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The assassination of Eduardo Mondlane: FRELIMO, Tanzania, and the politics of exile in Dar es Salaam

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ABSTRACT

This article uses the city of Dar es Salaam as an urban lens for understanding the politics of FRELIMO in exile and the assassination of its first president, Eduardo Mondlane, in 1969. By adopting a multiarchival technique, these narratives can be broken down to a micropolitical level, shedding light on the distribution of agency in the confluence of superpower rivalry and decolonisation in the Third World. The splits within the liberation movement can be explained via the intersection of internal disagreements, Cold War dynamics, and relations with the Tanzanian state, within the context of Dar es Salaam's cosmopolitan public sphere.

At ten o'clock on the morning of 3 February 1969, Dr Eduardo Mondlane pulled up his car outside 201 Nkrumah Street in central Dar es Salaam, Tanzania. The address housed the offices of the Mozambique Liberation Front (*Frente de Libertação de Moçambique*, FRELIMO), the guerrilla movement that was fighting Portuguese colonialism beyond Tanzania's southern frontier. Mondlane was FRELIMO's president. He collected his mail and drove to the beachfront villa of an American friend in the upmarket suburb of Oyster Bay. Mondlane preferred to work there, away from the noise and heat of Nkrumah Street. He sat down with coffee and sifted through his post. Unwrapping a parcel bearing stamps from Moscow, Mondlane saw that it was a French translation of the turn-of-the-century Russian Marxist, Georgi Plekhanov. He went to flip through the pages. When Tanzanian police arrived on the scene minutes later, they found Mondlane's remains spattered across the room, ripped apart by a parcel bomb.¹

A number of recent histories of contemporary Africa have utilised assassinations as cracks through which to prise open the murky networks of transnational and international politics in the era of decolonisation. Investigative histories of the two highest profile deaths in the Congo Crisis – the murder of Patrice Lumumba and the mysterious plane crash which killed the UN secretary-general Dag Hammarskjöld – have elucidated complex issues of

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¹Burns to State Dept, 13 February 1969, Record Group (RG) 59, Central Foreign Policy Files (CFPF), 1967–9, Box 2354, POL 30 MOZ, National Archives and Records Administration, College Park, MD (NARA); David Martin, 'Interpol Solves a Guerrilla Whodunit', *Observer*, 6 February 1972, 4.

contingency and agency that cross-cut narratives centred on the nation-state.² Like Susan Williams' book on Hammarskjöld, this article does not offer a full explanation of Mondlane's assassination. Rather, by setting FRELIMO's struggle in the cosmopolitan political landscape of Dar es Salaam in the late 1960s, it shows how the movement was riven with tensions, caught up in Tanzanian affairs and the dynamics of the twin metadynamics of international affairs at the time, decolonisation and the Cold War.

Over the past decade, the rising interest in the global dimensions of the Cold War has brought scholars of the superpower rivalry into conversation with a rich body of literature exploring the history of decolonisation.³ While successfully breaking down interdisciplinary subfields by challenging established analytical categories, this historiographical development poses a methodological problem: how to interpret such diverse forces within a single analytical framework. This article suggests that urban settings offer a potential solution, as concentrated environments in which a range of actors and dynamics — local, national, transnational, international, and global — come together. Through the geographic viewpoint of a city, physically fixed yet porous to movements of people, materials, and information, the entanglements of ostensibly separate narrative threads can be addressed without removing them from their immediate context.

In the so-called Third World, certain urban loci became epicentres of the political friction between the dual forces of decolonisation and the Cold War. The cosmopolitanism of the Saigon captured in Graham Greene's *The Quiet American* — a city caught between a French colonial *fin-de-siècle*, anticolonial fervour, and Cold War paranoia — represents a Southeast Asian example of this juncture. In Algeria and Egypt, the radical stances of the governments of Ahmed Ben Bella and Gamal Abdel Nasser led liberation movements from across the sub-Saharan and Arab worlds to flock to Algiers and Cairo. On the frontline of the struggle against white minority rule in southern Africa, 1960s Dar es Salaam assumed a similar character.⁴ As Andrew Ivaska argues in his history of cultural politics in post-colonial Tanzania, the capital constituted a 'nodal point', where circuits of global information were filtered through meshes of local understanding.⁵

In the absence of relevant, accessible post-colonial archives in Tanzania and Mozambique, this article follows Daniel Branch's example in using the 'archives of repression' — in this case diplomatic despatches from foreign embassies located in Dar es Salaam.⁶ While there are obvious dangers in a narrative written from the perspective of the global North, a multiarchival approach permits a degree of triangulation from different vantage points and the excavation of networks of information and interests within and passing through the city. These diplomatic sources are complemented by the limited African written sources available, here the Tanzanian press and memoirs of FRELIMO members.

²Ludo de Witte, *The Assassination of Lumumba* (London: Verso, 2001); Susan Williams, *Who Killed Hammarskjöld? The UN, the Cold War and White Supremacy in Africa* (London: Hurst, 2011); Emmanuel Gerard and Bruce Kuklick, *Death in the Congo: Murdering Patrice Lumumba* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2015).

³Odd Arne Westad, *The Global Cold War: Third World Interventions and the Making of Our Times* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005); Leslie James and Elisabeth Leake (eds), *Decolonization and the Cold War: Negotiating Independence* (London: Bloomsbury, 2015).

⁴For a history of the city, see James R. Brennan and Andrew Burton, 'The Emerging Metropolis: A History of Dar es Salaam, ca. 1862–2000' in *Dar es Salaam: Histories from an Emerging African Metropolis*, ed. Brennan, Burton, and Yusuf Lawi (Dar es Salaam: Mkuki na Nyota, 2007), 13–76.

⁵Andrew Ivaska, *Cultured States: Youth, Gender, and Modern Style in 1960s Dar es Salaam* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2011).

⁶Daniel Branch, *Kenya: Between Hope and Despair, 1963–2011* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2011), 20; Stephen Ellis, 'Writing Histories of Contemporary Africa', *Journal of African History* 43, no. 1 (2002): 1–26.

Dar es Salaam and the making of a 'Cold War city'

At the heart of the developments that turned Dar es Salaam into a hotbed of international politics was Tanzania's president, Julius Nyerere. Scholars have tended to situate Nyerere at the centre of Tanzania's post-colonial history. They focus on his vision of an African socialist path to development, based on the principle of *ujamaa* ('familyhood') and supposedly anchored in the communal traditions of the peasantry rather than abstract Marxist-Leninism.⁷ Yet as a number of recent histories have shown, Nyerere's control of *ujamaa* socialism was contested at both elite and grassroots levels. Although the sense of national identity that his policies fostered has proved remarkably enduring, *ujamaa* was replete with cultural, social, and political tensions.⁸

However, in terms of Tanzania's contribution to the cause of the liberation of those African colonies under white minority rule, Nyerere's own role is clear. At Addis Ababa in May 1963, African heads of state formed the Organisation of African Unity (OAU). Nyerere emphasised the continent's duty to free those still under colonial oppression. 'The real humiliating truth is that Africa is not free', he implored, 'and therefore it is Africa which should take the necessary collective measures to free Africa.'⁹ After Tanganyika became independent in 1961, Nyerere permitted exiled liberation movements from the Portuguese territories, Namibia, Rhodesia, and South Africa to establish military training camps in the country. They set up offices in Dar es Salaam, where they canvassed for external support. The city also hosted the OAU's Liberation Committee, established to fund and support the guerrillas' activities. The liberation movements became a central feature of Dar es Salaam's political life. When the Polish journalist Ryszard Kapuściński passed through in January 1964, he described the scene at the bar at the New Africa Hotel, a prominent city centre watering hole.

