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Jamii ya wahalifu. The growth of crime in a colonial African urban centre: Dar es Salaam, Tanganyika, 1919-1961¹

Andrew Burton

- ¹ Readers of this journal will be familiar with a considerable literature that has emerged over the past three decades on the history of crime. This literature forms a significant contribution to the historiography of western societies. By contrast, despite both the extensive body of historical work that has built up on sub-Saharan Africa over the same period, and the increasing salience of issues relating to criminality in contemporary Africa², research on the history of crime in African societies is negligible³. This article seeks to partially address this by presenting an exploratory account of the emergence of crime in colonial Dar es Salaam. Its principal object is comparative: to provide an analysis of criminality in a distinctive East African setting for historians of crime working on other geographical areas. Dar es Salaam provides an interesting case study in that the level of crime appears to have been low throughout the period under consideration; especially so between the wars. It therefore offers an opportunity to chart the evolution of a 'modern' criminal culture from its embryonic early stages. In a society undergoing unprecedented urbanisation, forms of crime emerged which, while familiar in other parts of the world by this time, were novel by local standards. Pre-colonial Tanzanian societies were overwhelmingly smallscale and rural, and at the advent of British rule, during the First World War, the vast majority of Africans in the territory continued to live in villages in which customary sanctions on anti-social behaviour were reinforced by the intimacy of the rural community. Accelerating urbanisation, alongside the deepening penetration of the cash nexus, and the imposition of western conceptions of crime and criminal justice, would have significant consequences for African societies. The towns, Dar es Salaam above all, offered freedom from the patriarchal control of village elders. They were arenas of opportunity in

which new forms of social organisation and behaviour were forged. The growth of crime was one such by-product of urban growth.

Crime in colonial Africa

- 2 In a useful discussion of crime in rural Kenya, David Anderson emphasizes two key aspects of colonial criminality. First, he observes what earlier historians of colonial African politics and society termed 'enlargement of scale', in which the proliferation of socio-cultural and economic links resulted in new forms of (in this case criminal) behaviour.⁴ This resonates with the discussion of the evolution of urban criminality in Dar es Salaam below. The concentration of population that the Tanganyikan capital represented offered new avenues to attain wealth (or just a subsistence) through novel forms of behaviour defined as criminal. Moreover, the proliferating connections that a town like Dar es Salaam established in the course of colonial rule, from transport links to increasing economic integration, likewise offered a context in which the 'modern criminal' could emerge. Indeed impressionistic evidence appears to confirm this: over the years crime occurred that was characterised by increasing levels of professionalism and seriousness, in which networks of criminality were evident that extended throughout and beyond urban society into the hinterland and to neighbouring countries⁵.
- 3 Anderson also highlights the manner in which colonial legal systems impacted upon African society. '[C]olonial legislation', he observes, 'generated new social tensions within African societies and exacerbated old ones.' Once again, his findings on rural Kenya have pertinence in the urban context. The colonial criminalisation of diverse forms of behaviour that arose in Dar es Salaam – from theft to petty trading – reinforced not only emerging cleavages in African society, notably between an urban bourgeoisie and lumpenproletariat, but also deeper-rooted generational tensions between African youth and elders⁶. Similar patterns have been detected elsewhere in Africa, notably South Africa where tensions between respectable and unrespectable African urban society and between African elders and delinquent youth are well documented⁷.
- 4 While the importation of alien definitions of criminality and the 'enlargement of scale' had distinctive repercussions in colonial Africa, however, it is the very familiarity of the forms that crime took in colonial Dar es Salaam that are perhaps most striking; particularly so given the very different socio-cultural circumstances prevailing in Africa to those in which modern criminal cultures emerged in Western societies. Much of the complex reality of quotidian criminality in Dar es Salaam, from pickpocketing 'urchins' to the illicit perquisites occasionally (in some cases, habitually) taken by employees, is familiar from the historiography of crime in early-modern Europe. However, this need not surprise us. Shifts in the definition, incidence and treatment of crime in the West have been associated with both the emergence of the modern state and industrial capitalism in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. It was in the colonial period that African societies were fully exposed for the first time to these historical trends in state formation and socio-economic organisation. Not only did familiar patterns of behaviour arise as a result of these phenomena, but they also resulted in the re-negotiation of moral economies implicit in existing social relations and notions of property, which whilst containing much that was locally distinctive, also

contain echoes of those similar re-negotiations that occurred in the transformation from pre-industrial to industrial societies in the West⁸. The important distinction to be made between twentieth century Africa and eighteenth/nineteenth century Europe, however, is the incomplete assault of capital and state, characterised most significantly by the persistently rural orientation of contemporary Africa, and the failure to effect the technological and economic transformation that occurred in the West. It was in the urban areas that the impact of European intervention was most keenly felt, and where crime was most prevalent. That it was not more prevalent, given the high prevailing levels of poverty, and in the absence of the economic growth arising from industrialisation in the West, can perhaps be explained by the lingering strength of familial and communal networks both within urban communities and bridging the town-country divide.

- 5 In the final analysis, it is difficult to judge whether particular forms of criminal behaviour emerging in Dar es Salaam represented part of a distinctive regional pattern of crime. Too little work has been conducted on the subject, particularly in tropical Africa and in the urban centres. While there is a growing historiographical literature on South Africa that charts the criminal repercussions of the social, economic and political policies pursued before and during *apartheid*, South Africa's unusual history complicates comparisons with other parts of the continent. Both the highly developed nature of criminal sub-cultures there and the unprecedented attention they attracted in the shape of township newspapers, the fiction and non-fiction of local writers, and the observations of government commissions and administrative officials⁹, offer the historian of crime in South Africa a particularly fertile research context. By comparison to Johannesburg's *Tsotsi* gangs, the activities of Ibadan's *Jaguda* or Dar es Salaam's *Wahuni* appear petty and disorganised¹⁰.
- 6 The patchy historical sources on delinquency in tropical African colonies are, on the one hand, no doubt a reflection of the relatively undeveloped nature of criminality there. At the same time, Ibadan, Nairobi or Dar es Salaam never received the attention, from both official and non-official sources, that South Africa's townships attracted. In the case of Dar es Salaam we are reliant on sources that reflect either officials' concerns or those of the town's propertied classes (whether African, Indian or European), and therefore historical insights from the point of view of the offender (as opposed to the victim) are hard to come by. Clearly we should be sensitive to the prejudices and bias reflected in these sources¹¹. Nevertheless, through the careful use of existing data it is possible to give an impression of the evolution of crime in colonial Dar es Salaam. However, judgment on the extent to which these phenomena fit broader patterns of colonial criminality awaits further research on other African urban centres.

Crime and colonial rule in Dar es Salaam

- 7 Founded by the Sultan of Zanzibar in 1862, and established as the capital of Deutsch Ost Afrika by the Germans in 1891, the Indian Ocean port of Dar es Salaam came under British administration in the course of the First World War, and its status as the capital of a territory mandated by the League of Nations to the British was confirmed in 1922. While, by world standards, it was a small town, with a population of between 20-35,000 in the 1920s (consisting of about 20-30,000 Africans, 4-5,000 Indians and 500-1,000 Europeans), this represented a quite significant concentration of population in a region

with negligible traditions of urbanisation¹². Moreover, from the late-1930s it experienced urban growth that was unprecedented by regional standards and remarkably high in comparison to historical peak rates experienced in the West¹³. By 1957 the town's population had grown to almost 130,000 – comprising 94,000 Africans, 30,000 Asians and 5,000 Europeans.

- 8 Racial differentiation in Dar es Salaam was marked. In the inter-war period, the town was divided into three zones which broadly corresponded with the main European (in Zone I – popularly known as Uzunguni), Indian (Zone II – or Uhindini) and African (Zone III – or Uswahilini) residential areas; though it was never totally segregated. Zone I extended over a large area and encompassed predominantly European suburbs of detached, well-spaced, houses. Zone II was a crowded commercial quarter that was also home to the majority of the Indian population (ie. people of South Asian origin). Zone III was where the bulk of the African population lived, and in the inter-war period consisted of the settlements of Kariakoo and Ilala. Population density was high and living conditions poor in the 'Swahili' style houses built of impermanent materials that predominated there. Although zoning was scrapped after the Second World War, these broad patterns of settlement persisted into the late-colonial period, with the three communities expanding into adjacent areas. Social contact between the races was mainly restricted to the workplace (which in the case of African servants included Indian and European homes). Economic differentiation was extreme. Most Europeans and many Indians enjoyed lavish lifestyles in comparison to the largely impoverished African population (though Indian and, exceptionally, European destitution was not unheard of). Even those Africans with regular employment – much work in Dar es Salaam was casual – only scraped a precarious existence from the miserable wages they received (normally supplemented by other sources of income such as money earned by urban wives or from the cultivation of small agricultural plots on the outskirts of town). On the other hand, a minority of educated Africans¹⁴, mostly employed in white-collar jobs and receiving significantly higher wages, formed the more affluent core of an emerging elite.

Figure 1. Dar es Salaam in 1957 (adapted from Leslie (1963))

By this time the administrative division of the town into zones had lapsed, though residential segregation along race lines persisted. What was known as Zone I into the 1940s was the area marked as Burton St. Area and north (along the coast, and slightly inland) to Oyster Bay. It remained a predominantly European residential area throughout the colonial period. Zone II, containing the bulk of the Indian community, was located in the 'Commercial Area', though after the war there was significant Indian expansion into Upanga (marked as Upanga Housing Estate). Zone III consisted principally of Kariakoo and Ilala, although by the time this map was produced African settlements had emerged all over the town (these are outlined in bold). Police stations/posts are also indicated.

