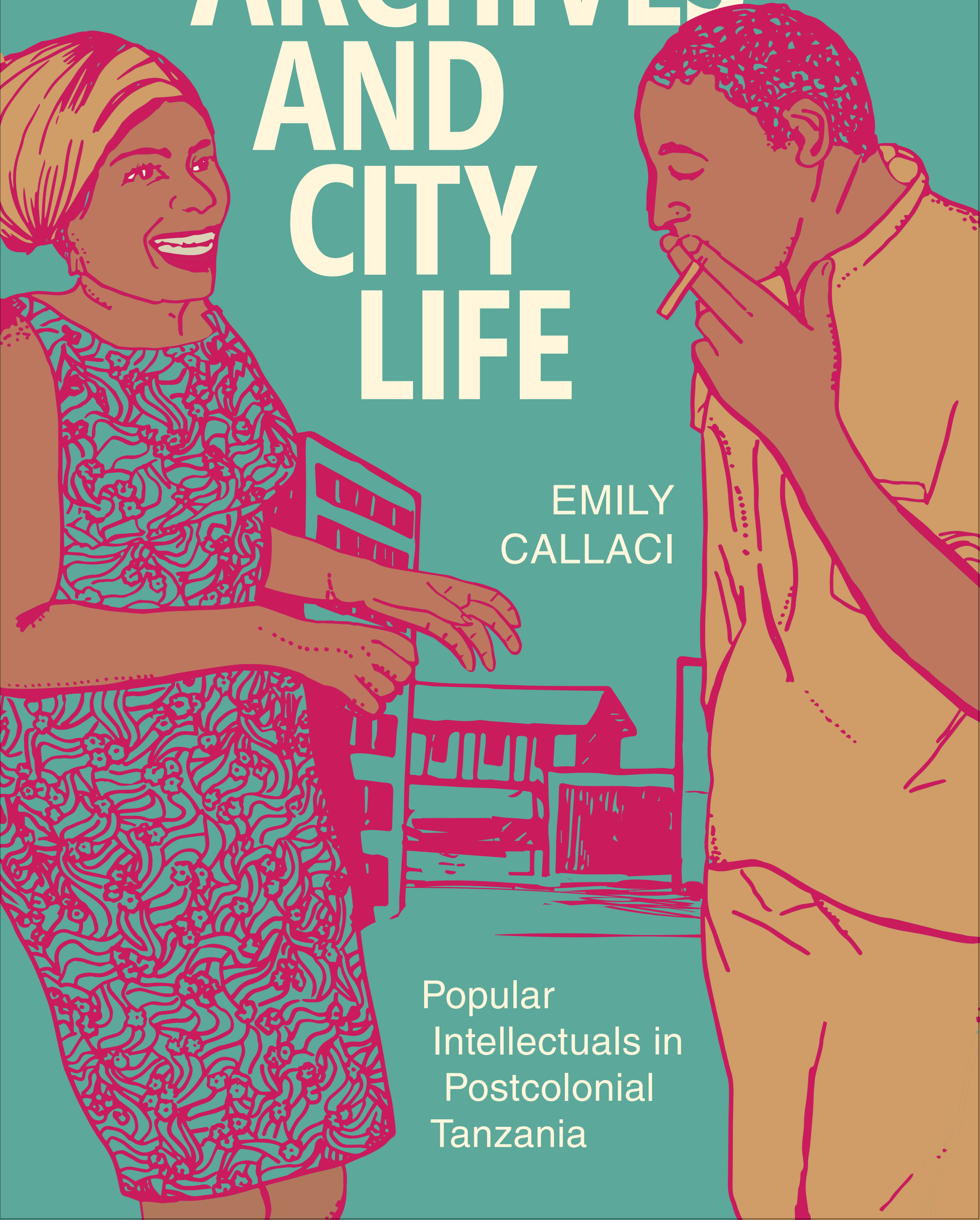
STREET ARCHIVES AND CITY LIFE



EMILY CALLACI

Popular Intellectuals in Postcolonial Tanzania

STREET ARCHIVES AND CITY LIFE

Radical Perspectives

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EMILY CALLACI

Street Archives and City Life

Popular Intellectuals in Postcolonial Tanzania

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Introduction

The migration of millions of young African men and women from rural villages and towns to cities during the second half of the twentieth century has been one of the most dramatic demographic shifts in human history. Yet in the midst of this urban revolution, many African-nationalist intellectuals, political leaders, and artists argued that Africans were an inherently rural people.

Nowhere was this contradiction more stark than in the postcolonial nation of Tanzania, where from 1967 through 1985 President Julius Nyerere launched a campaign to relocate citizens—at first on a voluntary basis, and later by force—into collectivized rural villages as the central policy of his program of African socialism. Nyerere envisioned the Tanzanian nation as a network of self-sufficient, egalitarian villages. Yet when by 1973 most Tanzanian peasants had not voluntarily organized themselves into village units, he launched a campaign to create African socialist villages by force. Simultaneously, in the cities, the ruling party TANU (Tanzania African National Union) carried out periodic campaigns to arrest unemployed youth and relocate them to the countryside. In the city, TANU periodically deployed its militant youth branch, the TANU Youth League, to dismantle new squatter settlements, while the Ministry of Information launched a vigorous propaganda campaign to educate youth—both urban-dwellers and villagers who might potentially choose to make the journey to the city—about the miseries of urban life and the rewards of rural development. Yet despite official policy, unprecedented numbers of young people from throughout East and Central Africa left their rural homes and made their lives in Tanzania's largest city of Dar es Salaam during the socialist era.[1]

Then as now, young Tanzanians would explain that they went to the city *kutafuta maisha*: to "search for life."[2] Like their counterparts across

the global south, Tanzania's urban sojourners sought material security, emotional satisfaction, and social recognition in circumstances radically different from those of their parents' and grandparents' generations. Earlier, in the late 1950s and early 1960s, many Tanzanians had believed that decolonization would mean that the benefits that had been attainable to only a small elite living under colonial regimes would now become available to the African masses. Yet upon arrival in Dar es Salaam, Tanzanians encountered a dramatically different material reality. By the mid-1970s, Dar es Salaam was, like many cities in Africa in the era of the global recession and state decline, a city in dire economic straits. The urban population and the boundaries of the city expanded rapidly every year not as part of a collective and planned vision of African prosperity, but informally, and often illicitly, as the growth of a city of squatters. The gap between the expectations of urban citizens and the material realities of the city grew greater each year over the course of the 1970s as the economy slowly collapsed, the central government systematically starved the city of resources, and rural socialism failed in the countryside, sending greater numbers of migrants to the city in search of life.

