
Landscape

The scramble for land and the ensuing house-building activity that has taken place in Salasala since the turn of the twenty-first century have transformed the formerly periurban zone into a desirable suburban landscape. One- and two-storey residential houses built of cement blocks and topped with the latest roofing sheets, flanked by carports and gardens and enclosed within cement walls, now dot Salasala's rolling hills. These suburban landscapes have become central to the boundary work through which middle-class distinction is achieved.¹ The spatial and topographical features of the suburban landscape, the state of repair of roads and other infrastructure, the style and density of houses and the materials used to build them, and the embodied experience of traversing and living in these neighborhoods are all experienced and evaluated by residents according to a relational hierarchy of urban space in which people higher up the social hierarchy deserve to live in better places. In the previous chapters the coloniality of space was examined in relation to land law, land administration and housing policies, and the ways in which an emergent middle class maneuvered these to access land and housing in the colonial and postcolonial city. In this chapter I turn to examine the ways in which the coloniality of space shapes urban residents' aesthetic engagement with the built environment of the suburban frontier to show how the aesthetic politics of landscape has become integral to middle-class formation.

Landscapes are constructed, lived, and imagined spaces that are historically, geographically, and socially shaped.² Despite the association of the global middle classes with particular landscapes of urban consumption such as the home, the suburb, and the shopping mall,³ the role of landscape in middle-class

formation and reproduction has received little sustained attention. In Africa, landscape research to date has been mostly concerned with rural communities.⁴ Urban research has only recently begun to pay attention to the qualities and aesthetics of urban space, the conditions of its production, and urbanites' lived experience of urban built environments.⁵ The continued salience of colonial representations of urban landscapes has emerged as particularly significant in cities such as Luanda and Maputo, where the cement city of the colonizers and the temporary materials of the city of the colonized are read locally as both reflecting and producing social differentiation.⁶ As Claudia Gastrow notes in Luanda, it is widely held that the *cidade* (the formal core of the city) is the place of "good urbanism," good people, and good development.⁷ In Dar es Salaam as in Luanda and Maputo, landscape aesthetics are not only a matter of taste and social judgment, but are also deeply informed by the coloniality of space.

As we saw in chapter 1, colonial Dar es Salaam was divided into three racially distinct zones that came to represent distinctive types of urban landscape. These became known as *uzunguni* (the place of the European), *uhindini* (the place of the Indian), and *uswahilini* (the place of the Swahili or African). In this chapter I argue that this colonial frame still has resonance for many of Dar es Salaam's residents. At first glance it might seem that the development of the suburbs as a distinctive landscape modeled on *uzunguni* has allowed the middle classes to find space for themselves in the city at a distance from *uswahilini*. But in the same way that the middle classes are not the elite, the suburban landscapes they have built are also not quite *uzunguni*. On closer inspection, these suburbs seem unfinished: many homes are arranged irregularly, most roads are untarmacked, and responsibility for the provision of services such as water, electricity, and sewage falls to the individual homeowner. They are also heterogenous: smaller, older houses, constructed by poorer residents with cheap materials, intersperse the better-appointed homes and cluster together on smaller plots unmarked or secluded by cement block walls. In contrast to other postcolonial cities where the wealthy and upper-middle classes have retreated into exclusive private enclaves and walled compounds,⁸ the landscape of Dar es Salaam's suburban frontier is shaped by both the middle classes and the urban poor. The polycentric governance of urban land and planning that is a hallmark of the coloniality of space in Dar es Salaam makes it very difficult for the middle classes to protect the landscape they have built by retreating into exclusive suburban enclaves. The machinations of the land market and the widespread lack of formal land titles make insurgent house-building in the suburbs almost impossible to police. A far more fragmented landscape emerges as relatively low-density, good-quality residences stand next to smaller houses on more densely arranged plots. This in-between position, of having built suburban landscapes of distinction yet being unable to protect them from infiltration by poorer urban residents, captures a

defining characteristic and central tension at the heart of contemporary middle-classness in Dar es Salaam.

THE COLONIALITY OF SPACE: ENFRAMING THE CITY

The seeds of the coloniality of space were contained in colonial urban planning practices that sought to impose order on what were considered chaotic, dirty, and dangerous urban landscapes. Early twentieth-century concerns with order in the colonial city betrayed racist environmentally determinist assumptions about the influence of the environment on human behavior, particularly in relation to air, light, and sanitation. The ills of urban space were diagnosed in terms of congestion and unsanitary conditions that prevailed in native quarters, where narrow alleyways that wound through areas of native huts were considered unhygienic and threatening. The disorder that the British perceived in African urban space “was seen as a sign of a lack of proper regulation, betraying . . . incapacity or irrationality.”⁹ The prescribed solutions included the demolition of native huts, the creation of straight, wide, regular streets, and racial segregation on sanitary grounds.¹⁰ Such measures would not only improve sanitary conditions, they would also allow air, light, and the colonial gaze to travel more easily through urban space. Colonial urban planning aspired to create space where there was congestion, and discipline where there was chaos.

