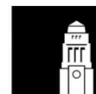

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## Title

‘Thickening agents’: modelling urban futures with Muslim commons in Dar es Salaam

## Introduction

In recent years, researchers have drawn attention to the enduring dynamism of cities as laboratories of religious ‘experimentation’ (Orsi 1999: 45; Lanz and Oosterbaan 2016). In the case of the African continent in particular, cities are increasingly saturated with innovative forms of public religious expression (Larkin 2016). This trend is particularly notable with respect to Christian and Muslim renewal movements with their widely-observed embrace of mass media technologies, new forms of public preaching, and other creative practices of gaining audibility and visibility (Becker and Cabrita 2017; Hackett and Soares 2015). In this chapter, I am interested in how religious groups in African cities are generating new possibilities for assembling and inhabiting cities by ‘[inscribing] themselves into urban life acoustically, typographically, and architecturally’ (Becker et al. 2014). Using the case of Kariakoo, a super-dense market district in the city of Dar es Salaam (Tanzania), I propose that these everyday practices of religious experimentation are also forms of *urban experimentation* which enact alternative models of urban development. [1]

Recent anthropological work on infrastructure proves highly suggestive for theorising quotidian dynamics of religious urbanisation. [2] In place of prevailing accounts of infrastructure which conceptualise it as ‘a simple, inert, technical supporting structure,’ this literature approaches infrastructure as a relational and agentive ‘ecology’ constituted by the very things—material objects, technologies, bodies, and socialities—that it gathers together and circulates (Fredericks 2018: 15). Accordingly, it becomes possible to ‘think infrastructurally’ about urban space itself as a composite outcome of these unfolding socio-technical processes (Chu 2014: 353; Farías 2011; Larkin 2013). Elaborating on this, I suggest that religious networks become implicated in assembling the city by configuring relational arrangements of people, objects, and capacities. Where these apparatus become deeply enmeshed with wider infrastructural ecologies, they give rise to what Stephan Lanz (2014: 30) calls ‘urban-religious configurations’.

One fruitful line of enquiry has been to conceptualise these configurations with reference to global processes of sociospatial ‘splintering’ and ‘fragmentation’ introduced by neoliberal urbanism (AlSayyad and Roy 2006; Lanz and Oosterbaan 2016). Speaking across Northern and Southern settings, this literature demonstrates how cities are increasingly being carved up into disarticulated citadels, enclaves, and archipelagos, generating uneven patterns of urban development and infrastructural distribution (Angelo and Hentschel 2015; Graham and McFarlane 2015; Graham and Marvin 2001; Larkin 2013; McFarlane 2018). In view of this work, the segregated ‘religious enclave’ has emerged as a productive category of spatial analysis, best exemplified by Nezar AlSayyad and Ananya Roy’s (2006) account of ‘medieval modernity’. This term spotlights the emergence of ‘feudal’ patterns of settlement, employment, and citizenship in contemporary cities which, the authors show, operate like autonomous ‘medieval enclaves’, with many being governed by prescriptive regimes of ‘religious rule’ rather than national law (AlSayyad and Roy 2006: 3-4; see also Çavdar 2016; Lanz 2016; Ukah 2016).

Elsewhere, this literature on religious enclaves is complemented by work on a very different form of urban-religious configuration in African settings, namely *multi-religious settings*. Recently, researchers have challenged accounts that conceptualise these spatial formations using ‘one-dimensional’ categories of ‘cooperation’ and ‘conflict’ between religious groups (Janson and Meyer 2016; Larkin 2016). They instead suggest we attend to the forms of ‘doing religion’ and ‘being religious’ that residents variously contest, tolerate, ignore, and borrow within these shared

ecologies. As Birgit Meyer (2014) demonstrates, these politico-aesthetic practices do not take place in a frictionless landscape; city-dwellers must navigate sensorial 'regimes' which establish dominant aesthetic sensibilities, and that govern which forms of religious expression can assume an amplified public presence in a given habitat and which cannot. In this respect, individual 'districts' and 'neighbourhoods', understood as hybrid arrangements of material and social components, prove to be useful categories to think with (Bjarnesen 2015). Individual neighbourhoods in African cities, as AbdouMaliq Simone (2007: 68, 75) observes, increasingly appear to be 'more inclined to "go their own way",' 'disarticulating' themselves from one another and in some cases 'accentuating' their specific features. This then is suggestive of a different kind of sociospatial splintering to that of the religious enclave: in many multi-religious settings, concentrations of 'heavily exaggerated' urban styles give rise to new religious subjectivities and publics (Meyer 2014: 597; Simone 2004: 230-231; 2007: 75). In turn, these generate and govern access to what I call 'religious commons', denoting collective goods shared by a religious group—objects, socialities, and capacities—which are 'maintained and reproduced only through their use' (Elyachar 2011: 96). Where religious commons are made available to those outside the originating group, as in the case that I present in this chapter, they can be spoken about as *urban commons*.

