

Wabagamoyo: Redefining Identity in a Swahili Town, 1860s-1960s

by

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ABSTRACT

This dissertation examines a new framework for analyzing identity in coastal East Africa. There is attributed to this region a cultural identity known as Swahili. How this is defined has been a subject of much debate over the past few decades. Swahili identity is somewhat of a paradox in that peoples from Somalia to Mozambique are defined as part of a common culture, while at the same time large numbers of people who played significant roles in this region are excluded. Not everyone who settled in the coastal towns wanted to “become” Swahili – many were happy to adopt from other cultures extant in the communities, but largely retained their own languages and traditions. Indeed, people who inhabited the coast had a stronger sense of what united them placially than they did culturally; even Swahili scholars tacitly acknowledge this. The so-called Swahili towns were home to only a small percentage of the overall population who actually identified themselves Swahili.

As a way of better interpreting and appreciating the actions and behaviour of these urban communities, I posit that we now need to reconsider seeing the peoples of the East African littoral through a cultural lens and explore a spatial framework. By examining how people identify with a particular area we gain a more inclusive perception of community that involves peoples of various racial, ethnic, religious, class, and gender backgrounds. By using the case study of Bagamoyo – a “Swahili town” – this dissertation explores space as a site that forged a common identity out of multiple communities. This framework shows how people of different backgrounds built bridges with each other and established an overarching community with which they all identified in common. Such an identity has been generally denied Africans historically by academics who focus on the tribal in order to explain tensions and violence that have erupted between ethnic groups. While Africans have their differences with each other, they are also quite capable of living together in shared spaces. Placial identity helps us understand how this occurred.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS USED

AAKA	Auswärtige Amt, Kolonialabteilung
ACS	Assistant Chief Secretary
ADM	Admiralty
AStEsp	Archives des St Espirt, Chevilly-Larue, France.
BAB	Bundesarchiv, Berlin
BG	Bulletin Generale
Bi.	Bibi
BJ	Bagamoyo Journal
BL	British Library
CO	Colonial Office
CS	Chief Secretary
DC	District Commissioner
DKZ	Deutsches Kolonialzeitung
DO	District Office/r
DOAG	Deutsch Ostafrikanische Gesellschaft
DOAZ	Deutsch Ostafrikanische Zeitung
DSM	Dar es Salaam
IBEAC	Imperial British East Africa Company
FO	Foreign Office
MCMB	Museum of the Catholic Mission, Bagamoyo
Mz.	Mzee
NA	National Archives at Kew (formerly the Public Records Office)
NLS	National Library of Scotland
PC	Provincial Commissioner
PCEP	Provincial Commissioner, Eastern Province
RCDO	Regional Commissioner Development Officer
SOAS	School of Oriental and African Studies
TAA	Tanganyika African Association

TANU	Tanganyika African National Union
TAPA	Tanganyika African Parents Association
TNA	Tanzania National Archives
ZNA	Zanzibar National Archives

GLOSSARY

<i>akida:</i>	officer to a jumbe; in colonial times used as a tax collector.
<i>bibi:</i>	woman, title for woman (ie Mrs.)
<i>diwani (pl. madiwani):</i>	another title for a jumbe; leader of an mtaa.
<i>fitina:</i>	rumour, gossip, slandering.
<i>hakim:</i>	Muslim community leader; appointed to replace colonial governors after independence in Tanganyika.
<i>jemadar:</i>	armed soldiers of the Sultan of Zanzibar, usually of Baluchi origin; responsible for looking after the business interests of the Sultan on the mainland.
<i>jumbe (pl. majumbe):</i>	leader; usually held paramount power over an mtaa.
<i>kibarua (pl. vibarua):</i>	a slave hired out for the day; a portion of the wages received usually went to the master.
<i>kubwa (pl. makubwa):</i>	“big man”; important, powerful person; also title for colonial district commissioners and other high ranking officials.
<i>liwali (pl. maliwali):</i>	Omani appointed governor to coastal towns; in charge of all matters dealing with the Sultan of Zanzibar.
<i>makuti:</i>	thatch made from palm tree leaves and used to construct roofs of dwellings; also used as a name for such dwellings in general.
<i>mganga:</i>	traditional healer.
<i>mgeni (pl. wageni):</i>	stranger, guest.
<i>mji:</i>	town.
<i>mshenzi (pl. washenzi):</i>	used in reference to the peoples who lived beyond the town and/or who were not Muslim; connotation of being barbaric and savage.
<i>mtaa (pl. mitaa):</i>	quarter, ward; smaller neighbourhoods that made up a town.

<i>mwalimu:</i>	Qur'anic teacher
<i>mzee (pl. wazee):</i>	elderly man.
<i>ngoma:</i>	dance or celebration involving heavy use of drumming; a drum.
<i>pazi (pl. mapazi):</i>	Wazaramo leader.
<i>qadi:</i>	Islamic judge.
<i>shauri:</i>	consultation, meeting; community system of restorative justice.
<i>sufi:</i>	form of Islam that stresses piety and faith over scholarly study of the Qur'an. There are many different variations of sufis.
<i>tariqa:</i>	a sufi sodality.
<i>tembo:</i>	palm wine.
<i>waungwana:</i>	freed people of the town; connotation of civilized and urbane.
<i>zikri (or dhikr):</i>	devotional ritual of sufi mysticism.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

“All these good inhabitants of Bagamoyo”

During the *vuli*¹ of 1863, Father Anton Horner, a French Catholic missionary, left the island of Zanzibar for Bagamoyo, a port town of approximately 3,000 people located nearby on the East African mainland. His purpose was to survey a land concession given his religious order, the Spiritans,² to establish a mission in town. As the dhow carrying Father Horner and his entourage approached Bagamoyo's harbour, he “noticed from afar the numerous groups of men, women and children who gathered in haste on the shore to greet us and express to us the joy they feel in seeing us amongst them.”³ After disembarking on the beach, the missionaries made their way to the house they had rented in town, followed by the crowd that had assembled to welcome them:

our cortège became so great that we were at pains to breathe under our little verandah. Soon the news of our arrival [had spread?] everywhere, and from morning to night people came to see the (N'zungu Oulaya) Whites of Europe. People would have said that there was a world exposition in Bagamoyo and that it was we who had taken the place of products of industry and curiosity. The whole day we were literally besieged by the curious public to the point that (Hamet) our Arab soldier was often obliged to send everyone away so that we could breathe a little.⁴

Over the course of their stay in Bagamoyo, the French missionaries received coconuts, fruit, eggs and chickens from the Africans of the town; the *jemadar*, or military

¹ The period of short rains in central eastern Africa which corresponds with the North American season of autumn.

² Also known as the “Black Fathers” or the “Holy Ghost Fathers.” The proper name of the order is *La Congrégation du Saint Esprit et de l'Imé Coeur de Marie*.

³ Archives Générales de la Congrégation du Saint Esprit (AStEsp), 2K1.6a3, Horner to TRP Sup, 14/11/1863, “Voyage à Bagamoyo.” Translated by the author, as are all subsequent French and German documents used in this dissertation.

⁴ Ibid.

chief of police, went through great efforts to find the guests mats and beds to furnish their accommodation; and when Father Horner went to inspect the land concession given the Fathers the year before, he was escorted by the *jemadar* along with the “chiefs of the land.”⁵ Satisfied with the state of things, Father Horner and his entourage departed Bagamoyo soon thereafter in their dhow, “followed by a dense crowd of blacks who marched in the water, following the military chief as far as the depth of the sea would permit.”⁶ When acknowledging the great treatment and hospitality that he received while in town, Father Horner did not single out any particular person to thank; instead, he referred to his hosts as “all these good inhabitants of Bagamoyo.”

This encounter is not noteworthy for any significant political repercussions. It was neither the first time Europeans had come to Bagamoyo, nor did it mark the moment in which Europeans first settled in the town – the Spiritans would wait another five years before they established their first African mainland mission. Yet, this otherwise mundane event illustrates an important conception of identity previously overlooked, or paid passing attention, by past scholars of East African history.

There is attributed to the length of the East African coastline, from Somalia to Mozambique, a cultural identity known as Swahili. How this is defined has been a subject of much debate over the past few decades. Typically, the Swahili are described by historians as a group of people united by a common spatial location (the East African coastal littoral), language (KiSwahili), religion (Islam), commercial undertakings (as

⁵ AStEsp, 2K1.6a3, Horner to TRP Sup, 14/11/1863, “Voyage à Bagamoyo.” The jemadar was a Baluchi from the region which is now Pakistan. This region was incorporated in the Omani empire in the 19th century and the Baluchis were brought to East Africa by the Omanis in the mid 19th century.

⁶ Ibid.

merchant middlemen between the interior of the African continent and the Indian Ocean basin), and a sense of hierarchy based on consumerism or claims to a Persian heritage. Overlapping some of these characteristics is the notion of urbanity; that those who lived in the coastal towns possessed, or had the opportunity to possess, *uungwana/ustaarabu*, or civilization. Those who lived beyond the town were considered *washenzi*, or savages. However, this long and rich debate over what constitutes Swahili identity, and who can be considered a part of this society, has obfuscated a more particular and inclusive understanding of East African society. Furthermore, Swahili identity was redefined and reified by colonial administrators so that it becomes difficult to use it as a referential term.

Swahili identity is somewhat of a paradox in that peoples from Somalia to Mozambique are defined as part of a common culture, while at the same time large numbers of people who played significant roles in this region are excluded. Such peoples include those who lived in the hinterland and interior, even though they were a part of coastal town life as traders and suppliers. Since Swahili refers to people of African and Arab origin, the important Indian merchant communities who lived in the towns are also omitted, as well as the Europeans who later made this region their home.⁷ Yet, broadening the framework of Swahili identity to incorporate these various peoples may cause the term to lose meaning.

This dissertation examines a new approach to understanding East African coastal society historically. As a way of better interpreting and appreciating the actions and behaviour of these urban communities, I posit that we now need to reconsider seeing the

⁷ See Mark Horton and John Middleton, *The Swahili: The Social Landscape of a Mercantile Society* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 2000), 17-23.

peoples of the East African littoral through a cultural lens and explore a spatial framework. By examining how people identify with a particular area we gain a more inclusive perception of community that involves peoples of various racial, ethnic, religious, class, and gender backgrounds.

In Father Horner's narrative, we observed how strangers to the "Swahili" town of Bagamoyo were welcomed, cared for and sent off. It was not, however, the Swahili *per se* who greeted the French missionaries and fussed over them, but the townspeople of Bagamoyo – the *Wabagamoyo* in local parlance. This is not to say that peoples who came to be described as Swahili were not among the crowd, but other communities who would not have identified themselves as Swahili – the various Indian groups, the Omani Arabs, Baluchis, hinterland Africans, as well as upcountry Africans – were present to greet and observe the French guests.⁸ Regardless of whatever might have otherwise divided the people of Bagamoyo, the arrival of the Europeans to the port town was a spectacle they experienced together. It was an event which occurred spatially; it happened in a particular area inhabited by a group of diverse peoples who, despite their differences, all had this area in common and therefore were united in their concern for what transpired there. This seldom-observed affinity is crucial to understanding the behaviour of these urban communities in the face of external forces and to appreciating an aspect of continuity in African history. In a field of study that is often concerned with investigating what separates Africans or pits them against others, this otherwise

⁸ The upcountry Africans – the Nyamwezi and Sukuma – although not specifically mentioned by Horner in his narrative, would have been present since they arrive from the interior to Bagamoyo as late as the beginning of December.

innocuous event reveals an overlooked dynamic of how African urban centers, made up of heterogeneous peoples, functioned and behaved as communities.

Identity in African History

The formation of identity in Africa occupies a central discursive role in historical scholarship. Due to late nineteenth/early twentieth century concepts of social Darwinism and anthropology which were used to justify European imperialism, race and ethnicity became loaded terms implying degrees of sophistication and civilization. European claims to racial superiority over Africans did not end there; propagators of racial sciences even ranked the level of civilization among Africans themselves.⁹ Through religion, colonial education, discriminatory laws, wage discrimination, and census taking – with its consequent allocation of entitlements and disenfranchisements – Europeans attempted to classify and reify Africans in order to better organize and rule them. The consequences – as evidenced in the extreme cases of South Africa and Rwanda – have been dire.¹⁰

Beyond its use in explaining modern ethnic conflicts and tensions in Africa, the history of identity formation has also been adopted on a much broader basis to explain the transformation of slavery, nationalism, and, above all, how politicized the creation of ethnic identity was. Terence Ranger set the parameters of the African ethnic identity debate: Europeans, using imperial symbols, military strength and education, attempted to

⁹ The most obvious example being the classification of Rwandans into “superior Hamitic” Tutsis, “inferior Bantu” Hutu and “base Pygmoid” Twa.

¹⁰ Mahmood Mamdani, *When Victims Become Killers: Colonialism, Nativism, and the Genocide in Rwanda* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2002); Alison Des Forges, *Leave None to Tell the Story: Genocide in Rwanda* (Human Rights Watch, 1999); Gerard Prunier, *The Rwanda Crisis: History of a Genocide* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1995).

separate themselves from their subjects, control them and inculcate a sense of awe.¹¹ Such traditions, Ranger argues, were not lost upon Africans who then invented traditions of their own, either borrowing from Europeans or their own past, to establish control, whether as elders over youth, men over women, or chiefs over subjects. The Europeans entrenched these identities in the codification of “native” customary law and created historical tradition.

Ranger’s article was often challenged over the following decade, with other scholars questioning his emphasis on the colonial encounter as the crucial moment in African identity formation. He was criticized for ignoring the agency of Africans in creating their own identities in relation to each other prior to the arrival of the Europeans and for essentializing the process – that this “invention of tradition” occurred everywhere the same. As well, if ethnicity was merely created in such a short period as the colonial era, why did it not disappear afterwards?¹² Some historians also demonstrated the continuities of African traditions prior to and beyond the colonial period.¹³ This

¹¹ Terence Ranger, “The Invention of Tradition,” in *The Invention of Tradition*, ed. Terence Ranger and Eric Hobsbawm (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983).

¹² See Leroy Vail, ed. *The Creation of Tribalism in Southern Africa* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991). In “The Beginnings of Afrikaner Ethnic Consciousness,” Hermann Giliomee argues that Afrikaner identity was not the result of a linear development, but something which was created in fits and starts and accumulation. In “Exclusion, Classification and Internal Colonialism: The Emergence of Ethnicity Among the Tsonga-Speakers of South Africa,” Patrick Harries argues that Tsonga identity emerged out of the events of the Mfecane; that the Tsonga were formerly divided along clan lines, but the threats of Zulu and European expansionism helped forge a more cohesive ethnic community. See also Bill Bravman, *Making Ethnic Ways: Communities and Their Transformations in Taita, Kenya, 1800-1950* (Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann, 1998).

¹³ Steven Feierman, *Peasant Intellectuals: Anthropology and History in Tanzania* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1990); Philip S. Zachernuk, *Colonial Subjects: An African Intelligentsia and Atlantic Ideas* (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 2000).

prompted Ranger to revisit his argument and alter it so that his concept of identity allowed for flexibility.¹⁴ He adopted Benedict Anderson's concept of "imagined communities" to achieve a more fluid understanding which incorporated multiple imaginations in contestation with each other; identity became an ongoing process challenged from within and beyond a community of people, not something fixed in time.¹⁵

This new concept of identity formation in African history resonated well in the field. Many exemplary studies have now revealed the contested nature of African identities not just in terms of ethnicity and race, but also in terms of class, religion, gender, and generation. These new frameworks have revealed multifaceted ways of understanding African historical experiences and provided new means for inclusion of previously ignored or overlooked actors in the grand narratives of African histories.

Fred Cooper and Rogers Brubaker, however, caution against this multiplication of interpretations of identity. "Social analysis," they argue, ". . . requires relatively unambiguous analytical categories. Whatever its suggestiveness . . . identity is too ambiguous, too torn between "hard" and "soft" meanings, essentialist connotations, and constructivist qualifiers, to serve well the demands of social analysis."¹⁶ Their suggestion is to create a series of more specified categories of social analysis such as *identification*,

¹⁴ Terence Ranger, "The Invention of Tradition Revisited," in *Legitimacy and the State in Twentieth-Century Africa*, ed. Terence Ranger and Olufemi Vaughn (Hampshire: Macmillan, 1993); Terence Ranger, "Concluding Remarks," in *Ethnicity and Nationalism in Africa: Constructivist Reflections and Contemporary Politics*, ed. Paris Yeros (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1998).

¹⁵ Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso, 1991).

¹⁶ Frederick Cooper and Rogers Brubaker, "Identity," in *Colonialism in Question: Theory, Knowledge, History*, Frederick Cooper (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005), 60.

self-understanding, *commonality* and *groupness*; words which better address the processes that give rise to and shape identities. While this author appreciates Cooper and Brubaker's concern over loose applications of identity as a category of social analysis, I disagree with their solution. Fragmenting identity appears only to restore the original word to its problematic essentialist beginnings; for Cooper and Brubaker, softer or fluid interpretations of identity have no right affiliating themselves with identity as a unit of analysis. Furthermore, it is difficult, if not impossible, to use the new categories they suggest separately since they are very much interrelated: how is it possible to separate the *identification* of *groupness* employing a framework of *self-understanding*? If engaged in a study of Zulu ethnic identity from the Zulu point of view, which of the above italicized categories would best capture the essence of that research?

Where Cooper and Brubaker show insight in their article is in their framework: “(w)hat is problematic is not *that* a particular term is used, but *how* it is used.”¹⁷ Scholars using identity as a category of social analysis must be thorough in their explanation of how they are using the term, whether as a “category of practice” – that is, something which exists in reality already – or as a “category of analysis” – that is, something which exists in theory. As will be demonstrated in this dissertation, the conception of identity I use is both practical and analytical; both fixed and fluid – a hybridity which Cooper and Brubaker make little allowance for in their new categories, but which remains, nonetheless, best served by the term “identity.”

¹⁷ Cooper and Brubaker, “Identity,” 65.

Who Are The Waswahili?¹⁸

Before we can delve into understanding the analytical framework of this dissertation, we must first examine what provoked it. The question which forms the subtitle above was asked by Carol M. Eastman in her 1971 article of the same title.¹⁹ It was, however, by no means the first time the subject had been raised. One of the greater preoccupations among historians of East Africa has been defining Swahili identity. It is not difficult to understand why: there exists a wide variety of historical evidence – archaeological, linguistic, literary, and oral – that traces the Swahili peoples back for approximately two millennia. Such a bounty of data makes them one of the best documented civilizations in a continent notorious among scholars for its challenges concerning historical documentation. Historians have thus had the means to map the development of the Swahili geographically, economically, culturally and politically over a protracted period of time. Yet, the term Swahili is, essentially, an externally applied appellation. This is not to say that Swahili is an arbitrary term, but only that its character has been much debated.

Until the 1970s – and in some cases beyond – scholars characterized Swahili civilization as an Arabic import.²⁰ They pointed to the prevalence of Arabic loanwords in

¹⁸ “Waswahili” refers to the Swahili as a people, ‘wa-’ being a prefix denoting a group of people. “Mswahili” refers to one Swahili person. “Kiswahili” refers to Swahili as a language.

¹⁹ Carol M. Eastman, “Who Are The Waswahili?,” *Africa* 41:3 (1971): 228-236.

²⁰ C.H. Stigand, *The Land of Zinj* (London: 1913); Reginald Coupland, *The Exploitation of East Africa, 1856-1890* (London: Faber, 1939); Kenneth Ingham, *A History of East Africa* (London: Longmans, 1962); J. Spencer Trimingham, *Islam in East Africa* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1964); A.H.J. Prins, *The Swahili-Speaking Peoples of Zanzibar and the East African Coast (Arabs, Shirazi, and Swahili)* (London: International African Institute, 1967), 40; Neville Chittick, “The Coast Before the Arrival of the Portuguese,” in *Zamani: A Survey of East African History* ed. B.A. Ogot

the Kiswahili language, the Indian Ocean orientation of the coastal towns and their economies, the influence of Arabic architecture and dress, and, of course, the central role of Islam. This argument was partly a result of the late European encounter with the central eastern coast of Africa in the 19th century. The establishment of a permanent European presence roughly coincided with Omani ascendancy in this region. Given the historical prevalence of Islam along the east coast, and nineteenth century European reluctance to credit Africans with having developed enduring civilizations, the Swahili civilization was explained as “an Arab-colonial one [with] no perceptible historical role to the Swahilis.”²¹

Since the 1980s, a new wave of critics began exploring the African contributions to Swahili culture. They demonstrated that Kiswahili, although possessing many Arabic loanwords, was based on a Bantu grammar structure; furthermore, most of the Arab words were introduced to the language relatively late during the Omani period.²² Others argued that the coastal towns and their economies were as much oriented inland as they were to the Indian Ocean, much like the African cities along the Sahel.²³ Indeed, ivory,

(Nairobi: East African Publishing House, 1974); John Iliffe, *A Modern History of Tanganyika* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979), 35-39; Helena Jerman, *Between Five Lines: The development of ethnicity in Tanzania with special reference to the western Bagamoyo District* (Uppsala: Nordiska Afrika Institutet, 1997), 100.

²¹ James de Vere Allen, *Swahili Origins: Swahili Culture and the Shungwaya Phenomenon* (London: James Currey, 1993), 6.

²² Derek Nurse and Thomas Spear, *The Swahili: Reconstructing the History and Language of an African Society, 800-1500* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania, 1984).

²³ James de Vere Allen, “Swahili Culture and the Nature of East Coast Settlement,” *International Journal of African Historical Studies* 14:2 (1981): 327; John Middleton, *The World of the Swahili: An African Mercantile Civilization* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992), 8; Michael N. Pearson, *Port Cities and Intruders: The Swahili Coast, India, and Portugal in the Early Modern Era* (Baltimore: The John Hopkins University Press, 1998).

rubber and cattle caravans from as far away as the eastern Congo traveled regularly to the East African shoreline to trade. Architecture in Swahili towns incorporated African floor plans and African motifs in the decorative work.²⁴ Finally, although Islam remains a fundamental tenet of Swahili culture, it only flowered along the Swahili coast around the fifteenth century.²⁵ As well, Islam is highly syncretic on the East African coast,²⁶ incorporating local rituals and symbols such as the use of drums and *siwas* (African horns carved from ivory tusks), the *ngoma*, or local dance, the continued adherence to the African solar calendar for agricultural purposes (Islam follows a lunar calendar), and the celebration of the Solar New Year (*mwaka ya mpya*). The Swahili also continued to consult traditional healers, *waganga*, for spiritual guidance and in times of calamity.²⁷ The form of Islam resembling a more purist version was practiced by a wealthy minority who could afford to hire Qur'anic scholars to teach them and their children.

The latter day scholars, however, do not eschew the Arabic contributions to Swahili culture; rather, they discard the exclusive framework their predecessors emphasized in favour of an inclusive understanding of Swahili identity. Instead of focusing on the genetic claims to an Arabic heritage which marked earlier scholarship on the Waswahili, recent scholarship examines the cultural attributes of the coastal urban dwellers. Defining Swahili identity through a cultural lens, versus an ethnic or racial one, allows for greater social incorporation which is important for a society made up of diverse peoples. Earlier scholars who stressed the Arab aspects of Swahili society often

²⁴ V.V. Matveiev, "The development of Swahili civilization," in *UNESCO General History of Africa – IV: Africa from the Twelfth to the Sixteenth Century*, ed. D.T. Niane (1984), 471-472.

²⁵ Matveiev, "Swahili civilization," 468; Pearson, *Port Cities*, 56.

²⁶ As it is in many other places.

²⁷ Nurse and Spear, *The Swahili*, 25; Middleton, *The World of the Swahili*, 177-178.

disregarded the African side and thus left behind an incomplete picture; focus was also usually on the elites of Swahili society. Now scholars refer to the Swahili as a “hybrid”²⁸ culture, a “middleman”²⁹ society, or a “cosmopolitan”³⁰ ethnicity.

Some scholars perhaps go too far in assigning Swahili identity an incorporative character. Eastman, for example, states that those who speak Kiswahili in East Africa, no matter where they reside, can be considered Waswahili. Although she describes six degrees of “Swahili-ness,” her emphasis on language as the most crucial aspect of defining who is considered Swahili is too broad. Many people spoke Kiswahili as a second language, but identified themselves by an ethnic identity. Perhaps the most successful definition of Swahili identity using an inclusive framework is found in Glassman’s 1995 study, *Feasts and Riot*. Glassman employs much of the same Arab/African hybrid framework as later scholars did, but goes into much greater detail about the efforts of “outsiders” like upcountry Africans or local peasants or slaves, to be included in Swahili society. The defining trait for inclusion is consumerism: the more one spends on patronage and improving one’s self-image, the more respected one becomes in Swahili society. Clothes, unique items like canes, clocks and umbrellas, and lavish expenditure on food and entertainment – all these mark a person apart in a community as important. Given the remarkable degree of trade found in East Africa, especially in the nineteenth century, fortunes stood to be made by anyone who could win

²⁸ Prins, *Swahili-Speaking Peoples*, 109.

²⁹ Middleton, 35.

³⁰ Abdul Sheriff, *Slaves, Spices & Ivory in Zanzibar: Integration of an East African Commercial Empire into the World Economy, 1770-1873* (London: James Currey, 1987), 8.

the trust of an Indian or Arab financier. Even slaves had access to wealth accumulation and, consequently, opportunity to be integrated into Swahili society.

Despite this important revision and refinement in recent Swahili identity historiography, two difficulties still remain. First, Swahili as a term of self-reference remains largely out of use for most of the inhabitants of East Africa; in Tanzania, it is even considered a derogatory term, implying “thief” or somebody who is not to be trusted.³¹ The term was coined by Arab visitors, as early as the 13th century, to describe the East African coast and its inhabitants.³² British use of the category was also largely negative: because the Swahili were largely an urban population of mixed racial and ethnic heritage, it created problems of governance for the British based on their conceptions of “tribal” rule. Consequently, people who identified themselves in Zanzibar and Tanganyika census polls between the 1920s and 1950s as Swahili were either considered non-indigenous or even uncivilized and were stripped of certain rights, such as land ownership.³³ Therefore, significant drops in the numbers of those identifying themselves as *Waswahili* are evident in the records.

The second difficulty is the general characterization of the East African coastline as a “Swahili coast.” While there are some common cultural and economic characteristics along the coast, there nevertheless remains the danger of generalizing the historical experiences of what is in reality a diverse region. Although scholars now avoid

³¹ Horton and Middleton, *The Swahili*, 16-17. See also chapter six for further discussion.

³² Horton and Middleton, 16.

³³ W. Arens, “The Waswahili: The Social History of an Ethnic Group,” *Africa* 45:4 (1975): 433; Fair, *Pastimes*, 39; Jerman, *Between Five Lines*, 104-106. It is highly ironic that the Swahili, who have been characterized as considering themselves “civilized” in contrast to the upcountry peoples, would come to be viewed as uncivilized. The British generally held African urbanites in low regard, believing that they were susceptible to all the worst vices extant in an urban environment.

defining the Swahili principally based on an Arabic heritage, the ethnic component is nonetheless maintained; the Swahili are considered a people of mixed origins, descended from coastal East Africans who intermarried with Arab traders. Yet they only represented one community inhabiting the coastline of East Africa. Furthermore they were not the only constant in this region – Arabs, South Asians and many other Africans could also be found among the coastal urban communities, all who played significant roles in town life. As Horton and Middleton note, the Swahili never referred to a single polity or state like *USwahili*, or Land of the Swahili, in which they were subjects.³⁴ The Swahili rarely united themselves for any common purpose; even in 1888, the uprisings against the Omanis and the Germans were not coordinated until a month after the first uprising broke out in Pangani. Each town reacted at a different time and somewhat differently; for example, while the Germans were protected in Pangani, the Germans further south at Kilwa were killed.

What is required, then, is a new framework of reference for the eastern coast of Africa; one which does not discard the Swahili, but provides more inclusion of other communities without broadening the Swahili framework any further, thus rendering it useless. I suggest we reconsider the cultural framework which has dominated coastal East African historiography for the past twenty-five years and look to a sense of identity based on attachment and affiliation with place. Cultural identities, although certainly relevant and useful, can be limiting in terms of appreciating how differing cultural communities – among other types of communities – coexist in cosmopolitan places like urban centers.

³⁴ Horton and Middleton, 17fn.

A Case for Place

A subtle shift has occurred in recent books on Tanzanian history concerning Swahili identity. Historians are showing signs of discomfort in using Swahili as a general adjective to describe the peoples of the Tanzanian littoral. Erik Gilbert writes

So who are the real Zanzibaris? The traditional answer to this question is the Swahili. The Swahili are conventionally seen as an African people who have adopted Islam, who live in cities and towns along the coast and whose patrician class was deeply involved in regional trade. In Zanzibar the term is used to designate people of slave descent and it is currently hard to find a self-identifying Swahili on Zanzibar . . . while Zanzibar is African in the geographical sense, culturally, economically and ethnically it also has a regional identity. And this regional identity is just as important to an understanding of what Zanzibar is about as is Zanzibar's African identity. So, whenever possible, I call Zanzibaris Zanzibaris and do not try to put them into the traditional Arab, Indian and Swahili pigeon-holes. To be sure, Zanzibaris have always divided themselves, or in some cases others have divided them, into a number of ethnic groupings. When these categories are important to understanding the flow of events (which is often the case), I use them, otherwise I try to avoid them.³⁵

Gilbert's study is focused on the Zanzibari dhow trade, so he does not elaborate further on this decision. However, he is aware that other races and ethnicities, whether newcomer or well-established in Zanzibar, partake of aspects of the local Swahili culture while also adhering to their own customs; and so, he opts for Zanzibari as a category on account of its sense of community inclusion based on geography rather than an elusive culture. Laura Fair, examining changes in slave identity in Zanzibar after abolition in 1897, retains the category of Swahili but stresses the association of Swahili-ness with urbanity as the key differentiation between those considered Swahili and those who were not (ie. the Hadimu and Tumbatu).³⁶ Thus, even in Fair's work, providing a close

³⁵ Erik Gilbert, *Dhows and the Colonial Economy of Zanzibar, 1860-1970* (Oxford: James Currey, 2004), 15-17.

³⁶ Fair, *Pastimes*, 16, 31, 35.

examination of Swahili culture, association with place is crucial for differentiating social experience as well as providing an arena for social incorporation.

The relationship between one's environment and one's identity has, of course, been explored by anthropologists and historians of various ethnic groups.³⁷ These studies, however, emphasize how the environment has come to shape a particular ethnic group so as to be unique from others; they rarely explore space as a site that forged a common identity out of multiple ethnic and racial communities. In fact, the majority of studies on the historical development of African identities emphasize singular ethnic groups. Whether they are defined in relation to other ethnic groups, or, as the more recent wave of scholarship discussed above has revealed, a disjointed entity, split up as they were along lines of gender, generation or class, African identity is still largely contained by "tribal" lines.

Urban studies, then, would be the obvious field to find space used as a new framework for understanding African community identity. Yet, in African urban history, space is often examined in terms of struggles over segregation and control.³⁸ Past scholarship tends to view urban centers as places where rural Africans either went to make money to bring back home, or as sites in which one could escape the social control

³⁷ Isaria N. Kimambo, *A Political History of the Pare, 1500-1900* (Nairobi: East African Publishing House, 1969); Steven Feierman, *The Shambaa Kingdom: A History* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1974); Sally Falk Moore & Paul Puritt, *The Chagga and Meru of Tanzania* (London: International African Institute, 1977).

³⁸ Historians of South Africa have long incorporated the issue of space into their studies given the historical division of land in South Africa between whites and blacks and the creation of urban townships to control African labour. For similar themes in Tanzanian urban historiography, see James R. Brennan, *Nation, Race and Urbanization in Dar es Salaam, 1916-1976* Ph.D Dissertation, Northwestern University, 2004; Andrew Burton, *African Underclass: Urbanization, Crime & Colonial Order in Dar es Salaam* (Oxford: James Currey, 2005).

exercised by one's elders or the persecution of one's natal community. Yet urban spaces can be more than just sites of opportunity, power struggles or escape. People reside in urban spaces over protracted periods, or they repeatedly return to them, so that places become invested with meaning. Spaces not only acquire character and permanence by those who dwell within them, but also have an influence upon the behaviour of inhabitants. Personal networks are forged, involving obligations to, and expectations from, those one lives closest to; furthermore, shared habits of daily life within a certain space create spatially-defined community codes for inhabitants to follow, regardless of their background.

I do not make the argument here that cultural identity is irrelevant; naturally it played a role in urban centers, as did other manifestations of identity. Studies have demonstrated how ties to natal homelands and cultures were maintained in towns and cities, particularly in those cities that European imperialism developed like Johannesburg and Nairobi. This was a survival tactic of rural-based Africans in order to minimize the alienating affects that large urban centers could exert on recent migrants. Studies also show how certain ethnicities tended to settle amongst their own peoples, creating ethnic neighbourhoods, not unlike the major cities of North America. Given such evidence, it is not hard to see why urban centers have not been seen as sites of communal identity; however, most of these studies focus on the experiences of recent migrations of rural-based Africans to the cities that Europeans designed, usually with a plan to segregate the races and under the pretence that Africans' presence in the urban centers was temporary, so that their neighbourhoods were never adequately developed.

Of course, urban centers were not introduced to Africa by Europeans. They existed for centuries before contact and developed along indigenous lines which neither necessarily followed a segregated pattern nor forced settlers to live in circumstances unfavorable to them. Such urban centers attracted a diversity of peoples over time. To survive, they could not afford to be insular within their own ethnic communities; bonds had to be forged amongst them. The principal unifying bond was the settlement they all had in common, uniting them in their concern for what transpired there.

Two phenomena help us understand how this bond came about. The first is what Michel de Certeau calls *the practice of everyday life*. In contradiction to Foucault's argument about how elites manipulate space to impose discipline and control over society, De Certeau looks for a "network of an antidiscipline" in space as created by the behaviour of masses of people. He examines the everyday practices of people:

Their story begins on ground level, with footsteps. They are myriad, but do not compose a series. They cannot be counted because each unit has a qualitative character: a style of tactile apprehension and kinesthetic appropriation. Their swarming mass is an innumerable collection of singularities. Their intertwined paths give their shape to spaces. They weave places together. In that respect, pedestrian movements form one of these "real systems whose existence in fact makes up the city." They are not localized; it is rather they that spatialize.³⁹

In other words, the organization of space into functions – living spaces, transportation spaces, industrial spaces, recreational spaces – does not mean that people will necessarily fulfill the functions expected of them. As de Certeau elaborates, people's movements

Carr[y] away and displac[e] the analytical, coherent proper meanings of urbanism . . . [they can] make some parts of the city disappear and exaggerate others, distorting it, fragmenting it, and diverting it from its immobile order . . . [they can articulate] a second, poetic geography on top of the geography of the literal, forbidden or permitted meaning.⁴⁰

³⁹ Michel de Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984), 97.

⁴⁰ De Certeau, *Everyday Life*, 102, 105.

While de Certeau's "antidiscipline" will illuminate aspects of agency and resistance later on in this dissertation, it is how other urban anthropologists and sociologists have either shared or applied his theory to the formation of community identity which is of utmost relevance to this research.⁴¹

In "the practice of everyday life," people naturally interact with others – neighbours, shopkeepers, officials, service providers, teachers, religious leaders – on a consistent basis so that, over time, people develop networks for themselves. Whether people even talk at length or at all with everyone they encounter in a day is not necessarily relevant; it is the fact that people are *seen and recognized* by those who share the same spaces. Faces become familiar and associated with certain spaces, whether in a positive or negative light. Familiarity is the next step to communication; in a time of crisis, it may become necessary to rely on those who also inhabit one's area. These same people also provide a means of surveillance, noticing those who are "accepted" members of the neighbourhood and those who are not.

Particular spaces like markets, transportation hubs, shops or plazas become nodes of communication, unifying diverse neighbourhoods. News, rumour and gossip are spread, informing citizens of what is happening in their shared environment. Community talk also plays a role in shaping the behaviour of the members; people will behave in

⁴¹ Claude S. Fischer, *To Dwell Among Friends: Personal Networks in Town and City* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1982); Irwin Altman and Abraham Wandersman, eds. *Neighbourhood and Community Environments* (New York and London: Plenum Press, 1987); Irwin Altman and Ervin H. Zube, eds. *Public Places and Spaces* (New York & London: Plenum Press, 1989); Henri Lefebvre, *The Production of Space* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1991); Michael Keith and Steve Pile, eds. *Place and the Politics of Identity* (London and New York: Routledge, 1993); David Harvey, *Justice, Nature and the Geography of Difference* (Malden: Blackwell Publishers Inc., 1996).

ways acceptable to the community at large to avoid being gossiped about or possibly expelled from the community.⁴² In the process of daily routine, people quickly become familiar with the landmarks and the characters which set a particular community off from another. Therefore people share points of reference and, when these are spoken of, they immediately recognize their significance; outsiders, naturally, do not. By “outsiders,” however, it is not implied those who do not live in the same neighbourhood; inclusive networks can expand beyond a person’s home street or block via those who consistently come and go. As Rivlin explains, they can include

people who may reside outside the borders but are central to the functioning and the familiar image of the area. They are the mail deliverers, shopkeepers, service providers such as police, and assortments of people who “hang out” in an area, even the homeless. The regularity of their presence and their roles in local life give them places and status within an area. In turn, they help to define the neighbourhood’s borders by their presence and their participation in the routine of neighbourhood activity and interchange with local residents.⁴³

People develop a vested interest in their communities: they want to ensure the welfare and safety of their families, relatives and friends; they want to secure their access to the local economy; they want to invest in social institutions to keep them active and entertained. In this way, “[p]ublic spaces are participatory landscapes. Through human action, visual involvement, and the attachment of values, people are directly involved in public spaces. People claim places through feelings and actions.”⁴⁴ Members of a shared community will also develop a social code; a sense of responsibility and respect towards

⁴² Sidney R. Waldron, “Within the Wall and Beyond: Ethnicity in Harar, Ethiopia,” in *Urban Life: Readings in Urban Anthropology*, ed. George Gmelch and Walter P. Zenner (Prospect Heights: Waveland Press, Inc., 1996), 483.

⁴³ Leanne G. Rivlin, “The Neighbourhood, Personal Identity, and Group Affiliations,” in *Neighbourhood and Community Environments*, ed. Irwin Altman and Abraham Wandersman (New York and London: Plenum Press, 1987), 4-5.

⁴⁴ Mark Francis, “Control as a Dimension of Public-Space Quality,” in *Public Places and Spaces*, ed. Irwin Altman and Ervin H. Zube (New York: Plenum Press, 1989), 148.

one another to live amicably.⁴⁵ In this way, people within a community will also respond as a community to threats against their claimed places, or simply to change or develop them. Over time, in an ongoing process, a society's space is therefore shaped by its inhabitants; yet, simultaneously, the space can also influence the behaviour and mindset of its dwellers.⁴⁶

This leads to the second phenomenon which guides the theoretical framework of this dissertation: spatial attachment.⁴⁷ When people spend a protracted period of time in a place, they develop an association with it, regardless of whether the experience is positive or otherwise. As Altman and Low explain:

it may not be attachment to a particular place that is central; rather, it may be affective attachments to ideas, people, psychological states, past experiences, and culture that is crucial. And it is through the vehicle of particular environmental settings that these individual, group, and cultural processes are manifested. The place may, therefore, be a medium or milieu which embeds and is a repository of a variety of life experiences, is central to those experiences, and is inseparable from them. Thus the place qua place is not necessarily the ultimate focus of the attachment. Extending this idea, one can infer from many writings that place attachment may contribute to the formation, maintenance, and preservation of the identity of a person, group, or culture. And, it may also be that place attachment, plays a role in fostering individual, group, and cultural self-esteem, self-worth, and self-pride.⁴⁸

⁴⁵ Sally Engle Merry, "Crowding, Conflict, and Neighbourhood Regulation," in *Neighbourhood and Community Environments*, ed. Irvin Altman and Abraham Wandersman (New York: Plenum Press, 1987), 59; George Reville, "Reading Rosehill: Community, identity and inner-city Derby," in *Place and the Politics of Identity* ed. Michael Keith and Steve Pile (London: Routledge, 1993), 128.

⁴⁶ Michael Keith and Steve Pile, "Introduction Part 1: The politics of place," in *Place and the Politics of Identity* ed. Michael Keith and Steve Pile (London: Routledge, 1993); Harvey, *Geography of Difference*, 316; Lefebvre, *Production of Space*, 38.

⁴⁷ David M. Hummon. *Commonplaces: Community Ideology and Identity in American Culture* (New York: State University of New York Press, 1990); Irwin Altman and Seth M. Low, eds. *Place Attachment* (New York: Plenum Press, 1992); George Gmelch and Walter P. Zenner, eds. *Urban Life: Readings in Urban Anthropology*, 3rd Edition (Prospect Heights: Waveland Press, Inc., 1996);

⁴⁸ Seth M. Low and Irwin Altman, "Place Attachment: A Conceptual Inquiry," in *Place Attachment*, 10.

On a subconscious level then, people become attached to a particular place through the practice of everyday life: they know where to go to buy groceries, to post letters, to get an education; how to get to the park, to a house of religion, to the town square for a community celebration. When people move house, they often remark on the “security” they are leaving behind and express anxiety over the “unknown” that lies ahead for them in their future community.

Familiarity with a community space is a shared phenomenon; the thousands of people who dwell within a town may not know each other personally, but they all can relate to the space they share and the events which transpire within. This is what Benedict Anderson refers to as the “imagined community.” David Harvey elaborates: “the fact that a category like ‘New Yorkers’ can make sense to the polyglot millions who occupy that place testifies precisely to the political power that can be mobilized and exercised through activities of place construction in the mind as well as on the ground.”⁴⁹

Aside from everyday life, more acute forms of place attachment manifest themselves through civic pride – the association of organizations, cultural venues, and particularly sports teams with communities: “[l]ike ethnic loyalty, such civic pride becomes much more marked when residents emigrate or otherwise come into contact with outsiders; thus, a small group of former Chicagoans may continue to root for the Cubs or for the White Sox after moving to Los Angeles or New York.”⁵⁰ Once Bagamoyo’s heyday as a caravan entrepot began to decline, the Asian population shifted to Dar es Salaam; however, they did not forget the former town. Other aspects of shared

⁴⁹ Harvey, *Geography of Difference*, 323

⁵⁰ Walter P. Zenner, “Introduction to Urban Places and Spaces,” in *Urban Life*, 476.

spatial identity include speaking with a local accent or dialect; association with a particular geographic feature, like a lake or mountain or plain; or a community's particular claim to fame such as the birthplace of someone famous, an invention, or an event.

Spatial identity is not wholly novel to scholars of Swahili identity. Pouwels notes "one referent which all coastal dwellers would fall back upon, whatever their social origins, is that they 'belong' to a town."⁵¹ Kusimba agrees: "[p]eople identified themselves according to their polity of residence. There were Wapate of Pate, Walamu of Lamu . . . Wakilwa of Kilwa, and so on."⁵² This sense of spatial identity, however, is only tacitly raised. Both historians only refer to the Swahili inhabitants of the towns; ignored, again, are the many other communities who called the coastal urban centers home or a home away from home. Iliffe, not surprisingly, acknowledges the role spatial identity plays in Tanganyikan history, albeit briefly. He cautions against homogenizing the historical experience of ethnic groups. Using the case study of the Manyema, he explains how this group behaved differently in the towns of Ujiji and Bagamoyo. He refers to this phenomenon as "situationalism," that "an African's identity often varied depending on the situation in which he found himself."⁵³ Iliffe's insight is of particular use to this thesis, but whereas he explains how a single ethnic group adopted different spatial loyalties, this dissertation explores how a diverse group of ethnicities adopted a

⁵¹ Randall L. Pouwels, *Horn and Crescent: Cultural Change and Traditional Islam on the East African Coast, 800-1900* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), 65.

⁵² Kusimba, *Rise and Fall*, 139.

⁵³ Iliffe, *Tanganyika*, 382-384.

common placial identity.⁵⁴ Exploring this experience along the so-called “Swahili coast” not only provides a more incorporative framework of understanding societies in this region, it also reveals what Norberg-Schultz calls the *genius loci* of each town;⁵⁵ that is, appreciating how each town’s community had a unique sense of itself compared to other urban communities placed under the Swahili rubric. From this perspective, the historian avoids generalizing the historical experience of East African coastal societies; each town deserves closer scrutiny because each experience is different.

Spatial identity proves a thorn in Cooper and Brubaker’s argument for the need to split identity into several specific categories, for spatial identity transcends these categories, being neither hard nor soft, firm nor fluid. As Harvey explains, “[w]e all know what Heraclitus meant when he said that we cannot step into the same river twice, but we all know that there is a sense in which we can return again and again to the banks of the same river.”⁵⁶ A space, once it has been invested with meaning and significance, becomes a place. This place, or town in our example, is named and that name conjures up certain associations as mentioned above. A *genius loci* is thereby created for that town – a prevailing character or essence of a place – that is unique from others. This is not to claim, however, that once a placial identity is formed it remains unchangeable. People come and go, different events occur over time, monuments are built and torn

⁵⁴ S.A.K. Mlacha is also interested in how the people of Bagamoyo, coming from diverse backgrounds, adopted a common culture; however, his analysis is extremely brief and he concludes that the culture that emerged was Swahili. S.A.K. Mlacha, “Cultural Pluralism in a Coastal Town of East Africa: A Study of Bagamoyo,” in *Swahili Modernities: Culture, Politics, and Identity on the East Coast of Africa* ed. Pat Caplan and Farouk Topan (Trenton, NJ: African World Press, 2004), 37-41.

⁵⁵ Christian Norberg-Schultz, *Genius Loci: Towards a Phenomenology of Architecture* (New York: Rizzoli, 1980).

⁵⁶ Harvey, *Geography of Difference*, 61.

down, buildings crumble and new ones take their place; clearly, as referential points alter, placial identity changes. Nonetheless, the label usually remains the same. The majority of the people of Bagamoyo identified themselves as *Wabagamoyo*⁵⁷ throughout the period under review.

In view of Cooper and Brubaker's valid critique, however, of the tendency of scholars to use identity vaguely or loosely, I make an effort here to pinpoint my use of spatial identity. I use placial identity – in this case, the *Wabagamoyo* – predominantly as a “category of practice” rather than a “category of analysis.” Being *Wabagamoyo* is definitely a practiced identity, although not always consciously so. Much in the same way that E.P. Thompson's “moral economy” of the masses reveals itself, evidence of the existence of a *Wabagamoyo* consciousness erupts in various manifestations as responses to crises, celebrations or town pride, but the identity remains nevertheless latently present.

It is also used self-referentially by the townspeople of Bagamoyo – all my oral informants identified themselves as *Wabagamoyo* and explained to me that those who live in the town, particularly those who have done so for awhile, are considered *Wabagamoyo*, regardless of their backgrounds. In letters and petitions found in the archives, townspeople also identified themselves locally, referring to themselves, for example, as the Indians of Bagamoyo, the businessmen of Bagamoyo, the women of Bagamoyo, and even the people of Bagamoyo. Yet, this is also a “category of analysis,” too, for the goal of this research is to analyze archival records in search of evidence

⁵⁷ The people of Bagamoyo.

which supports that, historically, there also existed a sense of being *Wabagamoyo* where it may not have been explicitly stated.

African Urban Studies and Bagamoyo

My definition of the urban is a straightforward one borrowed from Philip Curtin, who identifies a city as “a place where people do different things, and the more different things they do, the more the place is a city.”⁵⁸ Such an interpretation avoids defining cities based on population figures alone. For example, Bagamoyo had a population between 10,000 and 18,000 in the late nineteenth century; by western definitions it would be classified as a small town. Yet, such a classification fails to capture Bagamoyo’s importance as an economic hub in the context of the Indian Ocean trade system. Tanzanian historian John Iliffe describes Bagamoyo as home to a very diverse population and lacking in a predominant ethnic group.⁵⁹ Bagamoyo was a crossroads of trade, consequently home to merchants, financiers, traders, slaves, porters, sailors, and craftsmen. It was a center of religion, particularly Islam of the Sunni variety, but also a Christian refuge. Sufi brotherhoods, or *tariqas*, were prevalent in Bagamoyo. Because of its economic importance, political power was contested among local leaders, Zanzibari sultans, and, of course, the Europeans. All these elements contributed to a very dynamic urban arena, distinguishable from rural areas which, demographically, were not ethnically diverse or, economically, not as complex. I do, however, avoid referring to Bagamoyo as a “city;” this term carries too strong a connotation of western metropolises, conjuring up

⁵⁸ Philip D. Curtin, “Preface,” in *Atlantic Port Cities: Economy, Culture, and Society in the Atlantic World, 1650-1850* ed. Franklin W. Knight and Peggy K. Liss (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1991), xi..

⁵⁹ Iliffe, *Tanganyika*, 382.

images of urban spaces consisting of large, dense cores of great buildings. Bagamoyo is a town, but only in size; it is accurately an urban center given the reasons above.

As mentioned above, recent studies in African urban history have emphasized the migration of rural Africans into urban centers. Historians have examined cities like Johannesburg, Nairobi, Brazzaville, Maputo, Harare, and Atbara, all developed by Europeans for the benefit of empire.⁶⁰ Such environments, being the loci of direct imperial administration, were traditionally viewed as restrictive and coercive to migrant Africans. Yet scholars have repeatedly demonstrated how rural Africans were able to fashion new identities or maintain rural communities in the colonial urban centers. In this process, Africans engaged in various forms of struggle among themselves and with the colonial powers in order to give meaning and substance to an often alienating urban experience. Whether finding niches in the informal economy (as washermen, taxi drivers or prostitutes), forming leisure-based associations (football leagues, dance societies, or social clubs), or organizing dissent through unions or work teams, Africans found ways to avoid total submission to the imperial authorities. Simultaneously, these same authorities realized that their dependence on African labour undermined their ability to control Africans. When French authorities attempted to co-opt football associations in Brazzaville or when British authorities tried to remove prostitutes from Nairobi,

⁶⁰ Teresa Barnes, *"We Women Worked So Hard": Gender, Urbanization and Social Reproduction in Colonial Harare* (Portsmouth: Heinemann, 1999); Phyllis Martin, *Leisure and Society in Colonial Brazzaville* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995); Jeanne Penvenne, *African Workers and Colonial Racism: Mozambican Strategies and Struggles in Lourenço Marques, 1877-1962* (Portsmouth: Heinemann, 1995); Ahmad Alawad Sikainga, *"City of Steel and Fire": A Social History of Atbara, Sudan's Railway Town, 1906-1984* (Portsmouth: Heinemann, 2002); Charles Van Onselen, *Studies in the Social and Economic History of the Witwatersrand, 1886-1914, Volumes I and II* (Essex: Longman, 1982); Luise White, *The Comforts of Home: Prostitution in Colonial Nairobi* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990).

unexpected backlashes from the general African population forced imperialists to concede that these African urban phenomena were in fact necessary to placate an overworked and underpaid labour force.

These analyses have made a significant contribution to our understanding of the African urban experience. Yet, because this recent proliferation of historical urban studies focuses on the European colonial city, there is a risk of falsely associating urbanized Africans with westernization. That is to say, Africans become linked with rural or pastoral identities and Europeans are marked as the harbingers of urban civilization.⁶¹ While one can not deny that hundreds of thousands of Africans migrated to urban centers from the late nineteenth century onwards historians must avoid fashioning a singular historical urban experience for Africans. Some studies do exist on precolonial African cities, but such analyses tend to conclude at the beginning of the colonial era.⁶² Without a continuing narrative analysis, the reader is left with many questions as to the fate of these cities after the colonial takeover. What the scholarly repertoire on African urban history lacks are chronologically protracted accounts of those Africans who were already urbanites prior to the colonial era.

Some studies on the experiences of precolonial urban centers in the colonial era have recently been published. Fred Cooper looks at labour on the dockyards of Mombasa; Laura Fair examines the Swahili slave community of Zanzibar Stone Town;

⁶¹ Catherine Coquery-Vidrovitch also examines how romantic pastoral images of Africans in general have contributed to the association of African urbanization with westernization. See "The Process of Urbanization in Africa (From the Origins to the Beginning of Independence)," *African Studies Review*, 34:1 (1992): 1-98.

⁶² Walter T. Brown, *A Precolonial History of Bagamoyo* Ph.D Dissertation, Boston University, 1971; Toyin Falola, *The Political Economy of a Pre-Colonial African State: Ibadan, 1830-1900* (Ile-Ife: University of Ife Press, 1984). These are just two examples – more studies exist on both west and east African precolonial cities.

Ruth Watson follows the development of civic culture in Ibadan, Nigeria; John Parker focuses on the Ga elite of Accra; and Robin Law provides a detailed narrative of the West African slave entrepot of Ouidah.⁶³ Although Fair provides an excellent study on the transformation of slave identity in an urban context, her periodization is squarely in the colonial period (1890-1945) and the transition she analyzes was set in motion by British enforced abolition. The same is true of Cooper's study. Watson's and Parker's researches, although spanning the divide between the period of precolonial administration and formal colonialism, both focus on the experiences of a particular ethnic group within their towns, thus downplaying or ignoring an exploration of a more inclusive, shared urban identity. Law's book neither pushes far into the formal colonial period, nor explores a sense of "Ouidah-ness" among its inhabitants. This thesis, then, following the story of Bagamoyo, will be the first protracted examination of the continuity of a shared urban identity in Africa from precolonial times to post-colonial.⁶⁴

⁶³ Frederick Cooper, *On the African Waterfront: Urban Disorder and the Transformation of Work in Colonial Mombasa* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1987); Laura Fair, *Pastimes and Politics: Culture, Commodity, and Identity in Post-Abolition Urban Zanzibar, 1890-1945* (Oxford: James Currey, 2001); John Parker, *Making the Town: Ga State and Society in Early Colonial Accra* (Portsmouth: Heinemann, 2000); Ruth Watson, *'Civil Disorder is the Disease of Ibadan': Chieftancy and Civic Culture in a Yoruba City* (Athens: Ohio University Press, 2003); Robin Law, *Ouidah: The Social History of a West African Slaving Port, 1727-1892* (Oxford: James Currey, 2004).

⁶⁴ Douglas A. Anthony's research on multiethnic community in Kano, Nigeria is one exception, but its periodization is entirely postcolonial. A central underlying theme of his book – analyzing how different ethnic groups built bridges despite differences within an urban setting – resonates very strongly with this dissertation. See Douglas A. Anthony, *Poison and Medicine: Ethnicity, Power, and Violence in a Nigerian City, 1966-1986* (Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann, 2002).

Throughout the latter half of the nineteenth century, Bagamoyo dominated the commerce of the central East African coastline.⁶⁵ Thousands of African porters came to Bagamoyo each year bringing cattle or carrying ivory, copal, rubber, and many other products from the interior of the continent, as far away as beyond the Great Lakes region. In town, they exchanged these for cotton goods, weapons, copper wire, and various items which they took with them back to the interior to sell or to keep for personal use. The porters also enjoyed a lengthy rest in Bagamoyo where the townspeople earned a tidy profit in catering to the porters' needs, whether through accommodation, food, or drink. In this way, Bagamoyo grew year after year, its permanent population increasing from around 3000 in the early 1860s to roughly 18,000 by the end of the century.⁶⁶ The porters also increased the town's numbers by 20,000 to 50,000 annually. The Germans established the administrative capital of their East African colony here in 1886, but then abandoned the site five years later, moving southwards to Dar es Salaam. Despite competition from the rival city of Dar es Salaam, Bagamoyo continued to thrive for another fifteen years until the Germans began construction of a railway from Dar es Salaam into the interior in 1905, diverting the region's economic traffic. After World War I, Bagamoyo experienced a second colonial invasion as a British regime replaced the defeated Germans. Bagamoyo's protracted and dynamic transition into colonial status

⁶⁵ Norman R. Bennett, *Arab vs. European: Diplomacy and War in Nineteenth-Century East Central Africa* (New York: Africana Publishing Company, 1986), 30. Kilwa and Mombasa were ranked second and third most important trading ports after Bagamoyo.

⁶⁶ DOAZ, I/26, 26/8/1899. The French Mission reported that, by 1888, there were 12,000 inhabitants in the town while another 15,000 lived within four leagues (23km) of it in a southwesterly direction through Uzaramo. This would imply an urban/peri-urban population spread, but also that Bagamoyo served as a center for 27,000 permanent local inhabitants. *Bulletin Generale de la Congregation du St. Esprit et de l'ime Coeur de Marie* (BG), TOME XIV, April 1886-July 1888, 615-623.

thus provides a good example of an African urban community's struggles *in situ* versus the struggles of migrant Africans and their resettlement central to most recent African urban studies.

This thesis, then, will strengthen the literature on African urban history by reversing the usual framework, locating Europeans as the new arrivals and urban Africans as the resident hosts. Incorporating various social groups based on race, ethnicity, class, religion, gender and generation, this study will explore how people inhabiting an urban space continued to identify themselves as the community of that space as the colonial context unfolded. Although it is crucial to understand how groups of people related to one another within an urban environment, what often becomes overlooked is how people also related to their physical environment.⁶⁷ Catherine Coquery-Vidrovitch observes that the historiography of francophone and anglophone African urban history is plagued by a divide in analytical approaches: the former school stresses how colonial urban centers are constructed and the functions they serve for the ruling powers while the latter emphasizes the social behaviour of people living within those urban centers, yet paying "little attention to people's physical surroundings: their houses, offices, or factories" unless concerning segregation. It is my intention to heed Coquery-Vidrovitch's advice and "build a bridge between the two approaches and to combine their methods in order to grasp both the content and the container."⁶⁸

⁶⁷ These spatial relations are only briefly commented on in John Parker's study on Accra and mostly with reference to urban expansion.

⁶⁸ Coquery-Vidrovitch, "The Process of Urbanization," 19. See also William Cunningham Bissell, "Conservation and the Colonial Past: Urban Planning, Space and Power in Zanzibar," in *Africa's Urban Past*, ed. David M. Anderson and Richard Rathbone (Portsmouth: Heinemann, 2000); Anthony D. King, *Urbanism, Colonialism and the World-Economy: Cultural and Spatial Foundations of the World Urban System*

Three studies exist on the history of Bagamoyo; two of which remain unpublished dissertations.⁶⁹ Brown highlights the precolonial period, demonstrating, as was the scholarly trend at the time, how Africans had a history of their own prior to the European arrival. It does not explore the transitions the town experienced under German and, later, British administration. Shemhili's MA research explores the decline of Bagamoyo's economy since 1885, although his account of the German period is of little use since he did not consult German sources. Nimtz chose Bagamoyo as a case study to explore how Islam and politics were intertwined in Tanzania after the British took over the colony in WWI. Each of these studies provides useful data for certain aspects of this dissertation.

Research Framework and Methodology

To summarize, then, this dissertation has two aims. The first is to approach identity in coastal East Africa from a new perspective; one which does not solely focus upon the elusive ethno-cultural framework of the Swahili which only captures one aspect of East African coastal society. Instead, by using a spatial framework whereby identity is understood from the way people associate and attach themselves to a place, a more inclusive identity is achieved, incorporating people of diverse backgrounds into one

(London: Routledge, 1991); Anthony D. King, *Colonial Urban Development: Culture, social power and environment* (London: Routledge, 1976).

⁶⁹ Walter T. Brown, *A Precolonial History of Bagamoyo* Ph.D Dissertation, Boston University, 1971; Salatiel Togolai Shemhili, *The Economic History of Bagamoyo, 1885-1950* MA Thesis, University of Dar es Salaam, 1977; and August H. Nimtz, Jr., *Islam and Politics in East Africa: The Sufi Order in Tanzania* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1980). Brown's thesis also spawned two published articles: Walter T. Brown, "The Politics of Business: Relations Between Zanzibar and Bagamoyo in the Late Nineteenth Century," *African Historical Studies*, 4:3 (1971): 631-643; Walter T. Brown, "Bagamoyo: An Historical Introduction," *Tanzania Notes and Records*, 71 (1970): 69-83.

community. At the same time, understanding coastal East African societies from a spatial perspective avoids generalizing the historical experience of this region as can occur under the Swahili paradigm. Through placial identity, the *genius loci* of each of the myriad of towns which dot the length of the coastline from Somalia to Mozambique is preserved.

The second aim, flowing from the first, is to trace this placial identity of the townspeople of Bagamoyo, or *Wabagamoyo*, over a protracted period of time. Because the town of Bagamoyo existed prior to colonial rule, the opportunity presents itself to explore a precolonial identity before, during and after the colonial moment. From this, we can observe the persistence of the *Wabagamoyo* identity in the face of the colonial encounter and assess the impact of European imperialism on this urban affinity.

The question remains as to *how* the above will be demonstrated. Extracting a sense of consciousness of the *Wabagamoyo* community from archival material is a difficult task, especially since much of the evidence used in this dissertation stems from European sources. Not until the latter decades of the period under review (1910s – 1960s) does one find petitions and letters from the people of Bagamoyo themselves in the archives. The oral information provided by the *Wabagamoyo* consulted for this research also can only be relied upon for the same period. Yet, Europeans actually provide keen insight to the existence of a Bagamoyo community since the foreigners' very presence in the town often provoked reactions among the townspeople that can be explained as a spatially-based community response to outsiders. This took various forms such as the town welcoming of the French Catholic strangers we witnessed at the opening of this chapter. Other manifestations are more tense and violent such as later land ownership

disputes between the missionaries and the *Wabagamoyo*, as well as the uproar that marked the Bagamoyo chapter of the so-called Bushiri Uprising of 1888-1890, sparked by the German takeover of the Tanzanian coastline.

Not all *Wabagamoyo* behaviour was prompted by Europeans; documents also reveal urban community responses to the Sultan of Zanzibar and his representatives stationed in the town. The Sultan's struggle for influence over the booming trade town can be witnessed in his efforts to maintain the loyalty of his representatives who, after being posted to Bagamoyo, eventually realized that their success depended upon their willingness to become *Wabagamoyo* themselves. This trend continued into the colonial period as Germans were forced to negotiate longstanding, local associations between power and space, involving administrative and judicial structures, houses of religion, transport and trade infrastructures, and slavery. Other manifestations of *Wabagamoyo* behaviour reveal themselves in responses to environmental factors such as drought, plagues and famine. Taking inspiration from Phyllis Martin's and Laura Fair's excellent studies of leisure and society in Brazzaville and Zanzibar respectively, the formation of Bagamoyo football teams, jazz clubs and dance societies provide further insight into urban community consciousness. It is also important not to underestimate the descriptions of the mundane found in the sources which reveal the nuances of everyday life.

I do not wish to argue that the townspeople of Bagamoyo existed in some "merrie" state and only directed their mistrust, resentment and anger towards outsiders; this would obviously not ring true, as much as my informants would have me believe that Bagamoyo was simply "a peaceful place." While Bagamoyo's history certainly reveals

an impressive level of tolerance amongst its inhabitants, it is, nevertheless, made up of many diverse communities who did not always see eye to eye. This, however, does not detract from my argument; in fact, it even strengthens it. Rivalries and divisions can be spatially bound as much as they can be dictated by other considerations. Classes, clubs and associations can be made up of people from various ethnic, religious and racial backgrounds, locating their source of unity in the space in which they share. Disputes between community factions become shared points of reference in community lore. This lore is then exchanged among people and passed down over generations within a spatial boundary, thus forming a common identity. *Wabagamoyo* are also notorious for spreading *fitina* – rumour and gossip – to the detriment of the person or persons who are the subject thereof. Being the subject of *fitina* could result in loss of employment, loss of business, and even loss of one's friends. Yet, in order for *fitina* to be effective in its purpose of ruining a reputation, there had to be a community in place within which the reputation was to be ruined. *Fitina* is therefore a negative manifestation of community identity, but a manifestation of community identity nonetheless.

What this microhistory implies for macro considerations is the need to go beyond generalizations of culture in Swahili history as well as to go beyond understanding African identities bound by tribe. While histories of the development of nationalism in Africa do tackle these considerations, colonial borders were not the only force which brought peoples of different cultural, ethnic and racial backgrounds together on the continent. Swahili scholars, as discussed above, examine how a diverse group of Africans and Arabs became part of a single culture before the advent of colonialism. They have done well at identifying the social similarities of the coastal peoples of central

East Africa, but at the expense of exploring the differences among them. Those identified as Swahili did not act as a united people, nor did any leader emerge to unite them. Not everyone who settled in the coastal towns wanted to “become” Swahili – many were happy to adopt from other cultures extant in the communities, but largely retained their own languages and traditions. Indeed, people who inhabited the coast had a stronger sense of what united them placially than they did culturally; even Swahili scholars tacitly acknowledge this. The so-called Swahili towns were home to only a small percentage of the overall population who actually considered themselves Swahili.

This dissertation, then, seeks a new understanding of how these East African urban coastal dwellers understood themselves based on an affiliation to a particular place. This framework shows how people of different backgrounds built bridges with each other and established an overarching community with which they all identified in common. Such an identity has been generally denied Africans historically by academics who focus on the tribal in order to explain tensions and violence that have erupted between ethnic groups. While Africans have their differences with each other, they are also quite capable of living together in shared spaces. Placial identity helps us understand how this occurred while, at the same time, explains that behaviour and conflict in African history need not be explained away by tribalism, but can be based on the affiliation and loyalty of a diverse group of peoples to particular places.

The material used in this dissertation is drawn from both archival and oral sources. The Tanzanian National Archives (TNA) provided the majority of documentation, mostly administration files from both the German and British periods, as well as for the first years of independence. It must be noted, however, that the German

files are not as numerous as this researcher would have liked because German colonial administrators burned or buried many of their records during WWI. For example, there are neither monthly nor annual reports of Bagamoyo District to be found between 1892 and 1919. This made the task of reconstructing the history of Bagamoyo considerably more challenging. Further files, as well as newspaper reports and magazine articles, from the German period were located in Berlin at the *Bundesarchiv* and the *Staatsbibliothek*, as well as in the *Staatsarchiv* in Hamburg.

The Zanzibar National Archives, National Archives of Great Britain, British Library, School of Oriental and African Studies, Imperial War Museum and the National Library of Scotland provided a wide variety of correspondence and documents from British consuls, travelers, and soldiers which supplemented a large number of travelogues. These were particularly helpful for the period of the late nineteenth century. The Archives of the Congrégation du St. Esprit in Chevilly, France provided ample documentation of Bagamoyo since the 1860s in various forms of missionary correspondence and journal entries. In Bagamoyo itself, I gathered close to forty interviews among the *wazee* of Bagamoyo, the elderly townspeople, who offered illuminating detail to the stories found in the TNA concerning the British and early independence periods, as well as insight into other aspects of being *Wabagamoyo*. These oral informants were all the more important given the comparative paucity of sources on Bagamoyo after 1919 following the town's decline under the British mandate and the rise of its rival, Dar es Salaam.

Finally, I had the good fortune to be privy to documents which had scarcely been used by other researchers before myself: Father Gallus Mapunda of the Catholic Mission

in Bagamoyo provided me with a transcribed collection of missionary correspondence written in the crucial years of 1888-1890 during the Bushiri Uprising, documents which had only been used once before in a doctoral dissertation written in Dutch. These letters provided an amazing depth of detail of the Bagamoyo community during those tumultuous months. Jane Parpart and Marianne Rostgaard also generously provided me with documents previously unexamined pertaining to the years 1888-1891, perfectly complementing the letters that Father Gallus gave me permission to use. These were letters from a Danish employee of the German East African Company, Christian Lautherborn, who escaped to Bagamoyo from Pangani during the Bushiri Uprising. Lautherborn provides detail of events at that time as well as of the reconstruction of Bagamoyo town in which he took a leading role.

This dissertation will be broken down into chronological and thematic chapters. I have chosen the 1860s and the 1960s as the bookends of my periodization principally because they bridge the colonial divide, beginning in the precolonial period and ending after independence. This permits us to observe the impact of European rule on the Bagamoyo community without privileging it. The thesis will be presented in seven chapters. The second chapter will provide an introduction to the origins of Bagamoyo, its geographic setting and an overview of the peoples who inhabited the town. Much of this material will be drawn from Walter Brown's research. Once the background has been established, the chapter will examine the political implications of racial identity with regards to land disputes between the townspeople and the French missionaries as well as the relationship between the Sultans of Zanzibar and the townspeople. The political theme from chapter two overlaps the third chapter which examines the arrival of the

Germans and the consequent uprising of 1888. These two chapters will provide the clearest articulation of *Wabagamoyo* identity as revealed in *Wabagamoyo* responses to those they consider outsiders. The chapters will consider the issue of insiders and outsiders among the *Wabagamoyo*; the subject of respect for local interests and institutions; and stress caution about generalizing the Swahili experience up and down the eastern coast of Africa.

The fourth chapter will largely examine economic issues. The lucrative caravan trade which made Bagamoyo a flourishing town known from western India to northern Europe to the eastern United States was highly coveted. Attempts to control this trade by outsiders prompted urban community responses by the *Wabagamoyo*. This section will also demonstrate the need to reevaluate the concept of “outsider” in coastal East African society as propagated by scholars of Swahili culture. Typically the Asian and upcountry African communities are seen as transients without vested interests in the local community. The Wanyamwezi and Wasukuma porters who brought trade items from the interior of Africa to Bagamoyo were referred to as *washenzi*, or barbarians – a word which has also been translated as outsider. Yet the people of Bagamoyo, particularly the Asian merchants, catered to these porters’ needs and desires and, in return, these same porters returned to the coastal town year after year.