- 9 The African population was in itself also ethnically heterogeneous, comprised of diverse communities that included individuals coming from the predominantly Muslim coastal areas, as well as upcountry areas where traditional religions were practised and which in the colonial period experienced significant Christian proselytisation. It was also shifting: most Africans coming to the town for varying periods – from months to years – to work, although permanent communities did emerge. Africans were drawn to Dar es Salaam for a number of reasons. The spectacle and excitements offered by the town in this predominantly rural society, was no doubt one attraction – though the 'bright lights' syndrome was exaggerated by colonial officials. The town was also used as a place of refuge; by young (male and female) Africans in particular, escaping from private employers, the Native Authorities, husbands, parents and elders. The fiscal demands of the colonial state also formed a motive – Africans coming to town to either earn money for tax, or to evade its collection¹⁵. Most commonly, though, Africans came because the urban economy offered a relatively rare opportunity to earn cash (albeit in the form of desperately low wages) – for investment as well as to pay tax¹⁶. The concentration of wealth and population also offered criminal opportunities, attracting individuals keen to exploit these conditions.
- 10 A small, hard core of 'professional' criminals emerged, though opportunist felony driven by need appears to have been more common. As was the case in other parts of

the world, Dar es Salaam's criminals were overwhelmingly male¹⁷. They were also predominantly African, though the activities of a handful of 'hardened' Indian criminals are also reported in surviving sources. While 'traditional' African society provided limited scope for the development of 'modern' criminality of the sort that emerged in the town, this racial profile of the Dar es Salaam underworld should not surprise us. The African population formed an overwhelming majority of the urban and, to an even greater extent, the territorial population. While Indian and European criminality naturally occurred in Tanganyika, the character of the settler communities meant it was restricted. The social profile of the tiny European community, consisting predominantly of (mostly middle class) administrators or more senior officials in private companies, was by both local and European standards unusually highly educated and affluent and unlikely to engage in the kind of property crime discussed in this article. Meanwhile, the larger – though still, in the territorial context, numerically insignificant – Indian community, was composed of an increasingly successful core of commercial traders alongside skilled employees of government and industry. Criminality (and poverty) occurred amongst the urban Indian population, though it was limited in scale not only because of its social composition but also no doubt the personal ramifications of engaging in anti-social behaviour in what remained a relatively tight-knit community (or communities¹⁸).

- 11 The prevalence of illegal activity amongst the African population (as opposed to Indians or Europeans) also resulted from the manner in which colonial legislation criminalised not only commonly adopted urban survival techniques but also in some cases the very African urban presence¹⁹. Criminality was a contested notion amongst Dar es Salaam's various strata. Colonial definitions of crime were broad, their object being an orderly and strictly regulated urban environment. Administrative attempts to prevent particular forms of behaviour were frequently resisted. Petty economic activities might have been proscribed by colonial law, but they also provided incomes and services to the African population. Even certain property crimes appear to have been condoned by many Africans. Theft was described by Engels as 'the most primitive form of protest', and in Dar es Salaam property crime can plausibly be interpreted as having been in part unfocused (and/or unconscious) resistance against colonial economic and political iniquities²⁰. Faced with a massively skewed distribution of wealth, and their powerlessness in the colonial context, African criminals may even have attempted to rationalise their actions in this way. Nevertheless, it is important not to romanticise the Dar es Salaam criminal. As elsewhere in Africa, it was the poor who were the most vulnerable and were the commonest victims of property crime²¹. As such, those who chose to prey upon their fellow Africans were no doubt feared and detested by the majority, and if caught were vulnerable to a popular form of justice that could be swift and harsh²². Neither was 'social banditry' a feature²³. Crime in Dar es Salaam was more mundane. Although the quotidian criminality of thefts from European employers or from Indian shops appears to have been widely tolerated, and might be characterised as resistance, its basic motivation was more likely simple economic need, unaccompanied by any form of political consciousness²⁴.

The causes of crime

- 12 Western criminological theories appear to have some relevance in the East African context. The structural causes identified by Durkheim and Merton in modern industrial societies are applicable; where individual ambitions were often thwarted by the poor opportunities for personal improvement, with the subsequent frustration leading to a sense of normlessness and in some cases eventually to crime²⁵. This was a time when African society became increasingly exposed to a money economy; when economic 'development' led to the proliferation of commodities and the creation of new patterns of consumption, new needs and desires. Urban growth, meanwhile, provided an environment in which the opportunities and temptations for theft multiplied considerably at the same time as an impoverished urban class emerged in the midst of relative plenty. Avenues to wealth accumulation were closed to many unskilled Africans (and increasingly, towards the end of the colonial period and the years following independence, to many African 'school-leavers'). In his 1939 report on prisons in Eastern Africa, Alexander Paterson, the British Commissioner for Prisons, highlighted this 'revolution in rising expectations'²⁶ and the simultaneous lack of means to meet them:

A very rapid increase in the demand on life during the last 30 years has led inevitably to a[n]... increase in theft... Crime will further increase as this same demand to have life, and have it more abundantly, lures the more spirited and ambitious youngster from tending his parents' cattle to the Gold paved streets of Nairobi, Kampala or Dar es Salaam. On arriving at the town they find the only occupation open to them is to serve in the most menial capacity for Shs2/- a month in an Indian shop. They are just as hungry as when their parents fed them at home, but food in the town has to be paid for, and moreover there are many things in the town besides food that they want to buy. So they steal²⁷.

- 13 The poor conditions of life prevalent in colonial African 'townships', along with their fluid populations, may support ecological explanations of deviance associated with the Chicago school, which view crime as arising from the environmental and associational impact on individuals raised in deprived neighbourhoods. John Iliffe (following Oscar Lewis) has, for example, talked of a 'culture of poverty' emerging in colonial Dar es Salaam²⁸. More recent, radical criminology also has relevance, notably in the form of labelling theory, which sought to account for criminal tendencies in individuals through the societal response to their initial (quite possibly, petty) offences; their identification and treatment as miscreants contributing to a self-image which leads to further miscreancy. Colonial ideology was certainly responsible for the 'labelling' of a huge number of petty offenders through the criminalisation of many activities which within African society were socially acceptable; although this very acceptance in the host community problematises the impact of labelling on criminal behaviour²⁹. In the final analysis, however, the absence of necessary data means the application of western-derived theories of deviance has only limited value in the African historical context³⁰.
- 14 From the little empirical research that has been done on patterns of crime in Africa, it appears that poverty has tended to be a crucial factor in determining the identity of both perpetrator and victim³¹. According to Iliffe, in tropical Africa
- most urban crime grew out of poverty. It was crime by individuals against property... and most of the individuals were poor. Of those tried for robbery in Brazzaville in 1935-6, 42 percent had no trade and 40 percent were unemployed. 'I

was without work and destitute of resources', one explained. 'I stole to eat', said another. The same was true in Timbuktu in 1940, in Cotonou in 1952, and in Kinshasa during the 1960s³².

- 15 Clinard and Abbott found that in 1960s Kampala most crimes involved property offences committed by the poor against the poor. In an environment in which 'even the simplest object, such as a used shirt, a light bulb, or a piece of iron pipe, represents a desirable increment in wealth,' they point out, 'the potential market for stolen goods is much greater than in almost any developed country'³³. This was true of colonial Dar es Salaam. For example, the booty obtained as a result of break-ins tended to be extremely modest. After cash, clothes were the most common target of burglars throughout the colonial period, indicating the poverty of both the thieves themselves and the majority of their victims. According to the 1924 police report, 'property stolen is of infinitesimal value, and very often consists of rags of native clothing'³⁴. Two decades later the situation remained substantially unchanged, with items stolen in a wave of burglaries consisting mainly of 'only small quantities of clothing and other property'³⁵.

Explaining crime in colonial Dar es Salaam³⁶

- 16 To colonial officials criminality was above all bound up with the growth of urban centres in which African morals were viewed as prone to corrosion. Fryer, the District Officer for Dar es Salaam in 1931, observed in the town:

the type of development which produces from the waifs and strays and street urchins of London, the type of being that earns his living by his wits, who is a good judge at summing up his fellow man and has no respect for a law he can break with impunity³⁷.

- 17 Crime was commonly associated with the process of 'detrribalisation', in which Africans from homogeneous rural communities lost their cultural bearings on the move to the cosmopolitan urban environment. For the editor of the *Tanganyika Standard*, writing in the wake of an attack on a European woman in 1952, it was

quite obvious that the majority of crimes such as theft and burglary are committed by Africans many of whom travel long distances drawn by the glamour of the big town. In the 'new community of strangers' these people lose the social responsibility that close village life imposed on them.

- 18 'The evils and dangers which can result if this drift [to the town] is allowed to continue', commented the Member for Local Government in the same year, 'are well known'³⁸.

- 19 Within Dar es Salaam itself the shortage of employment was singled out as the key contributor to burgeoning African criminality. So in the first district report, in 1920, District Officer (DO) West blamed the high levels of crime prevalent in the early years of British rule on the presence of a large number of demobilised Africans in the town who were eventually repatriated to their districts of origin³⁹. The following year, DO Brett voiced his concern about the return of some of these individuals:

A number of these people are unable to obtain suitable employment, others have no desire to work; these are potential thieves if they have no-one who is willing to support them, since food is not available in Dar es Salaam as it may be at their homes. A successful theft of clothing or other articles which are disposed of outside the township procures the wherewithal for their maintenance for several days⁴⁰.

- 20 'The question of unemployment', observed the Indian editor of the *Tanganyika Opinion* in 1937 is '[i]nextricably tangled with the question of tackling the criminally-minded native'⁴¹. Lack of work was held to have a particularly bad effect upon African youth. In his 1931 social survey, the Native Administration official, E.C. Baker, commented on the large number of detribalised youths, 'pick[ing] up a living as best they can' who frequently resorted to crime to get by⁴². An African writing to the newspaper *Kwetu* in 1942 also bemoaned the pernicious effects of joblessness among the young. He regarded 'the number of unemployed youths as shocking'. Their semi-educated status gave them ambitions for urban employment which were not matched by the opportunities as a result of which, he claimed, many turned to crime⁴³. Another correspondent to *Kwetu* singled out the low level of African wages as an important contributory factor to rising crime. Rajabu bin Alfani complained in a letter four years earlier that a monthly wage of Shs.25/- was hopelessly insufficient when daily food expenses alone could be Shs.1/50, and that this was leading to the increasing incidence of theft. Officials voiced similar concerns. Paterson observed in 1939 that '[e]mployment at wages too low to allow a sufficiency of food tempts the simple and the hungry to steal'⁴⁴. Seven years later, a conference of district officials in Eastern Province was told that 'a partial review of cases of theft and burglary had indicated that a considerable number of such offences had been found to have been committed by Africans at uneconomic rates of pay'⁴⁵. It was the absence of formal employment for the ever-growing numbers of rural-urban migrants, however, to which crime waves in post-war Dar es Salaam continued to be primarily attributed. So an outbreak of burglaries in 1952 was, according to a secretariat official, 'due no doubt to the end of the boom or the beginning of the slump'⁴⁶. Down cycles in the urban economy produced not only a shortage of work but an increase in lawlessness. 'It is most noticeable', wrote the Commissioner of Police in 1959, that the amount of crime varies with unemployment (which varies seasonally)⁴⁷.