I find the recent literature on urban religion and religious urbanism to be highly suggestive for theorising African cities. However, there is a striking assumption across much of this work that the politics of religious urbanisation is animated by a desire for establishing governmental, spiritual, and symbolic *control* over urban space (de Witte 2008: 691; Larkin 2016: 637-8; Ojo 2007; Stockmans and Büscher 2017; Trovolla 2015). These 'competing sovereignties' and practices of religious 'territorialization' are often taken to be outworkings of an underlying 'fundamentalist' logic, particularly because of their association with renewalist movements (AlSayyad 2011; Lanz and Oosterbaan 2016: 492). In this chapter, I use the case of Kariakoo to provide a very different account of what is at stake in these attempts to occupy, control, and refashion African cities and neighbourhoods. In addition to 'lived' and 'everyday' approaches to the study of Islam (Deeb 2015; Marsden and Retsikas 2013; Schielke 2018; Soares and Osella 2010), I take inspiration from the work of AbdouMaliq Simone, and particularly his early article on the 'worlding' of African cities. In this essay, Simone (2001: 25) advises that struggles over space and belonging in various African settings may not derive from a concern to 'bring territory under the control of a particular force,' but could in fact constitute an attempt to create 'as many possibilities of linking that territory to a plurality of allegiances and opportunities' which extend the capacity of residents to act at different scales. In what follows, I further develop this insight in conversation with my own analysis of religious urbanisation in Dar es Salaam.

In several respects, Kariakoo resembles a number of older, inner-city suburbs across the African continent which, in the wake of neoliberal economic restructuring and shrinking formal employment opportunities, have become lively sites of popular economic activity.. [3] They have also emerged as important centres for public religious expression and mobilisation. Kariakoo, for example, is home to a pronounced concentration of large and highly-regarded Friday mosques, many of which have repeatedly served as rallying points for protests against injustice and precarity in the city. Neighbourhoods like Kariakoo can be described as 'mixed (up) districts' (Simone 2014b). This heterogeneity applies not only to the demographic profile of their inhabitants, typically incorporating working and lower middle class residents from a range of ethno-regional backgrounds, but also the diverse activities that are staged within and through these neighbourhoods, often amid intensified dynamics of precarity and urban transformation. Because of the 'thickenings of publics' (de Boeck 2012) that mixed districts like Kariakoo afford, and indeed their capacity to evade and openly resist attempts to implement centralised regimes of planning and regulatory norms, they have emerged as dynamic laboratories of urban experimentation. As such, mixed districts serve as ideal sites with which to conceptualise religious urbanisation in African cities with reference to quotidian practices of city-making. To this end, I coin the term 'urban-religious modelling' to denote how, in contributing to these vernacular practices, religious groups assemble and maintain living 'models' or reproducible templates for urban development. These

models are not explicit 'plans' or systematic 'designs' for urban regeneration so much as *scripts* and *devices* for aligning relational arrangements in ways that hold open alternative ways of making and inhabiting cities. In this chapter, I focus on the modelling practices employed by Muslim residents in Kariakoo amidst dynamics of sociospatial disarticulation, and more specifically how they capitalise on the 'thickening agency' of Muslim commons. The residents in question belong to a 'Muslim public' (Kresse 2018) which is not 'reformist' or 'renewalist' in orientation, being perhaps better characterised as what Stephan Lanz and Martijn Oosterbaan (2016) call a 'metropolitan religious mainstream' on account of both its dominant public presence and its heterogeneous composition.

This chapter falls into three parts. In the first, I provide a broad overview of the dynamics that contribute to Kariakoo's sociospatial disarticulation within Dar es Salaam. In the second part, I use the example of Muslim dress practices to demonstrate how tacit and provisional arts of urban-religious modelling have contributed to these outcomes. Finally, I show how these somewhat ephemeral practices intersect with more programmatic forms of urban-religious modelling, focusing specifically on the proliferation of large mosque complexes in Kariakoo. The analysis that emerges demonstrates how Kariakoo is forged through the interplay of various religious and urban elements and capacities, modelling a vernacular expression of urban-religious development characterised by built and social density; one that re-articulates the city as a shared platform for survival and resistance.

## An off-centre city centre

First conceived in 1905 by the German colonial administration as an African residential area, Kariakoo was for much of the 20th century the beating heart of Dar es Salaam's burgeoning associational life. In recent decades, Kariakoo has grown into one of the most important commercial districts in East Africa, attracting traders and real-estate developers from neighbouring countries, China, and the Middle East. With a daytime population is greater than any other neighbourhood in Dar es Salaam (Magina 2016: 115), Kariakoo has transformed from a residential neighbourhood with a market at its centre to a *market neighbourhood* populated by wholesale shops and street vendors.

Despite being positioned at the historic centre of Dar es Salaam, Kariakoo has become increasingly dislocated from the wider city, coming to resemble an 'island' sandwiched between the site of the former *cordon sanitaire* and the Jangwani valley floodplain (Moshi 2009: 130). Kariakoo's disarticulation has facilitated its incorporation into transnational circuits of capital and knowledge, emerging as a far more lively site of commercial and social activity than the formal Central Business District (de Blij 1963: 61; Mabin et al. 2013). In addition to its specialised land use, Kariakoo models a highly distinctive mode of urban development characterised by sociospatial density. This is particularly evident in the case of its vertical building density, with local planning regulations encouraging the replacement of single-storey housing units with eight- and ten-storey blocks (Lupala and Bhayo 2014). In Kariakoo's congested streets, wildly heterogeneous objects and bodies jostling for space: pedestrians, carts, stalls, parked and moving vehicles such as cars and lorries, bicycles, and more (Lupala 2002: 119-122).