The British colonial disposition towards African urban landscapes can be understood as an instance of what Timothy Mitchell has called “enframing.” In his analysis of nineteenth-century British colonial power in Egypt, Mitchell shows enframing to be a colonial strategy of authority that operated by dividing and containing space, separating insides from outsides, and providing a vantage point from which space could be apprehended and surveilled by the colonizer.¹¹ Garth Myers’s analysis of British colonial urban planning in eastern and southern Africa also finds enframing at work in colonial urban planners’ attempts to impose a racially segmented order where they found disorder, the demarcation and separation of the private inside from the public outside, and the construction of highly visible public buildings that provided elevated points from which the city could be surveilled.¹² Buildings such as Government House in Nairobi, Ng’ambo Civic Center in Zanzibar, and Munali Secondary School and the Governor’s Village in Lusaka served to impress upon the colonized the colonizers’ representation of what they considered to be the modernizing benefits of British colonialism. British colonial notions of order and discipline were diffused throughout the city and the countryside through the microphysical effects of urban planning on the body and the metaphysical effects of education on the mind.

The concept of enframing captures both the material and the psychological effects of colonial authority. Building on Edward Said’s *Orientalism*,¹³ Mitchell

shows that the effect of colonial enframing served both to separate and mutually constitute colonized and colonizer.¹⁴ The representation of the European as rational, modern, and civilized relied on the representation of the African as irrational, backward, and uncivilized. So it was with the landscapes of the colonial city, where colonial rule grappled with a paradox: the representation of the colonial city as ordered, spacious, and clean relied on the representation of native urban landscapes as chaotic, congested, and unsanitary, even though this very representation provoked colonial anxieties about native urban space. Native landscapes were to be divided and separated from European landscapes, but they were also absolutely necessary to the European representation of the modern colonial city.

The effects of the enframing of colonial urban space on the colonized have been powerfully conveyed in the writing of Frantz Fanon and Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o.¹⁵ From the perspective of the colonized the colonial city was experienced as a space of physical and psychological violence. For Fanon, the colonizer's space was seen from the outside as a space of order, modernity, and comfort as evidenced by the quality of buildings, the provision of street lights and permanent roads, and the abundance of food. Fanon observes that "the streets of his town are clean and even, with no holes or stones."¹⁶ He describes the native town as the negative opposite of the colonizer's space, characterized by congestion and "starved of bread, of meat, of shoes, of coal, of light."¹⁷ In Fanon's rendering of colonial urban space, the landscapes of the colonizer and the colonized were built, imagined, and experienced as separate compartments of the colonial city. Writing about postcolonial Kenya over two decades later, Ngũgĩ w Thiong'o insisted that the traces of colonialism remained scattered across contemporary African cultures and landscapes, and "the mental universe of the colonised."¹⁸ In the work of Ngũgĩ and Fanon, colonial alienation entailed not only the reordering of material space, but also a psychological struggle in and for the spaces of cultural production in the postcolony such as the community center, the theatre, the university, the hospital, and the street.¹⁹ The coloniality of space emerges from the insistence that colonial and postcolonial worlds have been shaped not just by the exertion of colonial power over the material landscape, but also by the less visible but no less devastating spatial and psychological effects of that power. Those effects continue to shape how people think about and experience the landscapes that have been produced.

In this chapter I describe the colonial enframing of Dar es Salaam as constituted of the separate, contained landscapes of *uzunguni*, *uhindini*, and *uswahilini*. I then turn to the ways in which these colonial landscapes resurface in middle-class suburban residents' representations of contemporary urban space. It is perhaps surprising that the colonial enframing of Dar es Salaam has so much currency in the city today, not least as Dar es Salaam has been reframed multiple times through the postcolonial state ideologies of nationalism, socialism, and neoliberalism.²⁰ All have left traces on the city's material landscapes and the geographical imaginations of its inhabitants. Most notably, the entire city was enframed by the

socialist government as a space of exploitation and consumption, shaped by and for colonial and imperial interests, that was not to be further privileged in a socialist postcolonial state pursuing a rural agricultural development strategy.²¹ Yet the colonial enframing of the city has lingered on into the postcolonial period. To argue that traces of colonial enframing continue to have currency both in the built environment and in the ways that urban residents experience and make urban space in contemporary cities is not meant to imply a lack of agency among urban dwellers who simply reproduce colonial modes of doing and being.²² Paying attention to the aesthetics of landscape reveals the endurance of the coloniality of space in the legal, material, and imaginative legacies that shape land tenure, the quantity and quality of urban housing, ideas about what good urban space looks like, why some people live in better places than others, and why residents make frequent references to *uswahilini*, *uhindini*, and *uzunguni* as both actual neighborhoods and distinctive kinds of landscape. In other words, showing how the coloniality of space works in contemporary Dar es Salaam is central to an understanding of the spatial politics of class. Middle-class suburban residents repeatedly draw attention to the aesthetic qualities of order and low density that distinguish the suburban landscape—and them—from *uswahilini* and the urban poor. In the same way that the British enframing of the colonial city needed the native town to define itself against, so too does middle-class suburban self-representation rely on the presence of *uswahilini*. Middle-class suburban residents in Salasala continue to enframe *uswahilini* as a chaotic, disorderly landscape and to distance themselves from it. And yet this enframing strategy, this projection of power, is only partial, as the suburban landscape falls between *uswahilini* (unplanned, lacking services) and *uzunguni* (low-density, serviced homes). While the suburban middle classes can build walls around their houses, they cannot protect the suburban landscape from insurgent house-building by the less well-off. It is difficult to assert authority over the landscape in the unplanned city.