The growth of crime in Dar es Salaam⁴⁸

- 21 The incidence of crime in Dar es Salaam appears to have risen precipitously in the period under British rule. Both the statistical record and impressionistic evidence support this view. It is necessary to stress caution about sources, however⁴⁹. In the case of Dar es Salaam, low crime figures in the early colonial period are likely to have had at least something to do with the negligible police presence in the town between the wars. Similarly, the rapid escalation of crime rates after the Second World War was probably related to the enhanced capacity of the police to detect misdemeanours and to enforce the law. They may have also reflected the greater likelihood for crimes to be reported as a result of increasing public confidence in the ability of the police to apprehend and prosecute offenders. Both before and after the Second World War, however, it is likely that a large number of offences remained unreported to a policing body whom many regarded as more an occupying force than a neutral keeper of the peace⁵⁰. Other, more impressionistic sources, including newspapers and official correspondence, are also unreliable. Heightened public perceptions of particular crimes, or of crime waves, can in the end almost prove self-fulfilling⁵¹. Human anxiety, meanwhile, often leads to exaggerated fears about the prevalence of criminality, especially violence-related crimes. Various factors then, complicate the treatment of crime as a historical subject

in colonial Dar es Salaam as elsewhere. Having necessarily made such qualifications, it is nevertheless possible to venture to give some impression of its extent⁵².

- 22 As the largest urban concentration in Tanganyika, crime was far more prevalent in Dar es Salaam than in other parts of the territory. In 1931, almost forty percent of all criminal cases in Tanganyika were reported there – 2,217 cases out of a total of 5,642⁵³. These included over 400 cases of theft. ‘Few nights pass without some form of minor appropriation of property taking place in the native quarter’, observed Baker in his report that year⁵⁴. In the course of the following decade reported cases of theft jumped dramatically, reaching 1,317 in 1939. In the same period, the number of Africans convicted in Dar es Salaam rose from 1,041 to 1,596⁵⁵. The early years of World War Two saw a reduction in crime, attributed to the absence from town of a large number of men away on service, less unemployment and the repatriation of ‘undesirable sojourners’⁵⁶. By the end of the war, though, crime rates appeared to be escalating once again. While few statistics for Dar es Salaam itself are extant, surviving records for the territory as a whole indicate a sharp rise in criminality (or at least a sharp rise in *detected* criminality). In 1939 there had been convictions in 1,618 cases of crime against property in Tanganyika. By 1946 the number of convictions for property offences had jumped by over 300 percent to 5,208⁵⁷. In Dar es Salaam, the District Commissioner observed in his annual report for that year, ‘burglary and petty thieving, bag-snatching and the like showed a considerable increase’⁵⁸ – with 1,963 thefts reported in the course of the year, as compared to 1,115 in 1938⁵⁹. Crime rates continued to rise. In 1949 the number of penal code cases dealt with by the Dar es Salaam police was 3,864. Three years later this figure was almost matched by the number of cases dealt with in the first half of the year alone: 3,092, which represented an increase over this short period of approximately 58 percent⁶⁰. Crime in the capital continued to escalate over the course of the 1950s; at a rate that exceeded the rise in Tanganyika as a whole. In urban local courts – presided over by the *Wakili* and *Liwali* – the number of criminal cases dealt with annually more than doubled between 1950 and 1960 from 1,997 to 4,596. A comparable increase was recorded in the Resident Magistrate’s court⁶¹.
- 23 Judging by colonial records then, the escalation in crime in colonial Tanganyika is striking. In 1922, the first year for which statistics survive, the number of criminal cases dealt with by the police stood at 4,960. In the final year of colonial rule the number of cases in which convictions were obtained alone was over 50,000. Property offences had proliferated at an almost comparable rate. From the introduction of the Tanganyikan Penal Code in 1930 to the end of colonial rule they had increased from around 2,000 to over 11,000. In Dar es Salaam itself, there were 443 prosecutions for offences against property in 1931. By 1960, the number of cases involving offences against property dealt with by Dar es Salaam police stood at 6,380.

Property crime in Dar es Salaam

- 24 Crime against property occurred throughout Dar es Salaam, although offences differed by area, and the incidence of crime appears to have varied markedly in the town’s three designated zones. Housebreakings occurred all over, but were particularly common in the African and Indian quarters. Petty criminals, such as pickpockets and con-men, were also commonly found working the streets of these latter areas. And once again it was the inhabitants of the African township and Uhindini who were the most

likely victims of violent crime; for they were also the commonest location of street robberies as well as the occasional armed hold-up. The higher incidence of crime in these areas had its roots in the lack of control over the urban population: the ineffective 'native' administration and the insignificant police presence in Zones II and III⁶². In Uhindini, at several times between the wars, reports in the Indian press portrayed this order as verging on the point of collapse. Although this is exaggerated, it seems that the area was considerably more lawless than would have been tolerated in the European quarter. Due to the shortage of sources one can only speculate on the situation in the less policed but more densely populated African areas.

- 25 According to the settler press, in the outbreak of lawlessness that followed the First World War, housebreaking was common throughout the town. '[T]here is hardly a European house that has not been broken into, at one time or another,' claimed the *Dar es Salaam Times* in June 1920⁶³. While any post-war crime wave soon appeared to dissipate, by 1925 the number of housebreaking cases dealt with by the police was 256, and it is likely that at least as many went unreported. A correspondent to the *Tanganyika Standard* in 1931 complained that '[t]he state of public security in this town is becoming alarming... [b]urglaries are of almost nightly occurrence'⁶⁴. They were by no means restricted to Uzunguni. In the early 1920s, when property crimes were often reported by the *Dar es Salaam Times*, burglaries in the African areas appeared to slightly outnumber those in the rest of the town. It is far more likely, however, that they occurred with much greater frequency in the 'township' than elsewhere⁶⁵.
- 26 Burglaries in the Indian quarter were also reported in the *Dar es Salaam Times*, though a much fuller impression of the incidence of crime in Uhindini can be drawn from Indian newspapers, editions of which survive from 1930. A 1931 editorial in the *Tanganyika Opinion* complained of 'the daily occurrences of thefts and robberies in some part of the Indian area or another'⁶⁶. Although incidents involving stealing from the person, pickpocketing or shoplifting, burglaries from both houses and commercial premises in Uhindini were reported with regularity in the Indian press. The most serious occurred in August 1931, when an armed gang perpetrated the daytime hold-up of the merchant house of Messrs. Kassavji Anandji & Co., in the course of which jewellery and Shs. 4,500/- in cash was stolen⁶⁷. While armed hold-ups such as this were few and far between, more petty forms of theft from commercial premises was common. A widely used ploy of gangs that frequented the area was for an African to begin a quarrel with an Indian shopkeeper. His cohorts would then come to his assistance and in the ensuing melee goods would be removed from the store⁶⁸. The conspicuous absence of a regular police presence meant there was little the storeholders could do about it⁶⁹.
- 27 If both the settler and the Indian press expressed concern about the level of burglaries in Dar es Salaam between the wars, the escalation of such offences in the post-war period was viewed with increasing disquiet. By 1952 over one hundred house- or shop-breakings were reported in the capital every month⁷⁰. The *Standard* commented in May that 'much public concern is being felt at the rising number of burglaries and other robberies which threaten the safety and well-being of members of all communities'⁷¹. In the penultimate year of colonial rule, 2,315 cases of housebreaking, burglary and allied offences were reported to the Dar es Salaam police, bringing the monthly average close to 200. As between the wars, all of Dar es Salaam's communities continued to be victim to burglaries after 1945, though houses in Zone III remained most vulnerable. Of the 116 housebreakings reported in May 1952, 67 were into African houses (when these

were the least likely to be reported). In June, 56 African houses were broken into out of a total of 104⁷². 'Africans going out in the evenings now lock and bar their windows', reported the *Standard* the same year, 'a few years ago this was unnecessary'⁷³.

- 28 If burglaries and break-ins were probably the largest identifiable category of property offences in Dar es Salaam during the British period, a variety of other offences, generally more petty, variously grouped together as thefts under the penal code (or in other places as stealing) were actually much more common. Theft from the person, for example, was, in various guises, widespread in the town throughout the period under consideration. It could take the form of pickpocketing, bag-snatching, or more seriously of street robbery accompanied with violence (or the threat of violence). The most complete impression of the incidence of such crimes comes once again from the Indian newspapers from the 1930s. Theft from the person was an everyday occurrence in Uhindini. Jewellery was particularly vulnerable to being snatched, often by gangs who purportedly hung around the Indian quarter. 'Petty cases of pilferage, of snatching bangles from children and necklaces from old ladies', the *Herald* observed in 1934, 'are too numerous to mention'⁷⁴ 'The Indian public, especially ladies...', found it 'unsafe to walk the streets even in the daytime. People see a danger in carrying money with them, cyclists must have their eyes fixed on their machines'⁷⁵.
- 29 Pickpockets were a common hazard of town life. The railway station, with large numbers of unwary new arrivals carrying valuables, appears to have been a favoured haunt. An Indian victim was relieved of the substantial sum of Shs.6,100/- there in 1926. It was subsequently recovered and a gang of six pickpockets convicted and sentenced to long terms of imprisonment⁷⁶. A few years later Juma bin Abdalla was charged with the same offence, stealing Shs.20/- from an Indian. According to the *Standard*, there was no shortage of people to take his place. 'At least twenty young natives in Court during the case showed unwonted attention as they hung closely on every word spoken by accused and witnesses', the paper reported. '[I]t was an excellent opportunity for anyone to study the art of picking pockets – with particular reference to avoiding those slips which may result in an appearance in the dock'⁷⁷. Throughout the colonial period pocket-picking seems to have been an activity particularly associated with African youth⁷⁸.
- 30 Street robberies, also categorised as theft, were another Dar es Salaam hazard. Once again they were frequently reported in the Indian press. In a case from 1931, the disappointed thieves rebuked their victims for the slender takings. 'Big men like you', the robbers were reported to have complained, 'should be ashamed to go out with only fifteen cents in their pockets'⁷⁹. In 1937 another victim died as a result of such an attack⁸⁰. Later that year Gujarati merchants wrote to the *Herald* complaining that 'during busy hours a gang of thieves armed with sticks and knives, loaf about the bazaar and carry on their profession without any fear of being apprehended and that the situation is going from bad to worse'⁸¹. 'The recent development', wrote the editor the previous week, 'is that robbery takes place in broad daylight and any attempt to chase a thief is answered by him with violence'⁸².
- 31 Such attacks were by no means restricted to Uhindini. Certain areas in the African township also became particularly feared because of the high incidence of robberies occurring there. Ilala Road was one such place, which, according to a letter in *Kwetu*, had 'been infiltrated by enemies who perpetrate violence'⁸³. Meanwhile, Mnazi Mmoja – the open space situated between Zones II and III comprising both recreation grounds