Kariakoo occupies a curious position within vernacular development discourse in Dar es Salaam. On the one hand, the district is taken to be a metonym for the various ills of 'underdevelopment' that afflict the city; a site of infrastructural disrepair where experiences of socio-economic precarity and abjection converge, releasing a flood of unbridled energies and frenzied construction projects. On the other hand, the staggering transformation that Kariakoo's built landscape has undergone in recent decades has become a subject of marvel and even pride. The district models a vision of urban development characterised by accelerating rates and expanding scales of urban densification; a truly 'home-grown' expression of urban modernity initiated not by any kind of formal planning scheme, but rather through the accumulated efforts and aspirations of ordinary residents.

It is notable that the spectacular transformation of Kariakoo is to some extent felt to be an achievement shared by the entire city. This partly derives from the fact that Kariakoo is perceived by many to be an *uswahilini* (unplanned or impoverished) neighbourhood. Ordinarily however, any claim to be affiliated with Kariakoo would belong to a distinctive kind of public; one that is articulated in and through a specific set of urban styles and affective capacities. Kariakoo is also associated with the figure of the 'town boy', *mtoto wa mjini* (lit. 'child of the city'), or *mwenyeji* (lit. 'owner' or 'host'). These overlapping personas variously denote a privileged belonging to inner-city neighbourhoods; a claim to an established 'urban' identity; and a 'street-smart' disposition (*ujanja*, lit. 'cunning'). As the reference to 'boys' suggests, these designations possess a gendered quality which reflects the demographic make-up of Kariakoo from its very beginnings (when it was home to a large population of male labour migrants from rural areas) up to the present day (where young male business operators have both a greater public presence and visibility than women) (Babere 2013: 135-7; Ivaska 2007: 214-17). Far from being restricted to a uniform style or singular mode of bodily comportment however, Kariakoo presents residents with multiple opportunities to 'experimentally invest in a wide range of different roles and affiliations' to establish provisional economic collaborations with one another (Simone 2014b: 1513). The proliferation of brightly coloured garments that display affiliations to associational football teams in Kariakoo prove particularly useful in this regard, most notably among men (Kirby 2019). In a materially and sensually congested environment, football colours operates as a succinct itinerary of one's moral and aesthetic 'co-ordinates', allowing residents to make themselves 'recognisable' to one another in a minimal and impersonal fashion. These stylistic practices provide a platform for generating and withdrawing moments of interaction with strangers without being bound to any sustained mutual obligations. They also provide a certain 'format' or 'script' for interaction which, in the case of football, can entail a staging of similarity (in the case of a shared team) or a staging of difference (in the case of rival teams) through expressions of playful antagonism (*utani*). These kinds of 'phatic labour' form part of a wider gestural commons to which Kariakoo's business operators, landlords, and middlemen (*madalali*) have access, and which significantly enhance their wider livelihood strategies (Elyachar 2010).

This pronounced concentration of gestural and stylistic elements has further intensified Kariakoo's spatial disarticulation from neighbouring districts, conjuring an impression of a highly integrated public from which those that are uninitiated are excluded. As non-residents of Kariakoo often told me, alluding to the 'impersonal' familiarities that I describe above, 'everyone in Kariakoo knows everyone.' For the many tens of thousands of consumers that pass through the district on a daily basis, these implicit associations and unspoken rules make it extremely difficult to determine whether you are truly being given something approximating a wholesale price (*bei jumla*), or how many levels of intermediary brokers are claiming a cut from your sale (*chajuu*). The (often knowingly) exaggerated 'mythologies' about Kariakoo that circulate around Dar es Salaam lend it a certain notoriety that reinforces the impression that it is inscrutable and unpredictable (Hansen and Verkaaik 2009). This renders its social worlds further opaque to local authorities and business competitors who might seek to interfere with their operations (Simone 2004: 4, 10; 2014b: 1515). In other words, these overlapping dynamics of social, spatial, and stylistic disarticulation not only generate and consolidate Kariakoo's publics, but also afford the neighbourhood a certain defensive capacity. In what follows, I demonstrate how different forms of religious expression contribute to these urbanising processes, presenting two different examples: the first focusing on Muslim dress practices, and the second on large mosque developments.

## Outfitting the commons

Muslim residents assume a dominant public presence in Kariakoo, using various 'political-aesthetic' forms of religious expression to heighten their visibility and audibility (Meyer 2014). [4] The number and scale of mosque complexes; the volume of *adhana* (the call to prayer); the prevalence of discernibly 'Muslim' dress practices, greetings, and foodstuffs; the incorporation of Islamic

terms into building and shop names; the closing of streets for Islamic celebrations—each of these aesthetic practices contributes to an impression reproduced by residents and researchers alike that Kariakoo is in some sense a 'Muslim neighbourhood' (Ahmed 2018: 135; Becker 2008: 248; 2016: 35; 2018: 16; Olenmark and Westerberg 1973: 8; Said 2007: 639).