All of Africa conspires here these days. Here gather the fugitives, refugees, and emigrants from various parts of the continent. One can spot sitting at one table Mondlane from Mozambique, Kaunda from Zambia, Mugabe from Rhodesia. At another – Karume from Zanzibar, Chisiza from Malawi, Nujoma from Namibia, etc. [...] In the evening, when it grows cooler and a refreshing breeze blows in from the sea, the terrace fills with people discussing, planning courses of action, calculating their strengths and assessing their chances [...] We, the correspondents, come by here frequently, to pick up something. We already know all the leaders, we know who is worth sidling up to.¹⁰

Kapuściński arrived in Dar es Salaam just as two near simultaneous crises thrust the city into the international spotlight. First, the government of Zanzibar – an archipelago lying a short distance off Tanganyika's coast, which had become independent from Britain the previous month – was overthrown in a violent uprising. The revolution was grounded in a complex mixture of ethnoracial tensions, economic inequalities, and grievances at the circumstances of democratic politics around the time of independence.¹¹ However, the presence of

⁷On *ujamaa* socialism in its global context, see Vijay Prashad, *The Darker Nations: A People's History of the Third World* (New York: The New Press, 2007), 191–203.

⁸Ivaska, *Cultured States*; James R. Brennan, *Taifa: Making Nation and Race in Urban Tanzania* (Athens: Ohio University Press, 2012); Emma Hunter, *Political Thought and the Public Sphere in Tanzania: Freedom, Democracy, and Citizenship in the Era of Decolonization* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2015); Priya Lal, *Socialism in Postcolonial Tanzania: Between the Village and the World* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2015).

⁹Julius K. Nyerere, *Freedom and Unity: A Selection from Writings and Speeches, 1952–65* (Dar es Salaam: Oxford University Press, 1967), 216.

¹⁰Ryszard Kapuściński, *The Shadow of the Sun: My African Life* (London: Allen Lane, 2001), 76.

¹¹Jonathon Glassman, *War of Words, War of Stones: Racial Thought and Violence in Colonial Zanzibar* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2011).

a number of Marxists in the revolutionary government, especially Abdulrahman Mohamed Babu, led some Western commentators to interpret the coup as a communist-backed plot. Britain and the United States therefore delayed recognising the revolutionary government of President Abeid Karume. The resulting vacuum was exploited by China, the Soviet Union, and East Germany, which ‘descended on Zanzibar like the Three Kings, bearing gifts of economic and military aid and opening embassies.’¹² Days after the revolution, a barracks mutiny broke out in Dar es Salaam, forcing Nyerere to flee into hiding and then call upon British troops to put down the revolt.¹³ Faced with unrest at home and a neighbour drifting into communist hands – and thereby risking Western intervention – in April Nyerere secretly brokered an act of union with Karume. This tethered radical Zanzibar to the more moderate mainland government, creating the state of Tanzania.¹⁴ Welcomed by Washington, the union curbed Zanzibar’s leftward slide, but left a volatile legacy for the government of the United Republic.

In the immediate aftermath of the union, Tanzania confronted a number of foreign policy crises with its main donor partners. A dispute about the future of East German diplomatic representation in Tanzania after the union embroiled the country in the Cold War subplot of inter-German rivalry. The tussle ended with West Germany withdrawing military aid over Tanzania’s decision to accept the opening of an East German consulate-general in Dar es Salaam. In a fierce demonstration of his non-alignment, Nyerere responded by rejecting all West German aid.¹⁵ Two spats over supposed American plots to overthrow the Tanzanian government also damaged relations with Washington. In November 1964, Oscar Kambona, the foreign minister and chairman of the Liberation Committee, seized upon supposed evidence that the United States and Portugal were seeking to overthrow Nyerere to whip up anti-American anger among demonstrators in Dar es Salaam. The documents were later shown by the State Department to be clumsy forgeries. Then in February 1965, two American diplomats were expelled after they were accused of plotting against the regime in Zanzibar.¹⁶ More seriously, in November 1965, Nyerere severed diplomatic relations with Britain over London’s failure to prevent Rhodesia’s Unilateral Declaration of Independence.¹⁷

These disputes pushed Nyerere into diversifying Tanzania’s sources of development aid.¹⁸ After the union, several Marxist Zanzibari ministers, including Babu, had been moved into the mainland government. Through Babu’s assistance, China and Tanzania developed a strong relationship, underscored by shared Afro-Asian identities – though Nyerere maintained he was not under Beijing’s influence. When Western governments declined to finance a railway between the Copperbelt of neighbouring Zambia and the port at Dar es Salaam, Tanzania turned to Mao’s China for a \$400 million interest-free loan, which was agreed

¹²Piero Gleijeses, *Conflicting Missions: Havana, Africa, and Washington, 1959–1976* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2002), 69.

¹³Timothy H. Parsons, *The 1964 Army Mutinies and the Making of Modern East Africa* (Connecticut: Praeger, 2003).

¹⁴Issa G. Shivji, *Pan-Africanism or Pragmatism? Lessons of the Tanganyika-Zanzibar Union* (Dar es Salaam: Mkuki na Nyota, 2008); Ethan R. Sanders, ‘Conceiving the Tanganyika-Zanzibar Union in the Midst of the Cold War: Internal and International Factors’, *African Review* 41, no. 1 (2014): 35–70.

¹⁵Ulrich van der Heyden, ‘“I will not recognise East Germany just because Bonn is stupid.” Anerkennungsdiplomatie in Tansania, 1964 bis 1965’, in *Kalter Krieg in Ostafrika: Die Beziehungen der DDR zu Sansibar und Tansania*, ed. Ulrich van der Heyden and Franziska Benger (Berlin: Lit Verlag, 2009), 9–30.

¹⁶Paul Bjerk, *Building a Peaceful Nation: Julius Nyerere and the Establishment of Sovereignty in Tanzania, 1960–1964* (Rochester: University of Rochester Press, 2015), 236–49.

¹⁷Arrigo Pallotti, ‘Post-Colonial Nation-Building and Southern African Liberation: Tanzania and the Break of Diplomatic Relations with the United Kingdom, 1965–1968’, *African Historical Review* 41, no. 2 (2009): 60–84.

¹⁸Cranford Pratt, *The Critical Phase in Tanzania, 1945–1968* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1976), 166.

in 1967. Nyerere insisted the decision was taken out of necessity, rather than ideological inclination.¹⁹

Conscious of the fragility of his own government, especially after the Zanzibar Revolution, the mutiny, and events in neighbouring Congo, Nyerere recognised the risks of supporting the liberation movements. The crates of weapons bound for the guerrillas that arrived in Dar es Salaam from the Soviet Union and China often did so without prior Tanzanian consent. This influx of arms concerned the government, which complained that in supplying weapons directly to the liberation movements, the communist powers were undermining the Liberation Committee's coordinating role.²⁰ In November 1964, Nyerere ordered the number of representatives for each liberation movement in Dar es Salaam to be limited to just four. Surplus officials, the British high commission reported, were to move to 'a more remote place than the capital, where they would be less able to stir up trouble, and conversely, where foreign diplomats would be less able to subvert them.'²¹

In no small part because of the liberation movements' activities, Dar es Salaam was transformed into a 'Cold War city', at the intersection of superpower rivalry and decolonisation. In a snowball effect, the city attracted not only liberation movements, diplomatic representations, and agents of the white minority regimes, but also an array of journalists, stringers, radical academics, and chancers in search of influential contacts or fistfuls of dollars. The city's public sphere became superheated with Cold War propaganda and the interventions of an outspoken, state-sponsored local press. The city was often engulfed in murmurings about coups. Nyerere's biographer noted that 'a sort of free-flowing paranoia sometimes seems to hang suspended in Dar es Salaam's heavy air.'²² Nyerere himself spoke of the danger of careless talk in the city's bars and cafés. He referred to his capital as 'Rumourville.'²³

FRELIMO and the Cold War powers

FRELIMO was created in 1962 from the merger of three separate Mozambican groups which had converged in Dar es Salaam in 1961: the Mozambique African National Union (MANU), the National Democratic Union of Mozambique (*União Democrática Nacional de Moçambique*, UDENAMO), and the African Union of Independent Mozambique (*União Africana de Moçambique Independente*, UNAMI). Nyerere wanted to prevent the fragmentation of the liberation struggle in Mozambique, especially as independent Congo fractured along ethnopolitical lines. He was also concerned about the growing influence over UDENAMO of Kwame Nkrumah's Ghana, as Africa's post-colonial states vied for influence over the exiled movements.²⁴

FRELIMO began military operations against the Portuguese in Mozambique in September 1964. However, the movement was more than a fighting force: it provided relief for refugees

¹⁹Priya Lal, 'Maoism in Tanzania: Material Connections and Shared Imaginaries', in *Mao's Little Red Book: A Global History*, ed. Alexander C. Cook (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 96–116; Jamie Monson, *Africa's Freedom Railway: How a Chinese Development Project Changed Lives and Livelihoods in Tanzania* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2008); Alicia N. Altorfer-Ong, 'Old Comrades and New Brothers: A Historical Re-Examination of the Sino-Zanzibari and Sino-Tanzanian Bilateral Relationships' (PhD diss., LSE, 2014), 189–229.