and remnant bush – was perhaps the most notorious haunt of muggers in the British colonial period. Kichwele Street, which bisected Mnazi Mmoja connecting Uhindini with Kariakoo, was, according to a correspondent to the *Standard* in 1949, ‘infested with thieves who take advantage of the poor lighting’⁸⁴. Both Africans and Indians, men and women, formed their prey. Complaints were made, for example, in *Zuhra* (a Swahili newspaper) in February 1951 that *wahunu* (hooligans) were hanging around Mnazi Mmoja (and *Tuwa tugawe* – see below) following women returning from the cinema and attacking them⁸⁵. Mkunguni Steet, which ran across the upper end of Mnazi Mmoja, was even more notorious. In a 1950 letter to the *Standard*, ‘Unprotected’ complained that ‘[d]ozens of robberies have taken place in this vicinity, so that the area in question has come to be known as ‘*Tuwa tugawe*’ which means ‘put it down and let us divide’⁸⁶. The notoriety of Mnazi Mmoja, and *Tuwa tugawe* in particular, was also recollected by oral informants:

At Mnazi Mmoja it was a gang, not an individual, consisting of young people in a kind of alliance. They were jobless idlers who had turned to crime. They stayed not exactly at Mnazi Mmoja but at a place known as *Tuwa tugawe*. If they wanted to rob you, at first just one of them would attack and then others – hiding nearby – would help him if he needed it⁸⁷.

- 32 While Uzunguni continued to be better policed than the African or Indian quarters, this did not mean Europeans in Dar es Salaam were not beginning to fall victim to ‘muggings’ or ‘snatchings’ themselves. After the Second World War, reports in the *Standard* of thefts from Europeans grew more frequent. After two failed attempts of bag-snatching from Europeans in 1946, the paper reported that this offence was on the increase. Two separate incidents were reported in 1948 in which European women had been attacked on Ocean Road, one of them being threatened with a knife. Whether the timing of this phenomenon had anything to do with a lessening of European prestige amongst the African population is unclear. Within a decade though, bag-snatching and attacks on women had become common enough to lead to nurses at a Kinondoni hostel being taught self-defence to protect themselves against assailants⁸⁸.

A criminal economy?

- 33 The concentration of population and wealth in Dar es Salaam appears to have led to the emergence of a criminal network exploiting the multifarious opportunities for illicit gain present in the capital. This network consisted of various criminal types engaging in the illegal acquisition, receipt and distribution of property. It hinged around the market for illicit goods. Links with areas beyond Dar es Salaam were often vital to the various groups taking advantage of these opportunities. Such links were especially apparent in the disposal of stolen goods. According to Baker, the steamer service to Zanzibar formed ‘an ideal outlet for stolen property’⁸⁹. The Commissioner of Police bemoaned the difficulty of dealing with theft cases resulting from ‘the proximity of Zanzibar and the facilities which are offered for transporting the proceeds of thefts and burglaries for disposal in that island, often before the theft has been reported’⁹⁰. A more common means of disposal, however, was through receivers in Dar es Salaam itself. Receivers were considered to play an important role in the incidence of thefts and burglaries. In the 1927 police report it was observed that they were ‘undoubtedly the instigators of a large proportion of the thefts of property by old offenders among the natives in the townships... [who] turn their attention to such articles as are likely to

obtain a ready sale with the receivers'⁹¹. Three decades later, the *Standard* was attaching 'still more blame to those dregs of human society who go by the name of receivers, without whom the disposal of stolen property would be a difficult and most hazardous process for thieves'⁹². 'Irreparable harm is done through the dealings of receivers', complained magistrate McPhillips in 1954, 'and our prisons are full of many who would not be there but for the[m]'⁹³.

- 34 Amongst Africans, resentment was voiced towards the numerous pawn-brokers that existed in the town, with whom – knowingly or otherwise – stolen property was frequently deposited. 'These shops', wrote Mary Margaret Mkambe to the *Standard* in 1944, are consuming the wealth of the resident African community; encourage theft, burglary and smuggling⁹⁴. Between 1928 and 1940 the number of pawn shops increased from eight to fourteen, providing, according to DC Pike, a 'convenient and profitable method of getting rid of stolen goods'⁹⁵. In spite of calls for pawning to be more strictly controlled from both officials⁹⁶ and Africans⁹⁷ the number of pawn shops had by the mid-fifties increased to eighteen⁹⁸. All the shops were Indian-owned.
- 35 Judging by inter-war police reports it was also Indians, and to a lesser extent Arabs, who usually performed the role of out and out receiver in the 1920s and 1930s⁹⁹. And as late as 1954 a magistrate observed that this 'mean, low, despicable' offence was 'one most frequently practised by those who are not natives to this country, but whose very business and livelihood receiving has become'¹⁰⁰. As time went on though, it appears that more Africans acted as receivers. Three out of six individuals convicted of receiving in the second quarter of 1954 were African, two Indian, and one Arab¹⁰¹. In his notebook from the same year ASP Young records receiving information from one Mohamed Chande 'better known to the seamier side of Dar es Salaam as Kinyengu [Kinyenga?] a trader in stolen property'¹⁰². The Shark Market in Kariakoo was well known as a place where such individuals operated, auctioning clothes and other stolen items¹⁰³.
- 36 Men such as Kinyengu, along with those scrap dealers not averse to accepting items of dubious origin, also helped create a demand for the various types of scrap available to the resourceful urban scavenger. In an attempt to suppress the high incidence of such activity, in 1953 a warning was passed on through African officials that a ten year sentence would be passed on anyone found guilty of stealing items from the railway 'for sale as scrap metal'¹⁰⁴. It had negligible impact. In sentencing Ali Mwinyishehe for stealing 21lbs. of iron from the docks six years later, the Resident Magistrate observed that 'theft of scrap iron from the yards of the East African Railways and Harbours... [was] a thriving industry from which many people make a dishonest living.' The theft of telephone wire and electrical cable, which in the 1960s and 1970s went on to become a serious problem in Dar es Salaam, was first reported in 1952, when as much as three-quarters of a mile of wire was stolen from poles in Kichwele Street¹⁰⁵. According to a police report three years later, 'serious thefts of telephone wire were taking place', whilst a spate of thefts of stop-cocks and water meters at one time threatened the town's water supply¹⁰⁶. The Assistant Superintendent of Police recommended that legislation be drawn up for the control of scrap metal dealers in the town. By the end of the colonial period theft of cables was beginning to assume its post-independence prevalence. In 1961, the *Standard* reported that over the previous two months almost eight miles of wire had been stolen. 'This vandalism', an editorial observed, 'is believed to be the work of a highly organised gang, which cuts up the wire into short lengths for

ease of transport and then disposes of it through scrap metal dealers, who pay about 50 cents a yard – a fraction of the value of scrap copper'¹⁰⁷. The paper considered that 'unscrupulous scrap metal dealers... [were] as guilty as those who carry out the thefts.'

- 37 The activities of receivers appeared to be connected to another common form of urban crime, that of theft from the workplace. In 1938 a port official noted that 'stealing from broken packages in the Port was taking place, and that there was liaison between the thieves and certain traders'¹⁰⁸. However, opportunistic theft was more prevalent. 'Petty theft is common in any dock area in the world,' observed Leslie, a colonial official who conducted a detailed social survey of the town in 1956, 'and this is no exception; pilfering from cargoes and from lorries is too easy to be ignored, and a man who refrained would be considered odd by his fellows'¹⁰⁹. Whether organised or opportunistic, theft from the workplace was certainly common. A newly appointed Acting Resident Magistrate was told on his appointment in 1948 that it was customary to impose harsh sentences on dockworkers found guilty of thefts in order to discourage stealing. He found, however, that severe sentences in 'no way acted as a deterrent and cases continue to come before me daily in which dock labourers and coolies are charged with stealing small articles either from ships or the custom sheds'¹¹⁰.
- 38 Depredations by employees were also common outside the port. In analysing records of the Probation service in his survey, Leslie found the biggest group of all offenders were 'unskilled labourers, who usually fell from grace while loading or unloading a lorry, from which they acquired some item of cargo'¹¹¹. In 1950, a railways official wrote to the Chief Secretary drawing his attention to the 'numerous thefts of consignments... and to the increase in lawlessness in and near Dar es Salaam'¹¹². Compensation payments made by the East African Railways in January alone totalled £3,247, which exceeded the total for the whole of the previous year, and was over twice as much as the figure recorded in 1945. In the preceding half-decade, theft from the railways appears to have gradually, though inexorably, escalated, with compensation payments increasing from £1,371 in 1945 to £3,203 in 1949. Three years later, an amendment to the penal code making new provision regarding the unlawful possession of Government, railway and service stores was deemed necessary to combat the 'prevalence of thefts of railway and other public stores in the Territory'¹¹³.
- 39 Perhaps the most widespread form of theft from the workplace was that of stealing by servants. It is difficult to gauge the incidence of such thefts. Many, such as the occasional theft of foodstuffs, no doubt went undiscovered, and even in cases where missing items were noticed it is likely that employers often declined to press charges, particularly when items stolen were of little value. Nevertheless, by 1952 between 70-90 cases of theft by servants were being reported to the police in Dar es Salaam each month¹¹⁴. 'Thefts by people holding positions of trust are widespread', complained the Resident Magistrate in sentencing Samuel bin Guli for the theft of money and clothing from his employer later the same year¹¹⁵. There is also evidence that professional criminals were by the 1950s – if not earlier – forging links with household domestics to gain entry into employers' houses. After a spate of burglaries in Oyster Bay in 1957 in which burglars gained entry with the use of keys, particular suspicion fell upon house servants. In round ups in the area during 'the hours of darkness' twelve servants were found in possession of keys to their employers' houses¹¹⁶. An earlier editorial in the *Standard* ascribed such offences to a 'black market' in employers' references¹¹⁷.

