Introduction

I

In the early 1960s, at the moment of independence from colonial rule, it was a truth universally acknowledged that the absence of a common identity threatened the prospects and, indeed, the very existence of Africa's nascent nation-states.[1] The new governments of Tanganyika and Kenya, former British territories which obtained their independence in December 1961 and December 1963 respectively, took steps, therefore, to fill this apparent void. In both countries, drawing on the wider thinking of social scientists, the school was identified as one essential site for the inculcation of a national consciousness, and the subject of History assigned a special role in this endeavour. Similar institutions were established in the two countries, tasked with designing new curriculums, links were established and ideas shared across East Africa and the wider continent as this process developed, and in both the expertise and burgeoning research of professional historians, dedicated to battling the racism of Hugh Trevor-Roper and keen to play their role in developing a 'history for self-government', was drawn upon. Despite the broadly shared impulse, institutional setting and understanding of what was happening elsewhere, however, the primary and secondary curriculums which emerged in the two countries between 1967 and the mid-1970s differed remarkably in their construction of national history.[2]

In Tanzania (as Tanganyika became after unification with Zanzibar in 1964) attention was drawn to the foundational unity of the country's people. The study of national history was intended to 'enable the pupils to think of Tanzania in pre-history and at present as one nation, not as groups

[1] B.J. Berman, 'Nationalism in Post-Colonial Africa', in J. Breuilly, (ed.), *The Oxford Handbook of the History of Nationalism* (Oxford, 2013), p.360.

[2] G. Scott, 'Education for Political Development in Kenya and Tanzania: A Comparative Analysis of the Divergent Policies of Two Newly Independent States' (Liverpool Univ. PhD thesis, 1983), p.113, p.244, pp.251-9, p.277. Republic of Kenya, *Kenya Education Commission Report*, Part 1 (Nairobi, 1964), p.2. J. Nyerere, *Freedom and Socialism* (Oxford, 1968), p.208. T.O. Ranger, (ed.) *Emerging Themes in African History* (London, 1968), pp.220-1. A.K. Hardyman, 'The Development of History Syllabuses', *Hadith*, Vol.1, (1968), pp.135-8.

of tribes', to 'stimulate the pupils in a pride of their nation', and to 'enable [them] to realise the effort and success of past generations of Tanzanians'.[3] To this end, attention was directed towards pre-colonial connections, especially economic, forged across the territory; resistance to the German intrusion was presented as a single narrative, a uniform response to the European presence, with acts of resistance taking their lead one from the other, developing further the theme of connection and growing unity; and the fight for independence provided a suitably heroic climax to the story, the ultimate act of Tanzanian unity and expression of nationhood.[4] This history showed if not the antiquity of the Tanzanian nation as a political unit, then at least its organic nature as the singular product of a longstanding process of historical development.

In Kenya, in contrast to the Tanzanian story of national development, the syllabus was characterised by an ahistorical multiculturalism. Attention was drawn to the '*peoples* of Kenya', members of ethnically defined 'traditional nations',[5] and to 'Comparative Tribal History'. Students were to study tales of ethnic origin, the ideas held by various groups about family, and their cultural habits and practices, where possible being brought to see similarities that existed in the customs of diverse groups. Kenya, the children were to be taught, was 'one nation made up of people of diverse traditions and customs' and held together by 'mutual respect'.[6]

Taken together, this process and the differences which resulted raise a number of questions. To what extent were the new rulers' fears about the absence of a widely shared national identity justified? What was a 'tribe' and how was it different from (or similar to) a 'nation'? How can the differences in these constructions be explained? How, more broadly, did the people of this region (to

[3] Scott, 'Education for Political Development in Kenya and Tanzania', p.277.
[4] Tanzania Institute of Education, *History: An In-Service Course for Teachers* (Dar es Salaam, 1967), p.52, pp.54-6. Scott, 'Education for Political Development in Kenya and Tanzania', pp.277-8.
[5] The term 'traditional nation' was used to avoid the negative connotations of 'tribe'. To the same end, scholars have, over the course of many years, widely substituted 'tribe' for 'ethnicity'. Given its widespread usage, however, it is doubtful whether the latter term any longer meets this objective. Across this thesis, therefore, I use tribe (without scare quotes) and ethnicity interchangeably. The nature of my subject and the basis of my argument should make clear that in doing so I do not accept the derogatory overtones of either.
[6] Republic of Kenya, *Syllabus for Kenya Primary Schools* (Nairobi, 1967), p.103. J.N.B. Osogo, *Kenya's People in the Past: Teachers' Handbook for Standards 3 and 4* (Nairobi, 1973). Republic of Kenya, Ministry of Education, *Curriculum Guide for Secondary Schools*, Vol.1 (Nairobi, 1973), p.1. Scott, 'Education for Political Development in Kenya and Tanzania', p.271. My emphasis.

borrow from Benedict Anderson) imagine community and their relationship with it?[7] And how did these imaginations change over time, and under what influences?

These questions are explored over the course of the following chapters, which compare the ways in which community, ethnic, racial and territorial, was constructed and thought about in Kenya and Tanganyika under colonial rule. Seen in a longer term perspective, the official urge to post-colonial nation building was but the latest in a series of efforts stretching across more than two decades to define community, to assert the obligation of people to the community in which they lived, and to establish how men and women, young and old, rich and poor could live well together in the modern world, arguments which formed the central element of public debate across the region, and which profoundly influenced the strikingly different official postcolonial visions of the nation-state outlined above. The following chapters trace the emergence of these various visions of community in Kenya and Tanganyika against a background of a widespread sense of social disruption, the evolving relationship between them, the interaction of intellectual inheritances and innovation over time[8], and, from a similar starting point, the divergence of Kenyan and Tanganyikan ideas. Above all, I trace the competitive patriotisms of both men and women as they sought to understand and shape their world; to end what was widely seen to be the hijacking of public interest by selfish individualism; to inculcate what was referred to in the post-colonial Kenyan history syllabus as the habits of 'good neighbourliness and co-operation that characterised traditional African society', the antithesis of 'the self-interest and self-seeking tendencies' which had taken root 'since the advent of modern ways'[9]; to wrestle from the British the political power that by the mid-1950s was seen to be central to this task; and through their instructive writing, to call forth from the disorder of the 'time of strangers', civil, reputable and prosperous communities.[10]

[7] B. Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origins and Spread of Nationalism*, 2nd Edition (London, 2006).
[8] R. Williams, 'Culture is Ordinary', in B. Highmore, (ed.), *The Everyday Life Reader* (London, 2002), pp.91-100.
[9] Osogo, *Kenya's People in the Past*, p.99.
[10] The phrase 'time of strangers' comes from British National Archives, FCO 141/6712, (Kenya: Activities of the Luo Union), Rules of the Luo Union, 1952, p.1.

II

Struck by the rise of demands for freedom from foreign rule and of movements aimed at this end in the period after the Second World War, but unsure as to their future direction, the earliest writers on nations and nationalism in Africa sought to outline, as James S. Coleman put it, 'the character and probable course of African nationalist development'. Drawing on the assumptions of contemporary modernisation theory, Coleman understood nationalism to be the 'end product of the profound and complex transformation which has occurred in Africa since the European intrusion', an impulse conceptually distinct from the involuntary spasms of other kinds of backward looking colonial protest, the progeny of imperialism, not a mere 'peasant's revolt.' It built, he argued, upon a double liberation. The intrusion of 'modernity' – new forms of economic life, urbanisation, western education – was characterised by rupture, bringing about the disintegration of old ways of life and patterns of authority, a liberation from tradition; the beneficiaries of this liberation, modern men close to the Western world, sought, in turn, to overcome the blockage imposed by colonial rule to their full participation in the benefits of this modernity. On this reading, tribe and nation were successive points in political time: the inherited loyalties of the former giving way to 'post-tribal, post-feudal' nations, the political association of individual modern citizens.[11]

If Coleman sought to explain the origins of the impulse to nationalism, others amongst his contemporaries, sharing many of his modernist assumptions, sought to describe and understand the organisation and heroic development of the political movements that succeeded in displacing the colonial state. Amongst the earliest of these, Thomas Hodgkin argued that the new colonial towns were not mere solvents, but sites of creative engagement. There, he held, the myriad associations formed to combat urban *anomie*, avowedly anti-colonial or not, had helped to stimulate opposition to European rule, to build African self-confidence and authority, and to create networks of

[11] J.S. Coleman, 'Nationalism in Tropical Africa', *The American Political Science Review*, Vol.48, No.2, (1954), pp.404-26. For a wider review of this literature, see J. Lonsdale, 'The Moral Economy of Mau Mau: The Problem', in B. Berman and J. Lonsdale, *Unhappy Valley: Conflict in Kenya and Africa* (London, 1992), pp.265-314.

communication, all of which, Hodgkin suggested in very general terms, had aided the emergence and development of movements aimed at the overthrow of the colonial state.[12] Over the course of the following years, nationalism understood as anti-colonial revolt maintained a tenacious grip on African scholarship, during which time historians such as John Iliffe approached the same broad set of issues, tracing more closely the course of nationalist mobilisation and triumph in particular territories. In turn, critics revised their accounts, showing how groups marginalised in the earliest understandings – especially Africa's rural population and women – both contributed to the overthrow of the colonial regimes and shaped the agenda of the nationalist elite.[13] Little thought was given in these studies, however, to the question of what the nation was, to nationalism as the imagination of community.[14]

In the 1960s and early 1970s, as nationalist revolt gave way to national government, however, this scholarly emphasis on the search for power was complemented by the practical effort to consolidate it. As we saw at the start of this chapter, this problem appeared urgent. Early scholars such as Coleman and Hodgkin agreed that anti-colonial nationalism was a distinctly modern phenomenon, its shaping agents western-educated urban dwellers. By implication, however, not all of Africa's people were modern, or, therefore, national; many, if not most, remained rural, traditional and above all tribal. As such, they threatened the spread of division and the destruction of the modernising project.[15] The 'chief problem facing African leaders today', wrote the young Kenyan historian B.A. Ogot in 1963, was, therefore, to weld the people 'into nations strong enough to stand on their own feet' by persuading them 'to transfer their loyalties from an association they

[12] T. Hodgkin, *Nationalism in Colonial Africa* (London, 1956).
[13] J. Iliffe, *A Modern History of Tanganyika* (Cambridge, 1979), Ch.16. J. Lonsdale, 'The Emergence of African Nations: A Historiographical Analysis', *African Affairs*, Vol.67, No.266, (1968), pp.11-28. S. Geiger, *TANU Women: Gender and Culture in the Making of Tanganyikan Nationalism, 1955-65* (Oxford, 1997). E. Schmidt, 'Top Down or Bottom Up? Nationalist Mobilization Reconsidered with Special Reference to Guinea', *The American Historical Review*, Vol.110, No.4, (2005), pp.975-1014. For a recent overview, see J. Allman, 'Between the Present and History: African Nationalism and Decolonisation', in J. Parker and R. Reid, (eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Modern African History* (Oxford, 2013), pp.224-242.
[14] J.M. Lonsdale, 'Anti-Colonial Nationalism and Patriotism in Sub-Saharan Africa', in J. Breuilly, (ed.), *The Oxford Handbook of the History of Nationalism* (Oxford, 2013), p.319.
[15] See R. Rathbone, *Nkrumah and the Chiefs: The Politics of Chieftaincy in Ghana 1951-60* (Oxford, 2000), Introduction.

know and understand – the tribe – to something impersonal, abstract and as yet non-existent called the nation'.[16] In the period immediately after decolonisation, then, the consciousness of ordinary Africans was assumed, rather than investigated, and the attention of scholars was turned to the steps that could, or should, be taken to turn peasants into citizens.

