

## **Common Ground, Growing Gap: Privatization, Education, and Religious Groups' Engagements in a Tanzanian Orphanage**

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To gain a better understanding of how liberalization and privatization have opened new spaces for religious engagement in African schools, this paper looks at how religious and community leaders control and direct material resources to and through a new school-orphanage built at the foot of Mount Kilimanjaro. The orphanage is an American-funded Christian institution, established on land once cultivated by Chagga women. Chagga elders first claimed the land—called *porini*—in the 1960s and 1970s when demographic pressures on the mountain forced families to subsistence-farm the plains below. Today, approximately fifty orphans live at the school, and a cohort of unorphaned children attend classes at the discretion of orphanage leaders. What old and new political, economic, and community relationships does the American-run school embed? How do people and groups variously engage with this school through the exchange of services and goods? Studying the different, sometimes competing moralities that shape its institutional operations, and exploring relationships made and changed in the course of having built the orphanage near an expanded *madarasa* school, illustrates that what is *new* about today's dynamic is the large and growing social distance between and among American-foreign and Tanzanian-local religious actors.