ENFRAMING DAR ES SALAAM

The foundations for the enframing of Dar es Salaam as a city divided between distinctive landscapes characterized by race, architecture, and urban planning were laid during the German colonial period. The first building ordinance, published in 1891, demarcated three zones of different building construction: a zone stretching from the east of the town along the harbor, in which “European-style” buildings could be constructed with permanent materials; a zone set back from the harbor around India street, in which buildings of “solid materials” were permitted; and the rest of the town, in which local building materials were permitted. The ordinance reflected the Germans’ concern with control over space, property, and health. It regulated the construction of permanent buildings by Arabs, Indians, Africans, and Europeans; African constructions with local materials could always

be removed at a later date. The Germans allocated to themselves the healthier eastern part of the town, away from the western end of the harbor where the Sultan had established the first buildings, which now became the location of noisy and polluting activities such as the floating dock, coal warehouse, quarantine area, and leper colony. Other health measures taken to protect Europeans included various efforts to improve air flow and sanitation, such as the construction of a small network of open drains, the leveling out of land to remove pools of stagnant water, and the destruction of Africans' huts that were thought to be a source of humidity, disease, and general displeasure for Europeans.²³

Thus divided, urban space was to be contained in a new road layout. The European administrative and residential area was expansively laid out around a network of straight, wide streets connecting government houses with the harbor, projecting "grace and permanence" and facilitating European security.²⁴ The district chief and former representative of the chartered company Deutsch-Ostafrikanische Gesellschaft, August Leue, was anxious to replace the formerly narrow streets that had provided cover for local fighters during the Bushiri Uprising against the Germans (1888–89) with wider thoroughfares that could be more easily surveilled and controlled.²⁵ The Indian business quarter was to be contained within a series of semicircular roads behind the European administrative area that stretched along the harbor-front. There were initially no roads laid out specifically for Africans. As discussed in chapter 1, over time Africans were removed from the European and Indian zones.

This blueprint for the town was consolidated with the publication in 1914 of the second building ordinance. These regulations were explicitly framed in terms of racial segregation, reserving Zone One for Europeans, Zone Two for Indians, and Zone Three for natives.²⁶ The "native quarter" developed at the western end of the town on a coconut plantation that was sold in 1901 by the Sultan of Zanzibar to a German investor, and on which Africans were able to settle from around 1905. By 1913 it had become the largest African settlement in Dar es Salaam, housing around two-thirds of the town's nineteen thousand Africans in sixteen hundred houses.²⁷ The administration laid out a road network for this native quarter on a densely arranged grid pattern, again with the aim of surveillance and control.²⁸

The enframing of Dar es Salaam as divided between and contained within these zones lived on in British urban planning from the 1920s, despite the fact that racial segregation was not permitted within the terms of the League of Nations mandate under which Britain administered Tanganyika. In practice, people and buildings often transgressed the zone boundaries.²⁹ Nevertheless, the enframing of the city as comprised of three racially distinct and internally organized landscapes entered local parlance. The zones became known as *uzunguni* (place of the European), *uhindini* (place of the Indian), and *uswahilini* (place of the Swahili; map 3). As well as being racially inscribed, each zone was also understood as a

distinctive, contained landscape within a hierarchy of landscapes. *Uzunguni* was the government area in the city center housing grand official buildings and European residences, which extended northwards along the coast and incorporated the suburban development of Oysterbay from the 1930s. It was characterized by low-density, high-quality single- and two-storey buildings, arranged regularly along wide, paved, and lit streets. Houses built to European standards contained interior kitchens and bathrooms and many large glass-paned windows.³⁰ During the German era a botanical garden extended across a large area of the European zone in the city center, and well-tended tropical trees and verdant greenery remained a feature of *uzunguni* during the British period. The location of this zone along the coast also enabled Europeans to benefit from the sea breeze. *Uzunguni* not only contained the administrative and residential buildings of the colonial power; it also cared for them when sick (the Ocean Road Hospital) and catered for their leisure needs (the Gymkhana sports club and golf course, the shops on Acacia Avenue). Africans such as domestic workers were tolerated in *uzunguni*, but were otherwise excluded.³¹