Giving voice to this desire, Karl Deutsch confidently invoked a *zeitgeist* characterised by the desire not only to contemplate but to *act*. 'While in the past the formation and rise of nations were merely observed by scholars', he wrote, somewhat breathlessly, 'today statesmen and voters increasingly want to *do* something about the process' such as 'establish[ing] or strengthen[ing] some national political entity of their own'.[17] Scholars duly obliged in providing strategies aimed at this end, drawing attention to the possibility of using the mass party, a *lingua franca* and the school, as we saw at the start of this chapter, as the fires in which a new humanity could be forged, the means by which the states inherited from the colonialists could be turned into stable nations.[18]

For all Deutsch's bullishness, however, doubts bubbled even at this stage about the possibility of achieving national solidarity. Nation-building hopes and strategies were shadowed by fears about the coherence and capacities of African nations, and African liberation movements were consequently taunted by colonial accusations of their unreadiness to rule.[19] The same fears found space, too, in the dark recesses of the minds of scholars tasked with outlining nation-building strategies, fearful that the apparently inherited loyalties of tribe could not easily be dislodged. 'Given the short duration of their existence and the much shorter period during which they have functioned as effectively organised units', wrote Rupert Emerson, voicing this ambivalence, 'it would be amazing for the colonies-turned-states to be able to achieve a *real* sense of national identity for a substantial number of their people.'[20] As the hopes of Africa on the verge of independence began to

[16] B.A. Ogot, 'From Chief to President', *Transition*, Vol.10, (1963), p.28.
[17] K.W. Deutsch, 'Foreword' in K.W. Deutsch, (ed.), *Nation-Building* (New York, 1966), p.v. Original emphasis.
[18] R. Emerson. 'Nation-Building in Africa', in K.W. Deutsch, (ed.), *Nation-Building* (New York, 1966), pp.96-116. Berman, 'Nationalism in Post-Colonial Africa', pp.360-1.
[19] E.g. Kenya National Archives, PC/NZA/3/24/6, (*If You Ask Me*, 1952-60), *If You Ask Me*, Vol.6, No.12, June 1958.
[20] Emerson, 'Nation-Building in Africa', p.101.My emphasis.

be frustrated, however, as the 'degradation from the hopes and freedoms of newly regained independence' dawned on imaginations and weighed spirits down, as the expectations of the social scientists appeared to be confounded, as tribe seemed to flourish while the nation-state floundered, these concerns became louder.[21] Some attributed this, unfairly, to a lack of sustained and serious interest in the task of nation-building.[22] Others placed under critical, often hostile, scrutiny the very possibility of nation-building, and, indeed, the liberating potential of these new nations. Two authors will have to stand as representatives of these growing criticisms.

The period from the 1970s witnessed a burst of scholarship centred on the study of nations and nationalism across the world. Books on the subject proliferated, dedicated journals were established, and academic research clusters flourished, in large part as a reaction to a world in which the number of states claiming to be 'nations' spiked following the decolonisation of the old European empires, and the idea of the nation itself came to be understood as the only legitimate form of political community.[23] Africa, however, was badly treated: the world of nations and nation-states with which these scholars began turned out to be not quite so national after all.

Concerned to elucidate the construction of the modern world, A.D. Smith, a driving force in this burst of activity, traced the pre-modern origins of what he called *ethnies*, complexes of myths, symbols, memories and values, and the social and economic changes that had led to the development in the modern period, initially in the West, of self-conscious nations from these long-standing cultural formations, the roots of which (so his argument ran) provided a shared public culture, the basis of their social cohesion. Shifting his attention to the recently decolonised world, he pointed to the absence of such a basis in Africa's multi-ethnic states, and argued that, in consequence, these states could not be regarded as true nations, and by implication, that they were

[21] B. Davidson, *The Black Man's Burden: Africa and the Curse of the Nation-State* (Oxford, 1992), p.9.
[22] D. Branch and N. Cheeseman, 'Conclusion: The Failure of Nation-Building and the Kenyan Crisis', in D. Branch, N. Cheeseman and L. Gardner, (eds.), *Our Turn to Eat: Politics in Kenya Since 1950* (Berlin, 2010), p.245.
[23] E.g. A.D. Smith, *The Ethnic Origins of Nations* (Oxford, 1986), pp.ix-x. Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, pp.1-3.

likely to be wracked by instability.[24] With the social scientists of the 1950s, Smith agreed that ethnic diversity could only be disruptive of state unity. He was clear, however, that tribe did not give way to nation, as Coleman had suggested, but rather formed its beating heart.[25] In a less confident age, history, it seemed, was beginning to take its revenge on the presumptions of the nation-builders. That history, however, appeared to be an idealised version of Europe's, against which Africa was judged, with little attempt at empirical justification, to be a failure.

Writing almost forty years after Ghana became the first of Britain's African colonies to claim its independence, and shaken by what he called the continent's 'crisis of society', the great journalist-historian Basil Davidson offered a more direct, and stinging, rebuke to thinkers and administrators, colonial and postcolonial, for their historical illiteracy, their lack of understanding of, or interest in, either the European or African past. What Davidson referred to as 'nation-statism', the insistence that the modernising projects of Africa's independence be contained within the confines of the conquest states, was not, he argued, the product of the creatively destructive impact of 'modernity' on Africa, the remaking of 'cultural space' by 'political time'[26], as Coleman had argued. Rather, it was the outcome of the conscious fetishizing, by colonial rulers, social scientists and successive African elites (from the 'recaptives' of late nineteenth century West Africa, to the postcolonial nation-builders) of a European model of 'progress' abstracted from its history. These thinkers, he argued, had failed to see the dark moral shadow, historically realised, of European nationalism, the specific conditions that allowed the nation to flourish in (parts of) Europe, and, most damningly of all, anything of value in Africa's past. 'Liberation from colonial rule', he lamented in an intentionally despairing echo of mid-century optimism, had been assumed by all 'to go hand in hand with liberation from whatever was or seemed to be "traditional"'. The double liberation

[24] Smith, *Ethnic Origins*. A.D. Smith, *Nationalism and Modernism: A Critical Survey of Recent Theories of Nations and Nationalism* (London, 1998), Ch.8. A.D. Smith, *Ethnosymbolism and Nationalism: A Cultural Approach* (Abingdon, 2009).

[25] Though the conclusions of Eric Hobsbawm, a modernist, were remarkably, indeed disconcertingly, similar. See E.J. Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism Since 1780: Programme, Myth, Reality* (Cambridge, 1990), pp.178-9.

[26] Lonsdale, 'The Moral Economy of Mau Mau: The Problem', p.279.

posited and eulogised by Coleman, was for Davidson a dangerous 'alienation'. The consequences of this for the continent's postcolonial history were, Davidson held, both profound and tragic. Without a dominant 'middle strata', the anchor of stable European nations, African national politics came quickly to be characterised, to anticipate an argument developed below, by vicious competition between competing tribalisms for limited national resources. At the same time, the deliberate sidelining of the demanding 'ancestral cultures' of African groups and peoples, each possessed of 'rules and regulations for the containment and repression of abusive violence', the historically developed basis of moral agency and political accountability, led to a grave 'moral degradation', he spat, the 'central count against the colonial process', the heart of Africa's independent malaise.[27] History's revenge was complete.

Between the 1960s and the 1990s, then, one dynamic dichotomy, 'from tradition to modernity', gave way to another, more static, antithetical pair of the 'authentic' and the 'inauthentic' or the 'organic' and the 'artificial', an emphasis which has come to dominate popular thinking about Africa.[28] These cloying dualisms, however, focused on what *should be* rather than what was, leaving little space for African imagination, for the creative (and uncertain) engagement by 'moral and intellectual beings' of the circumstances in which they lived.[29] As a consequence, both hope and despair were characterised by an eerie calm. These understandings, therefore, tell us little about the way in which Africans thought about their place in the world or how they sought to shape that world. And neither, relatedly, do they allow much room for understanding diversity in outcome and imagination on the continent. Both are, therefore, vulnerable to empirical criticism; neither convinces as understanding.

For the social scientists of the 1950s and 1960s, tribe was a primordial category of belonging, an attachment unthinkingly inherited from the past, from which men would be shaken by economic change and steeled political wills. As the vitality of tribe in the post-colonial period

[27] Davidson, *Black Man's Burden*, pp.9-10, p.11, pp.18-19, p.74, pp.246-7, p.251, p.291.
[28] E.g. R. Dowden, *Africa: Altered States, Ordinary Miracles* (London, 2009), p.3.
[29] E.P. Thompson, 'Agency and Choice I: A Reply to Criticism', *The New Reasoner*, No.5, (1958), p.89.

confounded the intertwined expectations and hopes of these writers, however, scholarly attention turned to the study of tribe itself, often drawing for inspiration upon the mushrooming general literature on nations and nationalism, suggesting a conceptual similarity between African 'tribes' and European 'nations'.[30] Over the past thirty years, a great deal of ink has been spilled in examining the development of this historiography.[31] I do not intend to retrace these outlines here, but, rather more modestly, to look in a little more detail at the particularities of the understandings of a few authors.

From his mid-century vantage point, James Coleman argued that 'the European superstructure and forces of modernity [had] tended to weaken the traditional powers of indigenous authorities' and had, in turn, loosened man's attachment to tribe, '*[n]otwithstanding the British policy of indirect rule*', the effort to rule Africa through apparently traditional, tribal, authorities.[32] In the 1980s, however, his emphasis was reversed, as scholars sought to historicise ethnicity in light of its refusal to die. Indirect rule came to be seen not as an incidental feature of British rule, but as *the* shaping experience in the formation of African identity. 'The British', wrote John Illife in this vein, 'wrongly believed that Tanganyikans belonged to tribes' and sought to make such units the basis of their administration. In turn, he continued, gloriously ambiguously, 'Tanganyikans created tribes to function within the colonial framework'.[33] Along similar lines, Terence Ranger argued, in perhaps the

[30] L. Vail. 'Introduction: Ethnicity in Southern African History', in L. Vail, (ed.), *The Creation of Tribalism in Southern Africa* (London, 1989), pp.1-2. L. Vail and L. White, 'Tribalism in the History of Malawi', in L. Vail, (ed.), *The Creation of Tribalism in Southern Africa* (London, 1989), p.152. C. Lentz, 'Tribalism and Ethnicity in Africa: A Review of Four Decades of Anglophone Research', *Cashiers des Sciences Humaines*, Vol.31, No.2, (1995), p.303. On the influence of the wider literature on nationalism on 'tribe' see e.g. E. Hobsbawm and T.O. Ranger, (eds.), *The Invention of Tradition* (Cambridge, 1983), which brought together the invented traditions of 'tribe' and 'nation' in various parts of the world; on-going debates about the pre-colonial roots of ethnic groups mirror debates in the wider literature between those who argue for the modernity of the nation and those who see deeper roots and draw on Smith's work, see T. Spear, 'Neo-Traditionalism and the Limits of Invention in British Colonial Africa', *Journal of African History*, Vol.44, No.1, (2003), pp.3-27, and R. Reid, 'Past and Presentism: The Precolonial and the Foreshortening of African History', *Journal of African History*, Vol.52, No.2, (2011), p.150. References to Anderson, *Imagined Communities* are, of course, ubiquitous. For a concerted effort to bring European and African imaginations of community together see B.J. Berman and J.M. Lonsdale, 'Nationalism in Colonial and Post-Colonial Africa', in J. Breuilly, (ed.), *The Oxford Handbook of the History of Nationalism* (Oxford, 2013), pp.308-17.

