

**“THE PROBLEMS OF SICKNESS FOLLOW ME”: EMBODIED STRUCTURAL
VIOLENCE AND SOCIAL SUFFERING AMONG SINGLE MOTHERS IN POST-
SOCIALIST TANZANIA**

by

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Abstract

This thesis seeks to better understand the pervasiveness of suffering amongst poor single Tanzanian mothers in times of severe economic austerity following the implementation of IMF/World Bank neoliberal structural adjustment policies. These policies, which restructured the economy through liberalization, were implemented due to economic crises and external pressure from donors in the late 1980s and continue today. Based on six months of ethnographic research, I draw on participant observation of everyday life in Mbande, a village on the outskirts of Dar es Salaam, oral life history interviews and focus group discussions with single mothers and the broader community. Focusing mainly on Tanzania's postcolonial context, this thesis relies on the unique capacities of ethnography and oral life histories to show the impacts of radical economic restructuring, and its intersections with gender and other markers of social difference. The thesis examines how these have impacted the livelihoods and health of poor single mothers. While there is sufficient literature to suggest that many people in Tanzania live in conditions of severe poverty, little research that has been done to understand the ways in which suffering in people's everyday lives is locally manifested as a result of economic, social and medical inequalities. Conditions of poverty and suffering are too often conveyed with a sense of timeless essence, often locating the "fate" and "doom" of Africa in discourses of backwards or unenlightened "African" cultural practices and various corrupt perpetrators. Departing from such an approach, and using a theoretical framework of structural violence and social suffering, I illustrate how the conditions of viscerally experienced suffering, especially by poor single mothers, are perpetuated by long term and systemic pathologies which "follow them" and in seemingly quotidian ways. By analyzing excerpts from two detailed oral life history interviews, I demonstrate the ways in which multiple factors align in harmful and unfavorable ways for single mothers in Mbande: I show how the suffering the people speak of in their lives is not

the result of ill intention or will of any one person or governing body, but arises from a more everyday violence of systematic neglect and limits of care.

Preface

The author conducted all of the research in this thesis. The UBC Behavioural Research Ethics Boards (BREB A) approval number is H10-01681. The Tanzania Commission for Science and Technology (COSTECH) ethics approval number is No. 2010-71-NA-2008-68.

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Glossary

chai - tea

chapati - flatbread

chips mayaii – chips and fried eggs, similar to a Spanish omelet

dala dala – bus

kanga – colourful cloth worn by women

kuhangaika – to suffer, to be anxious

mahari – bride price

maisha magumu – “life is hard”

malaya- prostitute

mandazi - donut

mchicha – local greens, similar to kale or spinach

mchuzi – meat gravy, commonly eaten with ugali

ngoma – initiation rites

ugali – maize four porridge, a staple in Tanzania
Ujamaa – concept forming Julius Nyerere’s socialist socioeconomic development policies

wahuni - vagabond

zawadi - gifts

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To my grandmother, Yen Yee Ho

1. Introduction

1.1 *Maisha Magumu* – “Life is Hard”

I conducted my ethnographic research in Mbande, a village situated on the southern outskirts of Dar es Salaam, Tanzania’s commercial capital. In August 2010, during one of my follow up visits to the village, I was lounging around in the afternoon with Mama Afidhi,ⁱ a 26-year old single mother and my field informant and assistant since 2006 when I first started my pilot study.ⁱⁱ Mama Afidhi was helping me to better understand what everyday life is like in Mbande for single mothers like her by letting me follow her around, showing me everyday life skills so that I could get by, and introducing me to her wider social circle. I was glad to be spending time with her in such a comfortable and casual manner because Mama Afidhi was not afraid to show her disapproval to things she disliked: thus I knew that I had gained some at least some respect.

While I will never fully know Mama Afidhi’s “true” thoughts about me, I felt that between 2006 and 2010, I had gained more acceptance with her and the wider community. I could only conclude that she felt that I had indeed learned something from her and others in Mbande, and that I was no longer a complete stranger. Still, caught in a moment wondering when I would be back again, and if the observations I had made of daily life in Mbande were faithful to people’s lived experiences I had observed correctly, I asked her: “If you were to write a story to describe the lives of single mothers in Mbande, how would *you* write it?” She spontaneously responded “*maisha magumu*” or “life is hard.” Her words were not radically different from my understanding of the everyday lives of single mothers in Mbande despite official reports, which claim that the IMF and World Bank-supported neoliberal structural adjustment policies have bettered people’s lives. Scholars such as Frances Vavrus (2005) and others have powerfully employed ethnographic insights to show the ways in which structural adjustment policies (such as the devaluation of currency,

privatization and cuts to social spending such as education and health care) have increased challenges for many people despite official claims of bettering everyday life as a result of the devaluation of currency, and cuts to government spending on education and health care (Vavrus 2005; Sanders 2008). Thus “*maisha magumu*” consolidated the basis of my research questions. This common question led me to wonder why was there so much disparity between what many people were telling me about their day-to-day lives and the official accounts of neoliberal development? Why were there so many single mothers in Mbande?ⁱⁱⁱ In what particular ways is suffering socially produced and experienced in Mbande village by single mothers who are unmarried, widowed or divorced? More specifically, what would a phrase such as “life is hard” mean in the life of a young woman like Mama Afidhi, who has been a single mother for more than six years, or Mama Deo, another of my key informants who was a single mother for four years and had three children to take care of? In the following pages, I will offer a more insightful understanding of single mothers’ “hard lives” not only in terms of their everyday lives, but also in how these experiences are socially constituted and produced by a specific socioeconomic and historical constellation of factors— a certain order of the world. In order to better situate these questions, I first offer the reader a general context in regards to neoliberal structural adjustment and its particular relationship to public health, especially in Africa. Following this, in the second chapter, I discuss how my main theoretical framework of structural violence and social suffering informs my analysis of single mothers’ everyday worlds in rural Tanzania. I then offer an account of the research setting and the methods I utilized. Finally, I present the oral life history of two single mothers from Mbande, Sakina Kabesa and Salima Abdala,^{iv} whose lives I learned about and followed from August 2006 to August 2010 during various periods of fieldwork. In addition to prioritizing and valuing women’s life experiences as recounted orally versus the written word, the foregrounding of women’s oral life histories in this ethnography also shows the ways in which social suffering is perpetuated in the daily lives of a few women in Mbande,

whose experiences and life courses do not appear particularly ‘spectacular.’ I analyze their life histories to show how ongoing inequitable structural forces perpetuate social suffering. Furthermore, I show the ways in which gender shapes their concrete suffering in ways that are unique to the lives of single mothers living in Mbande.

In this ethnography, I will explore this everyday feeling of such constant worrying and suffering, or *hangaika*, and the seemingly paradoxical tension in the coexistence of banality and adversity, which Laurent Berlant (2008) has referred to as “crisis ordinariness”. While I take care to avoid suggesting that the constant struggles and difficulties are insignificant to me or to my informants, it is more my concern to avoid producing a spectacle or sensational account of violence amongst the single mothers of Mbande as most commonly portrayed in discourses about poverty and suffering in Africa. Instead, I focus on violences of the everyday which are perhaps less premeditated and intentional, and less traceable to single identifiable and/or concrete perpetrators with nefarious intentions. As I argue later, focusing on the “event” or spectacle of violence not only betrays the everydayness of suffering as it was presented to me and experienced by my informants in the village, but also creates a limited view of violence which fails to capture the long, slow and social, economic and historical processes at play. As some anthropologists have demonstrated, the point of observable, spectacular violence—the point of the event—is most often the result of long-term, cumulative and historical processes at play (Biehl 2005; Farmer 2005; Lockhart 2008:108; Scheper-Hughes 1992). I argue that equal attention must be paid to the violence that permeates the everyday lives and bodies of single mothers in Mbande in less obvious ways that are seemingly everyday or even mundane, with perpetrators which are difficult to locate.

As such, this thesis challenges the idea that everyday events in people’s lives in Mbande village cannot be understood by examining Mbande itself in the traditional sense in terms of its local culture or environment. Instead, this paper argues the suffering which single mothers experience in

Mbande must look to seemingly less immediate and tangible pathologies which lie beyond the body and “local” culture. Instead, this thesis shows how such suffering cannot be separated from the context of rapid social and economic changes in post-socialist Tanzania in the past 30 years.

Attempts to better understand the multiple challenges that women in Mbande face require looking beyond the visibly ethnographic in attempts to “locate” particular factors. Specifically, after Julius Nyerere’s socialist government was deemed an economic failure (Lugalla 1995, Vavrus 2005), Tanzania joined many other countries in Africa in the process of deregulation, privatization and democratization following the implementation of IMF/World Bank structural adjustment programs in the 1980s (Sanders 2008:108). This thesis demonstrates how such radical economic restructuring initiatives have had long-lasting and enduring effects on already marginalized and disadvantaged communities such as rural single mothers.

1.1.1 Neoliberal Structural Adjustment

There have been countless critiques of the failures of neoliberal structural adjustment policies, which have arguably influenced the everyday textures of lived experiences (Bourdieu 1999; Seppala and Koda 1998; Farmer 2005; Ong 2006; Gunewardena and Kingsolver 2007). Structural adjustment policies (SAPs), which were imposed by international leaders on African states in the 1980s and 1990s, were implemented to deregulate markets, reduce state bureaucracies, and privatize state industries. Consistently ranked as one of the poorest countries in the world (Biermann and Moshi 1997; Bigsten and Danielson 2001; UNDP 2008), Tanzania is frequently characterized as being in the midst of economic “crises.” These crises, according to many critical scholars, are often associated with macroeconomic policy implementations, which were developed by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank to help heavily indebted countries, such as Tanzania, repay their outstanding loans under the condition that these countries restructure their economies (Ferguson

2006; Vavrus 2005:175; Sanders 2003, Creighton and Omari 1995). Broadly speaking, SAP's refer to the "practical tools" used by the IMF and World Bank at the country level to promote the market fundamentalism that constitutes the core of neoliberalism" (Pfeiffer and Chapman 2010:150). These IMF/World Bank SAPs vary with each country but are generally characterized by policies aimed at deregulating and liberalizing the economy according to neoliberal moral values, which promote fundamental ideas such as individual freedom and dignity as the cornerstones of "civilization" (Harvey 2005:5). For the purposes of better understanding neoliberal SAPs, David Harvey defines the *neoliberal state* as "a state apparatus whose fundamental mission [is] to facilitate conditions for profitable capital accumulation on the part of domestic and foreign capital" (2005:7). According to Harvey, the *neoliberal state* apparatus also invokes a certain idea of freedom, which "reflect[s] the interests of private property owners, businesses, multinational corporations, and financial capital" (2005:7). For example, policies associated with neoliberal SAPs entail the promotion of free markets, devaluation of the national currency, privatization of national industries and assets (in various sectors including health and transportation) and reduction in the size of governments (Pfeiffer and Chapman 2010:150; Vavrus 2005:175). It was argued that by removing the state's hand, which was seen as interfering negatively with the economy, neoliberal structural adjustment would create rapid economic growth and attract private investment (Ferguson 2006:78). While much is hotly contested, scholars such as Ferguson have noted that at least in African states, the structural adjustment era has in fact seen the *lowest* rates of economic growth ever recorded, in addition growing inequalities (Ferguson 2006:11).