The fifth chapter, focusing between WWI and the 1960s, examines similar political and economic themes raised in the previous three chapters, but in the context of British imperial rule. Subjects like education and smuggling will illustrate the continuing existence and importance of community networks. However, of politics, economics and society, the latter theme is the most obvious to seek out evidence of a sense of local

identity. The sixth chapter explores community loyalty to Bagamoyo sports and cultural associations. Such associations cut across divisions of race, ethnicity, class, gender, and generation making the social clubs truly placial in terms of identity. Another related social area was community experiences. These involved celebrations, funerals and crisis response to poor harvests, famine and plagues. Such events drew people closer together; just as important, they marked the passage of time within a shared space creating unique referential points, or a community lore, for members of that placial community to recall later and pass on to the next generation. Religion and gossip also played significant roles in the social life of a community. In other words this chapter will pay close attention to the “practices of everyday life” discussed above which bound the community of Bagamoyo together and, in subtle yet, powerful, ways forged a sense of placial identity.

CHAPTER TWO

IN THE INTERESTS OF THE COMMUNITY: AUTHORITY AND ACCEPTANCE IN BAGAMOYO

On account of the number of customs houses the Sultan of Zanzibar installed along the East African coastline by the mid 19th century, from Mogadishu to Inhambane, a misconception was created regarding the degree of authority the Sultan of Zanzibar wielded over this region.¹ This long stretch of territory is often referred to in nineteenth century European documents as “the Sultan’s dominion.” Some of the first general histories of East Africa sometimes repeat this claim without thorough investigation, or obfuscate it by referring to the region as being under strong Arab influence.² Yet documents reveal that Europeans (principally the French, British and Germans) recognized early on the weakness of the Sultan’s political power over the African mainland,³ yet supported the Sultan’s claims to suzerainty nevertheless as a buffer in the scramble for Africa.

The European – and American – powers, led largely by merchant companies, signed treaties with the Sultan of Zanzibar for trading rights in East Africa, further contributing to scholars’ notions of the Sultan’s strong influence over the continental

¹ National Archives (NA), FO 403/94, J.T. Last, “Notes on the Authority of the Sultan of Zanzibar on the Mainland and in East Central Africa,” 24/8/1885.

² J.M. Gray, “Zanzibar and the Coastal Belt, 1840-1884,” in *History of East Africa*, ed. Roland Oliver and Gervase Mathew (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1963); W.E.F. Ward and L.W. White, *East Africa: A Century of Change 1870-1970* (New York: Africana Publishing Corporation, 1972), 10; Even as late 1995 such claims were made in Kevin Shillington, *History of Africa* (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1995), 252.

³ NA, FO 403/93, Count Münster to Earl Granville, 5/5/1885. This will be discussed in more detail in chapter three.

coastline.⁴ The French and British were reluctant to start a war with one another over an aggressive grab at the lucrative caravan trade of the central coastline opposite Zanzibar. Tensions between the two nations were already exacerbated over Egypt and the Sudan, and control over the Suez Canal (1869) which provided a quick link for the European imperial powers to their Asian empires. Any claims to mainland concessions would have to be done via a struggle for influence over the Sultan who could then grant them land and customs harvesting rights. Europeans were largely confined to Zanzibar, trading with the mainland via Indian and Arab merchant middlemen who installed representatives at various ports along the coastline. These merchants acted somewhat independently of a state power; that is to say, they were not backed by any significant military force. The Indians were British subjects, but the British were mostly concerned with ensuring their subjects were not engaged in the slave trade or possessing slaves of their own. The Omani Arabs obeyed their Sultan to an extent. As long as these merchants paid him duties on goods destined for transshipment in Zanzibar, the Sultan did not feel his interests were threatened by them.

On account of their infrequent visits to the mainland, the true degree of the Sultan's authority over the coastline was masked from the imperial powers. His power was, for the most part, an idea which was manipulated by the French and British, increasingly aggrandized over the course of the nineteenth century as they saw an opportunity to seize territory via a non-coercive and legitimate path through winning the

⁴ Including the Moresby Treaty of 1822 in which Britain recognized the Sultan's authority over the coastline in exchange for his promise of prohibiting the trade in slaves to India, Mauritius or any other Christian state.

Sultan's favour.⁵ It was not until the French Spiritan mission was established in Bagamoyo in 1868 that a closer examination of the actual relationship between Sultan and coastal port was revealed.

This section will examine the level of authority the Sultan possessed over Bagamoyo, the town geographically closest to the Sultan's administrative center at Zanzibar, and the town which rapidly developed over the mid-nineteenth century into the most important trading entrepot of the central East African coastline. It argues that power in Bagamoyo rested in local hands; to succeed in the town, one had to respect the interests and institutions of the community. Thus, outsiders to Bagamoyo Town had to become *localized*, meaning they had to adapt to local customs and become accepted by the local inhabitants.⁶ For those who flouted local interests, the repercussions were often violent.

"You Pearl of the Sea, You Place of Happiness"

Nineteenth century European travelers often remarked upon the pleasant and friendly impression the town of Bagamoyo made upon them as they approached it from the ocean. From the wide expanse of the shallow bay, the land sloped gently upwards to where "stately" two-storied houses of coral stone and white limewash were constructed. These buildings emerged from a lush green backdrop of palm and mango trees onto the white, sandy beach. Less conspicuous from the ocean were the hundreds of single-

⁵ I.N. Kimambo, "The East African coast and hinterland, 1845-1880," in *UNESCO General History of Africa – VI: Africa in the Nineteenth Century until the 1880s*, ed. J.F. Ade Ajayi (Oxford: Heinemann, 1989).

⁶ I eschew using the terms "indigenized" or "assimilated" as both imply a power or custom of a singular culture, whereas I wish to convey a sense of multiple identities which generally cooperated in a shared concern over what occurred in a particular area.

storied, rectangular homes made of wattle and daub, covered by enormous sloping roofs of thatch, which filled in the spaces between the clusters of square shaped, two-storied structures with flat roofs.

This appealing image, however, only proved a romantic façade once the visitors landed on the beach. The town was permeated by “an indescribable smell coming from everywhere . . . of fish drying and incense burning, cloves and rancid butter, rosewater and the sweat of men.”⁷ Once beyond the beach, the European was confronted with a tangled myriad of narrow and twisting alleyways and paths intersecting with one or two main streets. Coconut shells and garbage of all sorts littered these roads, “making the barely three meter wide passageways all the more narrow and impassable. Sidewalks are nowhere to be found so that in the rainy season, foot-deep ponds fill up the entire road and are only taken care of by the good work of the sun.”⁸ Eventually the nameless, winding paths found their way to large, open spaces – sites of brisk activity between May and December when thousands of porters from the African interior camped there and proffered their goods for sale on mats and blankets. Because these porters had just completed a long journey of approximately six weeks from the interior, many of them were in a celebratory mood and could often be found stumbling around the town at night drunk. At least one European found the townspeople “cheeky and pushy” and was generally overwhelmed by the boisterousness of the upcountry African crowd.⁹

⁷ Museum of the Catholic Mission, Bagamoyo (MCMB); Bulletin Generale (BG); TOME XIII; May 1880-October 1883; p. 43-62.

⁸ H.F. von Behr, *Kriegsbilder aus dem Araberaufstand in Deutsch-Ostafrika* (Leipzig: F.A. Brockhaus, 1891), 129.

⁹ August Leue, “Bagamoyo,” *Beiträge zur Kolonialpolitik und Kolonialwirtschaft*, 2 (1900/1901): 15.

Whatever their impressions of the local behaviour most visitors agreed that Bagamoyo was the liveliest and most important town of the central East African coast.

The above description is drawn from various sources, mostly from the 1880s. At that point, Bagamoyo was perhaps a century old, one of the youngest towns to develop along the East African coastline. Walter Brown is the preeminent scholar on Bagamoyo's precolonial history and his research, based on dates of tombstones and oral history, points to the town being in existence by at least the mid eighteenth century.¹⁰ Much of the following section about the town's establishment and early development is drawn from his research.

At least three qualities recommended Bagamoyo as a site for settlement. The first was the fertile hinterland of the town watered by the nearby Kingani River. Foodstuffs such as manioc, rice, maize, plantain, mangos, citrus, and coconut could be planted there. Second, its harbour, although open, was protected by coral reefs and sandbars, allowing for relatively good sailing conditions for fishing, which became the other major industry of the town. Finally, given Bagamoyo's location on the oceanfront, there was always a healthy sea breeze which blew across the town, refreshing its inhabitants. European visitors always remarked positively on this quality and Bagamoyo's reputation as a breezy locale is so well known that it plays a significant role in one of the town's major traditions.¹¹

¹⁰ Brown, *A Precolonial History*, 134.

¹¹ During the funeral procession of Sheikh Mohammed Ramiya, one of the town's most prominent citizens in the 20th century, the breeze is said to have stopped blowing completely. This indicates not only a miracle, but the incredibly high standing Ramiya held in Bagamoyo.

There is no record of the size of Bagamoyo's population prior to 1863. At that time, it stood around 3,000 permanent inhabitants. Over the course of the decade, it increased rapidly, largely on account of unrest in the interior caused by civil conflict in the central region known as Unyamwezi. The influx of refugees to Bagamoyo in the 1860s caused the town's numbers to triple; new town quarters, or *mitaa*, were established.¹² The heterogeneity of Bagamoyo's population was often remarked upon by visitors. It is rare to find a traveler or French missionary who described the town simply as "Swahili." Most refer invariably to groups of Arabs, Baluchis, Indians, Swahili, Wamrima, Wanyamwezi, Europeans, slaves, and porters.¹³ They noted that there were more Indians in Bagamoyo than Arabs,¹⁴ and that the community resembled that of Zanzibar's racial make up, except that the African "element" was considerably larger.¹⁵

Brown and other scholars – principally archaeologists – date the arrival of a group of people known as the Shomvi to the Bagamoyo area to the late seventeenth century. The Shomvi have been described as either descendants of Arab traders who had intermarried with East Africans along the central Kenyan coastline who then migrated southwards, or as a prestigious rank within East African coastal society. In the case of

¹² AStEsp, 2K1.4a10; Horner to President de L'Oeuvre de la Propagation de la Foi, Paris; 31/12/1866.

¹³ Henry M. Stanley, *How I Found Livingstone: Travels, Adventures, and Discoveries in Central Africa* (London: S. Low, Marston, Low, and Searle, 1874), 42; Verney L. Cameron, *Across Africa* (London: G. Philip, 1885), 24; Joseph Thomson, *To the Central African Lakes and Back* (London: Frank Cass and Co., 1968), 267; Henry M. Stanley, *Through the Dark Continent* (Toronto: JB Magum, 1878), 57; Baur and LeRoy, *A Travers le Zanguebar* (Tours: Alfred Mame et Fils, 1886), 117-118; NA, FO 881/6105, Euan Smith to Salisbury, 5/3/1891; *Zanzibar Gazette*, October 14, 1896.

¹⁴ Dr. A. Becker, *Aus Deutsch-Ostafrikas Sturm und Drangperiode: Erinnerungen eines alten Afrikaners* (Halle: Otto Hendel Verlag, 1911), 46.

¹⁵ Oscar Baumann, *In Deutsch-Ostafrika Während des Aufstandes* (Wien: Eduard Hölzel, 1890), 30

Bagamoyo, the Shomvi were closely interrelated with the Wazaramo, the ethnic group who populated Bagamoyo's immediate hinterland, and "on whose land they had established their homes and had derived a living."¹⁶ The Shomvi are part of the Swahili people who are of mixed ancestry and inhabit the coastline.

The story of the bond between the Shomvi and the Zaramo has been related in at least two recorded traditions. These relate the invasion of the Kamba in the Bagamoyo area who drove the Shomvi out around 1800. Using gifts of salt, the Shomvi pleaded with the Zaramo, under the leadership of Pazi Kilama Lukali, to assist them in defeating the Kamba. They agreed and a relationship was established thereafter whereby the Shomvi, as the people of the coast, were obliged to pay the Zaramo, the people of the hinterland, an annual tribute (known as the *kanda la pazi*) for their help in routing the Kamba. The specifics of this tribute are not clear in terms of who exactly was paid and how much, only that it was yearly.¹⁷ What Brown identifies as the most important lesson to be learned from this tradition is how the Shomvi "functioned as the rulers of Bagamoyo . . . (and) married with the Zaramo to such a degree that one author calls them the "*Wazaramo halisi wa mwambao*" (the real Wazaramo of the coast)."¹⁸ The extreme

¹⁶ The Shomvi represent one aspect of the greater Shirazi diaspora who populated much of the coastline between Somalia and Mozambique, including the offshore archipelagos and islands. For further discussion, see Brown, *A Precolonial History*, Chs. III & IV, 90-91; EC Baker, "Notes on the Shirazi of East Africa," *Tanganyika Notes and Records*, 11 (1941); Prins, *Swahili-Speaking Peoples*; Glassman, *Feasts*.

¹⁷ The Zaramo are broken down into many different kinship clans, each headed by a *pazi*, or ruler. There is no evidence of there having been a paramount Zaramo ruler in the 19th century.

¹⁸ Brown, *A Precolonial History*, 104. Source: Ramadhani Mwaruka, *Masimulizi juu ya Uzaramo* (London: 1965), 16. Brown also mentions how some Tanzanians who identified themselves as Shomvi in the National Census of Tanzania for 1967 crossed it out and replaced it with Zaramo. 'Wa' is a Swahili prefix denoting the plural; thus 'Wazaramo' means a group of Zaramo people, while 'Mzaramo' refers to one person.

difficulty later European visitors and residents had in differentiating between Bagamoyo and Wazaramo rulers (*jumbes* and *pazis* respectively), suggests that the blood ties between these two peoples were thick.

Bagamoyo also attracted large numbers of Africans from the interior: Wadoe, Wakami, Wakwere, Wazigua, Wanyamwezi, and Wasukuma. The first four groups traded in agricultural products as well as rubber and copal, a hardened resin excreted from a local tree which Europeans used in varnishes; the last two groups came from a much further distance and traded principally in ivory, livestock and hides. It has not been conclusively proven when caravans from the interior first began arriving in Bagamoyo, but the conservative estimate is around 1800.¹⁹ Around the same time, caravans of coastal peoples, financed by Omani Arabs and Indians, also left for the interior to trade for ivory and other goods, using cloth and firearms for exchange.

The Omani sultanate, under the leadership of the mercantile Busaidi dynasty, placed a representative on the island of Zanzibar in 1744. The sultanate was able to provide some financing for local entrepreneurs to obtain ivory from the African interior to meet a high demand for the product, first in India and later in Europe. The Omanis in Zanzibar were later joined by a slow but steady influx of Indians from the Cutch region who were fleeing outbreaks of famine and the unfair trading practices of the British empire.²⁰ In the 1830s, Sultan Seyyid bin Said (1804-1856) of Oman moved his administration from Muscat to Zanzibar to strengthen his influence over trade in eastern

¹⁹ Brown, *A Precolonial History*, 114. Rockel suggests that it may have begun around the 1780s based on oral traditions of the Baganda in Uganda. Stephen Rockel, *Carriers of Culture: Labour on the Road in Nineteenth Century East Africa* (New Haven: Heinemann, 2006), 19.

²⁰ Sheriff, *Slaves, Spices and Ivory*, 20, 85-109.

Africa and to take advantage of the increasing demand for ivory as well as spices, slaves and copal. He encouraged commerce by promoting the migration of Indians to Zanzibar and the mainland opposite, and by establishing treaties with foreign nations and merchant companies, beginning with the Americans in 1833. It is not certain who initiated the long distance trade between the coast and the African interior; porters were definitely already organizing trips independently by the mid-eighteenth century to points within the interior as well as ports along the coast. It can not be disputed, however, that the influence of the Omanis in Zanzibar contributed to the increase of traffic and trade in the region, particularly at Bagamoyo, situated so closely to Zanzibar.

The owners of the land in and around Bagamoyo were the Shomvi *majumbe* and the Zaramo *mapazi* respectively.²¹ It is difficult to assess, however, how clear cut the distinctions were between the two groups of leaders. Since the 1850s, Europeans had repeatedly observed how the cultural characteristics of those Zaramo who lived in and around the coast resembled the mixed populations of the port towns. Their homes were described as “unusually large. They were quadrangular in shape, with the ordinary thatched roof. Occupying one half of the front of the house was a slightly raised portion, called the *baraza*, open on two sides, and roofed over for shade.”²² This is precisely the same style of architecture that one found in the urban centers themselves, outnumbering the so-called stone houses by about ten to one. Thomson adds, “The Wazaramo . . . present no marked characteristic to separate them from the Waswahili of Zanzibar and

²¹ ‘*ma*’ is a prefix indicating plurality.

²² Joseph Thomson, *To The Central African Lakes and Back* (London: Frank Cass & Co., 1968), 100; Franz Stuhlmann, *Mit Emin Pascha ins Herz von Afrika* (Berlin: Dietrich Reimer, 1894), 824; E. Werth, *Das Deutsch-Ostafrikanische Küstenland und die Vorgelagerten Inseln, Band I* (Berlin: Dietrich Reimer, 1915), 30.

the immediate vicinity of the coast. When rich enough they dress in a similar way.” Krenzler noted how the wealthier Zaramo dressed in long white shirts and kaftans;²³ Werth observed that Zaramo women wore Swahili-style earrings and had hairstyles which matched those of urban women whereas such characteristics were not to be found among other women of the East African interior.²⁴ Such evidence demonstrates the high degree of social mixing between this hinterland group and the coastal towns.

One therefore must take caution in distinguishing too starkly the differences between the *majumbe* and *mapazi*. Records from the nineteenth century are not always clear whether a Zaramo leader can only be a *pazi*; sometimes, as will be seen below, they are referred to as *majumbe*. The sense given is that *majumbe* are associated with urban leadership and *mapazi* with rural-based Zaramo leadership; however, as towns expanded, land controlled by rural authorities became urban, yet the authority remained the same. Therefore it remains difficult to differentiate one form of leadership from another in an urban center like Bagamoyo.

In terms of the caravan trade which gradually established itself at Bagamoyo, these rulers, whether *pazi* or *jumbe*, extracted a toll known as a *hongo* from passing porters. The *majumbe* who owned land in the town proper extracted a fee known as *ada* from wholesalers and merchants who resided there. It appears this was a kind of protection fee or form of patronage – or a mix of both. The porters sold their ivory and other products to the wholesalers who, for the most part, shipped them onwards via Zanzibar.²⁵ The Sultan installed a customs master in the Bagamoyo area to levy duties on

²³ Eugen Krenzler, *Ein Jahr in Ostafrika* (Ulm: J.Ebner, 1888), 120.

²⁴ Werth, *Küstenland*, 239.

²⁵ See chapter four for further discussion of this process.

these goods, and a troop of approximately thirty soldiers under the leadership of a chief of police, or *jemadar*, who protected the Sultan's business interests. The *jemadar* and his soldiers were hired mercenaries from Baluchistan, a region that had come under the influence of the Omani Sultan. The first *jemadar* was posted in the Bagamoyo area most likely in the 1840s.

The *mapazi* enriched themselves on the *hongo* extracted from passing caravans while their *majumbe* brethren did the same on protection fees and rent extracted from urban settlers. Recently arrived Omani Arabs, known as Shihiris, established large plantations as well as participated in the caravan trade. Indians were the principal financiers of the caravan expeditions and played the roles of the wholesalers, petty merchants and pharmacists of Bagamoyo. The Indians were not a cohesive group, but divided by religion into Hindus (often referred to by Europeans as Banyans or Banians), Catholics (Goans), and Parsees (descendants of the Zoroastrians), as well as the Muslim Memons (Sunnis), Ithna'sharis, Isma'ilis (also known as Khojas, and the most populous of the Indian groups at Bagamoyo), and the Bohras, the latter three being Shiite Gujarati speakers.²⁶

In relation to the general population, the non-African groups were all minorities.²⁷ The majority of the townspeople of Bagamoyo were divided between slaves of varying functions and the free; the former making up roughly twenty percent of the African

²⁶ See Brown, *A Precolonial History*, Ch. VI for a detailed breakdown of each group.

²⁷ Numbers for each group vary over the 19th and 20th centuries, but generally speaking, after the Africans, the Indians formed the next largest group in Bagamoyo (around 1000), followed by the Arabs (around 600), Baluchis (around 300) and Europeans.

population.²⁸ These people came from a diverse background of ethnicities, ranging from local hinterland groups to modern day Congo and Malawi. Many of the free inhabitants were involved as porters in the caravan trade, but most balanced subsistence occupations like agriculture and fishing with catering to the upcountry porters who arrived in town between May and December of each year. The services provided included food provision, alcohol, lodgings, entertainment and transportation to Zanzibar.

The account of the establishment of contact between Sultan Said and the *majumbe* of Bagamoyo survives only in traditions collected by Freeman-Grenville. The Sultan's *wazir*, or first minister, Said bin Seliman, "came secretly to Bagamoyo and, by cunning, took it without fighting."²⁹ It can be assumed, based on the account of how the Sultan gained influence over Mzizima, the future site of Dar es Salaam, tribute and offers of financial assistance were paid to the *majumbe* by the Sultan to win their support. Sultan Said installed the first *jemadar* at Kaole, a town five kilometers south of Bagamoyo. Kaole is much older than Bagamoyo but it fell into decline around the 1850s according to Brown on account of its harbour silting up and the consequent proliferation of mangrove trees. Bagamoyo's harbour, situated further north of the same bay of Kaole, remained free of growth. Yet, when considering there had been a military battle between the

²⁸ It is difficult to assess the numbers of slaves in Bagamoyo. The earliest year when the numbers were broken down was in 1893 during the period of German imperial administration. It was estimated that there were 2,500 slaves in town at that time. The racial breakdown of the Wabagamoyo was estimated in 1900 by former District Officer August Leue who estimated there were 14,500 "Bantu" inhabitants in Bagamoyo. Shemhili, *Economic History*, 33; August Leue, "Bagamoyo," *Beiträge zur Kolonialpolitik und Kolonialwirtschaft*, 2, (1900/1901): 23. The institution of slavery in Bagamoyo will be discussed in chapter three. See also Jan-Georg Deutsch, *Emancipation Without Abolition in German East Africa, c.1884-1914* (London: James Currey, 2006).

²⁹ G.S.P. Freeman-Grenville, *The East African Coast: Select Documents* (London, 1975), 233-234.

Sultan's soldiers and the Zaramo at Kaole in 1844 which the latter lost,³⁰ it strikes this author as more plausible that Bagamoyo was developed by locals to outmaneuver the Sultan's influence. By the time Burton passed through the region in the late 1850s, he noted the separation of spheres of influence between Kaole and Bagamoyo. Burton further observed that Kaole had a population of approximately 200 inhabitants plus Wanyamwezi porters who had arrived from the interior, whereas, six years later, Bagamoyo was said to have a permanent settlement of 3,000 inhabitants plus visiting upcountry African porters.³¹ It is very odd that a relatively thriving town would simply let its harbour become clogged with mangrove trees, a process that would take a number of years. It is more likely that after the Sultan's aggressive strike, the majority of Kaole's population migrated further north to the then developing town of Bagamoyo. The record shows that after Sultan Said established the military garrison at Kaole, the town went into decline soon thereafter.

The *jemadar's* primary duty in the Kaole-Bagamoyo region was to oversee and protect the Sultan's business interests. The *jemadar* could also perform a judicial role in matters which concerned the Sultan's business; those who broke contracts or who were debtors were placed in stocks or fetters outside of the *jemadar's* residence. One night, when a leopard attacked a prisoner, Baluchi soldiers accidentally killed the prisoner as well as a guard when shooting at the animal. This prompted the construction of the first

³⁰ Brown, *A Precolonial History*, 142.

³¹ Burton, *Lake Regions*, Ch. 1; AStEsp, 2K1.6a3; Horner to Très Révérend Père Supérieur; 14/11/1863; "Voyage à Bagamoyo".

prison in Bagamoyo where convicted offenders could be kept locked safely inside.³² Otherwise, judicial roles in Bagamoyo were performed by *majumbe* or the town *qadi*, an Islamic judicial administrator linked to the local Friday mosque. Whoever the judge all cases and complaints were presented before a public hearing known as a *shauri*. The *shauri* was an important community institution – anyone in the town could attend the hearings and there was often a diverse crowd present, representative of all the town's peoples. This is not to say that the *shauri* was unique to Bagamoyo; it was an institution common to most towns characterized as Swahili. However, each town's *shauri* was a placial institution because the authority figures involved were local residents who knew the defendants and the plaintiffs and the various social mores extant in each place. The *shauri* was a reminder to the *jemadar* that he was accountable for his decisions and that his decisions must be motivated by the interests of maintaining the public peace.

On account of the presence of this *jemadar* Europeans believed the Sultan ruled Bagamoyo and other regions of the coastline. When explorers like Burton, Cameron and Stanley left Zanzibar for Bagamoyo to begin expeditions into the African interior, they carried with them letters from the Sultan to be given to his representative there. The letters requested the *jemadar* to assist the European in every way possible; this usually meant helping them find and rent a house in town, securing porters for the journey, and offering protection for their supplies. Yet, assist is the key word: the Europeans quickly found out that in Bagamoyo they had to negotiate most of the details for their stay and upcountry journey on their own.

³² J.W.T. Allen, ed. and transl. *The Customs of the Swahili People: The Desturi za Waswahili of Mtoro bin Mwinyi Bakari and Other Swahili Persons* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1981), 200. There is no date given for this incident.

To take one example, Vernon Lovey Cameron, in charge of a relief expedition for Dr. Livingstone, encountered many unexpected complications at Bagamoyo. The *nahoza* (captain) of a dhow which Cameron hired at Bagamoyo was “not satisfied with the amount . . . given him” despite the fact that Cameron had paid the *nahoza* “double about what we hear is given by the Arabs.”³³ The matter was referred to the British Consul at Zanzibar. Securing porters for the journey was Cameron’s greatest obstacle. The Sultan, whatever his influence at the coast, could not order Wanyamwezi and Wasukuma from the interior to carry loads on behalf of his guests. Cameron had to wait over a month in Bagamoyo before he could start his journey because he happened to arrive at a time when porters were scarce. The porters would not accept Cameron’s offer of a lump wage below \$16 per porter for a journey to Ujiji or \$11 per porter to Unyanyembe, the region many porters called home. Instead, the porters insisted on being paid monthly at no less than \$5 per month.³⁴ This meant that Cameron had to pay his porters for waiting in Bagamoyo until he had gathered all the porters necessary for the trip. The Arabs in town, whom the Sultan supposedly had the greatest influence over, proved “not at all friendly and (hindered Cameron’s party) to their utmost.”³⁵

The only real assistance Cameron received in Bagamoyo came from the French Catholic missionaries who had established a mission six years earlier on the northern fringes of the town. Despite having met and presented a letter from the Sultan to the *jemadar* of Bagamoyo, Isa bin Kunari, it was Father Horner of the Spiritans who helped Cameron find lodgings in town, negotiating on his behalf with a local landlord who had

³³ National Library of Scotland (NLS); Acc 9942/8; Cecil Murphy to Dr. Kirk; 19/2/1873.

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ Zanzibar National Archives (ZNA), AA2/12, Cameron to Kirk, 2/3/1873.

begun at \$40-\$45 but, “after a great deal of bargaining”, was talked down to \$25.³⁶ Yet the French had had their share of difficulties, too, upon their arrival to Bagamoyo in 1868, based on misconceptions of the degree of authority the Sultan of Zanzibar exercised over the coastline. The level of *localization* the fathers possessed at the time of Cameron’s arrival in Bagamoyo had been hard won.

Authority in Bagamoyo

Both Norman Bennett and Walter Brown, writing in the 1960s and early 1970s, argued that the Sultan did not have significant influence in Bagamoyo, but Jonathan Glassman has more recently disagreed, stating that the Omani presence in the town by the 1880s was the strongest anywhere along the central coastline opposite Zanzibar. The next two sections, examining the difficulties the Sultan’s representatives and the French Spiritans both encountered in settling in Bagamoyo, will lend support to the former authors’ viewpoint. The Omani agents and French alike came to realize that paying respect to the local town authorities, as well as keeping the best interests of the town community at heart, were the key to success and survival in Bagamoyo.

The Holy Ghost Fathers, a French Catholic missionary order, established the first Christian mission in Zanzibar in 1860. Their goal, like other religious missionary orders of the day, was “the regeneration of the black races . . . to raise them up from the abasement where they have been captive for centuries.”³⁷ The Spiritan approach to achieving this mission was through labour. The Spiritans needed a large piece of land on which to develop plantations as well as to construct carpentry workshops in order to teach

³⁶ NLS, Acc. 10120/21, Copy of Lt. Cameron’s Journal, 2/3/1873.

³⁷ Quoted in Brown, *A Precolonial History*, 203.

their acolytes skills and industry. As Kollman shows, the Spiritans did not so much convert slaves into Christianity as they freed slave children and raised them as Christians. Furthermore, the Spiritans “envisioned these ex-slaves as colonizers of the interior, a nucleus of dependable Catholics around whom they would then build up the church by attracting the surrounding people to the prosperity and good order of the mission.”³⁸

Zanzibar’s Stone Town, despite being the site of a major slave market – a site for potential converts – was limiting for the grand requirements of the Spiritan vision. Almost from the mission’s inception, their sights were set on the African mainland with its much greater number of potential converts. The reasons the Spiritans gave for choosing Bagamoyo for their first African mainland station are good indicators of its general appeal to Africans, Arabs and Indians alike: better connections with Zanzibar, security, arable land, healthier environs, and, crucially, an established reputation in the interior.³⁹ Thousands of Wanyamwezi and Wasukuma porters arrived each year, providing a massive labour pool. These upcountry Africans often remained in town for weeks and sometimes months at a time while their goods were being sold, and to wait out the short rainy season, known as *vuli*, lasting from September to November. In the interim, they offered their services to plantation owners to support themselves. The fathers noted that wages demanded by freemen and *vibarua* slaves amounted to about

³⁸ Paul V. Kollman, *The Evangelization of Slaves and Catholic Origins in Eastern Africa* (Maryknoll: Orbis, 2005), 5, 18.

³⁹ AStEsp, 2K1.4a4, Chapitre de la Mission du Zanguebar tenu à Zanzibar du 2 au 20 juin 1870, 6/8/1870.

forty centimes per day; yet, when the porters were in town, wages fell to around ten to fifteen.⁴⁰

As early as 1862, Abbé Fava secured a land grant of six to seven hectares at Bagamoyo from a local *jumbe*, not the Sultan.⁴¹ When Fathers Horner and Baur arrived in Bagamoyo in 1868 to build the mission, there was not enough room in the house for the group to stay and some of them had to spend the first few nights sleeping in their boat because the concession Fava had been given by the *jumbe* in 1862 was mostly swamp. Those who did stay in the house were overrun by rats and thousands of ants which “push(ed) their stingers into our behinds.”⁴² Despite their being armed with letters of introduction by Sultan Majid (1856-1870), not all the town Arabs were sympathetic to the plight of the French Catholics. One prominent Arab offered to vacate his stone house so that the fathers could stay there, but he demanded a sum of two thousand francs per year as rent, a sum which Father Horner declared “exorbitant.”⁴³

It was the community of Bagamoyo independent of the Sultan’s influence which came to the fathers’ rescue: “We received . . . a very good reception on behalf of the inhabitants of Bagamoyo,”⁴⁴ wrote Father Horner of their arrival on March 3, 1868. “The chiefs, seeing our predicament, came spontaneously to offer us a very large piece of land

⁴⁰ AStEsp, 2K1.3b2, Horner to Très Révérend Père Supérieur, 24/6/1864. *Vibarua* (*kibarua*, sing.) slaves refer to slaves who could be hired out from their masters. These slaves shared their wages with their owners and represented the vast majority of slaves along the central East African coast. See Deutsch, *Emancipation*, Chapter 3.

⁴¹ AStEsp, 2K1.6a3, Horner to Très Révérend Père Supérieur, 14/11/1863, “Voyage à Bagamoyo.” Horner uses “chiefs of the country” and *majumbe* interchangeably throughout his record of correspondence.

⁴² AStEsp, 2K1.4a10, Horner to President de l’Oeuvre de la Propagation de la Foi, Paris, 4/3/1869.

⁴³ MCMB, BG, Tome IV, June 1867-April 1868, p. 41-49.

⁴⁴ Ibid.

. . . having already the Fava concession, we would not have dared to ask for a new one . . . Our future establishment is situated therefore between the old and the new town [quarters] of Bagamoyo in a place which is very healthy and very tranquil. We will make a treaty of union between the two villages.”⁴⁵ Such benevolence, however, was short lived as the fathers soon fell afoul of community codes.

Through careful reading of the documents of the Spiritans from 1868 to 1872, a period punctuated by tensions over land issues between the mission and the townspeople, a cohesive narrative emerges. It appears that at the moment when the “chiefs” of Bagamoyo – the *majumbe* – gave the fathers a better piece of land upon which to establish their mission, a great misunderstanding arose. Based on subtle references in later letters, it seems the *majumbe* gave this land to the fathers *in exchange for* the original swampy concession which had been given to Fava in 1862.⁴⁶ The fathers assumed that the new concession had been given them *in addition to* the Fava property. At the same time, the fathers also purchased a piece of adjacent land complete with a house and well from a neighbouring Indian indigo merchant. The property thus acquired was consequently vast – even the fathers could not believe it, describing it as “twice the size of the property at Chevilly”, the Spiritan headquarters south of Paris.⁴⁷

Not long after the arrival of the fathers to Bagamoyo, some townspeople began to clear land near the Spiritans’ property.⁴⁸ This would indicate that Bagamoyo was undergoing expansion and the land the Fathers were sitting on was coveted for new

⁴⁵ AStEsp, 2K1.3b2, Horner to Très Révérend Père Supérieur, 3/3/1868. The reference to two villages has nothing to do with Kaole, but with the expanding town of Bagamoyo.

⁴⁶ AStEsp, 2K1.3b3, Horner to Très Révérend Père Supérieur, 1/7/1871.

⁴⁷ MCMB, BG, Tome IV, June 1867-April 1868, p. 41-49.

⁴⁸ AStEsp, 2K1.4a10, Horner to President de l’Oeuvre de la Propagation de la Foi, Paris, 4/3/1869.

neighbourhoods. Given the great size of the mission concession, and local customs which dictated that property rights were established by three years of cultivation of land as opposed to land deeds, Father Horner launched what he admittedly defined as a “coup d’etat” to secure the uncultivated land. With the help of thirty to fifty men, Horner began to enclose the entire property through the construction of paths and the planting of hedges. Three pieces of evidence suggest that Horner knowingly took land that was not the mission’s: his belief that simply cultivating unused and uninhabited land in Africa established ownership thereof;⁴⁹ his acknowledgement that his enclosure movement was an aggressive move and a “coup” (i.e. if he truly understood the land to have been donated to the mission, he would not have seen his action in this light); and his acknowledgment of the shock of the townspeople over what he was doing and his stubborn refusal to undo what he had done.⁵⁰

A general uproar followed Horner’s actions, but it is unclear who led this. In the correspondence of the Spiritans at Bagamoyo, the Zaramo are identified as the principal disgruntled party who were reassured by “the Arabs”⁵¹ of Bagamoyo that the fathers were not going to displace them. Letters were sent by the Sultan to the “chiefs of the country”

⁴⁹ AStEsp, 2K1.4a10, Horner to President de L’Oeuvre de la Propagation de la Foi, Paris, 31/12/1866.

⁵⁰ MCMB, BG, Tome IV, June 1868-April 1869, p. 1009-1019; AStEsp, 2K1.4a10, Horner to President de l’Oeuvre de la Propagation de la Foi, Paris, 4/3/1869.

⁵¹ It is a well-observed fact that, in East African history, Europeans did not necessarily mean “Arab” in its purest sense when they identified someone from East Africa as such. As demonstrated in the famous case of Tippu Tib, the great “Arab” caravan merchant of 19th century East Africa who had an African mother, Arab referred to religious identification and claims to a distant ancestry rather than natal origins or physical characteristics. See John Middleton, “The Immigrant Communities: the Arabs of the East African Coast,” in D.A. Low and Alison Smith, eds., *History of East Africa* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989), for an informed discussion of this difficulty in identification.

to pacify them, yet one particular, unidentified “chief” would not stand down.⁵² This raises the thorny issue of sorting out who the authorities in Bagamoyo were. Since the “chiefs of the country” were equated with Wazaramo as well as Shomvi *majumbe* in other Spiritan letters, we can assume that the latter did play a role in the unrest.

As discussed above, there was a great degree of intermarriage and social mixing between the Shomvi and Zaramo, making it difficult to know when one group ended and where the other began. As Brown noted, the Shomvi of Bagamoyo were referred to by one Zaramo author as “the real Wazaramo of the coast.” Perhaps it is more useful if one does not use the distinction between urban and rural to define the ethnicity of the ruler, but accept that a town ruler, the *jumbe*, could have been either Zaramo or Shomvi. As Bagamoyo expanded, land formerly under rural authority would have become urban; yet, the authority over that territory would have remained the same. And it requires no great leap to imagine that several, if not all, of the *majumbe* had extended kinship networks which stretched into the rural hinterland known as Uzaramo, the land of the Zaramo.⁵³ Thus a town ruler could have called upon his Wazaramo brethren to assist him against the French missionaries, confusing the Spiritans into thinking the uproar was strictly a Wazaramo issue.

Although correspondence indicates that there were multiple authorities in Bagamoyo based on land ownership, one name which stands above the rest up until the 1870s was Jumbe Fimbo Mbili Mohamed, also referred to as Dschumbil-Mahomed. In

⁵² AStEsp, 2K1.3b2, Horner to Collin, 27/4/1868.

⁵³ The French missionaries never refer to the mixed population at Bagamoyo as Shomvi, but either as Swahili or *métis*. It is Brown who identifies this group, based on the markings of the town tombstones dating to the 18th century. I have not come across anyone who identified themselves as Shomvi; the closest being Shirazi, the peoples of mixed race populating much of the East African coastline.

various letters, this *jumbe* is referred to as “the chief of the coast” and the “civil chief” or “civil governor” of Bagamoyo,⁵⁴ distinct from the town *jemadar* who was referred to as “the military chief” of Bagamoyo. Given the titles attributed to him by the French fathers, Fimbo Mbili most likely played a judicial role in the town, hearing and settling complaints and disputes of the townspeople. There is no indication that the *jemadar* was the sole military power in the town as European explorers like Stanley would have us believe; in later land disputes with the mission, Fimbo Mbili was quite capable at organizing an armed force of fifty to two hundred men on his own. The Sultan’s soldiers in Bagamoyo, on the other hand, numbered only approximately thirty in all, spread out between Kaole and Bagamoyo,⁵⁵ furthermore, as Cameron later observed, the soldiers were ill equipped with “ancient firearm[s] which could not be persuaded to go off.”⁵⁶

The fallout of the first land dispute in Bagamoyo between the missionaries and the townspeople was that Sultan Majid told the fathers that he would not force them to give back what they had taken, but should anyone raise a claim for a piece of the territory they had enclosed, he expected the fathers to acquiesce. It is significant to note that the Sultan acted on the recommendations of “one of the more influential people of (Bagamoyo)” who wrote on the missionaries’ behalf.⁵⁷ This demonstrates the power of the *Wabagamoyo* in determining the fate of matters concerning their town as opposed to the perception that the Sultan dictated terms to them. Father Horner had to immediately

⁵⁴ AStEsp, 2K1.4a10, Horner to President de l’Oeuvre de la Propagation de la Foi, Paris, 4/3/1869; AStEsp, Bagamoyo Journal, 14/7/1869; AStEsp, 2K1.3b3, Horner to Très Révérend Père Supérieur, 6/11/1872; MCMB, Tome IX, BG, January-May 1873, 522-528.

⁵⁵ AStEsp, 2K1.6a3, Horner to M. le Directeur, 31/12/1866.

⁵⁶ NLS, Acc. 10120/21, Copy of Lieut. Cameron’s Journal, 5/2/1873.

⁵⁷ MCMB, BG, Tome IV, June 1867-April 1868, p. 41-49.

give back some of the land he had taken and he also paid damages to those he had insulted. With the assistance of the Sultan's letters and the reassurances of the town "Arabs," tensions cooled. By the end of the missionaries' first year in Bagamoyo, the "civil governor" of the town, Jumbe Fimbo Mbili Mahomed,

[came] to see us nearly every day in order to see if we lack[ed] anything. Since our provisional installation [left] much to be desired, he offered us one of his houses which appear[ed] to be most livable, but on account of the distance from our future works, we couldn't accept it. Since we lacked certain provisions, especially at the start, the good governor augmented what we had with presents and did his utmost in the manner of filling in our culinary gaps with the best [things] possible.⁵⁸

In June of 1869, the peace began to unravel. After almost a year of cordial relations between town and mission, an inhabitant of Bagamoyo made a claim on the Spiritans' concessions. Father Horner, however, did not wish to rekindle former hostilities among the townspeople and "granted him everything that he asked and even beyond in order to profit from this situation in our favour."⁵⁹ As an added gesture of goodwill, Horner took it upon himself to clear the northward leading road out of Bagamoyo which passed the mission, thus earning "the blessings of the Arab community" in town.⁶⁰ Yet, at the same time, Horner had selfish motives in performing this community work as it allowed him to surreptitiously enclose the mission property on its eastern boundary. By clearing the northern road, Horner at the same time blocked all other paths which crisscrossed the mission lands with the exception of one major route which he dared not block in fear of local repercussions. Instead, Horner managed to persuade the Spiritans' neighbour, Said Magram, a prominent Arab trader in Bagamoyo,

⁵⁸ AStEsp, 2K1.4a10, Horner to President de l'Oeuvre de la Propagation de la Foi, Paris, 4/3/1869.

⁵⁹ AStEsp, 2K1.3b2, Horner to Très Révérend Père Supérieur, 28/6/1869.

⁶⁰ Ibid.

to enclose his property through which the same major path cut, thus blocking the path at an earlier juncture. Horner was therefore very conscious of his community standing, being careful not to rouse any further tensions, knowing full well that the people of Bagamoyo could potentially drive the Spiritans out of town.

Horner's machinations, however, were soon discovered: "two Arabs from the north who had been coming to Bagamoyo for several years to do a little business . . . won [Fimbo Mbili Mahomed] over with bribes and they made him distribute a large portion of our land to them and other inhabitants of which the ancient rights of cultivation were at least in part very contestable."⁶¹ Hedges and markers planted by the fathers to delimit their property were torn up or removed by various inhabitants of Bagamoyo and Jumbe. Fimbo Mbili sold parcels of land which the missionaries believed belonged to them. Father Horner sent threatening letters to Fimbo Mbili to stop selling "their" land, but the *jumbe* would not respond. Exasperated, Father Horner went personally to the *jumbe's* house to complain, but the only person home was Fimbo Mbili's wife who took fright at the angry presence of the black-robed missionary with the great spade beard. Furious that the *mzungu* had dared to threaten him, Fimbo Mbili gathered about fifty of his supporters (both slaves and freemen) and paid a visit to the fathers at their mission where they were busy constructing a house for the sisters:

Leave, leave cried a menacing voice to the labourers who moved suddenly away . . . And all the aggressors cried at the same time: leave, leave, run quickly! or you'll be sorry . . . and they brandished their weapons and threw clods of earth at

⁶¹ AStEsp, 2K1.3b2, Horner to Très Révérend Père Supérieur, 8/10/1869. It's possible, given the observation that the "troublemakers" were from the north, that the major path which Father Horner was reluctant to block on his own, was only effectively blocked from the south through Said Magram's property. The "two Arabs" may have come through the mission property from the north where the path would not have been blocked off.

the unfortunate workers who seemed more reassured under the cover of a roof. All the workers took off; the invaders [then] left.⁶²

Curiously, the mob ignored the missionaries and focused their aggression solely upon the labourers, calling off their attack once the workers had left. These labourers were doubtlessly either local free townsmen, *vibarua* slaves, or Nyamwezi porters who had hired themselves out to the mission. Their intimidation tactic was effective, targeting as they did citizens and guests living in Bagamoyo who were more vulnerable. The message Fimbo Mbili, as a community leader, sent to these labourers was clear: do not work for these men who are at odds with us. Alarmed and seeing no other recourse, Father Horner turned to Sultan Majid for assistance.

Majid was reluctant to help. At first he tried to avoid the fathers by going to his newly established town of Dar es Salaam, but eventually the missionaries got an audience with him. Majid had been informed that the fathers had far too much land; he proved himself sympathetic to the *Wabagamoyo*, declaring that the fathers should only be entitled to about twenty-five hectares. Father Horner enlisted the aid of the French Consul to Zanzibar, Monsieur de Vienne, who succeeded in convincing Majid to increase the property size. The Sultan did so, bringing the allotment to 100 hectares; yet this apparently was still much smaller than what the missionaries had originally laid claim to in their “coup d’etat” the previous year. The fathers were disappointed, but concluded that what they had lost in quantity was made up for in the quality of the land.⁶³ This time, however, the fathers and Majid agreed that the mission property be delimited in the presence of a group of local Bagamoyo notables, and in the presence of a representative

⁶² AStEsp, Bagamoyo Journal, 14/7/1869.

⁶³ MCMB, BG, TOME VII, April to October 1869, p. 268-278.

of the Sultan, Jemadar Rakib Seif (or Sefu), who, presumably, played the part of impartial observer and mediator.

The delimitation process was very much a communal event:

In the morning, the jemadar Sefou [Rakib Seif] made the announcement to the military chief of Kaole and to Dchumbil-Mahomed [Fimbo Mbili Mahomed] that the measurement of our land concession would take place and he invited them to assist. Around noon, jemadar Sabre and his soldiers arrived, as well as jemadar Isa, also accompanied by his soldiers, dchumbil-Mohamed and many other chiefs of the coast; Said Magram and many other influential Arabs were also in attendance. The Arab etiquette demands that one serves dinner to everyone. As a result, the most distinguished personages were admitted to the refectory and the soldiers had their dinner served under the verandah. Dinner was complemented with a voracious appetite and each of them coped marvelously. There were nearly 40 soldiers. The measurement commenced after dinner.⁶⁴

The fathers paid special attention to local etiquette:

between 80-90 people were fed at the mission. Rice and meat were put on a great platter from which all serve themselves with their right hand. No cutlery is used . . . the word "invite" is unknown here since one invites one's self when it is known that there will be a meal of some size. Woe to those who measure their rice and beef because there will be a flood of guests. The common people drink water, but syrup is offered to the most distinguished of the guests. After dinner you wash your hands and drink coffee for as long as there is coffee to go around.⁶⁵

At one point during the process, a portion of land that had been cultivated by their neighbour, "our good friend," was offered to the missionaries. Father Horner "refused, saying that (he) didn't want to take other peoples' property. This refusal made a very good impression in the region."⁶⁶ Although the missionaries had to resort to deferring to

⁶⁴ AStEsp, Bagamoyo Journal, 26/8/1869.

⁶⁵ AStEsp, 2K1.3b2, Horner to Très Révérend Père Supérieur, 8/10/1869.

⁶⁶ Ibid. This is a curious passage: a cultivated property in this region would mean that the cultivator had a claim to said property. Although it is possible that the neighbour could have usurped a chunk of the missionaries' land claim and had cultivated it prior to the delimitation, it seems unlikely that a neighbour who did this to Father Horner would have been described as "our good friend" given his ire towards others who took over their land. It is therefore possible that this exchange was staged, but the motivation to smooth

the Sultan in the short term, ultimately it was in their best interests to placate the people of Bagamoyo in the long run.

The delimitation was not a complete success; Jumbe Fimbo Mbili stormed off at one point and did not return. The fathers also did not enclose the entire 100 hectare enclosure, leaving the swampy 1862 Fava concession open. It appears from later correspondence that this section was still in some dispute, the townspeople believing that the Fava concession had been surrendered in exchange for a better piece of land whereas the missionaries thought they had possession of both. In 1870, Sultan Majid died and his brother Bargash (1870-1888) ascended the throne. Upon this news, Father Horner made preparations to enclose the Fava concession in case the new Sultan was not well-disposed towards the missionaries. Once again, Fimbo Mbili became furious and, joined by a couple of other *majumbe*, complained to the Sultan. Shortly thereafter, one short-tempered father threatened to call for the French navy to bombard Bagamoyo to the ground if the *majumbe* ceased to let the matter rest. This only provoked another mob, this time numbering 150 men, to descend upon the Fava concession and rip up the hedges the fathers had planted. This time around, the fathers noted that Fimbo and the *majumbe* were supported by the Sultan's representative at Bagamoyo, Jemadar Isa bin Kunari and his Baluchi soldiers. The fathers record that these intimidation tactics occurred on three occasions during this stage of the dispute. Sultan Bargash was not only reluctant to side with the missionaries; he wanted to strip them of the land they already had, stating that part of the property had been given them in usufruct only and that the other section, having been given in deed to the fathers, but signed by the Sultan's first minister (*wazir*),

relations with the community of Bagamoyo still remains valid. It is also likely that this neighbour was Said Magram who remained a close ally of the Spiritans until his death.

could be overruled by him. Once again, the fathers sought the help of the French consul who persuaded Bargash to accede. This he did, but once again, the fathers received less than they had expected.

The French missionaries had learned a lesson about authority in Bagamoyo. Four years of tensions between them and the townspeople had occurred as a consequence of “the subject of the (land) concession *which was later judged too vast by the population.*”⁶⁷ The fathers could not expect to flout local customs and authority and get away easily with doing so, and letters from the Sultan were not going to solve every problem the missionaries encountered. The Sultan was involved in these land disputes, not because he was the paramount authority over Bagamoyo, but because the missionaries were seen as his guests since every visit they had made to Bagamoyo between 1862 and 1868 had been accompanied by his letters. There were multiple authorities to take into consideration in Bagamoyo, and Fimbo Mbili was one of the most influential. Even the British Consul to Zanzibar, Sir John Kirk, noted his payment of respects to “the influential natives of the Town of Bagamoyo” immediately upon his arrival there in 1873 when he went to check upon the Livingstone Relief Expedition led by Cameron.⁶⁸ Despite the fathers’ aggressive approach to land acquisition, they were aware that they still had to maintain some caution to prevent total alienation by the *Wabagamoyo*. This they achieved through negotiation with local authorities and attempts at making some kind of good impression upon the town community at large.

Given the evidence above of the missionaries’ provocative acts, it is easy to buy into the arguments made by Kierans and Brown that the Spiritans “always harboured

⁶⁷ AStEsp, 2K1.3b2, Horner to Très Révérend Père Supérieur, 8/10/1869. Italics mine.

⁶⁸ ZNA, AA2/106, Kirk to Smith, 10/3/1873.

strong, ambivalent feelings toward [Bagamoyo] - - and whatever their physical intimacy [i.e. proximity], a sizeable gap, created both willfully and accidentally, remained between mission and urban community.”⁶⁹ But while the fathers may have angered some elements of the local urban community, they cultivated allies among others. Furthermore, it *was* their very proximity to the urban centre which, over time, caused the mission to become inextricably linked with the *Wabagamoyo*. The practice of everyday life contributed significantly to the *localization* process of the missionaries at Bagamoyo.

From the beginning the missionaries used medicine as a way to win over the hearts of the townspeople of Bagamoyo. During the visit of 1863, which opens this dissertation, there was also a small group of sisters present who “attended to the lepers of Bagamoyo which made a strong impression over (the) blacks.”⁷⁰ As time passed and the fathers became more familiar with annual trends in town, they noticed when the caravans arrived in town, how there was always a number of Nyamwezi porters who had fallen ill during their journey to Bagamoyo. “One of our fathers, bustling with activity and initiative . . . goes each day to inspect the surrounding area and the alleyways of Bagamoyo . . . Usually he isn’t by himself. Accompanied by two or three young married men, his intelligent catechists and devotees, he tends to the most sick. They then carry the poor, dying Mnyamwezi back to the mission hospital to baptize him before death.”⁷¹ Eventually the missionaries would establish a hospital with the help of a generous donation by a powerful Indian caravan outfitter and ivory dealer, Sewa Haji Paroo, to

⁶⁹ Brown, *A Precolonial History*, 200; John A.P. Kieran, *The Holy Ghost Fathers in East Africa, 1863-1914* Ph.D Dissertation, (University of London, 1966), 133.

⁷⁰ AStEsp, 2K1.6a3, Horner to Très Révérend Père Supérieur, 14/11/1863, Voyage à Bagamoyo.

⁷¹ AStEsp, 2K1.4a11, de Courmont to President de l’Oeuvre de la Propagation de la Foi, Paris, 2/10/1884; AStEsp, Bagamoyo Journal, 26/8/1883.

take care of the sick porters whose numbers increased each year as Bagamoyo's trade expanded.⁷² The missionaries gained such a high reputation for caring for the sick porters that, as late as 1894, after the Germans had taken over Bagamoyo as part of their new colony of German East Africa, and had constructed a new government hospital in town, the porter and townspeople still carried their ill to the missionaries.⁷³

The greatest ally the missionaries had was the prominent Omani merchant, Said Magram, whose property lay adjacent to the mission.⁷⁴ As has already been mentioned, Magram was of some assistance to the missionaries in blocking town paths which crossed mission property, along which some inhabitants were building homes or clearing *shambas*, or garden plots. Magram had some influence with the Sultan of Zanzibar and doubtless was of further assistance to the missionaries in prompting his interventions during the land crises. Magram provided the missionaries with the rows of mango trees which lined either side of the road leading from the mission to the beach, providing cooling shade and bountiful fruit at least twice a year.⁷⁵ When a cholera epidemic broke out at the end of 1869, Magram gave the fathers the use of one of his homes so that they could evacuate the healthy orphans from the mission.⁷⁶

Most revealing about Spiritan mission relations with Said Magram is a letter written to the Father Superior in Zanzibar from a guilt-ridden father at Bagamoyo:

⁷² AStEsp, BG, TOME XIII, May 1880-October 1883, 43-62; BG, TOME XIII, Nov.1883-April 1886, 1073-1089.

⁷³ E. Steudel, "Die ansteckenden Krankheiten der Karawanen Deutsch Ostafrikas," *Koloniales Jahrbuch* 7 (1894), 171-202.

⁷⁴ Magram has since entered Bagamoyo lore; a town street is named in his honour.

⁷⁵ AStEsp, Bagamoyo Journal, 24/5/1870. The same trees line "Mango Drive" at the Bagamoyo mission to the present day.

⁷⁶ MCMB, BG, Tome VII, October 1869 to June 1870, 660-669.

To maintain and cultivate [Magram's] friendship, the mission of Bagamoyo has regularly supplied him for a certain time of a certain quantity of wine. This man has consequently taken up the habit of drinking and it isn't unusual to meet him drunk. Is the mission the cause of his drinking habits? I wouldn't know what to say!! But what is certain is that this man drinks the wine that we send him against his conscience since the Muslim religion forbids him to drink . . . I fear that a service of this kind given a Muslim, if one hears about it in Zanzibar, would hardly be to our praise. This deed has taken place with the approval of [Fathers] Horner and Baur.⁷⁷

Such a passage demonstrates how the fathers understood the importance of cultivating influential allies within the town who could be of use in facilitating mission-town relations. The cynicism of this episode aside, Magram and the fathers did appear to genuinely enjoy each other's friendship: Magram could be found at the mission during Christian celebrations like Christmas, and the fathers were invited to his place to celebrate Siku Kuu (New Year) and Ramadan.⁷⁸ Indeed, the fathers were very conscious of the Muslim rituals and traditions which occurred in town; besides the holidays, the fathers also knew when the Muslim boys of Bagamoyo were circumcised.⁷⁹ On one occasion, the fathers were careful not to flaunt the fact that they baptized a dying Muslim child who had been brought to the mission for medical assistance, "in order not to offend the Arabs."⁸⁰ Likewise, the largely Muslim population of Bagamoyo kept a curious reverence for the Christian rituals: "during a religious procession from the mission to the ocean and back, between 4pm and 6:30pm [Sunday service] an immense crowd from Bagamoyo followed, but maintained a respectful silence to the astonishment of all."⁸¹

⁷⁷ AStEsp, 2K1.3b3, Acker to Très Révérend Père Supérieur, 22/10/1879.

⁷⁸ AStEsp, Bagamoyo Journal, 15/7/1885; 25/12/1885.

⁷⁹ AStEsp, Bagamoyo Journal, 18/7/1883.

⁸⁰ AStEsp, 2K1.6a3, Horner to Directeur de l'Oeuvre de la Ste. Enfance, 31/12/1877.

⁸¹ AStEsp, Bagamoyo Journal, 18/5/1885.

The people of Bagamoyo and the mission population intermingled frequently with one another, and the Spiritans' reputation was known far and wide around Bagamoyo. In terms of proselytization, the fathers allowed their African acolytes to wander all over the town and vicinity, looking for potential converts.⁸² On occasion, however, the mingling of Christians and Muslims led to hostile exchanges in town. In one documented case, one of the married mission Africans

while passing along a narrow street, hit an Arab with his cane while twirling it. This Arab immediately started insulting him, saying to him, "Christian dog, you and your masters (are) pig eaters" The boy apologized for his mistake but told the Arab that that was no reason to make insults against his masters who had nothing to do with the affair and promptly administered a punch to his nose; blood flowed.⁸³

The Arab called his brothers and his slaves and pursued his assailant, who gathered his "comrades" who were in town; a fight broke out. The Arab complained to the *liwali*⁸⁴ later that day; the mission Africans complained to him the following day. The governor told the Christians to go back to the mission and that he would speak with Father Horner later about the incident. On their way back home, the mission Africans came upon one of the Arabs whom they had fought the previous day. They seized him and took him to the *liwali*'s residence, demanding justice. The *liwali* told them to leave, but the Christians refused and another fight broke out after the *liwali* struck the most stubborn of the mission Africans with his cane.

⁸² AStEsp, 2K1.6a3, Horner to Directeur de l'Oeuvre de la Ste. Enfance, 31/12/1877.

⁸³ The French missionaries referred to the Africans as 'boys' or 'children', whether they were married or not. AStEsp, 2K1.5a1, Baur to Très Révérend Père Supérieur, 8/2/1880.

⁸⁴ The *liwali* was introduced to Bagamoyo in 1874 as the new representative of the Sultan, outranking the jemadar. This will be discussed further below.

News of the altercation spread like wildfire across Bagamoyo: “The whole population was running about shouting, ‘to war with the whites! Kill their blacks!’”⁸⁵ However, the *liwali* prevented bloodshed by “going about all over town to stop everyone . . . and prevent them from attacking [the mission].”⁸⁶ A similar incident occurred at least once more, although without the same general uproar: a mission African named Michael asked for some mangos from a local slave who called him a “kaffir” and a “pig eater.” Michael beat him up and ran back to the mission; sometime later, the soldiers of the *liwali* came to apprehend Michael, accompanied by “many blacks from the town.”⁸⁷ What these two episodes illustrate is that the Christians – Europeans and Africans alike – were known in the town, even if not always on the most amicable of terms. Over time, the people of Bagamoyo became familiarized with the mission inhabitants, incorporating them into their local mental map; they were different, yes, but nonetheless a familiar part of their everyday lives.

The missionaries were aware of this and knew it was impossible to keep their African followers away from the town. The allure of the town was often too tempting for some of the Christians – two were caught wandering around Bagamoyo at night, visiting “houses of ill repute.”⁸⁸ The fathers wrote often to Paris of the dangers of the proximity of their mission to the town: “Our young Christians are too close to the Arabs here in Bagamoyo and contact with them is always dangerous for neophytes.”⁸⁹ Yet, despite this attitude, the fathers never had any intent of abandoning Bagamoyo, even as they

⁸⁵ AStEsp, 2K1.5a1, Baur to Très Révérend Père Supérieur, 8/2/1880.

⁸⁶ Ibid.

⁸⁷ AStEsp, Bagamoyo Journal, 1/1/1887; 2/1/1887.

⁸⁸ AStEsp, 2K1.3b3, Baur to Horner, 11/4/1873.

⁸⁹ AStEsp, 2K1.6a3, Horner, Annual Report, 31/12/1875.

established new missions in the hinterland and interior at Mhonda (1877), Mandera (1880), Morogoro (1882), Tununguo (1884), and Kondoia (1885). The missionaries continued their acts of charity within the town, including one particular *coup de grace* that won them the hearts of the community. Brother Oscar, the mission caravan outfitter, killed a prowling lion which had been terrorizing livestock and people alike for months: “about 10,000 people showed up from Bagamoyo, Kaole and elsewhere to look at the lifeless monster and congratulate us on our success.”⁹⁰ The same Brother Oscar established a famous reputation as a rainmaker among the Wadoe, another major ethnic group which populated the hinterland of Bagamoyo. While passing through their country during a drought, Oscar told them that they would have rain within the next day on account that his arm, having been wounded in a shooting accident, behaved like a barometer. Sure enough, his prediction came true, and he was feted as a powerful *mganga*.⁹¹ The music program the fathers established at the mission was also well-known across the town and the mission children performed for local notables.⁹² With each year, they became more and more intertwined with the urban community they had settled amongst, particularly, as will be seen in the next chapter, when a new group of community outsiders, the German East Africa Company, arrived in the mid-1880s. Even before then, the fathers recorded the changes that had taken place between them and the *Wabagamoyo* since the land disputes: “Since then, things have fortunately changed, and

⁹⁰ MCMB, BG, TOME X, January-July 1874, p.207-211.

⁹¹ “Healer.” MCMB, BG, TOME XIII, Nov.1883-April 1886, p. 1073-1089.

⁹² AStEsp, 2K1.3b3, Horner to Très Révérend Père Supérieur, 28/12/1870.

the chiefs of the group most hostile to us, have become our most devoted friends, our protectors, our benefactors.”⁹³

It was not only the missionaries, however, who came to appreciate the importance of forging community ties with the people of Bagamoyo. The representatives of the Sultan, the *jemadars* and *liwalis*, themselves localized, forming local power bases that were sometimes at odds with their employer’s interests. We have seen above how, during the land disputes between the townspeople and the missionaries, Sultan Majid appointed neither Jemadar Sabri of Kaole nor Jemadar Isa of Bagamoyo to facilitate the property delimitation; instead, he chose Jemadar Seif from Zanzibar to fulfill this function. By doing so, Majid indicated that he could not rely upon the local *jemadars* to remain impartial throughout the proceedings. In fact, during the final uproar over the land issue in 1871, Jemadar Isa actively participated on the side of the townspeople in tearing up the fathers’ property markers.

Losing Loyalty

In 1871, a reporter for the *New York Herald* arrived in Bagamoyo with the purpose to set up a relief expedition to find the famous Dr. Livingstone who had not been heard from in three years since trekking into Central East Africa. Like other European travelers and diplomats before him, Henry Stanley carried with him a letter of introduction from the Sultan of Zanzibar, asking his representative to assist Stanley with outfitting his caravan for the long journey to Lake Tanganyika. The letter was addressed to the *jemadar* at Kaole, the town five kilometers south of Bagamoyo, home to the chief

⁹³ MCMB, BG, TOME XIII, May 1880-October 1883, 43-62.

jemadar who was responsible for all the Sultan's soldiers along the central Tanzanian coast. Stanley, however, chose Bagamoyo as his departure point since, by 1871, it had surpassed Kaole as a trade and caravan entrepot. Yet, aside from an initial visit, the *jemadar* paid Stanley no attention. He consulted with the Bagamoyo merchant, Ali bin Salim, to organize his porters and supplies, but after two weeks of waiting, nothing had been done. Salim appeared insulted that there had been no letter from the Sultan for him and therefore was not inclined to assist Stanley. Instead, Stanley had to beseech Taria Topan, a prominent Zanzibari merchant, to provide him with a letter to enlist the service of Sewa Haji Paroo, a local Bagamoyo caravan outfitter who would become the wealthiest inhabitant of the town by the end of the nineteenth century.⁹⁴ Jemadar Isa of Bagamoyo assisted Stanley in helping him find a pair of missing donkeys, but only after Stanley had paid him.⁹⁵

This little episode serves to illustrate how the Sultan's representatives on the coast were not exactly obedient to their employer; in fact, they were quite susceptible to becoming influenced by the communities they were living amongst. Glassman writes that Sultan Bargash attempted to prevent his representatives "from establishing autonomous local power bases" in the towns in which they were stationed by rotating the *maliwali* every two years.⁹⁶ Other scholarship shows that the Sultan's influence waned the further north and south one went from Zanzibar. This section will demonstrate that even at Bagamoyo, the mainland town closest to Zanzibar, it remained a challenge for Bargash to control his representatives.

⁹⁴ Henry M. Stanley, *How I Found Livingstone* (New York: Negro Universities Press, 1969), 49-51.

⁹⁵ Stanley, *Livingstone*, 45.

⁹⁶ Glassman, *Feasts*, 150.

Brown uses the events of April 1872 to illustrate the weak ties between Sultan and representative. That month a hurricane swept across Zanzibar and Bagamoyo, wreaking much havoc, but dramatically more so at the former place.⁹⁷ Six months later, Sultan Bargash decided to visit Bagamoyo. Brown is hard-pressed to provide an explanation for this unprecedented visit – no previous Sultan had ever paid a visit to Bagamoyo. He believes that the visit may have been a “reconnaissance mission” regarding a scheme whereby the Sultan intended to offer better military protection for the caravan route to Bagamoyo by establishing military posts every three leagues and sinking wells every two leagues.⁹⁸ What Brown doesn’t take into consideration are the clove tree and coconut plantations on Zanzibar which were wiped out by the hurricane,⁹⁹ and would take seven or eight years to recover.¹⁰⁰ This left the Sultan dependent on the inferior plantations on the island of Pemba and, to a much greater extent, the income generated by the customs levied at the coastal ports.¹⁰¹

In light of these facts, it can be ascertained that the Sultan was in a desperate situation and was reestablishing old contacts. As Brown has observed, the reception of the Sultan by his *jemadar* at Bagamoyo, Sabri bin Safir,¹⁰² was somewhat frosty. Sabri

⁹⁷ ZNA, AA2/11, Kirk to Foreign Secretary, Bombay, 2/5/1872.

⁹⁸ Brown, *Bagamoyo*, 266-267

⁹⁹ ZNA, AA2/11, Kirk to Foreign Secretary, Bombay, 20/4/1872. Kirk writes, “Making all allowances for exaggeration it is not probably that above one third of the cocoanuts and clove trees on the plantations remain standing; of those still left many are so injured as to be next to lost . . . The Sultan’s personal loss afloat will not fall short of \$4,000,000 . . . The losses however that will be felt longest are those of the plantations, many years will be needed to bring Zanzibar to its former state of wealth and comfort.”

¹⁰⁰ Sheriff, *Slaves*, 234.

¹⁰¹ NA, FO 84/1415, Prideaux to Foreign Office, 8/2/1875.

¹⁰² Sabri was the head jemadar of the central coast whose headquarters were at Kaole, 5 km south of Bagamoyo. Sabri had an assistant jemadar named Isa bin Kunari installed at Bagamoyo, although it is not known in which year. The earliest mention of Isa’s

did not accord Bargash the full complement of “traditional Muslim – and especially Baluchi – hospitality.”¹⁰³ Brown cites the low payscale of the jemadars, inadequate equipment and poor housing facilities as the reasons why Sabri treated Bargash the way he did.¹⁰⁴ The *jemadars*, however, were not impoverished; they found other ways of supplementing the meager income provided by the Sultans. There is no evidence to suggest how Sabri went about this, but there is some about his assistant at Bagamoyo, Jemadar Isa bin Kunari. Brown suggests that Isa became involved with the caravan trade and the supply of porters. However he made his money, Isa purchased several land plots during the early 1880s. The *jemadars* were not the only ones to look elsewhere for additional income; regular Baluchi soldiers did much the same, acquiring property and slaves to work palm tree plantations.¹⁰⁵ Consequently, as Brown concluded, the Bagamoyo *jemadars* “appeared to be more solicitous of local Bagamoyo welfare than of the Sultan’s interests.”¹⁰⁶

Indeed, to undermine the *jemadar*’s authority in Bagamoyo, Bargash appointed a *liwali* there in 1874, leaving Sabri and Isa with the sole responsibility of policing.¹⁰⁷ The *liwali* was housed on the southern fringes of the town, whereas the *jemadar* lived in the

presence is in 1869, as noted in the Bagamoyo Spiritan mission journal. Brown, *Bagamoyo*, 259-263.

¹⁰³ Ibid, 268-269.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid, 258-259, 268.

¹⁰⁵ Brown, *Bagamoyo*, 263-265.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid, 274.