What did it mean to plan one's life in an unplanned city? How did these urban sojourners reconcile the promises of national liberation and collective economic uplift with the realities of inequality, scarcity, and infrastructural collapse that they encountered in the postcolonial African metropolis? In what ways did the expectations, aspirations, and imaginations of urban migrants shape the city itself? To answer these questions, this book explores the city as encountered by those socialist-era urban-dwellers who articulated visions of how life in the postcolonial African city should be. These popular urban intellectuals include investigative journalists and newspaper gossip columnists, songwriters, Christian women's advice writers, nurses and social workers, university sociologists, and underground pulp-fiction writers and publishers. Nearly all of these urban intellectuals were recently arrived migrants and part of a new generation of cultural producers in the city.

This book is both a literary history of Dar es Salaam and a retelling of Africa's twentieth-century urban revolution. Taken together, these case studies of urban cultural production reveal a paradox: despite the Tanzanian government's antiurban political philosophy and its systematic neglect and disinvestment from the city, the 1970s fostered the creation of a new kind of popular public intellectual who would innovate new modes and visions of urban community. While most African nationalist

intellectuals developed a moral terminology premised on a global order of things that presumed the nation-state as the primary actor, this book explores how migrants in the city theorized the postcolonial predicament based on their urban experiences. This book is about those intellectuals who addressed their visions to their fellow urban-dwellers, creating urban publics and mentalities that were connected to concrete conditions and practices of urban life. These popular urbanists developed a moral vocabulary for the postcolonial city that was distinct from the moral vocabulary of African-nationalist liberation and nation building.

City, Country, and African Socialism

Tanzania's program of African socialism drew on a philosophy encapsulated in the term *Ujamaa*: a concept that, in Swahili, means "familyhood." Priya Lal has shown that, in articulating its distinctive political vision, Ujamaa's creators drew on multiple intellectual sources: variants of socialist thought from throughout the continent and Third World, *long durée* East African regional political idioms, colonial-era policies, and the Cold War–era nonaligned movement.[3] The intellectual genealogy of Ujamaa philosophy also contained deeply antiurban strands, including colonial-era social science theories about the dangers of "detribalization," Gandhian rural romanticism, and Third World agrarianism.[4] Like other newly sovereign African nations, postcolonial Tanzania faced a severe lack of industrial infrastructure and skilled manpower and a seemingly impenetrable "development barrier" that appeared to separate their economic path from that of the rest of the world.[5] While urban industrial development remained a goal for some postcolonial African nations—notably Ghana under Kwame Nkrumah[6]—other African leaders envisioned models of socialism that could be attained in the absence of an industrial revolution and the creation of a robust urban proletariat. One way these Third World intellectuals, politicians, and activists claimed socialism as their own was through programs of rural reorganization. The argument that a productive countryside would be the engine of national economic and political liberation circulated widely in anti-colonial and socialist intellectual circles, inspired by a range of political thinkers from Frantz Fanon to Mao Zedong.

Lacking the infrastructure and skilled manpower of the industrialized global north, African countries aspired to rely on their own natural resources and the physical labor of their bodies. "We must run while others walk," Nyerere often said, echoing the words of India's first prime minister,

Jawaharlal Nehru. What he meant was that the nation's uplift must be based on physical labor, for that was the resource that Africans possessed and that would be used without incurring debts to foreign entities. African physical labor in rural areas would make up for the inequalities wrought by the legacy of what the political theorist Walter Rodney called *underdevelopment*.[7] In that sense, rural development brought about by physical labor was linked with self-reliance—in Swahili, *kujitegemea*.[8] Cities, by contrast, were understood to be unproductive sites where urban-dwellers shirked their duties to the nation and profited unfairly from the efforts of the peasantry.

Nyerere enshrined antiurbanism in the Arusha Declaration, the document that officially inaugurated and defined the socialist program and the concept of Ujamaa in 1967. In theory, for rural communities, socialism would entail the spatial reorganization and modernization of rural life, as peasants would be relocated from dispersed settlements into the spatially condensed unit of "village," or *kijiji*. More than the urban proletariat, in African socialism it was the rural peasant who would be the nation's common man and ideal citizen: the one on whose behalf state actions would be carried out. Agricultural development, it was argued, would make the nation of Tanzania self-sufficient and independent from the outside world, whereas the building of modern cities would require equipment, materials, and loans that would keep Tanzanians perpetually indebted to the outside world.[9] As a counterpart to rural villagization policies, the Tanzanian government carried out urban campaigns to remove women and unemployed youth from the city through forcible repatriations, while members of TANU's militant youth branch the TANU Youth League (TYL) patrolled city streets and carried out squatter demolitions in attempts to stem the tide of urban growth.[10]

Yet meanwhile, like other cities in the global south, Dar es Salaam was undergoing a dramatic transformation, both in size and in character. While earlier historical periods of urban growth throughout the world coincided with industrialization and economic growth, cities in Africa and much of the global south expanded rapidly in the face of economic decline, decreasing real wages, and collapsing state capacities and infrastructures.[11] AbdouMaliq Simone describes this trend as "the reorganization of the city from being the center for a modernist elaboration of formal public and private employment to an arena for highly improvised small-scale entrepreneurial enterprise."[12] In 1973, in the midst of this global urban shift, anthropologist Keith Hart first coined the phrase *informal sector* to describe

the extralegal income-generating activities he observed in the city of Accra, Ghana, and the term quickly caught on among academics and policy makers.[13] At the same time, many Western observers and policy makers cultivated panic about crowded cities in the global south as sites of potential catastrophe by invoking the specter of an impending "population bomb."[14] From 1975 through 1977, Indian prime minister Indira Gandhi declared a state of emergency and oversaw the coercive sterilization of millions of poor people in the name of population control and national development in Delhi.[15] Signaling the recognition of these new urban patterns as a global trend and collective concern of the international community, in 1976 the United Nations General Assembly convened "Habitat 1": its first conference on the problem of rapid unplanned urbanization in the "developing world." In Africa, struggles to control urban growth, formalize the economy of the city and to bring urban activities within the actionable sphere of national governments were not new to the 1970s. Yet in the context of postcolonial nation-building efforts, mass urban migration took on new political significance since rapid unplanned urban growth ran counter to the narrative of state-controlled development, modernization, and sovereignty.