1.2 Structural Adjustment and Global Health

To situate the historical context of the implementation of SAPs, these neoliberal policies are intimately entwined with the history of colonialism and many countries' independence from the West. While other institutions exist to facilitate neoliberalism (such as trade embargos, or military

interventions), SAPs refer more specifically to financial agreements which specific countries negotiate with International Financial institutions (IFI's). These result in “profound political, economic and social changes” under the premise of neoliberal values which include liberalization of the market, privatization, minimized government intervention and economic deregulation (Pfeiffer and Chapman 2010:150). In the Tanzanian context, this has been a particularly interesting shift due to the country's period of socialist governing under Julius Nyerere, after first gaining independence from the colonial rule of Great Britain in 1961. Nyerere, one of the founding architects of African socialism,^v promoted an economy that was based on a certain “attitude of mind” which emphasized sharing, solidarity, and communalism (Ferguson 2006:75). These fundamental social concepts, invoked via a moralizing discourse,^{vi} served as the basis for numerous economic reforms which opposed themselves to perceived principles and attitudes of exploitation, selfishness, malevolence and material luxury (Ferguson 2006:78).

While studies on SAPs surround vigorous debates about the impact of such major economic shifts on public health, several anthropological studies have offered particularly nuanced accounts of the experiences of people who live through them, suggesting that SAPs are part of a certain socioeconomic structure producing everyday conditions of increased polarization and inequality between the rich and the poor such as the creation of unequal access to health care. It has been suggested that SAPs have contributed to more deeply felt economic impoverishment, leading to negative impacts on health for the majority of those who are excluded from the supposed long-term benefits of these policies.^{vii} Jean Comaroff, for example, has pointed out the connection between the onset of HIV/AIDS and the emergence of radical economic restructuring which occurred in the form of economic deregulation, especially in Africa (Comaroff 2007:1998). She argues compellingly that HIV/AIDS is a manifestation of a particular global order of capitalism and that “For some, its onset made plain the dangers of laissez-faire and a drastic reduction of the reach of the polis—the erosion

of institutions of public health...” (Comaroff 2007:199). Such a perspective demands a view of health concerns in light of socioeconomic and historical contexts such as political and economic marginalization.

1.2.1 Gender and Health

One body of literature has emphasized the ways in which such suffering is manifested in different and complicated ways according to local configurations of gender, race, class, religion, and sexuality amongst other factors (Brodkin 2007:xi). While the aim of this ethnography is not to deconstruct and/or problematize notions of gender, through its focus on the unique experiences of single mothers, it foregrounds the ways in which gender disparities play an important role in better understanding how radical economic restructuring is not gender neutral. An analysis of globalization needs to see the process not simply as a vague and free flowing, ahistorical phenomenon but one with very “distinct, gender-specific implications” (Gunewardena and Kingsolver 2007:3); as such, many scholars who are critical of economic liberalization have offered case studies of the ways in which social suffering is often felt unevenly, with women and children often bearing the brunt of neoliberal reforms in the economy (Gunewardena and Kingsolver 2007:4; Lugalla 1995). In specific regards to health, Leslie Doyal has written compellingly on the need to focus not only on the differences between men and women in regards to biological sex, but also on how socially constructed categories of gender, in addition to other varying social factors, play a major role in shaping the health outcomes (Doyal 2001). The concept of gender is important in issues of health in order to highlight the varying societal contexts in which men and women live their lives (Vlassoff 1994:1249). The fact that women often occupy a lower status in many social contexts influences their health in many ways.^{viii} Therefore, drawing on the concepts of structural violence and social suffering as employed by several anthropologists (Biehl and Locke 2010; Scheper-Hughes and Bourgois 2004; Das 2001;

Farmer 1999, 2004, 2005; Green 1998, Kleinman et. al 1997), I explore the various ways in which these often inequitable larger structures intersect with gender dynamics to shape and harm the lives of single mothers in Mbande.

2. Theoretical Framework

When they are sick, there are many problems. There are many problems because when the child is sick, you as the mother are forced to “anxiously hover”, which means taking them to the hospital. Honestly, the problems of sickness really follow me. (*Fatumah Selemani, age 26, two children*)

In this section, I address the major theoretical themes which foreground my research and analysis. First, I discuss the ways in which structural violence and everyday social suffering are conducive to understanding how the subjective and lived experiences of single mothers are intricately entwined with the ongoing and rapidly changing context of socioeconomic, historical and political structures in Tanzania – Fatumah’s quote alludes to the ways in which such “problems” produced by structures constantly follow her throughout her life and impact negatively and create bodily suffering for her and her children. Following this, I attempt to grapple with the theoretical challenges of how to speak at once about the global and the intimate. I will also discuss how it is possible to remain faithful to the intimate and subjective experiences of informants while also not losing sight of a wider historical and structural analysis.

2.1 Social Ills: Structural Violence and Social Suffering

In order to understand the lives and experiences of poor single mothers in the context of neoliberal change in the form of IMF/World Bank structural adjustment programs in Tanzania, I draw on two related concepts, *structural violence* and *social suffering*. I draw largely from the work of anthropologists such as Paul Farmer, Arthur Kleinman, Nancy-Scheper Hughes, Margaret Lock and Veena Das, who employ these concepts to analyze and express how economic and political structures and institutions often shape and/or constrain individual agency (Farmer 2005:40). Such inequitable

forces are linked to failures and absences in health care systems (Biehl and Thomas-Moran 2009:275), which constitute lived social suffering in disintegrating social morale and ailing bodies in resource-poor contexts. In employing such understandings of violence and suffering, the aim is to show that health inequalities and social suffering are not simply a result of “faulty” individual behavior choices, cultural difference or cultural pathology (Farmer 2005:47-48), taking a stand against types of moral relativism that may have simply gone too far in justifying inequitable and unjust human suffering.

Structural violence emphasizes the power of the state to influence different areas of people’s everyday lives. It highlights the injury caused to individuals and groups as a result of inequitable regulations and categories imposed on the people by structural systems or governing institutions. These inequities work to deeply stratify societies and the result is a system that cannot afford to maintain the basic welfare of its people^{ix} (Biehl 2005; Kleinman et al. 1997; Das 2001; Farmer 1999). This body of thought can be brought into conversation with an argument made recently by Jean Comaroff (2007) in her article “Beyond Bare Life: AIDS (Bio)Politics, and the Neoliberal Order.” Comaroff asserts that the geospatial distribution of HIV/AIDS is profoundly and unsettlingly uneven as “the most devastating burden of suffering has been shifted to parts of the world where, from the vantage of the privileged, life is cheap, and people are disposable” (Comaroff 2007:201). She suggests that such systematic neglect is actively associated with ideas of Africa as backwards and stuck in time, and that Africa is placed in a zone of abandonment or irrelevance (Comaroff 2007:201). In thinking about the lives of single mothers in the context of rapid socioeconomic change, it is worth exploring the idea that the forms of neglect and abandonment in Tanzania and, in particular, Mbande village are examples of structural violence at play. This thesis asserts that these forms of structural violence, through inequitable and exclusionary policies and institutions, can have just as harmful effects as more seemingly tangible and direct forms of violence with visible

perpetrators. As I have already emphasized earlier, I do not wish to suggest that the difficulties in my informants' lives were unimportant or petty; but it is also my concern to avoid producing a spectacle or sensationalistic account of violence amongst the single mothers of Mbande. Instead, I aim to obtain a better appreciation of the everydayness of these matters as presented to me by my informants, while also producing a view of violence and suffering as a result of long, slow and historical processes at play. I suggest that an "everyday violence" approach might lead us to reconsider agency and forms of resistance that too easily and simply depict a perpetrator that can be resisted, while also complicating the idea that *something* must and can be done *now*.

Related to the notion of structural violence is the notion of social suffering, which refers to the widespread pain felt in a community as a result of structural violence—thus, in my work I also draw analogies between wounded bodies of individual women but also the wounded body politic as a result of such violence (Nelson 1999). Naomi Adelson's work on aboriginal communities in Canada also shows how shared histories of internal colonialism, neglectful state policies, racism, oppression and elimination of cultural practices facilitated by institutions such as the residential schools system produces shared community suffering which is often manifested in overly high rates of imprisonment, disease and suicide (Adelson 2005:45-46). Likewise, I argue that the observed local phenomenon of poor single mothers in Mbande village, and the ways in which bodily pain and sickness are a constant part of their narratives, is an example of social suffering as a result of the structural violence of inequitable social, economic and historical relations.

My analysis of the situation at hand adopts the perspective which emphasizes that while the unique local gender relations of a community will also shed light on the myriad of ways that "women's health" is experienced in different times and locations, gender alone is not enough to explain social suffering. As Farmer argues: "Social factors including gender, ethnicity ('race'), and socioeconomic status may each play a role in rendering individuals and groups vulnerable to extreme

human suffering; but in most settings these factors by themselves have limited explanatory power. Rather, *simultaneous* consideration of various social ‘axes’ is imperative in efforts to discern a political economy of brutality” (2005:43). He goes on to say, “In most settings...gender alone does not define risk for such assaults on dignity. It is *poor* women who are least well defended against these assaults” (Farmer 2005:44). Moreover, gender bias occurs everywhere even in Western countries but in poorer countries the disadvantage of women is more pronounced in restrictions on basic rights such as health care, nutrition and elementary education (Farmer 2005:44).

2.2 Globalizing the Intimate

It has been argued that “embodiment” is a powerful way in which to break down the often-cited mind/body binary, as well as the local/global, culture/biology and everyday/spectacular binaries. Theories of embodiment, then, can be used productively to understand how intimate subjectivities of poor single mothers can be tied to larger global processes as suggested by the theoretical framework of structural violence and social suffering. As Mountz and Hyndman have argued, the body has become a site in which feminists have started to look at the global through the intimate, arguing that no body can exist beyond global forces (2006:457).