¹⁰⁷ Anne K. Bang also notes that Bargash was a Muslim revivalist and wanted a new class of literate Muslims representing his interests; however, this had more to do with the Islamic judges, the *qadis*, than the *liwalis*. Nevertheless, the *liwalis* came from prominent Omani families. Anne K. Bang, *Sufis and Scholars of the Sea: Family networks in East Africa, 1860-1925* (London: RoutledgeCurzon, 2003), 117-119, 127-129.

heart of Bagamoyo, right behind the customs house;¹⁰⁸ it is possible that this was deliberately planned by the Sultan to prevent his new representative from becoming too intimate with the local population. The new representative, Nassor bin Suleiman al-Lemki, was the cause of much friction since his installation upset the accepted socioeconomic order in Bagamoyo between the Wazaramo, the *majumbe*, the Indian merchants and Zanzibar. Sometime after his arrival, the Indian merchants of Bagamoyo approached Nassor and complained about the practices of the local rulers in extracting *ada*, or protection money, from the Indians, and in extracting *hongo*, or toll fees, from the caravans passing through the lands of the Wazaramo and Shomvi. The Indians, who had grown more numerous in Bagamoyo since 1873,¹⁰⁹ claimed that these fees were hindering trade. Nassor, on behalf of Sultan Bargash, agreed.¹¹⁰ What their motivations were can only be speculated: the Indians would save money through the abolition of these fees, and perhaps the Sultan would be able to increase customs duties as well. Since the hurricane had destroyed his plantations, Bargash had already increased customs duties by a quarter of a dollar per *frasila* (35lbs) of ivory, a sum which British Consul Kirk found insignificant.¹¹¹

The old *jemadars*, Sabri and Isa, would have supported the above-mentioned traditional arrangements of fee extraction, since, in all likelihood, they benefited from them as well in order to supplement the poor wages paid them by the sultans. Under the

¹⁰⁸ Leue, *Bagamoyo*, 14.

¹⁰⁹ The abolition of the overseas slave trade in 1873 had an adverse affect on the port of Kilwa whose main export was in slaves. Many of the Indian community in that town decided to move north to Bagamoyo to take advantage of the growing caravan trade there. ZNA, AA1/19, Holmwood to Kirk, 2/7/1876.

¹¹⁰ Leue, *Bagamoyo*, 14-15.

¹¹¹ ZNA, AA2/11, Kirk to Foreign Secretary, Bombay, 19/9/1872.

newly appointed *liwali*, however, this system of patronage was threatened. The *majumbe* and Wazaramo *mapazi*, having been left out of the *liwali*'s consideration, felt their sense of traditional rights being infringed upon by this community outsider, and prepared for war. On September 8th, 1875, the malcontents launched an incursion against the southern edge of Bagamoyo (the *mtaa* of Pangapanga) where the *liwali* resided.¹¹² This caused general panic throughout the town, but the melee appeared confined to Pangapanga and "against the Arab Authorities;" two guards of the *liwali* were the only recorded casualties.¹¹³ Calls for help by the Indian and missionary communities were dispatched to Zanzibar and, the following day, both the French and British Consuls sent over soldiers, along with the Sultan's own, numbering about 800 altogether. The aggressors withdrew, although they continued to threaten the town. The *liwali*, Nassor bin Suleiman, was forced into negotiations. "After numerous talks, peace was finally, little by little, reestablished, yet the *liwali* was obliged to give several sacks of rice and other things to the *jumbes* of Bagamoyo."¹¹⁴ As Brown comments, despite being the representative of the Sultan, the *liwali* had to respect local institutions.¹¹⁵

According to Leue,¹¹⁶ who wrote a brief history of Bagamoyo at the turn of the last century, one of the "other things" Nassor was obliged to concede to the *jumbes* and *pazis* was the resumption of the right to collect *hongo* from the caravans arriving into

¹¹² MCMB, BG, Tome X, February-December 1875, 721-725.

¹¹³ ZNA, AA2/20, Euan Smith to Senior Officer of HMS 'London,' 9/9/1875; Brown, *Bagamoyo*, 270.

¹¹⁴ MCMB, BG, Tome X, February-December 1875, 721-725; AStEsp, 2K1.3b3, Baur to Horner, 21/9/1875; AStEsp, 2K1.3b3, Thorax to Horner, 21/10/1875.

¹¹⁵ Brown, *Bagamoyo*, 273.

¹¹⁶ August Leue was an employee of the German East Africa Company and, later, the German imperial administration, serving as a District Office for Bagamoyo twice, among other German East Africa regions.

Bagamoyo. The Indians of the town, however, were no longer obliged to pay *ada*.¹¹⁷ To make up for the loss of income formerly provided by the payment of *ada*, the local leaders began to take interest in the overland slave route which had developed in consequence of the abolition of the overseas slave trade which had shut down Kilwa in 1873 as an exporting center.¹¹⁸ In order to avoid detection by British anti-slaving squadrons, slave sellers took slaves that would have otherwise been sold and shipped at Kilwa and marched them northwards overland along the coastline and shipped them off at other ports and inlets in smaller numbers.

According to sources, the Wazaramo continued to periodically reassert their power over Bagamoyo between 1875 and 1878. No particular *majumbe* or *mapazi* are mentioned, but it appears that there were shifting power alliances occurring between certain local leaders and the *liwali*. In fact, just as the *jemadars*, Sabri and Isa, had grown more loyal to local interests, so did the Sultan's new representative. Throughout the latter half of the 1870s, the British Consul complained that the *liwali* of Bagamoyo was disobeying the Sultan's anti-slave trade decrees of 1873 and 1876; Nassor even disobeyed a direct order from the Sultan to punish two Arabs of Bagamoyo who were caught dealing in slaves.¹¹⁹

¹¹⁷ Leue, *Bagamoyo*, 14-15.

¹¹⁸ Leue, *Bagamoyo*, 14-15; ZNA, AA1/12, Kirk to Foreign Office, 22/7/1873 mentions hundreds of slaves going from Kilwa through Dar es Salaam and Bagamoyo en route to Pangani, Mombasa, and even as far as Brava. With each place passed, their value increased (\$12-\$15 @ Dar, \$25-\$40 @ Pangani, and \$60-\$80 @ Brava). The ZNA AA1/19 and AA1/20 files are full of references to the overland slave route during the 1870s.

¹¹⁹ ZNA, AA1/19, Kirk to Foreign Office, 20/7/1876; NA, FO 84/1454, Kirk to Earl of Derby, 9/8/1876; ZNA, AA1/20, Kirk to Earl of Derby, 24/8/1877; NA, FO 84/1547, Kirk to Marquis of Salisbury, 1/5/1879.

As new bonds were forged between the *liwali* and the local leaders in the mid 1870s, some leaders were marginalized, particularly those who lived further inland. These leaders, largely Wazaramo, continued to threaten Bagamoyo after 1875, but the *liwali* usually managed to ease tensions and work out agreements to please the malcontents.¹²⁰ But by 1878, it appeared the Sultan was fed up with the problems the Wazaramo were causing. This time, instead of merely threatening the town itself, some groups of Wazaramo were actually raiding the caravans near Dunda, some days inland from town.¹²¹ The Sultan ordered his *liwali* to organize an attack against the troublesome Wazaramo villages, which he did with 460 men.¹²² The *liwali*, however, did not act alone in this endeavour: he was joined by several of the local *majumbe* – Fimbo Mbili, Kisoka, Karande, Kasimu, Manji, Simba Bili, and the son of Salim bin Abdallah – plus their slaves and retinue.¹²³ Although there is no record of what caused the inland Wazaramo to attack the caravans, we can assume that, given the new alliances between the town *majumbe* and the *liwali*, as well as the abolition of *ada*, there was a struggle between town *majumbe* and hinterland *mapazi* for control of extracting *hongo* from the upcountry caravans coming to the coast. The results of the punitive expeditions against the inland Wazaramo were decisive; there was no further unrest.

During these military forays, there occurred an incident which can be cited as further proof of the *liwali*'s developing loyalty to local interests in Bagamoyo. Early in the morning of October 31st, 1878, flush with success after returning from battle with the

¹²⁰ AStEsp, 2K1.3b3, Baur to TRP Sup, 27/7/1876.

¹²¹ AStEsp, 2K1.3b3, Horner to Laverriere, 18/10/1878; ZNA, AA1/24/145, Kirk to Marquis of Salisbury, 13/11/1878.

¹²² AStEsp, 2K1.3b3, Horner to Laverriere, 18/10/1878.

¹²³ ZNA, AA1/47, Khoja inhabitants of Bhaga Moyo to Kirk, 3/11/1878; ZNA, AA1/47, Kirk to Bargash, 4/11/1878.

Wazaramo at Dunda, the *majumbe* mentioned above plundered the *dukas* (shops) of several Indians in town.¹²⁴ These were petty merchants; the warehouses of the “rich” Indian merchants like Kanji Husraj, Janmahomed Husraj, Megjee Silanee, Sewa Haji Paroo, Jairam Sivjee, among others, were left untouched.¹²⁵ The victims went immediately to seek out Nassor who showed no sympathy to their complaints. They returned to their shops where, in their absence, the *majumbe* had returned and plundered the same Indians’ shops again; yet, this time, they also beat some of the wives of the shopkeepers who had tried to defend their stores. The Indians went back to see Nassor, but his lack of concern forced the victims to seek out British Consul to Zanzibar, John Kirk, for justice.¹²⁶

Kirk wrote immediately to Sultan Bargash, stating that he was prepared to send someone himself to Bagamoyo to examine the case. The Bagamoyo Indians were brought over to testify before the Sultan. Most of them received financial compensation from him and not from the *majumbe* who had committed the crimes. The *liwali* of Bagamoyo was ordered to punish the offending *majumbe*, but the file is silent on whether this was actually carried out. Two of the *majumbe*, Kazoka (Kisoka) and another who was not named, were brought over to Zanzibar and imprisoned, but, in light of what Kirk wrote in his letter to Bargash, it is likely that the soldiers of the British Consul or the Sultan brought over the two *majumbe* when they went to pick up the Indian plaintiffs.

¹²⁴ There was no detailed inventory of all that was stolen, but cups and handkerchiefs were mentioned.

¹²⁵ In all likelihood, this was an act of revenge over the abolition of the *ada* payment. The wealthier merchants who were spared being plundered could afford to continue paying this tribute, not to mention appreciate the benefits reaped by doing so. The petty merchants would have found the *ada* more burdensome and, thus, were happy to hide behind the legal abolition of paying it.

¹²⁶ Twenty-three Indians signed the document.

The *liwali* of Bagamoyo had a history of recalcitrance towards the Sultan's orders when they did not match his own interests, and probably did little to round up the accused.¹²⁷

As mentioned above, Glassman writes that the Sultan avoided having his representatives forge ties with the local populations amongst whom they were stationed by rotating them every two years. At the time of the pillaging of the Indian petty merchants' shops in Bagamoyo, Liwali Nassor bin Suleiman had served his post for four years. He would remain in Bagamoyo for a total of ten. Prior to Nassor's appointment as *liwali*, Jemadar Isa had served at least fifteen years looking after the Sultan's affairs in the town. In 1884, the *liwali* of Bagamoyo was "accused by the Indians," although his crime is not given. Whatever the issue, the *liwali* was removed by the Sultan and a new one, Rameri (Amer), was installed in his place.¹²⁸ Liwali Amer would also serve at least four years as the new *liwali* until the events of September 1888 altered the political situation at Bagamoyo.

As discussed earlier, the subject of the Sultan's actual level of authority over the coastline has been a subject of controversy, even in the nineteenth century. From as early as 1873, the degree of his influence was questioned as it was by Sir Bartle Frere: "the Power of the Sultan which even before the recent Hurricane was always most limited has, since that event deprived him of his Navy, become little more than nominal."¹²⁹ Six years later, another British observer always used the qualifier "so-called" when referring

¹²⁷ For the previous discussion, see ZNA, AA1/47, Khoja inhabitants of Bhaga Moyo to Kirk, 3/11/1878; ZNA, AA1/47, Kirk to Bargash, 4/11/1878.

¹²⁸ AStEsp, Bagamoyo Journal, 31/7/1884 & 13/8/1884.

¹²⁹ ZNA, AA1/10/25, Frere to Granville, 10/3/1873.

to the Sultan's "dominions on the coast."¹³⁰ Kirk, at Zanzibar, wrote that "without the means of making his authority respected . . . it has become obvious to [the Sultan] that while he depends on Arab mercenaries his authority will be small."¹³¹ Kirk suggested to Bargash to build his own army of soldiers who were strictly loyal to him, thus relieving the British "of half the cost we now incur on this coast by giving His Highness a body of men with sympathies and interests at variance with the local Arab Governors who now connive at slave traffic."¹³² A decade later, a German naval officer also commented that the Sultan had no authority on the mainland; that "the Arabs have been doing their business there on their own for years."¹³³

A few examples of various events which occurred in the 1870s elsewhere along the East African coastline involving the Sultan's representatives serve to support the above opinions. The *liwali* of Lamu, "for his own ends and private trade," launched an attack on the town of Kismayu opposite Lamu on the mainland to drive off a threatening group of Somalis.¹³⁴ In January 1875, the British intervened in an uprising in Mombasa where the local *akida*, Mahammed bin Abdullah Bakhashwain, led over 1000 soldiers to attack the *liwali* there and take over the Fort. Part of the town was razed in this process. He held the citadel for six days until the British moved into the port and attacked. It was later found out that the *akida* had intended to spark uprisings elsewhere along the coast at

¹³⁰ School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS), MacKinnon Papers, Box 77/File 61, Gerald Waller to MacKinnon, 23/3/1879.

¹³¹ ZNA, AA1/20, (Kirk?) to Earl of Derby, 17/8/1877.

¹³² Ibid.

¹³³ Korvetten-Kapitän Hirschberg, *Neunzehn Monate Kommandant S.M. "Schwalbe" während der militärischen Aktion 1889/90 in Deutsch Ostafrika* (Kiel und Leipzig: Lipsius & Tischer, 1895), 16.

¹³⁴ British Library, L/PS/9/49, 12/7/1870, Kirk to Wedderburn, Acting Secretary to the Government.

Lamu and Malindi among other ports, “which would have given (the British) much trouble to suppress, for both the Sultan’s unpopularity and his military weakness would have rendered any efforts on his part futile.”¹³⁵ Prideaux did not turn in the *akida* to the Sultan for punishment because he knew that Bakhashwain would fight to the last man; instead, they evacuated all his soldiers from the island town, and allowed him to return to his estates on the island of Pemba. Regional security was of more importance to the British.

Another striking example of the weakness of the Sultan’s control over the coastline was the behaviour of the *liwali* of Kilwa, who was a member of Sultan Bargash’s own family. Because this *liwali* continued to involve himself in the local slave trade, thereby disregarding a decree Bargash passed in 1876 to curb it, the Sultan had him removed from Kilwa and imprisoned in Zanzibar.¹³⁶ Even at Dar es Salaam, the town which Sultan Majid established on the mainland in the late 1860s, political power had passed into the hands of the Sultan’s “chiefs” when he gave away the land to them as freehold plots in his will.¹³⁷

The Sultan’s authority over the mainland, therefore, depended largely on diplomacy and the acceptance of the local communities. Local power structures were left in place and the Sultan’s representatives concerned themselves largely with business interests; in particular, as seen above, their *own* interests. It was not, however, impossible for the Sultan’s representatives to become accepted as yet another town notable among others and to play a role in community affairs. But this took time and the

¹³⁵ NA, FO 84/1415, Prideaux to Principal Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, 23/1/1875.

¹³⁶ ZNA, AA1/20, Kirk to Earl of Derby, 24/8/1877.

¹³⁷ SOAS, MacKinnon Papers, Box 22/File88, Kirk to MacKinnon, 25/5/1879.

realization that the interests of the community at large could not be compromised or flouted. We have witnessed the process of community inclusion above using the *localization* experiences of the French missionaries and the Sultan of Zanzibar's representatives. Let us turn to one final exemplar to illustrate this phenomenon. We have looked at the case studies of racial outsiders – Europeans and Arabs – but have not considered the experiences of fellow Africans.

In late 1874, Henry Stanley returned once more to the town of Bagamoyo. This time, three years after his last visit, Stanley intended to cross the African continent from east to west. Having learned a difficult lesson from his previous experience in Bagamoyo regarding hiring porters and outfitting a caravan, Stanley chose to organize his expedition in advance in Zanzibar and pay for his porters to be brought over to the mainland. There were still some men to be hired, and Stanley knew he could fill in the gaps at Bagamoyo where there would be “volunteers from native caravans who are desirous of returning to their homes.”¹³⁸

After Stanley had settled in Bagamoyo, he gave his Zanzibari porters “ration money” for ten days while he busied himself rustling up more porters in town; yet, “within three hours Bagamoyo was in a ferment.”¹³⁹

The white man has brought all the robbers, ruffians, and murderers of Zanzibar to take possession of the town,” was the rumour that ran wildly through all the streets, lanes, courts, and bazaars . . . Arabs with drawn swords, and sinewy Baluchis with matchlocks and tinder ready to be ignited, came up threatening, and, following them, a miscellaneous rabble of excited men, while, in the background, seethed a mob of frantic women and mischievous children.

Stanley, confronted with an enraged community, asked what the matter was.

¹³⁸ Henry M. Stanley, *Through the Dark Continent* (Toronto: JB Magum, 1878), 55.

¹³⁹ Stanley, *Dark Continent*, 57.

“Matter!” was echoed. “What is the matter?” was repeated. “Matter enough. The town is in an uproar. Your men are stealing, murdering, robbing goods from the stores, breaking plates, killing our chickens, assaulting everybody, drawing knives on our women after abusing them, and threatening to burn the town and exterminate everybody. Matter indeed! matter enough! What do you mean by bringing this savage rabble from Zanzibar?” So fumed and sputtered an Arab of some consequence among the magnates of Bagamoyo . . . ¹⁴⁰

It is of significance to note that it was “an Arab of some consequence” (possibly Fimbo Mbili again), and not the newly installed *liwali*, who led the mob, accompanied by “the magnates of Bagamoyo.” Outsiders to the Bagamoyo community had disrupted the peace of the town, disrespecting the population, thus uniting the community – composed of all its diverse elements: Africans, Arabs, Baluchis, men, women and children – in their concern over the welfare of their shared space. Stanley, without resorting to the use of letters from the Sultan, immediately resolved to hear out the townspeople’s complaints in the manner of the region, the open court known as the *shauri*.

The Arab, with a short nod, accepted my proposition [to talk the matter over] and seated himself. “We are about to have a *Shauri* – a consultation.” “Hush there! Silence!” . . . “Words – open your ears!” . . . “You Baluch there, rein in your tongue!” etc. etc., cried out a wild mixture of voices in a strange mixture of tongues, commanding, or imploring, silence. The Arab was requested to speak, and to point out, if he knew them, the [Zanzibaris] guilty of provoking such astonishing disorder. In an indignant and eloquent strain he rehearsed his special complaint. . . . By the mouths of several witnesses the complaint was proved, and [the accused] was therefore arrested, disarmed of his knife, and locked up in the dark strong-room, to reflect on his crimes in solitude. Loud approval greeted the sentence. “Who else?” A score of people of both sexes advanced towards me with their complaints . . . after three hours, peace reigned in Bagamoyo once more, and over twenty of the [Zanzibaris] had been secured and impounded in the several rooms of the house.¹⁴¹

Given Stanley’s infamous short temper and willingness to kill those who stood in his way, it is a testament to the power of the *Wabagamoyo* to force Stanley to take

¹⁴⁰ Stanley, *Dark Continent*, 57.

¹⁴¹ Ibid, 57-58.

responsibility for the actions of his men. Stanley also asked the *liwali* of Bagamoyo to keep an eye over his porters and to punish them if necessary. Already the *liwali* demonstrated his susceptibility to *localization* in the zealous fulfillment of this duty:

I am sorry to say that the Wali (governor) took such advantage of this request that few of the Wangwana who showed their faces in the streets next day escaped violence. Acting on the principle that desperate diseases require desperate remedies, over thirty had been chained and beaten, and many others had escaped abuse of power only by desperate flight from the myrmidons of the now vengeful sheikh.¹⁴²

Doubtless the *liwali* had also been besieged with complaints from the townspeople to administer justice and exercise a careful watch over the guests of his master, Sultan Bargash of Zanzibar. Stanley and his Zanzibari porters were at the mercy of the Bagamoyo community and only by respecting local interests and authorities could they reside there in peace.

Summary

This chapter has outlined the development of an urban community at Bagamoyo from the late 18th century to the early 1880s. Land ownership rested in the hands of various local rulers known as *majumbe* or *mapazi*, while the economy was dominated by Arab and Indian wholesalers, merchants, plantation owners and caravan outfitters. The majority of townspeople were for the most part engaged in subsistence agriculture and the selling of surplus stock, but also in catering to the needs of the thousands of upcountry porters who came to the town annually. All these roles were very much intertwined, forging a singular community out of many groups who were united by their concern over the welfare of what transpired in their shared environment. Many of these

¹⁴² Stanley, *Dark Continent*, 58.

people came from diverse backgrounds, arriving in Bagamoyo as strangers and outsiders themselves. Two groups of outsiders – the French missionaries and the Sultan’s representatives – have been examined above. Their examples demonstrate how *localization* – adapting to local interests – was a necessary process in order to succeed in Bagamoyo and live in peace with the community.

Contrary to the theory that the East African coastline was simply a part of the Sultan of Zanzibar’s dominions, this chapter has revealed the Sultan’s weakness in this region. The French missionaries and other European travelers who came to Bagamoyo armed with letters of introduction from the Sultan were disappointed to discover that such letters often did not get them very far. The Sultan’s band of soldiers at Bagamoyo was only one among others, and apparently one of the weakest. Time and time again, local leaders were able to raise groups of fifty to two hundred men to stage protests or launch war, as in the case of the uprising against the *liwali* in 1875.

Ultimately the cultivation of local networks in Bagamoyo was essential to survival in the town. The poorly paid and poorly equipped *jemadars* and *liwalis* developed ties with local rulers to enrich themselves while the missionaries secured themselves a valuable ally in Said Magram, an influential local Arab merchant. But more than that, it was the act of being seen as part of the community which endeared outsiders to the *Wabagamoyo*, whether through the actions of the *jemadar* siding with the townspeople against the land grabbing missionaries; the *liwali* punishing Stanley’s uncouth Zanzibari porters; or the Spiritan father killing a lion that was terrorizing the town. With each passing year, faces and landmarks became more familiar between outsiders and Bagamoyo. By the time of the uprising which erupted in Bagamoyo in

1888, both the Sultan's representatives and the French missionaries had become deeply localized. As will be seen in the following chapter, it was former Liwali Nassor bin Suleiman for whom the Bagamoyo rebels clamoured to represent their demands, while the French mission became a safe refuge for thousands of *Wabagamoyo* who wished to stay out of the conflict; a conflict which had, in part, been caused by German outsiders who had flouted local community interests. The former community outsiders had become *Wabagamoyo* themselves.

CHAPTER THREE

LOCATING THE LOCAL: REVISITING THE UPRISING OF 1888 IN BAGAMOYO

Germans had been commercially interested in East Africa since the 1840s, when Hanseatic merchant companies like O'Swalds & Co. and Hansing & Co. established branches in Zanzibar. They were not interested in colonization. It was not until Carl Peters launched the *Deutsch Ostafrikanische Gesellschaft* (DOAG)¹ in the mid-1880s that Germans posed a serious threat to coastal trade. Without revealing to Zanzibari authorities his true motives, Peters and his associates traveled through Bagamoyo's hinterland in the late fall of 1884, securing treaties with various rulers until he had amassed putative claims to a territory of 140,000 square kilometers.² The treaties proclaimed Peters' company the right, in theory, to exploit this land – land which lay directly across the caravan routes from the interior to the coast. Chancellor Bismarck of Germany later backed up Peters' claims at the Berlin Conference of 1884-1885 which established a consensus among European powers regarding how they could legitimately lay claim to colonies in Africa.

Although Peters' company laid claim to a wide swath of territory in east central Africa, it had no coastal outlet for importing and exporting goods. As a result of increasing tensions in the region over trade control, the British, German and French governments established a joint commission in the spring of 1886 to determine the extent of the Sultan of Zanzibar's influence over the East African mainland. The commission

¹ German East African Company, formerly known as the Society for German Colonization.

² Müller, *Deutschland*, 133.

declared a strip of territory ten miles wide inland from the coast, from the island of Lamu to the Rovuma river, as the “Sultan’s domain” while the interior was divided up between Germany and Britain.³

Because the coastline was placed in the Sultan’s sphere of influence, DOAG had to petition him for use of the ports. To control Bagamoyo outright was always in DOAG’s sights; even Bismarck himself knew how important the town was.⁴ Yet, Bagamoyo was the Sultan’s highest earner among the coastal ports in terms of levying customs duties and he was not expected to surrender the town to the Germans so easily.⁵ Despite establishing stations on the mainland, DOAG, like their Hanseatic predecessors in Zanzibar, had to rely on Indian middlemen to facilitate trade on account of their “strong commercial network which was engaged in all levels of trade . . . and was highly competitive due to small operating costs.”⁶

DOAG continued to press the Sultan for the right to administer the port towns on the mainland in his name. Bargash eventually agreed in theory, but never negotiated a contract with the German company: he died in March 1888. His successor, Khalifa (1888-1890) was much weaker.⁷ By the following month, the coastal towns had passed into DOAG hands, allowing them the right to levy customs duties in all of the coastal

³ The Sultan acknowledged Germany’s authority over the Peters’ concessions in August 1885 after the German naval fleet threatened to bombard the Sultanate buildings in Zanzibar. The British supported this maneuver. See Müller, *Deutschland*, Ch. V.; Koponen, *Development*, 69-85.

⁴ BAB, R1001/985, Behr & Peters to Bismarck, 12/3/1885; Müller, *Deutschland*, 204, 209.

⁵ BAB, R1001/397, Trade Statistics for the year 1885-1886. The next highest single grossing mainland port was Kilwa which earned just under half of Bagamoyo’s total.

⁶ Koponen, *Development*, 150-151. Koponen mentions that Indian costs amounted to only a third of a white trader’s.

⁷ Weaker in the sense that Khalifa appeared more susceptible to European manipulation.

ports between the Umba and Rovuma rivers.⁸ This agreement, made without the consultation of any of the mainland authorities, contributed to an uprising which broke out all along the Tanzanian coastline in September of 1888.

The causes of this event have been investigated by Jonathon Glassman in his monograph, *Feasts and Riot*. The uprising had been referred to in past historical scholarship as the “Bushiri Uprising” in reference to the role played by a prominent *majumbe* from Pangani, or as the “Arab Revolt” in reference to the belief that the Omanis, threatened by the German administrative takeover of the central coastline, led the uprising. Instead of simply blaming one rebel leader, or the arrival of the Germans, as the source of discontent among the urban inhabitants of the mainland coastal towns, Glassman searches for more deeply rooted causes. He argues that prior to the entrenchment of Omani power in Zanzibar, social relations in the urban centers along the central East African coastline were relatively more fluid. Power in Swahili society was based upon a reciprocal relation whereby people who wished to be perceived as “big men” had to spend lavishly upon their communities – often to the extent of falling into debt – to earn their respect and loyalty. Therefore, becoming a community leader or town notable was not based strictly along hereditary lines; rather, anyone who had accumulated enough wealth could rise to influential position. Thus, in the coastal port towns, lower class urbanites, and even porters from the interior, could rise up the social ladder. At the same time, townspeople benefited from the distribution of wealth necessary to win their favour.

⁸ These form roughly the northern and southern borders of present day Tanzania respectively.

Glassman argues that when the Omanis arrived in East Africa, they were keen to maintain a social distance between themselves and the local urban communities they lived amongst. To accomplish this, the Omanis did what they could to shut off avenues of wealth accumulation traditionally available to the local population. In doing so, they froze social relations, denying people the opportunity to rise up the social hierarchy and, concurrently, the majority lower classes were denied the benefits of wealth distribution in exchange for their respect. When the Germans arrived, they proved to be the proverbial straw which broke the camel's back because they were viewed as entrenching this phenomenon further still.

Glassman constructs his sociocultural framework by drawing upon information he gathered about Swahili customs and culture as recorded by European travelers, scientists, and missionaries in the latter half of the nineteenth century from up and down the east coast of Africa. He thus constructs a generalizing view of social relations in this region, using examples drawn from one place as evidence of social characteristics for all of them. Despite this tendency to generalization, Glassman is aware that the uprising played itself out in differing ways among the various towns along the central East African coastline. He states: "the intensity of the uprising of 1888-89 was inversely proportional to the degree of early German presence: most intense at Pangani and Saadani, least at Dar es Salaam and Bagamoyo. Clearly then the outbreak of rebellion cannot be explained simply in terms of the level of German provocation."⁹ He explains this by claiming that towns like Bagamoyo and Dar es Salaam were more "polarized" between Omanis, Shirazis (the local mixed population) and upcountry porters than at Pangani and Saadani.

⁹ Glassman, *Feasts*, 196.

According to Glassman, the Omani presence was far greater in the former two towns and had succeeded in pushing the local Shirazi population out of access to financial credit. The Omanis went further still and worked to abolish the traditional tribute payments, like the *ada* and the *hongo*, which the Shirazi *majumbe* collected from town merchants and upcountry porters. This, argues Glassman, put the local *Wabagamoyo* “at odds” with the Nyamwezi from whom they tried to extract more wealth to make up for other lost sources of credit and payment. Thus, “variations in the local preeminence of the Shirazi conditioned struggles by low-status outsiders to participate in the commercial life of the towns.”¹⁰

Yet, as we have seen in the previous chapter, the Omanis only succeeded in Bagamoyo to the extent that they aligned themselves with local authorities and institutions. Liwali Nassor bin Suleiman, over the course of his decade-long posting, had become a respected member of the *Wabagamoyo*, after allying himself with a large number of local *majumbe*. As will be seen below, he was still remembered fondly even four years after his dismissal. Furthermore, tribute payments were not altogether abolished and, if the Nyamwezi porters were frustrated with having to pay them, they certainly did not demonstrate it: the numbers of upcountry porters arriving in Bagamoyo were consistently recorded as having been in the tens of thousands in the years leading up to 1888. Any lesser variations were blamed on ecological factors or warfare in the interior, not discontent with local authority.

Thus Glassman’s explanation does not quite work. Although he provides an original and convincing thesis for the root causes of the uprising, it begins to unravel as

¹⁰ Glassman, *Feasts*, 58. See also pp 57-64, 193, 197.

he seeks a way to understand why it played out differently in various towns. His weakness is that he remains trapped in his generalizing cultural framework: differences are accounted for by how the social relations of each setting deviate from his general understanding of the association between reciprocal material relationships and power in Swahili culture. Glassman's attempt to explain the uprising via a cultural framework causes him to lose sight of conditions and circumstances that were unique to each town. As remedy, this chapter employs a spatial framework that searches for those particular factors which will help us account for and appreciate the different outcome of the uprising in Bagamoyo. Furthermore, we will see how a spatial framework assists us in identifying the distinct communities obfuscated by the broader category of Swahili society. To demonstrate this, I emphasize the community origins of each group of rebels involved in the Bagamoyo uprising as opposed to the class and racial emphasis Glassman employs. In this way, we restore the local context masked by the generalizing theory.

DOAG and the Drummers

The relations between the Spiritans and the *Wabagamoyo* continued to fare well after the mid-1870s. As their mission prospered,¹¹ the fathers continued to think ahead in terms of enlarging their property at Bagamoyo, mostly in consideration for their married acolytes who sought independence from the fathers who helped raise them. Having learned hard lessons from their incorrect assumptions on land tenure around Bagamoyo, as well as their rash actions in plotting land grabbing "coups," the fathers became more

¹¹ In 1882, it was estimated that the mission would earn between 80,000 and 100,000 francs for the sale of the coconuts grown on their plantations. AStEsp, Rapport de M. le Comte de Mauberge au nom de M. Vallon: Sur la Mission de Bagamoyo, demandé par M. le ministre de la marine et des Colonies en 1882.

careful in their dealings with land purchases from the *Wabagamoyo*. In 1883, due to hostility between the Spiritans in Zanzibar and Sultan Bargash, fostered by the refusal of Father Acker to sell property the Spiritans owned around Stone Town to the Sultan, Bargash issued secret decrees to the town notables in Bagamoyo, ordering them not to sell land to the missionaries. The decrees were made secret, the fathers claimed, in order not to arouse the protests of the foreign consuls. Regardless, the Bagamoyo missionaries observed happily that Bargash's demands were "not in the least loyally observed" by the locals.¹² The fathers purchased a small piece of land in Bagamoyo in July of that year without repercussions.¹³

The situation appears to have become more difficult the following year. While the Indians were not affected by the Sultan's decree, it was getting more risky for the Arabs of the town to do likewise. On at least one occasion, the Spiritans used an Indian, the powerfully influential merchant Kanji, to buy land from an Arab for the missionaries in his name. The Arab in question was apparently a Qur'anic teacher, known locally as a *mwaliimu*, named Ramazani, who was indebted to Kanji. To clear his debts with the Indian, he agreed to sell his land in late 1884 for 700 rupees. This piece of property became Thomasville, a Christian village large enough for forty families of the mission's acolytes to settle in. Ramazani went to Zanzibar to draw up the deed with official letters from the French Consul General and a representative of the Sultan. The latter was disinclined to create the deed and the former was obliged to intercede to press the deed forward. This was successful. However, two days later, *askaris* sent by Bargash came to Bagamoyo and took Ramazani into custody. He was taken back to Zanzibar and

¹² MCMB, BG, TOME XIII, May 1880-October 1883, p. 43-62.

¹³ AStEsp, Bagamoyo Journal, 10/7/1883.

imprisoned for “having put the Sultan in the moral necessity of granting an authorization that he did not want to give.” The French Consul General, Ledoulx, on the other hand, was officially informed that Ramazani was guilty for not having paid off debts.¹⁴

While these incidents of land sale could be construed as acts of personal interest, the willingness of the *Wabagamoyo* to continue selling land to the Spiritans contrary to the Sultan’s wishes can also be interpreted as further proof to the argument of the preceding chapter: the sense of local independent spirit present in the town closest to the Sultan’s administrative capital. First, the decree issued by Sultan Bargash was spatial – he forbade the inhabitants of Bagamoyo as a community from selling land to the missionaries. This means that each landowner, if faced with an offer from the missionaries, would have to consider the same dilemma: was it worth the risk of provoking the Sultan’s wrath? Second, it remains a puzzle why the *Wabagamoyo* would dare such a risk; Bagamoyo in the mid-1880s was a boom town – surely there were plenty of others who would be interested in purchasing land. Was the extra money the Spiritans might offer worth a prison sentence? And finally, the sale of land to the missionaries had a placial community aspect to them: the European Christians used the Asian merchants (presumably ones they knew and trusted) as a front to buy land from local landowners (who may have had ties to the Asian merchants as in the case of Ramazani). Yes, individual choices and patron-client ties played a role here, but the

¹⁴ AStEsp, Bagamoyo Journal, 21/10/1884, 29/10/1884, 8/11/1884; AStEsp, 2K1.7.4, Acker to Monseigneur, 16/1/1885; 2K1.5a2, de Courmont to Très Révérend Père Supérieur, 16/2/1885; 2K1.6b2, de Courmont to French Consul General to Zanzibar, 30/4/1886. The Christian village, Thomasville, was so named in honour of the sponsor who donated 5000 marks to the Bagamoyo mission, Abbé Thomas.

community-wide ban on land sales to the Spiritans elevated the situation to a placial level. No doubt the Ramazani affair was the talk of the town.

At roughly the same time of the Ramazani affair, Carl Peters and three of his associates had snuck into the mainland and, in a very well documented process, unlawfully appropriated vast tracts of land for his organization, the *Deutsch Ostafrikanische Gesellschaft* (DOAG). This incident infuriated Sultan Bargash. On Easter Day, 1885, General Matthews arrived in Bagamoyo carrying two letters, one from British Consul General John Kirk and the other from Sultan Bargash, which were publicly read to the townspeople. The Arabs, informed by Bargash, and the Indians, informed by Kirk, were ordered not to sell anything to *wageni* – strangers – whether house, property or slave on penalty of caning, imprisonment or confiscation of goods.¹⁵ This prompted the Spiritans to question the Sultan concerning his definition of strangers, since the fathers had been resident in the region for twenty-five years. Bargash wrote a letter to Liwali Amer bin Suleiman of Bagamoyo stating that his recent official decree did not apply to the missionaries who he considered “old friends.” Despite this, the *Wabagamoyo* remained wary about selling land to the Spiritans, prompting them to believe that Bargash had sent secret instructions annulling his friendly letter. A few months later, however, it was remarked that the local “Arabs” “make us feel very welcome, setting a huge difference between the whites of France and the whites of Germany; between the whites of Bagamoyo and the whites of Kondoa.”¹⁶ Here, clearly,

¹⁵ AStEsp, 2K1.6b2, de Courmont to French Consul at Zanzibar, 30/4/1886.

¹⁶ AStEsp, 2K1.5a2, Acker to Très Révérend Père Supérieur, 5/8/1885; de Courmont to Très Révérend Père Supérieur, 11/5/1885; Courmont to Très Révérend Père Supérieur, 30/5/1885; 2K1.6b2, de Courmont to French Consul General to Zanzibar, 30/4/1886;

we see the local associations which were formed in the minds of the population, distinguishing one community of individuals from another (who shared a common racial background) based on an understanding of placial community. The Spiritans continued to show their solidarity with the *Wabagamoyo* by refusing accommodation at their mission to German visitors of a lower class during their stay in Bagamoyo.¹⁷ Later, when several of the married African Christians expressed desire to work for the Germans, the head of their Christian village sharply rebuked them.¹⁸

In March of 1886, DOAG agents Krenzler and von Bülow established a station in Uzaramo at Dunda, a village six hours west of Bagamoyo. Despite initial hostility, Pazi Songera (also known as Pazi Tumbo), the paramount ruler in the region, agreed to allow DOAG to cultivate the land in exchange for protection and gifts. According to Krenzler, the Wazaramo believed that the Europeans would bring money into their land whereas Sultan Bargash had hindered business. The DOAG agents raised their flag at Dunda on March 22nd. This, as well as Wazaramo support for the station, angered the *liwali* of Bagamoyo and the flag was taken down. Krenzler reported that Amer bin Suleiman announced via the mosques in town that nobody was to trade, assist or work for the *wageni*. Despite this, a report made in early April stated that the station was making gradual progress. They were able to engage dozens of local Wazaramo who came daily

2K1.4a11, de Courmont, Rapport adressé à Messieurs les Presidents des Conseils, 8/6/1888.

¹⁷ AStEsp, Bagamoyo Journal, 30/8/1885.

¹⁸ AStEsp, Bagamoyo Journal, 25/7/1886.

to work at the station for wages, as well as to train and maintain a small troop of *askaris*.¹⁹

Rumours that DOAG had raised their flag again prompted Amer bin Suleiman to lead a group of about 150 armed men, including his entire police detachment and many Arabs who lived in town, to march on Dunda on May 3rd. They arrived to find that there was no flag and subsequently returned to Bagamoyo.²⁰ Almost two weeks later, on May 15th, a group of porters working for DOAG were in Bagamoyo. DOAG agents Hermes and Poedecke were staying at the Spiritan mission while their equipment and baggage lay stored in a house in town where, presumably, their porters were also staying. Around 10pm, the porters working for Herr Hermes started an *ngoma* – a dance involving heavy drumming – outside in the street. The noise disturbed some residents in town who confronted the porters and told them they were making too much noise. Significantly, the *Wabagamoyo* also complained that the porters were being overbearing in their pride for working for the whites, reflecting the porters' brazen defiance of the *liwali's* decree banning anyone from working for the Germans. It is likely that improvised lyrics were being sung in the course of the *ngoma* that were boastful and arrogant. The single eyewitness testimony that survives this incident claims the *Wabagamoyo* started the dispute, but the witness in question was a DOAG employee named Andrew Balozi who worked for Herr Poedecke. At any rate, the two groups came to blows. Shortly thereafter, a group of four "Arabs" came to the scene. One of these men told the DOAG porters to stand down and, since he knew the *Wabagamoyo* who were fighting, he would

¹⁹ ZNA, AA1/42, n.n., 30/5/1885; BAB, R1001/396, Krenzler to DOAG Berlin, 7/4/1886; Eugen Krenzler, *Ein Jahr in Ostafrika* (Ulm: J.Ebner, 1888), 97; BAB, R1001/396, Hoffmann to Arendt, 26/5/1886.

²⁰ ZNA, AL2/107, Lucas to Arendt, 25/5/1886.

see to it that they were punished for their aggression. The other three Arabs, however, joined in the struggle against the porters. One of them was carrying a sabre and struck a DOAG porter named Osmani across the back. At this point, Balozi ran to inform Herr Poedecke what was happening.

Balozi's story gets somewhat confusing at this juncture. Instead of going immediately to the mission to retrieve his boss, he went back to the house in town where the porters' loads were stored and fetched a flint rifle. While he was doing this, he claimed he heard gunfire coming from the site of the struggle, although he swore he had not seen any weapons at the dance up until the time he had left it. He ran to the mission and woke up Poedecke, who, not quite grasping the scale of the struggle, had simply told Balozi to go back to the porters and tell them to behave. When Balozi returned to the scene, everyone involved had left except for some of the liwali's *askaris* who were on duty that night. A fight, however, had taken place in Balozi's absence between the DOAG porters and the townspeople. In the course of the melee, at least one of the *Wabagamoyo* had been critically wounded and four others less so from gunshot and small bullets fired allegedly from the DOAG porters. The French missionaries, to whom the seriously wounded was brought for medical care, were skeptical that the true perpetrator would ever be turned over or found out.²¹

Commandant Hoffmann of the German navy was sent over to investigate matters. At the time of his arrival, there was a caravan of 70 porters in Bagamoyo preparing to march to Dunda station the following day with loads containing a prefabricated house.

²¹ BAB, R1001/396, Bargash to Arendt, 19/5/1886; ZNA, AL2/107, Poedecke, Balozi, Hermes, 23/5/1886; ZNA, AL2/107, Hoffmann to Arendt, 25/5/1886; ZNA, AL2/107, Bargash to Arendt, 28/5/1886; ZNA, AL2/107, Arendt to Bismarck, 5/6/1886; AStEsp, Bagamoyo Journal, 16-17/5/1886.

He met with the *liwali* but no record exists of their conversation other than that Amer had complained that the guilty porters had long since fled the town. The next morning Amer accosted the 70 porters, ordering them to drop their loads, using his walking stick to beat them over their backs. He berated them for working for the Germans and forced the workers to return to Dunda empty handed. Their loads would remain in Bagamoyo for almost a month. Eventually the two incidents were resolved: DOAG was forced to pay 200 rupees to the *Wabagamoyo* who had been injured in the first fight, and Sultan Bargash wrote a letter to Amer bin Suleiman, delivered on June 18th, ordering him to stand down and provide the DOAG station with thirty porters so that they could finally deliver the loads to Dunda. Amer begrudgingly acquiesced to his employer's demand – he only provided two porters to agent Krenzler.²²

Glassman ascribes the episode involving the dancers to his cultural framework; that the porters, being non-Muslim *wageni*, had angered the local Shirazi population by engaging in an *ngoma* involving the firing of rifles which was a tradition which *only* Shirazi could perform. There is no record stating that all the participants were non-Muslim or non-Shirazi; on the contrary, one of the dancers had the very Muslim name of Osmani, and some of the porters were most likely Zanzibaris. In all likelihood, the porters had simply created a public disturbance to the annoyance of the town denizens; furthermore, given the locals' specific grievance over the pride the dancers flaunted regarding being employed by the Germans, it is plausible that the porters might have been mocking the townspeople for the May 3rd incident in which the *liwali* had marched

²² ZNA, AL2/107, Lucas to Arendt, 25/5/1886; BAB, R1001/396, Hoffmann to Arendt, 26/5/1886; ZNA, AL2/107, Lucas to Arendt, 4/6/1886; ZNA, AL2/107, Lerchem to Arendt, 12/7/1886; Krenzler, *Ein Jahr*, 97.

150 armed men on Dunda expecting to tear down the DOAG flag but then discovered none flying. Or perhaps the porters had been boasting the fact that they were flouting Amer bin Suleiman's decree forbidding anyone to work for the German *wageni*. Whatever the issue, there was certainly a local element sparking this incident, namely the blatant disrespect shown towards the Bagamoyo community. The wrath Amer bin Suleiman unleashed upon the subsequent DOAG caravan and his defiant attitude towards the Sultan's order to stand down and assist the Germans alludes to his locally oriented interests. The insults committed against his community were not addressed in a satisfactory manner and so Amer administered his own sense of justice by acting out against the DOAG caravan and refusing to submit to Bargash's orders which would have undermined his authority among the *Wabagamoyo*.

Prelude to an Uprising

On July 12th 1888, a deputation of high ranking DOAG officials, along with the German Consul General to Zanzibar, arrived in Bagamoyo to announce the administrative takeover of the town – along with the rest of the coastline between the Umba and Rovuma rivers – which would occur on August 16th. The deputation was accompanied by a representative of the Sultan, the former *liwali* of Bagamoyo, Nassor bin Suleiman al-Lemki. His presence is of some significance: as a respected personality among the *Wabagamoyo*, it is certain that he was included among the deputation to smooth over any potential problems resulting from the DOAG proclamation. Indeed, the announcement was made at the *baraza* of *liwali* Amer bin Suleiman²³ without incident;

²³ Amer bin Suleiman was Nassor's son.

Father Etienne Baur of the Spiritan mission reported that he was unable to gauge the effect the proclamation had upon the town's inhabitants. The day passed without further incident and the deputation left Bagamoyo at 6pm, leaving behind Herr Michahelles, the German Consul-General to Zanzibar, who remained a few days longer to visit.²⁴

Tensions arose a few weeks later, however, when *liwali* Amer bin Suleiman lodged a complaint with Sultan Khalifa, claiming that Baron von Gravenreuth, the DOAG agent in Bagamoyo and future Sultan's representative after August 16th, had ordered him to evacuate his residence immediately. DOAG replied that there had been a misunderstanding: Gravenreuth only wanted to take measurements in the residence for the renovations he would make when he moved in.²⁵ This incident, however, most likely contributed to the Sultan's hesitation about surrendering his appointed *maliwali* on the coastline. Over the following two weeks, the Sultan apparently could not make up his mind as to whether he wanted Amer bin Suleiman to acquiesce to the Germans or to refuse handing over the residence and flag. His dithering appears to have thrown the *Wabagamoyo* into confusion and angered Gravenreuth.²⁶

The day before the administrative changeover ceremony, the General Director of DOAG in Zanzibar, Vohsen, arrived in Bagamoyo. He had come to oversee the ceremonies at Bagamoyo since it was the most important town to fall under DOAG's administration. Vohsen met with the *liwali* to discuss the issues of the residence and the

²⁴ NA, FO 403/105, Euan Smith to Salisbury, 4/6/1888; MCMB, H.G.M. Tullemans, *Transcribed Letters and Documents of the Bagamoyo Mission during the Arab Revolt, 1888-1889* (henceforth *Tullemans*), ca. 1982, Baur to de Courmont; 13/7/1888; Bagamoyo.

²⁵ ZNA, AL2/89, Vohsen to Michahelles, 28/7/1888; BAB, R1001/406, Vohsen to DOAG Berlin, 25/8/1888.

²⁶ MCMB, Tullemans, to de Courmont, 15/8/1888, Bagamoyo; NA, FO 403/106, Euan Smith to Salisbury, 25/8/1888.

flag. Amer bin Suleiman stated he would refuse to vacate the house until he had received a direct order from Sultan Khalifa. A compromise was reached whereby the ceremony would take place at the house DOAG had been renting in Bagamoyo over the past two years. The *liwali* would provide a second flag which would be raised over the DOAG house. Later that evening, a deputation of the leading Indian merchants in Bagamoyo met with Vohsen who informed the community of all the changes which would affect them after DOAG assumed their new position. The Indians were content with what they were told and wished Vohsen and DOAG well.

The following morning, at 6am on August 16th, the festivities began. A military parade was led to the DOAG station which was festooned with decorations of palm and banana leaves. Several Indian merchants had also decorated their homes. The proclamation was read in Arabic, Swahili and German before a massive crowd of Arabs, Indians and Africans, followed by a military salute and music provided by the military band from the warship *Carola* anchored in the harbour. The local *akidas* danced and copper coins were scattered from the second story windows of the DOAG station house into the crowds of townspeople below. The festivities occurred without incident; however, Vohsen was upset at the fact that now there were *two* flags of the Sultan flying over Bagamoyo: one at the station house and the original over the residence of the *liwali*. Now that DOAG had taken over the responsibilities of the *liwali*, there was no need for the flag to still fly over his residence. Vohsen left Bagamoyo at 2pm to speak to Sultan Khalifa and the German Consul-General about resolving this issue immediately.²⁷

²⁷ BAB, R1001/406, Vohsen to Michahelles, 17/8/1888; BAB, R1001/406, Vohsen to DOAG Berlin, 25/8/1888; BAB, R1001/770, Michahelles to Bismarck, 26/8/1888. Telegraph communications had not yet been established between Bagamoyo and

Michahelles spoke to Sultan Khalifa who promised that he would send an order to the *liwali* to lower the flag. The following day, Michahelles went to the Sultan's residence to follow up on the Sultan's promise, but found that he was denied an audience and that Sultan Khalifa had left a message stating that he needed more time to think the matter over. Infuriated by this, Michahelles wrote a message to the Sultan reminding him of his promise and the situation at Bagamoyo. This note went unanswered. Michahelles then informed Vohsen on the same day, August 17th, that he could tell Gravenreuth to take down the Sultan's flag over the *liwali's* residence himself and, if need be, enlist the help of the frigate *Carola*. He urged Vohsen only to use armed intervention in an emergency.²⁸

News of these exchanges between the Sultan, Michahelles, Vohsen and Gravenreuth had spread rapidly among the *Wabagamoyo*. On the morning of August 19th, a group of Bagamoyo Indian merchants went to the *liwali's* residence to pay their respects on the occasion of the feast of Idd al-Hajj. He informed them that should the Germans attempt to remove the Sultan's flag from his residence, the *Wamrima* and *Washenzi* peoples would "set fire to the town" and that he, the *liwali*, would be powerless to stop them or help the Indians. On their way back from the *liwali's* house, the Indians overheard "two leading men of the Marimaje people talking on the road that they would set fire to the town and go away . . . In causing this terror, the leading Marimaje people of

Zanzibar. Depending on weather conditions, the estimated time to sail between the two places varied between four and twelve hours.

²⁸ BAB, R1001/770, Michahelles to Bismarck, 26/8/1888; BAB, R1001/406, Michahelles to Vohsen, 18/8/1888;.

this town take a prominent part, and we hear that the Chengi people have also arrived.”²⁹ The Indians closed their shops in fear and wrote letters to the British Consul General in Zanzibar as well as sending a delegation to Gravenreuth, the DOAG agent in Bagamoyo. News that a warship was being sent over to Bagamoyo reached the town on the 20th. Father Etienne Baur reported that “the jumbes are going to resist, the whole town is on edge, and the people have decided to attack any soldiers whose boats touch land.”³⁰

It is unclear what exactly motivated the dispatch of the warship to Bagamoyo: the correspondence before the petition was sent by the Indians of Bagamoyo indicates that a warship was to be at the disposal of Gravenreuth when he removed the Sultan’s flag from the *liwali*’s residence. After the 19th, Michahelles claims he ordered the warship *Möwe* to investigate the Indians’ concerns. Sultan Khalifa had still failed to give Michahelles a firm response regarding the flag by the night of the 20th, and early the following morning, the *Möwe* had left Zanzibar for Bagamoyo. Shortly after the warship had departed, Khalifa called for Michahelles and they reached a face-saving agreement whereby DOAG would simply take over the *liwali*’s residence and then his flag would not have to be lowered – DOAG would only have to raise its own flag below that of the Sultan’s. Unfortunately, the *Möwe* had already left. Vohsen departed Zanzibar immediately on the warship *Leipzig* with the Sultan’s orders for Amer bin Suleiman to vacate his residence.³¹

²⁹ ZNA, AA1/61, Translation of Letter from Bagamoyo Indian community to Zanzibari Indian Community, 19/8/1888; NA, FO 403/106, Indian Merchants of Bagamoyo to Canji, Rajpor, etc., 19/8/1888. *Marimaje* refers to *Wamrima*, the “people of the coast” and *Chengi* refers to *Washenzi*, or “outsiders”, “savages” or upcountry peoples.

³⁰ MCMB, Tullemans, Baur to de Courmont, 20/8/1888, Bagamoyo; BAB, R1001/406, Vohsen to Michahelles, 20/8/1888; NA, FO 403/106, Euan Smith to Salisbury, 21/8/1888.

³¹ BAB, R1001/770, Michahelles to Bismarck, 26/8/1888.

The *Möwe* reached Bagamoyo in the early morning of the 21st and landed a troop of forty to fifty sailors at Gravenreuth's request. A large crowd of *Wabagamoyo* had gathered around the *liwali*'s residence as Gravenreuth ordered Amer bin Suleiman one last time to lower the Sultan's flag from his house. Lacking an order from the Sultan, the *liwali* refused. Gravenreuth, reasoning that since the Sultan had not sent an order to keep his flag raised, felt partially justified in removing it.³² The DOAG and German consular reports state that Amer bin Suleiman eventually lowered the flag himself with the assistance of the sailors and that the latter also replaced the flagstaff on account of its being rotten and in danger of collapsing.³³ The British Consul, presumably informed by the Indian community at Bagamoyo, and the French missionaries, who were present, claimed that the sailors cut down the mast and removed the flag by force.³⁴ The *liwali* was escorted back to the DOAG station house for debriefing. Two hours later, Vohsen arrived on the *Leipzig* with the Sultan's orders for Amer bin Suleiman to vacate his residence.

Between 6 and 7am on August 22nd, the Sultan's new orders were read before an assembled crowd of *Wabagamoyo*. Two new flag masts were erected on the *liwali*'s residence and both the Sultan's and DOAG's flags were raised – the Sultan's in its former position and the DOAG on the opposite corner. The *majumbe* threatened that they would enlist the help of the Mafiti – a notorious rabble of people who plundered

³² BAB, R1001/406, Gravenreuth's report over the flag acquisition from the former Wali residence, 22/8/1888.

³³ Ibid; BAB, R1001/406, Vohsen to Michahelles, 22/8/1888; NA, FO 403/106, Michahelles to Sultan, 22/8/1888; BAB, R1001/770, Michahelles to Bismarck, 26/8/1888; BAB, R1001/770, Michahelles to Bismarck, 31/8/1888.

³⁴ MCMB, Tullemans, Baur to de Courmont, 24/8/1888, Bagamoyo; NA, FO 403/106, Euan Smith to Salisbury, 22/8/1888; NA, FO 403/106, Euan Smith to Salisbury, 25/8/1888.

communities in the interior – to remove the DOAG flags (there was another one raised at Mtoni, the site of the Kingani river ferry) and the Indians wrote again to the British Consul-General.³⁵ Vohsen met with the Indian community and berated them for causing a stir, stating that the so-called unrest they reported was merely the arrival of the upcountry Africans who had come into town to celebrate the *Siku ya Mwaka*, or the Solar New Year. The Indians refused to accept this explanation, as well they should – many of them had been resident in Bagamoyo for years and would have certainly been able to distinguish between regular festivities and serious threats. The merchants told Gravenreuth that “it was up to them to determine if the country remained peaceful or not.” Gravenreuth threatened them, stating that if they refused to accept his explanation he would prohibit them from selling firearms and ammunition to the upcountry porters and hinterland peoples. The Indians did not budge, and so the ban went into effect – any Indian caught selling the banned articles would have their merchandise confiscated and have to pay a 200 rupee fine.³⁶

This ban did not remain in effect for too long; it was rescinded within a few days.³⁷ With thousands of caravan porters present in town among whom firearms were much sought after possessions, and the townspeople already perturbed at the events of August 21st and 22nd, it was a tactful decision to lift the petty ban to prevent the town from exploding.³⁸ Bagamoyo remained generally peaceful for almost another month.

³⁵ MCMB, Tullemans, Baur to de Courmont, 24/8/1888.

³⁶ BAB, R1001/406, Vohsen to Michahelles, 22/8/1888; MCMB, Tullemans, Baur to de Courmont, 24/8/1888; NA, FO 403/106, Michahelles to Euan Smith, 22/8/1888.

³⁷ ZNA, AA2/47, Michahelles to Euan Smith, 26/8/1888; MCMB, Tullemans, Baur to de Courmont, 2/9/1888, Bagamoyo.

³⁸ Reports by Gravenreuth and British Consul General Euan Smith reveal their anxiety over the presence of massive numbers of caravan porters in Bagamoyo at this tense

The course of events elsewhere, however, affected Bagamoyo, revealing the deep discontent with the current state of affairs in the town among its inhabitants and upcountry guests. Although the tensions Glassman describes emanating from the power struggles between Omanis, Shirazi and upcountry porters had their roles in generating discontent, it was nevertheless still repeated in all sources, whether English, French, German or Swahili, that “tribes assert that the Concession [of the port towns to DOAG] was made without their consent, and is therefore not binding on them.”³⁹

The varying degrees of disrespect the Germans showed towards local authorities and institutions, combined with circumstances and conditions unique to each town, affected the degree of response by the urban communities and the outcome of the uprising in each setting. An examination of the events of the uprising in Bagamoyo reveals a sense of placial identity among the various peoples who composed its population. Glassman’s claim that the rebel movement “degenerated into a form of banditry” at Bagamoyo on account of “German force and plebeian indifference or hostility”⁴⁰ neither distinguishes who actually became bandits nor acknowledges that these bandits became alienated from the *Wabagamoyo*. Those rebels who disrespected

period. See BAB, R1001/406, Gravenreuth’s report over the flag acquisition from the former Wali residence, 22/8/1888; NA, FO 403/106, Euan Smith to Salisbury, 25/8/1888. Michahelles informed Euan Smith that the ban was lifted “in order to cause no injury to trade.” ZNA, AA2/47, Michahelles to Euan Smith, 26/8/1888.

³⁹ NA, FO 403/106, Euan Smith to Marquis of Salisbury, 21/9/1888. For German sources, see ZNA, AL2/59/1, Michahelles to Bismarck, 4/10/1888; BAB, R1001/407, Reports of a Meeting, 12/10/1888; BAB, R1001/693, Dr. Stuhlmann to Bismarck, 24/11/1888; for French sources, see AStEsp, 2K1.5a2, de Courmont to Très Révérend Père Supérieur, 4/10/1888; for Swahili sources, see Makanda bin Mwinyi Mkuu, “Vita vya Bagamoyo,” in Carl Velten, *Suaheli-Gedichte* (Berlin, 1918), 13-20.

⁴⁰ Glassman, *Feasts*, 6.

local interests and institutions aroused the hostility of the community and were perceived as community outsiders.

The Uprising

If the behaviour of Gravenreuth and the sailors from the *Möwe* at Bagamoyo had rattled the community at Bagamoyo, the personality and actions of DOAG agent Emil von Zelewski incensed the people of Pangani. As narrated by Glassman, Zelewski managed to insult the local *liwali* prior to the administrative takeover. Zelewski was a temperamental character: German Consul-General Michahelles described him later as “probably the most hated personality on the coast.”⁴¹ Due to tensions which arose in Pangani against Zelewski after his insults to the *liwali* were made known, the flag raising ceremony was delayed by a day in the town until a contingent of sailors from the *Möwe* could back Zelewski up. After the warship had left the harbour, hostilities broke out when Zelewski went to demand the keys to the town prison from the *liwali*. Zelewski requested another warship and the *Carola* responded. On the morning of August 20th, Zelewski and the armed sailors broke into the *liwali*’s residence, “violating the seclusion of his female dependants.” Zelewski, finding the *liwali* absent, went to search for him at a nearby mosque, into which he and his soldiers stormed. “The Germans did not bother to remove their shoes and in the confusion one of Zelewski’s hunting dogs slipped in with them . . . the mosque was defiled.”⁴² Zelewski went on to forcibly disarm the *liwali*’s mercenaries and to break open the prison and release the prisoners, mostly those who had dishonoured business contracts or had been runaway slaves. Finally, Zelewski

⁴¹ BAB, R1001/694, Michahelles to Bismarck, 8/12/1888.

⁴² Glassman, *Feasts*, 216.

chopped down the flagstaff at the *liwali*'s residence and declared DOAG "the true rulers of Pangani." He would go on to issue a form of martial law in the town, ordering the execution of anybody who resisted him and his men.⁴³

It is no wonder, then, that the uprising along the coastline began in Pangani. Zelewski and the sailors had, within a day, managed to violate almost every local institution – social, religious, judicial, and political. In no other port had DOAG agents behaved so rashly and tactlessly. If this was Zelewski's behaviour towards one of the town's leading notables, it was clear that the rest of the community should not expect anything less from him. The inhabitants soon deserted the town, only to return on September 3rd to drive Zelewski and the other Germans out of Pangani.

News of these events spread rapidly down the coastline. As described above, the forced removal of the Sultan's flagstaff at Bagamoyo occurred the morning following Zelewski's rampage through Pangani. Given Gravenreuth's relatively cooler head, and the decision to rescind his controversial ban on the sale of weapons, Bagamoyo did not erupt as quickly as had Pangani. After the uprising had broken out in the latter town, Vohsen was acutely aware of the possibility of its spread further south. It was noted that the *ex-liwali* of Bagamoyo, Amer bin Suleiman, was being mocked by the local Arab population since his power had been reduced under DOAG employment. Vohsen knew it was important that DOAG cultivate influential allies in the town to prevent the *Wabagamoyo* from revolting. Vohsen suggested to Gravenreuth that Amer bin Suleiman be involved more in town administration, whether in judicial or political matters, to boost his reputation among the townspeople and thereby be of more use to DOAG in the longer

⁴³ Glassman, *Feasts*, 216-217.

term.⁴⁴ Yet it was not the *liwali*'s political or judicial role which mattered so much in the eyes of the *Wabagamoyo*, but the fact that he had been stripped of his former power as the representative of the most powerful economic force in the region.

The cutting of the flagstaffs at the residences of the *maliwali* did not anger the people of Pangani and Bagamoyo because they viewed the Sultan as their true paramount; it angered them because it represented the abrupt end of decades of cultivating socioeconomic relations with him and his representatives, and because they had not been consulted about the new arrangement. DOAG, despite two years of activity in the region, had not really cultivated ties with the local populations they lived amongst. Zelewski's brutal tactics in the first days of the administrative takeover was a clear indication that DOAG was not respectful of local interests. In Bagamoyo, DOAG had been far less onerous in their actions and decrees. One of the French missionaries in Bagamoyo, Father Hirzlin, remarked that the changes made at Bagamoyo after August 16th were "insignificant . . . everything runs as it did previously under the former regime." Nonetheless, he continued,

two chiefs of the town, Salim bin Abdallah and Kisoka, aware of the enormous sums to be made on the ivory coming in from the interior, on the crossing of the [Kingani] river, on the fishing, etc. have silently been organizing a general uprising. They were not the only ones. The 'semi-Arabs' from the mosque in the Mangesani quarter and from the mosque in the Gongoni quarter . . . were always ready [at least verbally] to fall upon Gravenreuth and kill him . . . I always knew of all that was said, of all that was planned.⁴⁵

This observation and claim is reliable given that some of the fathers had now been *Wabagamoyo* themselves for twenty years. As witnessed in the previous chapter, the

⁴⁴ BAB, R1001/406, Vohsen to Gravenreuth, 15/9/1888.

⁴⁵ MCMB, Tullemans, Hirzlin to de Courmont, 22/9/1888, Bagamoyo. This letter must have been started by Hirzlin on the 22nd and finished later as it includes events that occurred after this date.

missionaries were conscious of what went on in the town via daily routine and the friendships they had developed with town notables. The *majumbe* were concerned about maintaining their traditional forms of revenue, much as they had been when Nassor bin Suleiman, the first *liwali*, had been posted to the town fourteen years earlier. Father Etienne Baur and Dr. Stuhlmann, a German naturalist who had been caught up in the uprising while on expedition in East Africa, also reported that the Bagamoyo *majumbe* were disgruntled about the DOAG threat to their economic livelihood.⁴⁶

Fathers Hirzlin and Baur both claim they were aware of the trouble brewing and that they had informed Gravenreuth his life was in danger. Baur reports, "He believed nothing of this; telling me that, on the contrary, the jumbes have become his friends, that he had talked and granted them all they had requested."⁴⁷ The evidence suggests that Gravenreuth did truly believe this. On the 20th of September, a month after the DOAG administrative takeover, Gravenreuth and Admiral Deinhard of the German naval fleet based at Zanzibar accepted an invitation from Said Magram to go on a hunting expedition along the Kingani river. Magram, the prominent local Arab plantation owner and merchant who had befriended the Spiritans, also extended the invitation to an unspecified number of *majumbe*. Clearly Gravenreuth felt comfortable enough in the local *majumbe*'s presence for he, Deinhard, and several other company employees departed the DOAG station the morning of the 21st for Magram's *shamba*, escorted by the town Arabs, *majumbe* and *askaris*.⁴⁸

⁴⁶ AStEsp, 2K1.5a2, de Courmont to Très Révérend Père Supérieur, 4/10/1888; BAB, R1001/693, Dr. Stuhlmann to Bismarck, 24/11/1888.

⁴⁷ MCMB, Tullemans, Baur to de Courmont, 2/10/1888, Bagamoyo.

⁴⁸ As to which *majumbe* remains unclear. There were apparently nineteen *majumbe* connected to Bagamoyo in total. BAB, R1001/693, Dr. Stuhlmann to Bismarck,

Their expedition, being well-armed, caused much concern and speculation in Bagamoyo because they were heading in the general direction of Poponi where Salim bin Abdallah had his estates. Townspeople asked Father Hirzlin why the Germans were going to make war with them and this venerable *jumbe*. The missionary allayed their fears, informing them that it was a hunting party and stating it was absurd to think the Germans were going to make war with the locals when they were accompanied by locals themselves. Excitement was also high since the day before, a large caravan had arrived in Bagamoyo:

Women and children rushed to meet the caravan and received it with ear-piercing music. The blacks sang and danced and provoked the porters to join in their noise making . . . Those who were armed fired off their rifles. Once the caravan arrived in the town and the ivory and other goods were stored in houses and warehouses, the porters received their wages and stormed off. They rented themselves a hut, found themselves a woman, and played, drank and sang the whole day until the last hard-earned rupee was spent.⁴⁹

Admiral Deinhard, caught up in the spirit of the celebration that typically greeted such an event, requested Gravenreuth to fire the station's cannons in the caravan's honour. Rifles continued to be fired off throughout the day.⁵⁰

The night of September 21st, the hunting party was camped out at Said Magram's *shamba* at Kimarangombe, some distance northwest of Bagamoyo's town center. Between 8pm and 11pm, soldiers arrived informing the group to return immediately to town because war was about to break out. Gravenreuth, still confident that he had

24/11/1888; ZNA, AA2/47, 25/9/1888, Churchill to Euan Smith; NA, FO 403/107, Vice Consul Churchill to Colonel Euan Smith, Inclosure 1 in 102.

⁴⁹ J. Sturtz & J. Wangemann, *Land und Leute in Deutsch Ostafrika: Erinnerungen aus der ersten Zeit des Aufstandes und der Blokade* (Berlin: Königliche Hofbuchhandlung von Ernst Siegfried Mittler und Sohn, 1890), 32. The authors of this book accompanied Gravenreuth and Deinhard on their hunting expedition.

⁵⁰ MCMB, Tullemans, Hirzlin to de Courmont, 22/9/1888, Bagamoyo; BAB, R1001/691, Deinhard to Chef der Admiralität, 24/9/1888.

everything under control, refused to believe the first two messengers. When the third group of soldiers interrupted the hunting party, Said Magram advised Gravenreuth and Admiral Deinhard to investigate the report. They returned to the town by foot around midnight and found things generally peaceful. The two men boarded a boat and returned to the warship, *Leipzig*, anchored in the harbour, which would take them back to the mouth of the Kingani river early the following morning so they could continue with their hippo hunt.⁵¹

The uprising which broke out the next morning on September 22nd is thoroughly documented. It was led by the *majumbe* of Bagamoyo and involved large crowds of townspeople and upcountry porters. As to which *majumbe* were responsible, sources conflict: some point to two or three in particular while others state that all nineteen participated. In all likelihood, a few prominent *majumbe* led the rest. Sources single out Salim bin Abdallah and Kisoka as the two principle leaders; the former owned much property in the quarters of Poponi and Mji Mpya while the latter is recorded as being nearly a hundred years old and a highly respected and feared *jumbe*.⁵² Other prominent rebel *majumbe* included Bomboma, Marera, Simba Mbili, Korandi, Makanda, and Fimbo Mbili, the latter having already been introduced in the previous chapter as the leader of the protests against the Catholic missionaries. Many of these *majumbe* had also been involved in the aggression against the petty Indian merchants of Bagamoyo in 1878.

⁵¹ BAB, R1001/406, Bericht über die Unruhen in Bagamoyo am 22. September, 1888, Heins, Belke, Ruehle, Mariani; MCMB, Tullemans, Hirzlin to de Courmont, 22/9/1888, Bagamoyo.

⁵² MCMB, Tullemans, Hirzlin to de Courmont, 22/9/1888, Bagamoyo; BAB, R1001/406, Gravenreuth, Bericht ueber die Unruhen in Bagamoyo, 28/9/1888; BAB, R1001/406, Vohsen to Bezirkschef Bagamoyo, 6/10/1888; BAB, R1001/407, Gravenreuth to ?, 14/10/1888; BAB, R1001/693, Admiral Deinhard to Chief Admiral, 3/11/1888; Tanzania National Archive (TNA), G32/15, Leue to ?, 16/2/1894.