Dar es Salaam, like many of the burgeoning cities of Africa and the global south in the 1960s and 1970s, was a city of migrants. By 1971, 82 percent of people living in Dar es Salaam had been born elsewhere.[16] According to World Bank estimates, during the 1970s, Tanzania was the country with the third-fastest urbanization rate in the world, after Mozambique and the United Arab Emirates.[17] In 1967, the year that rural socialism was inaugurated, Dar es Salaam was a city of 272,515 people, and yet when Nyerere left office eighteen years later, it had quintupled in size. Today, according to some estimates, Dar es Salaam remains Africa's fastest-growing city.[18] In the 1970s, Tanzania was simultaneously one of the most rapidly urbanizing places in the world and the African nation with the most overtly antiurban policies and rhetoric.

This book is a history of the socialist period written from the perspective of those who left their rural villages and made their lives in Dar es Salaam. Writing a history of Tanzania from the standpoint of urban migrants and the problem of migration constitutes a departure from an academic historiography of Tanzania that is strikingly bifurcated between studies of rural socialism and studies of Dar es Salaam. The last decade has seen the burgeoning of a rich and sophisticated historiography of Dar es Salaam, making it one of the most well researched cities on the continent.[19]

Additionally, in recent years, scholars have begun to revisit and rethink the history of Ujamaa villagization.[20] Yet one of the shortcomings of this scholarship about twentieth-century Tanzania is that, writ large, it inadvertently reproduces, rather than investigates, the presumed distinction between city and country that Nyerere found so morally potent and politically expedient.

As Raymond Williams has argued, representations of city and country perform critical political work.[21] In postcolonial cities in the global south, from Jakarta to Calcutta to the Zambian Copperbelt, intellectuals have used contrasting images of city and country to contest political legitimacy and sovereignty, to define patriotism and deviance, and to name insiders and outsiders.[22] This book shows how, by contrasting images of an idyllic, authentically African countryside with images of a decadent, miserable, un-African metropolis, Nyerere displaced accountability for urban inequality and suffering from international and state actors onto urban-dwellers themselves.[23] Tanzanians who had, over the decades since World War II, begun to envision prosperous futures that would arise out of wage labor and urban living now were to be convinced through TANU ideology to imagine a rural future. It was not peasants and farmers who were the primary audience for a nationalist iconography consisting of bucolic images of rural life, but rather urban youth and restless rural youth considered to be at risk of migrating. The discursive dichotomy of urban and rural was a political tactic aimed at the control of mobility and an attempt to shrink or contain the city. Rural romanticism, in other words, was about the countryside in only a superficial sense. In this way, the national vision of socialist villagization and the challenge of managing the urban crisis were part of the same process.

By bringing the history of Dar es Salaam and the history of Tanzania's vision of rural socialism into the same analytic lens, a new history of the city—and of Ujamaa—becomes possible. The history of Dar es Salaam as it exists today is largely a history of those who left rural villages in the 1960s and 1970s. The people who filled the streets and squatter settlements came from rural peasant families, and their presence in the city threatened the moral political legitimacy of socialism and its central mythologies. Observers of urban life witnessed not only the urbanization of Tanzania, but also a simultaneous ruralization of Dar es Salaam.[24]

Dar es Salaam's newcomers were problematic to socialist boosters and ideologues not only because of the material claims they made on the city, but also because of what they potentially revealed about the rural areas

from whence they came and about the ideology of Ujamaa more generally. Through their very occupation of the city's peripheral spaces, they contradicted the central premises of African agrarian socialism: that it could reverse the inequalities of colonialism, that the countryside was prosperous, that to live as rural villagers was to be authentically African, and that the Tanzanian people would choose it willingly. When urban migrant intellectuals rethought these premises and proposed new ways of living in the city, they—intentionally or not—forced a collective confrontation of the assumptions of Nyerere's central ideologies.

To explore Tanzania's socialist era from the standpoint of the city of migrants is to reframe the history of postcolonial Africa as a history of mobility, both in the physical and metaphorical sense. Sojourners "searched for life" in the cities to pursue what they did not find in their rural homes. The aspirations to social mobility implied by those who fled villages for the city threw into dramatic relief the incongruity between the desires of citizens and the state's ability to make those desires attainable. This mobility was not simply a technical problem, but rather the revelation of a more devastating truth: imperialism impoverished Africa, and yet national sovereignty and socialism alone did not deliver a just resolution.

Popular Urbanists

In recent years, a sophisticated body of scholarship has explored the tensions of national cultures in postcolonial Africa.[25] By shifting the frame from national cultures to popular urban intellectuals, this book illuminates new themes, both building on and departing from this rich field of academic inquiry. The urgent questions of urban expressive cultures that I examine in this book sometimes touched on matters of national culture, but more often probed personal questions about what it meant to leave a rural homeland behind, how to form viable personal relationships in an unfamiliar environment, and whether to resist or give into the temptations of new forms of wealth and pleasure in the city. From an itinerant songwriter composing songs and performing them in neighborhood bars to the mission-educated elite writing advice for young Christian girls in the city, how urban popular intellectuals portrayed the city and the countryside revealed an array of hopes for, and diagnoses of, a rapidly changing urban condition.

This book offers to the study of postcolonial Africa the category of *popular urbanists*. In a sense, it takes up and elaborates on Karin Barber's

1987 classic essay "Popular Arts in Africa," in which she identifies a "new kind of art created by a new emergent class, the fluid heterogeneous urban mass. Located at the perceived source of social change, popular art was both produced by a new situation and addressed to it."[26] Neither urban planners nor policy makers, nor simply "urban-dwellers" or the subaltern landless urban masses, "popular urbanists" are intermediate figures who are able to conjure urban publics.[27] My focus on popular urbanists, rather than more generally on urban-dwellers, highlights an approach that seeks out organic intellectuals who not only lived and survived in the city, but also theorized the urban predicament for a broader audience. Like Steven Feierman's category *peasant intellectuals*, these popular urbanists are defined as such neither by an objective measure of their intelligence nor by their academic or professional credentials, but rather by their ability to shape discourse and to call together an urban public.[28]