In this way, we might begin to connect the notion of structural violence to concrete experiences of social suffering. Arguably, the material, bodily pain and anxiety or bad health outcomes that single mothers in Mbande express cannot be understood outside and apart from the processes of globalizing forces which are arguably for the most part inequitable^x, suggesting that local particularities are only products of forces well beyond themselves (Comaroff and Comaroff 2003:156). In the case of Mbande’s single mothers, however, I reconsider the binary between “local” and “global”. I aim to think through the experiences of single mothers in Mbande village by seeing the “global” and the “local” (or intimate) as not separated, but instead as co-constituted (Mountz and Hyndman 2006:446). Moving beyond what is perceived as the “local” or “particular”

culture, I suggest that the present lived experiences of single mothers in rural Tanzania must be understood as actively produced out of and related to the particular ongoing socioeconomic and political conditions that lie seemingly well beyond the field. In this particular study I consider single mother's lives in ongoing relation to changes related to the implementation of neoliberal SAPs (Doyal 2001). As such, this thesis will show the ways in which the constellation of seemingly non-intimate socioeconomic and historical events are not vague, disembodied and free-flowing. Instead, they actively produce and shape very felt and materialized intimacies and inform "local" cultural practices in Mbande village. Moreover, by challenging the binary between the "local" and the "global", it is my aim to destabilize a sense of timeless essence conveyed by studies or popular notions attempting to understand the woes of Africa, which often simply draw essentializing explanations by citing faulty "local" cultural practices or corruption.^{xi} Unlike studies which may locate the "fate" and "doom" of Africa in backwards or unenlightened "African culture,"^{xii} I show that conditions of suffering or the everyday discourse on *kuhangaika*, especially in the case of poor single mothers, is actively produced by many social factors which lead to inequitable daily life circumstances. I also suggest that the increasing number of single mothers in Mbande and their visceral suffering (i.e. through everyday expressions of tiredness or hunger and also through larger occurrences of infections such as HIV/AIDS) cannot simply be "located" at the site of the body, but must also be connected to pathological processes at the national and global level as well.

2.2.1 Everyday Violence

Embodiment also provides the potential to reconsider the distinction between spectacular and everyday life, which is useful when thinking about structural violence, which is too often portrayed in a rigid binary. That is, if understanding biology requires understanding the ways it is shaped by socioeconomic, political and historical forces, the mechanisms of violence must be reconsidered. For example, Farmer writes, "Structural violence, at the root of much terrorism and bombardment, is

much more likely to wither bodies slowly, very often through infection diseases” (Farmer 2004:315). Berlant’s idea of “slow death” is useful, in which she explains obesity as the deterioration of a population under “global/national regimes of capitalist structural subordination and governmentality” (Berlant 2007:754). Her work teases out the subtly nuanced and interconnected processes of harm experienced in the slowly deteriorating and ever expanding bodies of a poor, obese population. Thinking about embodiment may encourage ethnographers to be more attuned to not only explicit acts of bodily harm but also more subtle, indirect and less obvious forms of violence which seep into daily life through oppressive and marginalizing social structures (Kleinman et. al 1997). Arendt’s (1963) “banality of evil” in *Eichmann in Jerusalem* is also consistent with such an intellectual engagement—i.e. we might consider a “banality of violence” in which harm is distinguished from more spectacular and intentional conceptions of violence. Moreover, if violence is to be thought of in the everyday, this poses a challenge for notions of agency in that the events and perpetrators of violence are no longer as easily identifiable. Thinking with embodiment alongside structural violence and everyday social suffering offers a compelling way to consider pathologies of widespread ailment in the bodies of those who are systematically neglected and fall through the cracks, such as poor single mothers in Tanzania.

One of the most salient criticisms of structural violence and social suffering, in that it highlights macrostructural constellations of violence to understand people’s suffering, is that it creates an overdetermining framework which leaves little room for agency.^{xiii} This important criticism surrounds the concern that people become represented as having very little choice in their lives and present conditions; thus the critique also points out the potential danger of overly emphasizing oppressive structures while failing to acknowledge subjects’ opinions and decisions. The classic spirit of anthropology, in part due to its Marxist influenced intellectual trajectory, has often sought to fly “low to the ground” by providing depictions of people’s everyday lives:

ethnographies often provide stories of the “little guys”, or those who are marginalized. As such, anthropologists have frequently utilized ethnography to create a space to tell tales of resistance and attempts to disrupt orders and structures of violence. However, I depart from Scott’s well-known account of what he identifies as “hidden transcripts” against oppressive regimes that happen off stage.^{xiv} This approach, rooted in a more traditional Marxist approach, often relies on the idea that subjects are necessarily conscious of their economic and material conditions of existence (Mbembe 2001:5). Furthermore, there is a tendency to search for agency in order to connect individual actions and structural determinants (Mbembe 2001:5). Following anthropologists such as Mahmood, I argue that it is necessary to rethink tendencies to search for this kind of “agency” because of the danger of ascribing problematic and potentially ethnocentric assumptions of individuality and freedom often associated with the liberal secular Western feminist movement (Mahmood 2005). Following Biehl and Moran-Thomas’ calls to move “toward explorations that can offer ways outside the structure/agency impasse” (2009:276), I seek to avoid unfolding a story of single mothers in Mbande as simply captives of overdetermining historical factors *or* resilient heroes, and instead aim to see how such tension is instead interconnected in complicated ways.

3. Research Setting and Methods

3.1 Tanzania in the Neoliberal Global Order

It is important to understand that Tanzania should not and cannot be thought of as an ahistorical deadzone, disjointed from global processes. I employed a mixed methodology of in-depth participant observation, semi-structured oral life history and follow interviews and focus group discussions (FGD), to gain a better sense of how single mothers’ everyday worlds are being impacted by these ongoing global socioeconomic forces. Following a pilot study conducted in 2006 and 2007, I narrowed down my subjects of interest and I returned again later in the summer of 2010 to conduct follow up interviews with 5 women from the pilot study. I also conducted 5 interviews with single

mothers who I had not met before and additionally held two more FGDs. In addition to relationship building as well as returning with more theoretical training, the main purpose of my follow up interviews was to find out if anything changed for the women I had interviewed during my previous preliminary fieldwork in Mbande. The “local” rhetoric of many informants in Mbande in my earlier pilot study included themes of suffering which were inextricably linked to poverty whose causes seemed to lie well beyond Tanzania itself.^{xv} For example, women constantly referred to the fact that everyday life is hard, often due to the lack of money for basic needs such as medicine, food, clothing, shelter, education, and so forth. Many of the single mothers expressed their disillusionment with men, telling narratives of domestic violence, neglect and quarrels over money matters, and how they were cheated on and lied to. Moreover, many single mothers shared stories of how their partners had abandoned them upon learning about their pregnancy, without assuming any responsibility especially in terms of material goods and financial support. Though most women in the pilot study conducted in 2006 and 2007 expressed their desire to find a “good man”, they also asserted that the men of today do not want to seriously commit or get married to fulfill the role of good husbands who, as they perceived, should provide for their wives and children. Women even spoke of the fact that traditional wedding ceremonies are becoming less common, due to lack of funds that marriage now entails. Many women commented that they had very little cash for things such as *maharai* (bride pice), *zawadi* (gifts), food, etc. and alluded to the ways in which everyday social relationships have become increasingly commodified. Tukai Omary, a 30-year old single in my pilot study so tellingly expressed in a focus group discussion:

If you're sick he won't help you. All he wants is sugar... vagina is sweet (*uchi ni sukari*). When you are sick he doesn't care. Why would he help you? Because when you are sick, he cannot get sex. He puts on his trousers and goes away [to sleep with another woman].

Responding to her opinion of men “these days,” the interviewee suggests that men are not willing to be held responsible when it is time to provide material, basic goods. It is beyond the scope of this

thesis to determine whether most men in Mbande are really “responsible” or not. Undoubtedly such an undertaking would be complicated; instead here the importance lies in the *circulation* of a discourse about contemporary men (i.e. that they are unreliable, liars and cheaters). Such stories, which were not uncommon during the course of my fieldwork, consistently alluded to the breakdown in relationships due to the lack of material resources and cash to get by. As such, they compellingly confirm the assertion that “singularities of places”, such as customs, traditions and “culture”, are not separated by processes of globalization. In contrast, such insights are indicators that the classic ethnographer’s pursuit of commanding expertise and understanding of the totality of a whole society and its relations in any one place according to conventional geographies is a lost pursuit (Comaroff and Comaroff 2003: 154-157). As Comaroff and Comaroff warn, “in the effort to privilege the ‘local,’ however worthy it may be, we miss slighting or misrecognizing the global forces that— increasingly, if with varying degrees of visibility—are besetting ‘little guys’ (Comaroff and Comaroff 2003:155). Thus, in the following passages, I offer a brief account of the research setting in a way which actively embeds Mbande in its historical context, as opposed to a perceived natural or wild and geographically fixated site where other events simply unfold as background context (Gupta and Ferguson 1997:8).

3.1.1 Pre-Independence and socialist Mbande

During Tanzanian independence, the village of Mbande was part of the coastal region, unlike its current zoning on the fringe of Temeke District. In order to travel there one takes an asphalt road from a major bus terminal located in the suburban town of Mbagala. On the way to Mbande, one passes through the villages Charambe, Maji Matitu and Chamazi.

Between 2006 and 2010, rapid change in the region was very apparent. When I first arrived in the region, for example, the main Kilwa Road connecting Dar es Salaam city to Mbagala bus

terminal and onwards to the other villages, was just being constructed. Besides Kamat's extensive ethnographic research in the area, the literature on Mbande is quite sparse. His archival research and documentation of local oral histories has revealed that in the past 15 years Mbande has grown to be a relatively large village due to the large amount of migrants it attracts from all over the country. In 2004, it was documented that there were approximately 1300 inhabitants including adults and children who lived in and around the market place, which serves as the village center. Most of Mbande village's residents, however, live in the peripheral hamlets (Kamat 2008).

In the local oral history of Mbande village, elders indicated that in the pre-independence era, very few people were living in what is now known as Mbande. At that time it was also distinctly an area occupied by the Zaramo ethnic tribe. Those who lived in the region relied on subsistence farming and had little participation in the capitalist market economy. Daily life in the region during the pre-independence era consisted of working on farms; and while most of the cultivated crops were consumed, some of it was also sold to pay for various things such as marriage, clothing or development taxes.

Mbande as it is known now was created during *Operation Vijijini* (Operation village) in 1974 and so "officially" speaking, it has only existed a little less than four decades.^{xvi} *Operation Vijijini*, which emerged out of socialist *ujamaa* villages, entailed the movement of people into villages so as to promote living together (Hendry 1975:68). People from all over Tanzania were often forcibly removed from their original territories and resettled into villages which had already existed or which were created, such as Mbande. Families and households were regrouped into larger units for the purposes of living together in the spirit of *ujamaa* (2004:98-99). While further details of the making of Mbande village are beyond the scope of this paper, it is important to note its history as an *ujamaa* village, which has led to many different ethnic tribes residing in the region, despite its historical association with the Zaramo people. *Operation Vijijini* is a clear example of the movements of

people due to socioeconomic and political factors, troubling ideas of original cultures and boundaries bound to conventional geographies. As exemplified here, understanding the “local” culture of Mbande demands an understanding of macrolevel forces that are well beyond the geographical region itself. Indeed, a simple account of the “local” culture of Mbande would not only be insufficient but nearly impossible.