²⁰Hobden to Osborne, 23 March 1966, DO 213/123/92, United Kingdom National Archives, Kew (UKNA).

²¹MacRae to de Burtet, 2 November 1964, DO 213/123/15^A, UKNA.

²²William Edgett Smith, *Nyerere of Tanzania* (London: Victor Gollancz, 1973), 153.

²³Dawson to Scott, 1 March 1966, DO 213/103/68, UKNA.

²⁴João M. Cabrita, *Mozambique: The Tortuous Road to Democracy* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2000), 5–12.

from offices scattered across southern Tanzania and operated a school in Dar es Salaam, the Mozambique Institute. It used the Tanzanian press to carry exaggerated body counts of Portuguese casualties and circulated a glossy magazine, *Mozambique Revolution*. In 1965, the Canadian high commissioner described it as ‘perhaps the only such organization in Africa which is now carrying out substantial operations designed to subvert and eventually overthrow a government under European control.’²⁵

President Eduardo Mondlane headed a twenty-man Central Committee. Born in Mozambique in 1920, Mondlane studied in Johannesburg and Lisbon, before moving to the United States, where he obtained degrees from Oberlin College and Northwestern University. When Mondlane was elected president of FRELIMO in 1962, he was teaching Anthropology at Syracuse University. Shortly after, he resigned his position and moved to Tanzania with his white American wife, Janet, who organised the Mozambique Institute. Mondlane did not initially support violent struggle, but felt he had little choice in the face of Portugal’s intransigence. He espoused a form of grassroots socialism, attuned with a pragmatism that recognised the pitfalls of global politics in the midst of the Cold War. Mondlane believed that victory over Portugal could be achieved only with the cooperation of the peasantry in liberated areas of northern Mozambique. This was owed in part to his understanding of Mao Zedong and the experience of the Vietcong guerrillas.²⁶

Mondlane spent much of his time outside of Africa, attempting to build diplomatic relations, secure aid, and raise awareness about FRELIMO. Wherever he travelled, he impressed bureaucrats and politicians of all ideological shades. ‘Mondlane is one of the most cultured and intelligent Africans in Dar es Salaam – a potential Kaunda, Nyerere or Adu,’ wrote the British high commissioner to Tanzania.²⁷ Mondlane was also adept at using the opportunities provided by the international environment of Dar es Salaam to promote FRELIMO’s cause. ‘The most notable and refreshing African liberation figure I reported on was Eduardo Mondlane,’ recalled one foreign journalist. ‘He had his own press network and when he wanted particular cover he would use journalists from outside to ensure better, more broad acceptance and coverage.’²⁸

FRELIMO was the only Dar es Salaam-based liberation movement to receive aid from all three superpowers. Other European states also made valuable contributions, especially the Nordic countries. Initially, FRELIMO’s connections to the communist world were strongest with China, which Mondlane first visited in 1963.²⁹ Chinese military instructors and arms soon began arriving for FRELIMO. Of FRELIMO’s inner circle, Uria Simango, Mondlane’s deputy, was the closest to Beijing. He was a familiar face at the Canton Restaurant, a stone’s throw from the movement’s Nkrumah Street offices. The establishment served not only as a popular meeting place for Tanzanian politicians and guerrilla leaders, but also as a front organisation for China’s espionage activities in Dar es Salaam.³⁰

²⁵McGill to Ministry for External Affairs, Ottawa, 8 November 1965, DO 213/102/133, UKNA.

²⁶On Mondlane’s vision for Mozambique, see Eduardo Mondlane, *The Struggle for Mozambique* (Baltimore: Penguin, 1969).

²⁷Fowler to Chadwick, 4 October 1965, DO 213/17/3, UKNA.

²⁸J. B. Thomson, *Words of Passage: A Journalist Looks Back* (n.p.: Xlibris, 2012), n.p.

²⁹On China and FRELIMO see Altorfer-Ong, ‘Old Comrades’, 149–56; Stephen R. Jackson, ‘China’s Third World Policy: The Case of Angola and Mozambique’, *China Quarterly*, no. 142 (1997): 388–422.

³⁰Services for the Centralisation and Coordination of Information for Mozambique (SCCIM), 4 January 1967, Ministério dos Negócios Estrangeiros (MNE), PAA 819, Arquivo Histórico-diplomático, Lisbon (AHD); PIDE Mozambique, 21 June 1968, PIDE, SC, SR 337/61, NT 3051, 1^o pt., 488–9, Arquivo Nacional, Torre do Tombo, Lisbon (TT).

As the 1960s wore on, FRELIMO developed stronger ties with the Soviet Bloc, at Beijing's expense.³¹ This reflected a growing irritation among African states and guerrilla movements at China's inflexible approach to bilateral relations – a trend to which the Tanzanian government was an exception. Speaking to the chairman of the East German Afro-Asian Solidarity Committee in November 1966, Mondlane complained about the treatment of a FRELIMO delegation in Beijing and China's 'divisive' intentions among Third World states.³² China began to support a rival organisation to FRELIMO, the Zambia-based Mozambique Revolutionary Committee (*Comité Revolucionário de Moçambique*, COREMO). The Soviet Union cast aside initial doubts about Mondlane's political stance and American background. Mondlane made three trips to Moscow, in 1964, 1966, and 1967, where he secured packages of aid and arms. FRELIMO delegations also received favourable receptions in Czechoslovakia and East Germany. In December 1966, after meeting with Mondlane in Berlin, the East Germans concluded that he had moved to the left, under the steady influence of Marxists within FRELIMO, such as Marcelino dos Santos, the secretary for external affairs, and Samora Machel, the director of military operations.³³

The presence of the African liberation movements in Dar es Salaam posed a dilemma for the West. Washington and London expressed concern about their leftist inclination. Some cited this as reason enough to steer clear of the guerrillas. Others argued that it was in the West's interest not to lose touch with potential governments-in-waiting, to prevent them from slipping directly into the hands of Beijing or Moscow. 'We do not wish to find ourselves entirely isolated from and out of sympathy with the rebel movements if and when they come to obtain a share in power', argued one British official.³⁴ In Dar es Salaam, contact between diplomats and the liberation movements was unavoidable. In 1965, the British high commissioner told the Foreign Office that it would be 'surprised to see the extent to which exiles and representatives of the various liberation movements circulate in diplomatic social circles here. They are to be seen at practically every National Day party or big reception'.³⁵

The matter was complicated by Cold War geopolitics. Portugal was a key NATO ally of Britain and the United States. The strategic importance of the Azores air base, on Portuguese territory in the Atlantic, was not lost on Washington – or Lisbon. When in 1961 President John F. Kennedy adopted a more critical stance towards Portuguese colonialism at the UN and announced that Portugal's use of NATO military hardware would be restricted to the northern hemisphere, Salazar threatened to prevent the United States from renewing its soon-to-expire lease on the base.³⁶ Meetings with guerrilla leaders in Dar es Salaam also did not go unnoticed by Lisbon. In 1966, Salazar sent a letter to Prime Minister Harold Wilson, criticising the reception given to 'terrorist chiefs' by the British high commission in Tanzania.³⁷

³¹On FRELIMO's relations with the Eastern Bloc, see Natalia Telepneva, 'Our Sacred Duty: The Soviet Union, the Liberation Movements in the Portuguese Colonies, and the Cold War, 1961–1975' (PhD diss., LSE, 2015).

³²Africa Division, Ministry for Foreign Affairs (MfAA), 12 December 1966, MfAA, A 18984/1, Politisches Archiv des Auswärtigen Amtes, Berlin (PAAA).

³³Africa Division, MfAA, 12 December 1966, MfAA, A 18984/1, PAAA.

³⁴Foster to Stewart, 14 January 1964, FO 371/176592, UKNA.