[31] For an outline of this material, see Lentz, 'Tribalism and Ethnicity in Africa', pp.303-28 and R. Waller, 'Ethnicity and Identity', in J. Parker and R. Reid, (eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Modern African History* (Oxford, 2013), pp.94-113.

[32] Coleman, 'Nationalism in Tropical Africa', p.412. My emphasis.

[33] Iliffe, *Modern History*, p.318.

most famous article ever written on African history, that tribe was not a primordial category of African belonging, but an 'invention' of the colonial period. Pre-colonial African identity and custom, he explained, had been multiple and flexible; under British rule, ethnic identities were rigidified and custom invented in the colonial effort to secure social control; in turn, these inventions were embraced by African male elites with a complementary interest.[34] And Leroy Vail, likewise, suggested that novel ethnic identities were the product of the colonial period, structured by the boundaries of indirect rule, shaped by the intellectual work of African elites and eagerly absorbed by the wider African population in the face of corrosive social and economic change.[35] For the following generation, the formulations of these writers formed the basis of the burgeoning literature on African ethnicity, which has very largely worked with their questions, revising the limits of colonial invention, emphasising the extent of African intellectual production, and drawing attention to the processes, techniques and technologies which, at various moments, brought tribes into being.[36]

The impact of these studies was profound, drawing 'the veil from the face of contemporary cultural forms', bringing into focus tribe's historical novelty.[37] Far from being ancient, contemporary African ethnicities were shown to be 'created', 'invented' and 'imagined' in the colonial period. With their emphasis on the 'making' of tribe, however, on the self-interested efforts of a variety of cultural brokers, on the *construction* of tribe, these writers (again) ignored the way in which tribe was talked about, how tribe figured in people's lives, what the relationship between (wo)man and tribe was, what, ultimately, tribe was imagined to be.[38] Those principally interested in the

[34] T.O. Ranger, 'The Invention of Tradition in Colonial Africa', in E. Hobsbawm and T.O. Ranger, (eds.), *The Invention of Tradition* (Cambridge, 1983), pp.247-60.
[35] Vail. 'Introduction: Ethnicity in Southern African History', pp.1-18.
[36] See Spear, 'Neo-Traditionalism and the Limits of Invention', J.D.Y. Peel, 'The Cultural Work of Yoruba Ethnogenesis', in E. Tonkin et al. (eds.), *History and Ethnicity* (London, 1989), pp. 198-215, J. MacArthur, 'The Making and Unmaking of African Languages: Oral Communities and Competitive Linguistic Work in Western Kenya', *Journal of African History*, Vol.53, No.2, (2012), pp.151-72, J. Macarthur, 'When did the Luyia (Or Any Other Group) Become a Tribe? *Canadian Journal of African Studies*, Vol.47, No.3, (2013), pp.351-363. See also J.C.D. Clark, *Our Shadowed Present: Modernism, Postmodernism and History* (London, 2003).
[37] D.R. Peterson, 'Culture and Chronology in African History', *The Historical Journal*, Vol.50, No.2, (2007), p.484.
[38] For a recent example of this, see J. Willis and G. Gona, 'Tradition, Tribe and State in Kenya: The Mijikenda Union, 1945-80', *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, Vol.55, No.2, (2013), pp.448-73.

postcolonial period, however, could not, given the prominence of tribe in the life of the post-colony, afford to ignore these questions.

In coming to terms with these issues, social scientists have typically depicted tribe as an instrument.[39] With a nod to the insights of the 'invention of tradition' literature, Basil Davidson, for example, drew a distinction between pre-colonial communities and the 'tribalism' or, as he preferred, 'clientelism', of the independent period, the aggressive, and destructive, pursuit by colonial agglomerations of earlier groups of partisan advantage in the competitive arena of the postcolonial 'nation-state'.[40] More recently, Gabrielle Lynch has, similarly, argued that the construction of ethnic groups was both motivated and sustained by the logic of competition. Shaped by a colonial state which encouraged people to think ethnically, a Kalenjin tribal identity emerged, she argued, in the efforts of the pastoral and semi-pastoral people of Kenya's Rift Valley to defend themselves from marginalisation in the face, first, of Kikuyu incomers seeking land, and later from the possibility of exclusion from the material benefits of independence. Amidst unequal colonial development, she argued, ethnic teams provided 'politicians with a means to mobilise support and for ordinary people to lay claims and assert rights to space, power and wealth'. The post-colonial 'nation' was, in turn, defined by default as little more than a boxing ring possessing a flag and anthem, an arena of competition which, according to Lynch, has the inherent potential for explosion and 'violent confrontation', a potential tragically realised in Kenya at every election which featured the presidential incumbent since the reintroduction of multi-party politics in 1992.[41]

Tribe certainly can be, and has been, used instrumentally, and the realities of postcolonial ethnic competition cannot be ignored.[42] Nonetheless, this use is better seen as a potential which becomes prominent in certain contexts, rather than the essence of identity, the foundation of

[39] See R.H. Bates, 'Ethnic Competition and Modernization in Contemporary Africa', *Comparative Political Studies*, Vol.6, No.4, (1974), pp.457-84.
[40] Davidson, *Black Man's Burden*, pp.99-104.
[41] G. Lynch, *I Say to You: Ethnic Politics and the Kalenjin in Kenya* (Chicago, 2011). See also N. Cheeseman, 'Nationalism, One-Party States and Military Rule', in N. Cheeseman, D.M. Anderson and A. Scheibler, (eds.), *Routledge Handbook of African Politics* (Abingdon, 2013), pp.11-13.
[42] See Berman, 'Nationalism in Post-Colonial Africa', pp.360-75.

community.[43] Indeed, the need to provincialize this tendency is indicated in the unacknowledged tension in Lynch's work between the liberal-individualist image of tribe as a vehicle for the pursuit of rational self-interest, of individuals contracting together to pursue material ends, and the idea of ethnic discourses of migration, achievement and shared culture, on the one hand suggesting that tribe could be dropped if other strategies of material accumulation were more likely to be successful, and on the other giving tribe a *storied* presence and an importance which stretched beyond the merely material. Lynch implied that ethnic narratives of migration, achievement and shared lives provided the solidarity needed to pursue material resources; but she had nothing to say on how understandings of these narratives and their demands shaped a community that was necessarily sustained by more than mere economic interest, by a wider sense of attachment and involuntary obligation. In part, this is the product of limited colonial period source material: in Lynch's account, the opinions and understandings of colonial officials, outsiders with peculiar interests and ideas, stand as substitutes for the arguments of the people of the Rift Valley. It is a mistake, however, to see stories of ethnic migration, cultural similarity, marginalisation and so on as mere cloaks thrown over rational self-interest. Political thought is not merely window dressing for unspeakable self-interest, however self-interested it might be, but the principle means by which political leaders seek to shape social action.[44] These stories themselves, therefore, deserve sustained attention.

A deep concern with political thought characterised the work of John Lonsdale. Acknowledging the realities of postcolonial inter-ethnic competition, but rejecting both the idea that the solidity of what he called 'political tribalism' (Davidson's 'clientelism') was the sole stuff of African politics, as well as the impersonal certainties of Coleman's classless revolution, he offered an understanding of tribe as a 'field of argument', an understanding which he termed 'moral ethnicity'. Focussing on central Kenya, he argued that colonial rule had neither mobilised people automatically

[43] J. Lonsdale, 'Ethnic Patriotism and Markets in African History', JICA-RI Working Paper 20, (2010), p.18.
[44] Q. Skinner, 'Moral Principles and Social Change' in Q. Skinner, *Visions of Politics Volume One: Regarding Method* (Cambridge, 2002), pp.145-57.

out of inherited identities, nor, in the first instance, promoted Kikuyu unity. On the contrary, its impact raised difficult and divisive questions. The intrusions of the colonial state and the widening of markets in produce and labour, Lonsdale held, both undermined and were tested against an apparently widely accepted moral economy which governed the legitimate bases of inequality, the reciprocal obligations of fertile wealth and obedient labour. According to this, the (male) self-mastery, *wiathi*, of successful household management was understood to be both the basis of public authority and encumbered by obligations to provide juniors with access to the means of production and reproduction, land and marriage, the basis, in turn, of their self-mastery. The subversive impact of colonial change created disputes between, broadly, rich and poor, young and old, men and women, 'new readers' and 'old believers'. In this context, and drawing imaginatively on the intellectual resources of the Bible, the first generation of literate Kikuyu, gripping the exterior architecture of indirect rule, reworked the institutions of sub-clan and age sets, *mbari* and *riika*, in their minds, developing competing images of tribe and legitimate authority, a disunited nationalism. Twice divided, by interest and by imagination, inter-war argument hardened a sense of Kikuyu identity. In the 1940s, in the face of revitalised white agriculture and the widening inequalities of class formation at home, Kikuyu divisions of interest deepened, as wealth became infertile and the wealthy lost civic virtue, putting a reputable adulthood out of the reach of their juniors, while the significance of their divided images of tribe and legitimate authority were sharpened. As many stared into the abyss of social closure their need for power grew, but Kikuyu continued to be divided by the question of how action could be pursued and led, that is, by the question of legitimate authority. In a process conceptually similar to the making of European nations, then, Lonsdale argued, the Kikuyu were made in the mutual conflict generated by social disruption.[45] Outside of central Kenya, he suggested, these questions were less desperately demanding, but the underlying

[45] Turn of the twentieth century Austrian socialists would well have recognised this dynamic. See O. Zimmer, *Nationalism in Europe. 1890-1940* (Basingstoke, 2003), p.116.

process was the same. On this argument, the 'ordeal of modernity' did not wipe tribe away, but rather formed the essential background against which it was made.[46]

Recent work has expanded and developed Lonsdale's themes. Like Lonsdale, Emma Hunter's work on Kilimanjaro drew attention away from the unquestioning solidity of political tribalism and the grand and impersonal themes of 1950s and 1960s social science, and concentrated instead upon the uncertainty generated by social change, and the imaginative efforts of the people of the mountain to deal with this, with the content of political thought. To Lonsdale's emphasis on the continuity of moral economy, she added both a more nuanced concern with the new intellectual strands, or 'languages', on which political imagination drew, the wider discursive context of Chagga political thought, and, importantly, a clearer emphasis on tribe not only as a field of argument, but as the *object* of argument.[47] And, pursing a second theme, Derek Peterson gave comparison *between* ethnic groups, rather than simply intra-ethnic conflict, the external competition for 'social capital', or the esteem of ethnic others, a more central role in the imagination of community. Taking, like Hunter, community to be the object of argument as much as a field of argument, he showed through a series of case studies running across Kenya, Tanganyika and Uganda, how in East Africa's cosmopolitan cities male anxieties about female independence and sexual indiscipline in an increasingly mobile world led cultural entrepreneurs to imagine historically novel ethnic groups, each attached to a discrete territory, and, through instructive histories and the coercions of ethnic unions, to seek to discipline, and so make reputable, these communities, drawing lessons, critically, from the efforts and initiatives of ethnic patriots across the region.[48]

Lonsdale, Hunter and Peterson all placed the domestic agonies of gender and property, and the often torturous efforts of African thinkers, writers and politicians to deal with the intimately

[46] See especially, J. Lonsdale, 'The Moral Economy of Mau Mau: Wealth, Poverty and Civic Virtue in Kikuyu Political Thought', in B. Berman and J. Lonsdale, *Unhappy Valley: Conflict in Kenya and Africa* (London, 1992), pp.315-504. J. Lonsdale, 'Moral Ethnicity and Political Tribalism', in P. Kaarsholm and J. Hultin (eds), *Inventions and Boundaries. Historical and Anthropological Approaches to the Study of Ethnicity and Nationalism* (Roskilde, 1994), pp. 131-150. See also B. Berman, 'A Palimpsest of Contradictions: Ethnicity, Class and Politics in Africa', *International Journal of African Historical Studies*, Vol.37, No.1 (2004), pp.13-31.