Based on a report written by British Consul-General Euan Smith, who could not understand why an attack would have been made against the Germans while the warship *Leipzig* lay anchored in the roadstead of Bagamoyo, Glassman claims that the *majumbe* lost control over the crowds the morning of the 22nd.⁵³ As the following analysis of events will demonstrate, however, the rebel *majumbe* were definitely orchestrating the uprising.

Already the night before, rumours had spread that the Germans were out to get Salim bin Abdallah. In all likelihood, it was Salim bin Abdallah himself who had spread that rumour to get the *Wabagamoyo* riled up and on his side. Hirzlin records that, had the soldiers not come to fetch Gravenreuth and Deinhard the night of the 21st, Jumbe Simba Mbili had been instructed to lead the two Germans to the estates of Salim bin Abdallah at Poponi to massacre them.⁵⁴ Seeing the German leaders return to Bagamoyo at midnight caused Simba Mbili to flee the town. Early the following morning, the *Leipzig* took Gravenreuth and Deinhard north beyond the town to the mouth of the Kingani river to hunt for hippos. It appears that this was the signal for the uprising to begin.⁵⁵ At around 6am, Amer bin Suleiman sent messengers to all the Europeans still in the town, informing them to either seek refuge at the DOAG station or at the French mission: a revolt was about to occur that he was powerless to stop. The DOAG agents still at the house sent three armed soldiers to escort Herr Schultze, the agent for Meyer & Co. who lived in the center of the town, back to the station house (previously the *liwali's* residence) which

⁵³ Glassman, *Feasts*, 213-14; NA, FO 403/107, 25/9/1888, Euan Smith to the Marquis of Salisbury.

⁵⁴ MCMB, Tullemans, Hirzlin to de Courmont, 22/9/1888, Bagamoyo.

⁵⁵ BAB, R1001/406, Bericht über die Unruhen in Bagamoyo am 22. September, 1888, Heins, Belke, Ruehle, Mariani.

stood at the far southern edge of the town. Schultze arrived safely at 8.15am and reported that “the town was in a stir and full of armed men.”⁵⁶

Following more or less on the heels of Schultze and his armed escort was a great crowd of people making threatening gestures, but not attacking. Earlier, Father Hirzlin, witnessing general excitement in the northern part of town where people were running about declaring that war had broken out, saddled his donkey and went to see what was happening. Riding through the center of town, the missionary saw

everywhere . . . people armed with rifles, spears, arrows, wearing witch doctors' hats and tails, etc. going here and there, talking among themselves, making their way bit by bit towards the governor's residence: it was general chaos. I asked them what they were going to do, calling them fools (*wapumbafu*) full of hot air, pointing out the warship, and foreseeing the ruin of Bagamoyo by this evening if they dared to rise up.⁵⁷

The *Wabagamoyo* most likely did not fully appreciate the range and firepower of the frigate in their roadstead. Until this point, German cruisers had never fired upon a coastal town. In Pangani, where the uprising was already in its third week, no orders had been given to fire upon the town.⁵⁸ The townspeople did know that boatloads of armed soldiers would be sent from the ships and this they were prepared for. They also counted on the absence of the leaders of both the DOAG station and the *Leipzig* to play into their favour.

At approximately 8.30am, two *majumbe*, Marera and either Fimbo Mbili or Simba Mbili, led a group of approximately fifty men to the shore where a boat belonging to

⁵⁶ Ibid.

⁵⁷ MCMB, Tullemans, Hirzlin to de Courmont, 22/9/1888, Bagamoyo.

⁵⁸ Glassman, *Feasts*, 223.

DOAG lay beached and proceeded to hack it to pieces.⁵⁹ Herr Belke left the DOAG station house with two armed *askaris* to stop the rebels who then retreated into some bushes and began firing upon the DOAG employees. Belke beat a retreat back to the station house while firing back at his assailants; at this point, the crowds surrounding the station open fired on it. Roughly two thirds of those *askaris* who had formerly been under the employ of Liwali Amer bin Suleiman but who had since been transferred under DOAG employ, immediately deserted the Germans.⁶⁰ Surrounded on all sides and under heavy fire, Herr Ruhle had the cannon taken up to the roof of the station and began to fire on the crowd below. At the same time, the men signaled the *Leipzig* in the roadstead for help. The rebels used the cover of the *makuti* houses located in the southern quarters of Pangapanga and Gongoni which bordered the station house no less than a hundred steps away. The bullets they fired pierced the wooden shutters of the station house. The Germans fired into the neighbourhoods hoping to destroy the cover of the rebels, but the shells Ruhle launched from the rooftop were not detonating. Instead, a troop of *askaris* were ordered to leave the station house and set fire to the *makuti* homes by hand.⁶¹ While

⁵⁹ The German source identifies the second jumbe as Fimbo Mbili while the French source states it was Simba Mbili. BAB, R1001/406, Bericht über die Unruhen in Bagamoyo am 22. September, 1888, Heins, Belke, Ruehle, Mariani; MCMB, Tullemans, Hirzlin to de Courmont, 25/9/1888, Bagamoyo. See also the poem about the events in Bagamoyo as written by one of the participating *majumbe*, Makanda bin Mwinyi Mkuu, "Vita vya Bagamoyo," in Carl Velten, *Suaheli-Gedichte* (Berlin, 1918), 13-20.

⁶⁰ BAB, R1001/692, Deinhard to Kaiserliche Vize-Admiral u. Kommandirenden Admiral Herrn Grafen von Monts, 3/10/1888.

⁶¹ BAB, R1001/406, Bericht über die Unruhen in Bagamoyo am 22. September, 1888, Heins, Belke, Ruehle, Mariani.

Marera and other *majumbe* led the attack on the station house, Salim bin Abdallah and Kisoka led men through the town center searching for arms and ammunition.⁶²

At 10.30am the *Leipzig* acknowledged the signal of the DOAG station house and sent 150 men to land on shore on boats mounted with machine guns. The rebels on the beach, seeing the approaching sailors, took shelter behind beached dhows and hedges and fired upon the German sailors. The sailors used the machine guns to return fire while the *Leipzig* lobbed shells into the town with devastating effect.⁶³ As Hirzlin reported, “the terror was general.” Many *majumbe*, including Salim bin Abdallah, immediately retreated into the town for cover. Until this point, the hunting party on the Kingani had been oblivious to what was happening in town. The sounds of gunfire were dismissed as the typical boisterous arrival of an upcountry caravan into Bagamoyo. When plumes of billowing smoke, “like heavy storm clouds,” rose from the burning southern neighbourhoods of the town, the men on the expedition passed it off as the seasonal burning of the undergrowth in preparation for the approaching *vuli*, the season of the short rains. But when the gunfire did not cease and the smoke became only thicker, the party knew something was not right. Unfortunately, Gravenreuth and Deinhard were trapped on the Kingani for three hours until the tide came in.⁶⁴

While the hunting party lay stranded on the river, the sailors from the *Leipzig* landed without losing any men and began a counter-offensive, beating back the rebels street by street. The fires started by the DOAG station men, and the shells lobbed by the

⁶² Further accumulation of ammunition and arms had probably not been conducted earlier in order to avoid arousing the suspicion of the Asian merchants who would have informed the Europeans as had happened in August when the DOAG flag was first raised.

⁶³ BAB, R1001/692, Strauch to Kaiserliche Geschwaderkommando, Zanzibar, 26/9/1888.

⁶⁴ Sturtz & Wangemann, *Land und Leute*, 35.

Leipzig, continued to burn throughout the day, destroying approximately four entire quarters, mostly the neighbourhoods in the south and west of Bagamoyo. Hirzlin estimates that approximately 4000 *Wabagamoyo* were made homeless in the conflagration.⁶⁵ Over one hundred rebels were massacred on the beaches as well as an Indian couple who were shot in their home, caught in the crossfire. Most of the town had fled to the mission or had retreated with the *majumbe* into the hinterland to regroup, leaving behind mostly the Indian population, numbering between 800 and 1000, who had remained shut up in their houses for the duration of the hostilities.⁶⁶ The attacking party from the *Leipzig* did not lose any men in the fight, nor were any DOAG agents killed.

“The Respect Bagamoyo Implants Deep into the Heart of the Black”

We have established the events of September 22nd; let us turn now to look more closely at who was involved. Gravenreuth, the DOAG agent at Bagamoyo, reported that approximately 900 people⁶⁷ were involved in the attack against the station, and that the uprising was led principally by one *jumbe* (Salim bin Abdallah) who, in turn, led “eighteen old Bagamoyo chiefs who have showed signs of discontent at the present regime. These were assisted by the Wazaramo tribe and joined by large numbers of porters lately arrived with caravans from the interior.”⁶⁸ However, Gravenreuth was not present for the uprising and the only eyewitness reports come from the men who

⁶⁵ MCMB, Tullemans, Hirzlin to de Courmont, 22/9/1888, Bagamoyo.

⁶⁶ ZNA, AA2/47, 25/9/1888, Churchill to Euan Smith; NA, FO 403/107, Vice Consul Churchill to Colonel Euan Smith, Inclosure 1 in 102.

⁶⁷ Gravenreuth initially made the exaggerated claim of 8000 rebels; he gave the more conservative estimate of 900 a few days later. See footnote 53 and BAB, R1001/406, Gravenreuth, Bericht über die Unruhen in Bagamoyo, 28/9/1888.

⁶⁸ ZNA, AA2/47, 25/9/1888, Churchill to Euan Smith; NA, FO 403/107, Vice Consul Churchill to Colonel Euan Smith, 25/9/1888.

defended the station house and the fathers of the Spiritan mission. Nobody else makes an estimate of the numbers of rebels; only large crowds are mentioned elsewhere, and it is most likely that the groups of actively participating rebels were followed by crowds of onlookers. Admiral Deinhard, who was also absent during the riot, reported that nobody really knew who the enemy was; that “the actual townspeople of Bagamoyo did not on the whole participate in the uprising, while [at the same time] some people came into possession of objects which were looted during the uprising.”⁶⁹

Glassman claims that the porters were inadvertently caught up in the uprising at Bagamoyo and that the hinterland peoples had not participated because they were not interested in protecting the *majumbe*'s traditional rights of extracting tribute. It is safe to say that there must have been a number of porters who took part, since they are mentioned; however, their support quickly faded as many sought refuge at the mission. The townspeople clearly were involved, led as they were by the town *majumbe*, but their numbers also diminished rapidly as they made their way to the Spiritans – over 3000 had become refugees within two days of the uprising. Hinterland peoples like the Wazaramo and Wakwere were also implicated by Father Baur and DOAG agents Gravenreuth and Vohsen, and, given the kinship connections between *majumbe* and these peoples, it can be safely assumed that these people participated.⁷⁰

One group of rebels who fought in Bagamoyo requiring careful attention were those who came from elsewhere. These people have been referred to in the sources somewhat ambiguously as the “Wamrima,” or people of the central coastline immediately

⁶⁹ BAB, R1001/691, Deinhard to Chef der Admiralitat, 24/9/1888.

⁷⁰ MCMB, Tullemans, Baur to de Courmont, 24/9/1888, Bagamoyo; BAB, R1001/406, Vohsen to Gravenreuth, 6/10/1888; BAB, R1001/407, Gravenreuth Report, 12/10/1888; BAB, R1001/407, Gravenreuth to Vohsen, 24/10/1888.

opposite Zanzibar. Ismael, the de facto *liwali* of Windi, a town some hours' march north of Bagamoyo, was singled out as the leader amongst this particular group of insurgents which also included inhabitants of the larger town of Saadani, further north still of Windi. DOAG did not post an agent at either of these towns, either because they were not considered large enough to warrant their presence, or it was hoped that the caravan trade would be rerouted so that all traffic came to those ports DOAG would administer after August 16th. Father Baur noted Ismael's complicity in the uprising at Bagamoyo as early as the 24th of September while a DOAG chronology of events implicated his role by the 27th.⁷¹ The presence of the *Wamrima* helps to explain Admiral Deinhard's report that nobody was really sure who the enemy was, and that the townspeople were most likely joined by others from beyond their community. It is important to raise this issue to explain the looting and slave robbing which took place in and around Bagamoyo throughout the uprising. Such actions, naturally, point to a blatant disrespect for person and property. Yet, despite the unsettled atmosphere engulfing the town as of the 22nd, it is still possible to discern a sense of community respect among the *Wabagamoyo*.

The first example concerns the actions of Salim bin Abdallah, the *jumbe* initially blamed for leading the uprising at Bagamoyo and retrospectively labeled its "soul." As some *majumbe* led the charge against the Germans in the station house the morning of the uprising, Salim bin Abdallah and Kisoka led groups of men into the town center to requisition more firearms and ammunition. Abdallah and fifty armed men, mostly his slaves, made their way to the house and store of the most prominent Indian merchant in

⁷¹ MCMB, Tullemans, Baur to de Courmont, 24/9/1888, Bagamoyo; Baur to de Courmont, 2/10/1888, Bagamoyo; BAB, R1001/407, Vohsen to DOAG Berlin, 16/11/1888.

town, Kanji, shouting his name out repeatedly. Kanji appeared and said, “here I am, what do you want? If you want to kill me, here I am.” Abdallah told him that he wanted to make *shauri*, or consultation. Kanji refused to do so unless Abdallah called off his armed men. This he agreed to and Kanji invited Abdallah into his home. The latter demanded that Kanji hand over his stocks of weapons and gunpowder. Kanji refused. The outcome of their *shauri* was terminated abruptly when the *Leipzig* began firing shells into the town while its men opened fire with their machine guns, prompting Abdallah to flee.⁷²

In terms of identifying placial identity among the inhabitants of Bagamoyo, this episode is telling. Abdallah and Kanji were two town notables. They obviously knew each other and most likely had economic ties in one form or another; Abdallah may even have received *ada* from Kanji. At that moment in the morning of September 22nd, the fate of Kanji was clearly in Abdallah’s hands; he could have easily stormed Kanji’s warehouse with his retinue and forcibly taken the weapons. Instead, Abdallah left the issue to consultation and respected Kanji enough to ease his anxiety over the presence of the large group of armed men who had accompanied Abdallah. Of course, we will never know what might have happened had the *shauri* continued, but these gestures nonetheless speak to a sense of placial community respect between two racial communities, Indian and Swahili, who are normally viewed in scholarly literature as being at odds with another on account of the economic indebtedness of the latter group to the former. At the end of the first day of the revolt, the only residence in town which was actually looted belonged to one of the European agents of DOAG, not the South Asian community.⁷³

⁷² MCMB, Tullemans, Hirzlin to de Courmont, 22/9/1888, Bagamoyo.

⁷³ BAB, R1001/406, Bericht über die Unruhen in Bagamoyo am 22. September, 1888, Heins, Belke, Ruehle, Mariani.

A few days after the meeting between Abdallah and Kanji, Gravenreuth led a punitive expedition to the Kingani river to wipe out pockets of rebels who had gathered there to regroup. Among his two most important targets were Salim bin Abdallah and Kisoka. He had first proposed this manoeuvre to Deinhard but, after failing to receive feedback, Gravenreuth took the mission upon himself. He gathered four European officers, about thirty of the Sultan's *askaris* who had stayed with DOAG, twenty-five "African servants," and about thirty slaves belonging principally to Said Magram, but also to other "wealthy Arabs." All were armed and two cannons were brought as well.⁷⁴ Gravenreuth succeeded in flushing out the rebels relatively quickly in the course of two skirmishes, but also burned down a village and probably killed innocents in the process.

On the way back to the station house, Gravenreuth led his party across Salim bin Abdallah's estate at Poponi. There he found kegs of gunpowder which he had pushed into the river. He then turned to his ragtag band of *askaris*, slaves and prisoners and gave them free license to plunder and loot Abdallah's property. To Gravenreuth's utter astonishment, only a single piece of fruit was taken by the men.⁷⁵ It is remarkable even further still when one considers that this mixed group consisted of men whose allegiance was essentially bought (*askaris*), those who were in the service of Arab notables who supported the Germans (slaves), and those who were criminals (prisoners). Yet, at the same time, the majority of these men were local citizens who knew the man whose property they were invited to plunder. Whether they spared Abdallah's *shamba* out of

⁷⁴ BAB, R1001/406, Gravenreuth, Bericht über die Unruhen in Bagamoyo, 28/9/1888. Father Hirzlin reported that Gravenreuth's punitive expedition party included armed Arabs, blacks and "prisoners" to drag the cannons. Gravenreuth would have had access to the *liwali's* prison. MCMB, Tullemans, Hirzlin to de Courmont, 22/9/1888, Bagamoyo.

⁷⁵ BAB, R1001/406, Gravenreuth, Bericht über die Unruhen in Bagamoyo, 28/9/1888.

deferential respect towards him or out fear of community retribution, these men nevertheless demonstrated a sense of placial identity that would have been absent among those without vested interest or attachment to Bagamoyo. As will be seen further below, looting and slave robbing increased in Bagamoyo in direct proportion to the increase in numbers of community outsiders present in the town.

The Spiritan mission played a crucial role for the community of Bagamoyo during the uprising. First and foremost, it became a refuge for thousands of *Wabagamoyo* within the first hours of the revolt. Father Baur granted sanctuary to anyone who asked providing that nobody carried arms while on mission grounds. It was to be respected as neutral territory. When large portions of the South Asian and Arab communities evacuated Bagamoyo for Zanzibar on September 30th, they entrusted many of their personal possessions and trading stock to the mission for safekeeping in their absence. They rented out sheds and houses on site where they could store their goods. Incredibly, despite the fact that the number of refugees would rise to almost 5000 people, the fathers never reported theft on their grounds. The fathers also provided as many food rations as they could to those in need from their gardens and plantations, up to 500 each day.⁷⁶ In gratitude for assisting them with the storage of their personal effects, the Indian community later raised funds in Zanzibar to help the fathers take care of the refugees.⁷⁷

The fathers had become such respected *Wabagamoyo* themselves that Father Baur was able to disarm without a fight fourteen rebels sent to the mission by one of the *majumbe* to acquire more firearms and gunpowder. Baur reprimanded them and sent

⁷⁶ MCMB, Tullemans, Baur to de Courmont, 17/10/1888, Bagamoyo; AStEsp, 2K1.5a2, de Courmont to Très Révérend Père Supérieur, 2/11/1888.

⁷⁷ Servants who worked for the Asian community may have also been among the refugees, but this was not mentioned in the documents.

them away.⁷⁸ Despite the fact that the fathers had taken advantage of their privilege of ascertaining local gossip, rumour and news to warn the Germans of peril, the mission was nevertheless regarded by the rebels throughout the duration of the crisis as territory to be respected. Local rebel leaders repeatedly reassured the missionaries, stating “you are our fathers, you are our brothers”⁷⁹:

We are your friends and you are ours; we have known you for many years and we know what you have done for Bagamoyo and those who are with you. Be not afraid . . . If you want to see us and talk to us, we are ready to receive you at any time or place where you want.⁸⁰

Rebel *majumbe* entrusted the fathers to relay messages for the refugees and Germans, while the townspeople – African, Arab and Indian alike – urged Father Baur to reason with the Germans and convince them to grant the rebels amnesty and to ensure the protection of the *Wabagamoyo*.⁸¹ The spirit of goodwill that the *Wabagamoyo* – rebel or bystander – demonstrated towards the missionaries prompted Father Hirzlin to reflect

the love, the respect that Bagamoyo implants deep into the heart of the black will always be a guarantee of security for us. [They see in us] neither German, nor French, nor English, nor Spanish, nor Arab, nor black, but simply the men of God who want the glory of God, his justice, peace with everyone; everyone likes us, praises our conduct and are happy for the services that we are able to lend them in every way.⁸²

⁷⁸ BAB, R1001/692, Deinhard to Kaiserliche Vize-Admiral u. Kommandirenden Admiral Herrn Grafen von Monts, 3/10/1888.

⁷⁹ MCMB, Tullemans, Hirzlin to de Courmont, 22/9/1888, Bagamoyo.

⁸⁰ MCMB, Tullemans, Hirzlin to de Courmont, 25/9/1888, Bagamoyo; Baur to de Courmont, 29/9/1888, Bagamoyo; Baur to de Courmont, 2/10/1888, Bagamoyo; Baur to de Courmont, 17/10/1888, Bagamoyo.

⁸¹ MCMB, Tullemans, Baur to de Courmont, 9/10/1888, Bagamoyo;

⁸² MCMB, Tullemans, Hirzlin to de Courmont, 22/9/1888, Bagamoyo.

In a town full of Muslims who considered their Christian neighbours to some extent as *kafiri*,⁸³ or unbelievers, Hirzlin's sentiment may be somewhat misplaced; instead, it is more likely that the missionaries were simply viewed by the inhabitants of Bagamoyo as a part of their community who had over the years won their trust and respect.

Any sense of unity and drive the uprising in Bagamoyo may have initially possessed was quickly undermined. The onslaught of the *Leipzig* must have had a shattering effect upon the rebels. The high death toll and the immense damage shook the resolve of many. By September 25th, some of the *majumbe* were already suing for peace.⁸⁴ The Germans were willing to negotiate and the rumour spread through town that peace would soon be restored. However, Gravenreuth had put a price of 100 rupees on the heads of three *majumbe*: Salim bin Abdallah, Korandi, and Bomboma. Consequently, the other *majumbe* became reluctant to return to town in case they should be suddenly thrown into prison. Gravenreuth, however, was willing to grant amnesty to all *majumbe* on the recommendation of Father Baur. Clearly Gravenreuth relied upon Baur's long standing community familiarity to assist him in restoring community peace. Baur stated that he was willing to speak on all the *majumbe*'s behalf with the sole exception of Bomboma. Bomboma, although owning some property in Bagamoyo, was from Tununguo, a village some days' journey southwest from Bagamoyo. Father Baur detested this man and stated that his execution by the Germans "would be good for Tununguo."⁸⁵ Unfortunately, Baur does not explain why, of all the rebel *majumbe*, he

⁸³ AStEsp, 2K1.4a11, de Courmont, Rapport adressé aux Messieurs les Prèsidents des Conseils, 8/6/1888.

⁸⁴ Ibid.; MCMB, Tullemans, Baur to de Courmont, 26/9/1888, Bagamoyo.

⁸⁵ MCMB, Tullemans, Baur to de Courmont, 29/9/1888, Bagamoyo; BAB, R1001/406, Gravenreuth, Bericht ueber die Unruhen in Bagamoyo, 28/9/1888.

singled out this particular one. A possible reason might be found in Hirzlin's report about some Wazaramo and Wanyamwezi who had been kidnapped by rebels to be sold as slaves.⁸⁶ Baur insinuates that Bomboma was in league with the Mafiti, a notorious nomadic robber band which wreaked havoc periodically in the interior.⁸⁷ Baur, associated with an organization whose mission it was to emancipate slaves, would have been conscious of any slavers in Bagamoyo. It is therefore plausible that Bomboma was responsible for taking advantage of the chaos of the uprising to profit from slaving. If not, then he must have done harm to the community in some other reprehensible, unforgivable fashion which his fellow *majumbe* had not.

The situation in Bagamoyo did not improve. By the end of September, the majority of the wealthier classes of Bagamoyo – the South Asian and Arab populations – evacuated the town at the end of September. This departure coincides with the appearance in town of Ismael of Windi, who had now taken a greater role at this point in organizing the uprising at Bagamoyo – Jumbe Korandi sent a message with one of the Spiritan mission porters that Father Etienne should write to Ismael for reasons of security regarding sending supplies to the missions established in the interior.

By October 2nd, another 2000 refugees had arrived at the mission grounds at Bagamoyo. The following day, ex-*liwali* Amer bin Suleiman fled Bagamoyo for Zanzibar, leaving via Bweni, which lies further south of the town. The first reports of rebels from Pangani moving southwards to Saadani were made on October 4th. Dissension in the rebel ranks was recorded as early as October 6th. The rebels sent a negotiator, Hamud bin Said, along with Hamed Ibrahim, to discuss terms with the

⁸⁶ MCMB, Tullemans, Hirzlin to de Courmont, 25/9/1888, Bagamoyo.

⁸⁷ MCMB, Tullemans, Baur to de Courmont, 29/9/1888, Bagamoyo.

Germans on the 12th. In exchange for peace, the rebels requested amnesty for the *majumbe* and anyone who wished to return to town to resume business as usual. Furthermore, the Muslim population wanted to choose a new *qadi*, or Muslim judge, to replace the one who was chased away. The negotiators also made it clear that the *majumbe* caused the revolt on account of the failure of the Sultan to consult them concerning the German takeover of the customs house. Nothing was signed, but everything was agreed to by the parties present. Yet nobody returned to the town. Worse, it was reported that Ismael of Windi and Bwana Heri of Saadani were prepared to attack Bagamoyo.⁸⁸

On either the 16th or 17th of October, a group of townspeople and Wazaramo captured five rebels accused of plundering and slaving and handed them over to the German authorities. One was executed immediately, one was released on flimsy evidence and the remaining three were pardoned based on information they provided. They told Gravenreuth that Salim bin Abdallah and Kisoka had received twenty kegs of gunpowder and twenty rifles from Ismael of Windi on October 5th. One witness claimed that the supply originally came from Sultan Khalifa himself who ordered Ismael, who was actually Khalifa's slave, to deliver it to the rebels. A further testimony was given three days later by a local mason named Maruchka who claimed Bwana Heri, the leader of Saadani, was also smuggling firearms and ammunition to the rebels. It was also declared that "the people of Saadani and Windi intend to attack Bagamoyo." While a rift

⁸⁸ MCMB, Tullemans, Baur to de Courmont, 2/10/1888, Bagamoyo; ZNA, AL2/59/1, Michahelles to Bismarck, 4/10/1888; BAB, R1001/406; Vohsen to Michahelles; 6/10/1888; BAB, R1001/406, Vohsen to Gravenreuth, 6/10/1888; BAB, R1001/407, Reports of a Meeting, 12/10/1888; MCMB, Tullemans, Hirzlin to de Courmont, 16/10/1888, Bagamoyo; BAB, R1001/407, Gravenreuth to Vohsen, 16/10/1888.

was reported to have emerged between the greater and lesser *majumbe* of Bagamoyo, the level of theft, arson and murder in the area was also reportedly getting greater. DOAG and Michahelles called upon the German imperial government to send a warship to bombard “the little Robber Republic” that was Windi which was hosting the main army of rebels.⁸⁹

Towards the end of October, DOAG launched successful attacks against Salim bin Abdallah and Makanda bin Mwenyi Mkuu, the former along the Kingani river and the latter at his base in Mbure, a village ninety minutes walking distance from Bagamoyo. On the 29th, runaway slaves reported to Gravenreuth that Abdallah and Kisoka had lost the majority of their people, but had been “reinforced by plunder-thirsty bands from Windi and Saadani.”⁹⁰ Father Baur reported:

The Germans wish that everyone would return to town or to their shambas, but all reply: put soldiers there to guard the town, etc. and the countryside, allow us to have weapons and gunpowder to defend our property, etc. and we will go. But only if one doesn't mistake them for WaMrima . . . These poor people, if they are without weapons in the country, they will be stolen or killed, and if they are armed, they will be taken by the Germans. Their state is very critical and difficult.⁹¹

On October 31st, the German warship *Sophie* sailed to Windi. Michahelles reported that the women and children of the town were given time to evacuate, but that most chose to stay. The town was then bombarded with shells for about six hours. It was commented

⁸⁹ MCMB, Tullemans, Baur to de Courmont, 17/10/1888, Bagamoyo; BAB, R1001/407, Protocol of a Trial, 17/10/1888; BAB, R1001/407, Bulow to Gravenreuth, 20/10/1888; BAB, R1001/407, Gravenreuth to Vohsen, 22/10/1888; BAB, R1001/693, Michahelles to Bismarck, 22/10/1888.

⁹⁰ BAB, R1001/407, Gravenreuth to Vohsen, 24/10/1888; BAB R1001/407, Gravenreuth to Vohsen, 29/10/1888.

⁹¹ MCMB, Tullemans, Baur to de Courmont, 28/10/1888, Bagamoyo. Again there is the use of the ambiguous category of “Wamrima”, people of the coast, indicating that the rebels at this point included large numbers of people from elsewhere along the mainland coastline across from Zanzibar.

that the explosions which tore Windi apart were indicative of the amount of gunpowder that was stored there. A troop of sailors landed later, finding only the corpse of an elderly woman. It was hoped razing the town to the ground would send a message to others, particularly rebel leaders from Saadani.⁹²

While the wrath of DOAG became increasingly directed towards those rebels from beyond Bagamoyo, the Germans also came to realize what many outsiders before them had learned: community peace required the respect of community interests. Contrary to Glassman's assertion that the first *liwali* of Bagamoyo, Nassor bin Suleimen, "had been widely reviled on the central Mrima since at least 1875,"⁹³ Gravenreuth repeatedly requested his presence to help convince the Bagamoyo *majumbe* to return to town and hinterland, bringing their followers with them. While Nassor's presence in Bagamoyo may have been initially resented, as demonstrated by the events of 1875 discussed in the previous chapter, we also saw how, over time, the situation changed as Nassor gradually localized. It seems strange that Gravenreuth would insist on Nassor's help after other DOAG agents, Zelewski and Leue, had condemned him for failure to control the rebels in Pangani and the incitement of unrest at Dar es Salaam respectively.⁹⁴ Yet, after Gravenreuth's meeting with the rebels' negotiators, he reiterated, "If only we could get Nassor bin Seliman here, everything would be fine. The people aren't accepting my authority."⁹⁵ Clearly Gravenreuth was not grasping at straws here; he had made an informed suggestion based on the respected reputation Nassor must have

⁹² BAB, R1001/693, Michahelles to Bismarck, 3/11/1888; NA, FO 403/107, Euan Smith to Marquis of Salisbury, 20/11/1888.

⁹³ Glassman, *Feasts*, 268, ft. 70.

⁹⁴ BAB, R1001/406, Vohsen to Gravenreuth, 6/10/1888.

⁹⁵ BAB, R1001/407, Gravenreuth to ?, 14/10/1888.

possessed at Bagamoyo. Otherwise, it makes little sense why Gravenreuth had specifically singled him out.

There are a few other examples demonstrating Gravenreuth's attempts to win over the *Wabagamoyo*. In early October, Gravenreuth ordered Zelewski, the irate DOAG agent who had caused so much anger in Pangani, to requisition some livestock. His efforts prompted one Arab from Bagamoyo, Abad bin Bedr, a mason, to complain to Sultan Khalifa that the Germans had forced him into selling three cows and one calf at an unsatisfactory price. Michahelles warned Gravenreuth that it would be in his interests to win over the people of Bagamoyo. Gravenreuth, despite defending his actions, nonetheless gave Abad what he requested.⁹⁶ On another occasion, when a group of twelve looters were caught plundering the *shamba* of one Sefu Halfan and stealing five people who lived there, Gravenreuth turned to the local judicial process known as *shauri*. He held an open court trial before a large crowd of local witnesses and the leader, Halfan bin Ali bin Issa, was sentenced to death by firing squad. Not that these smaller acts of questionable benevolence redeemed Gravenreuth's more brutal military manoeuvres, but they are the first signs that Bagamoyo's latest arrivals were beginning to compromise in order to gain acceptance. This trend would continue with the arrival of Bushiri bin Salim and his band of rebels to Bagamoyo and long after his defeat.

"This Is A Bad Business": Bushiri's Arrival in Bagamoyo

It is curious to note that Bushiri's departure from Pangani was preceded by an incident which can be plausibly construed as evidence of disrespect for the community of

⁹⁶ ZNA, AL2/89/159, Michahelles to Vohsen, 8/10/1888; ZNA, AL2/89/160-161, Gravenreuth to Vohsen, 9/10/1888.

Pangani. The new *liwali* of Pangani, Suleiman bin Nassor, another son of the first *liwali* of Bagamoyo, Nassor bin Suleiman, reported that Bushiri had led a band of his men in mid-November in “seizing the property” of a Pangani Indian merchant. This act aroused hostility amongst the local community, forcing Bushiri to retreat to his sugar plantations outside of town. A few days later, he announced his intention to attack the Germans at Bagamoyo and led several hundred men southwards.⁹⁷ Rumours and news of his advance reached Bagamoyo almost as soon as Bushiri had departed. Along the way, he joined forces with those of Ismael of Windi and Bwana Heri of Saadani, although he did not command these leaders. By the time he reached Bagamoyo, Bushiri had amassed a force of nearly 3000 men, many of whom were well armed, and also had possession of two cannons which had been seized from DOAG stations in the interior at Dunda and Madimola.

Between the time of Windi’s bombardment and Bushiri’s arrival, the people of Bagamoyo had begun to return to town to rebuild and resume business, including the Indian community which had taken refuge in Zanzibar. Despite the unrest, thousands of porters had already made it into Bagamoyo with their goods and the occasional caravan trickled in after September 22nd. At the end of November, three more caravans carrying a “very considerable quantity of valuable ivory” arrived at the coast. In the immediate hinterland of Bagamoyo, they encountered Bushiri’s army who had arrived at

⁹⁷ See Glassman, *Feasts*, 246. Glassman remarks that Bushiri may have also aroused community hostility in his defence of Bishop Smythies, a British Anglican who had gone to Pangani to negotiate with the rebels there concerning the release of some missionaries trapped in the hinterland. It is plausible that both incidents were factors. At any rate, his march on Bagamoyo can be seen either way as an attempt to restore his reputation.

approximately the same time.⁹⁸ According to reports, the porters had to fight their way through the insurgents who attempted to either force them to pay a ridiculous amount of *hongo*, or simply to rob them of their ivory. DOAG provided lodgings, food and storage for 200 to 400 porters in a stone house about 150 meters from their station. The DOAG officer in charge at Bagamoyo, now Zelewksi, also armed the porters.⁹⁹

Bushiri arrived in Bagamoyo in the darkness of the early morning hours of December 3rd. He and his forces occupied several of the deserted homes of the Indian merchants, Bushiri taking a large house belonging to the prominent merchant, Sewa Haji.¹⁰⁰ Instead of attacking immediately, Bushiri ordered his men to dig trenches along the beach from where they could defend themselves from the troops who would be sent by the warships in the harbour. Ismael of Windi was dispatched to fetch Father Baur from the mission for a meeting with Bushiri. Bushiri informed the missionary that he was biding his time, hoping the Germans would be content to abandon the coastline and take over the customs house in Zanzibar. Baur recorded Bushiri as stating, "If [the Germans] don't want to leave, I will make war with them as long as possible, and I will die if necessary. He told me to go find these Germans on his behalf and make them this proposition; that if they don't accept it, war will begin."¹⁰¹ Bushiri also reassured Father

⁹⁸ NA, FO 403/117, Fremantle to Admiralty, 2/12/1888; NA, FO 403/117, Euan Smith to Salisbury, 14/1/1889.

⁹⁹ BAB, R1001/694, Michahelles to Bismarck, 8/12/1888; MCMB, Tullemans, Baur to de Courmont, 27/12/1888, Bagamoyo; NA, FO 403/117, Euan Smith to Salisbury, 14/1/1889; Sturtz & Wangemann, *Land und Leute*, 38. G. Richelmann, *Meine Erlebnisse in der Wissmann-Truppe* (Magdeburg: Creutz'sche Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1892),

¹⁰⁰ This same house would later be given to the imperial German government to be used as one of the first interracial government schools in the colony. It still stands today.

¹⁰¹ MCMB, Tullemans, Baur to de Courmont, 5/12/1888, Bagamoyo.

Baur that his rebels had no issue with the Spiritans and that their mission would be respected.

Over the next two days, fierce fighting broke out between Bushiri's army and the German forces. The townspeople had already deserted the town upon hearing the news of Bushiri's advance on Bagamoyo. Some sections of the town which had not been destroyed in September were burned to the ground during this confrontation; it was noted that the *Leipzig* fired so many shells into the town that a firestorm broke out and decimated the northern quarters. On their way back to the station house, the German forces had to run through the streets because the town around them was burning so intensely. On more than one occasion the rebels would have had the upper hand over the German forces on land, had it not been for the presence of the *Leipzig* which fired shells into the rebels' midst every time it was observed that they had gotten the better of the Germans.¹⁰²

The British Consul General to Zanzibar later reported that, during this battle, Bushiri's men also surrounded the house in which the Germans had installed the caravan of Nyamwezi porters who had just fought their way into town. They seized the leaders, stole the ivory and gave an ultimatum to the remainder of the porters: either join us or die. The many who refused suffered injuries in the fight for their lives, while others were killed on the spot. Euan Smith comments, "in this treatment of the Unyamwezi porters Bushiri, from the point of view of his own interests, made a grave mistake. The news of

¹⁰² BAB, R1001/407, Kusel Report from Bagamoyo 22/9/1888-13/12/1888; BAB, R1001/695, Cohsmann to Strauch, 12/12/1888; NA, FO 403/107, 7/12/1888, Euan Smith to Marquis of Salisbury; AStEsp, 2K1.5a2, de Courmont to Très Révérend Père Supérieur, 18/12/1888.

their treatment will spread far inland and may bring many enemies down upon him.”¹⁰³ No other report corroborates Euan Smith’s briefing and, given that the same house full of Nyamwezi and their ivory was the object of repeated attacks by Bushiri as late as February 1889, it can be concluded that his report was exaggerated. Nevertheless, his sentiments concerning Bushiri’s tactical error in attacking the caravan still holds true. Because Bushiri’s men had harassed the porters on their way to Bagamoyo, he alienated them. While it is questionable whether he killed as many of the porters as Euan Smith reported, it is beyond doubt that he attacked them again in Bagamoyo since the Germans had housed and armed them.

Glassman’s claim that the Nyamwezi had sided with the Germans on account of their alienation from the community of Bagamoyo¹⁰⁴ is therefore misleading and ignores the particular circumstances of late November 1888. It ignores the fact that only a few hundred Nyamwezi actively sided with the Germans – the same who the Germans assisted after Bushiri’s rebels had accosted them on the town’s outskirts – while roughly two thousand other upcountry porters took refuge at the mission, preferring to stay out of the conflict. The Nyamwezi had not sided with the Germans anytime between September and December and, when some of them later did, their loyalty to the Germans was viewed as questionable: “the Nyamwezi . . . only see service to the Germans as a temporary means to earn some money or as temporary sport.”¹⁰⁵ Glassman’s claim, that the Nyamwezi sided with the Germans because of their resentment towards the *Wabagamoyo* for being mistreated and socially excluded by them, rests on the premise

¹⁰³ NA, FO 403/117, Euan Smith to Salisbury, 14/1/1889.

¹⁰⁴ Glassman, *Feasts*, 64, 214.

¹⁰⁵ BAB, R1001/407, von St. Paul to DOAG Berlin, 30/1/1889.

that all Nyamwezi desired to become townspeople themselves. While some certainly did, the majority of porters returned home year after year. As will be seen in the following chapter, Bagamoyo was a place of business and pleasure for the upcountry porters and a town which catered well to their needs and desires. If the upcountry porters had been so mistreated by the Bagamoyo community, one must question why they returned year after year to Bagamoyo in consistently large numbers, even after the Germans – their alleged new allies – abandoned Bagamoyo as the site for their colony's capital in 1891 and attempted to persuade and force the caravans to go to Dar es Salaam.

The actions of the Bushiri-led rebels in December contrasted sharply with those of the Bagamoyo *majumbe*-led rebels back in September. Whereas the *Wabagamoyo* rebels showed restraint in terms of looting and plundering their own town, the rebels from Pangani and elsewhere were without scruples. They began looting almost immediately as well as robbing slaves.¹⁰⁶ Admiral Deinhard reported “This is a bad business. When I got to Bagamoyo I found everything going wrong again; continual robbery of slaves, and plundering going on every night; the inhabitants had left the town.”¹⁰⁷ Within several days, about 400 people had been taken as slaves by Bushiri's rebels.¹⁰⁸ Aside from the introduction of a general naval blockade of the east coast of Africa manned by the British and the Germans to prevent smuggling of arms to the rebels, insecurity was so high at Bagamoyo that many dhow captains refused to make the passage between Zanzibar and

¹⁰⁶ BAB, R1001/407, Zelewski to Vohsen, 6/12/1888; BAB, R1001/407, Zelewski to Vohsen, 8/12/1888; MCMB, Tullemans, Baur to de Courmont, 8/12/1888, Bagamoyo; NA, FO 403/117, 9/12/1888, Admiral Deinhard to Colonel Euan Smith.

¹⁰⁷ NA, FO 403/117, 9/12/1888, Admiral Deinhard to Colonel Euan Smith.

¹⁰⁸ AStEsp, 2K1.5a2, de Courmont to Très Révérend Père Supérieur, 18/12/1888.

Bagamoyo thus cutting off a much needed supply route.¹⁰⁹ With a lack of provisions, many refugees had to resort to foraging in the hinterland to survive. This left many people, mostly Africans, but also Arabs and Indians, exposed to attack and kidnapping.¹¹⁰

Despite Bushiri's assurances that the mission would be considered off limits to his army, people were stolen from the mission; in fact, one Christian from the mission, Paul, was stolen while accompanying Brother Oscar on a trip. Ferazi, the son of Said Magram, the prominent local Arab merchant and longtime friend of the Spiritans, was killed. The situation became quickly desperate: "The people here with us are going to die of hunger if this continues, for nobody can go into the countryside to forage for whatever is there, nobody dares to venture out . . . in town there is nothing to be had; Bushiri's people have carried away everything they could."¹¹¹ The number of people seeking refuge at the mission also increased from between 4000 and 5000 in September/October to between 6000 and 7000 in December/January. The increase was on account of more people from the hinterland area seeking protection from the band of marauders from further north.¹¹² The rebels took over Ukami, the region which traditionally supplied Bagamoyo with food.¹¹³ The situation deteriorated so badly that Baur considered the following idea:

to (allow Bushiri to) recognize those people who are staying with us, I want to give them all a piece of cloth or a rag that is marked and to let him know of this

¹⁰⁹ BAB, R1001/407, Vohsen to DOAG Berlin, 13/12/1888; MCMB, Tullemans, Baur to Von Eberstein, 14/1/1889, Bagamoyo.

¹¹⁰ In January 1889, two Arabs and one Indian were kidnapped by Bushiri's rebels while waiting directly outside the door to the DOAG stationhouse. The Arabs were later released, but the Indian was held for ransom set at 1000 rupees. AStEsp, 2K1.5a2, Acker to Très Révérend Père Supérieur, 14/1/1889.

¹¹¹ MCMB, Tullemans, Baur to de Courmont, 8/12/1888, Bagamoyo.

¹¹² MCMB, Tullemans, Baur to de Courmont, 5/12/1888, Bagamoyo; AStEsp, 2K1.5a2, de Courmont to TRP Sup, 18/12/1888; MCMB, Tullemans, Baur to Deinhard, 8/2/1889, Bagamoyo.

¹¹³ BAB, R1001/408, von Eberstein to Von St. Paul, 15/2/1889.

mark thus preventing all his people from stealing them. But they must carry neither rifle, nor sword, nor arrow. If not, they will be fired upon because they will not be distinguished from those who are at war.¹¹⁴

Whether he attempted this tactic or not, the rebels' attitude towards the refugees at the mission did not change: "I believe that these *Bushirians* covet us here, licking their lips at this herd of potential slaves, and an attack is to be feared one day or one night when they could just burst in to take everyone."¹¹⁵ A large slave market was reportedly set up at Bushiri's camp at Bagamoyo "at which slaves can be bought in almost any numbers at a very low price."¹¹⁶

Tensions were high among the refugees. Father Baur reported that a fire had broken out as well as an epidemic, and that there were numerous "brawls and disputes, in which it is necessary to intervene without end."¹¹⁷ There were tensions between Nyamwezi refugees and *waungwana*, the local free population, so that the missionaries were required to give them rations on alternate days to avoid them mixing.¹¹⁸ These tensions appear to have been cultural, as Glassman has argued, as de Courmont emphasizes that it was the coastal peoples who wanted nothing to do with the upcountry

¹¹⁴ MCMB, Tullemans, Baur to de Courmont, 27/12/1888, Bagamoyo.

¹¹⁵ MCMB, Tullemans, de Courmont to Acker, 28/1/1889, Bagamoyo; BAB, R1001/407, von Eberstein to Vohsen, 12/1/1889. De Courmont went to Bagamoyo to assist Father Baur in running the mission during this period of intense pressure, and when Baur was often called upon to negotiate between the rebels and the Germans, especially after German missionaries were taken hostage at Pugu in the hinterland of Dar es Salaam. Father Acker took over de Courmont's duties at Zanzibar.

¹¹⁶ ZNA, AA!/63, Euan Smith to Foreign Office, 2/2/1889.

¹¹⁷ MCMB, Tullemans, Baur to Deinhard, 8/2/1889, Bagamoyo.

¹¹⁸ MCMB, Tullemans, de Courmont to Acker, 21/1/1889, Bagamoyo. On the other hand, this may simply have been an excuse for rationing. Supplies would have been drastically reduced as the number of refugees climbed. The two groups of refugees would probably have been almost equal in size. Therefore, one group receives rations on one day, the other group the next, because it was impossible to feed everyone each day without quickly depleting the provisions at hand.

porters. However, as the uprising dragged on and the survival situation grew increasingly worse, *Wamrima* began to desert Bushiri and sought refuge at the mission where they might be taken care of.¹¹⁹ The presence of looters from Pangani, Saadani or Windi among the local population would have stirred up tensions, too. The missionaries decided to begin evacuating the refugees to ease their burden. Father Baur was able to organize the removal of large numbers of upcountry porters via two caravans under Spiritan protection which returned to the interior in mid-January.¹²⁰

At the same time, the missionaries sought to send some of the refugees to Zanzibar. The two dhows at the disposal of the Spiritans were insufficient to effect an efficient evacuation and they implored Sultan Khalifa to put his steamer at their disposal. Admiral Deinhard stepped in and offered to ferry the missionaries and refugees over to Zanzibar, but Father Baur declined. He told Deinhard that the Africans had some irrational fear that they would all be taken prisoner by the Germans if they went on board; the real reason, however, why “none of these people, whether townsmen, country folk, freemen, slaves, or Wanyamwezi will dare to board a German warship” was their fear of being associated with the Germans and thus vulnerable to retribution from the army of rebels.¹²¹ The evacuations were successful, lowering the number of refugees to between 2500 and 3000, mostly the inhabitants of Bagamoyo.¹²²

Zelewski also took liberties, allowing the Nyamwezi under his care free license to plunder some of the homes and shops belonging to Indian merchants. The Germans were

¹¹⁹ BAB, R1001/407, von Eberstein to Vohsen, 7/1/1889.

¹²⁰ MCMB, Tullemans, de Courmont to Acker, 13/1/1889, Bagamoyo.

¹²¹ MCMB, Tullemans, Baur to Deinhard, 8/2/1889, Bagamoyo; Baur to Deinhard, 10/2/1889, Bagamoyo; ZNA, AA1/63, Euan Smith to Foreign Office, 11/2/1889.

¹²² AStEsp, de Courmont to Kremenzen, Archbishop of Cologne, 29/4/1889.

also accused of pulling down stone houses and recycling the building materials and selling the elaborately carved wooden doors and window shutters.¹²³ Zelewski denied these accusations, blaming either the rebels or the fleeing townspeople.¹²⁴ Nonetheless, German Consul General Michahelles sent an angry letter to Bismarck condemning DOAG's decision to appoint Zelewski as head of the Bagamoyo station after Gravenreuth had been sent to Germany for reasons of health.¹²⁵ Given his past track record in Pangani and DOAG's need for somebody who could practice diplomacy over aggression, Zelewski was eventually removed from his post in early January and sent back to Germany.¹²⁶ Von Eberstein, Zelewski's replacement, sought to improve DOAG's reputation by providing food for the few hundred Nyamwezi who had camped out in the stone house near the station house, which, by January, had been well fortified with thick walls, bastions, and surrounded by barbed wire. Prior to being given provisions by DOAG, the Nyamwezi either had to go out foraging in the town and hinterland, or go to the mission to buy food. Either way, many Nyamwezi were either killed or kidnapped by Bushiri's people.¹²⁷

Discussions for an imperial intervention in the East African uprising had begun as early as October 1888, and Hermann von Wissmann was considered the most suitable candidate to lead it. Wissmann was familiar with conditions in Africa, having crossed the continent from east to west already. Wissmann arrived in East Africa in late March 1889 and immediately established his base in Bagamoyo. Through the use of Father Baur's

¹²³ ZNA, AA2/48, Indians of Bagamoyo to Euan Smith, 23/1/1889; ZNA, AA2/48, Euan Smith to Foreign Office, 25/1/1889.

¹²⁴ ZNA, AA2/48, Michahelles to Euan Smith, 4/2/1889.

¹²⁵ BAB, R1001/694, Michahelles to Bismarck, 8/12/1888.

¹²⁶ BAB, R1001/695, Deinhard to Chef der Admiralität, 3/1/1889.

¹²⁷ BAB, R1001/407, von Eberstein to Vohsen, 7/1/1889;

mediation, a ceasefire was negotiated with Bushiri on March 20th.¹²⁸ Not convinced that the Germans could command the loyalty of the local population, Wissmann used foreigners as the bulk of his army: Sudanese militia, fresh from the Anglo-Egyptian wars, and Shangaan soldiers from Mozambique.

The ceasefire was broken on April 9th, when Bushiri caught an African mason named Dunia, who was in the employ of the Germans. Bushiri ordered both of his hands to be hacked off and sent back to the Germans as a “warning” to those who crossed Bushiri. The stories of this event are many and contradictory. Some state that Dunia was merely minding his business one day when he was kidnapped and brought before Bushiri. At least one story stated that Dunia was a paid spy working for Bushiri who was punished for not fulfilling his mission. The French missionaries, however, stated that Dunia was dissatisfied with working for the Germans and decided to terminate his contract abruptly, wishing to travel to Zanzibar. The Germans were angry because he had not obtained their permission and sought to prevent him from leaving. Dunia ran away, but either was caught by Bushiri’s men or simply went to Bushiri himself to escape the wrath of the Germans. One of Bushiri’s rebels identified Dunia as a mason who had worked on fortifying the DOAG station house at the southern edge of town. Bushiri then had his hands cut off and sent him back to Bagamoyo. The Germans healed him¹²⁹ and turned the incident into a cause célèbre, proving the barbarity of the Arabs towards Africans –

¹²⁸ AStEsp, Bagamoyo Journal, 12/3/1889; AStEsp, 2K1.5a2, de Courmont to Très Révérend Père Supérieur, 9/4/1889.

¹²⁹ They patched up the stubs and eventually gave him a pair of prosthetic hands.

who the Germans had come to protect from the evils of slavery – and declared war on Bushiri once more.¹³⁰

Wissman's army stormed Bushiri's camp on May 8th, 1889, during Ramadan. The majority of men were inside the fort eating according to the fasting schedule. The guards outside fled without firing a shot at the site of the Germans, thus failing to alert their comrades. The fighting was over within a couple of hours and the Germans took twenty Arabs prisoners along with many women. Among the prisoners and the dead left behind, not a single person from Bagamoyo was identified.¹³¹ Bushiri fled into the interior and most of the rebels scattered. They regrouped in various places; the Germans sent out punitive expeditions to crush them. In many cases, the rebels simply fled at the approach of the Germans. With Bushiri defeated (but not captured), the *Wabagamoyo* gradually left their refuge at the mission and returned to town. The townspeople and the neighbouring Wazaramo also took it upon themselves to catch any rebels in the region who were lurking about and preying on the local population for slaves. These they turned over to the Germans who often executed them. The locals also assisted the Germans by leading them to rebel hideouts.¹³²

¹³⁰ MCMB, Tullemans, Baur to de Courmont, 10/4/1889, Bagamoyo. For reports sympathetic to Dunia, see BAB, R1001/408, von Eberstein to Von St. Paul, 12/4/1889; Sturtz & Wangemann, *Land und Leute*, 45; Hugo von Waldener-Harz, *Bana kubwa, der deutsche Admiral: Eine Erzählung aus den Kämpfen um Deutsch Ostafrikas Erwerbung* (Stuttgart: Union Deutsch Verlagsgesellschaft, 1930), 126-129; Richelmann, *Erlebnisse*, Dunia was given prosthetic hands by the Germans, as well as a piece of land and a comfortable pension and lived generally well for the remainder of his days.

¹³¹ AStEsp, Bagamoyo Journal, 10/5/1889.

¹³² MCMB, Tullemans, Baur to de Courmont, 2/7/1889, Bagamoyo; Baur to de Courmont, 29/7/1889, Bagamoyo; AStEsp, Bagamoyo Journal, 26/8/1889; NA, FO 403/119, Acting Consul General Portal to Salisbury, 2/9/1889; MCMB, Tullemans, Delpuech to de Courmont, 30/9/1889, Bagamoyo.

Bushiri, however, had one last card to play. Having lost the support of most of the coastal rebels, he turned to the notorious Mafiti. Even more so than his last army, the Mafiti, joined by the Wahehe and Makonde, had no community ties to Bagamoyo and were largely interested in plundering. In October 1889, the Mafiti were within striking distance of Bagamoyo. They attacked the outlying Wazaramo villages around the town, killing many and forcing thousands to flee, many of whom sought shelter at the trusted Spiritan mission.¹³³ “All [of] Bagamoyo anxiously await[ed] the Mafiti attack,” but fortunately Wissmann led an army and headed the marauders off at the village of Yombo, not far from Bagamoyo.¹³⁴ The Mafiti, hoping for easy spoils, did not offer much resistance and quickly fled, not to return.

Without probably even realizing it then, the Germans in Bagamoyo had, from the time of Bushiri’s arrival, not only defended themselves, but actually defended the town of Bagamoyo from the aggression of outsiders. As local support for the uprising waned on account of the unexpected, brutal force used by the Germans, the dwindling ranks of Bagamoyo rebels were replenished with those from Windi, Saadani and elsewhere – community outsiders lacking vested interests in Bagamoyo who were therefore free of the restraints from looting and kidnapping which stayed the hands of the locals. The *Wabagamoyo* were no doubt in some way pleased at having the Germans punish those who disrespected them; the fact that the locals turned over perpetrators to the Germans when caught demonstrates this. Certainly when Bushiri joined forces with the Mafiti, all bets were off and their defeat at Yombo was celebrated in Bagamoyo.

¹³³ MCMB, Tullemans, Baur to de Courmont, 10/10/1889, Bagamoyo; Baur to de Courmont, 14/10/1889, Bagamoyo; AStEsp, 2K1.5a2, de Courmont to Très Révérend Père Supérieur, 23/10/1889.

¹³⁴ MCMB, Tullemans, Baur to de Courmont, 24/10/1889, Bagamoyo.

Bushiri, having a price of ten thousand rupees on his head¹³⁵ and lacking a power base, eventually returned to the Pangani region where he was caught by Wazigua, who turned him over to the Germans. He was executed on December 18th 1889. Three Bagamoyo *majumbe* were also caught: Bomboma, Marera and Masisi. According to one DOAG employee, after swearing an oath on their innocence, one *jumbe* was identified by Dunia as the one who cut off his hands; the other two were implicated in the killing of three German sailors who had deserted the *Leipzig* back in September. All three were hung on December 18th.¹³⁶ The uprising, at least in Bagamoyo, had now reached closure.

A Final Word on Complicity

One aspect of the uprising in Bagamoyo which deserves closer scrutiny is the role played by the Indian community. Until now, the Indians have generally been viewed either as victims of the uprising or neutral bystanders. In Bagamoyo, most of the Indian community evacuated the town both after the initial September uprising and again after Bushiri's arrival in December. In Pangani, according to Glassman, the community was prevented from leaving by the rebels who implored them to stay. Although the Indians

¹³⁵ NA, FO 84/1982, Euan Smith to Marquis of Salisbury, 2/12/1889.

¹³⁶ Letters of Christian Lautherborn, 28/12/1889. Special thanks to Jane L. Parpart and Marianne Rostgaard for generously sharing these letters with me. The collection of Lautherborn's correspondence has now been published in Jane L. Parpart & Marianne Rostgaard, eds. *The Practical Imperialist: Letters from a Danish Planter in German East Africa, 1888-1906* (Leiden: Brill, 2006). See also AStEsp, Bagamoyo Journal, 17-18/12/1889; NA, FO 881/6039, Euan Smith to Salisbury, 26/12/1889. The hangings of two of the *majumbe* were poorly executed "the ropes were so badly adjusted as visibly to prolong the sufferings of these unhappy men for more than twenty minutes." Given Lautherborn's testament, it is quite probably that these two *majumbe* were the ones implicated in the killings of the German deserters. For mention of the sailors' desertion, see BAB, R1001/407, Gravenreuth to Vohsen, 20/11/1888; BAB, R1001/693, Dr. Stuhlmann to Bismarck, 24/11/1888;

never picked up weapons and joined the rebellious crowds at either town, existing evidence does suggest some complicity in the revolt on their part.

As Gravenreuth noted after the September uprising in Bagamoyo, the Indian wholesale merchants, particularly Kanji, had imported large quantities of firearms, ammunition and gunpowder just prior to the revolt. While it remains impossible to claim that these large shipments were meant expressly for the uprising – especially since Salim bin Abdallah later went to Kanji on September 22nd to demand he turn over his stocks of weapons to him – the Indian community, given all their contacts in town and outside of it, would have known that something was about to happen and consequently would have debated the risks involved in making a lot of money at the expense of endangering their lives. A couple of reports noted that some of the Indians had conspired with the rebels, but it is never explained in what fashion.¹³⁷ The Germans probably did not know themselves, but the rumours were evidently strong enough to warrant mention.

After Bushiri's arrival, a couple of Indians accused of intriguing were mentioned by name. On December 15th, 1888, an Indian *askari* working at the customs house in Bagamoyo informed two local town notables, Ali bin Achmed bin Solimann and Sheikh Mohando, that the Indian petty merchant, Haji Juma Mainam, had stocks of fuses for sale. While his fellow community members had sought refuge at the mission, Mainam remained the only Indian still residing in the town, unmolested by the new army of rebels. This was sufficient cause for the Germans to enter Mainam's house and search for contraband. They found the fuses and ammunition as well as a significant amount of money, precious metals, and goods that a man of his business and means would not

¹³⁷ BAB, R1001/407, Gravenreuth to Vohsen, 11/10/1888; BAB, R1001/693, Dr. Stuhlmann to Bismarck, 24/11/1888.

otherwise be in possession of. He was eventually tried by the British court at Zanzibar and fined 100 rupees for his transgressions; he was also denied the right to return to Bagamoyo.¹³⁸ Of more serious note, Sewa Haji Paroo, one of the most prominent personalities of the east coast of Africa, and who will feature in the following chapter, was also singled out for complicity in the uprising; not by the Germans, but by the British under whom he was a subject. Again, his offending actions were not described, only that he had “intrigued” in a “prominent” fashion. He was warned by the British Consul General to desist and subsequently left East Africa for Bombay. He later tracked down Euan Smith in London where he apologized for his behaviour which was accepted on account that he was “a man of considerable importance in the local and commercial world at Zanzibar.”¹³⁹

While clearly the Indian community in general cannot be implicated in the uprising, the two examples above, involving both the powerful wholesalers and the petty merchant class, illustrate that perhaps the Indians perceived that they, too, had something to lose by the sudden takeover of the Sultan’s customs houses in Bagamoyo and elsewhere. The Indian merchants would have been compelled to intrigue against the Germans because, for the first time since the Indians had taken up residence on the coast, a foreign power with potential formidable military backing would be keeping a careful eye on their trading practices and posing a threat by hindering them from realizing the full profits they had been used to earning. Just like the *majumbe* and their followers, the years the Indians had invested in building up business relations with the Sultan’s agents

¹³⁸ BAB, R1001/408, von Eberstein to Von St. Paul, 24/1/1889; NA, FO 403/117, Euan Smith to Salisbury, 6/2/1889; BAB, R1001/408, Protokoll, 11/2/1889; BAB, R1001/408, von St. Paul to DOAG, 1/3/1889; BAB, R1001/408, Michahelles to Vohsen, 4/3/1889.

¹³⁹ NA, FO 403/119, Euan Smith to Salisbury, 13/8/1889.

and others might suddenly come to naught. Without the imperial German warships in the harbours, the DOAG agents on the ground would have been driven out and forced to reconsider the terms for representing the Sultan along the coastline.

Accusations of complicity also extended to Sultan Khalifa himself. Although I am in agreement with Glassman that this uprising was not an “Arab revolt,” enough evidence exists to implicate the Sultan of having taken part in supporting the uprising, at least after it had begun. As noted above, Ismael of Windi played a prominent role in the early stages of the September uprising at Bagamoyo; in fact, after the *Leipzig* broke the backbone of the revolt on the 22nd, it appears that Ismael largely coordinated the uprising after the rebels had dispersed and regrouped in diminished numbers. As noted earlier, he was accused in October of having received smuggled shipments of firearms, ammunition and gunpowder from Sultan Khalifa himself to be distributed to rebel *majumbe* and their followers. Ismael was a slave of Khalifa and the Germans held the latter responsible for the former’s actions which went unpunished throughout the uprising. After Bushiri was caught and brought to Pangani for trial and execution, he made a detailed confession in which he implicated Sultan Khalifa and the prominent role he had played in supporting the revolt. Bushiri was able to support his testimony by showing Major Wissmann a box of documents and letters, presumably of correspondence between himself and the Sultan. The German government was keen on keeping Khalifa’s complicity quiet and wrote to the British asking for their input; they, too, agreed that Bushiri’s confession should remain under wraps and that Khalifa’s rule continued untarnished.¹⁴⁰

¹⁴⁰ NA, FO 403/120, Euan Smith to Salisbury, 17/12/1889; NA, FO 403/120, Marquis of Salisbury to E. Malet, 18/12/1889; NA, FO 403/120, Sir E. Malet to Salisbury, 19/12/1889; NA, FO 84/1982, Euan Smith to Salisbury, 23/12/1889. Unfortunately, the

Sultan Khalifa realized that, with the raising of the DOAG flags along the coastline, respect for him among the coastal peoples diminished dramatically. Although, as we have seen, he attempted to postpone the installation of DOAG as customs masters, he nonetheless sent out the orders for his *maliwali* to evacuate their residences. As discussed above, the failure of the Sultan to take into consideration the input of local rulers regarding DOAG's demand to assume control over the customs house at Bagamoyo was viewed by the town's inhabitants as a transgression against, and disrespect towards, the interests of the community. While it remains difficult to establish what exactly the role of Khalifa was – if any – in the *outbreak* of the uprising, he at least attempted later to make amends by sending “gifts” of firearms and gunpowder to Salim bin Abdallah and other *majumbe* of Bagamoyo via his slave, Ismael. What other machinations Khalifa was involved in remain unknown for now, but we do know his involvement was significant enough that the Germans and British could have had him removed from the throne, yet chose not to. Why? Most likely both powers were looking to establish and maintain stability in the region which had been disrupted since Bargash's death. A new Sultan may have caused renewed unrest; furthermore, having the evidence to threaten Khalifa with dethroning may have proved an advantage in terms of political maneuvering in the region: Khalifa would be forced to rubberstamp British and German bills which, in turn, would add some veneer of legitimacy to what was, in reality, European pressure.

documents do not describe *how* Khalifa had supported the uprising. To my knowledge, this is the first time that Khalifa's involvement has been conclusively demonstrated; until now, it has always been alleged, but never proven to this extent. See Glassman, *Feasts*, 267-268 for a discussion of Khalifa's role in the uprising as argued by past historians.

Summary

This chapter has called into question the usefulness of a general understanding of urban Swahili culture as a framework to explain the behaviour of various urban communities along the East African coastline during the crisis period of 1888-1890. While these towns shared several characteristics such as a similar population make-up; a caravan trade and plantation based economy; and a hierarchical social system based on patronage, Islam and material wealth, this did not mean that these peoples were interchangeable from one town to the next. Each community had its own understanding of itself based on the particular personalities who lived in each town and the patterns of everyday life which bound the group of people who lived within each place. One of the best illustrative examples of this phenomenon was the case of the French Catholic missionaries who, by the end of the rebellion, had become so honoured in Bagamoyo for their services and sacrifices during the crisis, that one German observer noted after the peace how he often met “Arabs and Indians at the mission who sought advice from the Spiritans, for even though they were strict Muhammadans, they regarded these men with complete trust whom they knew were always ready to assist.”¹⁴¹

Glassman’s research provided a much needed deeper analysis into the standard narrative of the uprising of 1888, looking into reasons why the rebels not only rose up against the Europeans working for DOAG, but also why their anger was directed against the Sultan of Zanzibar and his Omani authorities on the mainland. The fact that the unrest occurred in a widespread fashion throughout the German sphere contributes to the notion that it was largely a cultural reaction. Yet, as we have seen, there were distinct

¹⁴¹ Richelmann, *Erlebnisse*, 43.

groups of rebels with differing agendas active in this area; groups which had aligned themselves along placial lines. In Bagamoyo, the uprising was initially led largely by local *majumbe* and their slaves and supporters. After the frigate *Leipzig* broke the first wave of violence, local popular support for the revolt began to wane only to be buttressed by groups of people from other towns like Windi and Saadani. The more the rebels came from elsewhere, the more the level of plundering and looting increased in Bagamoyo. With the arrival of Bushiri and his Pangani supporters in December, the disrespect for the community of Bagamoyo had become total. This led to the alienation of the *Wabagamoyo* from the rebellion. As their homes and shops were broken into and looted and their fellow townspeople kidnapped and sold into slavery, the *Wabagamoyo* in conjunction with those hinterland peoples to whom Bagamoyo was a place of significance, responded by handing over to the Germans those wayward rebels who they were able to catch. In this way, the Germans, having started off as the enemy of the *Wabagamoyo*, gradually became their effective protector. This phenomenon manifested itself fully in October 1889 when Bushiri led the Mafiti to attack the town.

The Germans learned a very difficult lesson which they did not forget quickly. In the next chapter we will examine evidence which demonstrates that the Germans came to appreciate the community codes that required their respect in Bagamoyo.

CHAPTER FOUR

AN ECONOMIC CATCH-22: UNDERMINING LOCAL ATTACHMENT

After putting down the rebellion at Bagamoyo, the German imperial government faced the same problem which had previously confronted the agents of the German East Africa Company: how to capture the economy of the region? This time around however, the painful lessons learned from earlier blunders demonstrated that tact and diplomacy had to be their primary tools for restoring security and confidence. This chapter will examine the efforts of the German administration to appease the *Wabagamoyo* so that trade would resume and profit could be made from the colony. However, as they quickly discovered, this tactic presented a catch-22: while their policy of appeasement was effective in restimulating economic activity in Bagamoyo and beyond, the fact that they allowed the *Wabagamoyo* to pick up where they left off before the uprising frustrated German efforts to take control of the lucrative central caravan routes. This prompted the imperial government to institute complex measures which would undermine the *Wabagamoyo* while at the same time refrain from harming the economy of the colony. Their solution was to develop a less economically significant town on the coast not too far from Bagamoyo so that the central caravan routes could be diverted there with minimal disruption.

The Germans developed Dar es Salaam into their new colonial capital of German East Africa. Located approximately 80 to 90 kilometers south of Bagamoyo, caravans coming to the coast from the interior required roughly an extra day's journey compared to the route to Bagamoyo. Dar es Salaam, despite its population of a few thousand

inhabitants and its status as a caravan terminus, remained of minimal economic importance in comparison with other towns, like Bagamoyo, Pangani, Kilwa, Tanga, Saadani and Lindi. Therefore, this enabled the Germans to be more aggressive in acquiring land from local townspeople in Dar es Salaam because the potential consequences of disrupting the economic community were also minimal. Whereas Bagamoyo remained largely in local hands, the Germans were in a better position to control Dar es Salaam's economy and society. Yet building a new city did not mean that people would necessarily come to it.¹

As discussed in Chapter Two, Bagamoyo rose to prominence on account of its proximity to Zanzibar; its flat sandy beach, free of the snarl of mangrove trees and thereby ideal for the beaching of the flat bottomed dhows of the Indian Ocean; and its fertile hinterland which provided an abundance of food. However, over time, as the population of the town expanded and traders returned to Bagamoyo year after year, Bagamoyo became more than just a practically located port; for the porters and traders of the African interior, Bagamoyo developed a reputation as a town of pleasures. The large number of Asian merchants resident there ensured well stocked shops which catered to the visitors' desires and needs while other local residents made a profit in providing accommodation, selling alcohol, playing music, offering transport or selling sex. People in the town developed ties with the peoples from the interior in order to secure their business for years to come. These ties kept the trade of the interior flowing through Bagamoyo instead of the Germans' new town a little further south.

¹ For a fuller discussion and analysis of this argument, see Steven Fabian, "Curing the Cancer of the Colony: Bagamoyo, Dar es Salaam & Socioeconomic Struggle in German East Africa, 1860s-1907," *International Journal of African Historical Studies*, 40:3 (2007).