3.1.2 Mbande in the Post-socialist Period

Mbande is a peri-urban village in the Chamazi Ward of the Temeke district in Dar es Salaam (pop. 3million), which is Tanzania’s commercial capital. Temeke itself is the largest of the three districts in Dar es Salaam, with an estimated population of 771,500 people in 2009. The village is located approximately 30 km south of Dar es Salaam’s central business district and in 2009 had a population of about 9,000, a significant number reflecting an almost doubled population size since the arrival of electricity in 2007. Mbande proper itself has an administrative boundary of four square miles and has a dense population gathering around the village centre around the market. 85% of the local residents identify themselves as Muslims. While many residents in Mbande identify themselves as Zaramo due to the tribe’s historical affiliation with the region, there are also a significant number of people who hold other tribal/ethnic identities such as Makonde, Ndengereko, Ngindo, Msukuma, among others.^{xvii}

Several factors have contributed to the increasing migration of people from other parts of the country to Mbande, mainly from north-western and south-eastern Tanzania. The construction and completion of the all-weather road in 1996, which connects Mbagala to Mbande, played a significant role in this migration wave because it facilitated rapid transportation of people and goods between the villages and the city. One of the main consequences of this rapid influx of newcomers into the village has been the growth in the demand for village land. Many in Mbande are selling their land to newcomers; and this has only been more enhanced by the overall changes in the general, more

liberalized political and economic landscape in Tanzania. In interviews and general conversations with people in 2010, there was a general agreement that in the past few years there had been an increased flow of newcomers to the village especially with the finished construction of the main Kilwa Road that connected Mbagala to the Dar es Salaam city centre, as well as the introduction of electricity in 2007. Many also agreed that the cost of land had significantly increased, which has consequently led to the exponential increase of rent. While concrete homes exist alongside mud homes with thatched roofs, the former are associated with elevated social status, wealth and modernity: they are obtainable by only a select few and for most only exist in desires and imaginations. The introduction of electricity in the village has also influenced property value; while it is available, it is still inaccessible to most who cannot afford the luxury. The difference in rental price between a unit with electricity and one without, for example, is quite significant. While an average 10 x 10 room in a concrete house could cost anywhere between Tsh 7000-10.000/month as rent, many cited the average cost of a rental unit with electricity to be about Tsh 14,000 or 15,000.

The general buzz of village life takes place in the nucleus, where the open-air market is located. It is here where one exits the village to enter the city, or go to Mbagala to catch busses to other parts of the country. The village centre is also the locus for exchange of people, goods and capital; and it is the pulse of the most evident “development” in the village. After taking the bus from Mbagala, the ride to Mbande village centre is approximately 15 more minutes. Surrounding the market are larger stores owned by well-to do business keepers. These shops are in concrete buildings, and sell various sundries and dried goods which are bought wholesale in the city and sold here, such as soap, matches, dried beans, rice and flour, *kanga* cloths and clothing, and candy.

Eating out is not common, but several eateries around the village sell basic meals such as *ugali* (maize flour porridge), rice, beans, *mchicha* (greens, much like chard or mustard greens), or a commonly made tomato *mchuzi* (gravy) made with sardines or anchovies. In addition to these

establishments offering more “traditional” meals, there are also vendors who sell fried *chips mayaii*, fried chicken and bottles of soda. *Chips mayaii*, best described as a deep fried round French fry omelettes eaten with tomato sauce (similar to ketchup), a mild hot sauce, or a tomato, chili and onion relish, is an extremely popular dish. In Mbande, I noticed that *chips mayaii* seemed to occupy a more elevated social status than more “traditional” food such as *ugali*, rice and beans. The fact that these omelettes are more expensive (i.e. Tsh 2000-2500 compared to Tsh 500-800) and that chicken and sodas are also sold at these establishments, two items which are also considered luxuries, elevate their status as symbols of relative social prestige. For example on several occasions, when I took friends and assistants out for a meal in the village, they would most commonly suggest *chips mayaii* and a soda.^{xviii} Moreover, on more than several occasions I was told that that it was not particularly uncommon for men to act as “sugar daddies” and buy young school girls *chips mayai* or other treats in exchange for sexual favours.^{xix}

The rapid expansion of the open air market and the addition of new shops and vendors is one of the most evident signs of socioeconomic change in the village. Even during the time I spent there in three trips from the years of 2006 to 2010, a relatively short amount of time, much had changed. Upon my initial encounter, Mbande was by no means a small village; yet by the time I had returned again in the summer of 2010, the market place had significantly expanded from originally only a few vendors with tables selling various fruits (most commonly oranges, bananas, and coconut), vegetables (small red onions, *mchicha*, tomatoes, and okra), spices and *mandazi* donuts and cakes, and dried fish amongst other things to many more vendors. Moreover, the onset of electricity in the village in 2007 was definitely visible. For example, I noticed the addition of vendors who sold small electric appliances such as power adaptors, wiring, and extension cords. The addition of electricity in the village was also very apparent in the changed village soundscape. For example, the most recent field trip to Mbande in 2010 led me to quickly notice loud music being blasted on the streets

via large speakers, something I had not previously observed. I also noticed that some had started screening films and charging a fee to viewers, much like a movie theater. Indeed, the addition of electricity in the village clearly brought new possibilities to the people in Mbande, such as cold sodas, refrigerators to store food, movie theaters and cell phone charging.

3.1.3 Livelihood and Local Economy

For most people in Mbande, there have been few cash earning opportunities despite the increasing realization that cash is necessary to get by especially in light of neoliberal changes in the socioeconomic landscape. In Mbande, the average income per capita per month is Tsh. 1475 (less than US\$2) (2008:363). Subsistence farming is still the economic basis for most local people, while a small number have engaged in petty business ventures. There is quite a good amount of vegetation in the village, and the main cash crops produced in the area are cashew, coconut, jackfruit and mango. Most families in the village sustain their livelihood through subsistence farming, cultivating crops on small plots of land with a hoe. For example, corn, rice, cassava, kidney beans, millet, potatoes and okra are some of the things that are commonly grown and eaten. While sometimes surplus vegetation can be marketed and sold, this is not too common.

As mentioned, though those who participate in such cash generating activities are still a minority, there has been a growth in the number of small shops and market vendors in Mbande's core which can be attributed to the influx of newcomers into the village. Additionally, many single mothers with whom I spoke found small business opportunities in cooking regular meals or *chapatis*, *mandazi* donuts, sweet potato fried in oil, and so forth – these are usually sold in the early mornings and during the late evenings. Such businesses generate a very small amount of income and are usually only enough to barely meet the day's necessities for meals, as well as a bit of sugar, tea or soap. Other enterprises which people may attempt to make some cash include felling trees to make

charcoal, making brooms, tapping palm wine, or weaving mats; however, these activities are not particularly profitable.

Keeping livestock on a large scale is not so common in Mbande, though families commonly raise a few chickens for domestic purposes; while locals try to make do with whatever they have in order to generate an income, mustering cash just to get by and cover for basic needs is extremely difficult. Saving enough cash for important social events, such as ritual celebrations, puberty rituals, and marriage ceremonies, is even more difficult, especially since cash is becoming more important and entwined in these events.

3.2 Methods

3.2.1 Participant Observation

In addition to interviews, I conducted many hours of participant observation. With the friendship of Mama Afidhi and her network of close neighbors, I attempted to actively participate in as many aspects of daily life as I could. For example, this entailed going on guided walks around the village and chatting with neighbors, friends and family. I also went to the women's beauty salon for hair braiding and henna, accompanied women to the market to buy produce, learned how to cook local dishes, bought medicine, and folded laundry. I traveled into town together with my friends from Mbande on the *dala dala* to go to a local pub; and often I simply sat around on straw mats and listened to jokes and community gossip. While I did observe a couple of wedding ceremonies and several *ngoma* celebrations, traditional ritualistic events of interest to the classic ethnographer, I was particularly interested in the observations that could be gained from the minutiae of everyday life. I kept a small field note journal and jotted down field notes during appropriate times. When the adults decided that they were tired of the anthropologist 'hanging about', the neighborhood children never

ceased to take interest in me and welcomed me into their worlds through games and stories and endless rounds of chocolates.

Most of the participant observation I conducted took place outdoors. In general, indoor living quarters are basic as their main functions are to facilitate sleeping, changing and storage. Moreover, they are often lacking proper ventilation, tap water and toilets. For example, one of my key informants, Sakina Kabesa, lived in a long, single-storied concrete building owned by one landlord, with several basic rooms on either side of a hallway which are rented out as separate units.^{xx} Outside in the back there was a shared restroom and shower area, and the water that was needed for flushing, bathing and cleaning was collected in large, heavy buckets at a water pump not too far away. Sakina's actual living quarters inside the building, however, were quite small and consisted of one dark room and two mattresses to accommodate herself and her four young children. Sitting inside her room and speaking with her, I observed that along the wall, she stored her entire life's personal possessions such as old photos, faded clothing, basic kitchenware and whatever scraps of found objects such as plastic bottles which were carefully collected and reused as useful tools. Things are not easily wasted or thrown away in Mbande—objects that are often perceived as disposable in the West are often creatively reinvented into useful tools or toys. For example, I noticed little children playing with mini decks of cards, which were cut out and made from the cardboard of matchboxes. I also noticed children playing makeshift soccer balls which were made out of black plastic bags tightly bound with reed.

Many important social activities in Mbande take place outside of the physical building of the home including important festivities such as weddings and *ngoma* (initiation rites) celebrations. A common everyday domestic scene might involve young children running around outside with other neighborhood children playing various games and playing with toys made from sticks, old plastic bottles, and woven straw, for example. Outside, women are often engaged in various domestic

chores such as hand-washing and hanging laundry, or cooking for their families. It is also outside where both men and women lounge around during the day and converse about the day's events or the new neighborhood gossip: straw mats are often taken out and placed on the sandy ground for sitting, lounging, playing cards and eating. Chatting with ones neighbors and friends also happens in the early evening as the village becomes dark, and hot, spiced chai is sipped before retiring to bed early in the evening. In addition to the fact that late at night it is often too dark to wander around since few have electricity, it is best to retreat inside to better avoid infected *Anopheles* mosquitoes which transmit malaria, and are most active between dusk and dawn.