In stark contrast, the public presence of Christians in Kariakoo is far more muted, despite there being such a large Christian population in Dar es Salaam that some now argue the city has no overall religious majority (Ndaluka 2012: 40). One reason that is so difficult to make any straightforward judgements about religious demographics among Kariakoo's daytime population is that, unlike Muslim residents, Christians have limited access to immediately-recognisable dress practices as a means of visibly performing their religious identities. In the cases of the five churches located in the neighbourhood, none have the sort of public presence that mosques enjoy: each is located at a horizontal or vertical periphery of Kariakoo. Their relative 'invisibility' is particularly notable given the proliferation of large church buildings in virtually every other neighbourhood in Dar es Salaam in recent years. Instead, Christian (and specifically Pentecostal) groups rely on more itinerant and ephemeral modes of public expression and proselytisation: pastors occasionally preach on street corners, and small pickup trucks playing gospel music through loudspeakers intentionally lodge themselves in Kariakoo's traffic jams to sell CDs. Providing a comprehensive account of the political-aesthetic 'marginality' of Christians in Kariakoo is a difficult exercise. What can be confidently stated, however, is that Kariakoo is implicitly governed by a prevailing sensorial regime which restricts the capacity of Christians from assuming the kind of public presence maintained by Muslim residents.

Rather than taking this concentration of Muslim styles in Kariakoo to be indicative of a desire to control urban space *tout court*, I instead propose to explain it with reference to the wider dynamics of sociospatial thickening that are taking place in the district. Here I draw attention to the considerable overlap between prevailing forms of Muslim self-presentation in Kariakoo and those that are associated with the aforementioned figure of the 'town boy'. Take for example the following conversation that I had with two of my primary interlocutors, Omary and Fundi Chomba, both of whom are Muslim men in their mid-30s who live and work in Kariakoo:

> Omary: In Kariakoo people are town-dwellers. All of those that come to Dar es Salaam adopt this lifestyle. It doesn't matter where you come from, people are the same here; there is a general behaviour.
>
> Fundi Chomba: Yes, newcomers here see a local tradition and want to be seen as a *mwenyeji* ['owner' of the city] so they take these on; they start gambling or they take on the culture of insulting and abusing others [*utani*].
>
> Omary: This is the behaviour of the cities [*tabia ya mjini*]. Everyone has to find something to be recognized in the city [in order] to cope. They buy certain clothes, a phone, get a new way of talking. There are certain values associated with cities. It's believed that to be in town, you have to be like X, Y, and Z. The good side of city life is that sometimes when we fail, we turn to God. People come to the city and fail in everything, and then they start working with the Bible and Koran. Islam is the easiest way to live: you turn to God, and then your fellow Muslim can give you shelter and money.

Islam here features as a component within a wider style of inner-city 'behaviour' associated with Kariakoo, operating as an important source of 'shelter and money' for rural-urban migrants. The compulsion to find 'something to be recognized in the city [in order] to cope' speaks to the forms of self-presentation that Muslim socialities extend to residents, articulating a distinctive sense of religious urbanity which can itself be mobilised as a resource for navigating the city.

To further elaborate this point, I want to discuss the dress practices of residents in Kariakoo which are more distinctively 'Muslim' than any other neighbourhood in Dar es Salaam. Several of

my interlocutors observed that where in the past young people would only wear Muslim dress at Friday prayer (*swala ya Ijumaa*) or at festivals (*sherehe*), these garments are increasingly worn on an everyday basis, with those who commute to Kariakoo from other suburbs making a conscious decision to do so. Again, rather than attributing this reassertion of visible Muslim identity to a renewed commitment towards 'controlling' space in any straightforward sense, I propose instead that it can be more convincingly explained with Omary as an impulse to 'find something to be recognised' through the adoption of a 'general behaviour'. As in the case of football colours, residents that present themselves as Muslims acquire a heightened legibility within the urban landscape. Indeed, many men in Kariakoo combine football colours with Muslim garments such as *kofia* caps and *kanzu* gowns, thereby further magnifying their 'recognisability'. Through performances of 'being Muslim', residents are ushered into certain kinds of encounters, with Muslim garments, in the words of one of my interlocutors, quite literally '[attracting] greetings from others.' Muslim-specific greetings and honorific titles provide a reliable 'script' for interaction with not only strangers, but also longstanding acquaintances. These phatic displays of mutual recognition 'make', in my friend Hassan's words, 'the brotherhood between Muslims stronger,' further consolidating these networks of sociality.