40 Professional criminals can be linked with another form of urban crime which became increasingly common in the colonial period: bicycle theft. As cycle ownership grew significantly from the 1940s, the incidence of reported thefts became commonplace. Between May 1946 and May 1947 155 bicycles were reported stolen in Dar es Salaam – about 3 per week¹¹⁸. The following year police recommended more care and use of padlocks ‘due to the large number of cycle thefts which are occurring in Dar es Salaam’¹¹⁹. When the use of locks became more common, however, thieves armed themselves with sets of keys and small hacksaws¹²⁰. By 1953 the number had increased to around one a day. In September that year, the Assistant Commissioner of Police announced that a special Bicycle Squad was operating ‘at the most vulnerable points in town’, but that despite their efforts ‘bicycles are stolen indiscriminately throughout the area’¹²¹. Indeed, the introduction of the Bicycle Squad was actually followed by a substantial increase in the number of thefts, with 487 being reported in the twelve months from October 1953. The response was an intensification in operations against known thieves – as well as ‘all loiterers’ at common theft sites who were ‘picked up and searched for cycle stealing implements’¹²². If the 81 known bicycle thieves in Dar es Salaam, the 65 not then in prison were, according to the Assistant Commissioner, ‘being continuously harassed’¹²³. And in the course of 1954 a remarkable 5,986 bicycles were checked by police to see if they were stolen – around a third of all licensed bikes in the town¹²⁴. Such methods had an immediate impact. In 1955 the total number of bicycles reported stolen went down to 334, and in the first quarter of 1956 the number decreased further to just 54. As with other types of property crime in Dar es Salaam, however, after a mid-fifties respite bike thefts resumed their upward trend reaching one a day again by early 1958¹²⁵.

Opportunists and old lags: the Dar es Salaam criminal

41 Little idea has so far been gleaned of the identity of the offenders. Recent historical research into crime in Britain has revealed the notion of a criminal class living outside mainstream society to be a spurious one. Rather, the conclusion has been reached that in fact ‘no clear distinction can be made between a dishonest criminal class and a poor but honest working class’¹²⁶. It appears that the same was true of colonial Dar es Salaam. Leslie, in the only surviving analysis of criminal records in Dar es Salaam from the British period, found there was little to distinguish offenders from the general urban population¹²⁷. The proportion of Muslim offenders was slightly larger than that of the population as a whole, pointing to coastal districts of origin for offenders, but the discrepancy was negligible; 92 percent compared to 87 percent. Single men were slightly more likely to turn to crime (64 percent of offenders as against 39 percent of the general population), although over half of those offenders in the sample considered for probation actually lived with wives, children or other relatives and two-thirds of those sentenced to imprisonment had relatives in Dar es Salaam. In analysing the length of residence of criminals it was found that those of short residence in the town provided more than their share, although overall the bulk of offenders were drawn from long-term residents. Neither was it possible to detect some distinguishing features from the work record. From the sample of nine hundred offenders a quarter had an average of under six months a job, half averaged between six months and three years a job, and a fifth averaged more than three years. Twelve percent had no paid employment at the time of conviction. Neither length of employment nor the receipt of

a better wage, Leslie observed, was a 'guarantee that a man will not succumb to the sudden temptation, often for trifling gain'¹²⁸. Indeed, in reviewing the available statistics Leslie surmised that:

The rather depressing conclusion to be drawn from these figures is that there is comparatively little difference in the circumstances and background of the three classes – the recidivists, the first offenders and the general public. There is a small bias towards crime of those with rather less pay, less work, less family responsibility and less continuity; but it is a small one¹²⁹.

- 42 Nor was location a guide. Leslie found just as much difficulty distinguishing criminals by area of residence as he had by social type. Some areas in the town did happen to develop an unsavoury reputation, becoming associated as the haunts of criminals. From early on Kisutu was considered a location favoured by offenders, as well as being Dar es Salaam's principal red light area. The Commissioner of Police, writing in 1935 after complaints in the Indian press¹³⁰, complained that

This settlement has always been a source of concern to the police, as it lies conveniently situated between the residential area and the native area and undoubtedly affords cover to thieves on their expeditions to the non-native area¹³¹.

- 43 Unlike other African residential areas in Zone II, Kisutu escaped demolition, and continued to be known as a thieves' haven throughout the colonial period, although its notoriety was never as pronounced as it became after independence, before finally being demolished in 1974¹³². Going on convictions reported in the *Tanganyika Standard* in the 1950s, Buguruni was another part of town which had a larger than normal criminal element either living or operating in it. By the early 1960s it had, according to Ishumi, become known as Alabama 'on account of its long record of urban crime'¹³³. Oral informants also remember Buguruni as having acquired a reputation as being 'quite a notorious area' in the late colonial period (not only as a result of a serious riot that occurred there in 1959)¹³⁴. As a minimally policed 'urban village' on the outskirts of town, it is perhaps not surprising if Buguruni was used as a place of residence by criminals (as well as a location to pursue their illegal activities). While Kisutu and Buguruni may have acquired reputations as being the haunts of criminals, however, the evidence we have is impressionistic. In his analysis of criminal records Leslie could detect 'no noticeable concentration of [offenders] in any one area of town; the proportion living in each tallied well with the figures for the whole population'¹³⁵. Indeed, an indication of the general prevalence of criminality amongst Dar es Salaam's population as a whole can perhaps be gleaned from the outcome of a raid conducted in early 1958. '[O]f a total of 331 checked', the Assistant Commissioner of Police reported, 'about one third were breaking the law in some manner in an area selected at random, and without special information regarding its inhabitants'¹³⁶.

- 44 While it was difficult to distinguish criminals by social type from the general population, a core of repeat offenders, who appeared to have turned to crime as a profession, was present in Dar es Salaam from relatively early on. The earliest surviving statistics on recidivism amongst detainees in Dar es Salaam (from 1927) numbers 132 recidivists out of a total of 892 convicts; a proportion of 14 percent¹³⁷. The average percentage of recidivists in the 1930s as a whole was just under 35 percent. Interestingly, over the following years the number of first time offenders, and those with just one previous conviction, increased at a greater rate than the number of recidivists. In the first half of the 1950s the average percentage amongst all those admitted to Dar es Salaam prisons was down to just 19 percent. Even the actual number

of recidivists, considering the rapid growth of both the town itself and crime within it, grew at a remarkably slow rate: the 337 of 1933 actually outnumbering the 316 admitted to Dar es Salaam's prisons twenty years later. While increasingly professional criminals were emerging by the 1950s, the vast majority of crime remained unorganised. In the final year for which statistics are available recidivists made up just 21 percent of admissions to Ukonga prison. This relatively slight number of recidivists would have made up the hard-core of Dar es Salaam's underworld, such as it was. Whilst numerically small, the activities of this group of hardened offenders formed the principle source of anxiety for the inhabitants and administrators of Dar es Salaam.

- 45 That there were professional criminals in Dar es Salaam was apparent from the earliest years of British rule. On several occasions between the wars the simultaneous release of a number of ex-convicts was held responsible for a mini wave of housebreaking in the capital¹³⁸. The situation was exacerbated by prisoners from the rural part of the district staying in the capital on release from prison¹³⁹. Attempts were made to prevent ex-convicts remaining in Dar es Salaam. It was not always a straightforward matter, however. 'Machinery is provided', the Commissioner observed in his 1926 report, 'for repatriating such persons to their homes and such action is invariably taken by the prison authorities, but it is surprising how many of the habitual criminals belong to the town'.
- 46 At least the small numbers involved in serious crime meant that the situation in Dar es Salaam was containable. The recidivism rates appeared to confirm that the control of a relatively small number of hardened criminals was the key to crime prevention. This was borne out for the Superintendent of Police in the early 1940s, who ascribed the reduction of reported crime at this time in part to '[t]he successful conviction before High Court of an appreciable number of old offenders, who are the instigators of crime, which has been a marked achievement during the past year¹⁴⁰.' By the mid-1950s a system of supervision was in place in which known criminals had to report daily to a local police station, although this regime was insufficiently strict for the Assistant Commissioner who argued for a night-time curfew for all supervisees¹⁴¹. The numbers reporting to police were relatively modest; between 26 and 43 in 1954/55¹⁴². These constituted 'the hard core of the criminal element'¹⁴³. Whilst, at any one time, the number of supervisees was small there was a relatively high degree of re-convictions. In the first quarter of 1955, for example, 11 of the 43 persons being supervised returned to prison. It is perhaps easier to get a grasp of the activities of this 'hard core' by turning to examples of individual cases.
- 47 As early as 1922, the *Dar es Salaam Times* reported the conviction of one Musa bin Hassani for housebreaking and stealing. In the short period of British rule up till then, he had already acquired three previous convictions¹⁴⁴. Two years later, the same paper was reporting a seven year sentence received by Mahomed bin Mursal for housebreaking, theft and assault. Mursal had acquired six previous convictions under British rule¹⁴⁵. The police report of 1927 recorded the arrest of another persistent offender who had an inter-territorial range of activity: Ali bin Sefu, who had been convicted of five previous housebreakings in Zanzibar, and had relocated to Dar es Salaam and Tanga, a town on the coast to the north of the capital, where he had committed several burglaries¹⁴⁶. The most notorious of inter-war criminals, though, was Omari bin Masua, a Bajuni who made his way to Dar es Salaam from his home district of Mombasa, in neighbouring Kenya Colony¹⁴⁷. He was first singled out by the

Tanganyika Herald – described as an ‘old convict’ – in November 1932, after his escape from jail and his subsequent recapture, prior to which he was ‘alleged to have committed a number of burglaries’. Six months later Masua escaped once again and committed at least two fresh burglaries before being re-arrested at Kilwa Kisiwani, on the southern Tanganyika coast. Later that year he was tried and convicted on four counts; entry into a King’s African Rifles officer’s house, two counts of theft, and escape from jail, receiving six months for each charge, which brought the time he had to serve up to ten years. Just 18 months into his incarceration, to the apparent delight of sections of the African population, he escaped once again. Masua was declared ‘Public Enemy Number One’ and considerable police resources were devoted to his recapture. The African community of Dar es Salaam was said to be abuzz with rumours about his whereabouts and future movements. Three detachments of police were engaged in his pursuit north through Bagamoyo and Tanga districts. In early March, Masua turned up in Mombasa, where a police officer recognised him walking down a central street in the town and attempted to effect his arrest. Masua responded violently, knifing Sub-Inspector Abdalla Said in the face, before making good his escape. Three hundred shillings was offered for information leading to his arrest. According to the *Mombasa Times*, however, Masua once again ‘vanished into thin air’. He moved further north still, to Kismayu in Somaliland. Here he was apprehended in mid-April by the Italian authorities. Once again Masua got the better of his captors. ‘Like love,’ declared the *Tanganyika Standard* in the wake of his latest escape, ‘Omari laughs at locksmiths.’ It was not until the following month that Masua’s peregrinations of the East African littoral were finally ended, when he was wounded in a shoot-out with Italian police after being caught breaking into a European house in Kismayu¹⁴⁸.