This chapter first examines the initial contradictory policy of the German imperial government to seek peace in Bagamoyo. It then shows how German efforts to undermine Bagamoyo further reveal the power of placial attachment along the Swahili coast. At the same time, it will also focus on two social groups in Bagamoyo who have hitherto been often viewed in scholarly literature on Swahili society as transients or outsiders: the Wanyamwezi and the South Asian peoples. Because these two groups do not easily fit the Swahili mold, they have been depicted as being at the fringes of Swahili society or at odds with it.² Yet, as this chapter will demonstrate, a significant part of Bagamoyo's economy was dependent on the Nyamwezi and the South Asian communities invested a great deal in Bagamoyo in terms of property purchase, housing construction, networking, and even acts of community philanthropy. Through use of a placial framework, we can better appreciate how these two social groups fit in amongst other social groups counted amongst the *Wabagamoyo*.

The Contradictory Consciousness³ of the German Crowd

On account of its reputation as the most lucrative port of the German East African coastline, Bagamoyo witnessed the most protracted and intense fighting in the region throughout the 1888-1889 uprising. Aside from the *Wabagamoyo* who sought to protect their traditional interests in the town, both the German East Africa Company and Bushiri

² Middleton (1992), 10-15; Horton and Middleton, 17-23; John Middleton, *African Merchants of the Indian Ocean* (Long Grove, IL: Waveland Press, 2004), 17-25; Prins (1967), Eastman (1971), and Arens (1975) do not include the South Asian communities in their studies of the Swahili. Nicholls (1973), Salim (1973) and Middleton (2004) regard the Indians as actors or immigrants within the "Swahili coast." Glassman, as seen in the previous chapter, views the Nyamwezi as being at odds with Bagamoyo.

³ The phrase is Jonathan Glassman's in reference to the plebian crowds of Swahili society. See *Feasts and Riot*.

desired to make Bagamoyo their headquarters on account of the wealth that the caravan trade brought there. Until the 1880s, European commercial influence in East Africa was restricted largely to Zanzibar. Zanzibar was an international trade emporium: goods from the African interior, extending from present-day Zimbabwe to Uganda and the Congo, were brought to various ports (approximately thirty-four within the future state of Tanzania alone) and then gathered in the warehouses of Indian and Arab merchants in Zanzibar, from where the goods could be purchased by foreign merchants in bulk and redistributed to their home countries. Likewise, all South Asian, Arab, European, and American goods could be gathered in one place and then divided up and distributed throughout the mainland by agents of the Zanzibari Indian and Arab wholesalers. Beginning in 1833, western mercantile interests, led by a Massachusetts firm, preceded the establishment of formal political embassies in this region; in fact, business firms often functioned concurrently as foreign consulates.⁴ These American and European merchant houses were generally not interested in colonization; they used local Indian firms as their “agents and commercial go-betweens” and did not think twice about putting profit above patriotism.⁵

Before the arrival of the German East African Company, other Europeans had attempted to establish direct relations with the mainland, thereby bypassing the middlemen. Such attempts failed. In the mid-1840s, a French businessman by the name of Maizan went to Bagamoyo and, without consulting local merchants or rulers, arranged his own caravan and prepared to go into the interior with the intention of establishing

⁴ Norman Robert Bennett, *The Zanzibar Letters of Edward D. Ropes, Jr. 1882-1892* (Boston: Boston University Press, 1973), 50.

⁵ Koponen, *Development*, 146.

direct links with traders there. A Zaramo leader murdered him.⁶ The British East Africa Company (BEAC) under the leadership of George Mackinnon made the next attempt in the late 1870s. With the assistance of British Consul General John Kirk, Mackinnon negotiated a contract with Sultan Bargash, permitting him to construct a road leading from the half-abandoned town of Dar es Salaam into the interior. The project began in 1879 and was abandoned in 1881.⁷ That same year, another French merchant, Rabaud, attempted to undertake a similar project, except that he planned to build a railway into the interior from Bagamoyo. Due to the machinations of British Consul General John Kirk, the Sultan flatly rejected Rabaud's request for concessions.⁸

At the heart of each of these episodes lay the intention to bypass the merchant middlemen and town notables of Bagamoyo to directly seize the trade of the East African interior. While lack of sufficient resources ensured these initiatives would not succeed, the stubborn refusal to involve the *Wabagamoyo* premeditated their failure. As seen in the previous chapter, the Germans of DOAG encountered the same hostility and resistance as their mercantile predecessors for dismissing the interests of the locals of the coastal towns. To further demonstrate that the uprising of 1888 was in large part a placial phenomenon, one need only compare the experiences of the European administrative takeover in the German and British spheres of interest along the East African coast: why

⁶ C.S. Nichols, *The Swahili Coast: Politics, Diplomacy and Trade on the East African Littoral, 1798-1856* (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1971), 189; email correspondence from Edward A. Alpers, 27/2/2005. It remains doubtful whether the Zaramo leader had actually committed the crime or, if he had, whether he was put up to the task by a second party.

⁷ This episode will be discussed in more detail later in this chapter.

⁸ NA FO 84/1599, Kirk to Principal Secretary of State, 3/3/1881.

did the 1888 uprising not spread to the Sultan's "domains" that were under British administration?

The Imperial British East Africa Company (IBEAC) took over the collection of customs dues in ports along the east coast north of the Uмба River in 1888, a few months before DOAG took over the ports south of the river.⁹ Yet, port communities like Mombasa and Malindi did not explode like Pangani and Bagamoyo. Correspondence from the IBEAC agents demonstrates that, unlike their German counterparts, they paid utmost respect to local interests and authorities. News of the German blunders reached Mombasa, causing some unrest amongst the local population concerning the intentions of the British representatives posted in their town:

I cannot conceal from myself that we found a large and influential number of the community in a very critical frame of mind and that the most delicate care and tact will be necessary for some time to come in framing the minutest details of our working . . . Yesterday I met the Elders of the people in public durbar, and I . . . made it clear that I came to administer the coast posts as a representative of the Sultan and that it was, my desire to place myself in the position of a son to the old and brother to the young.¹⁰

The town notables of Mombasa revealed their placial consciousness in a petition addressed to George Mackenzie, the IBEAC director on the spot:

Mr. Mackenzie is a stranger to this place and does not know what is necessary for our good and harmonious working and unless we inform him of same it is impossible that he can know. We would therefore like him to understand that the people of Mombassa require to be satisfied on (several) points.¹¹

Their list outlined the interests and authorities of the town to be respected by the IBEAC. Mackenzie responded by "distribut(ing) presents liberally amongst all the people in the

⁹ The IBEAC received permission from the Sultan in 1887 to administer the coastal ports north of the Uмба river, but they would not receive permission to do so from the British government until the following year.

¹⁰ SOAS, MacKinnon Papers, Box 63/File 4, Mackenzie to Euan Smith, 18/10/1888.

¹¹ Ibid.

place even the Jemadar, Akida and Soldiers in the fort . . . The Elders and the principal people are friendly, and we rely upon this support I think.”¹² Mackenzie appreciated the presence of a placial community even more than the Sultan: the IBEAC director removed the *liwali*, who had been installed by the Sultan, on account of his Malindi origins and unpopularity among the *Wamombasa*. Sheikh Mbaruk replaced him, “undoubtedly the man of power in these parts . . . His family is a very ancient one and his great Grandfather was the Sultan of the entire Coast Line with this town as their capital from the time of the downfall of the Portuguese Colony.”¹³ Mackenzie’s sensitivity to the community interests of Mombasa definitely contributed to the relative peace maintained there throughout the course of the uprising in the German sphere.

Mackenzie’s example of including the Mombasa sheikhs and elders in administrative matters in town was not lost on Michahelles, the German Consul General to Zanzibar, who believed the uprising would not have occurred if DOAG had been more respectful.¹⁴ He urged Vohsen, the local DOAG Director at Zanzibar, to take heed of the IBEAC’s strategies to win the hearts and minds of the coastal population.¹⁵ Unfortunately, by that point, it was too late for such advice and the German imperial government had to step in and crush the rebel forces with brutal military force. While it took over a decade to fully pacify the entire German colony, Bagamoyo, as the capital of the imperial German government in East Africa from 1889 to 1891, was the first town secured from the rebels. Bagamoyo had to be rid of Bushiri’s presence before the next

¹² SOAS, MacKinnon Papers, Box 63/File 4, Mackenzie to Euan Smith, 29/10/1888.

¹³ SOAS, MacKinnon Papers, Box 63/File 4, Mackenzie to The President and Court of Directors, IBEAC, 1/12/1888.

¹⁴ ZNA, AL2/59/1, Michahelles to Bismarck, 4/10/1888.

¹⁵ ZNA, AL2/89/159, Michahelles to Vohsen, 8/10/1888.

caravan season began.¹⁶ Once this objective was accomplished in May of 1889, Wissmann then informed the Bagamoyo Station Chief to take every measure needed to restore confidence in the trade routes.¹⁷

Caravans that arrived at this time received gifts and good treatment, and were not to be harassed more than was necessary to establish order. Hinterland chiefs received similar treatment.¹⁸ The Germans encouraged the townspeople to return to their shops and *shambas*. This applied above all to the Indian merchant community. In spite of resentment by rival German merchants over the Indians' grip on trade, their presence was nevertheless necessary because of their ties with "the far interior of Africa;" ties which the Germans "[were not] in a position to replace."¹⁹ The townspeople received lands, which had been confiscated from rebel leaders, as freehold plots so they would rebuild their homes. Station Chief Richelmann stated that a dozen "negroes" came to him daily for deeds to property.²⁰ This left the Germans bereft of significant land and property holdings; in fact, the Germans had to rent the very fort that served as their only stronghold in the town.²¹ German government attempts to buy up property were also frustrated because local speculators were buying up land near the fort and selling it to the

¹⁶ BAB, R1001/693, ? to Oswald & Co., Hamburg, 22/10/1888.

¹⁷ Richelmann, *Erlebnisse*, 130.

¹⁸ Ibid, 120, 126, 143.

¹⁹ NA, FO 881/6105, "Extracts from the Report of Discussion in the Reichstag on the Foreign Office Estimates, commencing February 3, 1891" Enclosure to 6/2/1891, Trench to Marquis of Salisbury.

²⁰ Richelmann, *Erlebnisse*, 138.

²¹ At \$550 per year. BAB, R1001/369, Schmidt to von Soden, 8/6/1891; ZNA, AL2/89, Vohsen to Michahelles, 28/7/1888; BAB, R1001/369, von Soden to von Caprivi, 24/9/1891.

Germans for extortionate prices.²² The Germans even spared the life of Salim bin Abdallah, the *jumbe* who was considered the “soul” of the uprising in Bagamoyo, and allowed him to keep his lands.²³

Wissmann’s policies had favorable results: in September of 1889, a Sukuma caravan from the southern edge of Lake Victoria under the leadership of Telekesa arrived in Bagamoyo, bringing no fewer than 3500 people carrying 400 tusks of ivory and driving approximately 2500 cattle, 2500 sheep and goats, and 50 to 60 donkeys.²⁴ Richelmann, the Bagamoyo Station Chief, quickly learned that he could neither requisition this massive herd of cattle, nor buy the lot wholesale. As Telekesa explained to him, each man in his caravan was his own master and, if Richelmann wanted to purchase some cattle, he would have to bargain with each individual owner. The Wasukuma’s refusal to accept payment in rupees made the situation more complicated – they wanted goods: cloth (*kaniki*, *amerikani*), weapons, ammunition, iron, copper wire, etc. Furthermore, Richelmann knew he had to conduct such transactions quickly before interested buyers in Zanzibar arrived in Bagamoyo and drove prices up.²⁵

²² ZNA, AA1/68, Steifensand to Portal, 10/10/1889. This phenomenon occurred at each station.

²³ BAB, R1001/693, Admiral Deinhard to Chief Admiral, 3/11/1888; Tanzania National Archive (TNA), G32/15, Leue to ?, 16/2/1894. An explanation for this decision is not provided in the documents, but, given the same treatment accorded Bwana Heri in Saadani, sparing Abdallah can most likely be attributed to keeping the peace in the town on account of his popular reputation within the community.

²⁴ Brown doubts the size of this caravan, but new evidence corroborates the numbers. Richelmann, *Erlebnisse*, 121; ZNA, AA1/63, Portal to Foreign Office, 9/9/1889; H.F. Behr, *Kriegsbilder aus dem Araberaufstand in Deutsch-Ostafrika* (Leipzig: F.A. Brockhaus, 1891), 138. It was reported that Telekesa came to the coast every two years bringing a massive herd of cattle and a caravan made up of thousands of people. Schweinitz, 201.

²⁵ Richelmann, *Erlebnisse*, 136-137.

Richelmann's brief time as station chief exemplified the Germans' carrot approach in subduing the town. In his memoir about his service in Bagamoyo, he stated that his mission was to create stability there:

In relatively short time, it occurred to all of us everywhere to establish friendly relations with the native population . . . The correct way to handle these people, however, had first to be learned. In order to achieve this, one could not sit atop a high horse and demand that the Negro adopt our views; rather it is the opposite: we took the trouble to penetrate the sensibilities of these people, to fit into their way of life, and from this establish how far our demands and innovations could go here.²⁶

He therefore avoided making too many impositions on the local population as he felt they had suffered enough.²⁷ Administering Bagamoyo towards the end of the rebellion was a difficult task, especially in terms of rebuilding the town. Many people had grievances and sought redress. Richelmann's duties included hearing petitions and complaints which he carried out using the indigenous legal system of public hearings known as *shauris*, which applied restorative justice. He surrounded himself with the town notables upon whom he could refer to for insight and advice in various cases.²⁸ He commented that there were days when he wished he could have escaped Bagamoyo on account of there being so many people who came to complain over petty grievances; it was a "true test of patience." Nonetheless, Richelmann recognized that it would have been utterly wrong if he had behaved brusquely; he wanted everyone to know that they had an open ear in him.²⁹ Richelmann also became the *de facto* urban planner for the reconstruction of the town of which three quarters had been destroyed over the course of the uprising. As mentioned above, the townspeople could apply for freehold plots of land, each 150

²⁶ Richelmann, *Erlebnisse*, 154.

²⁷ Ibid, 143-144.

²⁸ Ibid, 155-156.

²⁹ Ibid, 135.

square meters in size,³⁰ from Richelmann and then build themselves homes along the streets laid out by Richelmann and his associates. Despite the very linear street plan, the *Wabagamoyo* built their houses according to their own traditional principles which deviated from the Germans' straight lines. There had been nobody to supervise the construction of the new homes and so their façades did not line up as the Germans desired. Yet Richelmann did not tell the inhabitants to tear down their buildings and start over; instead, he revised the street plans accordingly to what the locals had initiated.³¹

The Germans left intact the buildings that they took over for their own use, such as the *liwali*'s residence and the nearby so-called Ratu House, although they built additions for the sake of defense. The buildings the Germans constructed for their own use and for local administration (warehouses, homes, officers' mess, caravanserai) were built using local materials. This meant coral rag, mangrove beams, and limewash, and that their buildings would have to be replastered and touched up every few years, just like any other stone house in Bagmoyo. They also used a local architectural style, inspired by the designs of Bagamoyo's stone houses: square or rectangular shape, two-storied, arabesque windows, exterior staircases,³² carved doors, elaborately designed wooden balconies, and stone barazas on the street. Some European elements were incorporated, particularly a Bavarian motif using exposed crossbeams in the façade, such as found on the beachfront house of the local agent of the German East Africa Company and, later, on the twin towers of the Customs House.³³ While the German administrative buildings may

³⁰ TNA, G8/874, Eschke to von Soden, 2/6/1892.

³¹ Richelmann, 139.

³² The Germans referred to these as "Feuertreppen" or "fire escapes".

³³ Neither of these features remain today, the former building having been destroyed in WWI and the Customs towers having either been torn down or decayed at some unknown

have been of massive size to impress a sense of German power and authority upon the locals, the buildings nevertheless fit in well with the indigenous environment.

Conscious of all the compromises he was making, Richelmann did introduce a few “stick” measures. These, however, never approached the extremes employed by the agents of the German East African Company the year before. Most were for security measures; for example, he ordered porters, upon their arrival in Bagamoyo, to leave their weapons in a house guarded by soldiers of the German army. The most obnoxious decree Richelmann promulgated was that every town inhabitant had to greet and salute any European who passed by, regardless of how busy the local may be at that time. Richelmann himself knew the order was petty, but he deemed it necessary to establish order and authority. He never intended that the order should last long and quickly discovered that it became even a nuisance for the Germans who had to reply back, “*jambo, jambo,*” to every person who saluted them. The *Zanzibar Gazette* reported that this order resulted in an air of oppression over the town. Tom von Prince later disagreed with this observation since there were so few Europeans present, the majority having gone off to continue suppressing the rebellion in other parts of the colony. Helena van Borcke, stationed as a nurse in Bagamoyo at the same time, agreed that the dictatorial nature of the decree was blown out of proportion by the British press in Zanzibar since greetings were an integral part of life in Bagamoyo and elsewhere on the coast and islands. The military salute, she mentioned, was comical when delivered by the children and women of the town, especially the former who were quick to mock the Germans.

point. Both were captured in photographs in Jane L. Parpart and Marianne Rostgaard, eds., *The Practical Imperialist: The Letters of Christian Lautherborn* (Brill, 2005); Photograph Archives of the Holy Ghost Fathers, 30 Rue Lhomand, Paris, France.

The locals, among whom protracted greetings were the norm, quickly appropriated the mandatory greeting, thus forcing the Germans, as Richelmann noted in annoyance, to stop and reciprocate instead of walking onwards as was the European custom.³⁴

Yet, for the most part, the Germans were inclined to keep the peace in Bagamoyo. After the uprising, when plans were made to erect a war memorial in Bagamoyo to the Germans who were killed between 1888 and 1890, there was discussion as to where to place the monument. Interestingly, the Germans rejected the proposal to put the cenotaph in the heart of the town, close to the marketplace; instead, they opted to place it in front of the future site of the new administration building, outside of the town center, also referred to as the "European quarter."³⁵ While no explicit justification for this decision has yet to be found, it could be plausibly argued that such a memorial to the German dead might serve as a provocation to the townspeople if placed in their midst.

The Germans were very reluctant to introduce two significant policies in Bagamoyo: the collection of a hut tax and the wholesale abolition of slavery. The former was not considered until 1891 after the German imperial government took over the administration of German East Africa from the German East Africa Company. The governor sent around a circular to the various stations asking the district chiefs for their opinions and advice about how much tax to charge, how to collect it, and how to enforce it. The district chief of Bagamoyo, Schmidt, advised Governor von Soden that the many people who lived in *makuti* houses would not be able to afford to pay a tax; as for the

³⁴ Richelmann, *Erlebnisse*, 146-147; *Zanzibar Gazette*, 1890; Tom von Prince, *Gegen Araber und Wahehe: Erinerrungen aus meiner ostafrikanischen Leutnantzeit, 1890-1895* (Berlin: Ernst Siegfried Mittler und Sohn, 1914), 1; Helena von Borcke, *Ostafrikanische Erinerrungen einer freiwilligen Krankenpflegerin* (Berlin: Buchhandlung der Deutschen Lehrer-Zeitung, 1891), 41.

³⁵ TNA, G32/3, n.n., 30/6/1892; TNA, G32/3, von Soden to Leue, 13/12/1894.

wealthier inhabitants of the town, they already paid business taxes, dhow licenses, and customs duties. Schmidt concluded that if they introduced a new tax, it would cause unrest in Bagamoyo.³⁶ Consequently the governor shelved the hut tax until 1894. When the idea was proposed again that year, the Bagamoyo district chief, among others, advised the government that it was still not a practical time to introduce the tax because most people would not be able to afford it and, furthermore, people would look upon it as oppression and would react accordingly. There had also recently been a plague of locusts and the amount of rainfall thus far was insufficient to guarantee a good agricultural yield. The advice was taken and the tax shelved yet again. The tax was finally introduced in 1897, but it was not until 1898 when district chiefs were able to collect hut taxes with any real success.³⁷

To help lend some kind of legitimacy to the hut and house tax, the German administration in Bagamoyo formed a five man tax assessors' committee out of locals: the *liwali* of Bagamoyo (Sheikh Amer), an Indian merchant (Banda Remtallah); a

³⁶ TNA, G3/51, Governor Soden to Bezirksämter in Tanga, Bagamoyo, Dar es Salaam, Kilwa and Lindi, 4/7/1891; TNA, G3/51, Schmidt to Soden, 21/7/1891.

³⁷ TNA, G3/43, Runderlass, 22/5/1894; TNA, G3/43, Verordnung betreffend Erhebung einer Häuserssteuer, 22/5/1894; TNA, G3/43, Bagamoyo Bezirksamtman to Gouvernement in Dar es Salaam, 6/7/1894; TNA, G3/43, Gouvernement to All Bezirksämter, 4/1/1895; TNA, G3/43, Verordnung betreffend die Erhebung einer Häuser und Hüttensteuer, 1/11/1897; TNA, G3/43, Leue to Liebert, 17/12/1897; TNA, G3/43/163, 225, & 288, Häuser und Hüttensteuereinkommen 1898-1899. It is also noteworthy that when the German imperial administration was considering instituting dhow anchorage fees and import and export duties on ivory and other trade goods, they consulted the leading local merchants as to whether they would find a charge of 1.5% on goods acceptable. They agreed so long as the duty was charged equally throughout the colony and applicable to everyone, regardless of caste, creed or colour. They rejected the administration's plan to tax dhows each time they anchored in Bagamoyo in favour for an annual anchorage fee which was easier to administer. TNA, G3/51, 88 Indians of Bagamoyo to Scherner, 12/7/1891; TNA, G3/50, Bagamoyo Indian Community to von Soden, 19/9/1891; TNA, G3/50, Scherner to von Soden, 26/9/1891.

Baluchi from Kaole (Abdallah Sabah); and two Shihiris (Said bin Achmed and Said Basakh). After taxes were assessed, the tax lists were publicly posted and the taxpayers allowed four weeks to examine them and lodge complaints.³⁸ The introduction of the tax in Bagamoyo incited widespread resentment amongst all the townspeople. A crowd of some two thousand “Swahili women” converged upon the district office building to find out why they had to pay taxes on homes that they owned. According to District Officer August Leue, the women left peacefully after he explained to them in a “friendly” manner what the purpose of the tax was.³⁹ Arabs, Indians and Europeans alike also lodged complaint after complaint about homes being taxed too highly or unfairly taxed since they did not live in these houses even if they owned them.⁴⁰ The director of the German East Africa Company station in Bagamoyo, Herr Schuller, even combined two of his homes into one to avoid paying taxes on two separate buildings.⁴¹ Two years after the tax’s inception, the colony’s newspaper noted that locals passively resisted taxation collection, particularly the Indian merchants.⁴²

Slavery was the other issue the Germans were reluctant to handle. While they were openly and actively against the capture of raw slaves and their export overseas, the Germans turned a blind eye towards domestic slavery which they described as a benign

³⁸ TNA, G3/46, Leue to Gouvernement, 4/10/1898.

³⁹ TNA, G3/46, Leue to Gouvernement, 4/10/1898.

⁴⁰ TNA, G3/46, Leue to Gouvernement, 30/3/1899; TNA, G3/46, Mera Paru to Bezirksamt Bagamoyo, 18/6/1900; Salim bin Saad to Bezirksamt Bagamoyo, 20/6/1900; Daramsi Haschim to Bezirksamt Bagamoyo, 1/7/1900.

⁴¹ TNA, G3/46, Schuller to Liebert, 29/4/1899; TNA, G3/46, Gaertner to Liebert, 10/5/1899; TNA, G3/46, Gaertner to Liebert, 15/6/1899; TNA, G3/46, Liebert to Schuller, 23/6/1899. This building was then leased to a Greek named Tsavalos who ran a guest house out of it. The house is still standing in Bagamoyo today and is owned by a Canadian doctor who had spent time working at the Bagamoyo hospital.

⁴² *DOAZ*, I/12, 20/5/1899.

form of servitude.⁴³ Richelmann claimed that slavery was the worst local institution that he had to come to terms with; yet, wholesale abolition of slavery in Bagamoyo was out of the question since he believed the slave-owning classes would have rebelled which was exactly what he was trying to avoid.⁴⁴ Deutsch's study on slavery in German East Africa soundly demonstrates that this attitude characterised much of the German administration in the colony.⁴⁵ Only when cases of slave abuse were brought before the district chief did slaves receive their emancipation as a form of punishment to the masters.

German fear of renewed revolt over the issue of abolition became apparent towards the end of the cool, dry season known as *kipupwe*. On August 1, 1890, Sultan Ali of Zanzibar, under pressure by the British Consul-General, Euan Smith, issued an abolition decree, prohibiting anyone in the Sultan's domains to "exchange, (sell), or purchase . . . slaves, domestic or otherwise."⁴⁶ The response of the local slave-owning class at Zanzibar was volatile. A deputation of Arab notables went to the Sultan and chastised him for the decree, demanding that it be pushed back by several years so that they could better prepare themselves, or that the Sultan compensate them for the loss of property. A group of twenty armed Comoroan men also tore down a copy of the decree posted at the Customs House and news that the town was in revolt spread like wildfire, prompting the merchant class to close their shops. There were rumours that Sultan Ali and Consul-General Euan Smith were to be assassinated as well as the threat that the

⁴³ NA, FO 881/6617, Mr. A. Hardinge to the Earl of Kimberley, 23/8/1894; BAB, R1004/97, "Bericht des Bezirksamts Bagamoyo", Leue, 14/9/1897; BAB, R7382/27, "Berichte der einzelnen Verwaltungsstellen in Deutsch Ostafrika ueber die Sklaverei", Bezirksamts Bagamoyo, Bezirksamtmann Sigl, n.d. [1898].

⁴⁴ Richelmann, *Erlebnisse*, 154.

⁴⁵ Jan-Georg Deutsch, *Emancipation Without Abolition: Slavery in German East Africa* (James Currey, 2006).

⁴⁶ ZNA, AA1/75, Colonel Euan Smith to the Marquis of Salisbury, 1/8/1890.

Arab population would move to the German coastline where the decree had not yet been posted. The situation was serious enough to prompt German Consul-General Michahelles to order two German warships to remain in the harbour in case of emergency. The backlash prompted the Sultan to issue a new decree on August 9th which softened the excesses of the original, namely in terms of punishment to be meted out to those who violated the decree.⁴⁷

The promulgation of the decree not only infuriated the Germans, but also angered the IBEAC which was responsible for administering the coastline north of the Uмба River. The director of the company, Sir Francis de Winton, sent a scathing letter to Euan Smith whom he accused of undoing years of careful work in building ties between the company agents and the local populations:

I may remind you that there are Decrees and Decrees, and, to use your own simile: While a child may make wry faces at a dose of medicine, I would add that a man will fight and struggle to the death if he thinks you are administering him a dose of poison . . . Since the issue of the Decree a marked change has exhibited itself, and for that change the issue of the Decree must be responsible, and not the Company . . . I may remind you that some two years ago the Company commenced operations on the East Coast; it strove at the outset, by conciliation, to lay down, as the lines of its government, peace and good-will; until very recently it had no regular armed force; it impressed the natives solely by its exhibition of kindness, of justice, of respect to their institutions; and I think you will admit it had gained their good-will, had promoted civilization, encouraged trade and commerce, and was proceeding on a path of progress in marked contrast to other operations in this part of Africa.⁴⁸

While Winton obeyed the consul and had the decrees posted in Mombasa, Malindi, Lamu and Takaungu, he nonetheless instructed the local agents to post only the Arabic versions to deflect animosity away from the British and to reassure the notables of each town “that

⁴⁷ ZNA, AL2/47/1, Michahelles to Caprivi, 4/8/1890; NA, FO 881/6105, Euan Smith to Marquis of Salisbury, 14/8/1890; ZNA, AA1/76, Euan Smith to Marquis of Salisbury, 14/8/1890; ZNA, AL2/47/1, Michahelles to Caprivi, 16/8/1890.

⁴⁸ NA, FO 881/6105, Sir F. de Winton to Euan Smith, 14/8/1890.

the Company are desirous to preserve their status quo as it now exists under the Proclamation, and while they have to carry out the orders of the Sultan, the Company will be just to all in future, as it has been in the past.”⁴⁹

The Germans were equally disgruntled about the decree. The correspondence between the German Consul-General to Zanzibar, the Imperial Commissioner of German East Africa, and the German Foreign Office reveal their sense of caution towards the local population. They did not want to upset them again, and maintaining the peace was contingent with ensuring that trade and prosperity returned quickly to the colony.⁵⁰ The Foreign Office agreed and informed Commissioner Schmidt “to calm the slave owners [by informing them that] we do not intend by our anti-slavery measures to interfere with current relationships.”⁵¹ The incident which followed this directive became an international scandal; the setting was Bagamoyo.

On September 6th, 1890 the following proclamation was posted in Bagamoyo:

Be it known to all that we give permission to everybody who has got land in Bagamoyo and Shenzi (three or four days' march around Bagamoyo) to recover and retain their slaves, and everybody who possesses slaves has permission to sell his slaves to the people of Bagamoyo, but it is forbidden to ship the slaves by sea. We desire that the shamba owners should begin working their shambas without delay, because it will be good for the people and the town.⁵²

What came to be called the Bagamoyo Proclamation was brought to the attention of the Euan Smith, on September 10th by “European gentlemen” resident in Bagamoyo. After confirming that the proclamation was indeed real and had been affixed publicly in town,

⁴⁹ NA, FO 881/6105, Sir F. Winton to Mr. Simons, 5/8/1890.

⁵⁰ ZNA, AL2/47/1, Michahelles to Caprivi, 2/8/1890; ZNA, AL2/47/2, Schmidt (Acting Imperial Commissioner) to Caprivi, 2/8/1890.

⁵¹ ZNA, AL2/48/1, Rettig (Auswärtige Amt Kolonial Abteilung In Vertretung) to Schmidt, 29/8/1890.

⁵² NA, FO 881/6123, Inclosure 2 in No. 30, Translation, Colonel Euan Smith to the Marquis of Salisbury, 15/9/1890.

Euan Smith began a flurry of correspondence with German officials expressing his disappointment and surprise while a report was leaked to *The Times of London*.⁵³ News had also reached Sultan Ali of Zanzibar who wrote a letter to both Chancellor Bismarck and Queen Victoria complaining of European disrespect towards his authority.⁵⁴

While the Germans initially denied everything, they later admitted that the proclamation had been concocted by the new *liwali*, Suliman bin Nassor, yet had not been officially sanctioned by the German administration; that a draft of the proclamation written by Suliman had been proofread then filed away, but never affixed to any public walls, particularly those occupied by the Germans.⁵⁵ Suliman bin Nassor confessed that he did write a draft of a proclamation informing local residents to ignore the Sultan's decree and that he submitted this to the district chief for consideration. The Germans were well aware of Suliman's grounds for the document: during the 1888 uprising, most of the local *watumwa* had fled their masters, most likely on account of the great degree of insecurity in the town and environs once Ismael and Bushiri's forces had arrived and begun kidnapping locals to sell into slavery. Suliman reported that, since the town's labour force had deserted, locals could not produce enough food to support the town and

⁵³ NA, FO 881/6123, Euan Smith to Salisbury, 15/9/1890; ZNA, AA1/75, Extract from the *Reichsanzeiger*, 18/9/1890; ZNA, AL2/47/2, Michahelles to Caprivi, 1/10/1890.

⁵⁴ NA, FO 881/6105, Sir H. Ponsonby to Marquis of Salisbury, 15/9/1890.

⁵⁵ ZNA, AA1/75, Le Poer Trench to Marquis of Salisbury, 17/9/1890; ZNA, AL2/47/1, Schmidt to Michahelles, 18/9/1890; NA, FO 881/6105, 19/9/1890, Euan Smith to Marquis; ZNA, AC19/1, Michahelles to Euan Smith, 18/9/1890; NA, FO 881/6105, Mr Trench to Marquis of Salisbury, 19/9/1890.

the large numbers of upcountry porters, forcing the townspeople to import supplies from Zanzibar.⁵⁶

Nowhere else in 1890, in the occupied towns of German East Africa, was a similar proclamation posted. Indeed, later estimates of the number of slaves in each of the colony's districts reveal the relatively lower number of slaves who resided in Bagamoyo compared to elsewhere.⁵⁷ The inability of the slave-owning *Wabagamoyo* to protect their slaves from the predations of community outsiders during the course of the uprising led to the large-scale flight of that class of *Wabagamoyo* from the town. The Germans, who had been trying to revitalize the economy of Bagamoyo for over a year, knew full well Sultan Ali's anti-slavery decree would seriously undermine their efforts. Not only did Bagamoyo need slave labour to replant the fields laid waste two years previously, but also the last thing the Germans wanted was to fuel any further animosity between themselves and the slave-owning *Wabagamoyo* whom they were trying to appease. Unclear as the details of this incident may be, they nonetheless reflect a unique, placial response to a decree which was in effect for much of eastern Africa.

Due to the international publicized scandal that developed, the Germans were quick to denounce the proclamation; however, they abstained from posting copies of

⁵⁶ ZNA, AL2/48/1, Statement of Wali Soliman ben Nassur, 21/9/1890. See also NA, FO 881/6123, Euan Smith to Salisbury, 29/9/1890; ZNA, AL2/47/2, Michahelles to Caprivi, 1/10/1890.

⁵⁷ There were approximately 2000 slaves recorded residing in Bagamoyo in 1897 and again in 1918. There were twice that number in Dar es Salaam, the capital of the colony since 1891. BAB, R1004/97, "Bericht des Bezirksamts Bagamoyo," Leue, 14/9/1897; BAB, R7382/27, "Berichte der einzelnen Verwaltungsstellen in Deutsch Ostafrika ueber die Sklaverei", Bezirksamt Bagamoyo, Bezirksamtman Sigl, n.d. [1898]; NA, CO 691/29, A.C. Hollis to Administration, 20/12/1918.

Sultan Ali's anti-slavery decree, and carrying out its measures, in the German colony.⁵⁸ In fact, it was only in 1906 that *enslavement* was actually outlawed under German East African law.⁵⁹ Yet the institution of slavery continued – by the time the British assumed control over the German colony after World War I, they estimated that there were still approximately 120,000 slaves in the territory.⁶⁰ And, like the Germans before them, the British were reluctant to emancipate them all at the risk of alienating the slaveowning class, not to mention that the British were not in a position to compensate all the owners, nor did they have the personnel to ensure the process was fully carried out.⁶¹

What all this behaviour amounted to – the fair treatment of the upcountry caravan porters, the return of seized lands to the townspeople, the presentation of gifts to hinterland leaders, the inclusion of Bagamoyo community leaders in matters of judicial and economic issues, the tact displayed in the reconstruction of the town and the placement of a war memorial, the reluctance to institute a house tax for several years, the tacit support of the local slave trade – was the restoration of confidence in the old trade routes and in Bagamoyo as the preeminent trading entrepot of the Mrima. Yet, while achieving the resumption of former trading patterns, the imperial German government failed to take any greater share in the profits to be had than DOAG before them. Any aggressive grab at Bagamoyo and the central caravan routes would have caused the trade to be diverted elsewhere where terms would have been more to the advantage of those who controlled the trade: the upcountry porters, the Indian financiers, and the Swahili

⁵⁸ NA, FO 881/6617, Mr. A. Hardinge to the Earl of Kimberley, 23/8/1894.

⁵⁹ Deutsch, *Emancipation Without Abolition*, 168.

⁶⁰ NA, CO 691/29, Circular on Slavery in GEA, no name, 8/2/1919.

⁶¹ NA, CO 691/4, Byatt to Principal Secretary of State for the Colonies, 12/2/1917; NA, CO 691/29, A.C. Hollis to Administration, 20/12/1918.

and Arab caravan leaders. To restore trade, the imperial German government had to let things be in Bagamoyo much as they had been before their arrival, but this meant the lion's share of the profit remained in non-German hands. How then were they to solve this catch-22? Their action in 1891 of developing the relatively insignificant town of Dar es Salaam into their administrative capital points to their solution.

A Tale of Two Towns⁶²

Sultan Majid of Zanzibar made the first attempt to divert Bagamoyo's flourishing caravan trade into his control when he established Dar es Salaam in the mid-1860s. The Zanzibari Sultanate abandoned Dar es Salaam in 1870, but the British East African Company tried its hand at making the port prosper between 1879 and 1881. When the Society for German Colonization arrived on the scene in 1884, Dar es Salaam had once more lapsed into ruin. The only benefit Dar es Salaam offered was its harbour, which was deeper and better sheltered than Bagamoyo's.⁶³

Examining Bagamoyo and Dar es Salaam from the 1860s to 1907, I argue that the German choice of the latter as a site for their colonial capital was not just a move to its superior port, but also a move away from the trading community of Bagamoyo. As demonstrated above, the German imperialists were not willing to coercively wrest trade from this established community. To restore confidence in the town and region, the Germans had to demonstrate that the interests of the *Wabagamoyo* would be respected. As will be demonstrated below, the townspeople of Bagamoyo had firmly established

⁶² The following four subsections are drawn from Fabian, "Curing the Cancer."

⁶³ Health was another advantage cited for developing Dar over Bagamoyo as the European city; however, this is specious reasoning – Europeans and locals died in both towns on account of diseases and climate.

socioeconomic ties with interior traders like the Wanyamwezi and Wasukuma. African porters held the monopoly over transport, either selling their labour independently or being contracted by local Indian and Arab merchant houses. These factors, I argue, motivated the Germans to move their capital away from Bagamoyo in an effort to outmaneuver its established political and economic power – a tactic already attempted by the Sultanate of Zanzibar and the British.⁶⁴ Dar es Salaam's sheltered harbour may have offered better protection than Bagamoyo's open roadstead for the navy of the German empire, but this does not sufficiently explain why the government shied away from imposing a more direct grip over the pearl of its East African colony.

The Germans were not the first to appreciate the economic importance of Bagamoyo. Attempts to undermine and outmaneuver the town had occurred at least twice in the twenty years preceding the first German efforts to take control in the mid-1880s. As noted in chapter two, Sultan Seyyid bin Said of Oman (1804-1856) moved his administration to Zanzibar from Muscat in the 1830s to strengthen his influence over trade in eastern Africa and to take advantage of the increasing demand for ivory, slaves and spices.⁶⁵ He encouraged commerce by promoting the migration of Indians to Zanzibar and the mainland opposite, and by establishing treaties with foreign nations and merchant companies. Bagamoyo emerged as the leading export town for ivory and copal on account of the large number of trading caravans which arrived there from the interior.

⁶⁴ Felix Chami suggests that the Germans may have been motivated to move their administrative seat to Dar es Salaam on account of their inability to control the town after unrest supposedly broke out following the hanging of local rebel leaders in 1889. There is no evidence to support this claim. Felix Chami, et al., *Historical Archaeology of Bagamoyo Excavations at the Caravanserai* (Dar es Salaam: Dar es Salaam University Press, 2004), 15-16, 21.

⁶⁵ Abdul Sheriff, *Slaves, Spices and Ivory in Zanzibar* (Oxford: James Currey, 1987).

Furthermore, a sizable number of Indian merchants had settled in Bagamoyo by 1866, occupying around twenty “rather lovely homes” in town, in order to conduct business with peoples from the interior.⁶⁶

In 1866, Sultan Said’s successor, Majid (1856-1870), chose to make Dar es Salaam the new administrative capital of the Zanzibari Sultanate:

There, the Sultan could with great ease extend his authority over the continent, making himself recognized by the tribes of the interior, steering the caravans coming from the lakes to this point, attracting to this port the European navy boats as well as the dhows from Madagascar and Arabia and India, to strengthen himself if need be; to be, in a word, there; to be more secure than on the island of Zanzibar . . .⁶⁷

Dar es Salaam did not offer much beyond a sheltered harbour, and even then, only boats powered by steam could navigate the narrow entrance with any sense of ease. In fact, the Sultan had to order a tugboat from Hamburg to assist boats entering the channel.⁶⁸

Both the Indian and Arab communities of Zanzibar and Bagamoyo were reluctant, if not hostile, to settling in the Sultan’s new town. The Indians complained that it was unhealthy, while the Arabs feared their slaves would flee the first chance they could get – during Sultan Majid’s visit to the site, forty of his slaves did just that. Majid seemed incapable of attracting enough people to stay and develop his new town. He offered

⁶⁶ Horner, *Voyage*, p. 80.

⁶⁷ AStEsp, 2K1. 1b7; LeRoy; 17/4/1886; Zanzibar National Archive (ZNA), AA3/26, 10/11/1866, Edwin Seward (Acting Consul Zanzibar) to Gonne (Secretary to Government, Bombay).

⁶⁸ ZNA, AA3/26, 10/11/1866, Edwin Seward (Acting Consul Zanzibar) to Gonne (Secretary to Government, Bombay). See also Victor Giraud, *Les Lacs de L’Afrique Equatoriale: Voyage d’Exploration Exécuté de 1883 à 1885* (Paris: Librairie Hachette et Cie., 1890), 40; NA, FO 881/6338, Major Levenson to Salisbury, 17/9/1891.

freehold plots to anyone who would develop the land agriculturally, but people preferred Bagamoyo.⁶⁹

It is worth pausing here to explore Majid's motivation to develop Dar es Salaam. As mentioned above, Majid lacked a firm hold over the mainland directly across from Zanzibar. The argument that Dar es Salaam's superior harbour swayed the Sultan's opinion to choose it as the site with which to take over the mainland does not hold.⁷⁰ The majority of ships that plied the waters of the East African coastline were dhows, or sailing craft, which had difficulty navigating the entrance to the harbour of Dar es Salaam on account of currents and swells. Bagamoyo's beach – an open roadstead – is protected by coral reefs and sandbanks, whereas the entrance to Dar es Salaam's sheltered harbour is not. Dhows had a longer journey between Zanzibar and Dar es Salaam in comparison to the shorter trip between Bagamoyo and Zanzibar.⁷¹ Sultan Majid's successor, Bargash, himself admitted "[i]t is true [that] Dar es Salaam is, at present, of no consequence because very few sailing vessels tuch [sic] it on account of the continuous high winds which prevailes [sic] there and all who wish to land on these shores choose to land in Baj-Moyo [Bagamoyo] which is the best port we have at present."⁷²

What would appear to be Dar es Salaam's advantage then was its close proximity to Bagamoyo, it being about a three day march southwards, or a day and a half sail by dhow. As examined in Chapter Two, Majid had minimal influence over Bagamoyo.

⁶⁹ Franck Raimbault, *L'Evolution de L'Espace Peri-Urbain à Dar es Salaam Durant la Colonisation Allemande (1890-1914)* (Unpublished paper), 18.

⁷⁰ Gillmann, *Dar*, 2.

⁷¹ SOAS, MacKinnon Papers, Box 22/File 88, Kirk to MacKinnon, 3/5/1879.

⁷² SOAS, MacKinnon Papers, Box 77/File 61, Sultan Bargash bin Saeed to MacKinnon, 3/5/1879. See also SOAS, MacKinnon Papers, Box 77/File 61, Kirk to Gerald Waller, 1/5/1879.

Sutton writes “there were well-established local interests at Bagamoyo represented by the Shomvi *diwan*, as well as the surrounding Zaramo and their *pazi*, who would resist direct control by the Sultan.”⁷³ Brown elaborates, demonstrating how the *madiwani* and *mapazi*, the owners of the land in and around Bagamoyo, extracted fees from porters and merchants alike. “Dar es Salaam, by contrast,” Sutton continues, ‘was to be the Sultan’s own city;’ in other words, profit would not be eaten away by local rulers.⁷⁴ Therefore, instead of waging a risky and costly war with Bagamoyo, it appeared plausible that Majid might actually succeed in luring traders away from Bagamoyo to his new town.⁷⁵ Majid chose Dar es Salaam as his new administrative headquarter because, if he was to capture a greater share of the coastal trade, he would have to undermine the longer standing socioeconomic relations of Bagamoyo and the interior by building his own.

The Ties That Bind: Upcountry Porters and Bagamoyo Town

Let us examine the socioeconomic ties that prevailed in Bagamoyo. Over the thirty years prior to 1866, an increasing number of merchants had moved themselves or agents to this coastal port, establishing bonds between themselves, the local townspeople, and African traders from the interior. The merchants, predominantly Indian but not exclusively so, bankrolled enterprising Arab or Swahili businessmen who wished to lead caravans into the interior to acquire ivory and other goods. Indian and Arab traders had also been establishing themselves at key resting points along the central caravan routes in the interior since the 1820s, assisting in the founding of such important towns as Tabora

⁷³ J.E.G. Sutton, “Dar es Salaam: A Sketch of a Hundred Years” *Tanzanian Notes and Records*, 71 (1970), 4.

⁷⁴ Sutton, “Dar es Salaam”, 4.

⁷⁵ AStEsp, 2K1.1b7; LeRoy; 17/4/1886.

in Unyamwezi and Ujiji on Lake Tanganyika. "These coastal men' writes Norman R. Bennett, 'were without any significant control from the authorities in Zanzibar [and] . . . direction for settling disputes and other problems gravitated into the hands of leaders accepted by the consent of the trading community.'" ⁷⁶ As Rockell demonstrates, caravans were not organized solely by the coastal merchants. ⁷⁷ The Wanyamwezi also organized caravans to the coast. One German observer noted in the early 1890s that many Wanyamwezi no longer hired themselves out as porters for others; instead they carried their own goods to the coast to trade. ⁷⁸ Coastal town merchants dispatched touts into the interior who lured the caravans to specific places by offering advances for the ivory they carried, or gifts like food and clothing to secure their favour. ⁷⁹ Over time, coastal merchant and interior trader forged bonds, so that eventually "a Nyamwezi [did] not come to the coast unless he [had] a friend in the town, a chief or a young man of the town." ⁸⁰

The friend in Bagamoyo may not necessarily have been a merchant, but someone who knew or worked for a merchant. Upon arriving within a day's march of Bagamoyo, the Nyamwezi caravan leader would dispatch a messenger to his contact to let him know that they were coming soon, and that the friend should find a house in town to rent on

⁷⁶ Norman R. Bennett, "The Arab Impact," in *Zamani: A Survey of East African History*, ed. B.A. Ogot and J.A. Kieran (Nairobi: East African Publishing House, 1968), 221.

⁷⁷ Stephen J. Rockel, *Carriers of Culture: Labour on the Road in Nineteenth Century East Africa* (Portsmouth: Heinemann, 2006).

⁷⁸ Schweinitz, 196.

⁷⁹ Richard Burton, *The Lake Regions of Central Africa* (London: Longman, 1860), 39; NA, FO 84/1454, Kirk to Earl of Derby, 6/9/1876; Rockel, *Carriers*, Ch.3, p.45. Rockel also suggests that touts were dispatched to head off caravans, not only for the opportunity to purchase their ivory and goods first, but also to procure porters to carry goods from the coast into the interior.

⁸⁰ Harries, *Swahili Prose Texts*, 180.

behalf of the caravan leaders and provide them and their porters with refreshments such as *tembo*.⁸¹ This local contact would often act as an intermediary between the Nyamwezi traders and the town merchants, bringing the owners of the ivory to the merchants' shops, or vice-versa, and helping with the negotiations. The purchasing and selling of ivory could take days before both parties would agree on a price. Father Horner remarked on this process during a visit to Bagamoyo in 1866:

Coming from very far away, these blacks carry on their heads and shoulders large quantities of ivory, copal, grain, animal hides, and other articles of trade. All these goods are spread out along the shore of the ocean. While waiting for the sale of their goods, which can take some two months, they stay on the coast to exchange them for cloth or goods from the coast. Nothing is more curious than to witness them barter the price of an elephant tusk. They begin in the morning at 6am, haggle until 6pm, and continue doing so for fifteen days without getting tired and without concluding anything.⁸²

It is also recorded that, when these lengthy transactions took place in a merchant's shop, the merchant served dates and coconuts as refreshments to win the favour of the African ivory traders and keep them in his shop.⁸³ When negotiations took too long, the intermediary would sometimes have to resort to berating both parties, advising the

⁸¹ Ibid. *Tembo* is palm wine. Caravans often numbered in the hundreds, occasionally in the thousands. Merchants did their best to house as many porters as they could in their homes and adjoining courtyards so that the porters would not be lured away from them by their competition. Ultimately, however, a spill-over occurred when there was insufficient housing, and porter camps were set up along the beach of Bagamoyo and in the southern part of town around the Old Fort and Ratu House. There was also another camping site on the western outskirts of the town where the German caravanserai was later completed in 1892. August Leue, "Bagamoyo," in *Beitrage zur Kolonialpolitik und Kolonialwirtschaft*, 2, (1900/1901): 15; G. Richelmann, *Meine Erlebnisse in der Wissmann-Truppe* (Magdeburg: Creut'zsche Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1892).

⁸² Horner, *Voyage*, 133-134. Burton noted that bargaining could take as long as four months for "a lot of 200 tusks". Richard Burton, *The Lake Regions of Central Africa* (London: Longman, 1860), 39.

⁸³ Harries, *Swahili Prose Texts*, 181; Burton, *Lake Regions*, 39.

merchant not to be stingy on his offer since acquiescing to the trader's demands would guarantee the merchant "many tusks from him in the future."⁸⁴

Bagamoyo's merchants catered largely to the desires of the interior porters. Oscar Baumann reported in 1890 that "one can identify the tastes of the Wanyamwezi in the countless Indian shops of Bagamoyo which are laden with many glass beads, wire, and other objects treasured by the Central Africans. Like in Zanzibar, there are little foodstalls erected everywhere . . ."⁸⁵ The town merchants also kept weapons and gunpowder – highly prized among the interior traders – well in stock. It thus makes little sense to view these porters as outsiders to coastal urban communities like Bagamoyo; the economies of these towns revolved around the trade, needs and desires of the upcountry traders. Bagamoyo was not the only coastal town African traders from the interior could go to – Mboamaji, Mzizima, Kunduchi, Saadani, and Pangani, among others, were alternatives. Yet Bagamoyo, by 1870, had the largest number of Asian merchants living along the central stretch of the East African coastline, numbering approximately 191 people living in 76 homes.⁸⁶ Thus, Bagamoyo would have had more to offer in the way of goods, services and ivory buyers.

Although the townspeople showed disdain for the upcountry porters by referring to them as *washenzi*, or barbarians, they still greeted their arrival each season with great ceremony. The *Wabagamoyo* had years of experience in dealing with upcountry porters;

⁸⁴ Harries, *Swahili Prose Texts*, 181.

⁸⁵ Oscar Baumann *In Deutsch-Ostafrika Während des Aufstandes* (Wien: Eduard Hölzel, 1890), 30-31.

⁸⁶ NA, FO 84/1392, Extract From Administration Report of the Zanzibar Agency, 1870. For the coast overall, only Kilwa had more at that time, and then only by about 15. Bagamoyo's Indian population received a further boost after the Anti-Slavery Decree of 1873 closed down Kilwa as a slaving port and prompted a migration of its south Asian inhabitants to Bagamoyo; see ZNA, AA1/19, Holmwood to Kirk, 2/7/1876.

Stanley noted of Bagamoyo in 1871 that “[t]he natives . . . are accustomed to hav[ing] their normally languid and peaceful life invaded and startled by the bustle of foreigners arriving by sea and from the continent.”⁸⁷ The townspeople incorporated the coming of the caravans into their local almanac, with their arrival marking the beginning of a season and their departure marking its end. The Nyamwezi, too, became accustomed to the locals with each passing year. For example, when porters offered their labour for hire, they networked amongst each other and the *Wabagamoyo* to find out which employers were “good or bad, harsh or gentle, and above all whether [they] were *kali* or *taratibu*; that’s to say, whether [they] were hot-tempered or easy-going.”⁸⁸ Such a social networking strategy separated the greenhorns from those Nyamwezi who were familiar with the potential unpleasantnesses of the Bagamoyo community.

Bagamoyo’s reputation grew among the peoples of the interior as a town of relaxation and pleasure. One of the interpretations of its very name is “take the burden off your heart.”⁸⁹ Germans have noted that, for the porters of the interior, Bagamoyo was like a “little Paris” or “El Dorado” of East Africa.⁹⁰ Brown mentions that a visit to Bagamoyo in one’s lifetime was considered a mark of worldliness among interior peoples.⁹¹ The power Bagamoyo held over the hearts of interior Africans is summed up poetically by a former German district chief of the town, who adapted a popular caravan song from Kiswahili:

⁸⁷ Stanley, *Dark Continent*, 55.

⁸⁸ Fischer, 99.

⁸⁹ Brown offers the most thorough discussion of the etymology of “Bagamoyo.” See *A Precolonial History*, Ch. 1.

⁹⁰ Sturtz, *Land und Leute*, 32; Leue, *Bagamoyo*, 11; Eugen Krenzler, *Ein Jahr in Ostafrika* (Ulm: J.Ebner, 1888), 71.

⁹¹ Brown, *Precolonial History*, 1.

Be happy, my soul, surrender all worry
 Soon the place of your desires will be reached:
 The town of palms – Bagamoyo.
 From far away, how my heart was aching
 When I was thinking of you,
 You pearl of the ocean, you place of happiness – Bagamoyo.

There the women wear their hair parted,
 There you can drink palm wine all year round
 In the garden of desires – Bagamoyo.
 The dhows arrive with fluttering sails
 And unload the treasures of Europe
 In the harbour of Bagamoyo.

Oh, what joy to see the dances
 Where the lovely girls sway
 In the evenings in Bagamoyo.
 Be still, my heart, all worries are gone;
 The call to rest thunders out, and with jubilation
 We reach Bagamoyo.⁹²

While the ties between the upcountry porters and Bagamoyo were economically and socially grounded, they were also placial in the sense that, over time, they became more and more familiar with and used to Bagamoyo and its inhabitants. The seasonal journey to Bagamoyo became anticipated among porters and one's personal familiarity with the town became a badge worn proudly back in the interior.

The evidence given above in relation to Sultan Majid's decision to move away from Bagamoyo – his lack of authority over land rights, the longstanding socioeconomic bonds forged between interior trader and coastal merchant, and the great reputation

⁹² Leue, *Bagamoyo*, 11-12 (original German text, with first verse in Kiswahili); Brown, *Bagamoyo*, 6-7 (English translation). Leue admits to translating the original Kiswahili liberally. My version is based on Brown's but with some corrections and word changes. E. Werth also recorded a song about Bagamoyo: "Njoo bana njoo/nikuage, nenda Bagamojo//Kwa heri bibi jangu/na kwenda Bagamojo . . ." (Come here, mister, come here/I must take leave of you and go to Bagamoyo//Farewell, my woman/I go to Bagamoyo). E. Werth, *Das Deutsch-Ostafrikanische Küstenland und die Vorgelagerten Inseln* (Berlin: Dietrich Reimer, 1915), 273. I have yet to come across songs in praise of other coastal towns.

Bagamoyo enjoyed as a town of pleasure and fortune – would later affect German behaviour in moving their administration away from Bagamoyo, too.

Dar es Salaam's fate was tied to Majid. When he died in late 1870, the town did not develop further. Majid had underestimated the tenacity and tastes of the Bagamoyo community. His brother and successor, Bargash (1870-1888), did not share the same enthusiasm over Dar and allowed it to fall into ruin. One oral tradition collected in 1886 has it that, upon visiting Dar es Salaam (most likely in late 1872⁹³), Bargash, after only an hour's visit to the town, "left in such haste, as though pursued by a ghost."⁹⁴ The town at that time would have already begun to take on a forlorn appearance.⁹⁵ Photographs taken in 1879 reveal a large-scale town neatly laid out in a gridlike pattern, yet half-finished. The buildings were no more than roofless skeletal frames while vegetation had overtaken the streets and the interior of the homes. Dar es Salaam was a portrait of desolation.⁹⁶

The Imperial British East Africa Company (IBEAC) was the next force to attempt to develop Dar es Salaam in the late 1870s. Its director, William Mackinnon, came up with the idea to build a large road into the interior from Dar which, he hoped, would entice the upcountry porters to bring their commerce to his company.⁹⁷ Beardale, one of the engineers working on the road (begun in 1879), showed some insight into whether the

⁹³ Bargash toured Dar es Salaam, along with Bagamoyo and Pangani, in the autumn of 1872. ZNA, AA2/11, Kirk to Foreign Secretary, Bombay, 25/10/1872.

⁹⁴ AStEsp, 2K1.1b7; LeRoy; 17/4/1886.

⁹⁵ J. Frederic Elton, *Travels and Researches among the Lakes and Mountains of Eastern and Central Africa* (London: John Murray, 1879), 72-76. Elton noted Dar es Salaam's decay only a year after the Sultan's visit.

⁹⁶ SOAS, MacKinnon Papers, Box 76/File 59, ? to MacKinnon, 14/5/1879.

⁹⁷ SOAS, MacKinnon Papers, Box 22/File 88, Kirk to MacKinnon, 25/5/1879; SOAS, MacKinnon Papers, Box 77/File 61, Kirk to Dawes, 28/4/1879. See also NA, FO 84/1485, Kirk to Earl of Derby, 26/7/1877 for earlier similar sentiments.

expectations placed on the road would be met: "I don't believe much in this route for Unyamwezi and Tanganyika, as by all accounts the Bagamoyo and Saadani roads lead through better country and the routes are better inhabited and consequently food is more easily procured, and they are certainly shorter."⁹⁸ He was correct. Three years after construction on the road had begun, the IBEAC deserted the project and moved north to Mombasa.

Undermining Bagamoyo

When DOAG emerged on the scene in the mid-1880s, a German newspaper remarked that any attempt by the Germans to control Bagamoyo would inevitably cause much friction with local residents given the significant fortunes that could be made there.⁹⁹ Tensions were also getting higher among the European powers resident in Zanzibar over trade influence in the region. As a result, the British, German and French governments established a joint commission in the spring of 1886 to determine the extent of the Sultan of Zanzibar's influence over the East African mainland. The commission approached Father Etienne Baur, who had resided at the French mission at Bagamoyo for over eighteen years, to share his knowledge of this issue. He declined comment, stating it was not his mission's place to get involved in political matters.¹⁰⁰ Yet, in a letter to his superior in Paris, Father Superior de Courmont, who oversaw the Holy Ghost Fathers' activities in East Africa, revealed his anxiety of the developing situation. On account of

⁹⁸ SOAS, MacKinnon Papers, Box 65/File 10, Beardale to Waller, 14/3/1880.

⁹⁹ DKZ, 1885, 382.

¹⁰⁰ This statement is somewhat ridiculous; as seen in chapter three, Father Etienne would get the mission fully involved in local political affairs during the 1888 uprising and thereafter.

the bogus treaties that Peters and his associates had established in the hinterland of Bagamoyo, all of the mission branches, save the two at Bagamoyo and Zanzibar, had fallen under German rule. De Courmont revealed the probable true reason for his reluctance to cooperate with the delimitation commission: the Sultan's claim over Bagamoyo was very questionable. In fact, de Courmont referred to Bagamoyo as the capital of Uzaramo, implying that the Wazaramo people had greater influence over the town than the Sultan.¹⁰¹ Despite Bargash's efforts to strengthen his influence at Bagamoyo over the previous decade, the community remained largely independent of Zanzibari control. If the commission were to discover this truth, then DOAG could establish treaties directly with local rulers and Bagamoyo would fall into their hands as well. The fathers would then have to renegotiate their rights and privileges in the town which, over the past two decades, had been hard won. Their silence seems to have worked: the commission declared a ten mile wide strip of coastland as the Sultan's domain while the interior was divided up between Germany and Britain.¹⁰²

In 1890, DOAG and the German imperial government began negotiations to place DOAG's East African concessions under imperial rule. After the fallout of the 1888 uprising, it was clear DOAG would not be able to control the colony on its own. Both DOAG and the German government agreed that the most challenging task facing them

¹⁰¹ AStEsp, 2K1.6b2, Baur to Le Ministre du Commission de delimitation des Etats du Sultan de Zanzibar, 23/5/1886; AStEsp, 2K1.6b3, 'Rapport à S.E. le Cardinal Prêfct de la S.C. de la Propagande sur les dangers, au point de vue catholique, de l'établissement des Allemands dans l'Afrique Orientale,' de Courmont, 8/6/1886. The branches which fell under DOAG control included Mhonda, 1877; Manderu, 1880; Morogoro, 1882; Tununguo, 1884; and Kondo, 1885.

¹⁰² The Sultan acknowledged Germany's authority over the Peters' concessions in August 1885 after the German naval fleet threatened to bombard the Sultanate buildings in Zanzibar. The British supported this maneuver. See Müller, *Deutschland*, Ch. V.; Koponen, *Development*, 69-85.

was wresting the East African trade from its age-old ties with Zanzibar facilitated through Bagamoyo. Closely linked to their plan of establishing new harbours on the mainland was the plan to divert the trade from the older ports of Kilwa, Bagamoyo, and Pangani which the Germans knew were far more important in terms of trade than the harbours they proposed to develop. Just like Sultan Majid, the Germans could establish towns that were their own. The new ports, DOAG officials pointed out, were not too far from the older ones and, like Sultan Majid and William Mackinnon beforehand, they believed it would not take too much effort to divert the caravans to the other ports. Stations would be established at interior locations, like Mpwapwa and Kilimanjaro for the central and northern routes respectively, which would “exert a certain pressure upon the arriving caravans” to journey onwards to Dar es Salaam and Tanga.¹⁰³ The plan to deliberately destroy Bagamoyo was clearly outlined:

From the moment that steamers run directly to the best port, Dar es Salaam, and deliver a large assortment of goods to the natives at a cheaper price than could be delivered from Zanzibar – and this will occur on account of the direct import – as soon as the independent caravans from the interior begin going to Dar on account of this and are fitted out there for the return trip; as soon as the Indians who supply the caravans follow the natives to Dar, then Bagamoyo will fall.¹⁰⁴

Doubts over the plan’s viability remained strong in the years immediately following Caprivi’s 1891 decision to move the administrative center to Dar es Salaam from Bagamoyo. The British General Consul to Zanzibar, Euan Smith, stated that “[n]ative commerce and native customs are so conservative, that it is probable that Bagamoyo will for many years be, as heretofore, the starting and arriving point for the

¹⁰³ ZNA, AL2/32/2, Von St. Paul to Michahelles, 25/2/1890.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid. This is an interesting statement, for it portrays the South Asian communities as being reliant upon the Africans as opposed to the usual viewpoint that is the reverse.

many caravans that ply between the coast and the interior.”¹⁰⁵ The *Zanzibar Gazette* reported the following year that:

There is no doubt that the German authorities will find it a matter of great difficulty to divert the native trade from the routes which it has used for generations past . . . The caravans however cannot at present be induced to change their route, even where some days' shorter journey would result; to the majority of the interior tribes Bagamoyo is a second home for a large part of the year, and a name as familiar as that of their own villages while Dar es Salaam is unknown to them.¹⁰⁶

Graf von Schweinitz, a member of the German Anti-Slavery Society, stated that the idea to force caravans to Dar es Salaam, which normally went to Bagamoyo, was a frequent threat. Like the British points of view cited above, Schweinitz also believed that this would prove a difficult task on account of “native custom”; even the governor of the colony knew he could hurt trade by forcing the porters to where they were not inclined to go.¹⁰⁷ But unlike the British Consul, Schweinitz did not believe Africans were so conservative that they could not be influenced to change habits. Schweinitz wrote that the Germans had to induce the Africans to bring their commerce to Dar es Salaam; there had to be advantages for them which superceded the ones the community of Bagamoyo had cultivated for the porters for decades.¹⁰⁸ And Schweinitz's comment bears truth: it was not “African conservatism” which kept traders going to Bagamoyo, but the incentives its community and the place itself provided them. The Indians offered many perks to secure African trade; because they lived frugally, they could afford to do so, thus making them so competitive against European merchants.

¹⁰⁵ NA, FO 881/6105, Euan Smith to Salisbury, 5/3/1891.

¹⁰⁶ *Zanzibar Gazette*, August 31, 1892.

¹⁰⁷ Graf von Schweinitz, *Deutsch-Ost-Afrika in Krieg und Frieden* (Berlin: Hermann Walther, 1894), 14-15; BAB, R1001/237a, Governor von Soden's Report, 8/2/1892.

¹⁰⁸ Schweinitz, 14-15; See also BAB, R1001/765, Lucas to DOAG Council of Representatives, October 1892, p.3, for similar sentiments by DOAG.

DOAG also advocated that the government impede dhow traffic which had connected the mainland with Zanzibar for centuries. As early as 1891, the Directors of DOAG wrote to the Foreign Office in Berlin of their intent to curb dhow traffic between Zanzibar and the German coastline, thereby reducing dependence on the old trade routes. By placing obstacles in dhow captains' paths such as having to acquire and carry health permits, manifests, and certificates, the mainland could be significantly freed from its ties to Zanzibar on account of bureaucratic hassle. Governor von Soden wrote to the Foreign Minister that this was not so much a difficult request as an impossible one, and doubted that such measures would serve the interests of the German colony.¹⁰⁹ The German steamer company, *Deutsch Ostafrikanische Linie* (DOAL), consisting of three boats which served the coastline, was established in 1890 and was heavily subsidized by the imperial German government. Within two years, the company was forced to acknowledge a profit loss and to resume making stops in Bagamoyo and other old trade ports like Pangani and Saadani.¹¹⁰

The government revisited MacKinnon's idea of building a road into the interior from Dar es Salaam; yet Schweinitz stated this would not work: "What European pedestrian would not prefer a shady footpath over a dusty highway? Furthermore, the erection of stations along the Dar-Mkondoa road will not attract the caravans. Each station will cause too many inconveniences."¹¹¹ In Bagamoyo, the District Officer attempted to forbid town merchant touts from intercepting ivory caravans in the

¹⁰⁹ TNA, G8/66, Lucas to Caprivi, 5/10/1891; TNA, G8/66, Caprivi to von Soden, 9/10/1891; TNA, G8/66, von Soden to Caprivi, 5/12/1891; ZNA, AL2/33/2, Bourjan and Lucas to AAKA, 6/12/1891.

¹¹⁰ TNA, G6/24, Woermann to Caprivi, 4/7/1892; TNA, G6/24, Nieberding and von Stephan to Marschall von Lieberstein, 6/12/1892.

¹¹¹ Schweinitz, 15.

Bagamoyo hinterland, as had been done for decades, so that the government would have more control over the levying of duties. However, this policy appears to have been only halfheartedly enforced.¹¹²

Throughout the 1890s and into the twentieth century, the Germans developed Dar es Salaam into a sizeable city employing European-style urban planning. Streets were laid, houses were built, and the population grew.¹¹³ But its trade remained negligible. From 1891 to 1907, various commentators remarked upon Dar's lack of commerce while Bagamoyo remained a thriving center.¹¹⁴ They blamed part of the problem on the German merchant companies for failing to fully invest in Dar es Salaam as their new headquarters. Instead, DOAG, Hansing and O'Swalds – the top three merchant houses – maintained Bagamoyo as their headquarters because their business depended on ties to the powerful merchant community there.¹¹⁵ Despite efforts from the government to create incentives for interior traders to use Dar es Salaam as their terminus over Bagamoyo, caravans still preferred the latter on account of “centuries” old ties.¹¹⁶ Due to lack of trade, authorities in the capital demolished the caravanserai constructed there and

¹¹² TNA, G8/67, ‘Bericht ueber die von (Herr Lucas) bei (s)einer Anwesenheit in Ostafrika in den Monaten Juni und Juli 1892 gewonnenen Eindruecke und Erfahrungen’; TNA, G8/67, Leue to Soden, 13/12/1892.

¹¹³ See Raimbault, *L'Evolution* for a detailed analysis of the growth of Dar es Salaam during German occupation, 1890-1914.

¹¹⁴ For a selective few examples: NA, FO 881/6338, Major Levenson to Salisbury, 17/9/1891; *Zanzibar Gazette*, 9/5/1894; *Zanzibar Gazette*, 10/2/1897; *Deutsch Ostafrikanische Zeitung*, I/26, 26/8/1899; NA, ADM 1/7589, 16/6/1902, Senior Naval Officer, East Coast of Africa to Commander in Chief, Cape of Good Hope Station; DOAZ, VI/3, 16/1/1904; BAB, R1001/641, Hansing to AAKA, 23/3/1907.

¹¹⁵ DOAZ, VI/2; 9/1/1904; DOAZ, VI/3; 16/1/1904; BAB, R1001/640; Goetzen to AAKA; 23/5/1904; BAB, R1001/640; Goetzen to AAKA; 25/7/1904

¹¹⁶ DOAZ, I/26; 26/8/1899.

never rebuilt it.¹¹⁷ Bagamoyo, by the turn of the century, was still the leading import and export town of the colony; even more interesting, the town's character persevered:

In Bagamoyo, life is akin to that in the smallest watering place, trees and the country creep up to the main street, officials are there but they escape your eye, work is done unobtrusively, refreshments are served you within doors, or a chair and table are planted down by the side of the road, and you attract no attention thereby. It is life going easily without the stream being stagnant: it is the life which runs the longest course in Africa.¹¹⁸

Because of the relative hands-off approach of the Germans in Bagamoyo, many Africans preferred to establish themselves and their businesses there where they would not be as harassed by police and officials as they were in Dar es Salaam. In Bagamoyo there was more freedom to conduct business much the same way as had been done prior to the German takeover.¹¹⁹

The Ties That Bind: The Asian Community and Bagamoyo Town

When ivory exports began to decrease around 1898 on account of the redirection of the trade to British East Africa and the Belgian Congo, copra production and rubber exports took up the slack.¹²⁰ The new avenues of wealth now open to Bagamoyo manifested themselves in the flurry of building activity and property buying which gripped the town. Within the first few months of 1904, approximately one hundred new buildings were constructed and the district office reported that 120 deeds to homes and property were purchased over the course of the year. The demand for property in

¹¹⁷ DOAZ, I/1, 26/2/1899; BAB, R1001/118; Runderlass, 16/8/1899.