The commercial and residential area dominated by Dar es Salaam's Indian community, *uhindini*, contained a mixture of two- and three-storey stone buildings and more temporary local constructions that doubled as home and *duka* (shop). It was considered overcrowded and unsanitary by the British.³² The area underwent a process of gentrification from the late 1920s, when the British replaced the prevailing German tenure system with right-of-occupancy tenancies that came with attendant building standards and plot-alignment requirements.³³ The resulting rebuilt environment began to reflect the relative wealth of the Indian community. A large number of three- or four-storey buildings with businesses (usually shops) on the ground floor and residential apartments on the upper floors were constructed in architectural styles ranging from classical to Indian and interspersed with the religious buildings of different Indian communities.³⁴

Uswahilini began life as the "native quarter" and developed into the neighborhood known as Kariakoo, extending to Ilala in the 1920s. A building-free "neutral zone" (later "open space") separating the native quarter from Zone Two was planned by the Germans and executed by the British on commercial and sanitary grounds.³⁵ From the 1920s Kariakoo developed into a densely populated African neighborhood, characterized by rows of Swahili houses arranged in a grid pattern around the town's main fresh food market. Living conditions were poor and basic infrastructure lacking, despite the fact that the colonial government collected revenues from urban Africans. In 1930, Africans in Dar es Salaam paid land rent (£1,740), municipal house tax (£1,051), hut and poll taxes (£3,650), traders fees at Kariakoo, and the municipal eating house (£2,210) and *pombe* (locally brewed alcohol) market fees (£720), yet the African areas were neglected.³⁶ In theory the density of housing in *uswahilini* made the provision of public services there easier, but they never materialized on the scale required. Instead, investment was mostly

directed at *uzunguni*.³⁷ Europeans paid no house rents or service charges, yet had their “hedges cut and drives gravelled for nothing.”³⁸

The dividing and containing of Dar es Salaam into three racialized zones characterized by different standards of urban planning and architecture emerged over time in an ad hoc and reactive way, born of the colonial impulse to racially segregate and control urban space, and was subsequently shaped by a lack of commitment to comprehensive urban planning and the willful neglect of African neighborhoods.³⁹ Despite its ad hoc development, the colonial enframing of the city provided a simple and powerful geographical imagination of the city’s landscapes in which an “urban entitlement” to space, housing, and infrastructure was widely understood in terms of a racial hierarchy.⁴⁰ The effect on Africans was to impose “a psychological atmosphere of African inferiority” that lingered on into the postcolonial period.⁴¹ The *Nationalist* newspaper captured this coloniality of space when it noted, in 1968, “We have failed to dismantle the myth of ‘*uhindini*’, ‘*uzunguni*’ and ‘*uswahilini*’. As a result, negative attitudes of judging people according to the ‘racial zones’ they live in still persist.”⁴²

The tripartite enframing of the city survived into the postcolonial period as the landscapes of *uzunguni*, *uhindini*, and *uswahilini* became recognizable in many urban areas across the country. These landscapes still carried their colonial racial connotations but now also reflected distinctions of social class.⁴³ Beyond Oysterbay, formally planned *uzunguni* landscapes where the elite and upper-middle classes resided could be found in Gangilonga (Iringa), Mlimani and Area D (Dodoma), Isamilo and Capri Point (Mwanza), Forest Hill (Morogoro), Loleza (Mbeya), Kijengi (Arusha), Shangani (Mtwara), and Shanty Town (Moshi).⁴⁴ In these neighborhoods—which were often small relative to the rest of the town—the orderly wide streets, large plots, and basic public services laid down during the colonial period were matched by spacious houses, well-tended gardens, and carports secured behind gates and walls.

In contrast, by the 1990s *uswahilini* areas housed the majority of the urban poor in unplanned settlements that had developed on marginal and sometimes hazardous land close to urban centers. In Dar es Salaam *uswahilini* was synonymous with cramped conditions and state neglect. Water, sanitation, and electricity services, if they existed, were provided by individuals, as was housing, which was mostly accessed in six-room Swahili houses. Families rented rooms and shared cooking and cleaning facilities in courtyards. Houses were densely arranged according to the preferences of their builders rather than in alignment with one another. Cars could go no further than the fringe of the neighborhood: *uswahilini* was navigable only on foot by those who knew the place well, and the impenetrable nature of *uswahilini* to outsiders lent it an air of refuge. Daily life took place in public view on verandas, in courtyards, and in-between spaces.⁴⁵ Homes provided business premises, particularly for women who conducted their tailoring, food preparation, and brewing businesses from a room, courtyard, or veranda; rooms and kiosks

became small retail shops or vegetable stalls. Streets became impromptu performance spaces at night for local musicians, or spaces of celebration for weddings and Eid.⁴⁶ *Uswahilini* invited commentary in popular music by *Bongo Flava* artists such as Professor Jay and Diamond Platnumz, who claimed it as the experience of the city for the majority and criticized the lack of jobs and opportunities, poor housing and roads, uncollected rubbish, and the random violence meted out to its residents by the city authorities and society at large.⁴⁷ *Uswahilini* and its residents gained a reputation for mastery of the scam and the deal, but the fact that residents of *uzunguni* could be equally creative, for example when it came to improvising an electricity connection, reminds us that the tripartite enframing of urban space is not all-encompassing.⁴⁸