- 48 It is not clear to what extent Masua was, in his sphere of activity, representative of a broader group of criminals operational along the Swahili coast. Both he and Ali bin Sefu obviously travelled widely in pursuit of criminal opportunities. Meanwhile, the 1926 police report complained that ‘the difficulties in the way of intercepting... stolen property are insuperable, as the thieves travel by *Dhows* and often from ports other than Dar es Salaam.’ Experienced criminals on the Swahili coast were clearly willing and able to relocate when a particular town got ‘too hot’. Criminals who operated inter-territorially were probably uncommon. However, the activities of Masua and Sefu indicate the presence of a criminal type that was the source of particular anxiety.
- 49 By the second half of the British colonial period, the arrest and conviction of offenders with substantial criminal records were being reported. In November 1942, Hamisi bin Punje (alias Mohammed bin Omari) was given a seven year sentence for breaking into the house of a European police officer. This brought the total number of years to which he had been sentenced to imprisonment between 1918 and 1942 to thirty three¹⁴⁹. Issa bin Abdallah (alias Selemani bin Abdallah), convicted of burglary and stealing in 1957, had an equally long criminal career, with a list of previous convictions that ran ‘almost continuously’ from 1935 to 1956¹⁵⁰. Similarly Hassani Abdullah, convicted on five charges of ‘highway robberies’ in 1960, was found to have previous convictions stretching back to the 1940s¹⁵¹. Not only were criminals with long records emerging, but also prolific thieves were being uncovered and apprehended. Two ex-offenders – reporting to the police as supervisees – who were re-convicted in early 1953 had sixteen and fourteen previous convictions each¹⁵². In August 1960, Juma Saidi, received a 21 year sentence for the grand total of 35 offences in the Oyster Bay area of Dar es Salaam¹⁵³. Six years earlier, the ‘notorious thief’ Augustino Yusif was active enough for

a noticeable reduction in the number of breakings in the town to have been attributed to his arrest¹⁵⁴.

- 50 In addition to rates of recidivism, a further measure of the degree to which crime becomes professionalised is the extent of co-operation between criminals. In the case of Dar es Salaam, it is noteworthy that organised crime was at an extremely low level throughout the colonial period, criminals tending to operate singly or in pairs, although this appeared to be changing towards the end of the period when gang activity seems to have become much more common. There is some evidence of criminals collaborating in their activities in the earliest years of British rule, however it is sporadic and the crimes committed inconsequential (the notable exception being the 1931 hold up at Kassavji Anandji & Co.)¹⁵⁵. It was not until after the Second World War that more widespread and serious gang activity in Dar es Salaam began to be recorded. It was most prominent – in the form of petty crime – in the vicinity of Mnazi Mmoja, which by this time had become a rather notorious area thanks to the predatory activities of loosely organised groups of muggers (see above). A greater degree of co-operation in house- and shop-breakings was also beginning to emerge. Three gangs of burglars operating in the Oyster Bay area were broken up by the police in 1953¹⁵⁶. An increase of 170 breakings in the last quarter of 1954 was attributed to the actions of numerous small gangs. ‘Every effort’, the Assistant Commissioner of Police reported, ‘is being made to exterminate these gangs’¹⁵⁷. The following quarter he was able to record nine convictions resulting from police infiltration of gangs, although by its very success this method of policing had subsequently been ruled out for the foreseeable future¹⁵⁸. Intensified police activity, however, was failing to prevent a trend towards more organised crime, which by the final years of colonial rule appears to have reached a peak. In 1960 the Commissioner of Police bemoaned the increase in motorised gangs. Meanwhile, towards the end of the 1950s, newspaper reports on the activities of armed gangs became increasingly common. In 1959, the *Standard* reported that a woman was fatally injured by a gang armed with *pangas* in the course of a housebreaking in Kinondoni¹⁵⁹. The following year, in Ubungo, an Arab was stabbed in the course of a raid on his *duka* by a gang of Africans. In the preceding six weeks eleven such attacks had taken place on Arab shops on the outskirts of town¹⁶⁰. The leader of one of these gangs was sentenced to a total of sixty seven years in April 1961, having been convicted on thirty three charges relating to a series of raids on shops in Dar es Salaam, Kisarawe and Morogoro¹⁶¹.
- 51 The wide sphere of operation of this gang was another indication of the increasing sophistication of criminals in Tanganyika. Increasingly they switched areas of activity as circumstances allowed. The District Commissioner of Bagamoyo in 1941, for example, blamed a crime-wave on a number of recidivists ‘who have made Dar es Salaam or Zanzibar too hot for themselves and who spend a while in Bagamoyo picking up easy money’¹⁶². Similarly, two years later, the Ruvu and Kikonga sisal estates, situated just to the east of the capital, were identified as being used as havens by criminals from Dar es Salaam¹⁶³. Indeed, the Ruvu minor settlement and nearby Ngeta Kikonga were somewhat notorious locations in themselves, singled out by a district official two years earlier as ‘one of the worst areas in the district from the point of view of crime’¹⁶⁴. Ruvu was home to receivers of stolen property and also served as headquarters to one or two gangs led, according to the official, by ‘such well known criminals’ as Idi Mwinyikondo (alias Idi Benafiri) and his brother Mzee Mwinyikondo (or Benafiri)¹⁶⁵. It is highly likely that these Ruvu gangs were linked to criminal activity

occurring in the capital. It is equally likely that they were implicated in crime associated with the central railway line which passed through Ruvu. The presence of professional pickpockets there, using Ruvu as a base whilst they 'worked' the passenger trains, was commented upon by the Provincial Commissioner in 1942¹⁶⁶. Eight years later, a Dar es Salaam railways official wrote complaining of 'the numerous thefts of consignments from wagons en route from Dar es Salaam to up-country stations'¹⁶⁷. He reported the activities of an organised gang armed with firearms operating in the district, stealing goods from trains. Thirteen persons were arrested in connection with one incident in January 1950, four of whom were railway employees. In October that year, a further series of burglaries along the railway line culminated in the death of an Indian railway official¹⁶⁸. Another instance of the criminal links being forged between Dar es Salaam and its hinterland was a flourishing trade in stolen bicycles¹⁶⁹.

Conclusion

- 52 Tanzania won independence in December 1961. The achievement of African majority rule brought in its wake both continuity and change, though focusing as we are on the urban arena and the incidence of crime within it, it is the long term trajectories that are most marked. Dar es Salaam continued to grow at an extraordinary pace, whilst the urban economy – or more specifically, the formal economy – failed to expand sufficiently fast to provide all its burgeoning population with jobs, homes and services¹⁷⁰. To post-colonial politicians and officials, like their colonial predecessors, this seemed a recipe for escalating criminality. Superficially, at least, such fears were borne out. Post-colonial Dar es Salaam has witnessed an escalation of crime, which has also become increasingly sophisticated and is often of a more serious nature. Organised crime, which was rare under colonial rule, proliferated after independence with newspaper reports of gang activity growing in frequency¹⁷¹. The value of property stolen and the methods employed to obtain it often bore the mark of a more professional criminal culture. By the 1990s, the gun-wielding car-jacker had become a contemporary counterpart of the colonial bicycle thief.
- 53 We should be careful not to jump to assumptions linking urbanisation with criminality, however. Interestingly, what evidence we have actually points to the (territorial) proportion of crime committed in twentieth-century Dar es Salaam having decreased¹⁷². In 1931 it was calculated that 38 per cent of all criminal cases occurred in Dar es Salaam; a recent survey put Dar es Salaam's proportion of all reported crime incidents in 1996 at just 26 per cent – despite the fact that the city accounted for around 7.5 percent of the national population at the century's end, compared to less than one percent in 1931¹⁷³. In assessing rates of criminality it is clearly important to relate surviving crime statistics to those recording the growth of the urban population. Indeed, information that has survived on crime in late-colonial Dar es Salaam also suggests that the 'common sense' association of urbanisation and crime, favoured by many colonial and post-colonial observers, is by no means self evident. If we take the number of preventable cases dealt with by Dar es Salaam police, we find that the incidence of crime actually appears to have slightly decreased between 1954-9, with one case for every 25 urban inhabitants in 1951 compared to one for every 29 by the end of the decade¹⁷⁴. With the capital growing at the rate it did from c.1939, urban crime rates inevitably rose. Commonly expressed anxieties about crime and

urbanisation probably reflected this increased incidence rather than a growing tendency to criminality. Given the high degrees of poverty, unemployment and inequality, alongside the novelty of large scale urbanisation in the region, it is the relative absence of serious crime rather than its increasing incidence that is perhaps the most noteworthy feature of both colonial and post-colonial Dar es Salaam¹⁷⁵.