¹¹⁸ *Zanzibar Gazette*, 10/2/1897. See also DOAZ, I/12, 20/5/1899 for similar sentiments from the German colonial media.

¹¹⁹ DOAZ, VI/12, 19/3/1904.

¹²⁰ The latter product is an oil extracted from the meat of the nut. DOAZ, IV/39, 27/9/1902; BAB, R1001/640, Hansing & Co. to AAKA, 28/12/1903.

Bagamoyo, particularly shambas, had grown so high that its value had increased tenfold.¹²¹ Bagamoyo's continued commercial dominance prompted a flurry of articles in the *Deutsch Ostafrikansiche Zeitung* in 1904 calling upon the government to do whatever necessary to undermine it in favour of developing Dar es Salaam. Commentators made the argument that trade coming to Bagamoyo flowed right through it and into Zanzibar; that profits were never reinvested in German East Africa but went to India instead, since trade was largely in the hands of the Indian merchants. Such accusations prompted the South Asian community of Bagamoyo to write a statement to the governor of the colony reaffirming their loyalty to their East African town:

[W]e the Indians of Bagamoyo . . . have for generations grown close to the land: our interests lie here, and our ties to the old country have loosened; for some of us, even completely vanished. Bagamoyo is the entrepot of the old export and import trade of the colony. Indian trade especially has its center here, even today. While petty trade is conducted by Indians in Dar es Salaam, the great, financially-powerful firms have their headquarters [in Bagamoyo] from which their connections spread out across the entire country.¹²²

Like the porters of the African interior who had become attached to Bagamoyo, so, too, had the South Asians. Indeed, of all the South Asian communities who migrated to East Africa, the Khoja Ismailis – the largest community of South Asians in Bagamoyo – were not only known for settling permanently along the coast, but also for encouraging their kin in India to join them.¹²³

¹²¹ TNA, G4/44, Spieth to von Götzen, 18/3/1904; TNA, G4/44, Spieth to von Götzen, 5/1/1905.

¹²² TNA, G9/58, Indian Community of Bagamoyo to von Rechenberg, 6/12/1906.

¹²³ Jean-Claude Penrad, "The Ismaili Presence in East Africa: A Note on its Commercial History and Community Organization," in *Asian Merchants and Businessmen in the Indian Ocean and the China Sea*, ed. Denys Lombard and Jean Aubin (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000).

Given the well known animosity displayed by Africans towards Indians in 20th century East African history, historians could be forgiven for supposing that there had always been considerable tension between these two groups in general. In Kenya, the Asian community faced racial discriminatory laws in the late 1960s prompting thousands to leave the country, while across the border in Uganda, President Idi Amin expelled the 72,000 strong Asian community in 1972. In Tanzania, Africans attacked the shops of Zanzibari South Asians during the revolution in 1964 while the government nationalized the businesses of many South Asians in the mid 1970s.¹²⁴ The general motivation behind each of these incidents was class resentment: the Asian communities of East Africa had long been the merchants and financiers of the regions while Africans had either been their underpaid employees or simply indebted to them. Yet, race relations between the South Asian and African communities in Bagamoyo prior to WWI were not always characterized by animosity and violence. Although these relations were not perfectly harmonious prior to British imperialism either, it has scarcely been researched as to what extent they just might have been.¹²⁵

As we have already seen, the South Asian community in Bagamoyo worked for decades establishing relations with the upcountry porters to secure their trade in ivory and

¹²⁴ For an excellent detailed study of what led to this in Dar es Salaam, see James R. Brennan, *Nation, Race and Urbanization in Dar es Salaam, 1916-1976*. Ph.D Thesis, Northwestern University, 2002.

¹²⁵ The following books focus on the experience of the South Asian communities in British territories and colonies in East Africa: J.S. Mangat, *A History of the Asians in East Africa, 1886-1945* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1969); Agehananada Bharati, *The Asians in East Africa: Jayhind and Uhuru* (Chicago: Nelson-Hall Company, 1972); Martha Honey, *A History of Indian Merchant Capital and Class Formation in Tanganyika, ca. 1840-1940*. Ph.D. thesis, University of Dar es Salaam, 1982; Robert G. Gregory, *South Asians in East Africa: An Economic and Social History, 1890-1980* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1993); Penrad, "The Ismaili Presence."

other goods. In the town itself, they lent credit to locals and paid protection fees to *Wabagamoyo majumbe*. In chapter two we saw how the wealthier South Asian merchants were spared aggression during the unrest of the mid 1870s, and in chapter three, we saw how the entire South Asian community was spared violence during the first days of the uprising of 1888. When the imperial German administration took over Bagamoyo in 1889, they quickly discovered that, contrary to what some elements of the German business community claimed – that the hearts of the South Asian community lay in India – South Asians were very much counted among the *Wabagamoyo*.

The Germans were not oblivious to the strong ties between Bagamoyo merchants and the interior porters. Oscar Baumann, a German explorer and naturalist who had been captured and held prisoner by Bushiri at the outset of the uprising, stated that although it was inevitable that the Germans would crush the uprising, he doubted their ability “to compete with the frugal, rich-in-capital, landed Indians.”¹²⁶ The Hanseatic trading companies informed the German General Consul at Zanzibar that it was “impossible” for Europeans to break the hold of the coastal merchants over the caravan routes; that the French, British and the Germans had all previously made attempts and failed.¹²⁷ For example, in 1886, the Hanseatic merchant firm, Meyer & Co., attempted to bypass local agents in Bagamoyo and establish direct ties with interior traders. Their representative, Gisecke, was murdered outside of Tabora.¹²⁸

Despite establishing their stations on the mainland, DOAG, like their Hanseatic predecessors in Zanzibar, had to rely on South Asian middlemen on account of their

¹²⁶ Oscar Baumann, *Deutsch-Ostafrika Während des Aufstandes* (Wien: Eduard Hölzel, 1890), 203.

¹²⁷ BAB, R1001/639, Hansing, Oswald's, and Meyer to Michahelles, 19/7/1890.

¹²⁸ Baumann, *Deutsch-Ostafrika*, 202; Bennett, *Arab vs. European*, 212.

“strong commercial network which was engaged in all levels of trade . . . and was highly competitive due to small operating costs.”¹²⁹ These merchants paid close attention to the changing wants and needs of their customers; failure to keep up with current trends could be financially disastrous:

Trade with the Wanyamwezi is above all arduous . . . They have much experience and are as knowledgeable about the value of goods as they are with ivory and they have many, many needs; for example, they, too, have their fashion, and they wouldn't accept fabric with a rooster and hen pattern when they've heard that the ship pattern is now “in.” The Indian trader must therefore have extraordinary patience if they are to cheat these strangers. It wouldn't be possible for a European to get involved in a trading relationship with the Wanyamwezi. That's why all the ivory is bought up in Zanzibar through the mediation of the Indian.¹³⁰

Edward D. Ropes, Jr., an American merchant in Zanzibar, also mentioned the strong grip the South Asian community held over the interior trade. In one letter, he expresses his disgust over the merchant community of Bagamoyo who had bought up all the ivory in July of 1888 (approximately 140,000 kg worth) and artificially raised its price by keeping it in warehouses.¹³¹ Ropes was forced to pay \$130/frasila (35kg) of ivory when it was usually valued at \$115.¹³² In terms of hiring porters, one German noted that, in the early 1890s, the German government had a contract with the prominent merchant, Sewa Haji Paroo. The same observer noted that if the government dealt directly with the porters

¹²⁹ Koponen, *Development*, 150-151. Koponen mentions that Indian costs amounted to only a third of a white trader's.

¹³⁰ J. Sturtz and J. Wangemann, *Land und Leute in Deutsch Ostafrika: Erinnerungen aus der ersten Zeit des Aufstandes und der Blokade* (Berlin: Königliche Hofbuchhandlung von Ernst Siegfried Mittler und Sohn, 1890), 37-38. For an excellent and interesting examination of how East African tastes could dictate commerce as far away as Salem and Bombay, see Jeremy Prestholdt, *East African Consumerism and the Genealogies of Globalization* (Ph.D Dissertation, Northwestern, 2003); Jeremy Prestholdt, “On the Global Repercussions of East African Consumerism,” *The American Historical Review*, 109:3 (2004).

¹³¹ Norman R. Bennett, ed. *The Zanzibar Letters of Edward D. Ropes, Jr. 1882-1892* (Boston: Boston University Press, 1973), 98.

¹³² *Ibid*, 66-67.

themselves, it would only have to pay a quarter of the cost it paid Sewa; however, on account of German inexperience and the consequent hassle, the Germans were willing to pay more for having the hiring done on their behalf.¹³³ This inability of the Europeans to capture the trade of the East African interior speaks directly to the reasons why the imperial German government decided to move away from Bagamoyo.

One German observer lamented: "I believe . . . that I don't do the Indians injustice when I accuse them of building up an economic mistrust among [the Africans] against us. At least I can't think of any other explanation that at present all natives would prefer to trust Indians with their savings than the whites."¹³⁴ Yet, Herr Lucas, the former director of the German East African Company, defended the Indian community, stating "[the Indian] is, in most cases reliable and liberal; he has, as a rule, not been found to take advantage of . . . a debtor or of his debtor's ignorance of business knowledge; and I, as a member of the German East African commercial body, protest energetically against this propaganda for the expulsion by force of the East Indian trader."¹³⁵ DOAG, however, like other longer established German merchant companies in East Africa, relied on the South Asians as their middlemen who sold European goods deep in the interior of the continent.

Significantly, former Bagamoyo District Officer August Leue noted that South Asian businessmen were as concerned for the public well-being as they were for earning money.¹³⁶ As seen in the previous chapter, during the uprising of 1888-1889 the Bagamoyo South Asian community raised funds in Zanzibar which they donated to the

¹³³ Schweinitz, 199-200.

¹³⁴ DOAZ, V/29, 18/7/1903.

¹³⁵ *Zanzibar Gazette*, October 4, 1899.

¹³⁶ Leue, *Bagamoyo*, 29.

Holy Ghost Fathers to help them look after the thousands of *Wabagamoyo* who had sought refuge at the mission. One South Asian in particular, however, stands out above all others in the historical record between 1883 and the turn of the century: Sewa Haji Paroo. Born in Zanzibar in 1851, Sewa was son to a Khoja merchant who, in the 1860s, established a small general store on the island. Sewa quickly became acquainted with the business of “supplying caravans with trade goods such as cloth, beads, copper wire and brass pots and . . . in turn purchasing ivory, rhino horns and hippo teeth”.¹³⁷ He rose to become the most successful merchant of Bagamoyo, diversifying his business from trade goods to porter requisitioning, land speculation, and property leasing.

Sewa Haji possessed a great philanthropic conscience. He donated or bequeathed land and buildings to both the French missionaries and the German government of Bagamoyo for the purposes of erecting and maintaining a school (1892), a hospital (1897), and a leper colony (1897). These institutions of social welfare were intended for all *Wabagamoyo* regardless of their racial or ethnic background.¹³⁸ Even the Wanyamwezi and Wasukuma porters who journeyed to the town on an annual basis were included among the potential recipients of Sewa’s generosity. It was his intention to keep his community cared for, as well as to ensure their economic competitiveness as European influence increased in the region. Such manifestations of Bagamoyo community spirit from the Indian community continued into the British period and beyond, but it is after the British conquest of German East Africa that race relations in

¹³⁷ Brown, *Bagamoyo*, 186.

¹³⁸ AStEsp, 2K1.5a4, Baur to Monseigneur, 28/2/1895; BG, TOME XIX, 1898-1899, p. 499-501.

Bagamoyo (and elsewhere in the Territory) were affected. This will be commented upon in the next chapter.

By 1907, sixteen years after the decision to move the administrative capital of German East Africa from Bagamoyo to Dar es Salaam, Bagamoyo continued to surpass Dar es Salaam as a trading center. The German imperial government therefore proposed to forcefully close down Bagamoyo as a customs port in favour of promoting the development of Dar es Salaam. In response, two of the leading German merchant houses in East Africa – Hansing and O'Swalds – wrote detailed letters to the Foreign Office advising the government not to take such a drastic step as the consequences would be harmful to the economy of the colony as a whole.¹³⁹ The German administration presumed that by shutting down Bagamoyo that Dar es Salaam would inherit its trade. Hansing and O'Swalds assured the government it would not be that easy:

Bagamoyo is not only the largest trading center of German East Africa, but also the most valuable one on account of its profits which are derived almost exclusively from products received from the natives without any major inducement by German colonization efforts . . . Bagamoyo's trade . . . is in no way the kind of trade that has its roots in buying and selling; rather, it is for a good part dependent on consultation, power, incentive, enterprising spirit and personal effort. It can not be undertaken by Europeans on account of its high expenses, since the available goods are scattered across the various regions. This trade is carried out by Indians in each region. It demands experience and bonds that can be trusted . . . Furthermore, trade is, of course, entirely dependent upon the porters. These people have been used to coming to Bagamoyo annually for almost a century. The cheap food provided from the rich hinterland of Bagamoyo offer them a greater attraction than the poor countryside around Dar es Salaam.¹⁴⁰

This statement reveals the ties between the community of Bagamoyo and the economy of the interior which were deep, both socially and historically; so much so, that

¹³⁹ O'Swalds & Co. was the oldest German merchant house in Zanzibar, established in 1847. Hansing & Co. set up their East African headquarters there in 1853. Both had their bases in Hamburg.

¹⁴⁰ BAB, R1001/641, Hansing & Co. to AAKA, 23/3/1907. See also BAB, R 1001/641, O'Swalds & Co. to AAKA, 20/3/1907.

one former governor of the colony referred to Bagamoyo as a “cancerous disease.”¹⁴¹ This was because the central trade route of German East Africa was in the hands of non-Europeans residing in the town. Since the wealth of key trade regions was controlled by these competitors, some of the colonizers of German East Africa believed it was being weakened because revenue was neither in German hands nor being reinvested in the colony. This strong sense of community solidarity thus proved difficult for the Germans to break. One wit suggested that a “Great Wall of China” should be erected in the channel between Bagamoyo and Zanzibar to stop dhow traffic, a chain placed in the Kingani River to stop ferries from bringing porters across to Bagamoyo, and the town shelled and invaded. The writer doubted whether, even if the government actually acted upon on all these ludicrous suggestions, it could still manage to shut down the town.¹⁴²

Like the upcountry porters, the ties between the South Asian communities and Bagamoyo were economically and socially based. But whose are not? Once these ties were established, a community began to settle. Children were born and raised in town and parents were reluctant to shift locality because of their investments – both financial and social – in the town. The petition by the *Wabagamoyo* South Asian community above is, in part, a reaction to the threat of being forced to move away from Bagamoyo. In Bagamoyo, they possessed familiarity with the town and they themselves were recognized by its inhabitants. The longer they remained in town, the better recognized they were. During my interviews with *Wabagamoyo* elders, many were able to recite the

¹⁴¹ DOAZ, Year VI/No. 8, Feb. 20, 1904, “Zur Hebung unserer Haupthäfen.” The German word used is *Krebsschaden*.

¹⁴² DOAZ, VI/13, 26/3/1904.

names of former prominent South Asian community members who had since moved on to Dar es Salaam.

In the previous two chapters, we saw evidence that would indicate the South Asian communities were perhaps not as closely entwined with the *Wabagamoyo* as others. Some of the shops of the petty merchant class were attacked by *majumbe* and their acolytes in 1878 and many South Asians fled Bagamoyo to Zanzibar during the uprising a decade later. Yet it must be restated that it is not this dissertation's intent to prove space can forge a perfectly harmonious community; instead, it provides an alternative identity which allows us to understand how diverse communities living within a shared space related to one another and how they related to those who lived beyond that shared space.

Divisions within Bagamoyo were not necessarily dictated by ethnicity or race; the South Asians who were attacked by the Shomvi/Zaramo *majumbe* were petty merchants. The more significant South Asian merchants and wholesalers were spared, indicating that the *majumbe* knew the South Asians well enough to know what they might get away with in terms of letting off some steam upon returning home after a battle against the Wazaramo beyond the immediate Bagamoyo hinterland. The South Asians who left Bagamoyo at the end of September of 1888 did not necessarily leave as South Asians, but as a wealthier class of *Wabagamoyo* who could afford to do so – the wealthier Arabs also left Bagamoyo for Zanzibar. Furthermore, both groups had kinship connections to Stone Town, relatives with whom they could stay to wait out the turmoil. Meanwhile, thousands of poorer *Wabagamoyo* sought refuge at the Catholic mission. Initially the wealthier classes also sought refuge at the mission, but these groups began to flee

Bagamoyo once the complicity of outsiders like Ismael of Windi had been implicated in the rebellion at Bagamoyo. When the Bagamoyo *majumbe* began to sue for peace, the South Asian and Arab refugees returned to Bagamoyo in November to resume business, only to be caught up in Bushiri's invasion. So, regardless of whether some townspeople sought refuge in Zanzibar, all classes of *Wabagamoyo* clearly indicated with their feet their discomfort and anxiety over the outcome of the initial September 22nd rebellion in Bagamoyo. While we must remain careful to distinguish between groups and classes of South Asians in Bagamoyo, the point here is to recognize that as *Wabagamoyo* they reacted to situations that were placial, but as South Asians – depending on their social status – they could also respond as South Asians, whether well-off or struggling, Muslim, Hindu or Catholic.

Summary

The German government did manage eventually to capture Bagamoyo's trade, but not through force. The construction of a railway from Dar es Salaam into the interior began in 1905 and, with each kilometer of track completed, the railway gradually replaced porters as an alternative means of transport for goods from the interior.¹⁴³ Calls for a spur to be laid between Dar es Salaam and Bagamoyo, or from a hinterland station like Mpwapwa, were ignored.¹⁴⁴ The government even rejected proposals to at least

¹⁴³ The Maji Maji uprising, which broke out in the same year, and difficulties securing financing for the railway caused some delay to the railway's construction. Costs to build this railway amounted to 11,000,000 Marks in total. Koponen, *Development*, 311.

¹⁴⁴ DOAZ, 1/26, 26/8/1899; *Deutsches Kolonialblatt*, 17/32, 9/8/1900; ZNA, AC8/4, Hollis (Acting Vice-Consul at Z'bar) to Hardinge, 21/7/1900; TNA, G9/58, Indian Community of Bagamoyo to von Rechenberg, 6/12/1906.

build roads between Bagamoyo and points in the interior.¹⁴⁵ Becher states that, according to trade statistics, Bagamoyo's trading heyday was over by 1912.¹⁴⁶ Thanks largely to continuing dhow traffic, the town's economy did not dry up completely. While financially powerful merchants were forced to accept defeat and move on to survive¹⁴⁷ – being that porters had been replaced by German-controlled railway transport – Africans continued to migrate to Bagamoyo where they felt more freedom than in the segregated city of Dar es Salaam.¹⁴⁸ As Bagamoyo's economic importance declined, the town survived nonetheless and took on a different meaning to its inhabitants and those elsewhere in the colony.¹⁴⁹

Caught between the consequences of coercively taking over the economy of Bagamoyo or of leaving it alone, the Germans opted to undermine Bagamoyo's power by developing another trade center. However, the Germans underestimated the tenacity of this heterogeneous urban community in protecting its interests and in its attachment to a particular place. Factors such as Bagamoyo's proximity to Zanzibar, the largest trade entrepot of East Africa; the bonds which had been cultivated over decades between coastal merchant and interior trader; and the reputation Bagamoyo enjoyed across central

¹⁴⁵ DOAZ, X/70, 12/9/1908.

¹⁴⁶ Becher, *Dar es Salaam*, 47. In 1912, the railway reached Tabora, the heartland of Unyamwezi where the majority of the East African porters came from.

¹⁴⁷ While the majority of the Asian community had left Bagamoyo by the 1920s, there still remained a few hundred out of a previous population of over 1,000. Those who left still retained strong ties to Bagamoyo and often returned to the town on weekends, a tradition that occurs to this day. In 1953, the District Officer noted how the carpark on the town shore "swarm[ed] with Asians on Sundays." TNA, Acc. 7/35/7, DC Duff to PCEP, 9/2/1953. There is also a massive stone house in downtown Dar es Salaam with an ornate façade built in the Asian fashion that is labeled the "Bagamoyo House." I was unable to find out its history or ownership.

¹⁴⁸ Interviews with RJ, 19/1/2005, Bagamoyo; Lila Rajabu, 22/1/2005, Bagamoyo; Abdallah M. Jembe, 19/3/2005, Bagamoyo.

¹⁴⁹ To be discussed in the next chapter.

Africa as a town of pleasure and opportunity ensured the town's resilience against attempts to undermine it.

This resilience also reveals the significance of two communities, the upcountry African porters and the South Asian merchants, to Bagamoyo society. While neither group intermarried to a high degree with local Africans and Arabs, nor converted to the Sunni version of Islam that was widely practiced in town, both groups demonstrated a remarkable level of loyalty and local attachment to Bagamoyo in the face of pressures to entice them away. Seen from a framework of Swahili culture, these two groups are perceived as outsiders to the coastal urban communities they lived amongst, which, as I hoped these past few chapters have shown, is erroneous. The placial framework, however, restores them rightfully to these port towns and serves as a caution to historians of East Africa to qualify the moniker, "Swahili town."

CHAPTER FIVE

NEW EMPIRE, SAME PLACE: BRITISH ACTIONS AND LOCAL RESPONSES

The previous three chapters have focused principally upon the manifestation of placial community amongst the inhabitants of Bagamoyo. This was revealed through the community's responses to the presence and actions of outsiders in the town. The thematic emphasis has been mostly political and economic, focusing on the experiences of various people and groups who endeavoured to acquire land, power and economic influence within the town. Those who disrespected local customs and interests tended to distinguish themselves as community outsiders by incurring the wrath of the *Wabagamoyo*. This revelation has not only shown us how "Swahili societies" along the East African coastline are not interchangeable from one port town to the next, it also demonstrated how groups of people like the South Asian and upcountry African communities, who are often regarded as outsiders and immigrants to the Swahili community in historical scholarship, can be regarded as part of the coastal urban societies. Furthermore, people like the Europeans, who we expect to be perceived as community outsiders, could also be counted among the *Wabagamoyo* so long as they demonstrated that they had the community's welfare, in one form or another, at heart.

The final two chapters of this dissertation examine the experiences of the *Wabagamoyo* in the context of the second round of European colonialism in Tanganyika: the British Empire. This chapter continues the discussion about politics and economy and will serve as comparison to the experience of the Bagamoyo townspeople under the Omanis and the Germans. The *Wabagamoyo* were able to maintain old placial networks

and develop new ones which allowed them to continue pursuing their own interests despite changes brought about by British imperialism. At the same time, the British – like the Omanis and Germans before them – learned to tap into the networks of local authority to better govern the town. This latter theme is explored first in an examination of Bagamoyo during WWI and how the town was administered thereafter. Colonial education as implemented during both the German and British periods is explored next; however, the effects of European education on the *Wabagamoyo* will not be studied. Instead, the focus will be on the imposition of a secular schooling system on the population and the struggle between the community and both imperial powers to increase enrollment. Just as with their experience in governance, the British found the *Wabagamoyo* were more cooperative when consulted. This chapter will also examine what became of the economy of Bagamoyo in the aftermath of the construction of the German railway that brought about the demise of the caravan trade and, consequently, Bagamoyo's preeminent position as the colony's leading trade entrepot. The chapter concludes with a detailed section on smuggling networks, demonstrating a placial response towards the British threat to local financial and consumer interests.

World War and Local Community

The period of German colonial rule over Bagamoyo came to an effective end on August 15th, 1916. On that day, British naval forces bombarded the town and landed hundreds of marines on its shores, driving the German army out of Bagamoyo and causing the desertion of hundreds of African porters from its ranks. For the previous two years, Bagamoyo had been occupied by the German military whose commanding officer

held martial law over the town's inhabitants as well as the German district administration. Over 1500 *Wabagamoyo* had been forcibly conscripted into the German army to serve as porters and labourers; local dhow connections between Bagamoyo and British-ruled Zanzibar had been severed; and the cost of foodstuffs had skyrocketed.¹ Despite the fact that Bagamoyo's economic importance had begun to wane since the construction of the central railroad from Dar es Salaam, the town remained a significant seaport. The British military considered Bagamoyo a key position in taking the colony.²

The declaration of war in August 1914 upset many *Wabagamoyo*. While it had been almost twenty-five years since the last time Bagamoyo had been engulfed by war, there were still plenty of townspeople resident who recalled the destruction the Germans had wreaked upon the town, reducing two-thirds of it to rubble. On August 23rd, 1914 the British cruiser, the HMS Pegasus, appeared in the open roadstead and demanded to be allowed to send a landing party on shore to repair and reinforce the telegraph cable between Bagamoyo and Zanzibar which the German postmaster had deliberately disabled. The British were denied permission to land. They then gave an ultimatum to the Germans to change their minds or face being bombarded. When the time was up, the

¹ AStEsp, BJ, 4/2/1915; BJ, 5-6/8/1914; BJ, 7/5/1916.

² NA, ADM 123/138, no name, General Report on the Taking of Bagamoyo 1916. Aside from its importance as a seaport and its proximity to Zanzibar, Bagamoyo also controlled a strategic ferry crossing over the Kingani River via a station called Mtoni. British armies occupying northern German East Africa under the command of General Jan Smuts, future president of South Africa, were unable to push southwards overland to Dar es Salaam until Mtoni was taken. The capture of Bagamoyo would open a second front from which to attack the Germans at Mtoni.

Pegasus fired between thirty and forty shells into the town. The majority missed and only the palatial District Office building and the Customs House suffered minor damage.³

One German observer claimed that the poorly orchestrated assault caused much amusement amongst the Germans and natives, but the Holy Ghost Fathers recorded a more likely scenario. Reminiscent of the first days of the uprising in Bagamoyo in late September 1888, the *Wabagamoyo* – African, Arab, Indian, and European alike – fled to the mission for safety. The wealthier class carried with them their most valuable goods and stored them in the mission sheds. Most of the Indian community stayed in the new church that the Fathers had been building since 1910. The Pegasus attacked only once, yet many townspeople remained in refuge at the mission. The Germans had to force the Indians to return to their shops and warehouses to resume local business.⁴

Not much is written on the two year period between the first and second attacks on Bagamoyo; however, it appears to have been a time of great unease. As mentioned earlier, the cost of food increased rapidly during wartime; a sack of rice, valued at around 21 rupees before the outbreak of war cost between 85 and 90 rupees two years later.⁵ Already during the months leading up to the declaration of war there had been a minor food crisis in Bagamoyo. A plague epidemic broke out in Zanzibar at the beginning of 1914 and dhows traveling from the island to the mainland were banned from landing at Bagamoyo and Saadani; only dhows which had checked into Dar es Salaam first could sail onwards to Bagamoyo, and even then they were not allowed to beach, but had to

³ Heinrich Schnee, *Deutsch-Ostafrika im Weltkrieg: Wie wir lebten und kämpften* (Leipzig: Verlag Quelle & Meyer, 1919), 64-65; General von Lettow-Vorbeck, *Meine Erinnerungen aus Ostafrika* (Leipzig: K.F. Koehler, 1920), 27-28; AStEsp, BJ, 23/8/1914.

⁴ AStEsp, BJ, 23-26/8/1914.

⁵ AStEsp, BJ, 5/8/1914; BJ, 7/5/1916.

transfer their goods at sea.⁶ Even after the Zanzibari government declared that Zanzibar was plague-free in early February, the German government continued to ban dhows from sailing into any ports other than Dar.⁷ This prompted a flurry of protest from the Bagamoyo representatives of the German East Africa Company, Oswalds & Co., the Bagamoyo District Chief, and the German Consul-General at Zanzibar. Bagamoyo was a principal importer of rice from India via Zanzibar and both *Wabagamoyo* and German merchants alike depended on dhows to transport rice to the open roadstead of Bagamoyo. Regardless of whatever alternatives the German imperial administration came up with, the end result was that imported rice and grains would cost the locals more than previously.⁸ Despite repeated requests to lift the ban on the beaching of dhows at Bagamoyo, and the inevitable damage done to the town's economy, the ban remained in effect well into July of 1914. One month later, war was declared and Bagamoyo was cut off from Zanzibar for two more years.⁹

Aside from growing anxiety amongst the *Wabagamoyo* over the advance of British forces from the north and the potential for a pending battle to be played out in the streets of Bagamoyo, tensions were high amongst the European community. The civil and military administrations were at severe odds, and the Fathers at the mission had been

⁶ TNA, G5/20, Schnee, 29/1/1914; Michels to Schnee, 9/2/1914; Schnee to Michels, 13/2/1914

⁷ TNA, G5/20, Stationsarzt Dr. Orenstein to Schnee, 9/2/1914.

⁸ TNA, G5/20, Oswalds & Co. to Dr. Vogel, 6/3/1914; Deutsch Ostafrikanische Gesellschaft to Schnee, 6/3/1914; Krenzer to Schnee, 6/3/1914; Michels to Schnee, 9/3/1914; Krenzer to Schnee, 30/4/1914; Krenzer to Schnee, 12/5/1914; Schnee to Krenzer, 9/6/1914; Krenzer to Schnee 9/6/1914.

⁹ There is one recorded instance of an Indian, Merali Remtulla, who donated a sack of rice to the Bagamoyo poor during this difficult period. While this can hardly be considered as representative of a general trend among the Bagamoyo Indians, it at least points to another example of community goodwill from this group that is often seen as serving its own selfish interests. AStEsp, BJ, 24/8/1914.

accused by the Germans of espionage. Father Gattang was arrested by German *askaris* and placed in jail for 48 hours after he went to the beach one morning to read a book while two British warships were stationed in the open roadstead. To add insult to injury, the Fathers from the mission had to provide Gattang with food while he was in prison since the Germans refused to do so. Father Vogt, the superior of the Bagamoyo mission, was outraged and had nothing but utter contempt for the German District Chief, Herr Michels. According to Father Vogt, Michels was notorious in Bagamoyo for his short temper and for his dislike of the local custom of *shauri*, or consultation, with leading town notables. When Father Gattang was released from prison, the townspeople threw a parade and a party in his honour. To avoid a serious falling out with the community, Michels was compelled to shake Gattang's hand in front of thousands of *Wabagamoyo* to demonstrate his solidarity with the townspeople who held Gattang in high regard and did not suspect Gattang of any wrongdoing.¹⁰

At the end of July 1916, the British launched another minor attack. This time a seaplane flew over the town, taking aerial photographs that would be used to plan the invasion of Bagamoyo the following month, but also dropping a few bombs, one of which killed a Baluchi woman and wounded her husband. Offshore warships also fired several shells onto the town again. The two Germans now in charge of Bagamoyo's defenses, Captain Bock von Wulfingen and Major von Boedecke, made a very controversial decision and positioned most of their soldiers amongst the trees between the

¹⁰ TNA, G9/23, Vogt to Governor Schnee, 20/10/1915; TNA, G9/23, Vogt to Governor Schnee, 6/11/1915; TNA, G9/23, Michels to Governor Schnee, 10/11/1915; AStEsp, BJ, 9/5/1915. Herr Michels referred to the German military commander (von Bonsdorf) in Bagamoyo as "that Kaffir". He also prohibited Bagamoyo *majumbe* from allowing their people to sell the German troops any fruit and also prohibited the Fathers from selling the commander any wine.

beach and the Holy Ghost Father's mission.¹¹ This, of course, now exposed the mission to the line of fire of the British navy. It was a calculated manoeuvre, intended to make the British hesitant to launch shells at the German troops while the Catholic mission lay vulnerable to their attack. The tactic failed.

Some time after 5am on August 15th, 1916, a British fleet of five ships – three cruisers and two monitors – which had moved into Bagamoyo's open roadstead, launched their attack. They began by bombarding the town from the sea. Because of the German position, the mission estimated that one quarter of all the shells fired landed on their property.¹² Two shells struck their new church in the midst of a service while others fell amongst the refugees' makeshift huts. Miraculously, with the exception of a few unlucky livestock, nobody on the mission grounds was killed or wounded. The coconut plantation, however, was not so lucky and sustained widespread destruction. Prior to the attack, once again, the *Wabagamoyo* – Africans, Arabs, Indians and Europeans alike – had fled to the mission to seek refuge. However, this time not as many came: only about 1500 *Wabagamoyo* were estimated to have waited out the bombardment on mission grounds; the others went to the hospital believing it to be safer since the Germans had put the mission in danger.¹³

By 7am thick clouds of smoke could be seen billowing from the town. The District Office, the Old Fort, and the Customs House each received hits and the Bavarian-esque stationhouse of the German East Africa Company, next to the Customs House on the beach, was completely destroyed. The Khoja Ismaili mosque and Arab mosques alike

¹¹ Even the wives of the Germans in town protested vociferously. AStEsp, BJ, 4/8/1916.

¹² AStEsp, 2K1.8b3, Vogt to Tres Reverend Pere, 22/8/1916.

¹³ AStEsp, 2K1.8b3, Vogt to Bon Cher Pere, 18/8/1916; MCMB, BG, #350, 1918-1919, p. 84-90.

were also damaged in the attack. The *makuti* houses which made up the southwestern quarters of Bagamoyo were set on fire and the neighbourhoods burned to the ground.¹⁴ For the second time in less than thirty years Bagamoyo lay in ruin.

During the attack both Boedecke and Wulfingen were killed. The rest of the German troops and African porters soon deserted their positions and the town fell quickly to the British thereafter. By 11am the British had control over Bagamoyo. Once the British command had secured their positions in the town and assumed control over the administrative offices, they sent word to the mission and hospital that the townspeople were to be encouraged to return to their homes and businesses. Early the next morning, Commander Watson of the British navy reported that

Many Natives came in from all directions, and by 9AM some 800 Swahilis, 200 Arabs and 100 Indians had returned to the Town. Deeming it very necessary that an efficient control of this community should be established without delay, I ordered them to assemble on the beach, and with Captain Dickson as interpreter I informed them that the British having taken the town would respect their property and allow them to return to their homes provided that they would give us any information as to the enemy's movements . . . I then directed each tribe to select two or three men to report to me each morning, and be responsible for the good behaviour of their people. All appeared to understand and seemed contented and happy that we had assumed control of the country . . .¹⁵

Watson further demonstrated respect for the community when some Indians informed him about Mohammed bin Yusuf, a local Baluchi who had been ranked highly in the German government service and who had profited very well from these connections. Upon inspection of Yusuf's house, the British found him in possession of armaments which, presumably, he had failed to declare to the occupying force. Instead

¹⁴ AStEsp, BJ, 15/8/1916; BJ, 16/8/1916; NA, ADM 123/138, no name, General Report on the Taking of Bagamoyo 1916; MCMB, BG, #350, 1918-1919, p. 84-90.

¹⁵ NA, ADM 123/138, Commander Watson to the Commander-in-Chief, Cape of Good Hope, 24/8/1916.

of condemning Yusuf without consultation, Watson invited the headmen of the town to the trial, informed them of his crime, and then deferred judgment of the sentence to the advice of *Wabagamoyo* leaders. Some requested that he be executed while others suggested deportation. Watson decided the latter would be more appropriate “owing to the excellent behaviour of the other inhabitants.” Watson reported that his decision was met with widespread approval.¹⁶

With regards to those Africans who had served as *askaris* for the German military force, Watson was approached by one of the leaders of the African community in Bagamoyo, Sheikh Ramiya. Ramiya, speaking through Captain Dickson, advised Watson not to arrest those *askaris* who turned themselves over to the British. Instead, if the *askaris* turned over their weapons, ammunition and uniforms, the British would then hire them as porters for their forces. These *askaris* were also asked to spread the word to others who were in hiding. Almost immediately, African deserters of the German army turned themselves in to the British and became their paid labourers.¹⁷ While Watson certainly had the final say in administrative matters in the town, these two examples point to Watson’s respect to one of Bagamoyo’s most valued institutions: the *shauri*. By consulting town notables, Watson gained the respect of the *Wabagamoyo* who had expected to be punished by the enemy of their previous occupiers.¹⁸

Watson’s deference to Sheikh Ramiya was particularly important. Ramiya was a Manyema slave who had been bought by a former *liwali* of Bagamoyo, Amer bin

¹⁶ NA, ADM 123/138, Commander Watson to the Commander-in-Chief, Cape of Good Hope, 24/8/1916; see also AStEsp, BJ, 19/8/1916.

¹⁷ NA, ADM 123/138, Commander Watson to the Commander-in-Chief, Cape of Good Hope, 24/8/1916.

¹⁸ AStEsp, BJ, 15/8/1916.

Suleiman al-Lemki. Because al-Lemki favoured Ramiya, the latter was allowed to undertake commercial activities, including a successful copra production venture which gave him enough earnings to purchase enough coconut plantations to make him the largest African landholder by 1911. He also traded in millet and gum copal. Ramiya became an Islamic scholar in 1886 at the age of 30, matriculating from the *madrassa* by 1900. He became a *mwalm*, or teacher, and opened his own school in Bagamoyo. By the early twentieth century, he was recognized by the Germans as the leading scholar out of thirty teachers working in town. Beyond this, he was known for his works of goodwill: caring for orphans and strangers in town and hosting Islamic scholars from elsewhere. He was nominated town sheikh in 1911, a position that he served until his death in 1931.¹⁹ While Ramiya garnered a high level of respect among the *Wabagamoyo* as a sheikh, it was his actions during the British bombardment which earned him the reputation as the saviour of Bagamoyo. In his own words Sheikh Ramiya recalled:

It is I who was first caught on the day when the English arrived in Bagamoyo. I was busy extinguishing fire from houses which were burning as I was pitying the country (sic) and (fearing) other unpleasant events, lest thieves should harm people's property. This happened on 15th August 1916 . . .²⁰

While most of the townspeople were in hiding as the bombs fell, Ramiya led a group of his followers to protect Bagamoyo. His intervention with Commander Watson concerning the fate of the Africans who served the Germans further contributed to the community's reverence towards him for helping to save the town.

¹⁹ All the details of Sheikh Ramiya's life are related from August H. Nimtz, Jr. *Islam and Politics in East Africa: The Sufi Order in Tanzania* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota, 1980), 120-121, 141.

²⁰ TNA, Acc. 61/1/E, Sheikh Ramiya bin Abdalla to Chief Secretary, DSM, 2/4/1930.

It was therefore not difficult for the British to find an appropriate *liwali* to govern Bagamoyo on their behalf; after canvassing popular opinion in town concerning the position, the British chose Sheikh Ramiya in October of 1916.²¹ The British also reopened the town markets, reduced the cost of foodstuffs, and restored the fishing industry which had been suspended over the previous two years. Upon catching the German's Chief of Secret Police in Bagamoyo, Ali Matata, they forced him to face the townspeople to answer for his treachery. The British also routed the Germans who were plundering the *Wabagamoyo* who lived along the western fringes of the town and forcing some of them into portage.²² All these actions made a favourable impression among the *Wabagamoyo* of their new administration. Lila Rajabu, the oldest of the *Wabagamoyo* whom I interviewed and whose life spanned both the German and British periods had the following to say about the reputations of the two imperial powers in Bagamoyo:

Lila: The British were strict but they were clever. They used to observe what people were doing.

Nzige: Why are people giving good comments about the British Government and not the German Government, and that the British were polite; why is that?

L: Indeed.

N: Why?

L: Because the Germans were not listening to people's problems

N: They were not listening?

L: Mmh (indicating the affirmative)

N: So when people were going to the *boma* to explain their problems to the British Government, were they helping people out with their problems?

L: Mmh.²³

²¹ Nimtz, *Islam and Politics*, 142; TNA, Acc. 61/1E, Woodhouse to the Provincial Commissioner of Eastern Province, 4/4/1930.

²² NA, ADM 123/138, Commander Watson to the Commander-in-Chief, Cape of Good Hope, 24/8/1916; AStEsp, BJ, 7/9/1916; BJ, 15/9/1916.

²³ Interview with Mzee Lila Rajabu, Bagamoyo, 22/1/2005. Mzee Lila Rajabu believed himself to be about 100 years old. It appears he was also interviewed by August Nimtz in

World War I was a hardship the people of Bagamoyo lived through together. While others in German East Africa also experienced hardships, manifestations of placial community were clear: the *Wabagamoyo* rallied around Father Gattang when he was imprisoned by the German authorities; they sought refuge from British bombardment together (this time there was no evacuation of the wealthier classes to Zanzibar); and a community legend was forged when Sheikh Ramiya risked his life to put out the fires that had broken out in the town while the British navy shelled Bagamoyo. Commander Watson also grasped the practicality of consulting the town's leaders in order to govern with the least level of resistance and local resentment. Over the following four and a half decades of British rule over Bagamoyo, the various administrators, with a couple of exceptions, learned that Watson's original approach to governing the town – of taking into consideration the influence and advice of town notables – was the most effective in making things run smoothly.

Authority in the Township

The British left the German system of administration largely intact for the first decade or so of their rule. Changes to this system, when they did come about, did not occur uniformly throughout Tanganyika.²⁴ In the case of Bagamoyo, the district had

the mid 1970s for his research on Sufism and politics in Tanganyika, but I was unable to confirm this since I was unaware of Nimtz's oral research at the time of my own interview with Rajabu. Nimtz recorded Rajabu as being in his mid 60s at that time which corroborates the age Rajabu gave me some thirty years later. Nzige Kawaka was one of two research assistants translating for me.

²⁴ Changes to the system of native administration during the British mandate era occurred officially in 1927 when they introduced their system of indirect rule; however, as seen in the case of Bagamoyo, changes were only implemented at a convenient or appropriate

been divided into nine sub-districts, each of which was administered by an *akida* who was a local nominated by the German District Officer. Each sub-district was further broken down into smaller regions which were administered by *majumbe* who answered to the *akidas*. There were 165 “jumbe-ates” in Bagamoyo District in total.²⁵ The responsibility of the *akida* was to administer “native” justice via open courts (*shauri*), to collect taxes from the people under their jurisdiction, and to report back regularly to the European District Officer of any news. In October 1916, as mentioned above, the British district administration, after canvassing popular opinion, placed Sheikh Ramiya as the *akida*, although they referred to him as *liwali*. He remained in this position until he resigned on September 30, 1928 as a form of protest over accusations of embezzlement made against two *majumbe* tax collectors who were under his authority.²⁶

Little is to be found in the archive about Ramiya’s term as *liwali* beyond how he became *liwali* and why he resigned. Undoubtedly he was revered among the townspeople, but he was not very popular among the various British district officers who served in Bagamoyo after the end of WWI up until 1928.²⁷ Upon Ramiya’s resignation, the British district officer, Woodhouse, summoned the leaders of the Arab and Baluchi communities to ask them for recommendations for the appointment of the next *liwali*. Shortly thereafter, Gulamrasul Sherdel, a Baluchi and the *liwali* of Kaole, was nominated

opportunity. TNA, Acc 61/1/E/1, District Officer, Bagamoyo to the Provincial Commissioner, Eastern Province, 20/3/1939.

²⁵ TNA, AB9, Bagamoyo Annual Report 1921.

²⁶ TNA, Acc. 61/52/E, Provincial Commissioner, Eastern Province (PCEP) to Chief Secretary, Dar es Salaam, 20/10/1928.

²⁷ TNA, Acc. 61/52/E, PCEP to Chief Secretary, DSM, 20/10/1928. No particular reasons are given for their disapproval.

as *liwali* of Bagamoyo.²⁸ There is no mention of Swahili or “native” elders being summoned, which tends to support Nimitz’s conclusion that Woodhouse was prejudiced against the African urban population.

At least one petition was delivered to Woodhouse from members of the African community protesting the nomination of Sherdel: “We are in deep grief that, we *the natives of Bagamoyo*, are ruled over by the Akida of other tribes. We do not want this procedure. The Government can find an Akida amongst us, *the natives of this place*, to rule over us. We do not want an Akida from other tribes.”²⁹ While the petitioners mention tribal differences, on closer inspection the letter also reflects a sense of placial community. First, the petitioners signed themselves as Washomvi. As examined in Chapter Two, the Washomvi were the people that emerged along the coast at Bagamoyo as a result of intermarriage between the Wazaramo and Arab merchants in the 18th century; during the precolonial era, as we have seen in Chapter Two and Three, many of the *majumbe* were Washomvi who formed the traditional social elite of Bagamoyo. Yet, since 1916 this community had willingly submitted itself to the authority of a man who was not only a former slave, but also of Manyema (eastern Congo) origins; therefore, their claim in their petition that they objected to being under the authority of an “Akida of other tribes” is suspect.

Nimitz argues that Sherdel’s appointment was highly unpopular amongst the African population on account of his racial background. Nimitz claims the Shomvi

²⁸ TNA, Acc. 61/52/E, Woodhouse to PCEP, 18/10/1928; TNA, Acc. 61/52/E, PCEP to Chief Secretary, DSM, 6/11/1928; TNA, Acc. 61/52/E, Chief Secretary to PCEP, 12/11/1928.

²⁹ TNA, Acc. 61/52/E, Six Washomvi of Bagamoyo to Chief Secretary, DSM, 6/4/1930. Italics mine.

population of Bagamoyo regarded the Baluchi “as usurpers of their former preeminence” since their arrival to the East African coast during the time of the Omani Sultanate of Zanzibar.³⁰ Indeed, aside from the fact that Sherdel had been the *akida* of Kaole since 1922, his family had roots that went deep into the history of that town. However, as discussed in Chapter Two, the Baluchis had been neglected by their masters, the Sultans, in terms of wages and support; consequently, they had developed their own local networks within the towns to which they were posted in order to survive. While they may still have been regarded as Baluchi by the African population, this did not mean that the Baluchis did not possess loyalties and ties to other peoples in these coastal urban centers. With reference, then, to the Bagamoyo Washomvi petition above, it must be noted that two placial references were made in the letter to the district officer. It could therefore also be plausibly assumed that “the natives of Bagamoyo” objected to having a community outsider (Sherdel as *Mkaole*) as their judicial authority when there were well over 5,000 inhabitants in their own town from whom the district officer could have chosen.

The appointment of Sherdel as Bagamoyo *liwali* marks the point when the system of administration changed in Bagamoyo. During the German period, the African, Arab, Indian, Shihiri and Baluchi communities had all been subject to the judicial authority of the *akida*.³¹ This continued under the British regime except that the Indian community, viewed as “non-natives” by the new colonial power, became subject to a European court for civil and criminal cases. This policy had significant consequences for the Indian community in Bagamoyo (as elsewhere in the colony): whereas up until 1916 the Indians

³⁰ Nimtz, 148.

³¹ Koponen, *Development for Exploitation*, 564.

had to answer to local town authorities (whether Arab, Swahili, Shihiri or Baluchi), after British occupation they were set apart from other communities in Bagamoyo because they answered directly to the local British magistrate. The Indian community, therefore, was less bound to the *Wabagamoyo* than they had been before. Furthermore, the British also physically segregated the Indians from the other townspeople in the local school and hospital. While class resentment may have existed between Asians and other *Wabagamoyo* prior to the British takeover, these segregationist policies certainly exacerbated them. Nevertheless, the legacy of British rule did not entirely alienate the Asian population from Bagamoyo – even after independence, the leading Asian merchant, Champsī Mulji, donated the furniture and supplies worth Shs. 9000/- to a new maternity clinic in town and also built a new schoolhouse under the auspices of the Tanzanian African Parents Association in the mid-1960s.³²

With the resignation of Liwali Ramiya in 1928, Woodhouse gathered the other so-called “non-native” groups – the Arabs, Shihiri, and Baluchis – and asked them if they would rather have their cases heard by a native authority or a European one.³³ The reasons why these groups had not been granted the same special status as the Indian community already was on account of the great degree of racial intermixing which made it difficult to determine who was a “pure” non-native and who was not. The fact that these groups were actually being consulted by the British about having their status changed indicates British uncertainty in Bagamoyo towards local ethnic or racial

³² TNA, Acc. 540/CD/CR/BCD/60, Mwalimu Abubakar, Area Chairman TAPA Bagamoyo, 19/6/1964; TNA, Acc. 540/CD/BDMR/72, Kisenge to Regional Commissioner, Development Office, 5/3/1966.

³³ TNA, Acc. 61/52/E, Woodhouse to PCEP, 18/10/1928.

delineation.³⁴ With the exception of one leading town Arab, Omar Awadh, who requested the reinstatement of Sheikh Ramiya as *liwali* and that Arab cases be continued to be heard in the court of a native authority, all the “non-native” *Wabagamoyo* notables asked for their civil and criminal issues to be submitted to a European magistrate.³⁵ Their request was granted, but within a few months the elders of the Arab, Shihiri and Baluchi communities in Bagamoyo sent District Officer Woodhouse a petition asking that their cases be heard by the town *liwali* – now town headman³⁶ – as in the past.³⁷ The only reason given was that it took much longer for the “non-natives” to have their cases heard by the European court.³⁸ This is a rather spurious excuse given that it was only a few months before the “non-natives” went back on their first decision. It would therefore not seem farfetched to believe that the “non-natives” might have quickly recognized the benefit of having their cases tried by somebody who might better represent their interests.

³⁴ Christopher Lee examines this issue in greater detail using an example from Nyasaland (Malawi). He observes how dubious the British colonial definition of “native” actually was despite the fact that it was so commonly used. The definition of “native” changed depending on the level of colonial administration. Lee claims that the British were preoccupied with issues of race in defining a native versus cultural attributes. The incident related above in Bagamoyo supports Lee’s conclusions. Christopher Joon-Hai Lee, “The ‘Native’ Undefined: Colonial Categories, Anglo-African Status and the Politics of Kinship in British Central Africa, 1929-1938,” *Journal of African History*, 46:3 (2005): 455-478.

³⁵ TNA, Acc. 61/52/E, Woodhouse to PCEP, 18/10/1928. Awadh was somewhat beholden to Ramiya because earlier Ramiya had supported his nomination as imam of the Bagamoyo Friday mosque during the German period. Nimtz, 144.

³⁶ It would appear that the title ‘*liwali*’ referred to someone who was not only an agent of the government, but also somebody qualified to fulfill the function of *qadi*, or Islamic judge. Sheikh Ramiya was an Islamic scholar and so was competent in carrying out all the duties of *liwali*. Gulamrasul Sherdel was not a competent Islamic scholar and so his duties were limited to the secular. Sheikh Sufi was appointed the town *qadi* of Bagamoyo while Sherdel fulfilled the role of town headman. See TNA, Acc. 61/52/E, PCEP to Chief Secretary, DSM, 6/11/1928.

³⁷ TNA, Acc. 61/I/E, Umoja wa Makabila ya Kiarabu, Kishihiri, na Kibulushi wa Bagamoyo to District Officer, Bagamoyo, February 1929.

³⁸ TNA, ACC. 61/I/E, Acting District Officer Bagamoyo to PCEP, 4/3/1932.

Neither the District Officer nor the Provincial Commissioner appeared frustrated or disappointed in the sudden change of heart; in fact, their response is telling in how difficult it was to separate the communities that made up the *Wabagamoyo*:

In practice Native Courts always have dealt with cases in which Arabs, Washihiri and Baluchis are parties and no objection has been raised by any of them. Attention has been called recently in Bagamoyo to the fact that the Town Headman's Court has no jurisdiction over non-natives, and that the hearing in his Court of civil cases in which non-natives are parties is in the nature of arbitration only. Many persons of the communities in question may be considered to be Swahili; on the other hand there are those of full Arab or Baluchi blood who would resent their classification as Swahili, and therefore as native for the purpose of the Courts Ordinance, a fact that is indicated in this petition. If special jurisdiction is conferred . . . any doubt would be removed as to the validity of judgments given in cases where one or both of the parties in a case is a doubtful Swahili.³⁹

Well before scholars debated over the characteristics of the Swahili, colonial officials themselves were not sure how to distinguish them.

The success of a *liwali*/akida/headman to keep the peace in Bagamoyo relied to an important extent on his readiness to involve the elders of the town in his legal duties. Given the heterogeneous make-up of Bagamoyo, no single ethnic group dominated and so the majority of its inhabitants were subject to a man not of their ethnicity. Consequently, to make informed decisions and pass fair judgments, the *liwali* had to consult various elders of different ethnic groups for advice or to sit in on hearings.⁴⁰ Thus the system was not much different than it had been during the precolonial period.⁴¹

³⁹ TNA, Acc. 61/I/E, PCEP to Chief Secretary, 29/4/1929. See also TNA, Acc. 61/1/E, Woodhouse to PCEP, 20/2/1929; TNA, Acc. 61/1/E, District Officer, Bagamoyo to PCEP, 4/3/1932.

⁴⁰ TNA, Acc. 61/1/E/II, Bampfylde to PCEP, 9/3/1938; TNA, Acc. 61/1/E/I, Bampfylde to PCEP, 11/3/1940.

⁴¹ The criminal case files for Bagamoyo District were missing from the Tanzania National Archives at the time I requested them. Because of this, it is impossible to discern who was tried in which court beyond what was commented upon in other files

District Officer Bampfylde, who took over Bagamoyo District during the latter half of the 1930s, noted the effectiveness in allowing the traditional system of *shauri* to continue in town. Both Liwali Sherdel and Acting Liwali Musa Pishoki not only took into consideration the advice of the town elders but also the influence of the parents in the town. According to district reports, problems arose in Bagamoyo Town with youth in the 1930s. Some were riff raff who had come to hide in Bagamoyo from law enforcers in Dar es Salaam and Tanga,⁴² but many were local youth. Bampfylde observed in 1938: “The Bagamoyo system of dealing with juvenile offenders has also been found most successful. The Liwali sends for their fathers, and the fathers themselves administer correction in the old fashioned style. The child then realizes that he cannot flout his father’s authority with impunity.”⁴³ Disobedience and loitering were the most common frustrations town authorities faced from the youth, but theft and gambling were more serious offences.

The theft of coconuts – Bagamoyo township’s leading crop – for resale was an age-old problem faced all over the town and by all communities; not only are annual reports from the British era replete with complaints about this phenomenon, but even files from the German government and the Holy Ghost Father archives make mention of it. The Germans observed that “natives” would steal coconuts from government plantations while cutting grass on nearby property; the coconuts would be hidden in the sacks or

and annual reports; consequently, I am unable to comment on whether the *Wabagamoyo* were able to use different courts to their advantage (ie. women might have found the colonial court more sympathetic than the local *shauri* system).

⁴² TNA, Acc. 61/24/E, District Officer, Bagamoyo to The Commissioner of Police and Prisons, DSM, 30/6/1931.

⁴³ TNA, Acc. 61/24/E, Bampfylde to The Commissioner of Prisons, DSM, 5/1/1938.

wheelbarrows of cut grass and sold on the market.⁴⁴ One British district officer noted with despair the statement of a “native” prosecuted by the Holy Ghost Fathers for stealing their coconuts: “*Hapa Bagamoyo, sisi tuhuibiana*” (here in Bagamoyo, we always steal from each other).⁴⁵ The same district officer went on to declare that coconut thievery was Bagamoyo’s most flourishing industry and was committed by gangs. It was difficult to prosecute anybody because “they are all thieves, they steal from one another and all being related won’t when it comes to the point give evidence.”⁴⁶ This latter statement is particularly interesting because of how it recalls a similar story examined in chapter three. When the Germans launched a punitive expedition against the rebel Bagamoyo *jumbe* Salim bin Abdallah, the African mercenaries used in the attack were given free license to sack the *jumbe*’s estate. The mercenaries, made up of local prisoners, slaves and former Sultan askaris, rejected the offer, due to their fear of local repercussions and vengeance. Here, again, in the trials brought against the coconut thieves, would-be local witnesses were reluctant to inform against their fellow *Wabagamoyo* most likely from fear over local retribution.

In May 1940, “there was a series of cases of petty thieving and housebreaking in (Bagamoyo). On enquiring it was found that a certain number of idle young hooligans whose chief form of amusement is card playing and gambling, waited till everybody had gone to their shambas, and then broke into the people’s houses to recoup themselves their losses at cards . . . the complaints of theft came from Missionaries, Arabs, Indians, and

⁴⁴ TNA, G32/11, Bagamoyo Bezirksamt Shauri Proclamation, 5/10/1913.

⁴⁵ TNA, DO Bagamoyo Annual Report 1950.

⁴⁶ TNA, Bagamoyo District Annual Report 1951.

Natives.”⁴⁷ Nine years later, there was a strike of turn boys⁴⁸ and house boys in Bagamoyo which threatened to become violent: “gangs of roughs marched the streets with sticks, shouting and talking very largely. The Indians were either in a trembling huddle in the Boma or else organizing for themselves a relief convoy to evacuate themselves to Morogoro.”⁴⁹ In each situation, the *liwali*, backed by the town elders, addressed the situation. In the case of the gambling thieves, some were placed in prison and sentenced to convict labour while the rest were made to cultivate their own shambas “with a zest unknown before”.⁵⁰ As for the strikers,

the Liwali was outraged. He summonsed the strikers to attend at the Boma, which they did, leaving their sticks behind them and talking much smaller. He had known their fathers and their grandfathers, he said, he thoroughly smartened them all up. Soon they were unhappily admitting they had got themselves into a jam, and what could they do to get out of it.⁵¹

What is significant about this quotation is the *liwali*’s reference to the strikers’ fathers and grandfathers. By the time this incident had taken place, Sherdel had served the Bagamoyo community for over two decades. Shunned twenty-three years earlier for being an outsider, Sherdel was now using his familiarity with the *Wabagamoyo* to chastise and shame them. Only somebody who was a part of the placial community could draw upon these sorts of references to bring people into line; as one district officer noted: “His influence is such that he often does a great deal more work than lies within the scope of a Native Authority. A number of people *of all races in the area* are prepared

⁴⁷ TNA, Acc. 61/3/XII/E, Bagamoyo District Report, May 1940.

⁴⁸ Turnboys were responsible for turning the crank that started the motor in trucks and busses. They were also usually the mechanics. The driver’s sole responsibility was to drive the vehicle.

⁴⁹ TNA, Acc. 61/3/XII/E, Bagamoyo District Report, May 1940.

⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁵¹ TNA, Bagamoyo District Annual Report 1951.

to listen to his persuasive and diplomatic speech and we are I believe saved a fair amount of Court work with the litigious by his mediation and negotiation.”⁵² Ultimately Sherdel would never be as popular as the Ramiyas who held the monopoly on earning the townspeople’s respect. Sherdel would always be seen as something of a stooge of the British since his power was credited to their backing. A year after independence in Tanganyika, he was removed from his position of authority and replaced with Sheikh Muhammad Ramiya whose inauguration was a cause for much celebration.⁵³ Nonetheless, if Sherdel did not always best represent the interests of the *Wabagamoyo* to the British authorities, he at least knew how to consult with them to administer the town with a sufficient degree of efficiency.

In the late 1930s, the British administration established township authorities in the colony’s urban centres, the intention of which was to provide a medium to give the various communities of the township a voice in local affairs. In Bagamoyo, the *liwali* was initially selected by the British district officer to represent African affairs in the town; however, after the establishment of a branch of the Tanganyikan African Association (TAA)⁵⁴ in Bagamoyo in August 1939, representation on the council was reconsidered. The TAA was introduced to Bagamoyo by a truck driver named Maksudi Mtumwa, an African of Manyema origin whose father had been brought to Bagamoyo as

⁵² TNA, Bagamoyo District Annual Report 1949. Italics mine.

⁵³ Nimtz, 163-164.

⁵⁴ The TAA originated in Dar es Salaam around 1929, although it remains unknown exactly when it emerged. It emerged as a voice of protest in response to the possibility of Tanganyika’s union with Kenya and Uganda. It claimed to speak on behalf of all Africans in the colony and aimed “to safeguard the interests of Africans, not only in Tanganyika, but in the whole of Africa. The constitution stated that ‘anyone who is an African may be a member,’ regardless of tribe, religion, or territorial origin.” Iliffe, *A Modern History*, 405-412.

a slave.⁵⁵ After consultation with Sheikh Mohammed Ramiya (the son of the earlier liwali, Sheikh Ramiya) and District Officer Bampfylde, the Bagamoyo branch of the TAA was set up by Mtumwa. Bampfylde praised the level of interest the TAA took in town affairs:

The African Association here represents all classes of the native community, and has already given me valuable assistance in many ways . . . They have an interest in the township, as their letters to the Authority show asking for better lighting, a rest camp for native strangers (now erected), simplification of procedure in granting building permits. It also seems unfair to me that the largest body of citizens in the township have no member to represent their interests as all the other communities are represented. The president is an educated lorry driver, the vice president an important township elder, the Treasurer the Head Station hand, and the membership is quite a large one, and, as stated above, is drawn from all classes and trades, and thoroughly representative of the natives of Bagamoyo.⁵⁶

After some discussion with the Provincial Commissioner, Bampfylde was granted permission to include African representatives on the Township Authority board after reducing the number of Indians who were represented on it.⁵⁷ Unfortunately, it would take another eight years before an African was finally placed on the board.⁵⁸

Authority in Bagamoyo, then, rested to a great extent on consultation with community leaders. No doubt that there has always been, however, for the period under review for this dissertation (1860s-1960s), one authority figure who has stood above the others. Whether this person emerged of his own power like Jumbe Fimbo Mbili Mohammed in the precolonial period, or was appointed and supported by a colonial

⁵⁵ Interview, Mtumwa Maksud (son of Maksudi Mtumwa), Bagamoyo, 6/1/2005. Maksudi's father was entrusted by his owner to lead caravans into the interior and back. After six successful trips, Maksudi's father was manumitted by his owner and given a piece of land to settle on in town. See also Nimtz, *Islam and Politics*, 148.

⁵⁶ TNA, Acc. 61/52/E, Bampfylde to PCEP, 1/3/1940.

⁵⁷ TNA, Acc. 61/52/E, Acting PCEP to DO Bagamoyo, 13/3/1940.

⁵⁸ Nimtz, 149. Sheikh Mohammed Ramiya would be the first African to sit on the local Township Authority.

government like the al-Lemki family or Gulamrasul Sherdel, these leaders ultimately understood that their power rested to some significant extent on discussion with other community leaders. This pattern came about as a result of Bagamoyo's heritage as a town made up of moieties, or *mitaa*, each which had been governed by a separate *jumbe*. Aside from the *majumbe*, there were also those men who made themselves reputations based on their understanding of Islamic law, their concern for the welfare of the community, or their business acumen. Add to this the leaders of other local racial communities like the Asians and Europeans and you have a large number of authority figures present in Bagamoyo Town. Given the potential for fractiousness in the community, diplomacy remained essential and demanded consultation between various community leaders to maintain peaceful relations within their shared space of Bagamoyo. Given the diversity of communities within Bagamoyo, there must have been selfish interests in the hearts of these *Wabagamoyo* leaders, but these interests had to be negotiated carefully within the larger racial community.

Taking Attendance: Schooling in Bagamoyo

Historical studies on education in Africa are predominantly concerned with the intentions of Christian missionaries and colonial governments in educating Africans and how the latter responded. Issues examined include the struggle between missionaries and governments over the minds of the Africans; whether Africans suffered a confusion of identity as a result of western education; how Africans were able to take advantage of western education to challenge and overthrow their colonial masters; how women were able to change their social status; how a new African elite was created which challenged

traditional authorities; education as a tool of exploitation and/or development; and education as a means to promote nationalism.⁵⁹ Few studies have been published on the history of colonial education in Tanzania and, while the scholarship that does exist addresses the issues just listed, there is scant mention of the struggle that took place between Europeans and Africans over how the former got the latter to show up in the classrooms in the first place.⁶⁰ One exception is Corrie Decker's recent doctoral research which examines the education of Muslim girls in Zanzibar during the British period. Muslim parents were even more wary of sending their daughters to British schools than they were their sons. Decker, examining the theme of *heshima*, or respect, demonstrates how the British administration consulted the local communities in devising their curriculum for Muslim girls in Zanzibar. Only then did the Muslim parents trust the government enough to send their daughters to school.⁶¹ This section also addresses this struggle and comes to similar conclusions with Decker: community consultation

⁵⁹ Andrew E. Barnes, "Western Education in Colonial Africa," in *Africa – Volume 3: Colonial Africa, 1885-1939*, ed. Toyin Falola (Durham: Carolina Academic Press, 2002), pgs. 139-156; Apollos O. Nwauwa, "Educational Policies and Reforms," in *Africa – Volume 4: The End of Colonial Rule – Nationalism and Decolonization*, ed. Toyin Falola (Durham: Carolina Academic Press, 2002), pgs. 167-184.

⁶⁰ George Hornsby, "German Educational Achievement in East Africa," *Tanganyika Notes and Records*, 62, (1964): 83-90; Marcia Wright, "Local Roots of Policy in German East Africa," *Journal of African History*, 9:4 (1968): 621-630; Lene Buchert, *Education in the Development of Tanzania, 1919-1990* (London: James Currey, 1994); Koponen, *Development*, 500-526. Buchert and Wright do not raise the issue while Hornsby and Koponen only mention that attendance figures were initially low during the German period, prompting the government to make attendance mandatory among children of schoolgoing age. He does not, however, discuss how this policy was put into practice. Iliffe is also generally silent on this issue, noting only the reluctance of many *majumbe* to send their children to government schools. Iliffe, 211.

⁶¹ Corrie Decker, *Investing in Ideas: Girls' Education in Colonial Zanzibar*. Ph.D. dissertation, University of California, Berkeley, 2007. See also Elizabeth McMahon, *Becoming Pemban: Identity, Social Welfare and Community During the Protectorate Period*. Ph.D. dissertation, Indiana University, 2005, 199-238.

ultimately led to higher and more consistent student enrollment. It provides another window into the previous section's discussion about control and consultation, maintaining the conclusion that some form of community consensus was necessary for *Wabagamoyo* cooperation.

Both the TAA and the Bagamoyo Township Authority took an interest in the schooling of the *Wabagamoyo*. State sponsored education in Bagamoyo did not, however, begin in the British period, but officially got its start on October 22, 1895 during the German era.⁶² The first schoolhouse was rented by the German administration from the Indian, Datu Mita, at 60/- rupees a month.⁶³ Herr Rutz was paid by the German government to teach Swahili, German, mathematics, geography, natural science, calligraphy, as well as music and gymnastics. Swahili was used as the language of instruction for all classes.⁶⁴ Three different grades of education were offered the local inhabitants, all with the intention of creating a class of clerks and scribes for the German administration.⁶⁵ The school was open to all the inhabitants of Bagamoyo with the exception of the European children as proven when the son of the local agent for the German East Africa Company came of school-going age and was privately tutored instead of receiving lessons at the schoolhouse.⁶⁶

⁶² TNA, G9/54, Rutz to Bezirksamt Bagamoyo, 4/10/1896. The Holy Ghost Fathers also offered schooling at the mission prior to 1895 and there appears to have been a class offered for the Indian children of the town as of 1892. AStEsp, Bagamoyo Journal, 2/10/1892.

⁶³ TNA, G9/54, Miethsvertrag, 20/9/1895;

⁶⁴ TNA, G9/54, Rutz to Kaiserliche Gouvernement, 12/4/1897; TNA, G9/65, Annual Report – Government School, Bagamoyo, Oswald Rutz, 1/4/1898-31/3/1899.

⁶⁵ Koponen, *Development*, 500-526.

⁶⁶ TNA, G9/65, Lorenz to Spieth, 21/5/1905. This was the son of Herr Schuller.

Arousing an interest in the state school among the locals and maintaining it proved the greatest challenge for the German administration. The *Wabagamoyo*, being predominantly Muslim (divided among several different sects to be sure), were suspicious of the state school. Although the state school offered no religious instruction of any kind, its instructors were, nevertheless, Christians. Matters were not helped much when, right from the beginning, the Indian teacher at the school told the students that the German teacher, Oswald Rutz, was an “*mtu mbaya*” – a bad man – because it was his intention to convince the children to give up their faith. Rather than simply fire the Indian, Oswald Rutz brought him before a public shauri which was attended by the town notables and general population. His crimes were read out aloud before the gathered assembly who accepted the court’s decision to fire the Indian instructor as well as fine him. At the same hearing, the objectives of the state school were read out loud for all to hear and understand; even the students themselves were gathered to hear them proclaimed.⁶⁷ Despite this clearing of Rutz’s name and the intent of the school, attendance remained low.