The work of these popular urbanists in socialist Tanzania was shaped by three historical circumstances. First, in Tanzania and beyond, across Africa and the global south, the growth of cities outpaced investments in infrastructure, economic growth, and planning. As time went on, as many African states faced financial strain and collapse in the late 1970s, the city and its trajectory gradually became unmoored from the prerogatives of nation building. State propaganda had encouraged people to organize their lives in rural nuclear-family households, to see themselves as economically self-sufficient, and to earn their living through agricultural production or, for a small minority, regularized wage labor. Yet these lifestyles never became the norm and countless other arrangements in the city continued to exist alongside these prescribed models. As state investments shrunk and the city grew, alternative forms of city-based community became increasingly important to the life of the city.[29]

Second, the larger political ethos of the time inspired people to think about the city in moral political terms, linking their personal and collective struggles to larger historical questions about Africa's place in an unequal world order. Participants in public debates drew from a wide range of sources in crafting their visions. They invoked utopian promises of African prosperity, critiques of neocolonialism and underdevelopment, Marxism, and discourses of Third World solidarity, and they combined these ideas with older regional moral idioms of sexual discipline, masculinity, and adulthood. They also drew on official Ujamaa rhetoric, and even moral narratives and characters from global popular cinema in genres including kung fu, Bollywood, blaxploitation, and spaghetti westerns. Urban popular intellectuals

assembled and combined images of racial and economic justice from various sources, held them up against the urban realities they witnessed, and used the contrast as a starting point from which to voice critique and produce new visions of what a just and meaningful urban life might be.

Third, the expansion of networks of communication and media and the concurrent dramatic rise of literacy rates made it possible for people to communicate their urban visions to a wide audience. The Tanzanian socialist state was remarkably successful at raising rates of education and literacy through a rigorous and comprehensive grassroots literacy campaign that spanned the territory in the early 1970s.[30] Additionally, state investments in music and dance festivals, theatre workshops, and poetry competitions encouraged more Tanzanian youth to see themselves as producers of culture. Paradoxically, the infrastructural, cultural, and educational investments of colonial and postcolonial regimes made possible expressive cultures and visions that were unintended by, and sometimes at odds with, the developmentalist states that built them. Moreover, state protectionism and censorship against foreign cultural imports during those years produced a ready-made market for locally produced cultural goods.

As a literary history of migrant Dar es Salaam, this book follows the itineraries of a generation of urban cultural and intellectual producers who were grappling with the quotidian realities of decolonization, economic recession, and everyday life in an unplanned city. Ujamaa socialism and the mythologies of Tanzanian nationhood structured, but did not contain, the conditions of their production and thinking. By decentering the nation as the narrative through line, we can ask a different kind of question that does not center on the success or failure of the nation-state or of Nyerere's experiment with socialism. Instead, we can ask: at what moments do urban-dwellers understand the stakes of their experiences in national or socialist terms, and at what moments do they rely on, or innovate, other shared moral logics?

Cities, Textualities, and "Street Archives"

All cities are interwoven with stories. The stories people tell about their cities shape the urban environment in concrete, if not always straightforward, ways. For example, narratives about risk and sexual danger shape the terms on which differently gendered people occupy and move through urban space. Judith Walkowitz's now classic *City of Dreadful Delight* shows how Victorian-era Londoners produced, consumed, and deployed

sensational narratives of sexual danger—such as stories about Jack the Ripper—as vehicles for shaping politics, policies, and unequal subjectivities in the city.[31] Historians and social scientists have also documented the mutually reinforcing relationship between crime narratives and concrete practices of racial segregation and securitization in cities ranging from São Paulo to Johannesburg and beyond.[32] Urban inhabitants design and construct domestic spaces that reflect their perceptions of crime and criminality and, in so doing, collectively transform the built environment in ways that entrench inequalities and perceptions of danger. At the same time, stories about cities also travel internationally in ways that impact global circuits of capital. Narratives that bolster a city's reputation for being modern or "world class" can attract capital foreign investment, while narratives of pathology or corruption can perpetuate conditions of marginality, whether or not these narratives are true.[33] Along these lines, Louise Young identifies Japan's "Tokyo-centrism" as a phenomenon that is simultaneously literary and material.[34] City stories change in tandem with changing global-historical circumstances: a process that Gyan Prakash illuminates in his 2010 book *Mumbai Fables* by tracking how the city of Bombay/Mumbai was transformed from a city of cosmopolitan colonial modernism to a "city of slums" in the collective national and global imagination over the course of the twentieth century. Prakash distills one of the questions at the heart of urban studies: what makes possible the telling of some city stories, but not others, at different moments in time?[35]

This is not an abstract question, for stories don't simply flow unmediated between author and audience. At least in Tanzania, the production of city stories not only has material effects, but is also itself a process shaped by material possibility and constraint. By the end of the 1970s in Dar es Salaam, basic commodities such as ink and paper were often unavailable in government cooperative stores, and basic services such as electricity and public transportation were frequently unavailable. Moreover, histories of urban narratives cannot take for granted a public that can access and interpret those narratives in a predictable, uniform way. Mass literacy was a new and growing phenomenon in postcolonial Tanzania, and as Rappaport and Cummins have argued, literacy is not a universal skill or technology that spreads evenly across a homogenous modernizing world, but is rather "a social process" that builds on various preexisting cultures of orality and expressive idioms. All of these factors shape how authors can convene audiences for their city stories.[36]

In other words, narratives—urban or otherwise—do not float freely apart from the physical forms, genres, and social contexts in which they are expressed. As Brad Weiss argues, "Imaginative acts are in fact materially grounded in social activities . . . too often the act of imagining is unmoored from the specific forms, times, and places through which persons project their possible lives."[37] Stories about the city and its possibilities become durable, shared, and embodied through specific forms of communication or expression. While in theory, anyone can create a narrative about a city, not everyone is equally empowered to shape urban practices and successfully assemble others into a shared moral community, nor are popular intellectuals completely free to choose the terms and forms in which they do so. By analyzing city stories in such a way as to include the genres and media in which they are expressed and the spaces in which they circulate and proliferate, this book aims to make visible the material inequalities and possibilities of cities that make some versions of urban life sayable, actionable, durable, and others not.

This book investigates texts, instead of narratives, to reveal the interplay of material, discursive, and social forms that give shape and substance to city stories. Karin Barber defines "text" broadly as a "tissue of words." She writes, "Though many people think of 'text' as referring exclusively to written words, this is not what confers textuality. Rather, what does is the quality of being joined together and given a recognizable existence as a form."[38] A collection of "urban texts" might include novels, newspapers, magazines, or religious books, as well as advertisements, graffiti, or the slogans printed on the sides of buses. It might also include oral texts, such as song lyrics, proverbs, and praise poems. It might include the Friday sermons amplified out from the speakers of mosques or the sales pitches of street hawkers shouted out of a megaphone: formulaic in some ways, yet also improvised and reshaped based on the dress and comportment of different potential customers encountered on the street.