Together with other Muslim cultural forms in East Africa deriving from the Indian Ocean littoral, Muslim dress practices have long served to project an impression of respectability (*heshima*) (Becker 2018: 10; Glassman 1995: 61; Gooding 2017: 212; McDow 2018: 96). However, several of my Muslim interlocutors observed that in Kariakoo, Muslim garments are poor indicators of whether a given individual is a 'good' Muslim or not. Along with those some deem to be 'bad' Muslims on account of their behaviour or lack of appetite for religious knowledge, I found that many Christian residents also elect to participate in Muslim dress practices. Here I am again interested in the dress practices of men who, as noted above, maintain a greater public visibility than women in Kariakoo. As one man emphasised:

> Most [men] who dress in a *kanzu* and *kofia* do so to identify as a Muslim leader or scholar, but inside [*ndani*] they have nothing. Anyone can enter a shop, buy a *kanzu*, and look like a *shaykh* when wearing one, but so many of those who do can't answer a single question about Islam.

Nevertheless, I found that such garments also exercise a moral claim on wearers, serving to restrict 'bad' behaviour. Another interlocutor helped me understand why:

> You can't wear a *kanzu* and ask a lady for a date. A *kanzu* brings respect to you. A certain type of person won't do these kinds of things at this time of day wearing this kind of clothing; won't talk to you with a swagger, with a 'clothes shop' mentality.

Similarly, a young Muslim man provided a rich account of how Muslim garments bestow both prestige and extend a certain ethical claim over wearers:

> To wear a cassock or a full Islamic outfit can change you. Even me, I am only Abdallah, but if tomorrow I wear *kanzu* every day, they will call me Shaykh Abdallah. Those that wear a *kanzu* prohibit themselves from bad things. The *kanzu* is supposed to be accompanied by this habit and this other habit is prohibited.

What is at fundamentally at stake here, as Fundi Chomba revealingly explained to me, is not 'what you have judged on your own,' but rather that to 'enter a bar' or to 'swear in the street' while wearing a *kanzu* actually 'serves to put down the *kanzu* and not you.' In other words, there is a discernable sense of responsibility on the part of residents for ensuring that Muslim garments are used 'appropriately' which has little to do with regulating individual behaviour, or indeed who is permitted to wear them. Accordingly, I understand this sartorial apparatus to constitute an urban

common which is made available to both Muslim and non-Muslim residents in Kariakoo. In accordance with dominant sensory regimes, aesthetic sensibilities embroider Muslim garments with technologies of government (Meyer 2014). These administer the kind of behavioural repertoires that dress practitioners can incorporate into the Muslim social roles they co-produce with their attire. Clearly there remain misgivings in some quarters about the discrepancies between the different impressions that individuals stage as they move between social frames. Nonetheless, residents continue to demonstrate a 'regard' towards one another by respectfully co-operating in these performances and thereby maintaining the common, often because they themselves rely on its thickening agencies as a means of navigating the district (Goffman 1959: 45).

## A mosque-industrial complex

Thus far I have demonstrated how Muslim styles and socialities contribute to broader practices of self-aggregation and sociospatial disarticulation in Kariakoo, modelling a 'thickening' of styles, gestures, and energies which serves as a platform for residents to mutually align and expand their horizons of activity without external interference. I have also used the example of Muslim dress practices to show how dominant prescriptive and sensory regimes govern the use of these forms of urban commons in ways that safeguard not only their ethico-religious integrity but also their aesthetic efficacy and recognisibility. To complement this discussion, I now consider how these tacit and provisional arts of urban-religious modelling intersect with more emphatic and programmatic efforts to calibrate Kariakoo's built and sensory landscape. To do so, I use the specific example of Kariakoo's mosque complexes, conceptualising these as infrastructural elements which share and extend material, social, and affective capacities. [5] As I go on to show, these buildings make an important contribution to wider efforts to remodel Kariakoo as a distinctive urban space.

Kariakoo is home to fourteen mosques (*misikiti*); a notably pronounced concentration for a neighbourhood with a land area of only about 1.4 square kilometres (indicating an average density of one mosque per square 100 meters). These mosques are also impressive in terms of their scale, with several numbering among the largest and most esteemed in Tanzania. Several of my interlocutors who reside outside of Kariakoo regularly make a point of coming through the district to pray, even if this means taking a detour or contending with traffic jams. As this indicates, Kariakoo continues to form part of a larger relational and rhythmic 'topography' within the wider city and beyond, and its mosques extend the district's capacity to captivate and act across different urban scales and spaces (Amin 2013: 484; Simone 2004: 10, 32, 290, 230-231). After prayer, the mosques' shaded verandas can confer a certain solemnity and prestige on social encounters which increases their appeal, particularly in the case of multi-storey mosques like Kwa Mtoro which are considered particularly 'beautiful' on account of their scale and their ornate design, often invoking global traditions of Islamic architecture. The pride and indirect prestige experienced by residents that pray there is further accentuated by the fact that its redevelopment into a grand, multi-storey complex was funded by Said Salim Bakhresa, a well-known business magnate with a claim to being an *mtoto wa Kariakoo* (child of Kariakoo). As much as the Mlimani City shopping mall and the new Kigamboni Bridge, mosques like Mtoro articulate visions of infrastructural modernity, operating as shared 'emblems of futurity' into which urban publics invest their desires and aspirations (Amin 2014: 137; Larkin 2013: 335). More than this though, Kwa Mtoro Mosque is a paradigmatic expression of the distinctive form of vernacular development that Kariakoo models: it articulates a density of built form and social interaction which facilitates its close integration with the rhythmic and stylistic landscape of the district.