3.2.2 Interviews and Focus Group Discussions

The initial pilot project for this study was carried out in the fall of 2006 and also carried on in the summer of 2007. Mariam, a research assistant from Dar es Salaam, helped to conduct oral life history interviews and assisted in transcription. Oral life history interviews were elicited with 42 single mothers based on a convenience sample, in addition to two focus group discussions (FGDs). This and previous research which was conducted by Kamat (2008) suggested that a significantly high number of women with children in the village are single mothers, and all of them have been divorced or simply abandoned by their male partners.

In addition to participant observation, this research entailed in-depth oral life history interviews in order to privilege the knowledge and experiences not necessarily bound up in North American and European literacy (Geiger 1986). For example most women who I interviewed did not attain a very high level of education, and some had not gone to school at all; in this context, an emphasis on written text would have proved to be a challenge or nearly impossible. Moreover, as will be demonstrated, oral life history interviews are able to offer rich points of views which allow

for a long term analysis over the course of an individual's life; as such they are suitable for showing the long-term and historical pervasiveness of structural violence and social suffering.

In 2007, I left the field just as Mbande was getting electricity, a critical moment in the "development" of the village. By the next year the construction of the major Kilwa Road that runs through Dar es Salaam and goes past towns and villages on the outskirts, such as Mbande, had been completed. Moreover, since the arrival of electricity in the village, I had heard that the price of property in Mbande had increased and that there had been a wave of new migrants into the area. I was interested to know how such major changes had affected the lives of single mothers. The pilot study in 2006 and 2007 suggested that single mothers' experiences are significantly different from the official stories of SAPs, which argue that life is better for Tanzanians. While the time span between the visit in 2007 and my most recent field visit in 2010 was relatively short, the return provided an excellent opportunity to follow up with people's lives in light of such important events, as well as illuminate my previous observations and analysis of the situation at hand.

The main focus of the research was on participant observation and oral life history interviews, but FGD's were also used to provide important background context. While FGDs create a less intimate atmosphere than individual oral life histories, they proved useful in their ability to supplement the intensive oral life histories in my work by providing a space for women to engage in dialogue with one another about the questions I posed. With their consent, the selected interlocutors also were made aware of the kinds of questions which would be asked in the FGDs. Moreover, FGD participants were informed of their freedom to leave the discussion at any point if they did not feel comfortable. Once the data had been translated, I extracted overarching themes that seemed to be generally prevalent in the single mothers' lives, despite each of their unique histories.

4. Data and Analysis

You can be dating a man and by bad luck, you get pregnant before you are married. What do you do? Will you remove it? You can't abort. You are forced to give birth. The result is once you have given birth, the man has seen you. He's seen that he has already made you pregnant. Some of them can even refuse the pregnancy. They can say, "The pregnancy is yours. I refuse –its not mine." What can you do? It forces you – what can you do but endure and give birth? Once you have given birth, you raise the kid; and maybe another man can come and marry you. What is wrong with this? (*Fatumah Selemani*)

In the following pages I present life history accounts of two women: Sakina and Salima. Their stories map the ways in which their daily living circumstances were woven by a unique constellation of socioeconomic and historical factors. Similarly, I also attempt to illustrate how these two women themselves perceive, understand and live through these events in the context of their own unique life circumstances. I then trace some of the common themes, which emerged in women's narratives about their lives as single mothers.

4.1 Sakina's Story

Like many other women in Mbande, Sakina found herself in a situation as a single mother with hardly any means to get by from one day to another. Her story, like others, reflects a symptom emerging and shaped by the larger story of interconnected social, economic, and historical inequalities in Tanzania. In many other life stories as well as FGDs which were conducted with single mothers, similar themes of everyday poverty, desperation and social breakdown surfaced.

Sakina^{xxi} is a 29-year-old Makonde woman and mother of four children. She was born in Mozambique in 1979. Her parents had three children. She was the eldest, followed by twins. Her parents were originally from Bagomoyo in Tanzania but later moved to Mozambique because her grandparents were there. When her mother died she was just four years old, Sakina went to live with her aunt, uncle, and mother's siblings. However, because there was not enough money they denied

her education “I did not have a chance to learn”; moreover, Sakina remembers this period of her life as a “life of hunger.” Eventually, Sakina moved to the Masaki area in Dar es Salaam with her aunt; however, life was quite difficult. When she was 13 her aunt attempted to marry her off so that she would no longer be a financial burden to her relatives. Sakina’s family told her that there was no money, and if she did not get married, she would be driven out of the house. Indeed, there was a general consensus among the women who I spoke to that girls are commonly expected to care for themselves at the age of thirteen, and this is often achieved through marriage. Thus, after Sakina had her *ngoma* ceremony (a coming of age ritual) she was courted by Peter, a man twice Sakina’s age, who gave some money for bride wealth (Tsh 22,000) to Sakina’s relatives. Upon this, Sakina’s family announced that this man was now her husband. Though she was upset and surprised by the ordeal and attempted to protest the arrangement, she eventually accepted things as they were since she had few other viable options. She was told that if she did not accept Peter, she would be driven out of the house and left to fend on her own. As a thirteen year old girl with no education and no means to support herself, Sakina accepted the marriage arrangement.

With Peter, Sakina gave birth to two boys: Deo and Pascali. The couple moved to Mbande when an opportunity arose to work a rich landowner’s plot. A year after this arrangement, however, the owner decided to sell the plot leaving both Sakina and Peter jobless. With hardly any opportunities to work, they struggled to come up with new ways to make ends meet. Sakina recalls that it was around this time that Peter became disgruntled. He also started to drink more and become verbally and physically abusive in the home. Sakina also described her growing fear towards the violence she experienced—for example, in times of desperation when he would ask her to go borrow food from the neighbors and if she came back without maize flour he would beat her. Because of her fear, she would often sleep at her neighbor’s home, fearful that if she stayed home Peter would come back and start beating her for no reason. Furthermore, he would leave home for one to two weeks at

a time, leaving Sakina alone to take care of the young children. Due her increasing feelings of fear and not knowing what else to do, Sakina eventually took her two children with her and ran away to her brother's house in Bagamoyo. When she eventually returned, she discovered that Peter had completely disappeared. Sakina waited for a long time and wondered if he would ever return; meanwhile she struggled to raise her two young boys. During this time she met a man named Juma who stayed with her for eight months and who fathered her third child, Fazili. Sakina had hopes that he would marry her as he kept promising her; however he also disappeared and she did not know of his whereabouts. Though they did not quarrel, Juma had left because he was simply unable to provide for her and her children. She later discovered that Juma already had another wife and, in her eyes, had been cheating the whole time.

In 2007 I heard that news that Sakina had become pregnant with her fourth child, Salma, after starting a relationship with an already married man who she met on the bus, who she described as elderly and with a potbelly. He had told her that he loved Sakina and that he would provide for her. Wanting to believe him, she slept with him a couple of times and became pregnant. Like in other cases, she hoped that this man would be able to fulfill his promises of taking care and potentially alleviating her and her children's poverty by marrying her.

I was eager to follow up with Sakina in 2010 to see if any significant changes had taken place in her life. One significant change she noted was that now that her children were older, they were able to help out:

After I separated from my children's father, life was very hard. I had to rely on small-scale agriculture and thereafter I started a small business. However, I went through a hell of a time, and my children were very young, so I had a lot of responsibilities. But now, my children are somewhat grown up and it is somehow better.

A significant sense of responsibility had been placed upon her two eldest sons, Deo and Pascali, to help out around the household, since it had become increasingly impossible for Sakina to do

everything.^{xxii} However, while Deo and Pascali's assistance in the household provided immediate alleviation of burden felt in the household, this interfered with their ability to attend school regularly. Moreover, Sakina's efforts to make some income meant that she was often away from the home. Thus she was often forced to leave her children on their own during the day although I noticed a very informal system of neighbors generally watching over each other's children. These factors, amongst many other things, contributed to the constant feeling of worry in Sakina's life. Despite the family's efforts to pursue any means possible to generate income for basic necessities, they still struggled to make ends meet despite the official development discourses which claimed that life would be better with roads and electricity. Her struggles to get by just for the day prevented her from being able to plan for the future; likewise her children were forced to take responsibilities for the family to make ends meet for their immediate circumstances. Sakina worked extremely hard and was dedicated to making a living from petty things such as cooking or selling meat scraps, but the income generated from these activities was still barely enough to get by each day:

You know if you are poor, and continue living in poverty, even when the situation is worse, it just looks all the same, because you can't force yourself to have what you are not capable of having, and even if the child asks for something you only tell him or her: 'I am sorry baby, I can't do it because I don't have money'.

Here, we get a sense of the daily cycle of impoverishment that Sakina and her family faces. She speaks in terms of continuation, implying the regularity of the situation, and even says that she thinks that things cannot get too much worse than they already are since – “it just all looks the same”. Moreover, Sakina also shows here that in the event that she cannot provide for her children, she has very few options and is only able to tell her them that she simply is unabl. For Sakina, as well as for many women, the sentiment in regards to these issues was that this was simply the way things were; this was certainly the case in Sakina's life when she was married off, when she herself could no

longer attend school because of the costs, and when she was abandoned by her partners to take care of her children alone.

In the 2010 follow-up field trip, Sakina's daughter, Salma, had reached the age of three. Moreover, Sakina was still in contact with Salma's father. She denied having an intimate relationship with him, but mentioned that he helped to provide for the baby from time to time though he was not necessarily reliable. She explained that Salma's father wanted to have a secret marriage so that relatives and particularly his first wife would not know. Sakina said that she was hesitant and questioned the potential benefits of such an arrangement. One reason for this is that she felt a marriage out in the open, instead of hidden, would afford her more rights and securities due to the attached social pressures and obligations. In the current status of her relationship with Salma's father, Sakina received support for Salma from time to time; however, the secretive nature of their relationship meant that he was less bound to the pressures and obligations to consistently support her and Salma. The times when he provided to her were completely up to his discretion.

As I will discuss later, many other single mothers who were interviewed mentioned that they at some point, or currently, had a male partner in their lives who they turned to for some financial support. These men were often boyfriends or lovers who would provide financial and material assistance from time to time; and many women hoped that these relationships would eventually lead to marriage. While it could be argued that having such boyfriends or lovers to provide financial support the definition of a single mother, it is important to emphasize the ongoing social stigma faced by women who are not officially married. In addition to the fact being unofficially married and having a "boyfriend" generated speculations and accusations of prostitution, many women also stressed that they recognized the impermanence of such relationships; ultimately, they hoped that their boyfriends would marry them. Despite fractures and instabilities in the marriage system, an official marriage still afforded more rights and social status. Stories of abandonment upon news of

pregnancy were extremely common, alluding to the fact that such men were not capable of or disinterested in taking financial and social responsibilities of a husband and a father.