Rutz’s next strategy was to speak to the parents of the community to ensure that their children went to school. Rutz claimed that out of over 100 students enrolled at the school, only about 45 came. The majority of these were the Asian children; Rutz had more difficulty in getting the “Mrima people” – the mixed population – to monitor their children’s inclination to play hooky. District Officer Leue asked the government if he was in the right to apply pressure to the parents of registered schoolchildren through the punishment of absenteeism with fines or short prison sentences. Permission was granted,

⁶⁷ TNA, G9/65, Oswald Rutz to Beziksamt Bagamoyo, 13/6/1896; TNA, G9/54, Gaertner to Kaiserliche Gouvernement, 10/7/1896.

but the government warned Leue to be prudent and fair in his judgment and to preferably use small fines over imprisonment. School attendance did improve shortly thereafter, but by the following year it appears to have slackened off yet again.⁶⁸

The next tactic Rutz and Leue tried was quite remarkable in its concern for human welfare. They approached the imperial government with the plan to establish a boarding house (Internat) where they would place several orphaned children in town and take responsibility for them with the condition that the children attend school on a regular basis. Rutz knew of eight to ten local boys between the ages of six and twelve whom he thought would benefit from this charity. The request was granted.⁶⁹ By the turn of the twentieth century there were fifteen orphans recorded as living in the boarding home.⁷⁰ Rutz also sought to create incentives for children to attend school. He asked the colonial governor for permission to take a field trip to Tanga with the best students of the school so that they could witness the development of a modern port town with its new harbour and railway. Governor Liebert flatly rejected Rutz's idea: "We don't need to raise negro boys as "grands logeurs" nor to indulge them in pleasure trips."⁷¹ Liebert did, however, concede to Rutz's request to purchase musical instruments and to teach the students to

⁶⁸ TNA, G9/54, Leue to Kaiserliche Gouvernement, 18/9/1896; TNA, G9/54, Kaiserliche Gouvernement to Bezirksamt Bagamoyo, 22/9/1896; TNA, G9/54, Storch to Rutz, 20/11/1896; TNA, G9/54, Rutz to Storch, 22/11/1896.

⁶⁹ TNA, G9/65, Rutz to Kaiserliche Gouvernement, 7/4/1897.

⁷⁰ TNA, G9/65, Annual Report – Government School, Bagamoyo, Oswald Rutz, 1/4/1898-31/3/1899. One child living in the boarding home was described as a slave. See also TNA, G4/40, Gaertner to Governor, 2/5/1899 & Leipzig Neuesten Nachrichten to Governor Liebert, 26/10/1899 for details of German financial donations to the Bagamoyo orphanage.

⁷¹ TNA, G9/65, Rutz to Leue, 6/8/1899; TNA, G9/65, Liebert to Leue, 10/8/1899.

play them and learn how to march.⁷² This the students picked up with alacrity. Furthermore, the government began to give away awards to the students who had demonstrated the most progress in their German studies, either in the form of clothing or actual cash.⁷³

The school administration was conscientious of its place within the Bagamoyo community. The student body reflected the great diversity of peoples who made Bagamoyo their home – aside from the various Indian, Arab, Shihiri, and Baluchi communities, one class list indicated students from the following African ethnic groups: Swahili, Zaramo, Kami, Lua, Gogo, Bisa, Zigua, Fipa, Nyassa, Manyema, Sagara, Sukuma, Nyamwezi, Yao, and Hehe.⁷⁴ The school observed not only German holidays, but also local ones, namely Ramadan. School was cancelled on at least two occasions so that the students could mourn at a funeral – one for a fellow student, and another for a town notable named Mzee bin Salehe.⁷⁵ Over time, the school also adjusted its schedule so that extended breaks would coincide with planting and harvesting seasons.⁷⁶

Most important, however, was the acknowledgement that state schools would never replace Qur'anic schools. In the early years of the twentieth century, correspondence between the school, district and state administrations reveal the tolerance

⁷² TNA, G9/65, Annual Report – Government School, Bagamoyo, Oswald Rutz, 1/4/1898-31/3/1899; TNA, G9/65, Rutz to Kaiserliche Gouvernement, 19/11/1900.

⁷³ TNA, G9/65, Annual Report – Government School, Bagamoyo, Oswald Rutz, 1/4/1898-31/3/1899; TNA, G9/56, Bagamoyo to Dar es Salaam, 12/3/1904; TNA, G9/56, Götzen to Bagamoyo, 25/3/1904; TNA, G9/66, Dinckelacker to Kaiserliche Gouvernement, 2/4/1909; TNA, G9/66, Weber to Kaiserliche Gouvernement, 20/7/1909.

⁷⁴ TNA, G9/65, Annual Report – Government School, Bagamoyo, Oswald Rutz, 1/4/1898-31/3/1899.

⁷⁵ TNA, G9/65/54, 29/9/1897; TNA, G9/65/62, no date (ca. 1897).

⁷⁶ TNA, G9/56, Rutz to Bezirksamt Bagamoyo, 1/9/1902; TNA, G9/56, Urban (teacher at Dar) to Kaiserliche Gouvernement, 26/9/1902.

shown towards state school students attending Qur'anic lessons in the town. One document records how the state school teacher and the Qur'anic teachers came to an agreement about schooling schedules so that students' religious and secular education would not conflict.⁷⁷ Between 1905 and 1908 there were six Qur'an teachers in town, among them the future Sheikh Ramiya as well as Abu Bakar bin Taha; in 1909 there were eight Qur'an teachers, and by 1913 there were 26.⁷⁸ In some ways the state school at Bagamoyo even encouraged the spread of Islam: non-Muslim children from the hinterland who came to Bagamoyo to take lessons at the state school found themselves following their Muslim school chums to their Qur'anic lessons during the period allotted for religious study.⁷⁹ By doing so, these upcountry children were demonstrating – like the Omani *liwalis*, Asian merchants, and French missionaries before them – how they, too, could localize as *Wabagamoyo*. By 1912, the school administration had resigned itself to the fact that it could not fight the popularity of Islam in Bagamoyo and its spread from that town into the interior.⁸⁰ The tolerance the local state school administration showed towards its students' religious education, however, does appear to have kept the attendance count over the 200 mark, twice as many students as before the government's official policy of religious education accommodation.⁸¹ The colonial administration had

⁷⁷ TNA, G9/56, Boeder to Kaiserliche Gouvernement, 4/8/1902.

⁷⁸ TNA, G9/65, Lorenz to Kaiserliche Government, 7/11/1905; TNA, G9/58, Lehrer Lorenz to Kaiserliche Gouvernement, 26/10/1909; TNA, G9/48, Bagamoyo Bezirksamt to Kaiserliche Gouvernement, 6/8/1913.

⁷⁹ TNA, G9/58, Lehrer Lorenz to Kaiserliche Gouvernement, 26/10/1909.

⁸⁰ TNA, G9/60, Ramlow to Kaiserliche Gouvernement, "Bericht ueber die Revision der Regierungsschule in Bagamojo, Pangani und Tanga," 12/8/1912.

⁸¹ Attendance appears to have lapsed by about sixty or so students between 1910 and 1912 when there was no European headmaster at the Bagamoyo school. During this time, the school was led by Mzee Shabaan who, although a longstanding and qualified teacher at the Bagamoyo school, was criticized as being uninspiring. TNA, G9/66,

been keen from the outset of attracting the children of the Muslim elite to their schools in order to cultivate them as colonial intermediaries, so this most likely explains the accommodating attitude towards Islam.⁸²

The British faced the exact same problems as their German predecessors regarding state school attendance in Bagamoyo. School records are missing for the period between 1914 and 1921, but by the latter year, attendance appears to have been about one-fifth of the heyday of German schooling.⁸³ At first, the British district administration attempted punishing the children to increase school attendance numbers, but soon resorted – as the Germans had once done – to speaking directly with the parents and town elders and encouraging them to monitor their children's whereabouts.⁸⁴ The British also awarded prizes to the best scholars for attendance, work and good behaviour in and out of the classroom.⁸⁵ The appearance of the school was improved, discipline was taught to students by a non-commissioned officer of the police force, and the school planted a *shamba* so that children could learn agricultural techniques which were important to their farming community. These steps led, stated one official, to an increase in attendance: “the inhabitants of the town have expressed their appreciation of the

Regierungslehrer Juenemann to Kaiserliche Gouvernement, “Bericht ueber die Revision der Schulen im Bezirk Bagamoyo,” 30/11/1911-23/12/1911; TNA, G9/60, Ramlow to Kaiserliche Gouvernement, “Bericht ueber die Revision der Regierungsschule in Bagamojo, Pangani und Tanga”, 12/8/1912.

⁸² Koponen, 505.

⁸³ TNA, AB9, Bagamoyo District, Annual Report, 1921; TNA, AB18, Bagamoyo District, Annual Report, 1923.

⁸⁴ TNA, AB18, Bagamoyo District, Annual Report, 1923.

⁸⁵ TNA, AB38, Bagamoyo District, Annual Report, 1924.

improved conditions, and in some cases have brought boys to be enrolled, saying, 'They wished them to be taught cleanliness and obedience.'"⁸⁶

By 1925, attendance was on par with the latter years of German rule; however, it soon dropped once again. Again, as in the German period, part of the difficulty was the strong influence of Qur'anic teachers in Bagamoyo which had increased rapidly since WWI. Whereas it was recorded that there had been 26 Qur'anic teachers in 1913, by 1925 there were 91.⁸⁷ Suspicion ran deep amongst the Muslim community towards the British state-run school. Whereas the Germans had neither subsidized Christian nor Muslim religious education institutions, since 1925 the British were giving Christian missions around £23,000/year while Qur'anic schools received nothing.⁸⁸ In 1930, the Director of Education paid the Bagamoyo school a visit and, noting the weak support from the community regarding the state school, suggested the district officer establish a committee of town elders "to encourage and supervise the general working of the school with a view to encouraging greater attendance." In addition, a school committee was also formed which was presided over by the *liwali* of Bagamoyo, Gulamrasul Sherdel, but formed of various members of the community. When the TAA was formed in 1939, one of its principal interests was the function and progress of the state school.⁸⁹

By the late 1930s, school attendance had improved significantly. District Officer Bampfylde credited the *Wabagamoyo* elders for the progress:

⁸⁶ TNA, AB38, Bagamoyo District, Annual Report, 1924.

⁸⁷ TNA, AB35, Bagamoyo District, Annual Report, 1925.

⁸⁸ TNA, Acc. 61/647, Memo by the Government Inspector on the Education of Moslem children in the Southern Province, October 1938.

⁸⁹ TNA, Bagamoyo District Book (comments entered by District Officer Bampfylde, 18/3/1940).

By constant persuasion and advice, the elders now take an intelligent interest in all town affairs and cases have occurred where a father has literally expounded to his son, one of the best known best proverbs of Solomon “that to spare the rod is to spoil the child.” One of the reasons that the Bagamoyo School is so flourishing is that at any matter relating to the welfare of the children is first referred to the elders. The Head Teacher has informed me he has found this system considerably help him in his work [sic].⁹⁰

The system of using the elders appeared quite effective; Habasi Choka explained how it worked: “If you were late the teachers would be looking for you and they would find three elders and ask them to look for those who are not there during the attendance period. When they find you, they take you to school and when you get there the teachers whip you.”⁹¹ Despite the strict supervision the township elders carried out amongst the schoolchildren of Bagamoyo, they did possess a genuine concern that these children receive any opportunity that might be of benefit. Samahani Kejeri recalled how he and his brother both passed primary school and were allowed to carry on to middle school in 1954. Unfortunately, the fees for attending the latter were too expensive; his father could only afford to send one son onto middle school. When Gulamrasul Sherdel, the *liwali* of Bagamoyo from 1928-1961, saw that only one of the Kejeris was continuing with his education, he approached the father and asked him why this was the case. After hearing the father’s explanation, Sherdel gave the man a job cutting grass so that he could afford to send both of his boys to middle school.⁹² District Officer Bampfylde also noted early on the enthusiasm Sherdel showed towards schooling in his town.⁹³

⁹⁰ TNA, Acc. 61/1/E/II, Bampfylde to PCEP, 9/3/1938.

⁹¹ Interview with Mzee Habasi Choka, Bagamoyo, 23/1/2005.

⁹² Interview with Mzee Samahani Kejeri, Bagamoyo, 2/1/2005. The fees strike the author as being far too high – I believe Samahani meant 40/-, not 400/-.

⁹³ TNA, Acc. 61/65/E, Bampfylde to PCEP, 10/9/1935.

While Sherdel may have been supportive of the school, others remained suspicious. Muslim authorities pointed out the unfairness of the government subsidies of Christian schools while Qur'anic schools received nothing.⁹⁴ In 1941 the government changed its attitude towards Islamic religious education and began granting financial aid and encouragement towards Islamic learning if the Muslim schools met certain requirements established by the British government regarding the curriculum. Ultimately, however, it amounted to including religious studies with secular studies which were taught by Muslim instructors.⁹⁵ Nonetheless, on account of the overwhelming Christian background of the state teachers and assistants, parents still held their reservations, fearing that their children would be converted if they attended lessons.⁹⁶ Habasi Choka reflected upon the community discussion that took place among Muslim parents and elders: "Some of them didn't want their children to go to school because most of them were saying 'If you take a child to school, he can change his religion to being a Christian', and some of them were saying no, just take him to school; when he grows up he will know what to do, but it is a must to go to school."⁹⁷ While many children were officially registered at the state school, their parents did not allow them to actually attend classes. Maalimu Liwasila Rajabu, now a Qur'anic scholar himself, explained that as a child, he and his relatives were rounded up on numerous

⁹⁴ TNA, Acc. 61/647, Memo by the Government Inspector on the Education of Moslem children in the Southern Province, October 1938.

⁹⁵ TNA, Acc. 61/647, PCEP to all District Commissioners, 8/9/1941; NA, CO 691/186, Dawson to Secretary of State For the Colonies, 2/5/1944.

⁹⁶ Interviews with Nzige Kawaka, Bagamoyo, 2/1/2005; Mzee Habasi Choka, Bagamoyo, 23/1/2005; Mzee Mrisho Saidi Kitimbwa, Bagamoyo, 6/3/2005; Maalimu Liwasila Rajabu, Bagamoyo, 5/3/2005; Mzee Salum Tamin, 13/3/2005; Sheikh Abdallah M. Jembe, Bagamoyo, 19/3/2005.

⁹⁷ Interview with Mzee Habasi Choka.

occasions by the elders on the school committee and brought into the schoolhouse. When his father would hear of this news, “(he) would come to school and tell the teachers, ‘my children are so and so, give them to me’ and we were taken out, and we didn’t study.”⁹⁸

Despite the use of coercive force such as the threat of monetary fines and corporal punishment, education administrators and district officials – both German and British alike – realised that they could not achieve any kind of success in making the *Wabagamoyo* children attend state schooling without involving the community itself. While coercion was effective at getting immediate results, maintaining those results over a longer period of time depended on the deferment of colonial authorities to the cooperation and assistance of local parents, town elders and the *liwali*. Thus, the experience of encouraging attendance at the state school in Bagamoyo mirrors that of achieving political authority over the townspeople through consultation and consensus.

After the Caravans Stopped Coming

While Bagamoyo’s historical growth and power as a port town had been contingent upon the long distance caravan trade, its economic backbone remained fishing and agriculture.⁹⁹ As one British district officer put it simply, ““When food is tight, money can be (made) from the sale of fish, mats, baskets and copra. There is work available at a number of estates. Thus the people of the coast never had to tighten their belts seriously.”¹⁰⁰ A large number of *Wabagamoyo* owned their own boats, usually *ngalawas* (outrigger canoes) or *mashuas* (canoes); some owned *jehazis* (square bottom

⁹⁸ Interview, Maalimu Liwasila Rajabu.

⁹⁹ TNA, AB9, Bagamoyo District, Annual Report, 1921.

¹⁰⁰ TNA, Bagamoyo District, Annual Report 1953.

boats) as well. Fishing was one industry in Bagamoyo that British observers noted was completely dominated by the African inhabitants.¹⁰¹ Fishing was so plentiful off the coast of Bagamoyo that even fishermen from Zanzibar took advantage of it.¹⁰² According to Makinga Rajabu, a local retired fisherman, a small fishing boat could be made locally in town during the British period for about sixty to seventy shillings.¹⁰³ Bagamoyo was a major centre for dhow construction in the past and remains one of the last places on the Tanzanian coast today where dhows are built by local craftsmen. In the nineteenth century the launching of a new boat had been a community affair:

When [the boat] is finished, the people are told, "Tomorrow the ship will be launched. Meet at the shore in the morning." Nyamwezi and waungwana come together. The Nyamwezi haul the ship down for a fee and the waungwana for love. As they haul the ship down they sing . . . until the ship enters the water. Three days later it goes out to try the mast and sails. People go on board; but they pay no passage money.¹⁰⁴

Rajabu noted that in his own lifetime, a new boat would be launched by slaughtering a goat and inviting a group of people for a feast and celebration that also involved washing the new boat with seawater.¹⁰⁵

Africans either worked for themselves or, depending on the size of the boat or the number of boats one owned, Africans could also work as crew members (*baharia*) for another. Rajabu stated that the latter situation was not particularly lucrative since the owner of the boat had to be paid a lump sum at the end of the day's fishing; whatever was

¹⁰¹ TNA, AB38, Bagamoyo District, Annual Report 1924; TNA, Acc. 61/390/I, DC, Uzaramo to PCEP, 3/8/1943.

¹⁰² TNA, Acc. 61/390/I, DC Pike to PCEP, 11/2/1936.

¹⁰³ Rajabu, 19/1/2005.

¹⁰⁴ J.W.T. Allen, ed. & transl. *The Customs of the Swahili People: The Desturi za Waswahili of Mtoro bin Mwinyi Bakari and Other Swahili Persons* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1981), 124.

¹⁰⁵ Rajabu, 19/1/2005.

left over was divided amongst the crew. These *baharia* made barely enough to eat and clothe themselves.¹⁰⁶ Women were also engaged in the fishing industry although not in boats. They sewed two or three pieces of cloth together to form one long piece. As the tide ebbed, two women would hold this long sheet between coral reefs in the water, while another woman, using a basket, chased the fish fry into the nets. They caught many this way and sold portions for one pesa each. The women also dried some of the fish which they took with them into the hinterland and exchanged for cassava. According to Mtoro bin Mwinyi Bakari, the upcountry people enjoyed the dried fish because of the “difficulty in getting anything tasty.”¹⁰⁷ The fish, including shark, would be bought up by *Wabagamoyo* Indian and Arab wholesalers who sold it to markets in Zanzibar, Dar es Salaam, Kilwa, Lindi and interior towns as well.¹⁰⁸

The other major local industry was coconuts. Bagamoyo is known as the town of palms and there were plantations of all sizes across and around the town. *Wabagamoyo* of all racial and ethnic backgrounds owned coconut shambas.¹⁰⁹ The coconuts were sold as drink and food to the interior porters who came to Bagamoyo, and the meat was molded into cakes called copra from which oil is extracted which can be used in soaps. Leaves from the tree were woven into mats or sold as thatch for building roofs. Women in town made a profit from tapping the trees and brewing *tembo*, or palmwine. This they also sold to porters staying in town as well exporting it upcountry. Just as the local

¹⁰⁶ Interview with Mzee Makinga Rajabu, Bagamoyo, 19/1/2005. Erik Gilbert does not comment on the lives of local fishermen in his monograph, *Dhows and the Colonial Economy of Zanzibar, 1860-1970* (Oxford: James Currey, 2004).

¹⁰⁷ Allen, *Customs of the Swahili People*, 122; E. Werth, *Das Deutsch-Ostafrikanische Küstenland und die Vorgelagerten Inseln, Band I* (Berlin: Dietrich Reimer, 1915), 248.

¹⁰⁸ Werth, *Deutsch-Ostafrikanische Küstenland*, 249

¹⁰⁹ TNA, AB38, Bagamoyo District, Annual Report, 1924.

fishermen had their rituals for launching a new boat, so, too, did the farmers have theirs for clearing a new field: "The opening of a new field in the wilderness is a sacred event, hunger (*njaa*) is ever near, and the power of *mwitu* (the bush) to give or deny is absolute."¹¹⁰ The townspeople had to acquire the bark of a particular shrub cultivated by the Wazaramo; this was mixed with the seed when the farmer was ready to plant.¹¹¹

The presence of the coconut palms exasperated colonial officials: "There is always a demand for labourers here, as the Roman Catholic Mission and Indian, Baluchi and Arab coconut plantation owners could employ far more men in clearing and picking than at present offer themselves . . . The local native prefers generally to work his own fields for a certain time, and to loaf the rest of the year."¹¹² Another official (or perhaps the same one) elaborated,

I am loth [sic] to encourage natives to grow Cocoanut palms, as in my opinion it undoubtedly breeds laziness. I have had abundant examples during my short stay here to witness the methods of a native cocoanut shamba owner. The crop is usually sold in advance to some Indian or Arab, the picking and cleaning of the shamba being left to the purchaser, and in consequence the owner does not do a hands [sic] turn of work from one year to the other.¹¹³

Of course, this was a colonial administrator's frustration towards his inability to make the *Wabagamoyo* grow more surplus produce for export, or the kinds of cash crops that the British Empire desired, namely cotton.

The Tanganyika Africa Association demonstrated concern over business practices in Bagamoyo Town. In 1950, the local branch beseeched the district officer to put an end

¹¹⁰ Allen, *Customs of the Swahili People*, fnnt 1, 288.

¹¹¹ Ibid, 127.

¹¹² TNA, AB38, Bagamoyo District, Annual Report, 1924.

¹¹³ TNA, AB18, Bagamoyo District, Annual Report, 1923. Almost ten years later another District Officer remarked, "Bagamoyo Township is moribund and is only kept alive by the continued existence of Cocoanut Plantations." TNA, Bagamoyo District, Annual Report, 1932.

to South Asian merchant GM Meghji's decade-long monopoly over the buying and processing of native grown copra and grains and allow Champs Mulji to establish his own processing mill. This competition would result in the offer of better prices to farmers for the raw resources as well as improve the quality of the products sold to the local inhabitants. The petition was successful.¹¹⁴

"A Household Word in Bagamoyo"

The onset of World War II brought more difficulties to the *Wabagamoyo*. First, after 1940 when Italy entered the war, the British resorted to forced conscription in Tanganyika.¹¹⁵ This brought back dark memories to the *Wabagamoyo* of similar German policies during World War I:

The outstanding event of the year was the introduction of conscription to tribesmen who still retain very vivid recollections of the methods employed in collecting slaves and of the more recent 1914-1918 war when all and sundry were impressed as porters. For about a month the market of Bagamoyo was given a wide berth by natives who were afraid they would be impressed if they came near the town.¹¹⁶

One Mbagamoyo elder recalled fleeing the school when British authorities arrived one day to impress the older boys and men.¹¹⁷ While the war affected the men directly through conscription, it also affected all *Wabagamoyo* generally through wartime

¹¹⁴ TNA, Acc. 7/20/4, Secretary Mwinyihija, TAA (Bagamoyo) to Bwana Shauri Mkubwa, 8/9/1950. See also applications by Mulji himself throughout the latter half of the 1940s in the same file.

¹¹⁵ Iliffe, *Tanganyika*, 370.

¹¹⁶ TNA, Bagamoyo District, Annual Report, 1941.

¹¹⁷ Interview with Mzee Selemani Abdallah Issa, Bagamoyo, 7/1/2005. See also Interview with Bibi Kidawa Abdallah, Bagamoyo, 16/1/2005, who mentions people fleeing the town after 7pm and hiding themselves in mango trees to avoid capture.

rationing decreed in 1942.¹¹⁸ Food and textiles were the main commodities that were being controlled. The former did not appear to affect Bagamoyo as much as it did in Dar es Salaam, probably because most people in the town had their own shambas and could subsist; at any rate, documented complaints relating to controlled goods in Bagamoyo during wartime only mentioned clothing and luxury items.¹¹⁹ The response to the sudden shortage of these goods was smuggling – *magendo* in Kiswahili – which in Bagamoyo was a household word.¹²⁰

Wartime rationing did not prompt smuggling in Bagamoyo; locals had been smuggling since at least the German period, principally in slaves. The switch to “legitimate smuggling” occurred after 1922 when the British officially abolished slavery in the former German East Africa. Ivory, and other similar goods like hippopotamus teeth and rhinoceros tusks, had been consistently smuggled from the interior through Bagamoyo to Zanzibar to avoid customs dues, from the time of the Zanzibar sultanate to present day. Prior to 1942, luxury goods such as sugar, tobacco, matches, and playing cards were smuggled in large quantities into Bagamoyo; the Supervisor of Customs noted in 1935: “(i)t is illuminating to observe that the official import of these (goods) through Bagamoyo Port for the past year is ‘NIL’.”¹²¹ After 1942, the District Officer noted that

¹¹⁸ Iliffe, *Tanganyika*, 372

¹¹⁹ Brennan, *Nation*, Chapter Three; TNA, Bagamoyo District, Annual Reports, 1942-1948.

¹²⁰ TNA, Acc. 7/8/3, Supervisor of Customs Hooper to Comptroller, 27/12/1935.

¹²¹ TNA, Acc. 7/8/3, Supervisor of Customs Hooper to Comptroller, 27/12/1935. See also TNA, 12402/I, Acting Comptroller of Customs McQuade to Auditor, 15/1/1934; TNA, Acc. 61/454, DO Bagamoyo to PCEP, 5/1/1935; TNA, Acc. 7/8/3, Comptroller to Bampfylde, 15/11/1935; TNA, Acc. 7/8/3, Bampfylde to Comptroller, 10/9/1936; TNA, 12402/II, Comptroller to Chief Secretary, 15/8/1939. Files about the smuggling of luxury items like cigarettes to the mainland from Zanzibar can also be found in the Zanzibar National Archives: ZNA, AB25/150, Renwick to Chief Secretary, 25/1/1951.

there had been widespread complaint about the price of clothing in town; thereafter, it was reported that large quantities of rice grown in the hinterland of Bagamoyo were being smuggled to Zanzibar while khangas and kaniki were being smuggled back into Bagamoyo.¹²² Piece goods were distributed at the Boma where the *Wabagamoyo* queued for their share. As Bibi Siwatu Hassan recalled, “they would give (the khangas) to each person one by one in a queue until when the queue is done. The ones who were in front of the queue were getting them first and they continued down the queue until when the khangas were finished. After that they would tell people that the khangas are finished, you should wait for other ones.”¹²³ In other words, there were not enough khangas to go around.

The network of smuggling in Bagamoyo ran deep and wide. It involved primarily the men in town who owned fishing boats and ran the illicit goods between Bagamoyo and Zanzibar; to a lesser extent it also involved the lorry drivers who ran goods between Bagamoyo and Dar es Salaam.¹²⁴ Hooper, the Supervisor of Customs, described the fishermen’s involvement: “Even small canoes can leave this coast at, say 10 p.m. reach Zanzibar in three hours, load, and return by dawn. Dhows often arrive at night-fall and are not cleared until the following morning, if they lie off Bagamoyo; if they choose one of the many unauthorized spots suitable for landing, in which the coast abounds, they are

¹²² TNA, Acc. 61/7/E, Bagamoyo Monthly Report, September 1942; TNA, Acc. 61/7/E, Bagamoyo Monthly Report, May 1943; TNA, Acc. 61/7/E, Bagamoyo Monthly Report, August 1943; TNA, Acc. 61/454, DO Bagamoyo to PCEP, 15/9/1943 (this report noted that some 400 tons of rice had “disappeared” in 1943 from the region between Mlingotini and Saadani); TNA, DO Bagamoyo Annual Report, 1947; Interviews with Mzee Salum Tamin, Bagamoyo, 13/3/2005; Maalimu Liwasila Rajabu.

¹²³ Interview with Bibi Siwatu Hassan, Bagamoyo, 12/1/2005.

¹²⁴ TNA, Acc. 7/8/3, Supervisor of Customs Hooper to Comptroller, 27/12/1935.

of course, not cleared at all.”¹²⁵ Six years later, Bagamoyo District Commissioner Pike observed much the same, elaborating somewhat more on the smuggling system: “rumoured practice of local fishermen under the guise of their lawful activities, smuggling goods from Zanzibar. This is difficult to detect since often the fishermen have not been to Zanzibar but have had goods passed to them at sea.”¹²⁶

While it was reported that some Arabs were involved in the actual transport of smuggled goods,¹²⁷ the illicit trade was predominantly in the hands of Africans. This is logical considering that the fishing trade, as discussed above, was dominated by local Africans. While some of these smugglers undoubtedly sold some of the items individually to local townspeople, more often they smuggled in larger quantities measured in cases or crates which they sold to the retail and wholesale merchants in town – Indians and Arabs – who then sold them in their shops.¹²⁸ While there is no concrete explanation as to why the Africans did not always simply sell the smuggled goods themselves to the locals, a reasonable explanation might be because the British designated which merchants in town could sell what goods. For example, merchants had to apply for licenses to sell restricted goods: G.M. Meghji was permitted to sell matches,

¹²⁵ TNA, Acc. 7/8/3, Supervisor of Customs Hooper to Comptroller, 27/12/1935.

¹²⁶ TNA, Acc 7/8/3, DC Pike to Comptroller, 18/1/1941. For further comments on the complicity of local fishermen and boatmen in the smuggling trade, see TNA, 12402/I, Acting Comptroller of Customs McQuade to Auditor, 15/1/1934; TNA, Acc. 7/8/3, Criminal Case #50 of 1934, Magistrate Cheyne, 13/10/1934; TNA, Acc. 7/8/3, Bampfylde to Comptroller, 10/9/1936; TNA, Acc. 7/8/3, Game Ranger Nyassa to DO Bagamoyo, 12/8/1938; TNA, 12402/I, Comptroller of Customs Smith to PCs, DSM & Tanga, 3/5/1939; ZNA, AB26/10, Acting Senior Customs Officer, Zanzibar to Port Captain, Dar es Salaam, 31/7/1939; Interview, Mzee Salum Tamin. Mzee Tamin, age 90, admitted he had been a smuggler in Bagamoyo. Curiously, a certain “Tamini” was identified as being involved in the local ivory smuggling business in a document from 1938 when my interviewee would have been in his early 20s.

¹²⁷ TNA, 12402/I, Comptroller of Customs Smith to PCs, DSM & Tanga, 3/5/1939.

¹²⁸ Interview, Salum Tamin.

kaniki and khangas while G.G. Dhirani was allowed to sell khangas; Champsi Mulji, Kalyanji Tushidas, and Ali Dewji were not allowed to sell any of these items in their shops.¹²⁹ Not until 1945 did a local African, Goha Momba, petition the government for the right to have African merchant interests represented on the Economic Control Board in Dar es Salaam.¹³⁰ If what merchants could sell was monitored by the government, it was less suspicious if restricted goods were being sold by licensed merchants.

Ivory was also being smuggled through Bagamoyo. This required a partnership between the ivory dealers from the interior and the *Wabagamoyo* who hid the tusks and teeth and made arrangements regarding which day to depart with the illicit cargo to Zanzibar and from where. Lila Rajabu explained the important role of the locals: "it's because they were from here, and if you are in an environment that you are used to, then you will be familiar with everything."¹³¹ With their local knowledge of the shifts of customs watchmen and guards in town, local accomplices were essential to the success of any ivory smuggling operation. At the same time, the customs officers were often part of the smuggling network. As early as the 1930s customs officers from Bagamoyo were being dismissed for their complicity in smuggling luxury goods.¹³² British officials discussed and debated the difficulties of having *Wabagamoyo* as customs officials and watchmen in town:

I have it on good authority that all the watchmen, local to Bagamoyo, property owners in that area, close kin to the malefactors whose nefarious enterprises they are supposed to circumvent, are hand-in-glove with the smugglers, and I believe

¹²⁹ TNA, Acc. 61/7/E, Bagamoyo Monthly Report, May 1943; TNA, Acc. 7/20/4, Wholesalers of Bagamoyo to DC Bagamoyo, 9/4/1945.

¹³⁰ TNA, Acc. 7/20/4, M. Goha Momba to Economic Control Board, DSM, 26/2/1945.

¹³¹ Interview with Mzee Lila Rajabu, Bagamoyo, 22/1/2005.

¹³² TNA, Acc. 7/8/3, DO Robinson to Comptroller, DSM, 28/11/1933.

that, but for a legal quibble, the corporal himself might have stood in the dock to face a criminal charge.¹³³

The same observer went on to suggest that all local employees be replaced with outsiders to avoid the development of local ties and sympathies. Yet another official had remarked the previous year on some of the pitfalls of having outsiders as customs watchmen in Bagamoyo:

It is not unusual for (an outsider) to be subjected to much intimidation as such impairs his usefulness: he will also be carefully kept in ignorance of such local irregularities as it is his duty to prevent and detect. The watchmen who is stationed in his native district is often aware of these doings, but it is probably fear of retaliation rather than connivance or corruption which prevents him from reporting them.¹³⁴

With regards to the last sentence, it was, in truth, both factors: one report described how customs watchman Mohammed Asmani was chased by a smuggler with a knife while a nearby askari refused to lend him any assistance. Salum Tamin, a former smuggler himself, related the story of how in the early 1940s a successful raid on smugglers in the nearby town of Mbweni resulted in the arrest of part of the smuggling network in Bagamoyo that included both fishermen and customs guards.¹³⁵

As widespread, elaborate and male-dominated as the smuggling network in Bagamoyo was, it was by no means restricted to such circles: the women of Bagamoyo were prolific smugglers of khanga and kaniki after 1942. Clothing was in short supply

¹³³ TNA, Acc. 7/8/3, Supervisor of Customs Hooper to Comptroller, 27/12/1935. A year earlier, the Bagamoyo District Officer had complained to the Comptroller of Customs that, unless they rotated the African Customs staff on a monthly basis, it would result “in the guard having an intimate acquaintance with all the local inhabitants of his coastal area and thus becoming more prone to connive at smuggling offences and to render himself more liable to the receipt of bribes.” TNA, Acc. 7/1/11, DO Robinson to Comptroller of Customs, 31/5/1934.

¹³⁴ TNA, Acc. 7/8/3, Comptroller McQuade to Cheyne, 16/7/1934.

¹³⁵ Interview, Salum Tamin.

and new shipments arrived infrequently to Tanganyika during and after the war. In 1944 a Bagamoyo District Officer summed up the situation succinctly, but tongue-in-cheek: “The arrival of a new issue of UK Khangas, the first for six months, caused rejoicing to those who had cash and marital troubles to those who had not.”¹³⁶ Bibi Asha Hassan Mtalii discussed how women carried out their share of illicit trade in town:

Bi.Asha: During (the 1940s) clothes were difficult to obtain here in Bagamoyo, so during that time (people) were taking dhows at night bringing bales of clothes, at night they were bringing them to people with money and then they would go back the next night to take other khangas.

Nzige: So khangas must have been very expensive or?

A: Yes, they were three hundred, two hundred shillings during that time; it was expensive during that time.

N: In normal times, how much did khangas cost?

A: When they started coming here in large numbers, they started being one shilling and fifty cents.

N: One shilling and fifty cents?

A: One shilling and fifty cents for a new khanga.

N: Did women ever bring khangas from Zanzibar to Bagamoyo, like smuggle it?

A: A lot.

N: Were many caught? Did many women get caught?

A: Yes they were being caught . . .

N: And did women do this by themselves or did they organise a way to smuggle the Khangas?

A: No, they didn't organise, just one by one, they were doing it by themselves.¹³⁷

Bibi Rehema Juma gave further details: “(w)omen were hiding khangas in their clothes, they were wearing more than two clothes and inside they were hiding khangas until when the government became aware of their tricks.”¹³⁸ Comments written in the 1949 annual report for Bagamoyo District corroborate the oral testimonies:

Khangas are scarcer than ever, excepting, apparently in Zanzibar, and any lady who cares to travel over to Zanzibar can come back, as many do, wearing new

¹³⁶ TNA, Acc. 61/7/E, Bagamoyo Monthly Report, April 1944.

¹³⁷ Interview with Bibi Asha Hassan Mtalii, Bagamoyo, 5/1/2005.

¹³⁸ Interview with Bibi Rehema Juma, Bagamoyo, 19/1/2005.

khangas in their proper place and two or three pairs in an improper place. The customs patrolmen are very thorough in their searching.¹³⁹

Once the smuggled goods had arrived in Bagamoyo – whether clothing, salt, tobacco, sugar, playing cards, or wheat – the locals had to be informed. This was the final stage involved in the smuggling network. Information and details were secretly passed around from person to person: “(The smuggler) was letting people know because he is a native here. He announces that he has a certain business here . . . and people start telling each other about the business. It was easy for me to tell you and you to tell another person.”¹⁴⁰

From planning to purchasing, smuggling in Bagamoyo relied to a large extent on community that was spatially defined: it required the cooperation of people of diverse livelihoods; people who knew the area in terms of hide-outs and storage; people who knew the comings and goings of local authority figures as well as general local traffic patterns; and people who knew local consumer demands and willingness to buy illicit goods. This is not to claim that all *Wabagamoyo* were involved in some shape or form in the black market; many locals simply complained to the British administration during the period of rationing: “While controls still applied, complaints were brought in numbers daily to the Boma, by Africans, Arabs, Indians, even the few Europeans. Since decontrol, certain faces, which gathered like a daily cloud at the Boma door, are, thank Heavens, scarcely ever seen.”¹⁴¹ Yet, whichever the reaction of the local townspeople, it nevertheless involved large numbers of people of diverse backgrounds and interests

¹³⁹ TNA, Bagamoyo District, Annual Report 1949. For other files which mention women who smuggled clothing, see TNA, Acc. 7/8/3, Sd. Anjaria to Comptroller, 7/9/1945; TNA, Acc. 7/8/3, DC Bagamoyo to DC Morogoro, 9/6/1949; TNA, Acc. 7/8/3, Officer in Charge to DC Bagamoyo, 7/10/1949.

¹⁴⁰ Interview, Maalimu Liwasila Rajabu. See also Interview, Bibi Asha Hassan Mtalii.

¹⁴¹ TNA, Bagamoyo District, Annual Report, 1948.

reacting together towards local concerns. While the complaints may have abated after deregulation, the Bagamoyo smuggling network has proven quite resilient over time:

There is black marketing even until today. You are saying, back in that time – how can that be? Black marketing is still going on until today. There are things that are restricted but people are still bringing them in . . . That is what I am telling you: from that period until now, it never ended. It never stopped. Black marketing has never stopped. Every day it changes to new things, whether it is kitenge, sugar, flour, it changes but it hasn't stopped. The black marketing network hasn't stopped.¹⁴²

Goods and raw products were not the only thing being smuggled back and forth between Bagamoyo and Zanzibar – even people were being illicitly ferried over the strait. The Nyamwezi may have stopped coming to Bagamoyo to trade ivory, rubber and skins since the construction of the central railway from Dar es Salaam to Lake Tanganyika, but they increasingly returned to Bagamoyo en route to the clove plantations of Unguja and Pemba. The emancipation of slaves on Zanzibar in 1897 created a huge demand for labour since ex-slaves were loathe to be associated with the work that had previously defined them.¹⁴³ Replacement labour came from the interior of Tanganyika as well as from the southern part of the colony and northern Mozambique.

In 1937, tensions broke out between the colonial administrations of Zanzibar and Tanganyika over the right of plantation owners from the former colony to recruit labour from the latter. While Tanganyikan officials prohibited formal Zanzibari recruitment of Tanganyikan labour – sisal and cotton plantation owners in the latter colony were forced to recruit labour themselves from Mozambique, the Belgian Congo and Northern Rhodesia due to local labour shortages – they acknowledged that they could not forcibly

¹⁴² Interview, Mzee Salum Tamin. See also interview, Interviewee #6 (Male), 05/01/2005.

¹⁴³ Frederick Cooper, *From Slaves to Squatters: Plantation Labor and Agriculture in Zanzibar and Coastal Kenya, 1890-1925* (Princeton: Yale University Press, 1981).

prevent Arab clove plantation owners from sending agents discretely to the mainland to find willing clove pickers. At the same time, Tanganyikans were allowed to travel to Zanzibar of their own free will.¹⁴⁴ Once WWII had broken out, however, labour was in great demand all over the colony, especially since forced conscription policies had been set in motion. Cloves were not deemed as essential to the war effort as sisal, rubber, pyrethrum and general food stuffs.¹⁴⁵ The Acting Labour Commissioner of Tanganyika estimated in 1944 that 33,000 labourers were needed to work the sisal plantations and a further 3,000 to tap and collect rubber. Once again, labour recruiters for the Zanzibari clove fields were banned from the mainland; however, in the 1940s, Tanganyikans were no longer allowed to travel to Zanzibar. Travel permits – *ruhusa ya njia* or *cheti ya njia* – had to be distributed by district officers to journeying Africans, but these were not to be granted. Instead, any upcountry Africans who came to the coast on their way to Zanzibar were to be diverted to the sisal plantations and wherever else their labour was required in Tanganyika.¹⁴⁶

Bagamoyo district officials, however, soon realized that it was very difficult to control the migrant labourers passing through the town. First of all, the wages being offered by the clove plantation owners in Zanzibar were much higher than what was being offered on Tanganyikan sisal plantations. Because of the nature of the clove crop –

¹⁴⁴ TNA, 26059, Acting Chief Secretary (ACS), Zanzibar to Chief Secretary (CS), Tanganyika, 12/6/1937; TNA, 26059, ACS, Tan. to CS, Z'bar, 22/6/1937; TNA, 26059, ? to Secretary of Agriculture, 30/9/1937; TNA, 26059, Platt to AS, 20/9/1937; TNA, 26059, Wren to CS, Zanzibar, 1/10/1937; TNA, 26059, ACS, Tan. to CS, Z'bar, 1/10/1937.

¹⁴⁵ TNA, 26059, Acting Labour Commissioner to Chief Secretary, 19/7/1944.

¹⁴⁶ TNA, Acc. 61/14/33, Director of Manpower to Provincial Commissioners, 24/11/1942; TNA, Acc. 61/14/33, Director of Manpower to Provincial Commissioner, Eastern Province, 30/3/1944; TNA, 26059, Chief Secretary, TG to Palm, 5/4/1944.

the difficulty of gauging when the clove buds would ripen and the necessity of picking the cloves quickly before they flowered – plantation owners were in fierce competition to attract labour to clear their crops quickly and this meant that wages were relatively generous and competitive.¹⁴⁷ By the early 1950s, clove pickers stood to make as much as twenty shillings per day as opposed to a dockworker in Dar es Salaam who made less than four.¹⁴⁸ Furthermore, as one Bagamoyo District Officer remarked, “It is useless diverting (the Africans) to sisal as the physical standard required for this industry is absurd.”¹⁴⁹

The other factor that made it difficult for Bagamoyo officials to prevent migrant labourers from going to Zanzibar was their lack of control over local transportation. While government steamers and boats refused to grant passage to those Tanganyikans who lacked travel permits, the local fishermen made a tidy profit from ferrying mainland labourers to the islands. During WWII, the Tanganyika government forbade fishermen from nightfishing; this involved smearing lime on fishnets which glowed in the dark underwater and attracted kingfish and shark. The British government, in an effort to control traffic across the channel under the cover of darkness, banned night fishing until mid-1945. As we saw earlier, this was a major industry in Bagamoyo and the ban hit the *Wabagamoyo* particularly hard.¹⁵⁰ To make up for lost income then, the deep-sea fishermen used their outrigger canoes – *ngalawas* – as (daytime) passenger ferries. The

¹⁴⁷ ZNA, AU3/47, Report on Labour, Zanzibar Protectorate, 1943.

¹⁴⁸ TNA, Acc. 460/541/20, Senior Commissioner, Z'bar to Labour Commissioner, DSM, 13/8/1953.

¹⁴⁹ TNA, Acc. 61/14/33, District Commissioner, Bagamoyo to Labour Office, DSM, 22/11/1944.

¹⁵⁰ TNA, Acc. 61/390/I, DC Pike to PC, EP, 9/5/1941; TNA, Acc. 61/390/I, PCEP to DO, 14/4/1945.

Bagamoyo District Officer reported to the Provincial Commissioner in 1945 that “It is quite impossible to assess the amount of movement of upcountry Africans, including Mawia from Portuguese East Africa to Zanzibar. Every ngalawa on the Coast is a potential blockade runner aggravated by the ban on night fishing.”¹⁵¹ In another letter, District Officer Webb summed up the situation with regards to preventing Africans from leaving the mainland for Zanzibar: “a few Nyamwezi applied early in the year for permits to proceed by dhow. On these being refused, they proceeded by Outrigger Express – half the time at twice the fare. They do not bother me now.”¹⁵²

Just as the goods smuggling network in Bagamoyo extended beyond the fishermen and boat owners so, too, did the passenger smuggling network. The *Wabagamoyo* also acted as middlemen recruiting agents for the Arab plantation owners from Unguja and Pemba. Because of the diversity of ethnic groups who made Bagamoyo their home, almost any African from Tanganyika could find somebody in town who spoke their mother tongue:

Nzige: Why were people saying that they should come to Bagamoyo?

Mz. Habasi: Bagamoyo, my dear, is a safe town.

N: Ok

H: Yes it is a safe town. Its name is *bwaga* (take the load off). Sometimes if you come here, they ask you about your tribe and if you say that you are a Zigua, there is no problem: you will be taken to your relatives. They say “take him to the Ziguas”.

N: Mmh

H: Maybe you say I am a Kwere, then they will take you to your relatives. Just like that people were welcoming each other.¹⁵³

¹⁵¹ TNA, Acc. 61/14/33, DC, Bagamoyo, to PC, EP, 28/3/1945.

¹⁵² TNA, Acc. 61/14/33, DC, Bagamoyo to PC, EP, 22/3/1945.

¹⁵³ Interview, Mzee Habasi Choka. See also Interview with Mzee Salum Tamim for similar comments regarding the Makonde.

Such connections were crucial since the town locals would help their ethnic brethren get to the clove fields of Zanzibar. Mzee Choka Habasi explained:

Mz. Habasi: There were the Nyamwezi who came here (to travel to Unguja). So if you were a local person you go and stay at the gate after the Kisimang'ombe road, left hand before you reach Magomeni. On the left hand there was a gate that was built by the Germans and there was a house that the Nyamwezi used to sleep in when they came to go to Unguja. When they were at their house, you (the local person) go there and ask them how they are doing and ask them to follow you. You take them to your house, you invite them and you prepare them any kind of food they want, they were not choosing what kind of food they wanted. All this was for the purpose of going to Unguja. This means that you were taking them to Unguja and handing them over to the Arab, and those were the strategies being used.

Nzige: Maybe they were paying you?

H: Yes. The Arab pays you, he pays the one who is taking people to him. . . ¹⁵⁴

Mzee Salum Tamim speculated that a local recruiter could earn as much as one to two shillings per head. ¹⁵⁵

Not all migrant workers could be accommodated by the *Wabagamoyo* and it appeared that a large number of them found themselves sleeping in open courtyards and *barazas* outside people's homes. On the recommendation of the local chapter of the Tanganyikan African Association, the Bagamoyo district administration built a rest camp for the migrant workers in town by 1940. ¹⁵⁶ By the 1950s the British district administration came to realize that, given the thousands of migrants who came through Bagamoyo as well as the widespread complicity of the local townspeople in assisting those migrant labourers to reach their destination, they stopped trying to fight against the interests of the town and, instead, tried to make their own profit out of the migrant labour system. With approximately 15,000 Tanganyikans crossing over to Zanzibar annually by

¹⁵⁴ Interview, Mzee Choka Habasi.

¹⁵⁵ Interview, Mzee Salum Tamim.

¹⁵⁶ TNA, Acc. 61/52/E, Bampfylde to PCEP, 1/3/1940.

the 1950s, the ban on migrant labour was lifted and the government steamer service to the islands was loaded to capacity during the clove picking seasons. The Tanganyikan government still resorted to issuing travel permits, but they also used this system to ensure that Tanganyikans had paid their poll taxes.¹⁵⁷ Of course, many Tanganyikans continued to find their way over to Zanzibar without official papers.¹⁵⁸ Through their ingenuity, cooperation and perseverance, the *Wabagamoyo*, despite being deprived of their status as the leading trade entrepot of the central east African coast, found ways to carry on using local networks that transcended ethnic, racial and gender divisions.

Summary

The general impression among the *Wabagamoyo* was that the British fared better as colonial administrators than their German predecessors. This opinion, however, may be largely due to British propaganda efforts to justify their own administration of the territory in that they came to rescue the Tanganyikans from the harsh regime of German imperialism and replace it with a more just rule. The actions of the Germans between 1914-1916 – particularly their policy of forced conscription and how they placed the Catholic mission and its refugees in danger in the battle of August, 1916 – also did little to endear them to the *Wabagamoyo* in their final days. The British, for their part, made

¹⁵⁷ Agents of Zanzibari plantation owners often paid migrant labourers advance wages to secure them from competition. This made it easy for the government to collect taxes prior to issuing travel permits. TNA, Acc. 460/541/20, Extract from Tanganyika Standard, 7/9/1953; TNA, Acc. 460/541/20, Excerpt from Tanganyika Standard, 18/9/1953; TNA, Acc. 460/541/20, Labour Officer, Z'bar to Sanders, DSM, 16/8/1954; ZNA, AB26/79, To the Chief Secretary, 10/11/1956; TNA, Acc. 460/541/20, Acting Senior Labour Officer, Tanga to Labour Commissioner, DSM, 9/9/1957

¹⁵⁸ ZNA, AB26/79, Secretary Ithadi el Umma Party (Pemba) to Chief Secretary, 14/12/1956.

similar mistakes and practiced policies similar to their predecessors': tax collection, corporal punishment, forced conscription during WWII, compulsory education, and economic prohibitions. As one informant stated "the British made people's lives very difficult."¹⁵⁹ Yet, the British are nevertheless fondly remembered in town for their willingness to listen to the community.

Such a sentiment, of course, is a generalization – good listening depended upon who was the district officer. Woodhouse, for example, the district officer who appointed Gulamrasul Sherdel as the *liwali* of Bagamoyo in 1928 without consulting the majority of the townspeople, was certainly not a man who respected the interests of the community he served. Bampfylde, on the other hand, served the longest term as district officer of Bagamoyo (five years) and was instrumental in diffusing the power of Liwali Sherdel to the elders and parents of Bagamoyo. As a testament to his commitment to the *Wabagamoyo*, his body is buried in a cemetery in Bagamoyo, just south of the Old Fort, the only British administrative official to have done so.

Ultimately, good governance in Bagamoyo was contingent upon the willingness of colonial authorities to allow local leaders a say in town affairs. The intensity of smuggling activities in Bagamoyo during rationing in WWII, and the illegal actions of local fishermen ferrying over labourers to Zanzibar, were the only serious challenges to British authority in town during their reign. Since both of the British policies that provoked this behaviour – rationing and the ban on nightfishing – were at real odds with the livelihood of many of the town dwellers, the *Wabagamoyo* reaction was what we would come to expect given the community's historical responses to those who

¹⁵⁹ Interview, Bibi Hadija binti Musa, Bagamoyo, 15/1/2005. See also interview, Bibi Zainabu Barabara, Bagamoyo, 5/2005.

disrespected local interests. Because the British were more liable to keep their finger on the pulse of local opinion, there was no serious local backlash against their administration until Nyerere emerged in 1954 to lead the TAA, to be discussed in the concluding chapter. Community cohesion in Bagamoyo, however, was not strictly a phenomenon provoked by external forces; as we will see in the final chapter, it was quite capable of emerging between and among the *Wabagamoyo* themselves.

CHAPTER SIX

“MTU NI WATU” - NO MAN IS AN ISLAND: SOCIAL COHESION AND DIVISION IN BAGAMOYO

We have caught glimpses of the sociocultural aspects of community life in Bagamoyo, but we have yet to really focus upon them. The reason for this can be blamed upon the paucity of extant sources prior to WWI which would reveal these aspects. Documents written by Europeans can be reliable for bringing to light community responses to the imposition of European authority, but people are generally more reluctant to jot down daily observations of the mundane. In addition, monthly or annual reports, which would have provided some sense of the daily in Bagamoyo during the German period, are absent from the archives, presumably being counted among those documents which were lost one way or another during WWI. Nevertheless, European travel writers have left some account of daily life in Bagamoyo in the late nineteenth century. Among these are some other extraordinary documents such as the collection of oral traditions recorded by Carl Velten, but dictated to him by Mtoro bin Mwinyi Bakari, a man who happened to count himself among the *Wabagamoyo*.

The bulk of evidence disclosing the sociocultural side of the *Wabagamoyo* community comes from the period of the League of Nations mandate (1919-1961) during which Bagamoyo, like the rest of Tanganyika, was ruled by the British. The documents from this period are further complemented by over three dozen interviews I conducted in Bagamoyo with elderly townspeople. The British period, followed by the first years of independent rule in Tanganyika/Tanzania, are therefore the best documented in terms of witnessing a sense of placial community in Bagamoyo through a sociocultural lens.

I separate the sociocultural from the political and economic because the archival record is spotty on this theme prior to WWI. Sociocultural themes which are commented upon in different periods, such as religion and leisure, are easier dealt with in a single chapter where they can be comparatively examined across time. Furthermore, over the past two decades, African historians have increasingly studied leisure and society as a topic in and of itself. Things we take for granted such as sport, nightlife, alcohol, fashion, music, and consumerism can actually have significant political implications and become crucial sites of struggle. For the purposes of this thesis, however, I focus on the ways in which a sense of placial community developed in Bagamoyo through sociocultural phenomena like religion, music and dance, football, festivals and town gossip. As stated in chapter one, manifestations of urban community consciousness also reveal themselves in community responses to environmental factors such as drought, plague and famine. Funerals, celebrations, and other events also mark the passage of time and contribute to the litany of community lore referred to amongst the *Wabagamoyo*.

There is a simple, well-known saying in Swahili: *mtu ni watu* – a person is people; better translated as “no man is an island.” This chapter will show how the people of Bagamoyo lived up to this proverb by building various social networks and sharing experiences in common which fashioned a common identity based on the area in which they all lived. I do not argue that the *Wabagamoyo* all responded similarly to the events that transpired in their shared space, nor do I claim that a peaceful unity reigned over the townspeople because they were all *Wabagamoyo*; in fact, as will be seen in the sections below on women’s dance societies and town gossip, community divisions could be

volatile. My point is that the townspeople responded to events which took place in Bagamoyo and not elsewhere, creating a unique frame of reference that was spatially bound. While an Indian, an African, an Arab and a European might be divided by language or cultural characteristics, they could all identify themselves as *Wabagamoyo* through their familiarity with common placial references such as local people, places or events.

A Note on Barazas

The common thread winding its way through and connecting each of the following sections is a frame of reference. Everything to be examined below – sufi brotherhoods, lelemama associations, fitina, leisure activities, crises, and local personalities – were locally performed or locally known and, consequently, locally discussed. In fact, the same can easily be said for everything examined throughout the previous five chapters. Perhaps it is useful to borrow Belinda Bozzoli’s analysis of the South African township of Alexandra to better illustrate my point.¹ In her study of riots that occurred in that township in 1986, Bozzoli refers to Alexandra as a “theatre of struggle,” the key word being theatre. In an urban space that was meant to control its black inhabitants, Alexandrans were quite capable of transforming the space into their own “performance stage” – of using its streets and stadiums as the medium for public protest. Protests were publicly performed so that Alexandrans of all backgrounds would know and hear about what was going on and react accordingly. For example, if a police informer working for the apartheid regime was caught, he would be tried in a public

¹ Belinda Bozzoli, *Theatres of Struggle and the End of Apartheid* (Athens: Ohio University Press, 2004).

“court” and often punished before the eyes of the people. The story would be passed from eyewitnesses to others through the course of everyday contact, and the message would be clear: do not betray your people.

While the *Wabagamoyo* did not have to use their streets to protest racial segregation, Bozzoli’s point about the use of urban space as a site for the dissemination of information through public performance is relevant for this study. Bagamoyo was a stage, if unintentionally. Much of what has been examined in this dissertation took place publicly before the eyes of the townspeople. These events were subsequently relayed to others through word of mouth. The local personalities, and most importantly the space in which various events throughout the town’s history transpired, came to constitute the core referential points for the town’s fount of shared community news, gossip and lore.

Where this fount of community information was most frequently shared was at the *baraza*. Joseph Thomson, the British explorer, describes the *baraza* as he saw it in the early 1870s:

Occupying one half of the front of the house was a slightly raised portion, called the *baraza* open on two sides, and roofed over for shade. Here the village gossips collect and retell their latest news. Here all business is transacted and friends meet friends. The *baraza* is open to all who may want to rest and the porters of a caravan take up their quarters there without asking permission.²

About one hundred and thirty years later, two Swedish urban planning students had the following to add:

In Bagamoyo, people leave their doors unclosed and on the *barazas*, the indoor house-life meets the outdoor street-life. Families living in the stone houses, in a way, use the *baraza* as a living room sofa – that is, as a place where you relax,

² Thompson, *Central African Lakes*, 100.

socialise, and meet people. The street has thus been incorporated in the everyday lives of the people occupying the house along it.³

In a sense, then, one's business in Bagamoyo could quickly become everybody's business; hence, the appropriateness of using the Swahili proverb – *mtu ni watu* – as the title for this chapter. In the aftermath of town events – uprisings, disputes, arrivals of caravans, abolition of slavery, lelemama rivalries, jazz nights at the Welfare Center – it was around the *barazas* where people gathered to swap stories, vent frustrations, offer opinions, and share gossip. *Barazas*, therefore, while being a widespread phenomenon beyond Bagamoyo, were very much local institutions, reaffirming local identities based on events and experiences that occurred within the shared space that was Bagamoyo Town. If the peoples referred to as Swahili do not really identify themselves as Swahili, then the *barazas* are key to understanding why they have no difficulty identifying themselves placially as *Wabagamoyo*.

Becoming Wabagamoyo

“The mode of life in the Mrima is simple. Men rise early and repair to either the shop, the boat, or the plantation, – more commonly they waste the morning in passing from house to house ‘*ku amkia*,’ – to salute neighbours.”⁴ This somewhat dismissive comment, made by the British traveler Richard Burton in the mid-19th century, speaks clearly to the everyday practice of community in Bagamoyo. While political and economic networks provided important ties that bound the people of Bagamoyo together, everyday greetings – a protracted and intimate process along the East African littoral –

³ Anna Areskough and Helena Persson, *In the Heart of Bagamoyo: The decoding of a coastal town in Tanzania* (Lund: Lund University, 1999), 41.

⁴ Burton, *Lake Regions*, 35.

provided the fundamental basis for building social networks. More than this, a mundane phenomenon like daily greetings fashioned a sense of placial identity because the people one greeted most often were the ones encountered along paths and routes daily traveled in town. The *wazee* who sat on the *baraza*, the Asian shopkeeper, the man who sold *kahawa* and *maandazi* on the street corner, the marketplace women, the fishermen returning with their catches, the askari walking his daily beat, and so on all became a familiar part of one's social landscape. These were the people in the neighbourhood who defined a person placially regardless of one's background.

One of the first things newcomers to Bagamoyo did was seek out settled fellow tribesmen in town to help orient themselves. Throughout the twentieth century in Bagamoyo Africans migrated to the town from other parts of the territory; certainly not in the greater numbers who flocked to Dar es Salaam, but enough to warrant mention in the annual reports from the district after WWII. While the bulk of the merchant community deserted Bagamoyo for the ascendant city of Dar es Salaam, the old port town continued to grow in a westerly expansion: "The old town continues to decay and to collapse. The native town increases and has in it many neat and well kept houses."⁵ In terms of buying plots and building homes in Bagamoyo, District Officer Duff had this to report in 1953:

Africans wanting to build must therefore go to one of the three major landlords, or one of the unknown number of small ones. Their systems of granting building plots are fickle: some cooperate, some do not. Planned development of the township is thus impossible. One result has been the "picturesque" growth of the

⁵ TNA, DO Bagamoyo Annual Report 1948; see also TNA, DO Bagamoyo Annual Report 1949; TNA, DO Bagamoyo Annual Report 1953. Such reports on Bagamoyo's increasing "native" population contradict Shemhili's thesis that Bagamoyo had stopped growing by 1950; far from it. Not only did Africans continue to migrate to the town, the revenue figures for Bagamoyo increased steadily throughout the 1950s, from £5,265 in 1950 to £24,712 in 1955 to £30,186 in 1959. University of Dar es Salaam Library, Tanganyika Blue Books, 1950-1959.

town, with its rows of houses curving and twisting to follow shamba boundaries and foot paths.⁶

This quotation also reveals the lack of spatial control the British possessed in Bagamoyo – a hangover from the German colonial days.⁷ People continued to build in the ways they were accustomed to in the town: close to their social networks and to the transport networks (ie. foot paths) that served the townspeople most efficiently.

Newcomers – *watu wa kuja* – to Bagamoyo did not necessarily settle amongst their kinsmen. My elderly informants explained to me that the multiple *mitaa* which made up Bagamoyo Town were not ethnically exclusive; that people of all backgrounds were made to feel welcome regardless of where they settled in town. Mzee Habasi Choka reflected,

I like Bagamoyo because it is in a safe country . . . once you get here people will welcome you, they will say you are their relatives, [and ask] where do you come from. [You will reply] I am from the mainland from a certain *jumbe* Ok, then take a rest. Then you will stay [in Bagamoyo], you will be welcomed and you won't even have to pay five cents . . . you will see mats made of straw being spread out in the open field, food spread out and there was no eating inside the house.⁸

Marriage also provided a means of “localizing”, of becoming *Wabagamoyo*. Abdallah M. Jembe, who became a town sheikh in 2005, reflected on his grandfather’s migration to Bagamoyo in the time of Sheikh Ramia:

⁶ TNA, DO Bagamoyo Annual Report 1953. Only one of the “three major landlords” was mentioned explicitly – the Catholic Mission. The British administration noted that there was hardly any “crown land” in Bagamoyo; most of it was in local hands, a legacy of Georg Richelmann’s days as the German district officer in the aftermath of the 1888-1890 uprising – see Chapter IV.

⁷ See Chapter Four regarding the frustrations the German Acting District Officer Georg Richelmann had in 1889 when trying to impose his vision of urban planning on the Wabagamoyo.

⁸ Interview, Habasi Choka.

Nzige: Where did your grandfather come from and why did he come to Bagamoyo?

Mz. Jembe: I think he came here from Morogoro during the time of the Germans

N: Why did he come to Bagamoyo?

J: He came here to look for a job. When he came here he was involved in business but I don't know a lot about his history and what business he was doing. He was mostly working at the Usagara Company [German East Africa Company].⁹

N: And where did your grandfather settle in Bagamoyo and how did he acquire the land, or did he have his own land?

J: We had land at one street called Kauzeni.

N: Was he given that land or was it sold to him?

J: He was given it.

N: By the owners? Who gave him that land?

J: He was given by Sheikh Ramia

N: Why did Sheikh Ramia give him land?

J: He was his father in-law because he married his daughter.¹⁰

Mzee Jembe's grandfather was Mkami whereas Ramia was Manyema, so clearly marriages were not ethnically exclusive in Bagamoyo.

The process of becoming localized – of becoming *Mbagamoyo* – involved a system of tutelage and patronage between *watu wa kuja* and *Wabagamoyo*. Mzee Liwasila Rajabu, a local *mganga* (traditional healer), explained this process:

Mz. Rajabu: Indigenous people from the rural area are different from indigenous people from the urban area. All the things done in the urban area are different, they are not the same and they do not agree with each other. If someone is born in the rural area and decides to come here, he/she¹¹ will be the same with the urban people [only] if he/she changes habits, and that is when he/she will have the same habits with a person from the urban area. You are asking if an indigenous person from the rural area and the one from the urban area are the same, they are not. They are different even in their know-how; everything that I will see here in the city can not be seen by the one who is from the rural area.

⁹ The informant meant the Usagara House, which was the name of the building in which the German East African Company conducted business in Bagamoyo.

¹⁰ Interview, Abdallah M. Jembe.

¹¹ In Kiswahili, the pronoun representing "he" and "she" is "a-;" the only way to distinguish is if there is an earlier reference specifying the subject of the sentence as masculine or feminine. In this example, Mz. Rajabu infers "that person" with "a-."

Nzige: Can you give me an example of how a person from the rural area will be able to live here? An example that will illustrate how those people will be able to change the rural area habits to urban people's habits?

R: Yes, I can.

N: Like what?

R: First they should agree to be open minded, meaning that he should be able to get into the city and follow his colleagues in what they are doing and he should follow what others are doing. He should be able to listen to what they are saying and follow their conservation and should avoid being very quiet. He should not be by himself all the time as he was used to being while he was in the rural area . . . When he comes here, he should agree with his natives that whatever they do, he should do it the same, and that way he will be a resident of the area, and the natives will be able recognize him, wake him up and direct him. Those are the characteristics of adaptation in life.¹²

The newcomer would thus learn the places of importance in town, the people of authority, and how things generally worked.

The majority of my informants were at least second generation *Wabagamoyo* and, when prompted to recall any difficulties their ancestors faced when settling in Bagamoyo, they replied that their parents or grandparents had been welcomed warmly in the town and that integration had been a smooth experience. Mzee Maneno Sumwa, a Mnyamwezi who had settled in Bagamoyo in the 1970s, recounted his experience of becoming Mbagamoyo:

Nzige: Did you face any problems coming to Bagamoyo?

Mz. Maneno Sumwa: Like what?

N: Maybe because you were new to the place, like a visitor?

S: To say the truth I didn't face any problems because when I got here people welcomed me pretty well and I stayed at nice places until one morning when the owner of the house told me that I should go to his fathers house and look after the cattle at Mohammed's. I agreed because I wasn't used to the place and I didn't have any job; unfortunately when I got to Ukuni (an *mtaa* of Bagamoyo), I fell sick. My legs were swollen and I couldn't sleep for nights until when my legs felt better. That is when that old man told me that I shouldn't continue to look after the cows and instead I should milk them. So that is what I was doing, I was just milking the cows of that old man . . .

N: Was he giving you any salary?

¹² Interview, Mz. Maalimu Liwasila Rajabu.

S: Yes he was . . .

N: And did the place that you reached in Bagamoyo have people from your tribe or were you the only one from your tribe?

S: When I started living here during that time I just got to know other people, but as time went by I started to find my other fellow Nyamwezi like Mr. Muige and others who have (since) passed away, so from then I started getting used to the place.

Mzee Sumwa's experience demonstrates interethnic cooperation and community in Bagamoyo.

There were different types of social networks a newcomer could join to better integrate with the local urbanites, as well as places they could frequent for leisure. Probably the most obvious affiliation a newcomer could adopt in Bagamoyo was Islam. Islam had long been associated with the coastal urban communities up and down East Africa and Bagamoyo was no exception. Mostly confined to the coast of Tanganyika up until the 20th century, a German district officer observed that Islam had begun making a noticeable impact on the interior from 1905 onwards as the central railway extended deeper into the interior.¹³ As late as 1912, the Germans regarded Bagamoyo as a significant centre from which Islam spread throughout the colony.¹⁴ This phenomenon occurred largely through the influence of Bagamoyo resident Sheikh Ramiya who was introduced last chapter as the first *liwali* of Bagamoyo under British occupation.

Ramiya, as previously mentioned, was a popular Qur'anic teacher in town. He gained a reputation for himself by practicing a unique form of *dhikr* or *zikri*, a bi-weekly form of Muslim prayer proclaiming the greatness of Allah: as he bent the upper half of

¹³ TNA, G9/46, Lambrecht to Kaiserliche Gouvernement, 24/9/1908.

¹⁴ TNA, G9/60, Ramlow to Kaiserliche Gouvernement, "Bericht ueber die Revision der Regierungsschule in Bagamojo, Pangani und Tanga", 12/8/1912. Nimtz states that the period 1916-1924 marked the greatest growth of Islam in Tanganyika, but the evidence in the German files of the TNA would indicate that it began a decade earlier. See TNA, G9/46, G9/47, and G9/48.

his body forward in prayer, he released a pronounced gasp from his mouth akin to a sigh.¹⁵ He was also known for clapping his hands during prayer.¹⁶ He practiced this outside of a central mosque located near the market and government school. Beyond this approach to *dhikr*, Ramiya was also renowned for how he led the Muslim celebration of the Prophet's birthday – the *maulid* – after he became town sheikh in 1911. Nimtz writes,

The event grew to such proportions that it became the most popular Muslim celebration on mainland Tanganyika for much of the colonial period . . . By-products of the Maulid were the establishment of Bagamoyo as a major center of Islam in East Africa and the spread of Shaykh Ramiya's fame throughout Tanganyika's Muslim community, which, in turn, led to the attraction of students from all over the mainland to his school.¹⁷

Many of Ramiya's first followers were *watu wa kuja* from the interior whom he supported by letting them live on his property in town. Sheikh Abdallah M. Jembe's grandfather studied with Ramiya:

Mz. Jembe: People were attracted to his system of education, he was a person who was very religious and he is the one who introduced *tariqas* and he was also involved in religious preaching.

Nzige: And were there other Qur'anic teachers other than Ramiya at that time?

J: There were a lot.

N: Were they as popular or not as popular as Ramiya?

J: They were popular but not like Ramiya.

N: Why was he more popular than the others?

J: Because people liked him a lot. I can give you examples: first he was very generous, and he was educating a lot of people about God, he was not teaching people about other matters other than religion. In other ways he was like a *liwali*.¹⁸

The *tariqas* Mzee Jembe mentioned were very important in Bagamoyo. A *tariqa*, or sufi brotherhood, emphasized faith and piety in Islam as opposed to literacy and

¹⁵ TNA, G9/46, Bericht des Lehrer Lorenz, 9/3/1909.

¹⁶ Nimtz, *Islam and Politics*, 137.

¹⁷ Ibid, 121.