BETWEEN USWAHILINI AND UZUNGUNI

In a discussion with the councilor for Wazo Ward, in which the *mitaa* of Salasala, Kilimahewa, and Kilimahewa Juu were located, I asked him to describe the area he represented. His response immediately mobilized the tripartite enframing of the city's colonial landscapes to interpret urban space more broadly: "It's a middle-class area. If you compare it to Manzese—we can say people of the lower level live there; if you go to Masaki, Oysterbay, then high-level people live there. Here . . . it's in the middle. But there is *uswahilini* inside."⁴⁹ His response captured the way in which many Salasala residents reflected on their community with a mixture of aspiration and trepidation. Salasala, like many of its residents, was in the middle. Not fully one thing or another, it was not *uswahilini* but neither was it *uzunguni*. Pockets of both could be found in Salasala. The planned area that stretched across the hilly terrain of Kilimahewa that had begun life as the World Bank-funded resettlement scheme approximated *uzunguni* with its sea views, well-ordered street layout, low-density plots, community water scheme, and impressive houses standing behind tall gates. But it was unclear whether this meant that Salasala and other suburban areas like it could therefore be understood as *uzunguni*. Residents who had built impressive houses in the planned area of Kilimahewa were unequivocal that it could. When I discussed the benefits of living in Salasala with Richard and Peter, who both worked in banking and finance, Richard claimed, "We call it Salasala City! Here it is planned, World Bank-financed. This is *uzunguni*—well organized, no local beer stalls . . . a well-planned area." Peter added, "Not like Manzese . . . there it is highly populated and unplanned."⁵⁰ In a separate conversation with Rehema, who had moved from the inner-city informal settlement of Mwananyamala to Kilimahewa in 2008, she compared the two areas directly: "Here there is a breeze! But there it is too congested. There's no noise and disturbance here, it's like being in the village. There it is noisy, people are going to bars and nightclubs. But not here. Houses there are packed tightly together. Here there is no congestion. It's like *uzunguni*."⁵¹

Despite the claims of Richard, Peter, and Rehema, pockets of *uswahilini* could be found in Salasala in the marginal spaces of the old quarry and the original Salasala RTD settlement, where narrow paths wound between small, densely arranged houses. Even in the resettlement area of Kilimahewa, not all of the streets were tarmacked, water did not run all of the time, and the provision of sanitation and electricity was down to the individual homeowner. Such conditions typified the rest of the Salasala landscape, populated by a mix of houses in terms of size, quality, and architectural distinction, built on irregularly organized plots, and traversed by earth roads and paths save for the two short tarmac roads that connected the planned area and the IPTL power plants to the main Bagamoyo Road. Zacharia, who worked for an international mobile telecommunications company and who had built a large house close to Kilimahewa, reflected, “There’s no word to describe this place. There is *uswahilini* for the packed places downtown, and there is *uzunguni* for the planned places like Masaki and Mikocheni. But we don’t have a word for places like Salasala. It’s not *uswahilini* because it’s not packed; but it’s not *uzunguni* either because it’s more mixed.”⁵² Located somewhere between *uzunguni* and *uswahilini*, there was unease among Salasala’s middle-class residents about the landscape they had built, what it said about them, and how they might be able to protect it from slipping further from the ideal of *uzunguni* in the future.

One particular source of anxiety for middle-class residents was the state of the roads in Salasala. The earth roads were an inconvenience during the rainy season when they became hazardous or impassable. While residents complained about the damage this did to their cars, there was also an underlying concern about what the slippage between residents’ aesthetic aspirations and the material reality of their neighborhood revealed about their place in the hierarchy of landscapes. Although the two short tarmac roads that formed the central arteries through Salasala made the area better served than most other neighborhoods that had grown up in the formerly periurban zone, the majority of roads in the settlement were made of earth. In addition to the general degradation of earth roads over time, the seasonal rains made many of the roads impassable for weeks, causing great damage that required regular repair. The municipal council possessed a grader, but communities had to raise funds to pay for the fuel, labor, and equipment hire. Many residents were unwilling to contribute money to the *serikali ya mtaa* (subward government) for this purpose. In April 2015 the *serikali ya mtaa* in Kinzudi, neighboring Kilimahewa, wrote to all residents to request contributions to a road fund that would be used to regrade the main roads through the neighborhood. They were looking to raise TSh4.5 million (US\$2,260). Showing me the letter, local resident Zacharia was unsure whether he would contribute anything. Later he admitted that he had not. Why should he pay, he argued, when he could not be sure that the *serikali ya mtaa* would use the money to hire the graders? Things got particularly bad after 2017, when Kinondoni Municipality’s graders were “loaned” to the newly created neighboring municipality of Ubungo. Neighbors were left to their own devices to