Additionally, many mentioned that it was common for single mothers, in times of desperation, to exchange sexual favors^{xxiii} for material goods as a last resort.^{xxiv} Despite the public stigma associated with such activities and the acknowledgement of the great risks associated with HIV/AIDS in the community,^{xxv} there was a general consensus that survival sex was still commonly practiced since it provided one of the few means for impoverished single mothers to get by in urgent times. The awareness of widespread HIV/AIDS and its very real risks and consequences was certainly present in the community of Mbande and the single mothers who I spoke with; however, what was being suggested was that it was nearly impossible to afford thinking about prevention for future protection.

The various factors in Sakina's life, from childhood to adulthood, interconnected to produce unfavorable conditions of structural violence: from the death of her mother, her extended family's poverty and their inability to take care of her, her inability to obtain an education, the violence and physical abuse she experienced during her marriage to Peter, and the abandonment she faced by other men who could not afford to look after their children leaving her alone to take care of them with no social or legal support networks. Furthermore, her current marginalized social position in the community as an unmarried woman with four single children produced special disadvantages, especially in an environment where there are almost no lucrative income-generating activities, let alone any opportunities to even get by from day to day. Struggling to take care of her children while making a living at the same time also proved to be a challenge, and meant that she was unable to provide them with the care and attention she would have liked to provide.

4.2 Salima's Story

I now turn to the story of Salima Abdala, another single mother who I had the opportunity to meet over the course of my fieldwork. While her story shares many overarching themes as Sakina's, I was also struck by the physical hardships that were highlighted in Salima's story. I first met Salima, a Zaramo woman and the mother of one four-year-old child named Kassim, in 2006 when she was 23 years old. Salima was born in 1983 in the Vikindu ward, which is located in the Pwani coastal region in Tanzania, west of Dar es Salaam. As a child she moved to another ward in Pwani, called Kisiju, with her parents and relatives. Eventually she moved to Mbande when her sister got married there. While many women who I spoke with had at least a few years of education, similarly it was not particularly extraordinary to meet individuals such as Salima, who had never gone to school. She explained that there were no schools which were close enough for her to attend and her family could not afford to ensure that she received an education.

In 2000, when Salima was 17 years old, she got married to a man for a bride price (*mahari*) of Tsh 30,000. She only received Tsh 10,000; and her husband failed to pay the remaining amount:

He came home, he saw me, and he told someone that he had seen me in a certain place and that he wanted to marry me. Now the person who was sent to investigate came to our home and said, "I have a young man who has seen a potential bride. So he would like to marry her." After this, he came to look at me and I was obliged to marry him. He wrote the marriage proposal letter, and soon after plans were made and we went to live at his place.

Her marriage lasted for three years:

I was bought by my fiancée. At that time, I did not know his behaviors or his actions; He appeared to be a young, civilized man, and so I accepted. Now after I went to his home, his many actions defeated me and he abandoned me... My husband was a drunkard. When he returned home after being out he would find excuses to beat me. I endured a lot of hardship and abuse and I decided, "Mr., I have been defeated. Whenever you go outside and you come back, you want to beat me. Now for how long are we going to lead this kind of a life? I would rather you permitted me to leave, to go home".

Salima had actually given birth to two children; but due to malaria her first child died after five months. She became pregnant quite soon after, only to then be abandoned by her partner, which marked the end of their relationship. She recounted:

I gave birth to my first child, who lived for only five months. But as you know, when someone buries a child, it is not uncommon for another pregnancy to follow. That's when I got the child who I now have. Then my husband left me when I was six months pregnant.

I was particularly struck by this sequence of events that Salima recounted in her life history, imagining the immense emotional and physical suffering she must have experienced with the birth and death of her first child and her pregnancy soon after, followed by the end of her marriage in which she endured regular physical abuse. I was also struck by her comment, which appeared to allude to the seeming frequency of the process of burying a child, and giving birth to a new one. However, it appeared that for Salima, the cycle of struggle continued to pervade her life; such suffering led her to express her lack of trust for men and desire to live alone:

There are others who do not want to get married; they just think about walking around (sleeping around). There are some of us who want to get married – but there are no men. If you get a man, you might stay with him for a while. But if you tell him, “my partner, can you write a marriage proposal letter so that we can get married and rest?” However, once you have asked this, it is as if you have asked to end the relationship. Men are attracted to women with no children; but once you have children that stops, and no longer perceives you in the same way: it is as if he no longer sees you as a woman. That is when he starts to stray from the relationship; and that's when you start anxiously fretting. Some men return once the children have grown older and try to coax you back to the relationship. The issue is that men do not want the burden of living and raising children.

In addition to demonstrating the ways in which life is difficult for Salima as a single mother, her experiences also show how a woman in Mbande might easily find herself in a similar situation. This particular passage also alludes to how cultural gender norms (i.e. the general expectation to get married, the expectation to remain in a marriage, and the stigmas associated with single mothers) and extreme poverty have been compounded to create unfavorable conditions often manifested in the breakdown of social bonds, so that women such as Salima commonly fall through the cracks and

experience social suffering. Salima's life demonstrates the difficulty in attributing blame and responsibility to any one cause or individual.

One might too easily take the route of blaming "traditional", "African" patriarchal cultural norms to explain the situation. Alternately, like many discourses found in public health and development organization campaigns, it might also be easy to suggest that Salima should become more knowledgeable and proactive about decisions which impact her health and well-being, and that the solution would be to educate her in how to think about preventative health care. These analyses, however, omit the ways in which Salima's decisions (as well as Sakina's) have been made based on immediate needs and circumstances which fell upon her: for example, her family's poverty led to her inability to complete any education. Local gender norms and inequalities, combined with lack of money, led her to be married off so that she would no longer be a financial burden to the family; and while this provided an alleviation of burden for the family and may have presented itself as the right choice, this also meant that Salima did not have the opportunity for further education in the first place, thus complicating the idea of free choice and "wise" decision making. Similarly, while her two sons were not married off, due to the inability to make ends meet and left and with few resources, Sakina made the decision to send her two eldest sons to find any odd tasks or jobs in order to contribute to the household economy. This resulted in further problems such as to the inability to ensure her children's regular school attendance.

Gender inequalities combined with other socioeconomic inequalities also manifest themselves in arguably unique ways for single mothers such as Salima and Sakina. For example, their status as unwed mothers lent them very little social capital in the community. Fetumah, a 26 year old single mother with two children explained:

If you are married, you are respected. I mean, even your parents are happy and they can say, "Today I am going to my child in a certain place." He or she can come and visit you in your home. Now for example, if your parents come to visit you and finds that you are living with

a man, it is not good. What should happen is that he or she should come and find you living with your husband, not just cohabiting with a man. It is not pleasing.

Here Fetumah cites the loss of social capital as a result of becoming a single mother. Additionally, there were little to no opportunities for economic capital development in Mbande. Perhaps one of the most lucrative local opportunities exists in sand mines surrounding the village. However for various reasons these opportunities are not readily available to women.^{xxvi} In addition to the fact that in general the work is extremely dangerous and physically demanding, women are generally excluded from mining work due to gender norms. The mines, however, have created some informal side business opportunities for women such as cooking food and selling to the local miners. It is also commonly rumored that women exchange sexual favors for money or basic goods with men, including miners who had more access to cash. Miners in particular were perceived as being reckless, rowdy and violent. They were notorious for spending their money on alcohol, gambling, drugs, and illicit sexual favors which led to the spread of disease; the community did not regard them favorably, but it was also acknowledged that they were one of the few sources of cash. Through one on one interviews, focus group discussions and more informal conversations, it became evident that survival sex activities were common practice especially for single mothers—however, the practice was still frowned upon. No one readily told me if they were engaged in such activities. Despite the fact that most people were highly aware of the social stigmas surrounding such activities as well as the risks of unwanted pregnancy and HIV/AIDS, they also acknowledged that such activities and practices were extremely common because of the high rate of impoverished single mothers in the community.

I followed up with Salima in 2010 to see if there were any changes in her life since I had last spoken with her. She mentioned that she had lived with a man in a non-marriage relationship with for eight months. However, once he found out that she was pregnant, he ran away. After giving

birth, the baby died of fever after living for only one year and two months. Salima soon met another man with who she was pregnant with at the time I spoke with her. This relationship lasted for a year until she reported that, like the other men in her life, he ran away when she became pregnant. He persuaded her to abort the baby but when she refused to do so, he told her that he would not be responsible for the pregnancy.

Yes, I had another relationship with a man with whom I had a baby, which died. After we had separated I had another man who made me pregnant the way you see I am now, but he has left me already...As always, he [the man] comes to you and makes lots of promises and you fall into his trap, then he goes away. That is what happened with me. So he left me to take care of my pregnancy all alone and after birth till her death.

Salima again expressed her desire to find a partner to marry, if possible; however, she was frustrated by the events that had happened in her life saying that she felt whenever she broached the topic of marriage with a man, it was as if she was asking him to go away “just like always”. Despite her attempts to create a better life for herself, the various events and socioeconomic structures in Salima’s life were aligned in such a way as to lead her to one difficulty after another. Moreover, while her experiences were also unique, the broader socioeconomic and gender inequalities she faced were systematically constructed and experienced socially *and* physically amongst other impoverished women in the community: in other words, Salima shared a similar and rather common story to many other women in the community. The ways in which women such as Salima and Sakina talk about their lives and experiences as single mothers indicate the ways in which such events and life courses have become normalized and expected – Biehl and Moran refer to this as “routinized urgency and crisis” (Biehl and Locke 2010:319). Despite the seeming normality of these events, the sense of frustration, grief and uncertainty is clear.

Nonetheless, continuing frustrations are intertwined with hope; and simply categorizing Sakina, Salima and other women in the broad-stroke category of “victims of structural violence” or alternately portraying them as “resilient agents” would miss the real life complexities of what appear

to be contradictions. In Salima's case, her hopes and continued attempts to have a better future cannot be ignored. I asked Salima what she thought of the new changes in Mbande, especially regarding the completion of the main road, the onset of electricity, and the wave of incoming migrants as I wanted to know if she thought any of these developments would create new and positive opportunities for her. Salima responded optimistically, and mentioned that she hoped that someday she would also benefit from such developments. For example, she hoped that if manufacturing industries started in Mbande, this would generate development and employment opportunities. While she did not yet experience many benefits from these changes, she observed that the population expansion had contributed to some increased income of selling onions and little cakes, which could sometimes bring her about Tsh 4000 per day.

My life is now better than previously, because in the past I could not have breakfast, lunch, and dinner everyday. I would either have tea for lunch in order to have dinner or have lunch and tea for dinner. Now, 4000 is enough for me to have breakfast, lunch and dinner at least once a day.