[47] E. Hunter, 'Languages of Politics in Twentieth Century Kilimanjaro', (Cambridge Univ. PhD Thesis, 2007).

[48] D.R. Peterson, *Ethnic Patriotism and the East African Revival: A History of Dissent* (Cambridge, 2012).

divisive impact of colonial rule, at the heart of their accounts of African ethnicity. In doing, they both added a previously unseen texture to their period, and went beyond a simple emphasis on construction, offering a rather different conceptualisation of tribe than that put forward by the instrumentalists. My thesis seeks to build on their formidable arguments and considerable insights. Nonetheless, all three accounts left questions. In particular, each decentred the quest for independence, the grand theme of the earliest writers, making clear that political argument and imagination in the 1950s and 1960s were not dominated merely by the Manichean struggle of black and white, the great fight for liberation from colonial rule.[49] Precisely what the impact of the liberation struggle on the imagination of community in East Africa was, and what imaginations of community existed beyond the tribe, however, remained underexplored in their works.

For Derek Peterson, to take the last first, *uhuru*, freedom, was encountered by the people of East Africa principally as a danger, a moral test for respectable ethnicities, a new element in East Africa's political theatre, an interesting and insightful argument, and a challenge to the ideas of instrumentalists like Lynch. Yet, his argument was built upon a distinction between East Africa's nation-builders and ethnic patriots, between anti-colonial nationalism and ethnic patriotism, as sharp, and underexplored, as that offered by the social scientists in the heroic age of nation-building, a distinction that is far too neat, and, ultimately, untenable. In the first place, to take Kenya as an example, Ronald Ngala, Oginga Odinga and Jomo Kenyatta were all deeply involved in *both* the effort to discipline respectable tribes *and* territorial politics. And in the second place, it ignores the fact that ethnic patriots and nation-builders addressed the same audience, the popular sense of grievance and excitement captured by earlier writers like Hodgkin, changing understandings of colonial rule, the creative efforts of African thinkers to engage this context and shape community in response, and, it follows, of understandings of how the territorial community was imagined.[50] To

[49] See also the introduction to F. Cooper, *Decolonization and African Society: The Labour Question in French and British Africa* (Cambridge, 1996).
[50] Peterson, *Ethnic Patriotism*, pp.13-17, pp.26-7, pp.153-4, pp.168-71, pp.281-2.

seek to place independence into historical perspective is one thing, to ignore it entirely quite another.

John Lonsdale offered two insights which are helpful in beginning to think more deeply about the relationship between respectable ethnicities and dreams of political freedom. Focussing on Kenya, he insisted upon a conceptual distinction between the deep community of tribe and a thinner vision of a territorial community. In their preoccupation with liberation, he suggested, earlier writers had underestimated the inherent difficulties of building pan-ethnic authority, and ignored the questions raised by the prospect of independence over the nature and basis of legitimate authority, questions familiar to East Africa's ethnic patriots from their internal debates, and which divided the political parties that fought for Kenya's independence.[51] By implication, Kenya's ethnic patriots could not afford to ignore nation-building efforts, but had to battle to shape the nation. And, secondly, in his study of the thought of Jomo Kenyatta, he suggested that his subject understood demanding ethnic identity to be the basis of moral agency and, therefore, the facilitator (not merely the enemy) of a general national identity. On this argument, tribe was not *only* a threat to the territorial nation, but, potentially its foundation.[52] Both are extremely useful insights; much more, however, remains to be said.

While Peterson and Lonsdale were only tangentially concerned with community beyond the ethnic group, Emma Hunter developed a more consistent concern, showing how a widely-shared Swahili language allowed an image of ethnic community on Kilimanjaro to develop alongside and within a vision of a wider territorial community. She argued that in the 1940s, this territorial community was imagined as an ethnic federation, before suggesting that this image fell out of favour in the 1950s. She did little, however, to outline what replaced it, to suggest what Tanganyika in the age of independence was imagined to be. Instead, she approached the organisation of TANU and the issue of independence solely as a matter of finding convincing answers to questions about

[51] Lonsdale, 'Moral Economy', p.316. J. Lonsdale, 'Moral and Political Argument in Kenya', in B. Berman, D. Eyoh and W. Kymlicka, (eds.), *Ethnicity and Democracy in Africa* (Oxford, 2004), p.79.
[52] J. Lonsdale, 'Jomo Kenyatta, God and the Modern World', in J-G. Deutsch, P. Probst and H. Schmidt, (eds.), *African Modernities: Entangled Meanings in Current Debates* (Oxford, 2002), pp.49-51.

the provision of education, the distribution of land and the dispensation of justice.[53] As Lonsdale's approach suggests, however, convincing answers to such questions were intimately bound up with images of community. Without some understanding of those imaginations and their historical development we cannot make sense of why particular answers to particular questions came to appear convincing, or why, indeed, different answers were given in different places.

A concern with what Tanganyika was imagined to be was the central theme in the recent work of James Brennan, who, eschewing a focus on ethnicity, traced the construction of a racially defined, territorially bound community in Dar es Salaam. Like Lonsdale, Hunter and Peterson, Brennan placed African intellectual production, and gender conflict, at the heart of his account. State policy during the Second World War, he argued, and in particular, the institution of a racialised system of rationing, heightened the racial consciousness of the town's rapidly growing African population. In these circumstances, African intellectuals, inverting a longstanding coastal understanding of *ustaarabu*, or civilisation, shaped and sharpened a vision of an exclusionary African *taifa*, a 'racio-nation', in debates over inter-racial sexual relations. In the same period, this image was sharpened yet further by the experience of Tanganyikan soldiers serving in the British army in South Asia during the Second World War. In the 1950s, Brennan argued, this vision of community came to form the basis (the moral qualms of Julius Nyerere, the leader of the Tanganyikan African National Union [TANU], notwithstanding) of the nationalist mobilisation, which sought to end the exploitation of Africans, to rescue the *nchi*, the country, for the *taifa*. Membership of the independent Tanganyikan nation, it followed, was popularly supposed to be confined to Africans, excluding European and (above all) Asian settlers.[54]

Brennan's willingness to look beyond tribe was extremely refreshing, as was his willingness to think about the relationship between imagination of community and the search for *uhuru*.[55] Nonetheless, his account left questions. In the first place, he said little about the relationship

[53] Hunter, 'Languages of Politics', pp.143-4, pp.158-9, pp.190-1, pp.208-9.
[54] J. R. Brennan, *Taifa: Making Nation and Race in Urban Tanzania* (Ohio, 2012).
[55] See also J. Glassman, *War of Words, War of Stones: Racial Thought and Violence in Colonial Zanzibar* (Bloomington, 2011).

between this racial vision of community and the ethnic understandings posited by Hunter and Peterson, a connection made more intriguing by both the coincidence of their dating, and their shared focus on disciplined female sexuality, themes developed across the following chapters. As we shall see, however, the 1940s Tanganyikan newspapers from which Brennan reconstructed the African intellectual production of race included overlapping understandings of tribe. Secondly, moreover, the geography of Brennan's argument left questions about the ideas and arguments being developed outside of Dar es Salaam, and, in turn, questions about their basis. And, finally, his argument raised comparative questions about the existence of similar visions and understandings of race in other African territories, and in particular in Kenya.

In the first generation after independence, comparison of Kenya and Tanganyika by social and political scientists, and in particular their post-colonial development trajectories, was a common enough endeavour.[56] There has been, moreover, a widespread assumption of difference in the nature of Kenyan and Tanganyikan nationalism, between both the political movements which took the two territories to independence, and, by extension, the underlying imagination, or its absence, of a nation. Two serious explanations for these presumed differences have been offered. The first focused on the contingencies of language. Scholars suggested that the more widespread diffusion of Swahili, the language of the nineteenth century coastal trade, across the territory that became Tanganyika, and then the contingent decision to make Swahili the language of colonial administration, established a widely shared, pan-ethnic medium of communication which facilitated the development of a sharper national consciousness there than in Kenya.[57] This argument is, however, problematic. In the first place, the nature of the differences that existed between the two territories, the profiles of their particular cases, have not been carefully, or critically, set out. They

[56] E.g. J.D. Barkan, (ed.), *Politics and Public Policy in Kenya and Tanzania* (Nairobi, 1984). G. Bennett, 'Kenya and Tanzania', *Africa Affairs*, Vol.66, No.265, (1967), pp.329-35. Scott, 'Education for Political Development in Kenya and Tanzania'.

[57] E.g. Lonsdale, 'Ethnic Patriotism and Markets', p.28. W.H Whiteley, *Swahili: The Rise of a National Language* (New York, 1969). T.P. Gorman, 'The Development of Language Policy in Kenya with Particular Reference to the Educational System', in W.H. Whiteley, (ed.), *Language in Kenya* (Nairobi, 1974), pp.397-453. See also Hunter, 'Languages of Politics', pp.44-59.

are assumed rather than shown. Language differences in Kenya and Tanganyika, moreover, were not absolute, but a matter of degree. By 1950, the Kenyan Swahili-language newspaper *Baraza* had a circulation of about 28,000, roughly half that of the Tanganyikan newspaper *Mambo Leo*, but hardly insubstantial, supplemented, between the mid and late 1940s, by the smaller circulations of other territory-wide Swahili newspapers, such as *Mwalimu*, *Habari* and *Radio Posta*, in addition to which there was, of course, the English-language press.[58] Language alone, therefore, cannot explain differences in the imagination of community in Kenya and Tanganyika. The problem, rather, is to explain how and why different visions of community came to be articulated in similar forums in the two territories.

The second explanation for the presumed differences between the two, focussed on the spectre of Mau Mau and the Emergency declared by the Kenyan government in October 1952. On alternate arguments, either the ethnic specificity of the rebellion or the divisive impact of the colonial decision in 1955 to allow political parties only at the district level (creating, in Tom Mboya's words, 'kings in their own right in their own areas' with a vested interest in maintaining divisions) destroyed the prospect of a unified Kenyan nationalism and a unified Kenyan nation, entrenching a destructive tribalism.[59] In this way, Kenya appears as an aberration, a deviation from an apparently generic nationalism of the kind seen in Tanganyika, blown from its predetermined, and well-travelled, path by a violent political storm. While in other African territories, therefore, committed nationalists built territory-wide movements, and ultimately nations, in the 1950s, colonial policy in Kenya limited political mobilisation and imagination to ethnically-defined areas. Paradise was lost in the hellfire of counter-insurgency.

[58] F. Gadsden, 'The African Press in Kenya, 1945-52', *Journal of African History*, Vol.21, No.4, (1980), p.518 & p.528. J.F. Scotten, 'Tanganyika's African Press, 1937-1960: A Nearly Forgotten Pre-Independence Forum', *African Studies Review*, Vol.21, No.1, (1978), p.7.

[59] See e.g. T. Mboya, *Freedom and After* (London, 1963), pp.85-6. O. Odinga, *Not Yet Uhuru* (Nairobi, 1968), p.146. D. Branch and N. Cheeseman, 'Introduction', in D. Branch, N. Cheeseman and L. Gardner, (eds.), *Our Turn to Eat: Politics in Kenya Since 1950* (Berlin, 2010), pp.6-7. C.G. Rosberg and J. Nottingham, *The Myth of Mau Mau: Nationalism in Kenya* (New York, 1966), pp.351-4.