FIGURE 5. A path damaged by rain in Salasala. Photo by author, June 2018.

do what they could with the roads that affected them. People found inventive solutions, filling holes and gulleys with palm fronds, bits of broken-up masonry, and sandbags. Some even entered into agreements with private rubbish collectors to fill particularly large gulleys that opened up in paths during the rainy season with truckloads of collected rubbish that would otherwise go to the municipal dump. A more expensive solution was to hire the municipal grader privately. This was the preferred solution for a group of neighbors who lived in and around the planned area of the Kilimahewa resettlement scheme (discussed in more detail in chapter 6). Some among this group had connections with the municipal council; all of them owned good-quality cars. While the private hire of the public grader temporarily resolved the issue of private mobility and damage to cars in their immediate neighborhood, it did little to address the state of the roads in the wider area.

FEAR OF USWAHILINI

The *uzunguni/uswahilini* enframing of urban space was a common refrain among middle-class residents and *mtaa* administrators in Salasala. Despite the fact that the newly constructed landscape did not quite fit this frame, the *uzunguni/uswahilini* framework still had currency as a way of dividing and containing urban space that served middle-class residents' geographical imagination of the city. This is the coloniality of space at work: in everyday parlance the landscapes of *uzunguni* were referred to, often in passing, as elevated, breezy, low-density, planned, ordered, and sedate; the landscapes of *uswahilini*, in contrast, were described as congested, chaotic, disordered, threatening, and unpredictable. In fact the representation of the orderly nature of the Salasala landscape relied on the simultaneous representation of the disorderly and dangerous landscapes typical of *uswahilini*. Fear of *uswahilini*—the densification of buildings, the subdivision of plots into smaller and smaller parcels, the invasion of open land by squatters—threatened to thwart the aspirations that middle-class residents had for the future of Salasala. The recognition that *uswahilini* might not be containable in the future was a source of considerable anxiety.

In a discussion at the Kilimahewa Juu *mtaa* office, the *mtaa* executive officer observed in a matter-of-fact manner: "Here there are two zones, Kwa Babu and Msiige. Kwa Babu—that place is like Manzese. But Msiige is planned."⁵³ Manzese featured regularly in middle-class residents' geographical imaginations of the city. As one of the oldest and largest informal settlements in Dar es Salaam, it was often conjured up to signify a generic "*uswahilini*." Afterwards, as I walked through Kwa Babu with two of the *wajumbe*, I asked them what the executive officer had meant. "When people come here," one *mjumbe* explained, "they know their status. They look at the other buildings . . . they are squatters." His companion chimed in, "It is an area of poor housing, it is *uswahilini* . . . *Uswahilini* is down at the bottom of the valley, *uzunguni* is at the top of the hill."

Middle-class residents were dismissive of *uswahilini* areas in Salasala. Residents of *uswahilini* were routinely referred to as “squatters” and considered as impediments to the development of the area. Yet the definition of “squatter”—always used in English even among Swahili speakers—is open to different interpretations. Originating in English land law and imported to Tanganyika during the colonial period, the legal definition of squatting refers to the occupation of land without tenurial rights.⁵⁴ However, as we have already seen in chapter 3, the tenurial rights of the majority of residents of Dar es Salaam’s former rural hinterland are ambiguous, since the rights of nonindigenous landholders occupying urban planning areas where customary rights have yet to be extinguished or compensated have not been settled in law or bureaucratic practice.⁵⁵ Despite this ambiguity, middle-class residents routinely referred to low-income residents of Salasala as “squatters,” even though their low-income neighbors’ tenurial rights were most likely equal to their own. Rather, it was the landscape aesthetic of *uswahilini* that marked low-income residents as “squatters.” The middle classes prided themselves on the quality and orderliness of the landscape they had built. Their spacious houses built with modern materials on good-sized plots legitimized their occupation of land, regardless of their legal status. In contrast, residents of *uswahilini* were considered illegitimate users of urban space, occupying land in a haphazard manner that contravened basic official urban planning requirements such as leaving sufficient space for paths between buildings. Words such as *ovyoo* (disorderly, reckless; valueless, worthless) and *mazagazaga* (a slang word for haphazard) were often used by middle-class residents to describe how people built in these areas.⁵⁶ Squatters were considered to be an eyesore and a nuisance. Two recently squatted areas in Salasala, one in a disused industrial site that was subsequently earmarked for a public health facility and a school by the municipality, the other in the old Kunduchi quarry, demonstrate the point. The first site was squatted and then parceled into large plots on which modern houses were built, while the second was developed by poorer residents into an area of lower-quality housing. Despite the fact that the middle-class squatters were depriving the area of planned public services, it was only those who had built in the former Kunduchi quarry area who were referred to as squatters.