The spectacular sensory presence of Kariakoo's mosques is not restricted to their visual impression, but also their audibility: several non-Tanzanians that visited me in Kariakoo commented on the sheer volume of the amplified *adhana* at individual mosques, and the sonic polyphony that they collectively generate across the neighbourhood. These sensory effects are particularly pronounced at the time of Friday prayer (*swala ya Ijumaa*) when the mosques are so full of Muslim worshippers that men spill out into adjacent streets. Entire roads are closed off, and

banks of Muslim bodies tessellate around abandoned lorries and across shop thresholds. When prayer begins, in marked contrast to the clamour which usually fills the streets, an intense silence descends on the district that is pierced only by the electronically-amplified voice of the imam. The mosque presents the possibility of assembly, creating a temporary thickening of publics, but also imposes a certain immobility and behavioural quietude on other urban users. When prayer concludes, worshippers participate in 'shared repertoires of emotion' which generate a certain 'affective density' characterised by both tranquillity and jubilation, and they gradually disperse in a cloud of warm greetings and firm handshakes which resonate through the surrounding streets (Ross 2014: 2, 95).

The community of affect that is forged through the interplay between mosques and Muslim bodies is also known to produce very different repertoire of emotion and action. In recent decades, Friday prayer has repeatedly served as an assembly point for protest action in Kariakoo against the mistreatment of Muslims by the state and socio-economic inequality along religious lines. The coalescing bodies and affective intensities that thicken in Kariakoo's overflowing mosques present an unparalleled opportunity for generating feelings of collective indignation and a desire to mobilise (Kirby 2017: 228-232). The irascible affects that these thickenings can afford are particularly heightened in Kariakoo where experiences of precarity and collective struggles for livelihood congregate in great multitudes. In Dar es Salaam more generally, mosques are especially privileged sites of affective mobilisation because of an incident in 1998 when, at a mosque in the nearby Mwembechai suburb where a demonstration was taking place in response to the arrest of a senior Muslim cleric, two people were shot and killed by state police. The memory of these events have become emblematic for many Tanzanians, and particularly those who feel politically disenfranchised (Kirby 2017: 164-167). In Kariakoo, I observed that even the latent presence of this affective capacity possesses a discernable social productivity: many of the Christians that I spoke to in Dar es Salaam were keenly aware of the 'sensitivity' that accompanies Muslim cultural forms, and particularly in the case of mosques where Muslim publics thicken. These impressions are no doubt informed in part by Islamophobic tropes which have been exacerbated by the political context of the War on Terror as it has unfolded in East Africa and beyond. However, some of my Muslim interlocutors confirmed that these associations are warranted, and in doing so illuminated how they actually confer certain protective affordances on Muslim publics. As Hassan explained to me, 'the police can't come to the mosque because they respect the place, and the government doesn't need problems with religion.' He added that 'both the government and society believes that the mosque is a good and safe place' where 'nothing bad can be done.' The way that Hassan oscillates here between alluding to a dynamic of respect(ability) and a latent threat of social disorder is highly revealing. Similarly, Omary told me that the police 'respect these people [Muslim worshippers] and these places [mosques], so they can't make a scene.' Because of this, Omary continued, 'the district policemen can't come here to the mosque to inspect the place, so those who are here are protected by the mosque.'

Notably, I found that Muslim dress practices afford a certain defensive capacity by means of a similar mechanism. 'To wear a *kanzu*,' Fundi Chomba noted, 'is like a protection [*ulinzi*].' This is no less true in the case of law enforcement agents, as another man explained:

> If a police patrol meets a man without a *kanzu*, they can be called and interrogated, yet if they do wear one the police will say, 'Oh, this is an *ustadh* [Muslim honorific title] so we won't take him in.'

As was seen above, those that wear the *kanzu* are compelled to display a certain social propriety consistent with the dignified kind of persona with which it is associated. The sight of an individual engaged in such a display of respectability being arrested would be widely perceived as gratuitous and even discriminatory, running the risk of arousing the irascible affects outlined above. When these stylistic practices are understood as a component within a wider infrastructural assemblage, it becomes clear that the concentrated distribution of mosque complexes significantly augments the

protective affordances of Muslim dress. Consider, for example, how Fundi Chomba elaborated on the 'shield'-like operations of mosques:

> It is bad to sit on the steps of the mosque, but many who are day workers have to stay there so that if their phone rings, they can go from there. The new regional commissioner says that those that are found loitering on the street will be arrested, so the mosque is like a safe place for them to stay. If you are outside a house, for example, the police can go for you, whereas if you are at the mosque, you can say you are attending to mosque matters.