³⁵Fowler to Chadwick, 4 October 1965, DO 213/17/3, UKNA.

³⁶On the United States and Portugal, see Witney W. Schneidman, *Engaging Africa: Washington and the Fall of Portugal's Colonial Empire* (Lanham: University of America Press, 2004); on Britain and Portugal, see Pedro Aires Oliveira, 'Live and Let Live: Britain and Portugal's Imperial Endgame (1945–75)', *Portuguese Studies* 29, no. 2 (2013): 186–208.

³⁷Palliser to Bridges, 22 April 1966, UKNA, DO 213/17/8.

Nonetheless, Washington provided covert support for Mondlane. While a student in the United States, he befriended Wayne Fredericks, who became assistant-secretary of state for Africa under the Kennedy administration.³⁸ Via Fredericks' introduction, in February 1963 Mondlane met Robert Kennedy, the attorney general, and Averill Harriman, under-secretary of state, in Washington. Both recognised that Mondlane represented the best chance for a negotiated settlement in Mozambique and a counterweight to more radical elements within FRELIMO. Shortly after, the CIA channelled \$60,000 to FRELIMO via the African-American Institute in New York. \$99,700 followed from the Ford Foundation to the Mozambique Institute.³⁹

Mondlane's connections with the United States were subject to continual rumour in Dar es Salaam. In May 1967, a member of the Liberation Committee told a Polish diplomat that he was convinced Mondlane was working for the Americans.⁴⁰ These rumours were encouraged by the case of Leo Milas, who was FRELIMO's first publicity secretary, having been invited to Tanzania from the United States by Mondlane. He was expelled from the movement in August 1964, after Mondlane found that he was actually an American, named Leo Clinton Aldridge.⁴¹ Mozambicans were not alone in attracting such accusations in a public sphere pregnant with anti-Americanism. In 1967, Tanzania's minister for health and housing, Austin Shaba, was the target of an anonymous pamphlet that accused him of being a 'traitor', 'working hand in glove with the mad dogs of CIA [*sic*]'. Although the government denounced the tract as 'disgraceful', the American embassy noted that the regime, by permitting scathing attacks on Washington from ministers and the government-controlled press, had 'helped to create an atmosphere in which scurrilous pamphleteering of this sort can easily blossom.'⁴²

FRELIMO and its discontents

Although a full analysis of the schisms within FRELIMO lies beyond the scope of this article, the developments described below can only be understood in the context of the broader dynamics of the liberation struggle. FRELIMO's early years were plagued by splits, as the leaders of the parties which were subsumed into the unified movement under Mondlane resented their reduced status. By the late 1960s, the main opposition to Mondlane within FRELIMO was clustered around the figure of Lázaro Kavandame, the movement's provincial secretary in Cabo Delgado in 'liberated' northern Mozambique. He was a Makonde, an ethnic group which straddled the Mozambican-Tanzanian frontier. Waves of Makonde had migrated northwards into Tanganyikan territory over the preceding centuries, with influxes in 1922 and 1933, as they fled exorbitant Portuguese taxes. Some were involved in the Tanganyikan independence struggle and later set up MANU – originally the *Makonde* African National Union. MANU's members felt slighted at their displacement by the likes of Mondlane and dos Santos, who were from southern Mozambique.⁴³

³⁸José Manuel Duarte de Jesus, *Eduardo Mondlane: Um homem a abater* (Coimbra: Almedina, 2010), 184.

³⁹Schneidman, *Engaging Africa*, 44–6.

⁴⁰Brzezinski to Department V, MSZ, 19 May 1967, DV 1967 57/70 W-5, Archiwum Ministerstwa Spraw Zagranicznych, Warsaw.

⁴¹Walter C. Opello Jr., 'Pluralism and Elite Conflict in an Independence Movement: FRELIMO in the 1960s', *Journal of Southern African Studies* 2, no. 1 (1975): 66–82.

⁴²Burns to State Dept, 7 December 1967, RG 59, CFPF 1967–9, Box 1511, CSM TANZAN, NARA; Burns to State Dept, 15 December 1967, RG 59, CFPF 1967–9, Box 2512, POL 2 TANZAN, NARA.

⁴³Sayaka Funada-Classen, *The Origins of War in Mozambique: A History of Unity and Division*, trans. Masoko Osada (Tokyo: Ochanomizu Shobo, 2012), 169–77.

Class differences mapped onto these ethnic divisions. Most Makonde were poorly educated: Kavandame did not speak Portuguese. Many held low-paid jobs on sisal plantations in Tanzania. Some of the Central Committee, on the other hand, had studied overseas. Mondlane's lifestyle in Dar es Salaam's wealthy suburb of Oyster Bay, while FRELIMO's rank-and-file lived in crowded dormitories or training camps, also drew criticism. 'Mondlane's dogs eat better than we do', grumbled one member. This image was not helped by Mondlane's American connections, nor by his intellectual demeanour.⁴⁴

However, this class divide did not produce a more revolutionary approach among the Makonde. Rather, while Mondlane, dos Santos, and Machel increasingly stressed the need for a 'People's War' and social revolution in the liberated territory, Kavandame and the so-called 'Council of Elders', which represented a rival authority to the Central Committee, espoused a narrow, racially-defined nationalism which saw the elimination of white rule in Mozambique as an endgoal in itself. They were deeply hostile to white members of FRELIMO, like Janet Mondlane. Dos Santos – a *mestiço* with a white, Jewish, South African wife – also fell under suspicion. The dual ideologies that had glued together so many liberation coalitions elsewhere in Africa, socialism and nationalism, were thus uncoupled.

Rival leaders drew upon these differences to further their own personal interests. Kavandame's opposition to the transformation of Cabo Delgado was owed to the fact he was materially benefitting from the status quo. He and the chiefs working underneath him ran the province much like the Portuguese, extorting produce from the peasantry and, with the connivance of the local Tanzanian authorities, taking a cut from cross-border trade.⁴⁵ At the same time, FRELIMO's military campaign in Mozambique stalled. After making initial inroads in 1964–5, a Portuguese counteroffensive pushed back the guerrillas. The number of FRELIMO dead and lack of progress contributed to the growing resentment towards Mondlane.⁴⁶

As Michel Cahen cautions, historians should not seek to explain the subsequent crisis via strict categories. Issues of class, ethnicity, and ideological stances towards the Cold War powers all contributed to schisms, aggravated by the 'internal democratic centralism' that prevented public disagreement among the FRELIMO cadres. There was not a 'simple crisis', but rather 'tensions at the crossroads of numerous, varied factors, without the possibility of democratic control.'⁴⁷ These splits did not go unnoticed by the Portuguese and other foreign powers. In mid-1967, the Portuguese secret police (PIDE) reported that Chinese agents were cultivating an opposition faction to Mondlane among Mozambican workers of Makonde background at the Friendship Textile Factory, a Chinese-funded scheme in Dar es Salaam.⁴⁸

The crisis of 1968

In 1968, these pressures spilled over into open unrest, as a series of violent episodes exposed the extent of the fractures within FRELIMO. At the centre of this crisis was Mateus Gwenjere,

⁴⁴Pickering to State Dept, 30 March 1968, RG 59, SNF 1967–9, Box 2513, POL 2 TANZAN, NARA.

⁴⁵Funada-Classen, *Origins*, 251.

⁴⁶Cabrita, *Mozambique*, 29–36; Telepneva, 'Sacred Duty', 171.

⁴⁷Michel Cahen, 'La "fin de l'histoire"... unique: Trajectoires des anticolonialismes au Mozambique', *Portuguese Studies Review* 16, no. 1 (2008): 171–237. See also Georgi Derluguian, 'The Social Origins of Good and Bad Governance: Re-Interpreting the 1968 Schism in FRELIMO', in *Sure Road? Nationalisms in Angola, Guinea-Bissau and Mozambique*, ed. Eric Mourier-Genoud (Leiden: Brill, 2012), 79–101.