The arrangement and density of housing was of particular concern to Salasala’s middle-class residents, who were keen to maintain the area’s suburban residential character. *Uswahilini* areas offended middle-class residents’ aesthetic judgment about order in the landscape. People in *uswahilini* “settled randomly,” as one resident complained, and they needed “to be educated about how to build their houses,” as an *mjumbe* observed. David, who worked for the Catholic Church, explained, “*Uswahilini* . . . means that a place is constructed irregularly, it is a place that is difficult to govern because people just do what they want, it is a place where people live anyhow. The construction of houses—there is no planning. The fire truck cannot pass! There is no organization. The government just leaves you there [i.e., does nothing].”⁵⁷

The smaller, irregularly arranged plots and more congested living conditions characteristic of *uswahilini* areas were a threat that had to be guarded against. I discussed this point with Elizabeth, a middle-aged nurse who had constructed a modest, well-built and carefully decorated house on a large plot that she had inherited from her mother in Msiige, the zone in Kilimahewa described by the executive officer as “planned.” In fact Msiige was not formally planned by the municipal council. Rather, the relative order and arrangement of the larger plots in that part of the *mtaa* was a conscious attempt to approximate the landscapes of *uzunguni* rather than *uswahilini*.⁵⁸ Picking up the executive officer’s distinction between areas in Kilimahewa, she explained:

Most of the people in Kwa Abarikiwe [an area in Kilimahewa] and Kwa Babu, they didn’t buy their plots. They were given their plots [by the government during the campaigns of the 1970s and 1980s]. But here, people came from town to buy. There [Kwa Abarikiwe and Kwa Babu] is *uswahilini*, where people live like they do in Manzese. But those small small plots you won’t get here. 10×10—you can’t get them. People come here for big plots, 30×30, 40×40, 70×70. People who want small plots go there. Here, people want to keep it like this, so they don’t sell small plots.⁵⁹

David’s and Elizabeth’s descriptions of the different types of urban landscape demonstrate the apparently benign and banal ways in which the coloniality of space shapes everyday representations of urban space. Urban space is separated and contained—now by the market—into areas of small plots and big plots between which people make an aesthetic choice. In this rendition of urban space, unequal access to land is simply a natural outcome of who chooses to build where according to aesthetic preference. The disorderly and chaotic landscapes of *uswahilini* reflect the failures of its inhabitants who did not purchase their land or who chose small parcels, who built their environment haphazardly, and who failed to plan properly. Yet despite Elizabeth’s assertion that the exclusive landscape of Msiige could be maintained through residents’ vigilance over land sales, the multivalent nature of land transactions and construction activities meant that controlling plot sizes—and the aesthetic appearance of the landscape—was very difficult to achieve in practice.

MIDDLE-CLASS PLANNING

Middle-class residents who had obtained land from the 1970s onwards thought of themselves as pioneers who had brought order, improvement, and value to a landscape that they considered to have been previously empty.⁶⁰ These residents often described the landscape as having been *pori* (wilderness or scrubland) before they cleared the land to farm or to construct a house, or to pay TANESCO to put up the first electricity pole.⁶¹ Zacharia, who had been a relatively early settler when he bought land and started building a house near to Kilimahewa in 2008, was



FIGURE 6. Middle-class planning, Salasala. Photo by author, July 2018.

proud of the way his area had changed from undeveloped land to a built environment. It suggested that he had made a shrewd move in buying the land in the first place, despite the initial reservations of his wife who had considered Salasala too far from the city center. Having first visited him in 2012, on my return in 2015 I was astonished at the speed with which new, impressive buildings had gone up in his neighborhood, where there had previously been grass, shrubs, and trees. “Do you recognize the place now? Can you see how it has grown?” Zacharia exclaimed proudly as he gave me a quick tour.

The congregation of the middle classes on the suburban frontier has brought with it various attempts to impress a new vision of urban order on the landscape by naming places and streets in a context where few individual streets are signposted.⁶² Scattered across northern Kinondoni were a small number of street signs that signified global consumer culture (Old Trafford Street, Beverly Hills), African political leaders (Mwinyi Street, Madiba Street), Swahili words that conjured up histories of cooperation and neighborliness (*Amani* [peace] Street, *Upendo* [love] Street), and personal names where recent housebuilders had given their name to a path on their land. These new street signs declaring new place names contrasted with the preexisting practice of referring to places by the name of a significant individual or group who had lived in an area, or that referred to a distinctive physical feature.⁶³ Such localized place names and histories were being overwritten by

more recent settlers who wanted to represent the landscape in a more modern idiom, such as in Msiige, where the area formerly known as *Kijiji cha Wagogo* (village of the Gogo people) was now commonly referred to as “Best One” after the name emblazoned across the smart and modern two-storey office building that had been constructed on a central plot in the vicinity by two recent arrivals. In contrast, Kwa Babu was so called after a well-known medicine man set up in the area in the early 2000s; Kwa Abarikiwe was named after the settler who enclosed the land in the 1970s and gradually parceled it out to newcomers; and Mbuyuni was so named because of the very large baobab tree that stood near the Salasala junction on the Bagamoyo Road and was said by long-term residents to be a place of spirits that had caused many road traffic accidents. These places and their localized names coincided in middle-class residents’ geographical imaginations with spaces of *uswahilini*. Near Zacharia’s house was *Usukumani*, a group of small houses and kiosks where a group of people from the Sukuma ethnic group had long lived. Looking at *Usukumani* from his walled and spacious house across the valley, Richard, who had retired from working in a bank, commented, “My neighborhood is good, it’s not like those small shacks over there [pointing towards *Usukumani*]—over there it’s like Manzese. That’s *uswahilini*.” When I asked Zacharia who lived in *Usukumani*, he shrugged and said, “They are just tenants.”