Three criticisms present themselves. In the first place, it worth noting that the impact of the Emergency did not confine ethnic groups, to borrow a phrase the Tanganyikan thinker Martin Kayamba used to describe a rather different problem in the late 1930s, to 'a riveted water-tight compartment'.[60] The Swahili and English language press, and their letters pages, continued to offer a forum in which people from across Kenya (and beyond) could, and did, communicate. If the Emergency did not cast Kenya quite as firmly in ethnic moulds as is often implied, neither did it organise politics on quite as sound an ethnic basis as has often been suggested. A cursory glance at the historical record shows that district level, ethnically-based, parties were very often not formed until long after 1955, fell in and out of existence, a consequence of local apathy and official concern, and routinely struggled to attract more than a handful of people to their meetings, a marked contrast to the crowds pulled into the meetings of KANU and KADU as they were formed in mid-1960.[61] Both points suggest that not enough attention has been paid to what was actually happening in the 1950s. Ultimately, finally, and relatedly, these ideas remain, consciously or otherwise, in thrall to the concept of a generic nationalism thrown up by modernisation theorists, indeed to the idea of a battle between a progressive modernity and an atavistic tradition. Like TANU, KANU appears as an 'orthodox nationalist party'[62], the bearer of a generic African nationalism, challenged by KADU which (in the words of David Anderson) 'lack[ed] nationalist aspiration'.[63] As this concept has come under pressure in the face of the crisis of the postcolonial African nation-state, however, as the idea of the 1950s as an era of 'nation-building' has been challenged by the tensions of the post-colony, space has opened up in which to ask rather more precise questions about the imagination of community across a much longer stretch of time.[64] This is part of the challenge taken up in this thesis.

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[60] M. Kayamba, *African Problems* (London, 1948), p.87.
[61] See e.g. FCO 141/5861, (Kenya; Kilifi District Intelligence Summaries, 1953-60). FCO 141/5816, (Kenya: South Nyanza District Intelligence Summaries, 1958-61).
[62] C. Sanger and J. Nottingham, 'The Kenyan Election of 1963', *Journal of Modern African Studies*, Vol.2, No.1, (1964), p.3.
[63] D. Anderson, 'Yours in Struggle for *Majimbo*! Nationalism and the Party Politics of Decolonization in Kenya, 1955-1964', *Journal of Contemporary History*, Vol.40, No.3, (2005), p.551.
[64] See J. Lonsdale, 'KAU's Cultures: Imaginations of Community and Constructions of Leadership in Kenya after the Second World War', *Journal of African Cultural Studies*, Vol.13, No.1, (2000), pp.107-124.

Over the course of the following chapters, then, I seek to show how men and women came to think about community and their relationship with it, how they understood their place in the world. I seek to pull together various visions of community, ethnic, racial and territorial, stepping beyond the recent domination of the literature by one particular vision of (generally ethnic) community, and to examine their shifting relationships over the course of time, and the context in which these shifts occurred, setting out, in the process, clear profiles of the two territories. And I seek to show both how much and how little divided Kenya and Tanganyika, to draw attention to the shared elements of the developing nightmare that lay behind the agonised arguments of the region's people, and to explain how it was and why it was that imaginations of community in the two came to diverge.

III

In order to meet these aims, I have adopted a comparative framework. As we saw above, comparative history, 'historical investigation that works at multiple sites… in order to tease out similarities and differences',[65] is no panacea, no simple solution to historical problems. Indeed, these endeavours have long been regarded with suspicion, not least, as the historian Raymond Grew noted, as a consequence of their association with the 'comparison of civilisations, comparison on the grandest scale'.[66] To this longstanding suspicion, the rise of 'transnational' history, the study of interconnection across regions, oceans, long-distance trade routes and so on[67], in the past twenty years has raised further questions for practitioners of the method, leading to a necessary period of reflection and auto-critique. In the light of the dynamism of transnational approaches, traditional comparison came to appear old fashioned, mechanistic, artificially separating the analytical field into isolated pieces to be compared, failing to notice the links which bound them together, the way in which two apparently, and naturally, distinct units were mutually constituted, and, in the process, reifying the hoary-old nation-state as the central unit of historical analysis.[68]

Those led to reflect on the method have, in general, however, rightly concluded that comparative history can make productive use of the insights and methodology of transnational history. In particular, they have suggested that the links and connections which bind units of comparison together can be usefully integrated into comparative studies, helping to explain the similarities between the units of comparison.[69] Empire is a particularly fruitful field in which to pursue these connections. Important policy imperatives and techniques of rule were dispersed and

[65] P. Levine, 'Is Comparative History Possible?', *History and Theory*, Vol.53, No.3, (2014), p.332.
[66] R. Grew, 'The Case for Comparing Histories', *The American Historical Review*, Vol.85, No.4, (1980), p.764.
[67] J. Darwin, *After Tamerlane: The Rise and Fall of Global Empires, 1400-2000* (London, 2008), p.12.
[68] J. Kocka, 'Comparison and Beyond', *History and Theory*, Vol.42, (2003), 43. Peterson, *Ethnic Patriotism*, pp.25-6. F. Cooper, 'Race, Ideology and the Perils of Comparative History', *American Historical Review*, Vol.101, No.4, (1996), pp.1122-1138.
[69] Kocka, 'Comparison and Beyond', p.44. Levine, 'Is Comparative History Possible?', pp.339-40.

used across the imperial landscape; people, African and non-African, moved between territories and across the empire; and so too did both material goods and imaginations and ideas.[70] Kenya and Tanganyika were linked both by their vertical connection with the imperial metropole and by horizontal connections, through their porous borders. It was in the context of these connections that various visions of community, including 'nation-states', were imagined.[71] Over the course of this thesis I therefore endeavour to integrate these connections and movements into my understanding of the production of similarity.

Nonetheless, a focus on connection does not obviate the need for comparison. Rather, it deepens it precisely by helping to define differences which connection cannot explain. The comparative method, therefore, remains too valuable to abandon. Rigorously pursued, its engagement amounts to a constant rebuke, the demand that we see one set of circumstances, ideas, practices or events in light of another. The benefits of this restless competition are two-fold, the first descriptive, the second explanatory. In the first place, careful comparison draws attention to the details, the texture of the profile of a particular case study, helping to highlight what is unique about it, and, therefore, what particular features require explanation. It draws attention to the ideas put forward in one place, but not the other, to the arguments pursued and the questions asked (or not).[72] And secondly, and subsequently, comparison gives historians their only opportunity to 'test', to attempt to falsify, their explanatory hypotheses. An outcome in one place cannot reasonably be held to be the product of a particular circumstances, events or processes, if those circumstances, events or processes were experienced elsewhere without resulting in the same outcome.[73] While,

[70] On the movement of ideas, see C.A. Bayly, 'Afterword', *Modern Intellectual History*, Vol.4, No.1, (2007), pp.163-9, and C.A. Bayly, 'Rammohan Roy and the Advent of Constitutional Liberalism in India, 1800-30', *Modern Intellectual History*, Vol.4, No.1, (2007), pp.25-41. See also Peterson, *Ethnic Patriotism*, pp.25-6.
[71] C.A. Bayly, S. Beckert, M. Connelly, I. Hofmeyr and P. Seed, 'AHR Conversation: On Transnational History', *The American Historical Review*, Vol.111, No.5, (2006), p.1449.
[72] Grew, 'Comparing Histories', pp.770-1. Kocka, 'Comparison and Beyond', p.40.
[73] W.H. Sewell, 'Marc Bloch and the Logic of Comparative History', *History and Theory* Vol.6, No.2, (1967), pp.209-11, p.217. C. Wickham, *Problems in Doing Comparative History: Reuter Lecture, 2004* (Southampton, 2005), pp.3-4. C. Wickham, 'The Problem of Comparison', *Historical Materialism*, Vol.19, No.1, (2011), p.227. Kocka, 'Comparison and Beyond', p.41.

therefore, comparison can stand neither as a substitute for historical imagination, nor suggest explanation, it can play an invaluable role in sharpening historical explanation.

Undertaking comparative investigation, however, adds further to the always thorny issue of source material, and, in particular, the difficulty of finding comparable sources, comparison's curse.[74] Across the following chapters, I draw on the documentary sources of the colonial archives, in Britain, Kenya and, to a lesser extent, Tanganyika, the occasional recorded or published speeches of prominent politicians, political pamphlets, ethnographies, histories and, from the late 1950s, Parliamentary debates, as well as both the oral and written evidence submitted by African informants to three major commissions of enquiry – the East African Royal Commission, which reported in 1955, and which drew evidence from both Kenya and Tanganyika, as well as Uganda; the Robertson Commission, tasked with investigating the claims to autonomy of certain sections on the Kenyan coast in 1961; and the Kenyan Regional Boundaries Commission, established in 1962 to designate the provinces or regions which, controversially, would be the basis of Kenya's independence constitution. Above all, in my investigation of African imaginations I draw on English-language, Swahili-language and colonial translations of vernacular-language newspapers, and in particular their colourful letters pages.

Chief among the English-language newspapers I use, are the weekly editions of the (Kenyan) *East African Standard*, which I engaged for the years between 1941 and 1963, and the *Tanganyika Standard*, which I engaged for the years 1945 to 1961, newspapers run by the British-owned *East African Standard* Ltd., the former of which dated from the early twentieth century, and the latter of which was published in Tanganyika from 1930, after the territory's governor, Sir Donald Cameron, requested that *East African Standard* Ltd. establish a newspaper there.[75] These newspapers were developed to serve a primarily white audience - settler and official - and while colonial administrators were aware that by the late-1920s English-literate Africans *read* these publications,

[74] Wickham, *Problems*, pp.5-10.
[75] M. Sturmer, *The Media History of Tanzania*, (Dar es Salaam, 1998), pp.53-4. B. Frederiksen, 'Print Newspapers and Audiences in Colonial Kenya: Africa and Indian Improvement, Protest and Connections', *Africa*, Vol.81, No.1, (2011), p.156.

before the 1940s an African presence in these newspapers was, at best, limited.[76] From around the mid-1940s, however, in first the Kenyan paper and very slightly later in the Tanganyikan paper, a greater African presence began to develop, reflected above all in the number of African-authored missives that appeared in their letters pages. While the detailed history of these newspapers remains to be written, it seems likely that this growing presence was the product of state pressure, part of a burgeoning colonial effort to cultivate, engage and co-opt (educated) African opinion, a desire seen in the granting of seats to Africans in the territories' respective legislative councils, in 1944 in Kenya and 1945 in Tanganyika.[77] The European-owned press in East Africa, as Bodil Frederiksen has noted, was never entirely free from the influence of the state.[78] From the 1940s, then, these newspapers were a space in which English-literate Africans engaged with each other, with settler authors and with colonial policy, sources which provide a run of directly comparable Kenyan and Tanganyikan material. In turn, the nature of the arguments writers engaged - which tended to be notably more concerned with what we might call the rights of Africans, rather than their duties, than was the case in either Swahili-language or vernacular-language newspapers - was shaped by the shared nature of this forum.