⁴⁸Secretary-general for national defence, 16 August 1967, PIDE, SC, SR 337/61, NT 3051, 1^o pt., 776–7, TT.

a Roman Catholic priest. Mondlane initially supported Gwenjere when he fled to Tanzania from Mozambique in August 1967. Gwenjere was fast-tracked into FRELIMO's leadership and represented it at the UN General Assembly. Then he began to criticise FRELIMO's education policy. He tapped into discontent at the Mozambique Institute in Dar es Salaam regarding the lack of scholarship opportunities to study abroad and the leadership's insistence that students spend time fighting at the front, to foment opposition to Mondlane. Encouraged by Gwenjere, the students called for the removal of the Institute's white teachers. The ensuing stand-off resulted in the temporary closure of the Institute and reached a climax when a FRELIMO party, including Machel, raided the student dormitories on the night of 6 March.⁴⁹

Weeks later, FRELIMO was convulsed by more violence. On 6 May, a group of Mozambicans forcibly closed the movement's offices at 201 Nkrumah Street. When FRELIMO's leadership succeeded in getting the offices reopened on 8 May, the following day the group of Makonde returned, armed with clubs and machetes. In the ensuing violence, one member of the Central Committee was fatally wounded. At the time, Mondlane was in Mozambique with representatives of the Liberation Committee.

At a press conference, Simango blamed the unrest on underground Portuguese activities. He claimed that he did not recognise any of the eighteen men arrested and that none was a FRELIMO member.⁵⁰ In a public statement on 26 May, Mondlane largely concurred: two of the men were former members who had deserted FRELIMO over a year before, the rest were unknown to the leadership.⁵¹ These claims were rejected in a letter from the 'Council of Elders', printed in the Tanzanian trade union newspaper, *Mfanyakazi*. It accused Simango of conspiring against Mondlane, but then of shying away from cooperation with the Elders when they sought his cooperation in forcing new presidential elections. It also criticised Mondlane's 'contemptuous designs' in refusing to work with the Elders and reopening the office.⁵²

Gwenjere was also at the heart of this latest disturbance. Mondlane told George Houser, head of the American Committee on Africa, an anticolonial pressure group, that Gwenjere had lobbied the Tanzanian civil service and the Liberation Committee to shut the FRELIMO offices and order elections. When this proved unsuccessful, Gwenjere encouraged members of his church, who were mostly Makonde, to first close the offices and then attack the reopened premises.⁵³ On 27 May, a Portuguese informer in Tanzania reported that 'at any moment now, there will be an attempt on the life of Dr. Mondlane to assassinate him. He will be extremely lucky if he escapes or save [*sic*] his life from this attempt.'⁵⁴

Portugal sought to aggravate these divisions. According to a report produced by the Italian secret services, the SCDI, between June 1968 and October 1969, Robert Leroy carried out a series of interviews in East Africa, including with Mondlane, dos Santos, and Gwenjere. Leroy was purportedly a journalist, but in reality worked for an organisation

⁴⁹Cabrita, *Mozambique*, 53–4; Michael G. Panzer, 'The Pedagogy of Revolution: Youth, Generational Conflict, and Education in the Development of Mozambican Nationalism and the State, 1962–1970', *Journal of Southern African Studies* 35, no. 4 (2009): 803–20; Mondlane to Houser, 5 June 1968, Herbert Shore Collection (HSC), Subgroup II, Series 2, Box 2, Oberlin College Archives, Ohio (OCA); Mondlane to Mwangira, 2 April 1968, HSC, Subgroup II, Series 6, Box 2, Microfiche 1, OCA.

⁵⁰Burns to State Dept, 11 May 1968, RG 59, CFPF 1967–9, Box 2515, POL 13 TANZAN, NARA.

⁵¹Mondlane, press statement, 26 May 1968, HSC, Subgroup II, Series 4, Box 1, OCA.

⁵²Müller to Africa Division, MFAA, 13 July 1968, SAPMO, DY 30/IV A 2/20/948, 23–9, Bundesarchiv, Berlin (BA).

⁵³Mondlane to Houser, 5 June 1968, HSC, Subgroup II, Series 2, Box 2, OCA.

⁵⁴Director, PIDE, to director-general of political affairs, MNE, 7 November 1968, MNE, PAA 569, AHD.

named Aginter Press.⁵⁵ Ostensibly a publishing house, Aginter was connected to Operation GLADIO, NATO's stay-behind network of sleeper cells in Western Europe after the Second World War. Intended to coordinate resistance in the event of a Soviet invasion, GLADIO instead became associated with groups that carried out a number of false-flag terrorist attacks, which were blamed on left-wing extremists in order to whip up anti-communist sentiment and bolster conservative governments.⁵⁶ Leroy's work in Tanzania was part of *Operação Zona Leste*, a series of Aginter interventions against Portugal's enemies in Africa. An SDCI officer told journalist Frederic Laurent that 'Leroy's job of intoxication consisted of giving false information to the leaders of FRELIMO and of creating discord among them by playing on their personal rivalries.'⁵⁷ The cosmopolitan public sphere which Mondlane skilfully used to broadcast FRELIMO's struggle to the world could therefore also be turned against him.

In these circumstances, Mondlane bowed to Kavandame's demands that FRELIMO hold a Special Congress in July, at which Kavandame and Gwenjere hoped to topple the leadership. Kavandame wanted it to be held in southern Tanzania, where his support base was strongest. Instead, Mondlane held the meeting on liberated Mozambican soil. Fearing an anti-Makonde plot, Kavandame and his supporters boycotted the Congress, at which Mondlane and dos Santos strengthened their positions. The former was re-elected president, beating Simango in a secret ballot. The Congress passed a programme that transformed FRELIMO into a more centralised 'vanguard party', along Marxist lines.⁵⁸

Concerned by the splits within FRELIMO, Nyerere intervened. In August he brought Mondlane and Kavandame together in southeastern Tanzania, but the latter refused to compromise. Instead, Kavandame pushed ahead in his attempt to set up a rival Makonde nationalist movement. He was deluded enough to think that Nyerere would support him, on the grounds that Tanzania was already providing assistance for the Biafran separatists in Nigeria. After Paulo Kankhombe, a FRELIMO representative sent to implement the reforms agreed on in July, was murdered in Cabo Delgado in December, on 3 January 1969 the Central Committee suspended Kavandame from his duties as provincial secretary.⁵⁹

Tanzanian entanglements

These divisions within FRELIMO were not purely a Mozambican affair, but also involved Tanzanians pursuing their own agendas in destabilising Mondlane's position. The longer the liberation movements were based in Dar es Salaam, the more they became 'domesticated' and entangled with local political frictions. This was especially so in the case of FRELIMO, given the shared Makonde background of many Tanzanians and Mozambicans. In FRELIMO's early years, Mondlane fell back on his good relations with the Tanzanian leadership, especially Kambona, to remove dissident members.⁶⁰ However, in July 1967

⁵⁵Frederic Laurent and Nina Sutton, 'The Assassination of Eduardo Mondlane', in *Dirty Work 2: The CIA in Africa*, ed. Ellen Ray et al. (Secaucus: Lyle Stuart, 1979), 137–9.

⁵⁶Daniele Ganser, *NATO's Secret Armies: Operation GLADIO and Terrorism in Western Europe* (London: Frank Cass, 2005); José Manuel Duarte de Jesus, *A guerra secreta de Salazar em África. Aginter Press: Uma rede internacional de contra-subversão e espionagem sediada em Lisboa* (Algragide: Dom Quixote, 2012).

⁵⁷Laurent and Sutton, 'Assassination', 138.

⁵⁸Cabrita, *Mozambique*, 56–7; Opello, 'Pluralism' 76.

⁵⁹Funada-Classen, *Origins*, 257.

⁶⁰Cabrita, *Mozambique*, 12, 17.

Kambona fled into exile after falling out with Nyerere. The Tanzanians henceforth responsible for the guerrillas' security were less inclined towards Mondlane.