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NOTES

1. *Jamii ya wahalifu* is a Swahili phrase that translates roughly as 'the underworld'. The former colonial territory of Tanganyika is today known as Tanzania, adopting the name after its merger with the islands of Zanzibar in 1964.
2. One aspect of this increasing criminality, the interaction between political and criminal cultures has begun to receive increasing attention in the work of political scientists. See eg., Bayart, Ellis, Hibou (1999); Chabal, Daloz (1999).
3. For exceptions, see Isaacman, (1977); Crumney (1986); Anderson (1986); Iliffe (1987, pp. 175-176 *et passim*); Throup (1987, chapter 8); Heap (1997); Anderson (2004, [f/c], chapter 5); Fourchard (forthcoming). Also there is a growing historiography of crime in South Africa, where the 'colonial' presence both pre-dated and outlasted that in most other parts of the continent, and whose historical trajectory was therefore quite distinct. The trail was blazed by Charles van Onselen in the excellent *New Babylon/New Nineveh*. See also egs., Bonner (1993); Kynoch (1999); Glaser (2000).
4. Anderson (1986); for the historical exposition of the 'enlargement of scale', see Iliffe (1979).
5. In relation to property crime this feature is perhaps most marked in relation to the increasing number of references to Kenyan criminals active in the city from the 1950s, but more especially in the post-colonial period (eg. *The Standard*, 8th September 1970). For a discussion of drugs in contemporary Dar es Salaam that provides another example of this illicit 'enlargement of scale', see Moyer (2003), chapter 9.
6. See Burton (2005).
7. See egs., Coplan (1985) for the former; and Glaser (2000) for the latter.
8. Compare, for example, the attitudes of dockworkers in eighteenth century London, as discussed by Linebaugh (1991), and colonial Tanga, as discussed by Kaijage (2000), toward the appropriation of cargo. For the moral economy in rural Kenya, see Anderson (1986); for a discussion of African attitudes towards property, in Dar es Salaam see Burton (2005), chapter 6.
9. See eg., Glaser's (2000) discussion of sources, pp. 12-15.
10. While particular forms of behaviour and dress make the *Tsotsi* an easily identifiable subject of historical analysis, who exactly constituted the *Wahuni* is by no means clear; the term reflecting concerns over the social process of urbanisation as much as it identifies a particular (nebulous) social group. See Burton (2005); for the *Tsotsi*, see *ibid.*; and *Jaguda*, Heap (1997).
11. For an extended discussion, see Burton (2005), chapter 6.
12. Pre-colonial East African societies were overwhelmingly rural, though there is some evidence of urban concentration inland and more especially along the coast, where Swahili culture was urban-focused. For a discussion, see Burton (2002a).

13. Dar es Salaam grew at an annual average rate of over 6 percent from the 1940s. See Burton (2005), introduction and chapter 10.
14. The majority of the urban population – over 80 percent of the workforce in 1931 – could not read or write.
15. See Burton (in preparation).
16. Waged employment on plantations and in mines was also relatively common in Tanganyika, however, Africans appear to have preferred the relative freedom offered by the town – and the better wages (though urban workers were mostly required to provide for their own subsistence and accommodation).
17. The almost complete absence of surviving evidence of female offenders in colonial Dar es Salaam is striking.
18. The Indian population was sub-divided into a number of highly integrated religious communities – the main ones being the Hindus and the predominant Ismaili, Ithnasheri and Bohora Muslims.
19. Antipathy towards African urbanisation, the administrative response and criminalisation of urban Africans lie at the heart of Burton (2005).
20. The quote is from *The Condition of the Working Class*, cited in Crumney (1986, p. 3).
21. Clinard, Abbott (1973, p. 36); Van Onselen (2001), McCracken (1986, p. 135); Iliffe (1987, pp. 17 & 189); Kynoch (1999); Glaser (2000) p. 138 *et passim*.
22. As occurred in 1957, when Maganga Mnameta – caught stealing merely a bundle of clothing from a house in Buguruni – was tied up and beaten to death by a mob. *Tanzania Standard (TS)*, 16th November 1957, p.1. In Dar es Salaam and other African cities, these gruesome lynchings have since independence become an increasingly common response to the growth of urban crime. For a recent example, see *Daily News (DN)*, 29th September 2003, p.3.
23. The one individual who approached ‘social bandit’ status was Omari bin Masua, whose activities in the early-1930s won the approval of Africans in Dar es Salaam. However, his criminal career was probably motivated more by the mundanely material than by any desire to redress colonial wrongs. For social banditry, see Hobsbawm (1985); and for Africa, Crumney (1986).
24. Van Onselen comes to similar conclusions about criminals on the Rand (2001, p. 397); as does Fourchard (2003), writing on Ibadan.
25. Blackwell (1971, p. 213). See Merton’s theories as having relevance in the Tanzanian context. However, he cautions that crime could be equally plausibly be attributed to the simple need to survive in a society in transition.
26. The phrase is from Friedman (1993).
27. Paterson, ‘Report’, p. 2; see also Leslie (1963, p. 4).
28. Iliffe (1979, pp. 388–389). Although careful interpretation of colonial records leads one to the conclusion that the township of Dar es Salaam was more an undeveloped than a disorderly place.
29. Van Onselen (2001, p. 377) notes how the enforcement of the pass laws impacted upon crime on the Witwatersrand providing recruits for the ‘Ninevites’ gang.
30. The dearth of historical sources in tropical Africa should be stressed to western historians accustomed to relatively extensive data in the form of not only official records, but also numerous non-official sources such as newspapers and diaries. Research on colonial Africa is also complicated by the nature of the data that has survived. With literacy being relatively uncommon among Africans at this time, the bulk of the material reflects the official view. As a result, innovative and important schools employing oral historiography and discourse analysis of colonial sources have emerged in Africanist scholarship.
31. Clinard, Abbott (1973, p. 36).
32. Iliffe (1987, p. 176).
33. Clinard, Abbott (1973, pp. 36; 257).

34. 1924 Police Annual Report (AR), departmental annual reports can be found in the Public Records Office (PRO), London, accession CO/736.
35. TS, 1st March 1952, p. 1.
36. The following section contains a discussion of how contemporary observers accounted for the growth of crime in colonial Dar es Salaam. For an analysis of the situation in Nairobi that highlights markedly similar factors – urbanisation, the diminishing influence of communal sanctions, unemployment and low wages – see Throup (1992, p. 132).
37. Dar es Salaam District Annual Report (DAR) for 1931, p.7, unless otherwise indicated DARs are in Tanzania National Archive (TNA)/53.4.
38. Memo. no.68, 6th May 1952, TNA/21616/Vol.III.
39. DAR for 1919-20, p.9, TNA/1733:1.
40. 1921 DAR, p.8 TNA/54.
41. *Tanganyika Opinion* (TO), 20th November 1937, p. 7.
42. Baker, 'Memorandum on the Social Conditions of Dar es Salaam', 4th June 1931 (copy in the School of Oriental and African Studies [University of London] Special Collection), p. 94.
43. Kwetu, 26th March 1942, p. 7.
44. Some observations on the treatment of the offender against the law [in Tanganyika] by Alexander Paterson (1939), p.1, TNA/27062.
45. Mins of District Commissioners' conference, Eastern Province (EP), 2nd September 1946, TNA/61/502/1.
46. Sec. min., 26th August 1952, TNA/21963/Vol.1.
47. 1959 Police AR, p.45.
48. Due to the nature of the original research project from which this article has arisen – on the informal economy in Dar es Salaam – data collected was restricted to economic crimes. The foregoing discussion as a result contains no discussion of violent crime such as murder, assault or rape.
49. For discussion of sources in colonial Kenya see chapters by Anderson (1991) and Willis (1991).
50. In a study of crime amongst low income residents of Kampala shortly after independence it was found that 41 percent of those who had been the victim of a theft had not reported the offence to the police. Clinard, Abbott (1973, p. 24). For the Dar es Salaam police, see Burton (2003).
51. See eg., Emsley (1996, p. 26).
52. The foregoing discussion gives an account of criminal activity which is based on surviving colonial records. It shares the weaknesses of those records, which, without knowledge of how they were produced, are furthermore difficult to interpret. Nevertheless, as the main source of information about crime – however unreliable – statistics have been quoted in an attempt to convey an impression of the situation in Dar es Salaam. They should be treated as indicators of trends instead of a reliable guide to the extent of crime at any one time or in any one place.
53. Commissioner of Police (CP) to Chief Secretary (CS), 11th July 1932, TNA/18950/Vol.I; & 1929-31 Police ARs.
54. Baker, 'Social conditions', p. 93.
55. *Ibid.*, p. 96; and information in TNA/18950/Vol.II.
56. See Police ARs, 1941(p.10) and 1942 (p.19).
57. Police AR for 1939; & Judicial AR for 1946.
58. Uzaramo DAR for 1946, p.8, TNA/61/504/1/46.
59. Answers to D.K.Patel's questions in the Legco, December 1946, TNA/20219/Vol.II.
60. CP to CS, 14th August 1952, TNA/21963/Vol.II.
61. 1951 Dsm DAR, TNA/61/504/1/1951; Dsm Extra-Provincial Dist. Book Vol.V.I; PARs 1956-59; & Judicial Dept. ARs
62. See Burton (2002b); *idem* (2003).

63. *Dar es Salaam Times (DT)*, 9th June 1920, p. 5.
64. Letter from Dogberry, *TS*, 15th August 1931, p. 7.
65. Not only were Africans less likely to report crimes to the police, but also those that were reported were less likely to be recorded in the (European owned) *Times* than crimes against Europeans. Housing in the African areas was also much more vulnerable to being broken into. A common means of entry into African homes was for the burglar to simply tunnel underneath a wall or door. See eg. *DT*, 28th October 1922, p. 9.
66. *TO*, 5th August 1931, p. 8.
67. *TH*, 4th August 1931, p. 12.
68. See egs. *TH*, 14th July 1931, p.14; *TO*, 12th November 1937, p.4; extract from the *African Sentinel*, 1st March 1942, TNA/21963/Vol.II.
69. *TH*, 14th July 1931, p. 14.
70. *TS*, 1st March 1952, p. 1.
71. *TS*, 31st May 1952, p. 24.
72. CP to CS, 14th August 1952, TNA/21963/Vol.II.
73. *TS*, 1st March 1952, p. 1.
74. *TH*, 7th July 1934, p. 12.
75. *TH*, 23rd March 1935, p. 6.
76. 1926 Police AR, p. 37.
77. *TS*, 8th June 1935, p. 12.
78. *TS*, 13th December 1955.
79. *TH*, 11th August 1931, p. 9.
80. *TH*, 16th January 1937, p. 6.
81. *TH*, 20th November 1937, p. 3.
82. *TH*, 13th November 1937, p. 6.
83. *Kwetu*, 14th Jan. 1939, p. 29; quoted in Anthony p.191. See also, *TH*, 30th September 1933, p. 5; District Commissioner (DC) to Supt.Pol., Dsm, 4th May 1945, TNA/540/271/1.
84. *TS*, 9th April 1949, p. 9.
85. *Zuhra*, 3rd February 1951, TNA/540/21/8; see also *TS*, 13th February 1950.
86. Letter from 'Unprotected', 4th February 1950, TNA/20219/Vol.II; see also *TS*, 17th February 1950
87. Interview with Mwinyimvua Sultan, Amiri Mngamili and Hassan Mbwana, Buguruni kwa Malapa, Dar es Salaam, 9th July 1997.
88. Photo and caption, *TS*, 19th June 1957, p. 5.
89. The British-administered Zanzibar Protectorate, consisting of the islands of Zanzibar and Pemba, lay off the coast, about 50 kilometers from Dar es Salaam.
90. Baker, 'Memorandum', p.93; 1926 Police AR, p. 54.
91. 1927 Police AR, p. 49.
92. *TS*, 31st May 1952, p. 24.
93. *TS*, 2nd September 1954.
94. *TS*, 18th November 1944, p. 12.
95. Pike, 'Report', p. 16; Amendments by Baker to 'Memorandum', 10th January 1940, TNA/18950/Vol.II; PC Brett to CS, 5th May 1928, TNA/61/286/1, cited in Brennan (2002).
96. See, for example, Pike's report; or Baker's amendments in TNA/18950/Vol.II; or for a somewhat later eg. Quarterly Police Report (QPR), Dsm Dist., 1st July-30th September 1954; QPRs are in TNA/90/1011/Vol.1.
97. See egs., correspondence in *TS*, 18th November 1944; *TS*, 21st September 1946, p. 9.
98. Leslie (1964) p. 143. Whilst they continued to provide an outlet for stolen property (consciously so or otherwise), it should be stressed that the shops also performed an important legitimate role in the extension of credit to the impoverished urban populace as documented by