Though often improvised, texts are not spontaneous or random; they are organic to the social worlds in which they resonate. Texts are both durable and mutable, revealing change and continuity over time. They are durable, for to perform work, they rely on social convention, genre, defined relationships between author and audience, and the expectations each has of the other. At the same time, they are mutable in that they change and can be deployed for different ends by their authors. Authors can create new texts by dis- and reaggregating old ones, through extracting and recasting fragments, through quoting or misquoting, and through

combining multiple texts to constitute new communities and audiences in changing circumstances. In this way, texts reflect the constraints and possibilities of the worlds in which authors produce them.

This book examines text-making as a mode of city-making.[39] In this sense, I am not proposing to interpret texts produced in Dar es Salaam as evidence of urbanism; more than that, I argue that they are *constitutive* of urbanism. The Dar es Salaam texts collected and explored in this book instantiate the active efforts of urban-dwellers in the past to call together new publics, to innovate new spatial practices, and to construct urban moral communities that were at times separate from, and at times overlapping with, those of the ruling party and its documentary and bureaucratic conventions. Rather than reading texts as sources that deliver up to the historian an urban reality beyond themselves, I seek here to read texts as active components of the social worlds in which they were produced. How did the people who produced them seek to "matter," and in what way, and to whom? How, in a time of material scarcity, did urban intellectuals assemble the resources to produce and circulate texts for urban audiences? What were the contours of the social relationship that was being called into being through the author and her audience?

Such an approach to urban textualities is especially germane to the urban history of postcolonial Africa and other locations characterized by urban growth that occurs outside of the purview of state-based urban planning. Dar es Salaam during the socialist years was a city undergoing a massive transition. If the rhetoric of national citizenship in the late colonial and early postcolonial "developmentalist" years led to a vision of urban life that consisted of full employment, the upgrading of housing, and better services and working conditions as the components of citizenship, by the end of the 1970s and early 1980s, urban-dwellers from Abidjan to Harare to Lagos to Dar es Salaam began talking instead about being prepared to hustle; to "improvise" or "bluff," to "use the brains" to respond to unpredictable changes, or to forgo straight and predictable paths and "zigzag" through the city.[40] While historians have defined the post–World War II era as a time of policies of stabilization in African cities,[41] economic anthropologist Jane Guyer, writing about Nigerian cities in the wake of the oil boom and currency devaluation, identifies *destabilization* as a defining characteristic of urban life in recent African history.[42] In this context, ethnographers have taken a broad and creative approach to analyzing forms of contemporary urban life. In the absence of conventional forms of state and private urban infrastructure, AbdouMaliq Simone tells

us, urban-dwellers invest in social networks above all else, mobilizing "people as infrastructure."[43]

This shift in the language and tactics of urban citizenship was accompanied by changes in the official documentation of city life. If, as Frederick Cooper has observed, the era of so-called stabilization went along with new forms of official documentation of the lives of Africans by the colonial state,[44] the retreat of the state from these forms of urban citizenship makes for a different kind of documentary record. As Jean Allman has argued: "At least in Ghana's case, the state has not adopted the same role as the colonial state in naming, preserving, categorizing, classifying, withholding, or destroying its records. As importantly, it appears to be either unable to do so or uninterested, especially compared to its predecessor, in the archives' panoptic potential."[45] Contrary to theories that emphasize surveillance and social engineering of top-down repressive states,[46] Bähre and Lecocq have argued that one of the defining features of the postcolonial state is its *inability* to see its citizens.[47] While Bähre and Lecocq see this as a sign of the weakness or incapacity of the state, Ananya Roy defined a lack of government documentation of the city of Calcutta not so much as an inability to see the city as an active strategy of neglect and flexibility, which she calls *unmapping*.[48] How will historians investigate these vital forms of urban life that, by their very definition, elude conventional forms of state documentation and archiving?

One of the central arguments of this book is that the popular and vernacular texts that were produced and circulated in socialist Dar es Salaam formed infrastructures of urban sociality. These texts can be read as unintended archives of an unmapped city: each collection of texts an unofficial "street archive." Reading these texts critically, as active components of city-making, reveals the everyday acts of creativity and imagination, as well as ad hoc logics of community and governance, that people deployed in their attempts to make durable forms of urban life. They reveal that, while Nyerere and his international allies saw the exploding squatter city as a diagnosis of crisis to be resolved by curbing the flow of migrants from the countryside, many urban sojourners saw it as an opportunity: to create and sell commodities, to assemble Christian converts, to redefine adulthood on new terms, to map new solidarities, to establish a reputation, or to engage in a salvationist project of uplift. Reading collections of popular texts from the past as archives of the city can reveal these soft infrastructures that sustained urban lives and imaginaries.

My point is not to romanticize urban textualities and the moral universes they improvised as a kind of democratic, liberating, or entrepreneurial alternative to the promises of state-directed urban modernity. In contrast with the more conventional narratives of modern African political history that seek to diagnose regimes in terms of success or failure or as stories of democracy or corruption, the popular urban intellectuals that appear in these pages elude these reductionist narratives. They did not see the Tanzanian socialist experiment as something to support or resist, but rather as a set of circumstances that they had no choice but to inhabit.[49] Approached as an alternative archive of city life, Dar es Salaam's popular texts reveal urban communities called together in circumstances not of their choosing and that many of the new urban arrivals identified as unacceptable and unjust. These street archives reveal urban-dwellers grasping toward new languages of political critique of the very circumstances in which they expressed their visions. Moreover, while street archives might reveal the ad hoc labor of producing networks, moral communities, and solidarities, like more conventional archives, they simultaneously reveal the work of power, hierarchy, and exclusion.

In the pages that follow, I mine texts produced in the city, along with interviews with the authors, producers, and sellers of these texts, to investigate the history of the migrant city. In this way, this book deploys the study of texts and textuality as a mode of urban historical investigation.

