

## A PENTECOSTAL CONVERSION STORY

### ANALYSING BORN AGAIN RUPTURE AND TRANSFORMATION IN MUSLIM ZANZIBAR

Over the past decades the role of conversion has received increased scholarly attention; not the least within a growing bulk of anthropological work where the role of rupture within Pentecostal-Charismatic Christianity has been thoroughly examined in relation to migration, new moral lifestyles, culture as well as other religious traditions.<sup>1</sup> The transformative outcome of a new life in Christ is yet sparsely studied in relation to Muslim majority settings and intra-continental migration in Africa.<sup>2</sup>

This paper analyses conversion narrated by a Pentecostal from mainland Tanzania, temporarily living in the predominantly Muslim context of Zanzibar. By assessing the conversion narrative in relation to the Pentecostal migrant's work in Zanzibar's tourist sector, the paper's analysis discusses the link between conversion, economic and social transformation. The contextual approach thus addresses how modes of identification with a wider Pentecostal narrative not only affects stances vis-à-vis the local Muslim society but also refigure the convert's relations to the place of origin in mainland Tanzania.

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<sup>1</sup> For instance; Elizabeth E. Brusco, *The Reformation of Machismo : Evangelical Conversion and Gender in Colombia* (Austin, Tex.: University of Texas Press, 1995); Birgit Meyer, "'Make a Complete Break with the Past.' Memory and Post-Colonial Modernity in Ghanaian Pentecostalist Discourse," *Journal of Religion in Africa* 28, no. 3 (1998); Joel Robbins, "The Globalization of Pentecostal and Charismatic Christianity," *Annual Review of Anthropology* 33 (2004).

<sup>2</sup> But see Barbara MacGowen Cooper, *Evangelical Christians in the Muslim Sahel* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2006); Harri Englund, "From Spiritual Warfare to Spiritual Kinship: Islamophobia and Evangelical Radio in Malawi," in *Christianity and Public Culture in Africa*, ed. Harri Englund (Athens, Ohio: Ohio University Press, 2011); Tomas Sundnes Drønen, *Pentecostalism, Globalisation, and Islam in Northern Cameroon : Megachurches in the Making?* (Leiden: Brill, 2013).