Several other residents shared the same observation, namely that mosques provide a credible pretext for inhabitants who are obliged to justify their presence in Kariakoo. Though routine crackdowns and forcible evictions of traders working in public spaces have a long historical precedent in Dar es Salaam (Burton 2005), recent decades have seen business operators face increased pressure to be registered and licensed from local authorities (Brown and Lyons 2010: 41-2; Babere 2013; Bahendwa 2013: 155; Msoka and Ackson 2017; Steiler 2018; Malefakis 2019: 19-29). As a form of tacit resistance then, 'unlicensed' traders who participate in recognisably Muslim forms of self-presentation can, when forced to explain what they are doing in Kariakoo, feasibly claim that they are in the district to observe devotional practices at a mosque. It might even be argued that these hybrid arrangements of Muslim bodies and mosques provide residents with a more effective means of navigating precarious regulatory and economic challenges than the largely ineffective interventions staged by operators' associations and municipal regulators (Babere 2013: 273; Brown and Lyons 2010: 34-35).

Given the 'shield'-like operations of mosque spaces that have been described, and indeed given that mosque leaders already exert a degree of control over the stretches of street which are adjacent to the mosque entrances, it is no surprise that many street vendors cluster around them selling food, drink, and 'Muslim' goods including garments, literature and media products, and medicinal items. Several of my interlocutors explicitly described Kariakoo's mosques as 'great commercial hubs'. Unsurprisingly, this way of speaking about the social lives of mosques did not correspond with more normative accounts, and some people insisted that 'the mosque is not a place to think about business,' and that 'to think beyond *iman* [faith] about one's business while in prayer is unlawful.' One man told me that people are expected to 'immediately disperse' after prayer to 'look for one's livelihood'. However, several other interlocutors spoke at length about Kariakoo's mosques as important 'connectivity areas' which generate certain kinds of social encounter which may be advantageous for business operators. Hassan gave a detailed account of one way that this works:

> Some go to the mosque to meet rich people and ask for money. It is hard to meet them in their offices, to make appointments. In prayer, you shake hands and then get their business card or cash. People try to plan where [Said Salim] Bakhresa prays on a given day, and then when they ask for some money to pay for the fare from where they have come from, he will take them to the mosque welfare committee. So people go to mosque for different reasons: first there is the real reason, then for the business appointment. This takes place even with Christians and churches, but the difference is that you will not be allowed to sit next to a man like Bill Gates or the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom in church. When an MP or even the President of Tanzania enters a mosque, he leaves his bodyguards outside and you are free to meet and talk to him, to sit and pray beside him.

This dynamic relies on an emotional repertoire which obliges worshippers to adopt a 'neighbourly' disposition when interacting with fellow worshippers. Given that for most Muslims in Kariakoo there is no sense of 'membership' of a mosque in the way that there is of belonging to a church or welfare society, this condition of social 'promiscuity' is especially pronounced, especially in the case of Kariakoo where there are fourteen mosques in close proximity to one another. As in the case

of the ‘protective’ capacities discussed above, this is another instance where the socio-technical hybridity of Kariakoo as an infrastructural assemblage is thrown into sharp relief, emerging from the intersection of provisional and programmatic forms of urban-religious modelling which gather together disparate styles, buildings, and affects. The thickenings generated by these practices not only afford residents new opportunities to mobilise against socio-economic precarity then, but also enhance their capacity to expand, consolidate, and protect the channels through which they secure livelihoods.

## Conclusion

I began this chapter by discussing a number of recent publications which have drawn attention to how religious groups in African cities are devising innovative practices to enhance their public presence. In doing so, they are reassembling the built, social, and affective composition of urban habitats across the continent. In this chapter, I used the case of Kariakoo to argue that these practices are best conceptualised as forms of ‘urban-religious modelling’. This term which brings into view how, by contributing to quotidian arts of city-making in settings where centralised planning schemes and regulatory mechanisms are unevenly implemented, religious groups assemble alternative models of urban development. Here my analysis has built on AbdouMaliq Simone’s (2001: 25) suggestion that spatial politics in African cities might have less to do with securing territorial ‘closure’ than extending possibilities for residents to collaborate and act at different scales. While Simone (2004; 2007; 2014) has used this insight to shed light on religious entanglements with popular economic activity and migration circuits, I have brought it into explicit conversation with his observations elsewhere about the sociospatial disarticulation of mixed districts. By examining urban-religious modelling at the scale of the neighbourhood, I have drawn attention to how these dynamics may not only generate stylistic thickenings but also contribute to related processes of urban splintering, affording protective capacities by *foreclosing* certain kinds of encounters with non-residents and police.

As I have shown, Kariakoo has been dislocated from other neighbourhoods from its very inception through a combination of colonial urban planning and natural topographic barriers. However, in recent decades, new dynamics of economic, sociospatial, and stylistic thickening have reinforced Kariakoo’s disarticulation, elaborating a distinctive expression of vernacular development characterised by density. This applies not only to Kariakoo’s mutating built environment, but also the concentrated webs of sociality to which it gives rise, cultivating a gestural and stylistic commons which diverse residents use to integrate and secure their livelihood strategies. These material forms of self-accentuation have been accompanied by a series of imaginative exaggerations which are reproduced by residents elsewhere in the city. On the one hand, Kariakoo is characterised as a site of underdevelopment and infrastructural disrepair. On the other, it is viewed as a spectacular expression of urban modernity in *uswahilini*, propelled by the unbridled entrepreneurial fervour and tight-knit cohesion of its residents. These imaginative associations render Kariakoo even more inscrutable and incalculable to those who do not belong to its public, further shielding its operations from interference on the part of local authorities and business competitors. Far from devitalising the neighbourhood, these dynamics of disarticulation and self-aggregation have considerably extended Kariakoo’s capacity to insert itself into transnational circuits of capital, thereby facilitating its emergence as a parallel Central Business District and a regional commercial hub where popular economic activity is concentrated.