Method and Structure

My research method was to collect popular urban texts and analyze both their content and the ways in which they moved through the city and summoned urban communities. These texts were preserved in various, dispersed urban sites, and seeking out these texts and understanding how they were produced and circulated took me to many unexpected corners of the city. Over the course of my research, I spent time in church bookshops and the libraries of mission schools and Christian girls' hostels, sifting through the storage trunks of itinerant used booksellers, in conversation with pirated cassette tape sellers, and at the rehearsal spaces where songwriters composed songs and practiced with their bands. I spent much of my time interviewing those who authored, published, disseminated, or sold texts. I asked men and women about their knowledge and experience as text producers, focusing on the mechanics of producing various kinds of texts in Dar es Salaam in the socialist era. These interviews also took

the form of more general and open-ended conversations about the experience of migration to Dar es Salaam in the 1960s and 1970s. The chapters that follow draw on this combination of textual analysis, ethnography, and oral-history interviewing.

Chapter 1 weaves together an intellectual history of representations of rural and urban locations in twentieth-century African nationalist thought and an accounting more specifically of how Dar es Salaam came to occupy a central symbolic place in constructions of race, nation, and authenticity in African socialism. Drawing on the pedagogical texts and propaganda produced by state ministries, it examines the relationship between the ruling party and the city of Dar es Salaam, the historical conditions that made Dar es Salaam a site of cultural production during an era defined by rural romanticism and antiurban sentiment, and the attempt of the ruling party to cultivate a citizenry that defined itself as rural. It goes on to examine the city and its publics as imagined by "roving reporters" and investigative journalists who wrote for the newspapers produced in Dar es Salaam over the course of African socialism. It tracks the takeover of the press by the ruling party and the rise of a new authorial mode in which reporters constructed a dichotomy of rural racial authenticity and urban foreignness as a way of defining criminality and sexual deviance in the city. This shift in perspective reveals a larger historical process by which the ruling party, TANU, distanced itself from its urban origins and its claims to represent urban constituencies and began to portray the city as the nation's foil.

Chapter 2 examines the intellectual and cultural work of middle-class Christian African women reformers who sought to model a modern urban African womanhood by composing advice literature for unmarried "girls" in the city. Through advice and prayer books, didactic novellas, newspaper advice columns, and public health pamphlets, these middle-class educated women advised female urban newcomers on how to live respectable Christian lives as workers in a city that had, until recently, been predominantly Muslim. The creation of distinctly female reading publics was linked with the attempts of reformers to make spaces of respectability and safety for women in the city, including the promotion of hostels for unmarried women and of improvements in transportation and workplaces to promote women's physical safety. In their advice to women about how to comport themselves in the city and in their broader attempt to politicize urban womanhood, reformers shared in common a privileging of monogamy, Christianity, and the nuclear family as the desired life outcome

for young urban women. Yet regional norms of sexuality and extended-family-household composition and the economic precariousness of city life meant that this vision had limited appeal to most women for whom flexible sexual and domestic alliances were often a source of security, community, and material well-being in the city.

Chapter 3 uses songs and social rituals as an entrée into the nightlife of socialist-era Dar es Salaam. It explores networks of musicians, waitresses, bouncers, stage dancers, taxi drivers, and consumers who created a subculture in dancehalls and nightclubs of Dar es Salaam. Contrary to ruling-party ideals of austerity and physical discipline cultivated through national youth cultural curriculum, these influential urban denizens and social commentators elaborated an urban ethos from the stage and the dance floor in which access to leisure spaces, economic networks, and gendered modes of belonging were linked to cosmopolitan cultural knowledge displayed through dress, dance, and conspicuous consumption. The songs they wrote, the social rituals they choreographed, and the slang lexicon they developed to describe urban social types reveals a precarious sexual economy in which reputations and belonging were crafted through the exchange of money, scarce luxury items, and sex. Economic scarcity put strain on this highly gendered sexual economy, and young participants increasingly expressed frustrated desire and ambitions as gendered animosity.

Chapter 4 uncovers the existence of a thriving literary movement started by a group of young urban migrant men, known as "briefcase publishers," whose self-published crime thrillers and romance novellas modeled a new urban masculinity while generating powerful critiques of ruling political elites. These writers drew on international genres of romance and crime thrillers, set their stories in recognizable locations in Dar es Salaam, featured local urban characters as villains and protagonists, and composed their works in a colloquial Swahili idiom. Underground Swahili pulp-fiction novellas valorized the struggles of young migrant men to find livelihoods and social recognition in the city of Dar es Salaam. I show that the plotlines of the novellas mirrored the production process of the books themselves. In creating a publishing industry out of pilfered paper and ink and distributing their texts through informal trade networks, writers not only described urban communities and reputations, but also created them.

If the question asked by party leaders was whether or how Ujamaa was possible in the city, by the end of the period, urban-dwellers had innovated

another term to capture the ethos of the era: *bongo*. In a way, the terms *Ujamaa* and *bongo* form chronological bookends to this study. Chapter 5 tracks the collapse of African socialism in the 1980s and the rise of the popular concept of bongo: an urban ethos valorizing an ability to survive in a precarious economic urban environment through creativity and street-savvy. The term *bongo* literally means "brains," and it refers to the kind of creativity and street-savvy one needs to survive in the city. This chapter steps back from the case-study structure of the earlier chapters and tracks a changing urbanist lexicon across Dar es Salaam's multiple "street archives," including popular terminology for black-market trade, prestige, beauty, masculinity, and sexual prowess. I argue that for Dar es Salaam's urban intellectuals, the ethos of bongo emerged as a shift toward a cynical realism about the place of Africa's growing numbers of urban strivers in an uneven world economy.

Taken together, the various texts created by urban-dwellers about urban life do not congeal around a single urban vision, yet they do share a set of concerns and moral idioms centering on the question of entanglement with the city and its networks. Whether to engage in informal-sector trade; whether to accept a gift from a lover; whether to wear the uniform of the TANU Youth League, or to accept a ride in a car from a wealthy man and move easily through town, rather than waiting in vain for the inefficient and maddeningly slow public transport; whether to cohabit with a romantic partner or bring a pregnancy to term in the city before securing the recognition of rural relatives; these were all weighty decisions. To be sure, the challenges faced by these generations of postcolonial African urban sojourners were, on one level, economic decisions about survival and household composition. Yet they were also far more than that. The kinds of obligations that shape social networks are not simply about survival, but are the very substance of how personhood, respectability, and community are constructed.