In addition, for the years 1961 to 1963, I draw on the Kenyan *Daily Nation*, a paper funded by the Aga Khan, the spiritual head of the Ismaili community, and established in the last years of colonial rule to provide an English-language newspaper more centrally aimed at a territory-wide, non-European audience, the first in a stable of newspapers which would soon span the entire East

[76] On Africans as readers, see e.g. BNA, CO 691/119/9, (Closer Union in East Africa: Evidence given by Tanganyika Territory Delegates to Joint Committee on Closer Union), Memorandum by Philip Mitchell, Secretary of Native Affairs in Tanganyika on the Statement of Conclusions, 1931, p.6. On white audience, see D.R. Peterson and E. Hunter, 'Print Culture in Colonial Africa', in D. Peterson, E. Hunter and S. Newell, (eds.), *African Print Cultures: Newspapers and Publics in the Twentieth Century* (Ann Arbor, 2016), pp.8-9.
[77] See Chapter One. For a brief indication of pressure applied to the Kenyan press at this time, see R. Ainslie, *The Press in Africa: Communications Past and Present* (London, 1966), p.101.
[78] Frederiksen, 'Print Newspapers', p.163.

African region, and an invaluable source, in particular, for its coverage of the speeches of African politicians.[79]

Swahili-language newspapers aimed at territory-wide audiences - more widely read by Africans than their English-language counterparts in this period - also feature prominently in the following chapters. In Kenya, much of my access to these sources in the 1940s comes through translations made by colonial intelligence services of editorials and letters sent to these newspapers as part of a wider surveillance of the burgeoning Kenyan African press, the difficulties of which are discussed below, in the years between 1946 and 1949. These translations include letters and editorials from African-owned and edited newspapers such as *Mwalimu*, *Habari* and *Radio Posta*, newspapers with a circulation of a few thousand.[80] Importantly, translations from *Baraza*, a weekly newspaper established in 1939 and published by *East African Standard* Ltd., until 1961 under the ultimate control of a European, with the aid of a government subsidy, also feature. By 1950, as I have already noted, *Baraza* achieved a circulation of around 28,000, making it (even allowing for the movement of a sizeable proportion of those newspapers to Tanganyika) Kenya's most widely read newspaper catering for an African audience.[81] In Tanganyika, I draw on *Mambo Leo*, which I consulted for the period between 1940 and 1955, a government newspaper established in 1923 and published by, first, the Education Department, and, after the Second World War, the Information Office, which achieved a circulation of 52,000 by 1952, making it Tanganyika's most important newspaper.[82]

The differing ownership regimes of these publications shaped their content. While, for example, *Mambo Leo* was explicitly intended to promote and explain government policies to its

[79] C. Hornsby, *Kenya: A History Since Independence* (London, 2013), p.113. J.B. Abuoga and A.A. Mutere, *The History of the Press in Kenya* (Nairobi, 1988), p.28. Sturmer, *Media History*, p.68.
[80] For circulation figures, see Gadsden, 'African Press', pp.533-5.
[81] E. Watkins, *Oscar from Africa: The Biography of Oscar Ferris Watkins, 1877-1943* (London, 1995), p.230. Ainslie, *Press in Africa*, p.103.
[82] E. Hunter, '"Our Common Humanity": Print, Power and the Colonial Press in Interwar Tanganyika and French Cameroun', *Journal of Global History*, Vol.7, No.2, (2012), pp.284-5. E. Hunter, *Political Thought and the Public Sphere in Tanzania: Freedom, Democracy and Citizenship in the Era of Decolonisation* (Cambridge, 2015), p.37. G. Mytton, *Mass Communication in Africa* (London, 1983), p.45.

readership, and typical issues of the paper included improving articles, offering advice on good farming and health practices[83], *Baraza* eschewed such efforts, its founder, O.F. Watkins, determined to avoid publishing 'government propaganda' and 'preach[ing]' to his audience.[84] Despite these differences, however, both these newspapers, as well as the African-owned newspapers mentioned, aimed to engage a territory-wide audience[85], and included, centrally, letters pages, which were 'a most popular feature' in both *Baraza*[86] and *Mambo Leo*, the latter of which received between three and four hundred letters per month by the early 1930s, a space in which African writers engaged with both Africans from across the territory and with the colonial state. [87]

This space was never free. In what we might call the loyal press, papers ultimately under European direction, there were carefully policed limits on what could be said. Such newspapers were, in short, 'subject to the disciplines of [the] state'.[88] While, therefore, the editors of *Mambo Leo* consistently denied that their paper was censored, they were keen to ensure, to take one example, that the newspaper carried articles that would rebut the anti-British propaganda likely to be imbibed, they feared, by Africans with a developing grasp of the English language, and, moreover, did not deny that the letters they published were carefully chosen and, therefore, and importantly, not necessarily representative of the full-extent of public argument.[89]

The African-owned press that grew up in Kenya in the period 1945 to 1952, moreover, was closely, indeed fearfully, watched.[90] Under the Books and Newspapers Ordinance (1906), such newspapers were required to register themselves with the government, while (though not without difficulty) prosecutions could be, and were, launched under the colony's libel and sedition laws, the

[83] Hunter, '"Our Common Humanity"', pp.285-6.
[84] Watkins, *Oscar from Africa*, pp.230-1.
[85] While the Swahili-language newspapers I use were all aimed at a territorial audience, it was not the case that all Swahili-language newspapers addressed this audience directly (although Swahili-reading 'others' were to some extent an implied audience in such forums). Tanganyika's local press was typically written in Swahili, for example, on which see Hunter, *Political Thought*, p.39.
[86] Watkins, *Oscar from Africa*, p.231.
[87] Hunter, '"Our Common Humanity"', pp.285-6.
[88] E. Hunter, '*Komkya* and the Convening of a Chagga Public, 1953-61', in in D. Peterson, E. Hunter and S. Newell, (eds.), *African Print Cultures: Newspapers and Publics in the Twentieth Century* (Ann Arbor, 2016), p.294.
[89] Hunter, '"Our Common Humanity"', p.298.
[90] Frederiksen, 'Print Newspapers', pp.155-6.

end point of a wider process by which, using 'friendly' warning letters, informal conversations in the Department of Information, and threats of prosecution, colonial censors sought to maintain control of a press that settlers and officials feared posed an existential threat. This environment, a context in which the state was an 'implied reader' of all that was written, in turn, as Faye Gadsden and Bodil Frederiksen have argued, had an impact on what was said and how it was said, both influencing 'the style of rhetoric' employed and placing limits on what editors were prepared to publish.[91]

Censorship of the African-owned press, however, as the above description of the efforts of the administration suggests, was a dynamic process, one in which boundaries were felt for, probed and exceeded on one side, and redefined in light of developing concerns on the other. Difficulties, therefore, existed in voicing criticism of the colonial regime in these forums, but criticism was never entirely absent. While, and centrally, moreover, other forums, for example, petitions to local colonial administrations, the Secretary of State for the Colonies, and, in Tanganyika, to the United Nations Organisation, although by no means open to all, give at least a flavour of the kinds of criticisms that were being made of colonial policy and colonial rule, constrained as they were, these newspapers, loyal and African, offer a window onto the wider arguments African writers engaged, the wider concerns that occupied their minds, the assumptions with which they approached their world, and the efforts they made to shape it, allowing us to escape a simple dichotomy of coloniser and colonised and to think through wider imaginative worlds.[92] As such, they are an extremely valuable resource.

Much the same can be said of Tanganyika's 1950s newspapers. Despite the significant tightening of Tanganyika's censorship laws in the middle of that decade,[93] from 1957 there began to emerge, the efforts of the colonial administration to clamp down on 'seditious' writing notwithstanding, an independent African-owned press in the territory, critical of colonial rule and the colonial government, a development which both reflected and aimed to popularise the recasting

[91] Frederiksen, 'Print Newspapers', pp.161, pp.163-4, p.166. Gadsden, 'African Press', p.530. The phrase 'implied reader' is Frederiksen's.
[92] See also Hunter, *Political Thought* and Brennan, *Taifa*.
[93] See Sturmer, *Media History*, pp.74-6.

of the potential of colonial rule that characterised the second half of this decade, a development which figures centrally in the final two chapters of this thesis. That year witnessed the founding of *Mwafrika*, a newspaper with territory-wide coverage, by Kheri Rashidi Baghdelleh and Robert Moses Makange, closely associated in its early years with TANU, but independent of the party's structures. Initially established as a fortnightly publication, *Mwafrika* became a weekly in 1958, with a circulation of 25,000, and from 1959 also published a daily edition with a circulation of 8,000. Facing financial difficulties, it was sold to the Nation Group in 1961, another part of that organisation's growing media empire, but not before it was repudiated by TANU's leadership, fearful of the paper's radicalism.[94] Disillusioned with *Mwafrika* and seeking an outlet through which they could make their nationalist case to a Tanganyikan audience, TANU set up *Ngurumo* in 1959, a daily newspaper available to me for the years 1960 to 1961.[95] 1957 also saw important developments in the direction of the Roman Catholic *Kiongozi*. One of a long line of mission-published papers, *Kiongozi* began life in 1950 (initially as a monthly, before becoming a fortnightly in 1956) as a publication concerned with religious affairs. From 1957, however, the newspaper became increasingly engaged in more worldly matters, as a 'friend' (albeit a critical one) of TANU, a development that was, in part, the product of a change of editor, as the newspaper appointed the first African, Father John B. Kabeya, to this position in that year, and in part (according to Kabeya) the product of the realisation that, in rapidly changing times, 'the paper had a duty to educate the people not only in faith and morals but also in political, economical, and social matters according to the teaching of the Church', an engagement which earned the paper a circulation of 25,000 by the late 1950s.[96] In the coverage these newspapers (whose circulation rose as that of government-backed newspapers like *Mambo Leo* fell[97]) gave to the speeches and ideas of prominent politicians and in their editorials and letters pages, we can trace evolving understandings of the obstacles that were understood to stand in the way of a good collective life, continuities with the arguments and imaginations of the earlier period,

[94] *Ibid*, pp.66-7.
[95] *Ibid*, pp.67-8.
[96] Scotten, 'Tanganyika's African Press', p.2, pp.11-12.
[97] Sturmer, *Media History*, pp.66-7.

and the tensions that existed in competing conceptions of both a good collective life and the nature of those collectivities.

The limits that were placed on the press in Kenya in the 1950s were markedly tighter than those imposed in Tanganyika, as tensions in Central Kenya and its diaspora built and then exploded. To dissuade the publication of (apparently) dangerous material, the colony's Penal Code was amended in 1950 to allow courts to confiscate the printing presses of newspapers found to have published seditious material, a further discouragement to publication of critical pieces, while, crucially, Emergency regulations put in place in 1952 all but destroyed the African-owned press, bringing to an end the golden age of African publishing in Kenya, discussed below.[98] Non-English language newspaper sources for 1950s Kenya, are, then, scarce, the patchy (known) survival of those that were published, a further problem for the historian. In coming to terms with imaginations of community in the period after 1952 in Kenya, therefore, I rely to a large extent on evidence given by African informants to two commissions of enquiry – the Regional Boundaries Commission and the Robertson Commission. Nonetheless, three important Swahili-language newspapers (all of which included some English-language articles and letters), each aimed at a territory-wide audience, feature.