Unlike Sakina, Salima's immediate conditions in the moment appeared to be less precarious though undoubtedly she had experienced immense suffering throughout the course of her life. However, she was the single mother of only one child (and soon another) and the last follow up interview revealed that her son was now living with his father. Nonetheless, she expressed concern over the rising costs of food and rent and other expenses. Despite her increased ability to meet the bare minimum of at least feeding herself more regularly, she still perceived the future as unpredictable. Moreover, it was impossible for her to save money in order to prepare for unexpected events in the future, such as medical emergencies. Though she hoped for development, Salima felt it was very hard to predict what would happen. Like most others, however, she hoped that development initiatives would bring jobs, stability and a brighter future with a chance for food, shelter and education and good health care.

5. Discussion

Sakina and Salima's stories are both powerful examples of the ways in which structural violence and social suffering play out in the lives of single mothers and their children in Mbande. Due to space limitations, I am not able to elaborate on everyone's stories; however, Sakina and Salima's stories are excellent general representations of the various travails that many single mothers in Mbande face. Their stories powerfully demonstrate the ways in which the difficulties they faced in their lives and the very visceral pain in their bodies were shaped by greater socioeconomic and historical factors that lay well beyond any one individual's "bad decisions", or local cultural practices which are stuck in time. Indeed, they show that an approach that only takes a "local" account of the situation effectively eclipses the long genealogy of social and bodily suffering. While conceiving the situation at hand may seem vague, the intention is not to disregard the subjective worlds and viscerally felt experiences of single mothers and their children. Indeed, such delocalized pathologies shaped single mothers experiences of locally felt injustices felt in interpersonal relations.

While there is a general sentiment of suffering amongst many Tanzanians, Sakina and Salima's stories both demonstrate the unique and gendered challenges that single mothers face. In both cases, poverty was cited as the main reason for having lack of education; combined with traditional gender norms in the community, poverty was also the incentive for each of these women's families to arrange marriages for them. Both Sakina and Salima encountered domestic violence and abuse in the household, and were both abandoned by their partners. Their lack of education and resources made it nearly impossible for any legal follow up. In addition to the general lack of employment in the formal sector in the whole community, trying to raise children alone as a single mother proved to be even more challenging. For example, as highlighted, particularly challenging are unpredictable situations such as children getting sick. For mothers such as Sakina and Salima,

such a situation would summon a host of difficulties. If the ailment were particularly urgent, for example, it would imply that Sakina would not be able to work for the day to feed her family. Her daily struggles meant that it was nearly impossible to save much money, if any at all; thus finding money for medicine, and finding the time to take care of her children,^{xxvii} travel to a clinic or hospital, all became extremely difficult her (and many others) in her situation. The sociocultural stigma associated with her status as a single mother exacerbated her difficulties, and she had very few friends and family to rely on. Moreover, the general widespread poverty and suffering in the community related to the state's inability to provide for education, public health care, employment and legal support, etc. meant that most people in the community were only in positions to worry about themselves. Indeed, such emergencies do occur in people's lives; however, they are inextricable from process and complicated entanglements of long term, historical and systemic neglect and harm and as demonstrated, are not traceable to any one person or body's intentions. Arguably for individuals such as Sakina, such emergencies are only manifestations of the greater, systemic issues constituting structural violence, which impede her abilities to plan, predict, prevent and successfully overcome. Sakina and Salima's stories show that one of the greatest challenges for single mothers in Mbande is navigating major life crises and uncertainties without the security of social safety nets.

Sakina and Salima's stories strongly indicate the very visceral suffering in their lives. Financial problems were arguably not apart from bodily suffering: dying children, domestic abuse and hunger were not uncommon. Their experiences of suffering are excellent examples of the ways in which informants encounter, experience and embody such seemingly monolithic and vague, invisible forces of capitalist globalization – for example, through the everydayness of tired bodies, sick children, physical abuse, hunger and engagement in risky sexual practices. These material and visceral experiences are a product of violent “social orders—local, national, global” (Kleinman

2000:226), which have particularly gendered effects: to push the point further, such bodily suffering and pain cannot simply be “localized” to the body proper as has been traditionally conceived. The stories recounted by Sakina and Salima were intertwined with bodily suffering especially when they spoke on issues of child illness and the risks of HIV/AIDS or “modern diseases” as a result of engaging in risky sexual behavior.^{xxviii} Certainly, while the consequences of HIV/AIDS are not taken lightly, it was also couched in a discourse of everydayness due to its prevalence in the community: in Mbande, there is nothing surprising about it. While the prevalence of HIV/AIDS is acknowledged in the community, single mothers often chose to highlight other pressing, more seemingly immediate concerns in their lives. As discussed, when asked to list the most pressing concerns and challenges in their lives, most of the single mothers with whom I spoke to talked about their daily struggles, due to poverty, to meet basic needs for themselves and their children. While openly having AIDS is certainly a stigma in the community, a particular openness also exists in regards to it, surfacing in daily conversation and humour. On several occasions, for example, I was openly told about people going to get HIV/AIDS testing and was asked myself if I had been tested.^{xxix}

As Sakina and Salima’s stories demonstrate, it is not uncommon for impoverished women, particularly single mothers, to engage in survival sex for money or basic goods. While some women openly talk about their status as single mothers, others avoid doing so for fear they will become vulnerable to sexual harassment by men, or come under public scrutiny — avoiding the stigma associated with being labeled as *malaya* (prostitute) or *wahuni* (vagabond). Nearly all of the single mothers who I interviewed expressed the desire to be legally married in order to gain not only some legal rights but also social rights; many women also recounted the ways in which they felt socially excluded as single mothers.

My informants repeatedly stated that they received little moral or financial support from members of the community. While certainly for most people in Mbande village, poverty is

widespread and “life is hard” is a common saying, informants also spoke of the lack of moral support from neighbors and friends, commenting on the ways in which they often felt isolated specifically due to their statuses as single mothers.

Though my informants were arguably some of the most marginalized community members in Mbande, the general hardship of people’s everyday lives is certain. In the pre-structural adjustment era in Tanzania, the state emphasized a philosophy of *Ujamaa*, which called for self-reliance, social cohesion, social consideration and the sharing of communal resources. In contrast, the introduction of neoliberalism in Tanzania has placed an emphasis on an economic and individual liberalism in the form of rights and obligations, self-reliance and self management, and a turn away from community dependence and regulation (Ong 2006:2).^{xxx}

6. Conclusion

In tales of domestic abuse, in lack of money for food and medical treatment, in comments recounting physical exhaustion, the suffering bodies of single mothers can be read as the everyday, intimate lived fabric of unequal social processes and institutions. First, I have argued that traditional units of “local” and “global” must be reconsidered as not separate entities, but as constitutive of one another. Drawing largely from Ferguson (2006), I first briefly examined how the construction of “Africa” has been dismissed in conversations surrounding globalization. Seeing “Africa” not as a natural entity but as a socially constructed reality, I have argued that we must look at the ways that the category “Africa” is a part of globalizing processes, whether those are through relationships of inclusion or omission and marginalization. A discussion of the imposition of neoliberalism via structural adjustment programs in Africa shows that certainly the “local” is inevitably shaped by the “global.” Additionally, the life history of several informants, the increasing need for cash as survival, is testimony to this. Following this, I argued that embodiment serves as a potentially powerful means to move forward, dissolving the binaries of “global” and “local” and taking into considerations how

the problem of scale. By viewing the body as permeable to and shaped by social forces, embodiment deconstructs the “natural” body while still allowing for a commitment to the material, concrete and “real” experiences of body. Finally, by providing excerpts and examples from Sakina and Salima’s lives as well as from my experiences and observations conducting fieldwork in Mbande village, I have hoped to show how it is that informants “embody” structural force. Moreover, by offering an account of how embodiment plays out in the day to day, I have argued that the notion of violence itself needs to be reconsidered by looking at everyday, processual and slow mechanisms that play into the weakening and deteriorating bodies of women. Thus, embodiment allows for the potential of breaking down binaries, as it is able to bring forth of an understanding of the ways in which the global and the intimate are constitutive of one another. Importantly, embodiment allows social scientists to not ignore the category of the “body” and simply stand by when people express their real suffering: suffering on the body cannot be “localized” but seen as necessarily in relation to slow social, economic and political forces permeate the everyday to orchestrate structural or, as Kleinman (1997) calls them, “everyday” violences.

Sakina and Salima’s oral life history narratives demonstrate the ways in which multiple factors align in harmful and unfavorable ways; their suffering was not the result of ill intention or will of any one person or governing body, but through systematic neglect and limits of care or “anonymous constellations of control” in the Foucauldian sense (Ferguson 1994:20). Such insights support arguments made by Tanzanian scholars such as Lugalla, who attempt to demonstrate how the inequalities, crisis and “suffering” which exists in sub-Saharan Africa cannot be effectively analyzed through “local” factors that need to be fixed. Lugalla points out that in the 1981 Berg Report on the social and economic crisis of sub-Saharan Africa, the report focused *solely* on the mismanagement of resources by state officials and bureaucrats who were “corrupt” and “unaccountable” (Lugalla 1995:43). IMF economists blamed the economic crisis that Tanzania as well as many developing

African countries were facing on “local” factors such as “bad policies” made by African governments. Moreover, leaders of these states were pinpointed and accused of making technical errors such as overvaluing their currencies and implementing misguided social policies (Cooper 2002:116). ^{xxxi} This report suggested that only “local” factors, which cropped up in the form of pinpointed personal moral judgments (such as “corruption” and “unaccountability”), were held responsible for the financial crisis, meanwhile ignoring the situation’s necessary and active relationship to wider-scale socioeconomic, political and important historical factors (Lugalla 1995:43). Such explanations are not rare in the literature of development in Africa and are part of a discourse rooted in colonial history, which has portrayed the concept and image of “Africa” as backwards, and inferior. Africa or Africans are often perceived as not possessing attributes properly part of “human nature” and when it is, these attributes are seen as of lesser quality, poor value, backward, elementary or primitive (Mbembe 2001:1). Furthermore, it is in this supposed primitiveness that the West regards Africa as its radical, non-European absolute other – an essential otherness in which the West strongly asserts its difference from (Mbembe 2001:2). Sakina and Salima’s oral life histories demonstrate that suffering and hardship, while registered on the body, must not merely be conceived of as individual, “local” or “cultural” concerns, for they – and the body-in-pain they seem to constitute – are, in turn, constituted themselves by structural constellations of inequality.

Endnotes

ⁱ For the purposes of protecting privacy and confidentiality, all names of individuals have been replaced with pseudonyms.