Among these officials was Lawi Sijaona, who was tasked with refugee matters as minister of state in the office of the second vice-president, Rashidi Kawawa. A British pen-portrait described Sijaona as 'a vigilante, fanatical and lacking in humour'.⁶¹ Like Kawawa, Sijaona was of Makonde background – a reminder of the artificiality of the colonial border at Tanzania's southern frontier. As the Portuguese military reported from Mozambique just days before Mondlane's assassination, a 'crisis which was initially an internal FRELIMO issue seems to have been generalised by Makonde connections'.⁶² Hostile to Tanzania's Asian commercial class, Sijaona shared Kavandame's antipathy towards Mondlane on the same anti-white, racial grounds.⁶³ The American embassy also believed that Sijaona resented the manner in which Mondlane frequently bypassed him in preference for dealing directly with Kawawa.⁶⁴

Sijaona divided his time between his ministerial responsibilities and his role as chairman of the TANU Youth League, the party's activist arm. The Youth League became closely associated with Maoist practices. Its 'Green Guards', wearing shirts in the TANU colours, were consciously modelled on their Chinese counterparts. Sijaona himself had visited China as early as 1963 – before the establishment of Beijing's close relationship with Tanzania – and accompanied Nyerere on another trip in 1968.⁶⁵ These sympathies gave him common ideological ground with Simango, who was reportedly dissatisfied at FRELIMO's deepening relations with the Soviet Bloc.

Sijaona and senior civil servants in Kawawa's office deliberately undermined Mondlane. After the trouble at the Mozambique Institute, Mondlane attempted to clear rebellious students by ordering the school's closure and for the students to be sent to rural camps. In Kawawa's absence, Sijaona countermanded Mondlane's order – until Kawawa returned and overruled Sijaona.⁶⁶ Similarly, on 29 May the Tanzanian government expelled three white Portuguese teachers from the Mozambique Institute. A FRELIMO official told the East Germans that the decision was again taken in the absence of Kawawa, suggesting the hand of Sijaona. This time, when Kawawa returned, he did not overturn the order, but merely extended the deadline for the teachers' departure.⁶⁷ According to Helder Martins, a white Portuguese doctor, who was FRELIMO's director of health services and among the expelled teachers, Sijaona was also closely associated with Gwenjere.⁶⁸

The institution that was supposed to provide Mondlane's security deliberately failed to do so. On 26 April, despite opposition from Sijaona, Mondlane won Kawawa's agreement for a round-up of FRELIMO deserters and dissidents in Dar es Salaam. However, these measures were never implemented.⁶⁹ In parliament, Kawawa was forced to defend his office against

⁶¹Hart to Holmes, 6 June 1969, FCO 31/434/18, UKNA.

⁶²Military Governor of Mozambique, 25 January 1969, SCCIM/A/20–7/30, 42–3, TT.

⁶³Burns to State Dept, 28 March 1969, RG 59, CFPF 1967–9, Box 2513, POL 2 TANZAN, NARA.

⁶⁴Burns to State Dept, 10 May 1968, RG 59, CFPF 1967–9, Box 2515, POL 13 TANZAN, NARA.

⁶⁵James R. Brennan, 'Youth, the TANU Youth League, and Managed Vigilantism in Dar es Salaam, 1925–73', in *Generations Past: Youth in East African History*, ed. Andrew Burton and Hélène Charton-Bigot (Athens: Ohio University Press, 2010), 197–220; Lal, 'Maoism'; Hart to Holmes, 6 June 1969, FCO 31/434/18, UKNA.

⁶⁶Burns to State Dept, 28 March 1969, RG 59, CFPF 1967–9, Box 2513, POL 2 TANZAN, NARA.

⁶⁷Müller, 5 June 1968, SAPMO, DZ 8/163, BA.

⁶⁸Helder Martins, *Porquê Sakrani? Mémoires dum medico duma guerrilha esquecido* (Maputo: Editorial Terceiro Milénio, 2001), 350.

⁶⁹Burns to State Dept, 9 and 10 May 1968, RG 59, CFPF 1967–9, Box 2515, POL 13 TANZAN, NARA.

accusations made in *Mfanyakazi* that the attack on the FRELIMO headquarters could have been prevented by adequate police protection.⁷⁰ In October, Mondlane told British officials in London that he believed Sijaona had known about the attack in advance – a not unlikely suggestion, given the Makonde ethnic background of both the minister and the assailants.⁷¹ Mondlane also informed the East German consul-general that an internal Tanzanian investigation had found that many of the false accusations about him emanated from the Second Vice-President's Office, alleging that Sijaona was collaborating with the Chinese.⁷²

In October, Sijaona was moved out of Kawawa's office to the less politically charged position of minister for health. In London, Mondlane claimed that this was the result of his petitioning of Sijaona's superiors.⁷³ This may have played its part in Nyerere's decision, but there were other reasons. On 23 August, Sijaona had led a raucous TANU Youth League demonstration in protest at the Warsaw Pact invasion of Czechoslovakia, during which the grounds of the Soviet embassy in Dar es Salaam were vandalised. The episode embarrassed Nyerere, who was tiring of his minister's irresponsible activities. The reshuffle also followed a pattern in which Nyerere sought to prevent potential rivals from building power-bases in settled ministries. These interwoven developments exemplified the confluences of diverse issues that typified political life in Dar es Salaam – here the Cold War in Europe, liberation movement affairs, and Tanzanian politics.

At the same time, the Tanzanian press seized on the unrest in FRELIMO to make a series of attacks on Mondlane. The *Nationalist* was owned by TANU, but the outspoken Marxists who dominated its editorial staff were permitted a relatively free rein by Nyerere. The day after the fight at 201 Nkrumah Street, a *Nationalist* editorial contemplated the reasons behind the divisions within FRELIMO and other liberation movements. 'As a result of such non-observance of the constitutional rights of ordinary members,' it stated, 'conferences are never called to allow for members to exercise their right to choose their leaders or to endorse their trust in the existing ones.'⁷⁴ On 27 May, the newspaper carried extracts from a speech made by Abeid Karume, vice-president of Tanzania and president of Zanzibar. At a rally in Dar es Salaam to mark Africa Liberation Day, Karume criticised the guerrilla movements for being more preoccupied with issuing news bulletins than liberating their territory. He called on their leaders to reject the bribes of 'the very imperialists we are fighting' and desist from befriending people whom they 'fully well knew were enemies'.⁷⁵

Following Karume, the *Nationalist* delivered a brutal verdict on the liberation movements. It accused certain unnamed leaders of living 'luxuriously in air conditioned bungalows in independent African countries at a time when their own people are suffering from untold colonial cruelties.' 'It is not rare in Dar es Salaam for example to see a freedom fighter locked in heavy drinking bouts with strange faces of white men,' it continued, warning that 'our brothers should be extra careful about such guises which the agents of the enemy may employ, through drinks, diplomatic parties or cheap bribes.'⁷⁶ The target was clearly the Mondlanes. This attitude towards the liberation movements predated the unrest in FRELIMO in 1968. The previous December, the East German intelligence service, the Stasi,

⁷⁰Müller, 5 June 1968, SAPMO, DZ 8/163, BA.

⁷¹Wilson to Scott, 21 October 1968, FCO 45/174/7, UKNA.

⁷²Jesus, *Eduardo Mondlane*, 325.

⁷³Wilson to Scott, 21 October 1968, FCO 45/174/7, UKNA.

⁷⁴'Fracas at Frelimo Offices', *Nationalist*, 10 May 1968, 1.

⁷⁵'Victory is Certain – Karume', *Nationalist*, 27 May 1968, 1.

⁷⁶'Freedom Fighters', *Nationalist*, 28 May 1968, 4.

noted that the guerrillas were ‘increasingly seen as “salon parasites” [*Salonschmarotzer*] in Dar es Salaam.’⁷⁷ Such latent feeling was brought to the boil by the violent incidents concerning FRELIMO.

The extent of the opposition to Mondlane among the Tanzanian establishment was revealed again when on 23 November, the *Nationalist* reported on visit he had made to Nairobi. It claimed that at a private dinner there, Mondlane had briefed a group of Americans, who were in Kenya to attend the Ford Foundation-sponsored ‘American-African Dialogue’ meeting. Some of them had connections in the State Department. The *Nationalist* repeated rumours that the CIA had penetrated FRELIMO. Mondlane claimed that he had been in Kenya to meet President Jomo Kenyatta and had met the Americans by chance.⁷⁸ Information passed to the British high commission in Dar es Salaam by a Zimbabwean liberation movement leader, who had spoken to Mondlane on his return flight from Nairobi, suggested the meeting was more organised than admitted.⁷⁹ Wayne Fredericks, who had left the State Department the previous year, had been among the group. He observed that Mondlane seemed frustrated by the splits within FRELIMO.⁸⁰

Regardless of Mondlane’s honesty about his dealings in Nairobi, the *Nationalist*’s selective use of information was another demonstration of its hostility towards him. The article was written by Nsa Kaisi, described by the American embassy as the *Nationalist*’s ‘leading Marxist true believer’.⁸¹ While condemning Mondlane’s meeting with the Americans, Kaisi neglected to mention that Joseph Nyerere, brother of the president, had been in attendance too. It was also odd that the *Nationalist* had based its article on a story from the *Daily Nation*, a Kenyan newspaper that had been banned in Tanzania the previous month, having long been attacked by the *Nationalist* as a vehicle of ‘imperialist’ propaganda.