Notes

Introduction

1. Over the course of socialism, the city of Dar es Salaam grew from a population of about 272,000 to about 1.3 million.
2. The phrase *kutafuta maisha* entangled both material meanings and philosophical connotations. At one level, it refers to "making a living," in the sense of searching for an income. As Jamie Monson has shown, socialist-era workers on the TAZARA railroad described the work as part of kutafuta maisha, encompassing both a life course and a livelihood. Felicitas Becker, in her work on poor women in coastal East Africa in the years after the abolition of slavery, describes kutafuta maisha as working for a living in public spaces, in contrast with the respectability and status associated with the practice of female Islamic seclusion. In postsocialist Arusha, Brad Weiss shows how the phrase *kutafuta maisha* includes a recognition of the struggle of doing so in the context of systemic poverty, and, in this sense, the phrase might be seen to include an implicit critique of economic conditions. Andreasen and Agergaard state that migrants to Dar es Salaam describe that migration to the city as "kutafuta maisha." In the context of postcolonial Dar es Salaam, kutafuta maisha combines these personal and economic connotations. It typically refers to income-generating activities, the migration from rural to urban areas in search of such opportunities, and the attempt to forge a personal sense of respectability, accomplishment, or status through those activities. See Jamie Monson, *Africa's Freedom Railway: How a Chinese Development Project Changed Lives and Livelihoods in Tanzania* (Athens: Ohio University Press, 2011), 114; Felicitas Becker, "Female Seclusion in the Aftermath of Slavery on the Southern Swahili Coast: Transformations of Slavery in Unexpected Places," *International Journal of African Historical Studies* 48, no. 2 (2015): 229; Brad Weiss, "Thug Realism: Inhabiting Fantasy in Urban Tanzania," *Cultural Anthropology* 17, no. 1 (2002): 102; Manja Hoppe Andreasen and Jytte Agergaard, "Residential Mobility and Homeownership in Dar es Salaam," *Population and Development Review* 42, no. 1 (March 2016): 101.

3. Priya Lal, *African Socialism in Postcolonial Tanzania: Between the Village and the World* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 37.
4. For additional examination of TANU antiurbanism, see Emily Callaci, "'Chief Village in a Nation of Villages': History, Race and Authority in Tanzania's Dodoma Plan," *Urban History* 43, no. 1 (2015): 96–116.
5. For further analysis of Nyerere's predicament, see Andrew Coulson, *Tanzania: A Political Economy* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1982), especially chapters 18 and 19. For a broader global context to the Tanzanian experience, see Odd Arne Westad, *The Global Cold War: Third World Interventions and the Making of Our Times* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005).
6. Jeffrey Ahlman, *Living with Nkrumahism: Nation, State, and Pan-Africanism in Ghana* (Athens: Ohio University Press, 2017); Stephan Miescher's "'Nkrumah's Baby': The Akosombo Dam and the Dream of Development in Ghana, 1952–66" *Water History* 6, no. 4 (2014): 341–66.
7. Walter Rodney, *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa* (London: Bogle L'Ouverture Publications, 1972).
8. Julius Nyerere, *Ujamaa: Essays on Socialism* (Dar es Salaam: Oxford University Press, 1968).
9. Two recent monographs document the history of the villagization programs of Tanzania's socialist era; see Lal, *African Socialism*, and Leander Schneider, *Government of Development: Peasants and Politicians in Postcolonial Tanzania,* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2014).
10. Richard Stren, "Urban Inequality and Housing Policy in Tanzania: The Problem of Squatting," in *Research Series* (Berkeley: Institute of International Studies, UC Berkeley, 1975); Andrew Burton, "The Haven of Peace Purged: Tackling the Undesirable and Unproductive Poor in Dar es Salaam, ca. 1950s–1980s," *International Journal of African Historical Studies* 40, no. 1 (2007): 119–51; Andrew Ivaska, *Cultured States: Youth, Gender and Modern Style in 1960s Dar es Salaam* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2011), chapter 2.
11. Garth Myers and Martin J. Murray, "Introduction: Situating Contemporary Cities in Africa," in *Cities in Contemporary Africa*, ed. Garth Myers and Martin J. Murray (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006), 3–7.
12. AbdouMaliq Simone, *For the City Yet to Come: Changing African Life in Four Cities* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2004), 169.
13. Keith Hart, "Informal Income Opportunities and Urban Employment in Ghana," *Journal of Modern African Studies* 11, no. 1 (1973): 61–89.
14. Paul Ehrlich, *The Population Bomb* (New York: Ballantine, 1968); Matthew Connelly, "To Inherit the Earth: Imagining World Population, from the Yellow Peril to the Population Bomb," *Journal of Global History* 1, no. 3 (2006), 299–319.
15. Emma Tarlo, *Unsettling Memories: Narratives of the Emergency in Delhi* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003).
16. R. H. Sabot, *Economic Development and Urban Migration* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1979), 48.

17. World Bank, *World Development Report 1994* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994), 222–23.
18. African Development Bank Group, "Tracking Africa's Progress in Figures" (Tunis: African Development Bank, 2014).
19. The major historical works on Dar es Salaam in recent years include Andrew Burton, *African Underclass: Urbanisation, Crime and Colonial Order in Dar es Salaam* (Oxford: James Currey, 2005); Andrew Ivaska, *Cultured States* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2011); James R. Brennan, *Taifa: Making Nation and Race in Urban Tanzania* (Athens: Ohio University Press, 2011); and James R. Brennan, Andrew Burton, and Yusuf Lawi (who also edited a collection of essays on the city), *Dar es Salaam: Histories from an Emerging African Metropolis* (Dar es Salaam: Mkuki na Nyota, 2007).
20. On Ujamaa, see most notably Leander Schneider, *Government of Development,* and Lal, *African Socialism*.
21. Raymond Williams, *The Country and the City* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1973).
22. Ananya Roy, *City Requiem, Calcutta: Gender and the Politics of Poverty* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2003); Swati Chattopadhyay, *Representing Calcutta: Modernity, Nationalism and the Colonial Uncanny* (London: Routledge, 2005); Abidin Kusno, *Behind the Postcolonial: Architecture, Urban Space and Political Cultures in Indonesia* (London: Routledge, 2000); and James Ferguson, "Country and City on the Copperbelt," in *Culture, Power, Place: Explorations in Critical Anthropology*, ed. James Ferguson and Akhil Gupta (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1997), 137–56.
23. This book is not the first to examine binary portrayals of city and country in Nyerere's political philosophy; see Ivaska, *Cultured States,* especially the introduction.
24. Monika Krause, "The Ruralization of the World," *Public Culture* 25, no. 2 (2013): 233–48.
25. There is an expanding literature that explores the politics of national culture production in postcolonial Africa. In addition to Ivaska, *Cultured States,* see also Kelly Askew, *Performing the Nation: Swahili Music and Cultural Politics in Tanzania* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002); Andrew Apter, *The Pan-African Nation: Oil and the Spectacle of Culture in Nigeria* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005); Mary Jo Arnoldi, "Youth Festivals and Museums: The Cultural Politics of Public Memory in Postcolonial Mali," *Africa Today* 52, no. 4 (2006): 55–76; Ryan Thomas Skinner, "Cultural Politics in the Post-Colony: Music, Nationalism and Statism in Mali, 1964–75," *Africa* 82, no. 4 (2012): 511–34; and Jay Straker, *Youth, Nationalism and the Guinean Revolution* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2009).
26. Karin Barber, "Popular Arts in Africa," *African Studies Review* 30, no. 3 (1987): 14.
27. My thinking on intermediate figures builds on the work of Nancy Rose Hunt on "colonial middle figures"; Hunt, *A Colonial Lexicon: Of Birth,*

