April 1959, 1.
69. *Ngurumo*, "Nafasi za uandishi," 16 October 1964, 2; *Ngurumo*, "Ngurumo Mtwara," 21 April 1967, 4; *Ngurumo*, "Ngurumo Arusha," 16 May 1967, 4.
70. Mytton, "Role of the Mass Media," 250.
71. M. O. Riko Ngare, "Ngurumo Mombasa," *Ngurumo*, 12 December 1967, 4.
72. Ivaska, *Cultured States*; Callaci, *Street Archives*.
73. Roberts, *Revolutionary State-Making*.
74. Mytton, "Role of the Mass Media," 245.
75. Bundesarchiv, Berlin (BArch), SAPMO, DY30/IV A 2/20/964, Junghanns, 1 November 1968.
76. *Ngurumo*, "Mkurungenzi wa Ngurumo safarini," 21 October 1961, 2; *Ngurumo*, "Aenda Ujerumani," 6 October 1965, 1; *New York Times*, "Africa newsmen to attend seminar," 4 September 1966, 42.
77. National Archives and Records Administration, College Park (NARA), Record Group (RG) 59, Central Foreign Policy Files (CFPF) 1967–1969, Box 2513, POL2, Burns to State Dept, 9 May 1969. On North Korea's use of foreign newspapers for propaganda, see Young, *Guns*, 53–9.
78. *Ngurumo*, "Vita baridi," editorial, 9 May 1969, 2.
79. *Ngurumo*, "Vita baridi," editorial, 23 August 1968, 2. On Tanzania's response to events in Czechoslovakia, see Roberts, *Revolutionary State-Making*, 183–7.

80. *Ngurumo*, “Mkatamba wa kirafiki usioweza kuvunjika,” 23 September 1968, 3–4.
81. *Ngurumo*, “Vita baridi,” editorial, 24 September 1968, 2.
82. “The Arusha Declaration,” in Nyerere, *Freedom and Socialism*, 233–4.
83. *Ngurumo*, “Vita baridi,” editorial, 11 February 1970, 2.
84. *Ngurumo*, “Kuzaliwa,” 15 April 1968, 1, 4.
85. Syracuse University Archives, Robert Gregory Papers, Martha Honey interview with Surendra Thaker, 8 March 1973. I am grateful to James Brennan for sharing his notes on this document.
86. Quoted in Mytton, “Role of the Mass Media,” 242–3.
87. *Ngurumo*, “Vita baridi,” editorial, 28 January 1969, 1.
88. *Ngurumo*, 30 August 1968, 2. Thakers appears to have maintained a shop on Zanaki Street.
89. G. S. Bujiku, “Nataka Ngurumo iwe . . .,” letter to the editor, *Ngurumo*, 28 February 1975, 2.
90. Mytton, “Role of the Mass Media,” 241–2.
91. NARA, RG 59, CFPF 1967–69, Box 2513, POL2, Burns to State Dept, 28 March 1969.
92. *Uhuru*, “Wahindi 4 wafukuzwa nchini!,” 13 August 1969, 1; Aminzade, *Race*, 230–1.
93. Honey interview with Surendra Thaker, 8 March 1973.
94. *New York Times*, “‘Abode of peace’ has sluggish economy,” 4 February 1973, 35, 45.
95. Shivji, Yahya-Othman, and Kamata, *Development as Rebellion*, vol. 3, 212–20.
96. Roberts, *Revolutionary State-Making*, 229–30.
97. National Records Centre, Dodoma, Prime Minister’s Office Papers, Box 364, PM/N40/1/40, Mzuri to General Secretary, TANU, “Azimio la wafanyakazi kuendesha *Ngurumo* kijamaa,” n.d..
98. Konde, *Press Freedom*, 43.
99. According to the Standard Group’s chairman, the government was unaware that the *Standard* did not own its printing works when it nationalised the newspaper. Chande, *Knight in Africa*, 139.
100. *Ngurumo*, “Jagabule,” editorial, 14 January 1971, 2.
101. *Daily News*, “20 years anniversary of Printpak (T),” 28 April 1986, 6.
102. Wilcox, *Mass Media*, 51–2. On printers, see Bgoya, *Books and Reading*, 20–5.
103. *Ngurumo*, “Tatizo . . .,” 4 October 1974, 1. *Ngurumo* had expanded from four to six pages in June 1974. Given the ceiling on daily print runs caused by its outdated press, this would appear to indicate falling circulation, rather than an increase in the total number of pages printed daily.
104. Konde, *Press Freedom*, 84.
105. Wilcox, *Mass Media*, 51–2.
106. Tanzania National Archives, Dar es Salaam (TzNA), 596/21/IA/NPC/5, NPC, Annual Plan for 1975.
107. *Ngurumo*, “Vita baridi,” editorial, 7 July 1975, 2.
108. *Uhuru*, “Uhuru jipya kwa umma,” 5 August 1971, 1.
109. TzNA, 596/21/IA/NPC/5, NPC, Annual Plan for 1975.
110. TzNA, 596/21/IA/NPC/5, NPC, Board Paper No. 5/75 – Capital Expenditure.
111. TzNA, 596/21/IA/NPC/5, NPC, Minutes of the 2nd Quarterly Board Meeting of Directors, 2 January 1976.
112. Konde, *Press Freedom*, 43; Musalali, “Case Study,” 9.
113. Ferdinand Ruhinda, “Transnational power and mass media,” *Sunday News*, 21 November 1976, 4.
114. Reuster-Jahn, “Private Entertainment Magazines.”
115. Callaci, “Street Textuality.”
116. Srinivasan, Diepeveen, and Karekwaivanane, “Rethinking Publics.”
117. Conversation with a newspaper editor, Dar es Salaam, April 2019.
118. Chachage, “Democracy,” 74.

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