In contrast, those who had acquired land from the original inhabitants from the 1970s onwards and who had built large storey houses saw themselves as pioneers who had made the former scrub land more productive. They had had a vision for the area, and that vision did not include *uswahilini* or squatters. One of those pioneers was Rajabu, whom we met in chapter 3. He and his wife had bought their land in 1975, and had become prominent members of the early Salasala community. Rajabu had been the secretary of the Salasala Community Development Association (SACODEA) in the early 1990s. SACODEA had brought together approximately fifteen early settlers, including the CCM branch secretary and the *mtaa* chairperson, to discuss issues pertaining to the development of their neighborhood. At that time, Rajabu explained, “we were really setting up on our own, there was no government here—the administration was coming from Mtongani. Back then this place was a village.”⁶⁴ SACODEA had wanted to preserve the area as a farming green belt, which would have protected the members’ large farm plots. They lobbied the prime minister’s office, the Ministry of Agriculture, and the Dar es Salaam Municipal Council to no avail. “We couldn’t get it,” Rajabu lamented, “and then those stone quarries were squatted.” He was referring to the incremental settlement of the former Kunduchi quarry in Salasala. The implication was that the squatters had effectively thwarted the SACODEA members’ attempts to protect their land, as well as SACODEA’s authority over the area’s development. SACODEA ceased to function, because, Rajabu said, “people with different interests moved into the area.” Describing the landscape that subsequently developed, Rajabu swept his arm from his plot towards the quarries: “When the quarries were

finished, they were settled randomly. The area that is planned in Salasala starts here and goes inward [he gestured towards Goba]. The rest [gesturing the other way, towards the quarries] is squatters.”

As Rajabu experienced, middle-class residents had limited power to protect the landscape they felt they had constructed. Some residents recognized this fact, as Richard and Peter demonstrated:

Richard: This place will become congested. This area was all farms ten years ago. Now it is a town. We are predicting this place will be congested, and we will be *wazee* [elders] . . . but we don't want to be disturbed with noise and traffic.

Claire: Why will this place become congested?

Peter: If the government was strong . . .

Richard: Look at Masaki [next to Oysterbay]. It was very nice, it was executive, but now there are bars, it's noisy. So from this experience we think this area will go the same way. Here one hundred houses are planned [those built in the Kilimahewa resettlement scheme], around us the rest is not planned. People can settle, they can do whatever they want. It will be horrible. We are working with the *serikali ya mtaa* to make sure there are no unplanned houses. We don't have control.

. . .

This lack of power sat uneasily alongside the sense of natural authority over suburban space that many middle-class residents felt. The enframing of urban space was an everyday practice of distinction mobilized by middle-class residents to define themselves and the space they had built against the less desirable landscapes of the city. Drawing on colonial and socialist tropes that measured the right to be in the city in relation to building materials and urban productivity,⁶⁵ middle-class residents framed their self-built neighborhoods as evidence of their legitimate presence on the suburban frontier. In liberalized Tanzania, socialist ideas about the self-reliant, hard-working rural citizen were recast in terms of suburban respectability, now measured by the individual's hard work in building a good house in an ordered neighborhood. In defining the landscape they had constructed in opposition to *uswahilini*, many suburban residents considered their use of space to be of higher quality, and therefore more legitimate, than poorer residents' buildings and use of space. Their attention to maintaining neighborhood roads and paths, plot sizes, architectural design and finishing; their acquisition of land through the market rather than by invasion or government grant from the 1970s; and their appropriate use of space for residential rather than noisy business purposes distinguished the suburban landscape from the noise, congestion, and haphazardness of *uswahilini*.

Yet *uswahilini* was not easily contained. *Uswahilini* was necessary to the enframing of middle-class suburban landscapes, but it also provoked anxiety. In examining this enframing and its contemporary manifestations, this chapter has shown that paying attention to landscape can help us to grasp the in-between, unsettled

nature of middle-class subjectivities in Dar es Salaam. Richard and Peter identify the central tensions at the heart of middle-class life on the suburban frontier: How to protect one's stake in the landscape? How to make the landscape fit the frame? How could *uswahilini* be kept at bay? This is the coloniality of space at work in the postcolonial city. Middle-classness emerges as an unstable condition of being in between multiple binaries; between *uzunguni* and *uswahilini*, rich and poor, property owner and squatter. The material reproduction of the suburban landscape and the social reproduction of the middle classes is far from inevitable.