Medicalization and Mobility in the Congo (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1999).

28. Steven Feierman, *Peasant Intellectuals: Anthropology and History in Tanzania* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1990).
29. The term *informal sector* was first coined by anthropologist Keith Hart in 1973, based on his work in Accra, Ghana; Hart, "Informal Income Opportunities and Urban Employment in Ghana." For more recent evaluations of the term, see Karen Tranberg Hansen and Mariken Vaa, "Introduction," in *Reconsidering Informality: Perspectives from Urban Africa,* (Uppsala: Nordic Africa Institute, 2004), 7–20; Ananya Roy and Nezar AlSayyad, *Urban Informality: Transnational Perspectives from the Middle East, Latin America, and South Asia* (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2004); Deborah James and Elizabeth Hull, "Introduction: Popular Economies in South Africa," *Africa* 82, no. 1 (2012): 1–19. In Tanzania, see Aili Tripp, *Changing the Rules: The Politics of Liberalization and the Informal Urban Economy in Tanzania* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997).
30. Tanzanian literacy rates rose rapidly from a mere 11 percent at independence in 1961 to 79 percent at the end of the socialist era; H. S. Bhola, *Campaigning for Literacy: Eight National Experiences of the Twentieth Century* (Paris: UNESCO, 1984), 149.
31. See several works by Judith R. Walkowitz, including *City of Dreadful Delight: Narratives of Sexual Danger in Late-Victorian London*, Women in Culture and Society (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992); "The Indian Woman, the Flower Girl and the Jew," *Victorian Studies* 42, no. 1 (1998): 3–46; and *Nights Out: Life in Cosmopolitan London* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2012).
32. Teresa Pires do Rio Caldeira, *City of Walls: Crime, Segregation, and Citizenship in São Paulo* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000), and Martin J. Murray, *City of Extremes: The Spatial Politics of Johannesburg* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2011).
33. Murray, *City of Extremes,* chapter 2; Ferguson, *Expectations of Modernity: Myths and Meanings of Urban Life on the Zambian Copperbelt* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999); and Achille Mbembe and Sarah Nuttall, "Introduction," in *Johannesburg: The Elusive Metropolis*, ed. Achille Mbembe and Sarah Nuttall (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2008).
34. Louise Young, *Beyond the Metropolis: Second Cities and Modern Life in Interwar Japan* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2013).
35. Gyan Prakash, *Mumbai Fables* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2010).
36. Joanne Rappaport and Thomas B. F. Cummins, *Beyond the Lettered City: Indigenous Literacies in the Andes* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2012).
37. Weiss, "Thug Realism."
38. Barber, *The Anthropology of Texts, Persons and Publics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007).

39. I am inspired here by Derek Peterson's definition of "creative writing," which refers not to artistic merit, but instead to the ways in which quotidian forms of writing and reading are socially productive; see Peterson, *Creative Writing: Translation, Bookkeeping, and the Work of Imagination in Colonial Kenya* (Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann, 2004), and Peterson, "The Intellectual Lives of Mau Mau Detainees," *Journal of African History* 49 (2008): 73–91.
40. Simone, *For the City Yet to Come*; Sasha Newell, *The Modernity Bluff: Crime, Consumption, and Citizenship in Côte d'Ivoire* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2012); Alex Perullo, *Live from Dar es Salaam: Popular Music and Tanzania's Music Economy* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2011); and Jeremy L. Jones, " 'Nothing Is Straight in Zimbabwe': The Rise of the *Kukiya-Kiya* Economy 2000–2008," *Journal of Southern African Studies* 36, no. 2 (2010): 285–99.
41. Frederick Cooper, *On the African Waterfront: Urban Disorder and the Transformation of Work in Colonial Mombasa* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1987).
42. Jane Guyer, "Introduction," in *Money Struggles and City Life: Devaluation in Ibadan and Other Urban Centers in Southern Nigeria, 1986–1996*, ed. Jane L. Guyer, LaRay Denzer, and Adigun A. B. Agbaje (Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann, 2002).
43. Simone, "People as Infrastructure: Intersecting Fragments in Johannesburg," *Public Culture* 16, no. 3 (2004): 407–29.
44. Cooper, *On the African Waterfront*.
45. Jean Allman, "Phantoms of the Archive: Kwame Nkrumah, a Nazi Pilot Named Hanna, and the Contingencies of Postcolonial History Writing," *American Historical Review* 118, no. 1 (2013): 129.
46. Most famously, James C. Scott, *Seeing Like a State: How Certain Schemes to Improve the Human Condition Have Failed* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1998).
47. Baz Lecocq and Erik Bähre, "The Drama of Development: The Skirmishes behind High Modernist Schemes in Africa," *African Studies* 66, no. 1 (2007): 1–8.
48. Roy, *City Requiem, Calcutta*.
49. Daniel Magaziner and Alexei Yurchak have made a similar argument about the lives of artists in apartheid South Africa and the Soviet Union respectively; see Yurchak, *Everything Was Forever, Until It Was No More: The Last Soviet Generation* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2005), and Magaziner, "Two Stories about Art, Education and Beauty in Twentieth-Century South Africa," *American Historical Review* 118, no. 5 (2013): 1403–29.

Chapter 1: TANU, African Socialism, and the City Idea

1. "Tumpe Kura Zetu Mwl. Nyerere," *Ngurumo*, September 21, 1965.
2. On the desire for cement houses, see Julius Nyerere, "The Arusha Declaration Ten Years After" (Dar es Salaam: Government Printer, 1977), 29–31. On