ⁱⁱ Under the supervision of the PI Vinay Kamat's supervision, a pilot study was conducted on single mothers in Mbande. This entailed approximately 4 months of ethnographic research in Mbande village in the years of 2006 and 2007.

ⁱⁱⁱ An observation based on what many people in the village told me, and also based on Kamat's (2004) work in the area.

^{iv} While I had the opportunity to speak with many women, for the purposes of this paper, I have selected the stories of only two women.

^v "African socialism" became popular in the 50s and 60s in the context of African postcolonialism and independence. While there were unique interpretations and applications of it, it is based on the underlying premise of an economy which shares things in a traditional "African" way. Themes included public sector industry, sharing and avoiding the development of class relations. In Tanzania, Julius Nyerere's interpretation of this movement was encompassed in *ujamaa*. Due to many complicated factors beyond the scope of this thesis, *ujamaa* led the state into massive debt; nonetheless, Nyerere made significant advances in the fields of education and health.

^{vi} James Ferguson provides an interesting analysis which argues that unlike European socialism, which drew on a language of scientific objectivity (which he describes as "scientific socialism"), African socialism uniquely emphasized an explicitly moral discourse versus a scientific, economic one. Ferguson observes that in his fieldwork, for example, mineworkers in Zambia accused the government for their selfishness versus ineffective policies or acts. Kamat (2008) has also observed the ways in which the people of Mbande village use a moralizing discourse to reminisce past days of socialist Tanzania. Likewise, as I will later suggest, in the context of gender relationships and family in my field site, many single mothers commented on the ways in which men "these days" (compared to say, ten to fifteen years ago) are often liars and cheaters and do not support their wives and children.

^{vii} For example, the implementation of SAPs coincided with the concept of Primary Health Care (PHC) which emerged from a key moment in public health care at the WHO/UNICEF Alma Ata conference in 1978, promoting healthcare for all by the year 2000. In its stated goals, PHC included the availability of vaccines, maternal-child health services, first aid, and so forth. Importantly, PHC acknowledged the importance of community participation and development from different sectors. However, PHC faced criticism from those who argued that it was a lofty ideal in light of real economic restraints. Additionally, in line with the basic tenets of neoliberal structural adjustment, in 1987 the World Bank produced a blueprint for the privatization of health services including the introduction of user fees, private insurance, encouragement of NGOs to play a greater role in providing health services and lessened governmental intervention in health care (Pfeiffer and Chapman 2010:151).

^{viii} For example, an understanding of women as being of low value could result in their receiving fewer opportunities for education and thus, less access to information about health. Similarly, lowered status in the family may mean that in a context in which resources are limited, women have less access to health care services (cf. Vlassoff 1994:1249; Gunewardena and Kingsolver 2007).

^{ix} Foucault's expansion of the notion of violence is useful to think with here, as it considers more discursive and indirect forms of violence such as "...the fact of exposing someone to death, increasing the risk of death for some people, or quite simply, political death, expulsion, rejection and so on" (Foucault 2003:258).

^x For example, Sutton's work on the ways in which neoliberal globalization in Argentina also shows ways in which such structural violence varies in different social locations, according to class, race, gender and so forth (Sutton 2007:147). In the context of neoliberal structural adjustment programs implemented in the 1990s in Argentina, Sutton argues that we should reconsider the gendered and classed "flesh of inequality" as experienced in the bodies of poor Argentinean women: for example, tiredness, tendonitis, bad health from improper nutrition, stress and agitation (Sutton 2007:155-166). I also draw on Joao Biehl's compelling account of Catarina from his *Vita: Life in a Zone of Abandonment*, a victim of urban poverty in Brazil who has been abandoned, forgotten and left to slowly die, shows how her mental and physical circumstances cannot be understood apart from an analysis of Brazil's history, economy, transitions in various policies, medical discourse, as well as the ways in which Catarina imagines herself. Biehl's account provides a necessarily nuanced account of the ways in which Catarina's life cannot be separated from this intricate constellation of events, refusing to see her as someone who is simply "crazy" and "irrational", out of nowhere and out of time.

^{xi} A document produced by the Africa Regional Sexuality Resource Centre (ARSRC) entitled "femininity, Sexuality and Culture: patriarchy and Subordination in Zimbabwe" is an excellent example of the ways in which such discourses are commonly perpetuated (Kambarani 2006). In an excerpt of the document, the author writes about Shona gender relations, arguing that the "family, as a social institution, is a *brewery* for patriarchal practices" due to various cultural practices. Such studies emphasize "local" inequitable gender constructions and relationships, showing how they are particularly disadvantageous to women. For example, the author continues to describe the patriarchal "nature" of society, proceeding to offer various examples such as the "irrational" idea that Shona men perceive having sex without a condom and with a virgin is a cure for HIV/AIDS, thus perpetuating the rape of young girls by male relatives as well as the "spread of HIV in the African continent" (Kambarani 2006:9-10). These perspectives often draw upon ideas of the need for women's empowerment and liberation through education, while missing the various structural constraints that may interfere with this ideal of "agency".

^{xii} See Achille Mbembe's first chapter, "Of Commandment" in *On the Postcolony*, in which he analyzes in great detail the historical racist "othering" of Africa, which worked to justify colonial dominance (Mbembe 2001:24-65).

^{xiii} For example, Paul Farmer, one of the strongest advocates for using a structural violence framework to understand social suffering has been criticized as leaving very little room for human agency in his work. In doing so, however, his aim is to criticize AIDS research which overly emphasizes individual strategies to combat AIDS through education, individual and culture change (Lockhart 2008:96).

^{xiv} For a more in depth discussion on the phenomenon of "hidden transcripts", see James Scott's *Domination and the Arts of Resistance: Hidden Transcripts* (1992). Nation (1996) also provides an excellent ethnographic example of hidden transcripts at work in Brazil. There, marginalized communities resisted Brazil's cholera interventions because of the stigma associated with the disease in order to speak out oppressive regimes of class inequality.

^{xv} Especially challenging for Tanzanians have been the consequences of the implementation of national "structural adjustment" policies in the early 1990s. There have been countless critiques of the failures of neoliberal structural adjustment policies, which have arguably influenced the everyday textures of lived experiences (Bourdieu 1999; Seppala and Koda 1998; Farmer 2005; Ong 2006; Gunewardena and Kingsolver 2007).

^{xvi} See Kamat 2004 for more historical background on *ujamaa* villages and Operation *Vijijini* especially in regards to Mbande village. Also see Hyden 1975 for general information.

^{xvii} For a comprehensive examination on issues of Tanzanian nationhood building see Askew 2002.

^{xviii} In addition to the fact that this meal is more costly, I also interpreted chips and *mayai* as signifiers of modernity and progress. The consumption of chips is an influence of British colonialism.

^{xix} See Vavrus (2006) for more detailed literature and analysis of school girls in Tanzania and the pressure to find “sugar daddies” to pay for basic needs.

^{xx} Tungaraza (1995) has noted housing trends in rural and urban Tanzania. She observes that most housing in rural areas lack proper ventilation as well as tap water and toilets. For example, one neighborhood man called Wasi Wasi, who often hung around my home base in Mbande, was known for living in a home without a roof. In urban areas, it is common to see a concrete building with several rooms, with each room rented out by one family. As Mbande starts to grow, there is now a combination of both styles of housing.

^{xxi} Sakina Kabesa is legal name of the informant given to her at birth. However, it is most common in the community for a woman to be referred to as “the mother of” the name of her child (usually her first child). Thus, Sakina is most commonly referred to as “Mama Deo”.

^{xxii} While it is beyond the scope of this paper to address the issue of children’s social roles in the Tanzanian context, my general observations did note this as a topic of interest. My preliminary observations would suggest that due to lack of resources and social services, many children are led to take upon responsibilities at a younger age in order to help their families. For example, it appeared that children take upon more domestic duties and chores to assist their parents, compared to those growing up in Western contexts. It was not uncommon to see young children helping around the household to prepare food, carry heavy buckets of water, hang laundry or look after younger siblings. See Tungaraza (1998:303) for more research on this.

^{xxiii} For the purposes of this paper, I distinguish these sexual favours (or ‘survival sex’) from prostitution. These exchanges of sexual favours were not regular or full time occupations; instead, they were practiced only in times of necessity for the purposes of survival (Campbell et al. 1995; Omari 1995; Lugalla 1995).

^{xxiv} While it was rumored that many women engaged in practices, including married women who were said to have “strayed” or younger school girls looking for extra cash, I focus here on single mothers.

^{xxv} Interestingly, one informant referred to HIV/AIDS as a “modern” disease suggesting that

^{xxvi} For a more in depth discussion of gender inequalities and mining, see the World Bank publication: 2009 *Gender Dimensions of the Extractive Industries: Mining for Equity*. Extractive Industries and Development Series #8. World Bank.

^{xxvii} For minor ailments, I noticed that it was not uncommon for children to take care of themselves. For example, during one visit, I observed a boy of about 10 years old complain to his mother that he had a headache (also, his front two teeth were missing). In response to this, his mother gave him some pocket change and sent him along to a nearby shop to buy painkillers for himself. I asked Mama Afidhi how common this was in Mbande, and she responded that it is not a big deal there.

^{xxviii} In Tanzania, the first discovered case of AIDS was discovered in 1983. According to the Tanzanian Commission for AIDS (TACAIDS), while AIDS was once a new and rare disease, it has now evolved into a common household problem in Tanzania and has affected most Tanzanian families (TACAIDS 2011).

^{xxix} It was also interesting to note the ways in which themes of HIV/AIDS had entered the local humour in the community. For example, I was concerned when Mama Afidhi arrived late one morning since she was quite a punctual person. A few hours later she came back and told me that she had gone to the clinic to get tested for HIV because her ex-husband, Ramadani, had showed up to tell her that he had been tested positive. She was relieved to find out that her results were negative, but I was quite interested to note the way in which she freely spoke about this with her friends and neighbors who all laughed in relief as she shared her story.

^{xxx} Indeed, it has been observed that many in the community of Mbande have felt that there has been a decreasing level of social support. Kamat has also noted that the people in Mbande have commonly express their discontents with the seemingly growing sense of distrust between friends and neighbors, thus alluding to an erosion of social cohesion (2008:373). He cites the increasing reliance on cash for survival as a theme that permeates people’s everyday conversations: “money has become central to survival while family and community reciprocity, mutual aid and gratitude are significantly less available” (2008:373). Kamat has also noted that his tensions of the household have intensified in an environment of growing economic hardship.

^{xxxi} For example, IMF economists argued that the overvaluing of currencies led to the encouragement of import and the discouragement of export. Moreover, officials have been accused of engaging in corrupt behavior such as collecting bribes or establishing monopolies to friends and relatives.

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