Houser, who attended the meeting in Nairobi and then travelled onwards to Dar es Salaam, noted in a letter to the editor of *Newsweek* magazine that the incident and the *Nationalist* reports had produced ‘a great deal of flak’. Houser spoke to President Nyerere about the situation. He considered the *Nationalist*’s articles ‘ridiculous’, but added that ‘we don’t censor everything that goes into the paper.’⁸² Private criticism of Mondlane was heard elsewhere in government circles. The minister of state for foreign affairs, Stephen Mhando, told an East German news agency correspondent that Mondlane should fight in Mozambique rather than ‘sitting around in Dar es Salaam.’⁸³ Mondlane’s continued associations with Western diplomats in Dar es Salaam did not help his cause. While the East Germans acknowledged that FRELIMO were moving closer to the Eastern Bloc, they noted that Mondlane maintained close relations with American diplomats, especially an attaché, Philip Potter – who was a CIA agent.⁸⁴

With FRELIMO fractured, its Tanzanian hosts distrustful of or even openly hostile towards its president, and Dar es Salaam agog with gossip, Mondlane began to fear for his

⁷⁷Ministerium für Staatsicherheit, 15 December 1967, MfS, HV A, no. 231, 130–45, Bundesbeauftragte für die Unterlagen des Staatsicherheitsdienstes der ehemaligen DDR.

⁷⁸‘Mondlane in Nairobi Dialogue’, *Nationalist*, 23 November 1968, 1; ‘Mondlane Denies “Dialogue” Story’, *Nationalist*, 25 November 1968, 1.

⁷⁹Hobden to Holmes, 30 November 1968, FCO 45/174/25, UKNA.

⁸⁰Schneidman, *Engaging Africa*, 102–3.

⁸¹Pickering to State Dept, 29 November 1968, RG 59, CFPF 1967–9, Box 2513, POL 2 TANZAN, NARA.

⁸²Houser to Osborne, 31 December 1968, HSC, Subgroup II, Series 6, Box 2, Microfiche 3, OCA.

⁸³Schlegel, 5 December 1968, SAPMO, DY 30/IV A 2/20/964, 262–3, BA.

⁸⁴Müller, 5 June 1968, SAPMO, DZ 8/163, BA; ‘Notes from Herbert Shore’s conversation with Pat Murphy, 28 June 1979’, HSC, Subgroup II, Series 6, Box 2, Microfiche 6, OCA.

safety. He was rumoured to have asked Nyerere in mid-December to expel Gwenjere from Tanzania in connection with the murder of Kankhombe. According to the French embassy, Nyerere flatly refused. A number of Gwenjere's supporters were arrested, however, and when the priest approached the police to request their release on 28 December, he too was placed under detention, though all were released on 6 January.⁸⁵

In mid-January, Portuguese intelligence in Mozambique reported that the crisis inside FRELIMO was worsening due to the conflict between Kavandame and Mondlane. They observed that Dar es Salaam was 'swarming with people from all around, completely out of control and causing the FRELIMO leadership serious concerns.'⁸⁶ Amid this unrest, Mondlane travelled to Khartoum, where he attended a 'Conference of Solidarity with the Patriots of South Africa and the Portuguese Colonies,' organised by the Soviet Afro-Asian People's Solidarity Organisation. Mondlane's participation at the meeting, at which Chinese representatives were distinctly unwelcome, suggested the severance of his ties with Beijing.⁸⁷

On 1 February, Mondlane met officials from the Second Vice-President's Office. He expressed concern about the threat posed to him by Kavandame and his Tanzanian supporters, especially Sijaona.⁸⁸

Two days later, Eduardo Mondlane was dead.

Who killed Eduardo Mondlane?

The Tanzanian Criminal Investigation Department (CID) took up the murder case. It soon recognised the Soviet stamp on the parcel as a forgery.⁸⁹ The remnants of the device – plus two further bombs encased in Plekhanov volumes, addressed to dos Santos and Simango and intercepted by the police in the following weeks – were sent to London for analysis by Scotland Yard. Through Interpol, they found that the batteries in the detonators had been manufactured in Japan and sold by a firm in Lourenço Marques (present-day Maputo). The police believed that the bomb had been constructed in Mozambique and then inserted into Mondlane's mailbag in Dar es Salaam. This information was not made public, but was communicated by a deputy CID officer to the American embassy; and later by Geoffrey Sawaya, head of the CID, to David Martin, a British journalist.⁹⁰

The assassination has never been satisfactorily explained. Despite concluding its investigation in May 1969, the CID kept silent for three years. In February 1972, Radio Tanzania announced that the police knew who had killed Mondlane, but refused to name him, as he was a Portuguese resident in Mozambique.⁹¹ Martin published a story in the *Observer*, which used insider information from the Tanzanian police to establish the technical specifics involved in the bombing. However, no culprit was revealed.⁹² More recently, historians have blended oral testimony with archival research, but still no smoking gun has been found.⁹³

⁸⁵Tanzanie-Mozambique: Dissensions au sein du FRELIMO; [late December 1968]; 'Tanzanie-Mozambique: Rivalités au sein du FRELIMO'; 6 January 1969, both in 370PO/B/731/PP7-5, Centre des Archives diplomatiques, Nantes.

⁸⁶SCCIM, 16 January 1969, SCCIM/A/20-7/30, 135-6, TT.

⁸⁷Jeremy Friedman, *Shadow Cold War: The Sino-Soviet Competition for the Third World* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2015), 174-5; Telepneva, 'Sacred Duty', 177-83.

⁸⁸Cabrita, *Mozambique*, 58.

⁸⁹Burns to State Dept, 15 February 1969, RG 59, CFPF 1967-9, Box 2354, POL 30 MOZ, NARA.

⁹⁰Burns to State Dept, 13 and 15 February 1969, RG 59, CFPF 1967-9, Box 2354, POL 30 MOZ, NARA.

⁹¹Jesus, *Eduardo Mondlane*, 345.

⁹²Martin, 'Interpol'.

⁹³Jesus, *Eduardo Mondlane*, 317-87; Cabrita, *Mozambique*, 58-62; Cahen, 'La "fin de l'histoire"', 211-6.

As Duarte de Jesus outlines, both the Soviet Union and China had vested interests in eliminating Mondlane, as the moderate tip of a movement lurching to the left.⁹⁴ However, the broad consensus is that the plan was hatched by the Portuguese, with African collaboration in transporting the bomb to Dar es Salaam.