The first, and most important, which I consulted for the period 1957 to 1960, the years for which copies of the newspaper survive, is the Swahili weekly *Jicho*, a newspaper set up by the Asian publisher Girdhari Lal Vidyarthi, a man with a long history of involvement in Kenya's press, in 1952, a 'daring action', in the words of B.A. Ogot, in a context in which the press was being shut down. While circulation figures are, sadly, unavailable, *Jicho* is regarded as having been, along with *Baraza*, the most important newspaper catering for an African audience in the Emergency period, and one which, through its letters page, 'provided' (according to Ogot) 'Africans with a forum for ventilating

[98] Gadsden, 'African Press', p.515, pp.530-2. Frederiksen, 'Print Newspapers', p.169.

their views'.[99] Before 1960, Emergency restrictions placed limits on the views that could be expressed, the newspaper's existence depending (perhaps surprisingly give Vidyarthi's long history of falling foul of the colony's sedition law) on the willingness of its editors to work within the confines of the colony's strict censorship laws. In the age of the first African elections to the Legislative Council, as the colonial regime sought to engage African's politically, reflection on Kenya's future direction was not entirely absent, but it was not until the Emergency was brought to a close that thinkers were given freer range. From 1960, to supplement the patchy survival of *Jicho*, I have the yet patchier survival of editions of both *Baraza*, available for 1960, and the Swahili daily *Taifa Leo*, a newspaper owned by the growing Nation Group and established in 1960, but only available to me for the year 1961.[100] While this material is less voluminous than we might like, read alongside evidence given to commissions of enquiry, it provides access both to on-going arguments about community and what ailed it and developments in those arguments in the face of new imperatives.

Censorship, finally, provides access to my final set of newspaper sources: translations made by colonial security services of editorials and letters published in Kenya's vernacular-language press in the period 1946 to 1949, a press aimed at ethnically-defined audiences, and made as part of the wider panic, noted above, about the threat posed to the life of the colony by irresponsible African newspapers. Such newspapers were not new in this decade (although before the 1940s they were largely Kikuyu).[101] Nevertheless, the period between 1945 and 1952 (when the African press was destroyed by Emergency regulations) witnessed an 'unparalleled growth of the African-controlled vernacular press in Kenya', with no less than forty newspapers being started in those years,

[99] B.A. Ogot, 'Mau Mau and Nationhood: The Untold Story', in E.S. Atieno Odhiambo and J. Lonsdale, (eds.), *Mau Mau and Nationhood: Arms, Authority and Narration* (Oxford, 2003), pp.25-6. Abuoga and Mutere, *History of the Press in Kenya*, p.23.
[100] Abuoga and Mutere, *History of the Press in Kenya*, p.29. Ainslie, *Press in Africa*, p.104.
[101] On the Kikuyu press in the 1920s, see J. Lonsdale, '"Listen While I Read": Patriotic Christianity Among the Young Gikuyu', in T. Falola, (ed.), *Christianity and Social Change in Africa: Essays in Honour of J.D.Y. Peel* (Durham, 2005), pp.563-94.

newspapers with circulations which ranged from 6,000 copies, in the case of the Kikuyu-language *Mumenyereri*, to a few hundred in other cases.[102]

In recent times, such publications have, in general terms, been the subject of welcome scholarly interest. This work has stressed the precarious nature of these enterprises, the extent to which they were the product of the hard work and devotion of individual editors, people like the redoubtable Henry Muoria, the editor of *Mumenyereri*, who, because their projects were undercapitalised, worked long hours, invested their own money in their creations, and, without the aid of a wider staff, heroically cobbled together a collage of editorials, articles clipped, with little regard for copyright, from other sources, and, importantly, reader's letters.[103] Reflecting this precarious nature, Kenyan African-owned newspapers of this period had all the stability of uranium, often opening and closing with dizzying rapidity, the Luo-language *Ramogi*, which continued publication into the 1950s and beyond, a rare outlier in an otherwise fast-changing landscape.[104]

These translations provide access to material, to ideas and arguments (however constrained by the colonial censorship regime), that Kenya's linguistic diversity would otherwise put beyond the reach of any single scholar. They are, nonetheless, problematic. In the first place, while recent scholarship has focussed on the production, form and content of these newspapers, colonial translations offer no indication of what these newspapers looked like, of what they consisted, of how, as *individual* publications, they were put together. Thanks to the work of other scholars, we know most about the two newspapers already mentioned, *Mumenyereri* and *Ramogi*; about others we know much less. Secondly, moreover, no indication is given in this source of the decisions that

[102] Gadsden, 'African Press', p.515, pp.533-5.
[103] See Hunter and Peterson, 'Print Culture in Colonial Africa', pp.2-3, pp.5-6, pp.10-11 and Frederiksen, 'Print Newspapers'. On Muoria and his investment in his newspaper, see Gadsden, 'African Press', p.527. For Muroia's own account of his editorship, see H. Muoria, *I, The Gikuyu and the White Fury*, (Nairobi, 1994), and on his endeavours more generally see W. Muoria-Sal, B.F. Frederiksen, J. Lonsdale and D. Peterson (eds.), *Writing for Kenya: The Life and Works of Henry Muoria* (Leiden, 2009). For similar difficulties faced by Eric Fiah, the editor of *Kwetu*, in Tanganyika, see N.J. Westcott, 'An East African Radical: The Life of Eric Fiah', *Journal of African History*, Vol.22, No.1, (1981), p.94.
[104] On *Ramogi*, see M. Carotenuto, '*Riwruok E Teko*: Cultivating Identity in Colonial and Postcolonial Kenya', *Africa Today*, Vol.53, No.2, (2006), pp.63-4. For details of the lifespans of individual newspapers, see Gadsden, 'African Press', pp.533-5.

lay behind inclusion in the colonial file. We have no way of knowing for sure, in short, why certain letters - generally with little by way of obviously seditious content or intent - caught the eye of the security services, of what was excluded in this process and, therefore, how representative of public argument the letters chosen were. Finally, translation itself, the choices made in how words are rendered, is a fraught task, shown recently in the Kenyan context in evolving understandings of the meaning of the Mau Mau slogan *ithaka na wiathi*, often translated as 'land and freedom', but perhaps better understood to mean 'self-mastery through land', and the impact of this shift on our understandings of the rebellion.[105] How colonial intelligence services understood certain words, the choices they made in their work, is necessarily obscured in this kind of source, leaving the historian prostrate, unable to think through their decisions, at the mercy of their unknowable (and potentially misleading) choices.

There is, moreover, a further problem of comparability. The very accessibility of these Kenyan translations demands their inclusion; they do not here, however, have a Tanganyikan counterpart. While a local press, produced by local councils and district offices (rather than African-owned), and generally written in Swahili, emerged in Tanganyika between the end of the Second World War and the mid-1950s, scholars have only recently begun the laborious process of tracing these newspapers through Tanzania's National Archives.[106] Their omission here has potential implications for the arguments that I make. While newspapers such as *Mambo Leo*, *Mwafrika* and *Kiongoz*i included letters on local issues and local arguments, giving us some access to local debates in Tanganyika, we must be alive to the ways in which the nature of the particular forum in which thinkers made their argument shaped the issues letter writers took on, the arguments that they made, and the way in which they made them. Steven Feierman, for example, has suggested that African thinkers adapted the idioms in which they argued to the forum they addressed, appropriating, for example, the bureaucratic language of the colonial state in forums open to

[105] See Lonsdale, 'Moral Economy', and F. Hobson, 'Freedom as Moral Agency: *Wiathi* and Mau Mau in Colonial Kenya', *Journal of Eastern African Studies*, Vol.2, No.3, (2008), pp.456-70.
[106] Hunter, 'Komkya', pp.283-305. Hunter, *Political Thought*, Ch.1.

outsiders of one sort or another, which included both the Swahili and the English-language press, and a more locally-rooted language in other interactions.[107] In deploying overlapping English-language and Swahili-language newspapers aimed at territory-wide audiences, I have endeavoured to ensure the basic comparability of the material I use and the conclusions I draw. The absence of Tanganyika's local press, however, means that we must be open to the possibility that certain debates, topics or patterns of thought, with implications for (parts of) my argument, are occluded from view in what follows.

My source material is, therefore, incomplete. The treasures of Nairobi's Macmillan library, the storehouse of the Kenya's newspapers, have barely begun to be uncovered, while Tanganyika's local press deserves sustained attention. The justification for using this material as it is, rests, ultimately, on a consideration of what we lose by turning away. The conditions of the scientist's laboratory can never be recreated by the historian, comprehensiveness is always a chimera, and the contingent availability of source material always a problem. Without accepting this difficulty, we cannot move beyond an intense focus on particular localities, or even begin to think through wider trends and patterns, a huge loss.[108] The sources drawn on here, then, are deployed to provide this beginning. They offer a rich seam of material, a seam that provides a window, albeit a partial one, constrained by the conditions of their production and their medium of transmission, onto African thinking and African argument. In these forums, we encounter African letter and editorial writers reflecting on the nature of the world in which they lived, the impediments they feared stood in the way of a good life, on community and the obligations that were owed to it, and attempting, through their writing, to persuade other people to think about the world and their place in it in particular ways, and to act accordingly. My conclusions, though, represent only a starting point, not the final word. There is plenty more to say.

Beyond the matter of the conditions of their production and the issue of comparability, these sources are stalked by a broader, and common, set of exclusions and problems. The

[107] S. Feierman, *Peasant Intellectuals. Anthropology and History in Tanzania* (Madison, 1990), pp.209-10.
[108] See K. Thomas, *The Ends of Life: Roads to Fulfilment in Early Modern England* (Oxford, 2009), p.6.

unevenness, of my material, firstly, goes far beyond differences between Kenya and Tanganyika. Missions, the bringers of literacy, were far from uniformly distributed across the region, their efforts felt more forcefully in some places than others. Public argument, moreover, was typically most intense where the political, economic and social forces associated with foreign rule were most cloying, generating the most disputatious public spheres, and leaving the most significant trace on the historical record. The imprint of other regions is much lighter. Local news appeared in Tanganyika's territory-wide press, but not in equal amounts from all areas, while the instability of Kenya's African-owned vernacular and Swahili-language newspapers grants only momentarily, and partially, the possibility of any kind of glimpse into the lives of certain regions. In places, indeed, all I can find are mere fragments, single letters; and in others, at times, nothing at all. In turn, this unevenness is reflected and reinforced in the secondary literature. As far as possible, then, I have endeavoured to draw material from across the length and breadth of Kenya and Tanganyika (with the exception of Kenya's sparsely populated Northern Frontier District, about which I have nothing to say), and to make the wider unevenness of colonial rule a part of my story. East African historiography, nonetheless, requires many more of the micro-studies of particular areas, or indeed particular processes, that have been the typical focus of recent scholarly work.

My source material is, moreover, undoubtedly unrepresentative. Public letter writing was, in the first place, very heavily gendered, and delegations to public commissions almost exclusively male. Women, whose conduct was perhaps the central topic of public argument in the period between 1940 and independence, were notably rare, but not altogether absent, contributors to these debates. I have endeavoured to include these few voices; much more remains to (and must) be said.

More generally, while the voices of the small percentage of the population who were literate and who read newspapers figure centrally in what follows,[109] the voices of non-elites remain elusive, in evidence given to commissions of enquiry as much as in the press, their struggles,

[109] On literacy levels see G. Kershaw, *Mau Mau from Below* (Oxford, 1997), footnote 8, p.242.

perhaps, reflected in the exasperation of one correspondent to *Mambo Leo* who ended his letter by explaining that while it had been his intention 'to write many words', the Swahili language had 'defeated' him.[110] This problem is hardly unique to this study.[111] Faced by a similar issue, James Brennan, amongst others, has pointed, in mitigation, to the wider consumption in East Africa of newspapers through public readings: writers consciously wrote, demonstrated by the literary styles they employed, for a wider audience than new 'readers', an audience plugged in by performance to these wordy debates. The literate were not quite so isolated as they might seem.[112] More generally, writing in another context, but to the same end, a philosopher, considering the relationship between elite and non-elite ideas, insisted that '[a]n elite does not invent', but rather, 'renders explicit what many others think'.[113] Whatever the precise relationship, however, the ideas of such people and their place within society can only be understood by making the effort to come to terms with what they had to say, to establish a profile that can then be compared (elsewhere) with other material. The historian's task, of course, is to endeavour to widen the available lens, not to ignore the material that is readily available. To do otherwise, indeed, would be merely to perpetuate the colonial slur that the educated were inauthentically African, 'agitators' cut off from wider society.