Leslie (pp. 142-147); just as they had done in working class communities in 18th and 19th century England (see Emsley (1996,p. 169)).

99. There are numerous references to Asian activity in this field in the annual police reports.

100. TS, 2nd September 1954.

101. QPR, Dsm Dist., 1st April-30th June 1954.

102. ASP R.W. Young's Personal Duty Diary, 29th January 1954, RH/Mss.Afr.s.2293.

103. DC Harris to CP, 14th May 1954, TNA/540/3/91.

104. Supt. EAR & H Police, Dsm, to OiC Central Police Station, (1953?), and following *Tanganazo*, TNA/540/21/8.

105. TS, 6th September 1952.

106. QPR, Dsm Dist., 1st January-31th March 1954.

107. TS, 29th May 1961, p. 2.

108. Mgr., Tanganyika Railways to CS, 24th March 1938, TNA/12402/Vol.1.

109. Leslie (1963, p. 239).

110. Ag. RM to Chief Justice, High Court, 7th April 1948, TNA/37512.

111. Leslie (1963,p. 208).

112. Regional Assistant, East African Railways & Harbours, to CS, 27th February 1950, TNA/20219/Vol.II.

113. TS, 2nd August 1952, p. 16.

114. TS, 1st March 1952, p. 1.

115. TS, 14th June 1952.

116. Asst. CP., Dsm to CP, 5th February 1957, TNA/90/2009/Vol.1.

117. TS, 5th April 1952.

118. TS, 8th September 1947.

119. TS, 18th December 1948, p. 3.

120. TS, 24th February 1958, p. 3.

121. QPR, Dsm Dist, 1st July-30th September 1953.

122. *Ibid.*, 1st April-30th June 1955.

123. *Ibid.*, 1st October-31th December 1954.

124. In 1957 there were 15,600 bicycles licensed in Dar es Salaam. TS, 24th February 1958, p. 3.

125. TS, 24th February 1952, p. 3.

126. *Ibid.*

127. Leslie (1963, pp. 205-208).

128. *Ibid.*, p. 208.

129. *Ibid.*

130. See TH, 23rd February 1935, p. 6.

131. CP to CS, 1st March 1935, TNA/23457.

132. See Burton (forthcoming).

133. Ishumi (1984, p. 84).

134. Interview with Mzee Bogora, Salum Kambi and Hassan Omari, Buguruni kwa Madenge, Dar es Salaam, 28th July 1997.

135. Leslie (1963, p. 207).

136. QPR, Dsm Dist., 1st April-30th June 1958. Though it should be stressed this is probably indicative more of the manner in which colonial legislation criminalised African activities and behaviour than the delinquency of the urban population.

137. Dar es Salaam (later Msasani, then Ukonga, both also located in the town) was the main prison for all coastal districts in Eastern Province, including Dar es Salaam itself.

138. 1926 Police AR, pp. 57/8; see also 1928, p. 18.

139. AO, Kisarawe to Provincial Commissioner (PC), EP, 27th October 1943, TNA/540/3/46.

140. Supt., Dsm to PC, EP, 15th February 1943, TNA/61/3/XVII.

141. QPR, Dsm Dist., 1st July-30th September 1954.
142. See QPRs, *ibid*.
143. *Ibid.*, 1st January-31th March 1955.
144. DT, 9th September 1922, p. 9.
145. DT, 13th September 1924.
146. 1927 Police AR, p. 42.
147. Possibly via Zanzibar: In evidence to an enquiry investigating a prison riot in Zanzibar in 1928 (Zanzibar National Archive File AB61/10), the escape of a juvenile delinquent named Omari bin Msuo in 1927 is reported. Variations in spelling were common at this time – particularly when recorded by European officials – and it seems likely that this delinquent was to grow up into the ‘old lag’ described in Tanganyika.
148. TH 8th November 1932, p. 6; 24th December 1932, p. 9; 5th June 1933, p. 11; 19th August 1933, p. 4; 2nd February 1935, p. 3; 9th February 1935, pp. 3 & 10. TS, 26th January 1935, p. 19; 23rd February 1935, p. 3; 2nd March 1935; 20th April 1935; 4th May 1935, p. 20.
149. TS, 27th November 1942, p. 8. The statistical discrepancy can be accounted for by the fact that criminals were often awarded separate sentences for offences committed in the same criminal case that ran concurrently.
150. TS, 29th March 1957.
151. TS, 9th September 1960.
152. QPR, Dsm Dist., 1st October-31th December 1953.
153. TS, 27th August 1960.
154. QPR, Dsm Dist., 1st July-30th September 1954.
155. See footnote 54 above.
156. QPR, Dsm Dist., 1st July-30th September.
157. *Ibid.*, 1st October-31th December 1954.
158. *Ibid.*, 1st January-31th March 1955.
159. TS, 25th February 1959, p. 1.
160. TS, 14th September 1960, p. 1.
161. TS, 7th April 1961, p. 3.
162. DC Bagamoyo to PC, EP, 13th May 1941, TNA/61/688/5.
163. DC, Dsm to SP, Dsm, 28th July 1944, TNA/540/21/8..
164. Political, Kisarawe to Political, Dsm, 12th March 1942 TNA/540/21/8..
165. ADO, Kisarawe to DC, Uzaramo, 3rd February 1942, TNA/540/21/8.
166. PC, EP to Crime, Dsm, 16th February 1942, TNA/540/21/8.
167. Regional Assistant, EAR & H to CS, 27th February 1950, TNA/20219/Vol.II.
168. 1950 EPAR.
169. See egs., QPRs; *Sunday News*, 14th August 1955.
170. Between 1967-1978 it was one of the fastest growing cities in the world with an annual average growth rate of 9.8 percent. See Burton (forthcoming) for a discussion of post-colonial urbanisation and the state’s response.
171. To take egs. from September 1970, see *The Standard* from the 7th, 11th and 14th September.
172. Although post-colonial crime statistics are even more unreliable (and scarce) than colonial statistics.
173. Of course the manner in which these statistics were collected complicates any meaningful comparison. Nevertheless, these figures are cited because they diverge so dramatically from what might be expected in a city undergoing rapid urbanisation. Andersson with Stavrou(2001, p. 11). The Dar es Salaam/national populations are worked out using Burton (2005, f/c) Appendix 1; Iliffe (1979, p. 315); and the latest census results (for 2002), which can be found at <http://www.tanzania.go.tz/censusf.html>.
174. See figure 3 in Burton (forthcoming).

175. This absence can most likely be attributed to the strength of familial and kinship relations in urban Africa, and in Dar es Salaam in particular. A recent survey in Tanzania recorded 'an impressive stock of social capital' amongst the population; furthermore, crime was found to attract negligible public concern – identified as a 'national problem' by just three percent of those surveyed, as opposed to sixty percent of South Africans and 28 percent of Malawians. (Afrobarometer (2001) – for the data on which this survey was based go to <http://www.afrobarometer.org>). In African cities where capitalist relations have penetrated more deeply and greater social atomisation appears to have occurred – notable examples being Nairobi, neighbouring Kenya's capital, and Johannesburg, in South Africa – the problem of criminality tends to be very serious indeed. A comparative study to assess the validity of this intuitive truth would be of especial value.

ABSTRACTS

This article contains a description of the growth of a 'modern' criminal culture in Dar es Salaam under British rule. It provides an analysis of the possible causes of increasing criminality in colonial Tanganyika: including urbanisation, shifting definitions of criminality arising from state intervention, the penetration of the cash nexus and economic differentiation. The growth and changing shape of property crime in the city are outlined, as are the emerging criminal networks that helped foster this phenomenon. This is followed by a discussion of the nature of those individuals engaging in crime, assessing the extent to which a 'professional' criminal type emerged. Neither the incidence or nature of crime in colonial Dar es Salaam were particularly grave, however, it is hoped that as an example of locally unprecedented forms of criminality emerging in a novel (colonial) socio-economic context the article will be of comparative use to historians of crime elsewhere in Africa and further afield.

Cet article présente une description du développement d'une culture délinquante « moderne » à Dar es Salaam, sous domination britannique. Il fournit une analyse des causes possibles de la croissance de la criminalité dans le Tanganyika colonial, qui prend en considération l'urbanisation, le glissement dans la définition de la criminalité qui résulte de l'intervention de l'État, la pénétration d'une économie monétarisée et différenciée. L'article décrit la montée et la transformation des atteintes aux biens dans la ville, ainsi que l'émergence des réseaux criminels qui ont favorisé cette évolution. Suit une discussion sur la nature des individus engagés dans la criminalité et une évaluation du degré de « professionnalisation » des délinquants. Toutefois bien que la criminalité à Dar es Salaam ne fût réellement grave ni par son incidence, ni par sa nature, l'auteur espère que cet exemple de l'apparition de formes de criminalité jusqu'alors inconnues localement, dans un contexte socio-économique colonial nouveau, aura un intérêt comparatif pour les historiens du crime ailleurs en Afrique et dans d'autres contrées.

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