Lisbon was caught off guard by the assassination. An Overseas Ministry report concluded that although the turmoil arising from Mondlane's death represented a short-term advantage to Portugal, the long-term consequences of a more revolutionary FRELIMO were far more disadvantageous.⁹⁵ The PIDE also distanced itself from the crime. An internal report into the murder concluded that responsibility for the assassination, plus the unrest within FRELIMO over the previous year, lay with Beijing.⁹⁶ Even if we accept this denial as genuine, the absence of 'official' PIDE participation does not preclude the involvement of Portuguese agents, via the clandestine Aginter Press network. Several sources have claimed that the bomb was assembled by Casimiro Monteiro, a Goan-born explosives expert and Aginter operative. Monteiro had fought for Franco during the Spanish Civil War, for Hitler with the *Division Azul* on the Eastern Front, and murdered the Portuguese opposition leader Humberto Delgado in Spain in 1965. He later fought for the anti-communist Mozambique National Resistance (*Resistência Nacional Moçambicana*, RENAMO) against FRELIMO in post-independence Mozambique's civil war. Monteiro was first named as a participant in the assassination plot by Martin in 1975. This has been corroborated by two PIDE agents and a Rhodesian intelligence officer, though there remains scepticism as to whether their stories can be trusted.⁹⁷

The question of Mozambican involvement also remains unclear. The logistics of delivering the bomb to Dar es Salaam must have required some African collaboration. However, no consensus has emerged. Substantial space would be required for a full exploration of the myriad allegations and refutations that continue to mark Mozambican politics, in what has become a memory war entangled with the country's post-independence travails.⁹⁸

Martin's 1972 *Observer* article identified two prime suspects. Kavandame was questioned by the CID a week after Mondlane's death, but gave little away. In March, he defected to the Portuguese. Silvério Nungu, an official at FRELIMO's headquarters with access to Mondlane's mail, was the CID's other main suspect. Arrested by the Tanzanian police while trying to defect to Mozambique, Nungu officially died of a hunger strike in prison. Simango later claimed he was executed.⁹⁹

Aginter Press documentation uncovered by Italian intelligence implicates Simango in Mondlane's assassination.¹⁰⁰ Simango denied any involvement, claiming that he had come perilously close to opening the book, only to notice that it was in French, a language he could not read.¹⁰¹ Suspicion of Simango's involvement largely stems from his activities after

⁹⁴Jesus, *Eduardo Mondlane*, 367–8.

⁹⁵Catalão, 4 February 1969, Ministério do Ultramar, GM/GNP/RNP/160, 10^o pt., AHD; Jesus, *Eduardo Mondlane*, 342–3. Cahen advances the alternative, if unsubstantiated, theory that Portugal actually sought a Marxist FRELIMO leadership, since this would add legitimacy to its 'anti-communist' war. 'La "fin de l'histoire"', 214.

⁹⁶Jesus, *Eduardo Mondlane*, 345.

⁹⁷Dalila Cabrita Mateus, *PIDE/DGS na guerra colonial, 1961–1974* (Lisbon: Terramar, 2004), 172–3; Jesus, *Eduardo Mondlane*, 347; Cahen, 'La "fin de l'histoire"', 213n85.

⁹⁸Victor Igreja, 'Politics of Memory, Decentralisation and Centralisation in Mozambique', *Journal of Southern African Studies* 39, no. 2 (2013): 313–35; Cahen, 'La "fin de l'histoire"':

⁹⁹Martin, 'Interpol'.

¹⁰⁰Laurent and Sutton, 'Eduardo Mondlane', 138.

¹⁰¹Burns to State Dept, 13 February 1969, RG 59, CFPF 1967–9, Box 2354, POL 30 MOZ, NARA.

the death of Mondlane. Under FRELIMO's constitution, the vice-president should have taken over the leadership of the movement. However, doubts about Simango's loyalty led the Central Committee to establish a 'Council of the Presidency' in April 1969, in which he shared power with dos Santos and Machel. The latter pair developed into a stronger faction. In November, Simango issued a pamphlet entitled 'Gloomy Situation in FRELIMO', which accused Machel and dos Santos of murder, tribalism, and nepotism, and demanded they resign and be put on trial. Simango was expelled from FRELIMO and subsequently joined COREMO. In May 1970, the Central Committee abolished the triumvirate and appointed Machel as president, with dos Santos as vice-president. After Mozambique gained its independence in 1974, Simango was brought before a kangaroo court. At a show trial in Nachingwea in southern Tanzania in April 1975, he was forced to read a 'confession' of his guilt at betraying FRELIMO. Simango was sent to a 're-education camp' and eventually murdered in 1978 to prevent him from falling into the hands of RENAMO.¹⁰²

Few members of FRELIMO's leadership have escaped suspicion. Oscar Cardoso, the former head of PIDE, has accused Joaquim Chissano (then chief of security for FRELIMO, later president of Mozambique) of collaborating with Monteiro.¹⁰³ In his memoirs, Mondlane's secretary, Sérgio Vieira, recounts a fantastic conspiracy in which the package-bomb was transferred to Dar es Salaam via Portuguese agents in Malawi and Mozambicans in Tanzania, including Nungu and Gwenjere.¹⁰⁴ Helder Martins places Gwenjere at the centre of the plot, but asserts that it was only made possible by co-conspirators inside FRELIMO.¹⁰⁵

Finally, there is the question of Tanzanian complicity. The fact that the inquiry into Mondlane's death was carried out by the Second Vice-President's Office raises serious doubts about its transparency. Martins believes that Sijaona was 'undoubtedly' involved.¹⁰⁶ The potential implication of senior members of Tanzania's state and security apparatus may also explain why the CID's findings have never been released.

Conclusion

In *The Struggle for Mozambique*, Mondlane warned against the dangers of factionalism within FRELIMO. The enemy, he argued,

may use a member of the main organization to try to spread dissent, so as to bring over a section of the membership. The complexities of motive behind divisive conduct makes it the more difficult to guard against: individual neuroses, personal ambitions, real ideological differences are muddled up with the tactics of the enemy secret service.¹⁰⁷

Mondlane's assessment was more astute than much of the scholarship about him. The early historiography portrayed FRELIMO as waging a bold struggle against its internal and external enemies. These histories, usually written by scholars sympathetic to FRELIMO's ideological cause, especially after its full conversion to Marxism-Leninism under Machel, tended to

¹⁰²Cabrita, *Mozambique*, 81–4, 169–70. Simango's biographer seeks to exonerate his subject, although his book has attracted strong criticism. Barnabé Lucas Ncomo, *Uria Simango: um homem, uma causa* (Maputo: Edições Novafrica, 2004); Cahen, 'La "fin de l'histoire".'

¹⁰³Mateus, *PIDE/DGS*, 172.

¹⁰⁴Vieira, *Participei*, 257–9.

¹⁰⁵Martins, *Porquê Sakrani?*, 357. Martins later claimed that he himself had unknowingly passed the package to Simango, as requested by a Belgian missionary friend of Gwenjere. Jesus, *Eduardo Mondlane*, 366.

¹⁰⁶Martins, *Porquê Sakrani?*, 357.

¹⁰⁷Mondlane, *Struggle for Mozambique*, 132.

glorify the revolution.¹⁰⁸ They did not deny the schisms within the movement, but integrated them into a heroic narrative, in which the progressive proto-state overcomes Kavandame's backward, parochial tribalism, then joins forces with the oppressed Mozambican peasantry to drive out the Portuguese colonialists.¹⁰⁹

Building on more recent scholarship which questions these obfuscating binaries and Marxist teleologies, this article has demonstrated how the micropolitics of FRELIMO, in its Dar es Salaam exile, were rife with tensions. These did not only take place within the movement's leadership, but overlapped with centrifugal dynamics among a range of local actors in the 'Cold War city'. While Mondlane skilfully utilised Dar es Salaam's position at the epicentre of international politics in sub-Saharan Africa to attract material aid and public support, the same environment was exploited by FRELIMO's enemies to subvert the movement. Despite having Nyerere's backing, there were limits to the security this provided. Tanzanian politicians and journalists, sharing ideological, racial, and ethnic affinities with Mondlane's opponents, attacked FRELIMO's leader, eroding his support base. These dynamics came together in the rumour-filled environment of Dar es Salaam, which bred uncertainty and distrust. The city's politics complicated the efforts by actors based in Washington, Moscow, and Beijing to influence the late decolonisations in Africa. The textured histories which emerge through this urban aperture thus foreground the agency of Africans and disrupt conventional narratives of both the global superpower rivalry and liberation struggles in the Third World.

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¹⁰⁸Thomas H. Henriksen, *Revolution and Counterrevolution: Mozambique's War of Independence, 1964–1974* (Westport: Greenwood Press, 1983); Allan Isaacman and Barbara Isaacman, *Mozambique: From Colonialism to Revolution, 1900–1982* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1983); Barry Munslow, *Mozambique: The Revolution and its Origins* (London: Longman, 1983).

¹⁰⁹See the criticism in Aquino de Bragança and Jacques Delpechin, 'From the Idealization of Frelimo to the Understanding of the Recent History of Mozambique', *African Journal of Political Economy* 1, no. 1 (1986): 162–80; Derluguian, 'Social Origins'.

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