Literacy in colonial East Africa was, moreover, intimately linked to religion, which looms large across the following chapters. Away from the coast, with its long history of bookish Islamic learning, whether schooling took place at mission stations or in the more numerous village 'out-schools' run by African catechists, across East Africa, literacy was tied to Christianity.[114] Christian missionaries, indeed, often played a key role, alongside African intermediaries, themselves the products of mission schools, in the creation (or the attempted creation) of standardised vernacular

[110] *Mambo Leo*, Letter Petro Ulesi Mboga, March 1945, p.34.
[111] For an eloquent and honest statement of the problem, see Lonsdale, 'Moral Economy', p.319.
[112] Brennan, *Taifa*, pp.16-17.
[113] Cited in P. Brown, *Through the Eye of a Needle: Wealth, the Fall of Rome, and the Making of Christianity in the West, 350-550 AD* (New Jersey, 2012), p.xxiv. The philosopher in question was Louis Gernet.
[114] J. Anderson, *The Struggle for the School: The Interaction of Missionary, Colonial Government and Nationalist Enterprise in the Development of Formal Education in Kenya* (London, 1970), p.113. B.A. Ogot, *My Footprints on the Sands of Time* (Kisumu, 2011), pp.21-2. See also Lonsdale, '"Listen While I Read"'.

languages, while the Bible was often the first printed text available to East Africa's literate elite.[115] Newspapers, too, often, but not always, had a close connection with missionary Christianity, either directly, as in the case of *Kiongozi*, a Roman Catholic outlet, or indirectly, in the case of (Kenya's) vernacular press run by graduates of mission schools.[116] Even in publications, notably *Mambo Leo*, in which discussion of religious affairs was banned, and to some extent nationalist publications such as *Mwafrika* where it was frowned upon, both concerned with the potentially divisive impact of religious dispute, religion was, as Emma Hunter has argued, and as the following chapters suggest, 'everywhere' as much as 'nowhere', as contributors to these newspaper regularly invoked divine authority, religious teachings and religious verses to buttress their arguments, suggesting that Christians brought their biblical learning to bear on the world in which they lived.[117]

Both Christians and specifically-Christian understandings of the world were, then, well represented in the forums of public argument and the debates with which this thesis is centrally concerned. Christians were, however, a minority of East Africa's population in this period. Given the close connection between Christianity and literacy, the voices of others, including, importantly, the region's Muslims, who amounted to somewhere between 20 and 25% of Tanganyika's population at this time, are harder to access. Indeed, compounding the close connection between missions and education, the shift to writing Swahili in a Roman-script that occurred under colonial rule, served to push the pre-colonial elites of the Islamic coast, literate in Swahili written in an Arabic-script, out of forums of public debate. Nonetheless, while Muslim voices are underrepresented, they are not altogether absent, and those of Muslims literate in Roman-script Swahili, English or (perhaps) even vernacular languages, figure in the arguments that I trace.[118]

Moreover, while the communities investigated in the following chapters shared a common intellectual origin in the Bible, a resource Christian thinkers used to make sense of their world, and

[115] Lonsdale, 'Moral Economy', p.369. Iliffe, *Modern History*, p.361. MacArthur, 'Making and Unmaking of African Languages'.
[116] Peterson and Hunter, 'Print Culture in Colonial Africa', p.8. Lonsdale, '"Listen While I Read", p.568.
[117] Hunter, *Political Thought*, p.30. See also Hunter, '"Our Common Humanity"', p.289.
[118] Hunter, *Political Thought*, p.19, p.30.

Christian writers often (explicitly) claimed divine origins for these communities,[119] there is little evidence that Christian thinkers understood these communities to be religiously specific, to exclude their fellow tribesmen, or Africans or Tanganyikans, whose souls belonged to a different religion, indeed quite the opposite.[120] When one *Bibi* Flowarose suggested, in a letter published in *Mambo Leo* in 1945, for example, that Islam knew not black and white, but only Muslim, her controversial opinion received short shrift in the letters of response received by the newspaper over the following two years from men concerned to defend the reputation of overlapping understandings of continentally-defined and territorially-defined communities, and insistent that African women of whatever religion do their patriotic duty as Africans or Tanganyikans.[121] Indeed, as we shall see, while the intellectual underpinnings of community in East Africa were to be found in the Bible, the constant process of comparison engaged by people across the region helped to spread a model of order Christian thinkers found in Old Testament Israel, and to unmoor this image from its religious origin, a loosening seen nowhere more clearly than in the claims of those who, in the 1950s and 1960s, insisted that not only did an *Islamic* nation exist on the Kenyan coast, but that it was, in contrast to the African interior, a true (and, indeed, ancient) nation.[122]

Beyond the uneven and unrepresentative nature of these sources, I face a further, and perhaps devastating, issue of interpretation. Letter writers are, as Rowan Williams has argued, by their very nature 'unsystematic and "occasional" thinkers'.[123] Correspondents in the press were partisans in concrete and particular arguments, seeking quickly to articulate a small number of points, to persuade people of certain ideas, to influence their behaviour in certain ways, all in only a few hundred words. They were not political philosophers attempting to explicitly set out wholesale understandings of the world. (How surprised, I wonder, would they be to find their voices used in the ways that I have?) Two concerns flow from this. In the first place, there is the terror of

[119] See, in particular, Chs.2&3.
[120] See Lonsdale, '"Listen While I Read"', p.563, pp.570-2.
[121] On Flowarose see Brennan, *Taifa*, pp.130-6 and Ch.2.
[122] See Chapter 4.
[123] R. Williams, *The Wound of Knowledge: Christian Spirituality from the New Testament to St John of the Cross* (London, 1990), p.33.

incoherence, of inexplicable fragmentary chaos. The second, perhaps more dangerous, concern follows the first, seducing the historian, in the absence of firm details, to imagine a coherence that never existed, assuming that various positions and statements formed a stable whole, leaving little room for dissonance and disconnects, for intellectual innovation and change over time, for the ambivalences, the tensions, the silences, the ideas and subjects that simply were not broached (and the reasons for these omissions), the endless incompleteness of evolving understanding and argument. I have done my upmost to listen for such sounds and silences, but perhaps not carefully enough. At best, then, what follows provides a framework. My arguments and conclusions are necessarily provisional, but then what historian's aren't? Here, as elsewhere, there are plenty of other stories to tell.

IV

This thesis is divided into four broadly chronological chapters, plus a conclusion. The first focusses on the long period between the beginnings of European rule in East Africa in the 1880s and the mid-1950s, the point at which an anti-colonial, nationalist political party emerged in Tanganyika, and territory-wide political parties were banned in Kenya under Emergency regulations. It offers a narrative account of the widening and intensifying impact of the social, economic and political forces associated with colonial rule, and considers how these forces were experienced and understood. It argues that colonialism was experienced as an 'ordeal', which was felt above all in the disruption perceived to be done to the intimate relationships of class, gender and generation that made up the fabric of people's lives. The contradictions of colonialism, the opportunities and withdrawals engendered by the advent of cash-crop farming, migrant labour, urbanisation, and mission education brought about a profound sense of social disruption.

The second chapter begins from this region-wide sense of disruption, a sense which was felt deeply across the region by the 1940, traces from it the common origins of then diverging imaginations of community in Kenya and Tanganyika, up to the mid-1950s, and examines how these communities were understood and thought about, how they figured in people's lives. It argues that, haunted by this sense of crisis, people across the region sought to (re)establish social harmony. In their effort to do so, drawing on a number of intellectual influences, they imagined a range of historically novel, but conceptually similar, communities which they then sought to rescue from the very crisis which brought them into existence. Public debate across the region took the fate of the community as its object, focussing on the question of how to shore up right human relationships, to end moral decay, and establish the best basis for community in the context of the 'modern' world, to make these communities civil, reputable and prosperous in the difficult conditions of this perceived social crisis. And it shows, finally, how from this common starting point thinkers in Kenya and Tanganyika began to think about the relationship between these visions of community in notably,

and significantly, different ways. It argues that constitutional reform and hardening visions of community led thinkers in both to begin to reflect on the proper relationship between these communities. In Kenya, both the impulse to ask questions and to organise a relationship between them was supercharged by the prominence the centralised economic geography of that territory gave to one ethnic group. On the other side of the border, by contrast, the absence of such an evident heart left more intellectual space for thinkers, space which allowed most people to evade a hard definition of the proper relationship between tribe and race and in which they called into existence a conceptually similar vision of a territorially-bound, racially-defined community, a vision without counterpart in Kenya.

The final two chapters trace, individually, the diverging imaginations of community in Kenya and Tanganyika in the 1950s and 1960s, as colonial rule was recast, in light of the increasing intrusions of the second colonial occupation and the failures of constitutional reform, as the central threat posed to a good collective life. These chapters argue that the imperative to independence, for all its importance, did not enter a vacuum. They show how, in each territory, thinkers brought this new imperative to independence to bear on the visions of community which had occupied their minds for the previous two decades, further shaping specifically Tanganyikan and Kenyan visions of community. Chapter Three follows the Tanganyikan story. It shows how, from the pluralism of the 1940s, nationalists picked up on the by now well-embedded image of Tanganyika as a foundational nation and insisted that this understanding of community was promoted over all others, the better to pursue independence, a novel insistence which, because this image was widely shared, raised strikingly little dissent. Even, however, as a territorially defined community of *Watanganyika* was prioritised over other visions of community, the identity of that community was called into question, as questions about the status of non-African immigrants in the postcolonial future came to the fore. Many people continued to insist that both history and justice demanded that citizenship was reserved for Africans, reflecting the longstanding racial character of the Tanganyikan nation. For their most vociferous critics, the moral principle of non-discrimination, a key emphasis in their battle

against imperialism, demanded that provision was made to allow Europeans and Indians to be equal citizens with Africans. They insisted that the basis of citizenship would not be descent, but a voluntary loyalty, reinventing both the foundation of the Tanganyikan community and widening the possibility of belonging to the nation. And many people made an uneasy attempt to reconcile both an emphasis on justice for an historically exploited African community with the power of the principle of non-discrimination, simultaneously holding out the possibility of non-African citizenship and making threats against them if they failed to adequately prove their loyalty. Who the *Watanganyika* were, and what Tanganyika was, became less sure even as the emphasis on the priority of this community hardened.

The final chapter tells the Kenyan story. As in Tanganyika, colonialism was recast in Kenya in the late 1950s and early 1960s as a denial of the humanity of the colonised people and as a block to their material development, supplementing (not replacing) older ideas about the threats that faced civil, reputable and prosperous communities, and being brought to bear by thinkers on their proper relationship. As in Tanganyika, the prospect of independence raised new and sharp questions in Kenya about the future of non-Africans in the territory, a challenge to established understandings of racial community, answers to which were influenced by their neighbour's earlier debates, and just as contested. As on the other side of Kilimanjaro, moreover, thinkers in Kenya understood that gaining and maintaining a true independence required a bulk not possessed by any of the territory's ethnic groups alone. In Kenya, however, where imaginations had been schooled rather differently in the 1940s, where no image of a 'national' community existed, and where tribe was well-established in people's minds as the necessary building block of any wider community, thinkers responded to these novel circumstances in a strikingly different way. In the early 1960s, in light of the new imperative to independence, Kenyan thinking was both united, by the question, and divided, in the particularities of their answer, by the issue of how a sustainable unity could be constructed in the face of legitimate diversity, the details of which form the heart of the chapter.