These processes of urban thickening both generate and partly derive from a concentration of discernibly Muslim styles, socialities, and sensory arrangements in Kariakoo. I have presented two different but intersecting forms of urban-religious modelling; one more tacit and provisional, and the other more emphatic and programmatic. In the first case, I have shown how popular Muslim dress practices have been incorporated into Kariakoo’s gestural and stylistic commons. Muslim garments grant residents a heightened ‘legibility’, steering them into particular social encounters and repertoires of mutual recognition which both extend and consolidate networks of sociality. I

have also demonstrated how prescriptive and sensory regimes govern the use of Muslim forms of urban common, curating the production of 'respectable' Muslim social roles without disrupting their integration into popular forms of sociality, and thereby maintaining their performative efficacy. In the second case, I considered how large mosque developments in the neighbourhood articulate a density of built form and social interaction, serving as emblematic manifestations of Kariakoo's distinctive expression of urban modernity which arouse a sense of pride among residents. I have conceptualised mosques as hybrid assemblages composed of built forms, bodies, and styles, emerging from a confluence of provisional and programmatic forms of urban-religious modelling. In Kariakoo, mosques harness the energies of residents and their individual experiences of precarity, forging communities of affect which enable them to feel and act together in new ways.

I have provided two examples of how mosques intersect with wider dynamics of sociospatial thickening and disarticulation in Kariakoo. On the one hand, mosques generate socially 'promiscuous' spaces and shared repertoires of conviviality which further assist residents in expanding and consolidating their livelihood networks. They also provide legitimising pretexts for 'unlicensed' business operators to elude the attentions of police, especially when combined with Muslim dress practices and the impression of 'respectability' these can engender. On the other hand, mosques serve as important rallying points for mobilisation against social injustice. This latent capacity to arouse irascible affects induces among many a sense of mild apprehension in relation to Muslim cultural forms, particularly on the part of police and other non-residents, and thereby enhances their protective affordances. As each of these examples demonstrate then, Muslim commons not only operate as sociospatial 'thickening agents', but also further augment the neighbourhood's impenetrability and disarticulation. I have argued that these dynamics have facilitated Kariakoo's incorporation into transnational circuits of capital and knowledge as a regional commercial hub. Accordingly, such practices of urban-religious modelling serve to magnify the capacity of residents to operate across multiple scales (Simone 2001).

Because of their heightened exposure to neoliberal programmes of economic and political restructuring, African cities have emerged as 'frontiers' for global processes of urban transformation (Comaroff and Comaroff 2012; Nuttall and Mbembe 2008; Pieterse 2008). Amid these dynamics, residents in cities across the continent are increasingly turning to religious commons—garments, gestures, affects, capacities, buildings, bodies, and styles—as resources for reassembling urban landscapes in ways that enhance their life-projects and collective strivings. As this chapter has shown, the innovative forms of religious urbanisation that are taking place in neighbourhoods like Kariakoo are themselves 'models' or reproducible templates for constructing urban futures in Africa and beyond which hold together disparate lives and hold open new horizons of mutuality.

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## Notes

[1] In this chapter I draw on fifteen months of ethnographic fieldwork in Kariakoo where I lived alongside ‘residents’, a category that I use to denote both those that inhabit properties in the district as well as the business operators that make up the majority of Kariakoo’s much larger ‘daytime’ population. I am grateful for feedback on earlier drafts by Erik Meinema, Joe Tulasiewicz, and members of the Centre for African Studies at the University of Bradford.

[2] See Fredericks (2018: 14n13) for a list of noteworthy contributions to this research agenda.

[3] Other examples from East Africa include Eastleigh in Nairobi (Carrier 2016) and the downtown area of Kampala. On the other side of the African continent, AbdouMaliq Simone (2011: 364) provides the examples of New Bell in Douala, Ikeja in Lagos, and Treichville in Abidjan. Because these different urban outcomes are ‘singularities’, emerging from urban arrangements specific to each setting, they are best understood as ‘repeated instances’ (Robinson 2016: 14). The family resemblance between these sites can be explained with reference to their parallel exposure to interconnected configurations of colonial urban planning, postcolonial governmental technologies, and neoliberal programmes of economic restructuring.

[4] The following sections incorporate some significantly revised material which appears in an earlier article (Kirby 2019).

[5] Even understood within conventional terms of infrastructural efficacy, Kariakoo's mosque complexes provide washing and toilet facilities for worshippers, both of which are in short supply in the neighbourhood. Kwa Mtoro Mosque even offers a source of free drinking water for all residents.

[6] This marks a contrast with the formal Central Business District which, though it also has many large mosques (a greater proportion of which are Shia), does not generate such popular ludic spaces.