¹⁸ Interview, Abdallah M. Jembe.

orthodox schooling. *Tariqas* are more mystical than scholarly and were more popular in converting peoples to Islam because they were more tolerant of local customs.¹⁹ There are many *tariqas*, each initiated by a different wandering Muslim mystic who acquired followers – a phenomenon which began as early as the 11th century in the Islamic world. The *tariqa* Sheikh Abdallah Jembe refers to above was the Qadariyya, named after the sufi mystic, Sayyid Abd al-Qadir al-Jilani. Qadariyya was, and remains, the largest of the *tariqas* in Bagamoyo. Jembe is wrong, however, when he says that Sheikh Ramiya was responsible for introducing Qadariyya to Bagamoyo; this was done by Sheikh Muhammed bin Husayn al-Lughami in 1905.²⁰ Ramiya had already been a Qur'anic teacher – a *mu'allim* – for five years by this time and must have become a member of Sheikh Muhammed's *tariqa*. There is no question, however, that it was due to Ramiya's reputation and influence that Qadariyya acquired such a large and popular following.

Why were *tariqas* important for the *watu wa kuja* who settled in Bagamoyo? *Tariqas* provided a new framework for social patronage in town. Whereas in the past the *majumbe* and wealthy men of Bagamoyo acquired followings and great reputations by spending their wealth on gifts and feasts for the townspeople, *tariqa* sheikhs also acquired followers through generosity. Ramiya, as sheikh of the Qadariyya *tariqa*, was obliged to aid his *murids* – adherents – in every way he could. Both he and his son, Mohammed Ramiya, clearly succeeded in this endeavour; August Nimtz, while conducting his research on the sufi brotherhoods in Bagamoyo in the 1970s, observed that

¹⁹ Nimtz, 56.

²⁰ Nimtz, 59.

many people, especially women, gave the impression of being awestruck by (Muhammed Ramiya) and a stroll by him in town created a stir as numerous people rushed toward him to pay their respects by bowing, genuflecting, or kissing his hand. This outpouring of esteem came from people not affiliated with the Qadariyya as well as from his murids. Some suggested that this homage had been even greater for Shaykh Ramiya.²¹

Even in the 21st century, the memory of Ramiya is much revered: “He was our leader and whenever we had problems we were depending on him to help us out.”²²

The Qadariyya may have been the largest *tariqa* in Bagamoyo, but it was not the only one. The other significant *tariqa* in town was the Ahmadiyya, established by Mzee Fereji, a Shihiri, in 1938.²³ While both *tariqas* provided a sense of social solidarity amongst its members through communal performance of the *dhikr*, only Qadariyya provided its members any social welfare benefits. The Ahmadiyya sheikh, in other words, was not obliged to aid his acolytes.²⁴ Women were also forbidden from joining the Ahmadiyya whereas they could be part of the Qadariyya. Before the establishment of the Ahmadiyya *tariqa*, it would appear that the various Muslim groups who inhabited Bagamoyo – African, Arab, Indian and Baluchi – prayed together at the mosque of the Indian Memons which was erected by the marketplace.²⁵ However, in November of 1938, Sheikh Mohammed Ramiya twice proclaimed in the mosque that the Prophet

²¹ Nimtz, 133.

²² Interview with Hadija binti Musa, Bagamoyo, 15/1/2005.

²³ “Mzee Fereji was relatively affluent, having obtained much of his wealth as one of Bagamoyo’s important businessmen . . . (he was) the son of one of the town’s most respected religious leaders, and the brother of a leading merchant.” Nimtz, 123.

²⁴ Nimtz, 126-129.

²⁵ TNA, G9/46, Bericht des Lehrer Lorenz, 9/3/1909. Naturally there were other mosques in town, but this particular mosque was the only one to merit a closer description of its worshippers. I assume this was the Friday mosque.

Mohammed was not Arab.²⁶ Nimtz writes that this “heresy” reflected Ramiya’s disenchantment with the Arab community as former slave owners in the town – to whom his own father had once been a slave – and his intention to undermine the religious leadership role of Arabs in Bagamoyo.²⁷ Whatever his motivations, his proclamation incensed the local Arab community and led to a schism among the Bagamoyo Muslims. The creation of the Ahmadiyya *tariqa*, established just prior to this internal dissension, prompted the majority of the Arab community to join its ranks.

The controversy sparked by Sheikh Mohammed Ramiya’s proclamation could not be resolved by any local Islamic leaders; the Acting District Officer recommended deferring the matter to the *qadi* of Zanzibar, Seyid Omar bin Ahmed bin Seyid Abubakar. Both parties supported this motion and agreed to “do all they [could] to prevent any high feeling being raised.”²⁸ While there remains no record as to the outcome of this crisis, the legacy of 1938 can still be witnessed in Bagamoyo to the present day. Every year the two *tariqas* come together in one setting or another, depending on the number of participants and observers, to debate religious issues, Qur’anic interpretations, and resolve problems. Mzee Waziri describes:

Kenny: What are the relations between Ahmadiyya and Qadariyya, do you get along or are there some tensions?

Mz. Waziri: Their relationship is based on religion and not other things, but at times when there are problems we try to help each other and we all work together.

K: And are there times that they critique each other?

²⁶ TNA, Acc. 61/55/I, Acting DO, Bagamoyo to PC, EP, 13/12/1938; Enclosure of testimonies written by Saleh Hassan and Sheikh Mohammed bin Sheikh Ramiya, 12/12/1938.

²⁷ Nimtz, 134

²⁸ TNA, Acc. 61/55/I, Acting DO, Bagamoyo to PC, EP, 13/12/1938; Enclosure of testimonies written by Saleh Hassan and Sheikh Mohammed bin Sheikh Ramiya, 12/12/1938.

W: Yes, there are times we hold religious debates regarding the Qur'an, debating about this and that regarding the Qur'an on what God says and when people don't follow what the Qur'an has written; so they all discuss the differences of that which creates misunderstandings between the two.

K: Where did you debate? Did you debate at the baraza or in the mosque?

W: They were being held at various places, at the football ground where there is a big place.

K: Like Mwanamakuka?

W: Mwanamakuka, that is where the two sides used to challenge each other by showing books. Let's say this book is written by so and so – where did you get this? and the other will say I got it from so and so.

K: Ok, it sounds like they were organized; how often do they have the debates?

W: They were occurring even five times a year.

K: And may women attend?

W: Yes.

K: At Mwanamakuka?

W: Yes.

K: And has this been going for years? How long have these debates been occurring?

W: All the time, whenever there was a problem, [the tariqas] were sitting together either three times, a certain date or a certain month.

Thus, in the twentieth century, Bagamoyo's reputation as the most important trading entrepot gave way to a new reputation as the most important centre of Islam in Tanganyika.²⁹ Over the years, the *tariqa* debates became a defining aspect of the Bagamoyo community. Of course, as one of my informants reminded me, Islam was not the only religion in town and becoming a Muslim was not the only way to become accepted as one of the *Wabagamoyo*.³⁰ We have already examined Muslim-Christian relations in Bagamoyo in previous chapters; that despite some tensions, both groups ultimately respected one another. As a final testament to that relationship, one of my informants, Mzee Samahani Kejeri, was employed as the senior interpretive guide for the

²⁹ Nimtz mentions in his prologue how Bagamoyo was mentioned more often than any other town for having influential tariqas by various Muslim leaders throughout Tanzania. Nimtz, p.x.

³⁰ Interview with Kazimoto Salumu, Bagamoyo, 5/2005.

museum established by the Catholic Holy Ghost Fathers. Not only was his mother a former slave-owner, Mzee Kejeri is also a practicing Muslim.

Lelemama Rivalries

Religion was not the only means through which *Wabagamoyo* could create social networks in the twentieth century. Dance societies were also a widely popular medium. As Terence Ranger and Margaret Strobel have demonstrated through their studies of *beni* and *lelemama* (male and female dance societies respectively), East Africans relied on these groups not only for social networking and entertainment, but also as a means for social welfare provision, particularly to help cover funeral costs and to help out in times of crises.³¹ During precolonial times in Bagamoyo, *ngomas* – dances – played an integral part in the *majumbe*'s displays of wealth and grandeur. Their acolytes would perform at feasts wearing the finest clothes purchased by their patrons. Glassman's study reveals how intense the level of rivalry could be between the *majumbe* of coastal towns to be seen as the *mkubwa sana* – the big man. Under German rule, with the erosion of the traditional patronage networks of the *majumbe*, two rival *ngoma* organizations emerged – Goboreni and Seneda – but there is no information as to who sponsored these groups.³² The groups were named after types of German rifles and its members were divided more or less along racial lines (Goboreni/African and Seneda/Arab). The women also had

³¹ T.O. Ranger, *Dance and Society in Eastern Africa, 1890-1970: The Beni Ngoma* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1975); Margaret Strobel, *Muslim Women in Mombasa, 1890-1975* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1979).

³² Nimtz, 98.

dance societies of their own known as *lelemama*; prior to WWI, the two dominant groups in Bagamoyo were Salihina and Majimaji.³³

Male dance societies began to decline in the 1930s, possibly on account of the rise of political associations like the Tanganyika African Association, possibly on account of their replacement through the rise in popularity of football teams and jazz bands.³⁴ What is evident in Bagamoyo is that *lelemama* rivalries surpassed all others in town between the late 1930s and late 1940s. Two new societies emerged, Ashrafu and Mahiwa. Unlike the *ngoma* associations of Goboreni and Seneda, Ashrafu and Mahiwa were not as racially exclusive, although the latter had a larger number of Arabs and Swahili women who claimed Shirazi ancestry.³⁵

Ashrafu and Mahiwa were established in the late 1920s by Juma Pango and Sheikh Mzee Baruti respectively.³⁶ While these men were the leaders of their respective groups, there were others involved in organizing and planning events, such as Mohammed Kikbai and Bibi Mwinjuma Kimbule who helped Juma Pango manage Ashrafu.³⁷ Both sides competed with each other in terms of extravagance: displays of the latest fashion, amount of food served, number of dancers, prestige of invited guests,

³³ Shemhili, *Bagamoyo*, 133.

³⁴ Iliffe, *Tanganyika*, 391-392; Shemhili, 135.

³⁵ TNA, Acc. 61/55/T, District Officer Bampfylde to PCEP, 28/8/1936; Interview, Maalimu Liwasila Rajabu, Bagamoyo, 5/3/2005. Bampfylde notes that even when people he considered to be "pure Arabs" had a family celebration like a wedding their wives, children and relations were often Swahili, or of mixed race.

³⁶ TNA, 10849/1341, The Women of Bagamoyo to Chief Secretary, 6/10/1947.

³⁷ Interview with Selemani Rajabu Mkandinga, Bagamoyo, 10/1/2005; Interview with Asha Mwinjuma, Bagamoyo, 7/1/2005. Given Baruti's title, Sheikh, he was obviously a religious leader and probably was a plantation owner; Juma Pango worked for the district administration as a law enforcer. One informant mentioned that he was the one who administered the whipping sentences. Interview, Maalimu Liwasila Rajabu.

and whatever else the leaders could dream up. The following are some comments the *Wabagamoyo* had about the days of the intense lelemama competition in town:

Mz. Selemani Abdallah Issa: The main reason why these groups were competing with one another was just to show each other how good and better one group was over the other

Nzige: Why?

I: They were just doing it for their own pleasure. It is not like it was of much benefit to them because it was causing them losses as well, because whenever they were to play ngoma they had to incur expenses of preparing food, welcoming guests; that is all they were doing just to show the group how good one group is. It was causing losses to them because there were not benefiting at all from ngoma.³⁸

Mz. Salum Tamin: [The lelemama societies] were slaughtering cows [for the feasts]; if this one slaughters two cows, the other slaughters three cows, another four cows. Sometimes this one brought this, the other one brought that; they were competing and in that way they were happy.³⁹

Mz. Maalimu Liwasila Rajabu: If they were slaughtering two cows, the other side will slaughter three or four. They will cook rice and it was eaten by all the people and every person who goes there will eat that rice. These were their competitions. They were even selling their farms; they placed them on mortgage, and they ended up being poor.⁴⁰

Sheikh Abdallah Jembe: During the lelemama ngoma people lost a lot of property in Bagamoyo, a lot sold their farms for the purpose of wanting to compete.

Nzige: So that is to say after the competitions and groups were over, people found themselves poor, as in left with nothing?

J: Yes, they were left poor; all of the farms were taken by the Mission.

N: Mmh

J: All these farms that now belong to the Missionaries . . .

N: Eeh

J: They used to belong to the natives who were dividing the farms into pieces and then selling piece by piece, until they were left with nothing and all because of ngoma.⁴¹

As can be discerned from the above reflections, the largesse of the feasts and celebrations often bankrupted the members of the lelemama societies. Perhaps the most lavish

³⁸ Interview with Mzee Selemani Abdallah Issa, Bagamoyo, 7/1/2005.

³⁹ Interview, Salum Tamin.

⁴⁰ Interview, Maalimu Liwasila Rajabu.

⁴¹ Interview, Abdallah Jembe, 19/3/2005.

expenditure was incurred in 1947. Ashrafu invited British naval officers from the HMS Norfolk, which was in port at Zanzibar at the time, to come and attend their feast as the guests of honour. They hired a very popular band from Zanzibar to come and play and installed electric lights at the site of the feast.⁴² Ashrafu also ordered new khangas for all its dancers from Dar es Salaam which were then delivered to Bagamoyo on an airplane which dropped the cargo on the beach between the Customs House and the Old Fort for the whole town to witness and gossip over.⁴³ The event ranks prominently in community lore and memory.

While the leaders of the lelemama societies certainly paid for many of the expenses incurred in their competitions, the members themselves were also obliged to pay annual fees. There were two categories of fees – those for office bearers within the society (very similar to military ranks) and those who were the rank and file dancers. Ashrafu office bearers paid Shs. 100/- while those of Mahiwa paid Shs. 200/-; the rank and file dancers for each group paid Shs. 15/- and Shs. 35/- respectively.⁴⁴ Shemhiliu records that these were expensive rates for the time. People could choose to join whichever association they wished since they were not organized around ethnic or kinship lines; in fact, families in Bagamoyo could often be split between Ashrafu and Mahiwa, with a mother in one group and a daughter in another.⁴⁵ Both groups also

⁴² Bagamoyo lacked power lines until the 1970s. This meant that Ashrafu had to provide a generator.

⁴³ TNA, 10849/1341, The Women of Bagamoyo to Chief Secretary, 6/10/1947; Interviews with Mz. Selemani Rajabu Mkandinga, 10/01/2005; Mz. Abdallah M. Jembe, Mz. Lila Rajabu, Bi. Asha Mwinjuma, Mz. Salum Tamim; see also Shemhiliu, 135.

⁴⁴ Shemhiliu, 134.

⁴⁵ Interviews with Fatuma Ramadhani, 05/03/2005; Siwatu Hassan, 12/01/2005; Maalimu Liwasila Rajabu; Mwanahamisi Salamu, 14/01/2005; Asha Mwinjuma. Asha Mwinjuma, for example, was recruited as a young girl into Ashrafu.

actively recruited for members, particularly young girls and women who were considered beautiful. Thus lelemama societies cut across ethnic, racial, gender, class and even generational lines; yet factional tensions ran very high, especially given the level of financial investment each woman put into her society and the degree of local pride and prestige which was at stake.⁴⁶

The animosity between the two lelemama societies appears in the colonial record in the late 1930s and again a decade later. Lelemama feasts would be held at private homes and would be arranged without consulting the district authorities. While invited guests, new khangas, and musicians would be paraded down the streets of Bagamoyo for all to see, the actual feasting and dancing would take place privately (although the noise from the party would have been heard by all within earshot). Jealousies would be triggered by the parading and, inevitably, some members of the rival society would make their way to the site of the feast to try and crash it. Bibi Asha Mwinjuma recalled how one female office bearer of her Ashrafu group, Zubeda, the wife of the leader Juma Pango, would stand guard outside the house during the feast:

That woman fought so much! In our ngoma she was the one who was like our warrior. She never used to dance; all she did was stand outside the ngoma and look for people who wanted to cause trouble. Whenever there was trouble, she was the one who was using sticks to beat people. We just used to hear the sound of the sticks but didn't know where it was coming from. It was Zubeda fighting outside while we were dancing lelemama, while it was being performed!⁴⁷

⁴⁶ Strobel observes that this was also the case in Mombasa. *Muslim Women*, 156-181.

⁴⁷ Interview, Asha Mwinjuma.

Because of these fights, District Officer Bampfylde prohibited lelemama from being organized privately and performed in private spaces in 1936; henceforth, lelemama feasts would be held in public spaces with his approval and under the watch of the police.⁴⁸

His decree did not do much. Two years later, tensions had yet to ease and Bampfylde resorted to enlisting the assistance of the town leaders (*Wakubwa*) in reconciling the two societies. A great *shauri* was held in town for all the townspeople to attend, especially the two rival groups, and impartial elders from Dar es Salaam were invited to recite a *fatiha* to get rid of the bad blood between Ashrafu and Mahiwa. Bampfylde records that this was successful.⁴⁹ This might have been the case since tensions do not resurface in the colonial record until 1947, but efforts to suppress lelemama activities appear to have caused new tensions:

Bi. Siwatu Hassan: During that period the women were being divorced by their husbands because of lelemama. If a woman was being stopped by the husband, she broke off the marriage and left.⁵⁰

Mz. Maalimu Liwasila Rajabu: You could not even stop your wife from going to ngoma; it was necessary that she went. Wives were more than ready to get divorced rather than being stopped from going. It was a must that she should go, and during the time of the uniforms it was necessary that you buy her one, otherwise you would divorce with your wife in those times.⁵¹

Competition clearly slowed down during WWII when rationing was introduced and new khangas were harder to come by. But as soon as the war was over, tensions picked up more or less from where they left off. As mentioned above, in 1947, Ashrafu

⁴⁸ TNA, Acc. 61/55/I, G.F. Webster, PCEP to DO, Bagamoyo, 17/7/1936; TNA, Acc. 61/55/I, DO Bampfylde to PCEP, 28/8/1936.

⁴⁹ TNA, Acc. 61/I/E/II, DO Bampfylde to PCEP, 9/3/1938 & Enclosure of letter signed by the Wakubwa wa Bagamoyo (Elders of Bagamoyo), 8/3/1938.

⁵⁰ Interview, Siwatu Hassan.

⁵¹ Interview, Maalimu Liwasila Rajabu. The “times of the uniforms” refers to a period in the 1940s when Ashrafu initiated a phase of its members wearing the same style of clothes which would be readily identifiable within the community as Ashrafu.

arranged the town's most lavish feast remembered in the 20th century. Mahiwa, not to be outdone, began organizing its own feast in response, with plans to arrange for a new, prefabricated banda to be built in Zanzibar and brought over to Bagamoyo in which to hold the feast. The popular Dar es Salaam Police Band was to be hired for the occasion and the association's leader, Mzee Baruti, was to be presented with a medal for his longstanding leadership and was also to be weighed in shillings. The money collected for this weighing was then to be distributed to charitable causes such as hospitals, maternity clinics, Qur'anic schools, and mosques in Bagamoyo as well as Dar es Salaam. In the midst of preparations, however, District Officer Webb forbade Mahiwa from holding its feast. This sent the women of the association into a desperate frenzy and they petitioned every authority above the District Officer for an appeal:

Our souls flow with sadness whenever we have thought of what our condition at Bagamoyo will be after having been deprived of all help from our District Commissioner and our hearts melt from their sorrow after we have seen our friends [Ashrafu] enjoy life to the full. Our minds have almost left us and we will rather commit suicide out of pity and compensation on ourselves for the pains of life which made us prefer death.⁵²

The women go on to express the unfairness of the decision of the District Commissioner to grant Ashrafu their feast and deny Mahiwa theirs. The petition, however, fell on deaf ears.⁵³ The following statements from some *Wabagamoyo* point to the reasons for the District Commissioner's decision:

Kenny: Did lelemama stop after the big competition between Ashrafu and Mahiwa?

Bi. Siwatu Hassan: Yes

⁵² TNA, 10849/1341, Women of Bagamoyo to the Chief Secretary, 6/10/1947. The Provincial Commissioner of the Eastern Province in which Bagamoyo District was incorporated, was also beseeched by the same women.

⁵³ TNA, 10849/1341, Assistant Secretary to Chief Secretary & Chief Secretary to Assistant Secretary, 14/10/1947.

K: How did it happen?

SH: There were just conflicts as I have told you. When people were coming to play for the competition, people were not staying in their houses and everyone was fighting. That one with his group, maybe even you and your father, you and your mother can not understand each other and everyone goes into his or her own group. Maybe this one goes to join the Ashrafu and your colleague goes to join the Mahiwa. When everyone goes into his group then they start competing. When this group slaughters cows, the other slaughters goats and that brought conflict between the two groups and, in the end, they decided to stop ngoma because people could not understand one another, somebody could not get along with her mother or father and as a result they decided to stop lelemama . . . You know how celebrations are when somebody wins in a competition by shouting at each other and groaning aloud in derision.⁵⁴

Mz. Selemani Abdallah Issa: [The District Commissioner] stopped them because it reached a point when those competitions started to build up hate among the group members – that is why he decided to stop them.

Kenny: Was that the real case? Was that how [the lelemama members] really felt, or is that what [the District Commissioner] was thinking, that they were going to have a war? Were the actual groups thinking that or was the competition from their point of view friendly?

SL: He decided to stop them because there was a time when the groups started hating each other, the Mahiwa and Ashrafu. They were discriminating against each other and that was when he thought that there was no understanding between the two groups and that is when he decided to stop them.⁵⁵

Asha Mwinjuma's testimony sheds the best light on the situation at the time. She begins with a song that her lelemama association used to sing:

Do not play with the Mahiwas, (if I had known I would not have done so),
Do not play with the Mahiwas, (if I had known I would not have done so),
Mahiwas are still young, the things they do are notorious (?) (*mapana*);
Do not play with the Mahiwas, (if I had known I would not have done so).

Taunting, teasing and disrespect between members of the associations extended beyond lelemama feasts and into the everyday in Bagamoyo:

Sometimes when children used to meet across the streets, we used to fight by ourselves. Those who are from Ashrafu were fighting with those from Wamahiwa. In God's name, when we met, we fought each other until when elders came to stop the fight and started asking what caused it. First when we (the

⁵⁴ Interview, Siwatu Hassan.

⁵⁵ Interview, Selemani Abdallah Issa.

children) see each other we started to spit on each other – *po!!* And then you left, and they also did the same. Then they started the fight . . . even the elders when they met started spitting on each other . . . that ngoma was bad, my child, we never met each other even for a bit. If they knew that you were a child from Asharafu or Wamahiwa you couldn't meet with each other.⁵⁶

Ultimately, in 1948, religious leaders had to be brought in once more from outside Bagamoyo to heal the division by performing another *fatiha*.⁵⁷ The lelemama craze ended soon after; the District Commissioner reported in 1949 that the rivalry had cooled and no other comments appear in the records. The *Wabagamoyo* elders also agree that lelemama met its end soon after 1947, replaced by new ngomas such as *buti*, *mgodo*, and *bugi*. Each ethnic group in Bagamoyo were also known for a particular style of ngoma: the Zigua danced *selo*, the Doe danced *digilia* and the Zaramo danced *vanga* and *mdundiko*.⁵⁸ While there were still some tensions between various ngoma societies beyond the 1940s, they never reached the intensity of the rivalry between Ashrafu and Mahiwa, and any fighting which would break out was quickly quelled by the town elders who tossed into prison those who misbehaved.⁵⁹

The significance of this episode for this study is how placial these events were – even Ranger and Strobel observe the placial organization of these societies along *mitaa* lines elsewhere in East Africa.⁶⁰ The groups in Bagamoyo were local creations – they

⁵⁶ Interview, Asha Mwinjuma.

⁵⁷ Shemhili, 135.

⁵⁸ Interview, Mwanahamisi Salama.

⁵⁹ Interview, Siwatu Hassan. The same system of membership and rivalry remains to this day, however. While I was in Bagamoyo in 2004, one ngoma society, in preparing for its feast, marched through the streets of town carrying a long rope to which were tied all the new khangas that had been purchased for the event. The feast was held outside one member's house on Mangesani Street where there were large speakers stacked atop one another outside in the yard – speakers that would look more at home at a stadium rock concert. The music could be heard far and wide in town.

⁶⁰ Strobel, 160; Ranger, 26.

were not chapters of a larger organization based in Dar es Salaam or Zanzibar. The lelemama associations themselves were not confined to any kinship group, race, ethnicity, gender, or generation. The associations ran across all these divisions, a phenomenon which was of advantage for newcomers to the town who could easily join one group or the other and integrate into town life. Each group was very conscious of its reputation within the town community; their activities were quite public and they relied upon making a favourable impression on the townspeople in hopes of encouraging more people to join their societies. While each side involved outsiders to some extent – inviting British naval officers as guests to the feasts, or hiring jazz bands from Dar es Salaam to entertain – the point of their involvement was to boost local reputations. The rivalry consumed most of the town; Bampfylde reported in 1936 that most people belonged to one group or the other.⁶¹ This seemed likely since impartial outsiders to Bagamoyo had to be called in to ease tensions since no authority within Bagamoyo was deemed appropriate to fulfil such a task. As Asha Mwinjuma's story indicates, the *Wabagamoyo* knew who was on which side and fighting could break out instantly on the streets as rivals passed each other by. Unless invited to attend the feasts, no outsider could have been able to identify this community rift; this was a division that was locally recognized.

⁶¹ TNA, Acc. 61/55/I, DO Bampfylde to PCEP, 28/8/1936.

The Mother of Fitina

The lelemama rivalry was exacerbated by a phenomenon known as *fitina*. Its simplest definition is mischief or intrigue, but a couple of quotes from the *Wabagamoyo* elders themselves illuminate the greater implications of this word:

Kenny: Can you describe to me the meaning of fitina?

Mz. Saidi Omari: Fitina is a state whereby one person can cause two other people to fight or have a misunderstanding. Let's say you might decide to tell your friend that you saw his wife with another man, even though it is not true. After hearing that, your friend will decide to hit his wife and they will fight everyday in the house – that is what the Arabs call fitina. Fitina can cause people in the whole town to have misunderstandings with each other: this person might tell the other person this and the other might also tell another person a different thing; people fight and hate each other. All religions are against fitina, there is no religion that favors fitina. Fitina can affect a hundred lives if those people do not follow what religion says. That is why people are told whenever they see fitina going on their way they should try to investigate the cause of it before taking any further action, to try and find if what you have been told by other people is true or not. Fitina is a very bad thing and God doesn't like it.⁶²

When asked why people would spread fitina and sow discord in the community, the following reasons were given:

Mz. Saidi Omari: Fitina is mainly found among people who have desperate lives, people who are very poor where their lives are very difficult. If someone does not have anything and does not have enough money and sees somebody else living well, then they will try to do fitina so that they can at least get what others have.⁶³

Kenny: Can you give examples of fitina in Bagamoyo . . . ?

Bi. Mashama Salum: If someone owns a beautiful house, people might do anything bad to the person.⁶⁴

Bi. Fatuma Ramadhani: Sometimes a person can see someone else doing business and because they simply don't like the state the other person is in, they will go to the police and tell them that so and so is doing this kind of business and it is not legal and then the police will come and capture you, just like that.⁶⁵

⁶² Interview, Mz. Saidi Omari, 09/01/2005.

⁶³ Ibid.

⁶⁴ Interview, Bi. Mashama Salum, 08/01/2005.

⁶⁵ Interview, Bi. Fatuma Ramazani.

Jealousy and envy, then, were often the root causes for spreading *fitina*, although revenge would be another obvious motivation.

Given these explanations and examples it is easy to see why the lelemama rivalry sparked so much *fitina* in Bagamoyo. When Bampfylde enlisted the support of the town elders to put an end to the animosity between Ashrafu and Mahiwa, the central issue they targeted was the spreading of *fitina* between the two groups. The town elders announced in a public *shauri* the following resolution:

- (A). The young people must listen to their elders.
- (B). Any person raising “fitina” will be punished.
- (C). All such alleged cases [of fitina] to be thoroughly examined first by the Liwali and elders to see that the charge of fitina is a true bill.⁶⁶

As we have seen, the proclamation, despite its good intentions, fell on deaf ears.

Fitina was a weapon that was exercised by one and all in Bagamoyo throughout the town’s history. It neither distinguished between race nor ethnicity nor gender nor class nor generation. *Fitina* contributed to tensions and hostilities in the town when the French missionaries first arrived in the late 1860s. *Fitina* drove Georg Richelmann to distraction when he served as Acting District Officer for Bagamoyo in 1889. When the British landed on the beaches of Bagamoyo in 1916 they were confronted with accusations of the *fitina* variety made against *Wabagamoyo* who had profited from their allegiance to the Germans, such as Akida Taha and Muhammed Yusuf.⁶⁷ After Sheikh Ramiya resigned from the office of *liwali* for Bagamoyo, District Officer Woodhouse

⁶⁶ TNA, Acc. 61/I/E/II, DO Bampfylde to PCEP, 9/3/1938 & Enclosure of letter signed by the Wakubwa wa Bagamoyo (Elders of Bagamoyo), 8/3/1938.

⁶⁷ AStEsp, BJ, 19/8/1916; TNA, AB 817, 5/6/1924, no name; TNA, AB 817, Administration Officer i/c Grierson to Chief Secretary DSM, 2/7/1924.

was aware that the nomination of a new *liwali* might well spark a fresh wave of *fitina*.⁶⁸ Almost a decade later, when Liwali Gulamrasul Sherdel was called to fill in for the *liwali* of Dar es Salaam and was temporarily replaced by Musa Pishoki, some of the town elders of Bagamoyo requested that Pishoki be made town *liwali* permanently. District Officer Bampfylde agreed in principle with the elders' letter, but prudently decided to await a visit from the Provincial Commissioner to Bagamoyo at which point a public *shauri* could be held with all the town elders to discuss the issue and thereby "prevent any 'fitina' being caused against him afterwards."⁶⁹

Complicated enough as *fitina* was in terms of sorting out what was true and what was false, the *Wabagamoyo* still found ways to frustrate colonial officials even further: "the fashion at present is to send letters to all and sundry starting from His Excellency (the Governor of the Protectorate) downwards; very often it is directed by quite another person than the writer. I had an instance of this quite lately, when an accusation was made against a certain member of your Department by Africans but directed by an Indian."⁷⁰ The frustrations a District Officer experienced in Bagamoyo on account of the mischievous intrigue prevalent there are best summed up by District Officer Scott in 1948:

Bagamoyo township and Bagamoyo district are, it seems, as different as chalk from cheese. Throughout the year the district and its inhabitants have remained calm, the succession of seasons has placidly been followed, the crops planted, reaped and sold, almost, one would think, automatically . . . But the township, daily, with a score of tongues, shouts at the Boma doors, scandal, slander and complaint. The town must be the Mother of Fitina.

⁶⁸ TNA, Acc. 61/52/E, DO Woodhouse to PCEP, 18/10/1928.

⁶⁹ TNA, Acc. 61/1/E/II, Bampfylde to PCEP, 25/5/1937.

⁷⁰ TNA, Acc. 7/39/2/Vol. II, District Commissioner Heslop to Assistant Director of Medical Services, Eastern Medical Region, 19/12/1952.

In an interesting insight to an aspect of the localization process that made a rural newcomer to town become *Wabagamoyo*, Scott continues:

The most placid countryman, settling here, at once learns: soon with a sharpened tongue conducts forty feuds with forty clattering neighbours; attempts secretly to lay information to smirch each neighbour's name. Arabs, Indians, Africans, all are affected. If one argument is settled, at once another is started. The official ear, hardened, turns deaf.⁷¹

None of my informants admitted to having spread *fitina*, but two of them confessed that they had been its victims. Mzee Ally Khalfan Mtengwa, who was employed in the Medical Office as a health inspector, said that he had been up for promotion when a job had become available after the death of the position's former occupant. Yet, because another one of his senior officers did not want him to get the position, the officer made a falsehood to the District Commissioner and Mzee Mtengwa was held back. Bibi Harima Kibwana had held a position of authority in an *akina mama* cooperative in the mid 1950s, but somebody in the group made *fitina* against her and she was forced to resign her position. She never knew who had done this nor why she had been targeted, only that somebody must have been jealous of her.

While Bagamoyo may have been "noted for its scandal mongering propensities,"⁷² *fitina* was by no means unique to the town; like the judicial system of *shauri*, many towns characterized as Swahili practiced *fitina*. However, aside from a passing reference by Strobel,⁷³ *fitina* has not been previously commented upon in historical scholarship in East Africa. It is, however, a form of rumour – a topic which has

⁷¹ TNA, Annual Report, Bagamoyo District, 1948.

⁷² TNA, AB 817, Administration Officer i/c Grierson to Chief Secretary DSM, 2/7/1924.

⁷³ Strobel, 62.

recently been the subject of a study by Luise White.⁷⁴ Yet, whereas White's book explores how historians can make use of local blood-chilling rumours in learning about the African experience during the colonial period, what makes the *fitina* phenomenon worth discussing in my study is its localized framework of reference. If the intention of *fitina* is to destroy a reputation then there needs to be a community in place within which a reputation can be destroyed. Lies, rumour, gossip, or ill feelings are spread along various social networks in the town, conveyed from person to person, amongst neighbours, in marketplaces, over a game of chess or *mbao*, or even while having one's hair styled.⁷⁵ In order for *fitina* to work its vice, the unfortunate people who are the subject of the *fitina* need to be recognized amongst the social networks which *fitina* is spread. People in Tanga or Kilwa would hardly have a frame of reference to appreciate *fitina* which is spread about Juma Doe from Bagamoyo. Few people, if anyone, would really care what was said about an *Mbagamoyo* unless that person had some particular connection to their own urban community. *Fitina*, therefore, is further proof of a local conception of community identity; negative, perhaps, but a community nevertheless.

Leisure and Community

Studies on African leisure have made a noticeable impact on historical scholarship over the past two decades. Scholars have repeatedly demonstrated how

⁷⁴ Luise White, *Speaking With Vampires: Rumor and History in Colonial Africa* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003).

⁷⁵ Mtoro bin Mwinyi Bakari notes in his reflections about precolonial society in Bagamoyo how "The hairdresser sits on a stool and the client on the ground in front of her, and she plaits and gossips. They gossip about everything that goes on in town." Allen, *Customs*, 115-116.

politicized leisure activities could become in both the colonial and postcolonial periods.⁷⁶ Many of these studies are focused on the urban environment and highlight how leisure activities like sport and nightlife served as sites for the creation of new identities. Since urban centres attract peoples of all backgrounds, leisure societies, clubs and venues often provided new social networks that were not based on ethnicity, religion, class or gender; instead, new urban identities were forged among diverse peoples, based on urban residency. This aspect of leisure studies, then, is highly relevant for this study: the formation of identity that is spatially bound.

An interesting tradition emerged in Bagamoyo during the British period. Around Christmas Day, the District Officer organized a mini-festival in which football teams from Dar es Salaam would travel to Bagamoyo and stay for a few days to compete with teams from Bagamoyo. Music bands would also perform at public venues and food and drink would also be provided. The earliest mention of this phenomenon is in 1924 when a team from Dar es Salaam played three matches against “local native teams” in Bagamoyo.⁷⁷ Whether this tradition began earlier or was consistently repeated on an

⁷⁶ Phylis Martin, *Leisure and Society in Colonial Brazzaville* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995); Emmanuel Akyeampong, *Drink, Power and Cultural Change: A Social History of Alcohol in Ghana c. 1800 to Recent Times* (Oxford: James Currey, 1996); Laura Fair, *Pastimes and Politics: Culture, Commodity, and Identity in Post-Abolition Urban Zanzibar, 1890-1945* (Oxford: James Currey, 2001); Kelly Askew, *Performing the Nation: Swahili Music and Cultural Politics in Tanzania* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002); Thomas Burgess, “Cinema, Bell Bottoms and Mini-Skirts: Struggles Over Youth and Citizenship in Revolutionary Zanzibar,” *International Journal of African Historical Studies*, 35:2-3 (2002); “Special Issue: Leisure in African Studies,” *International Journal of African Historical Studies*, 35:1 (2002); Andrew M. Ivaska, *Negotiating Culture in a Cosmopolitan Capital: Urban Style and the Tanzanian State in Colonial and Postcolonial Tanzania*. Ph.D. thesis, University of Michigan, 2003. Many of these authors have also published articles on leisure and society in various journals.

⁷⁷ TNA, AB38, Bagamoyo District Annual Report, 1924.

annual basis is difficult to determine, but mention of the event does reemerge in the 1940s, when Sunderland Football Club and African Young Stars Football Club – the predecessors of Tanzania’s most renowned football rivals, Simba and Yanga – came to play against local Bagamoyo teams around the Christian holiday.⁷⁸

Football was encouraged in Bagamoyo, particularly by District Officer Bampfylde who saw in it “not only an essential recreation for natives here, who are very keen about the game, but incidentally it also keeps the young men from loafing (about) the town and getting into mischief.”⁷⁹ He noted the need for more playing fields in town to support the activities of three competing clubs and ordered that government coconut *shambas* be cleared to make space.⁸⁰ A colony-wide football association and tournament was established in 1945 in which each province in Tanganyika would send a team to compete for the Sunlight Cup. The winner of this tournament would go on to represent Tanganyika in the Gossage Cup against teams from Britain’s other East African colonies – Kenya, Uganda and Zanzibar. On account of the establishment of this tournament, the Chairman of the Tanganyika Football Association commented that “football is now more popular than ever before and enthusiasm has been stimulated by Tanganyika winning the Gossage Cup in both 1949 and 1950.” The people’s interest in the final for the Sunlight

⁷⁸ TNA, Acc. 7/M5/1, Secretary Gessani of the Sunderland Football Club (DSM) to District Commissioner (Bagamoyo), 27/11/1943; Secretary, Young Africans Football Club (DSM) to District Commissioner (Bagamoyo), 25/7/1945; *Mambo Leo*, February 1951, p.22; Chairman, Question Temporary Football Club (DSM) to District Commissioner (Bagamoyo), 13/9/1952.

⁷⁹ TNA, Acc. 7/M5/1, District Officer Bampfylde to PCEP, 20/5/1937.

⁸⁰ Ibid; PCEP to Bampfylde, 27/5/1937; Bampfylde to Saleh Aboud, 4/6/1937.

Cup in 1951 was so great that they had to shut the gates to the stadium in Ilala because it had reached full capacity.⁸¹

Before reaching the Sunlight Cup playoffs, a football team in Bagamoyo would have to play a district tournament and then a provincial tournament (Dossa Cup). While a cup had been presented to the winning Bagamoyo district team since at least as early as 1951, it was reported in 1956 that the Asian merchant, G.M. Meghji, “a wealthy person, who is very famous among all the people of Bagamoyo”, presented a new Bagamoyo tournament cup in 1956 named after himself – the Meghji Cup.⁸² Over the years since 1951 there have been on average six teams competing in Bagamoyo district. These have changed over the years, but the most consistent names that appear were Bagamoyo Winners (formerly Gibraltar Winners), Home Defence (formerly Home Boys), African Step, Vumbi Chai as well as teams supported by TANU and the Catholic mission (Seminary). Africans made up the majority of these teams but it was not unusual to find Arabs and Asians also playing on the team.⁸³ The Christmas Day and the Meghji Cup tournaments brought out the *Wabagamoyo* of all backgrounds to the football pitch at Mwanamakuka and the sport remains a local favorite pastime.⁸⁴

Around the same time that the Tanganyika Football Association was formed, the colonial administration in Tanganyika also began to build Social Welfare Centers around the territory. Financed as these were from the Colonial Welfare and Development fund

⁸¹ TNA, Acc. 7/M5/1, Chairman Walden, Tanganyika Football Association to Provincial Office, DSM, 9/3/1951.

⁸² TNA, Acc. 7/42/7, Zuberi to Chief Broadcasting Officer, 24/11/1956.

⁸³ Mz. Ussi Makame Ussi recalls there being at least three Asians who played on the various Bagamoyo teams in the 1950s. Interview, 03/01/2005.

⁸⁴ Interviews, Interviewee #6 (Male), 05/01/2005; Saidi Omari, 09/01/2005; M.S. Waziri, 14/01/2005; and Ussi Makame Ussi.

established in 1940 for all of Britain's colonies, the intent of these centers were "to help Africans to devote their leisure to the best advantage in healthful recreation and good citizenship (and) the development of worthy character and the promotion of a real sympathy between all Africans."⁸⁵ Because it was also intended that these centers were to be run by the Africans themselves, there was some issue between Liwali Gulamrasul Sherdel and Social Welfare Organizer E.C. Baker about whether there would be enough interest among the Africans of Bagamoyo to sustain such a center.⁸⁶ The District Commissioner, however, took the issue to a public *shauri*, and the African community pointed out that they already had a dance club and a social club but were sorely lacking a proper venue to host events. The leaders of the clubs, with a total membership between them of fifty, promised that they would give their full support to the erection of a welfare center in town.⁸⁷

Officially opened in February 1948, the building provided a small library, a radio, a gramophone and records, and various games including chess, dominoes, darts and playing cards.⁸⁸ Attached to the center was a large walled in courtyard complete with a small stage. Membership was contingent on paying an initial application fee of Sh. 1/- and a monthly subscription of Sh. /50.⁸⁹ It was open to anybody in Bagamoyo who paid the fees, but Indian membership was discouraged by the British who wanted to see the

⁸⁵ TNA, Acc. 7/51/2, Draft Rules For Welfare Centres, 15/8/1945.

⁸⁶ TNA, Acc. 7/51/2, E.C. Baker, Social Welfare Organizer to District Commissioner Webb, 19/6/1946.

⁸⁷ TNA, Acc. 7/51/2, District Commissioner Webb to E.C. Baker, 22/7/1946.

⁸⁸ *Mambo Leo*, November 1948, p.130.; TNA, Acc. 7/51/2, Saidi to Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Local Government and Housing, 2/10/1960.

⁸⁹ TNA, Acc. 7/51/2, District Commissioner Reardon to Hon. Secretary Tsaba Tsaba Jazz Band, 26/7/1958.

“native” community benefit from the center.⁹⁰ Once an initial membership was established and a council was formed, subsequent requests for membership had to be approved by current members. Because of the fees and a delay of three months between application and final approval, official membership was minimal in Bagamoyo, thus thwarting the intention of the British to develop the “worthy character” of Africans.⁹¹

Instead of becoming a philanthropic venue to better the lives of “natives,” the Social Welfare Center in Bagamoyo soon became the town’s *de facto* night club. Non-members were entitled to enter the center for public dances which usually occurred on Saturday and Sunday nights.⁹² Like all leisure pursuits in Bagamoyo, there arose a rivalry around two local jazz bands – Lucky Star and Bagamoyo Jazz. It was the latter who performed at the opening of the Welfare Center in 1948, but it was Lucky Star which emerged as the most popular among the *Wabagamoyo*. To illustrate how vicious the competition could develop between the two rival bands, it is worth quoting at length the following abstract from the Bagamoyo District report of 1949:

A Sub-Inspector was posted to the district early in the year . . . The appointment was not a happy one, for the young man, although keen and energetic, became overinterested in the domestic affairs of the town and a violent partisan, now of this party, now of another. The result was that his work suffered as did some of the townspeople. He founded what was named the Police Easter Club Dance Band, in rivalry to an old established Bagamoyo band with a large following. Finally the Police Club merged with another, the Bagamoyo Jazz Band, but could offer no attractions to innumerable partisans of the Lucky Star. It became obvious then that leading members of the Lucky Star were often appearing in Court or

⁹⁰ TNA, Acc. 7/51/2, District Commissioner (Bagamoyo) to “Provincer”, Dar es Salaam, 16/6/1944. The DC also mentioned “that such a club should not be for Africans only but should also cater for the large Arab-Baluchi African element.”

⁹¹ See lengthy correspondence between a frustrated Edward E. Mteka and several other “patrons” to the President of the Social Welfare Centre between July and November 1959 in TNA, Acc. 7/51/2. TNA, Acc. 7/51/2, Saidi to Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Local Government and Housing, 2/10/1960.

⁹² *Mwangaza*, 2/8/1957, p.4; Interview, Ali Khalfan Mtengwa, 10/01/2005.

being confined in the gaol on remand, in cases in which the witnesses were Police or their friends. The Sub-Inspector was removed but unfortunately other members of the police carried on with the rivalry and what in fact almost amounted to persecution of their rivals.⁹³

In the end, however, Lucky Star came out on top – Bagamoyo Jazz Band folded and a new jazz band, Saba Saba, emerged in 1957. Despite a lot of media hype to promote Saba Saba, the jazz band was ultimately no match for the much respected and followed Lucky Star. By this time it had become the house band for the Welfare Center and Saba Saba was actually prohibited from playing at the venue unless it agreed to split the profits it made from its performances 50/50 with the center.⁹⁴ One young woman from Bagamoyo, Mariam binti Shaabudu, published her feelings of devotion to Lucky Star in a poem entitled, *Bagamoyo Mesifika, Dansi ya Luck Star* (Bagamoyo is Renowned For the Lucky Star Dance). In it she describes how she went to Dar es Salaam, lured by the music of the Dar es Salaam Jazz Band, but how, only after a year away, she was longing for Bagamoyo and the Lucky Star dance music. She returns home to her parents (“for the maize belongs to the cob”), imploring the manager of the Welfare Center to let her back in.⁹⁵

The jazz bands played a mix of rhumbas, sambas, jive and jazz. Many of the performers had been taught to play musical instruments, particularly the brass instruments, by the British (and previously the Germans).⁹⁶ Based on studies by Martin and Askew, it can be safely assumed that they picked up the western musical forms via

⁹³ TNA, Bagamoyo District Annual Report, 1949.

⁹⁴ TNA, Acc. 7/51/2, Saidi to Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Local Government and Housing, 2/10/1960.

⁹⁵ *Mambo Leo*, September 1950, p.112.

⁹⁶ Interview, Salum Tamim.

radio and gramophone records.⁹⁷ While *Wabagamoyo* young and old attended the performances at the Welfare Center, it was predominantly the youth who went. We know the dances were very popular and well attended: a report in 1960 remarked that “on dance day, I was told that the Courtyard becomes (too) small and some of the dancers use (the) centre’s hall.”⁹⁸ Women were often escorted by men, but occasionally some went on their own. Some youth met their lovers there and couples danced away until the early hours of the morning.⁹⁹ The parents and elders of the town generally frowned upon the young going out to the Welfare Center on weekend nights, but there was little they could do to prevent them:

The old people of Bagamoyo did not like those kinds of things, those dances, because they were spoiling their children. But a child is a child, and youths are youths, you can not look after them all the time. If you sleep until one o’clock in the morning, they escape and go to places where the dances were being played. You can not stop them.¹⁰⁰

Alcohol was also served at the center, particularly *tembo* (palm wine). It was commented in the district annual report of 1953 that the sale of *tembo* made up half of the income of the Social Welfare Center.¹⁰¹ One informant even admitted that he had “learned to drink” at the center. On account of the mix of alcohol and tensions between the rival jazz groups, it was not unusual for fights to break out, but most people agreed that nights out on the town at the Welfare Center were safe and fun.¹⁰² Over time, the Welfare Center

⁹⁷ Martin, 127-153; Askew, *Performing the Nation*, 98.

⁹⁸ TNA, Acc. 7/51/2, Saidi to Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Local Government and Housing, 2/10/1960.

⁹⁹ Interviews, Salum Tamim, Fatuma Ramadhani, Siwatu Hassan, Ali Khalfan Mtengwa, 10/01/2005; and Asha Hassan Mtalii, 05/01/2005.

¹⁰⁰ Interview, Maalimu Liwasila Rajabu. See also Mrisho Saidi, 06/03/2005 and Rajabu Makinga, 19/01/2005.

¹⁰¹ TNA, Bagamoyo District Annual Report, 1953.

¹⁰² Interviews, Ali Khalfan Mtengwa, Siwatu Hassan, and Mrisho Saidi.

and the football pitch of Mwanamakuka became new focal points within Bagamoyo around which the townspeople oriented themselves.

One final leisure event that occurred in Bagamoyo that deserves mention was the celebration of the coronation of Queen Elizabeth II in 1953. Although the festival that was arranged was prompted by circumstances external to the town, the *Wabagamoyo* nonetheless did not pass up the opportunity to throw a good feast especially when it was fully supported by the British administration. Inhabitants of all races played roles in organizing the day of events. Aside from speeches, songs, food and fireworks, there were games and competitions of all kinds involving both children and adults: track and field events, sack races, three-legged races, tug-of-wars, football competitions, ngoma competitions, spear throwing, and carving and handicraft competitions. There was an interesting manifestation of community solidarity when a young boy of about four feet in height performed a poll vault of nearly seven feet. "The spectators were so excited that they organized an impromptu collection on his behalf. He received his first prize later in the afternoon."¹⁰³

What is of particular interest are those events and competitions that reflected the local economy of Bagamoyo and the actual physical town itself: two kinds of boat races were organized – sailing (*ngalawa*) and rowing (*mashua*) – and prizes were awarded for the best decorated shop in town and the best preserved carved "Arab" door. Funds were raised among all *Wabagamoyo* to contribute to the day's events (£240 in total), the leftover balance of which would go towards building concrete seats on the Bagamoyo football pitch and a permanent surround. This was decided with the consent of the

¹⁰³ TNA, Acc. 7/35/7, District Officer Duff to Provincial Education Officer, 9/6/1953.

people.¹⁰⁴ While the day had been ostensibly a celebration in honour of the Queen of the British Empire, it was ultimately a local affair.

Perhaps one of the most conspicuous divisions in Bagamoyo society was that between former slaves and former masters; not conspicuous to outsiders necessarily, but certainly to those *Wabagamoyo* with deep ties in the town.¹⁰⁵ This division, however, may not have been as pronounced as one might think: as noted in chapter four, the number of slaves in Bagamoyo decreased significantly during the uprising and unrest between 1888-1890, when many slaves fled the town or were kidnapped and sold by Bushiri and his accomplices. By the end of the 19th century, Bagamoyo had one of the lowest numbers of slaves in an urban area in German East Africa. Nonetheless, the number was still around 2,000 out of approximately 20,000 inhabitants.

As Nimtz shows, the slave/master division morphed into a native/non-native struggle in the 20th century (although he is careful to note the problematic category of the Shomvi-Swahili who allied themselves with one or the other depending on the circumstances). Vestiges of this animosity manifested themselves particularly in the *tariqas* (but not to the point of persistent violence) and to a lesser extent in the lelemama societies as noted above. It also manifested itself in the various political associations which emerged such as the Indian Association, the Arab Association and the African

¹⁰⁴ TNA, Acc. 7/35/7, District Commissioner Duff to PCEP, 9/2/1953; DC Duff to Liwali, Mawakili na President TAA (Bagamoyo), 19/3/1953; Liwali Gulamrasul Sherdel to DC Duff, n.d.; Minutes of Meeting of Coronation Celebration, 27/4/1953; Secretary, TAA to DC Duff, 2/5/1953; Bagamoyo District Annual Report, 1953.

¹⁰⁵ Few people would admit to being descendents of slaves in Bagamoyo. I only identified one descendent of a slave and one descendent of a slave owner. Katrin Bromber attempted to undertake an oral research project in the town several years ago about the legacies of slavery in Bagamoyo, but was only able to find several more than I did. My contact at the Catholic Mission and at the Department of Antiquities both agreed that descendents of slaves would be unwilling to identify themselves as such.

Association, but these were more indicative of divisions experienced in Dar es Salaam – the first two associations were small affairs in Bagamoyo. With the creation of new associations in town based around leisure pursuits like football and jazz clubs, new divisions emerged that were not slave/master oriented. In terms of daily life, in some cases at least, former slaves remained loyal to their former masters and vice versa long after emancipation. Mzee Samahani Kejeri related how his mother, a slave owner, was still consulted by her former slaves in most matters regarding the various rites of passage in their families' lives. The Kejeris were always invited to important feasts put on by their former slaves and contributed to them as they saw fit. When Mzee Samahani's mother passed away, the former slaves all duly attended her funeral.

Tensions between Arabs and Indians on one side and Africans on the other never ran as high in Bagamoyo as they did across the water in Zanzibar. When the revolution broke out in early 1964, it did not spread to Bagamoyo despite the age-old connections between the two ports. Bagamoyo *nahozas* received word from their Zanzibari contacts just prior to the revolution not to sail over to the island for awhile. When the situation had calmed down, trade resumed. Some *Wabagamoyo* sailors brought over friends and family from Zanzibar who wanted to leave, but that was the extent of their involvement. Arabs and Indians in Bagamoyo were not harmed.¹⁰⁶ This may have been on account of the smaller number of Asians and Arabs in Bagamoyo or the longer history of Arabs and Indians in Bagamoyo being subjected to the same judicial authority as other *Wabagamoyo* and therefore, more beholden to the community.

¹⁰⁶ Interviews with Makinga Rajabu, 19/01/2005; Salum Tamin, 13/03/2005 and Choka Habasi, 23/01/2005.

While community festivals and celebrations brought out one and all in Bagamoyo and united them in the common pursuit of enjoyment, the other forms of leisure we have looked at – dance societies, football, jazz clubs – were much more fractious. The question that is begged, then, is how does one reconcile these community divisions with this study's aim to establish a unifying identity based on place and placial attachment? First, as stated in the introduction to this chapter, it is not my intention to argue for a Bagamoyo that existed in some kind of “merrie” state. Naturally there were divisions in this urban community, just as there exist in any other urban environment; yet, as discussed above, these factions cut across ethnic, religious and class lines. What makes these factions even more relevant to this study is how they emerged from *local* activities: music, dance, football – topics which were discussed by all and sundry in Bagamoyo regardless of affiliation. The skill and merit of teams and clubs were discussed around *barazas* as were the various personalities affiliated with them. Such topics became the subject of local gossip. Sometimes there would be community solidarity if an outside team (ie. football) visited to challenge local teams, but generally rivalries were local and internal. Few from outside the urban community would appreciate or comprehend them to the degree that the *Wabagamoyo* did.

Crisis and Community

We have already looked at several events or phenomena that have occurred in Bagamoyo which have become a part of the town's shared community lore. One crisis which many of my informants recollected was a period of famine that struck Bagamoyo and has since become known as *kibanganazi*, or “the splitting of the coconuts.” The lack

of rainfall in 1933 led to drought in the hinterland region of Bagamoyo. This crisis was further exacerbated when a plague of locusts descended upon the district eating all crops and vegetation save for the coconuts.¹⁰⁷ The narratives of the *Wabagamoyo* provide the details left out of the archival record:

Mz. Habasi Choka: When the locusts started to spread over, we heard that (people) started to see the sky becoming overcast, and then they asked each other what is the cloud for? Then, one by one, [the people] went to their shambas and started to scream [to frighten the locusts away] while cutting down coconut palm leaves in order to spread them over rice plants or cassava. [This went on] for about one hour, but then after that you saw that all the cassava leaves were being eaten by the locusts.¹⁰⁸

Bi. Asha Hassan Mtalii: Locusts came . . . [the people] started asking each other on what was going on, and by the time they decided to go out they saw locusts all over the place. The whole country was red. Then people were just complaining about the locusts, which went on for about three to four days, they were just going from one place to another, they covered everything especially trees and grass.

Nzige: How long did that period last?

A: A week from what they told us, but during that week there were no grasses or fruits.

N: Famine was all over the place?

A: Yes, famine started during that time, there was neither fruit nor anything.¹⁰⁹

Interviewee #20 (female): The locusts ate all of the plantations and left behind coconuts. People used to chew coconuts, and sometimes they were taking coconuts to other people to exchange them with other things.¹¹⁰

Aside from subsisting off of coconut meat, the *Wabagamoyo* also resorted to eating the locusts themselves by frying them and eating them with *ugali*, a dish resembling stiff porridge made from cassava root. Some *Wabagamoyo* even collected the locusts in large

¹⁰⁷ TNA, Acc. 61/341/E/I, Bagamoyo DO Bonavia to PCEP, 17/6/1933; PCEP to DO Bagamoyo, 18/11/1933; Bagamoyo Assistant DO Robinson to DO Bonavia, 20/1/1934.

¹⁰⁸ Interview, Habasi Choka.

¹⁰⁹ Interview, Asha Hassan Mtalii.

¹¹⁰ Interview, Interviewee #20 (female).

pots and sold them to others.¹¹¹ Those *Wabagamoyo* whose livelihoods were not dependent upon agriculture were able to survive comfortably by selling fish and livestock for rice and flour. People also helped each other by using the barter system, trading sacks of grains for other items.¹¹²

The government spent over Shs. 160,000/- on famine assistance, bringing in grains and cassava powder from other parts of the Territory.¹¹³ Taxes were also reduced in 1934 from Shs. 10/- to Shs. 7/-, but this did not result in it being any easier for the *Wabagamoyo* to pay: 3000 tax defaulters were forced to labour on public works that year.¹¹⁴ District Officer Bonavia established a decree whereby all district residents were required to plant *muhogo* (cassava root) in their shambas as an emergency food supply. Those who did not comply with this measure were imprisoned and Bonavia recorded that 46 people, including a few women, were jailed for disobedience.¹¹⁵ Acting District Officer Pike took over this procedure in 1935, another year when rainfall was scarce. His efforts in forcing compliance to this *muhogo* measure are well remembered by the *Wabagamoyo* who recalled Pike by name:

Bi. Asha Hassan Mtalii: Nobody could sell coconuts during that time, because no one could sell them or no one could buy them because of hunger; they were just picking them up and eating them until when Massa Paiki [Master Pike] brought aid. He brought aid for homes and cassava seeds, if you have ever heard of the Master Pike seeds.

¹¹¹ Interview, Siwatu Hassan, 12/01/2005. While Bibi Hassan was unable to elaborate further on this entrepreneurial activity during the famine, my guess is that the locusts would have at least been prepared (ie fried) before being sold since the locusts would have been readily available to anybody.

¹¹² TNA, Acc. 61/341/E, Bagamoyo District Officer Cheyne to PCEP, 2/2/1935; Interview, Habasi Choka.

¹¹³ TNA, Acc. 61/141/E, Bagamoyo DO Bonavia, 13/8/1934.

¹¹⁴ TNA, Bagamoyo Annual District Report, 1934. The 3000 would not have come solely from Bagamoyo Town, but rounded up from the district in general.

¹¹⁵ Ibid.

Nzige: Master Pike?

A: Master Pike. Whoever did not want to farm would be punished by beatings on the shoulders. Everyone was supposed to farm: women and men, the young and the old.

N: Did people not like this, or did they understand what had to be done?

A: For those who managed to run away, they ran away and for those who remained behind, simply had to do what they were told to do and agreed to farm. They were told to plant cassava seeds, cow pea seeds, pumpkin seeds. After that what they planted grew and that was the end of the great hunger and people were happy because they got some vegetables to eat.

N: And what happened to those who did not want to farm?

A: For those who did not want to farm, they were caught and jailed and after they were taken out they had to farm as well.¹¹⁶

The efforts of the district administration and the cooperation and resourcefulness of the *Wabagamoyo* saw the town through this period of hardship in the mid 1930s without any serious loss of life. The *kibanganazi* affected everyone in Bagamoyo, either directly or indirectly, and, like other crises before it and other crises that came thereafter, drew them together and marked the passage of time. *Kibanganazi* thus became a shared point of reference for the inhabitants of Bagamoyo.

It was not only shared community experiences that contributed to a sense of local identity in Bagamoyo; the ways in which certain people were remembered among the town dwellers was also very important to this process. While Julius Nyerere, Bibi Titi Mohammed, Ali Hassan Mwinyi, and Robert Shabaan were well known among the *Wabagamoyo*, these were famous personalities who were known among *all* Tanganyikans. Within Bagamoyo alone, however, there were certain people who were only reputable among the town inhabitants themselves; that is to say, these people would not be widely recognized beyond the town limits. I asked several of my informants who

¹¹⁶ Interviews, Asha Hassan Mtalii and Siwatu Hassan.

they considered to be the most famous of the *Wabagamoyo* prior to the 1960s. Many of them mentioned the same people.

One reason why people are remembered in Bagamoyo is wealth: Champs Mulji and someone named “Soud” were remembered because they owned cars (in which case, the latter could well be Mtumwa Maksud who owned two lorries for transport purposes in the mid 20th century).¹¹⁷ Mulji was a prominent merchant in Bagamoyo. G.M. Meghji was also counted among the famous town inhabitants: we met him previously as the donator of the Meghji Cup for the local district football tournament. Meghji was the most prominent businessman in town and had even built a cinema in Bagamoyo, the *Bahati*, in 1949.¹¹⁸ The main reason, however, why people were identified as being among the most famous *Wabagamoyo* was on account of the services they provided for the community. This list includes first and foremost Sheikh Ramiya and his son, Sheikh Mohammed Ramiya; also mentioned were Mzee Mgonera, Said bin Baghdadashi, Sheikh Issa bin Mzee, Sheikh Brahamani, Mzee Salum Tamim, Mzee Mtumwa Maksud, Juma Pango, Mzee Maalim Shaani, and Maksud Jembe.¹¹⁹ The following are some excerpts of the reasons the *Wabagamoyo* provided for their choices:

Kenny: Who was Maalim Shani and why was he popular?

Mz. Saidi Omari: He was born here in Bagamoyo and he was well known.

K: Why is he so remembered?

SO: Who? Maalim Shani?

¹¹⁷ Interviews, Choka Habasi, Kazimoto Salumu, Maksud Mtumwa, Salum Tamim & Mwanahamisi Rajabu.

¹¹⁸ TNA, Bagamoyo District Annual Reports, 1949-1950; Interview, Kitwana Ndege. Due to lack of interest among the African population for Indian films, the *Bahati* closed the following year and became a storage facility.

¹¹⁹ Interviews, Lona Bupe, Saidi Omari, Hadija binti Musa, Abdallah Jembe, Samahani Kejeri, Mrisho Saidi, Makinga Rajabu, Maalimu Liwasila Rajabu, Mwanahamisi Salumu, Asha Mwinjuma, Maksud Mtumwa, Selemani Abdallah Issa, Kitwana Ndege, Omari Mfaume, and Harima Kibwana, 06/03/2005.

K: Yes

SO: For his empathy and hospitality. Whenever people went to his house for talks or problems he was there for them, he never discriminated against anyone.

K: Who was Maksud Jembe and why was he famous?

SO: Maksud Jembe, who was a Manyema, left his homeland and came here for religious purposes as well. He was a person who was polite, understanding and had empathy and people loved him a lot. He grew very close to the people and he was there to offer help to people at any time of the day, whether during the day or at night. That is why he was famous.

K: Can you tell me one story about Maksud, any story about Maksud that you remember about his kindness and how he helped people?

SO: There are so many people who went to him for help and he was there to help them when people lost members of their family or wanted to travel and didn't have enough funds to support them – he was there to help. God gave him a kind heart.¹²⁰

Kenny: Can you tell me who some of the most famous Wabagamoyo in history are? Give me two names and tell why they are famous Wabagamoyo.

Mz. Mrisho Saidi: Sheikh Ramia . . . and Said Bin Baghdadashi.

K: Why are they famous?

M: They are famous due to the things they have done for Bagamoyo. Ramia built a college and Said built a mosque.¹²¹

Kenny: Who are the most famous Mbagamoyo?

Bi. Hadija binti Musa: The famous Mbagamoyo was Sheikh Ramia and we all depended on him.

K: Why did he become famous?

H: We all depended on him and he was there for people.

K: How?

H: He was our leader and whenever we had problems we were depending on him to help us out.

K: Can you give me some examples of how Sheikh Ramia helped the people of Bagamoyo? What did he do to them?

H: Whenever you had problems, he was there to help and that's how he was helping us.¹²²

While the Ramiyas did actually have a degree of fame outside of Bagamoyo, the townspeople did not mention this. The Ramiyas – and the others – were significant to them because of their importance within the town: they were recognized as people to

¹²⁰ Interview, Saidi Omari.

¹²¹ Interview, Mrisho Saidi.

¹²² Interview, Hadija binti Musa.

whom the *Wabagamoyo* could turn in times of need. Such reputations had been cultivated over time – these were not only the result of personal connections, but also of stories being told and people bearing witness to the greatness of these men. One woman mentioned among the *Wabagamoyo prominente* was Bibi Khadija Athumani:

Kenny: Why was Khadija famous?

Bi. Mwanahamisi Salamu: Because she has been here throughout generations and she goes out a lot, she knows almost every place, so everyone knows her for that.

K: So what are the main reasons that make her famous?

M: She is an old woman, and she has been living here since the past years.¹²³

While Bibi Salamu failed to mention something in particular that made Bibi Athumani stand apart from other *Wabagamoyo*, what is striking about her comment is the importance of familiarity as a determining factor for singling somebody out. Bibi Athumani was probably one of those people who “has always been there” in the community, whether seen at public places like the market or chatting with people on the street. Thus, in some ways, the example of this woman best illustrates what this discussion is about: identifying *local* personalities. Mzee Salum Tamim elaborates on this theme about what makes an *Mbagamoyo* well known within his or her own community:

Mz. Salum Tamim: They are the natives of their country.

Nzige: Was there anything that they did that is well known in Bagamoyo?

T: They do not have any reputation because being a native is a reputation itself.

N: Did they do something for the community? Did they help people or were they rich?

T: Because they are originally from Bagamoyo, their native grandfathers and grandmothers are here. Their grandfathers are from Bagamoyo and it is not like they came yesterday or the day before yesterday like us. Their grandfathers and fathers were born here in Bagamoyo.¹²⁴

¹²³ Interview, Mwanahamisi Salamu.

¹²⁴ Interview, Salum Tamim.

This brings us to a final word about becoming *Wabagamoyo*. I asked each of my informants who were the *Wabagamoyo*. It was not an alien term to them; in fact, in the interviews when I also asked the *wazee* who the Waswahili were, they invariably had less trouble describing the former versus the latter. While a couple of people identified the Waswahili as coastal people, most defined them as those who simply spoke Kiswahili. At least one person identified them as people who could not be trusted. Mzee Saidi Omari had the following to say about Waswahili:

That word is in the dictionary. I don't know how to interpret that word. When other people talk about Waswahili they mean black people; others consider Waswahili as people who are coming from the coastal area, but I don't know where that word came from or from what tribe because Mswahili is not a tribe, as everyone has his or her own tribe. He [pointing to the author] is European, another person might be an Arab, and others are from Japan; we can all call them whites.¹²⁵

In other words, to this *mzee*, Waswahili was a blanket term used for describing black people; therefore, it lacked any real sense of identification, just as referring to all Europeans, Arabs and Asians as "whites" did.

As for being regarded as *Wabagamoyo*, a list of related qualifiers emerged: one's ancestral roots in the town, one's birth in the town, being married in town, and several also listed various ethnic groups most commonly associated with living in Bagamoyo including Wazaramo, Wadoe, Wakwere, Wakami, and Wazigua. Yet, most agreed that ultimately anybody of any ethnicity or race, whether African, Asian or European, could become *Wabagamoyo*; it was only an issue of the length of time it took in which to become recognized as a part of the community. Since many agreed that this could take place within one's lifetime, I would surmise from my informants' remarks that, while

¹²⁵ Interview, Saidi Omari.

time was certainly a factor, familiarity and recognition by fellow townspeople were more important.

Summary

As this chapter has demonstrated, it was not always external forces or influences which brought out a sense of local community identity among the inhabitants of Bagamoyo. Local clubs, associations, leisure activities, tariqas, and events (negative and positive) were significant focal points for community cohesion. These very social networks were what reinforced a sense of local identity among the Bagamoyo townspeople. These networks cut across lines of race, ethnicity, class, gender and generation in town. Clearly, as witnessed above, this did not necessarily make Bagamoyo a peaceful place, but rifts and tensions within Bagamoyo society ran along lines that were different than what some scholars of coastal East African societies would have us believe.

While Nimtz emphasizes the divisions between ‘natives’ (Africans), ‘non-natives’ (Europeans, Asians, Arabs and Baluchis), and the Shomvi-Shirazi (Swahili) in Bagamoyo as dominating the socio-political landscape in town throughout the 20th century, my research has shown that the picture was much more complicated. Common experiences, common personalities, and shared spaces brought all these peoples together in Bagamoyo. I do not argue that there were not ethnic, racial or class tensions present in Bagamoyo, but given the remarkable degree of harmony that has persevered in this town throughout its history, such tensions can not have been as prominent as some scholars have argued. In agreement with Douglas A. Anthony, who examined ethnic-religious

divisions between Igbo and Hausa communities in the northern Nigerian town of Kano, “any generalized depiction of the gulf between groups fails to take into account the ability of individuals to build bridges.”¹²⁶ In Bagamoyo – a veritable melting pot of ethnicities, races and religions – where you came from was not the decisive factor in establishing one’s reputation in town; it was the bridges one built within the local community that mattered most.

¹²⁶ Douglas A. Anthony, *Poison and Medicine: Ethnicity, Power, and Violence in a Nigerian City, 1966-1986* (Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann, 2002), 33.

CHAPTER SEVEN

CONCLUSION

*"The world has mixed us up and brought us together"*¹

Tanganyikan nationalism did not really take hold over Bagamoyo until 1955. This coincides with the moment that Julius K. Nyerere assumed leadership over the Tanganyika African Association and transformed it to a national political party which pushed for the independence of the country and the enfranchisement of all Africans. The TAA then became the Tanganyika African National Union (TANU) in 1954. Until the mid 1950s, the TAA had served primarily as an organization which sought to improve the plight of Africans in their respective local communities. As we saw above, a branch of the TAA was established in Bagamoyo in 1939. Its agenda was generally restricted to representing the interests of the African community in town to the district administration and the Township Authority.²

Until Nyerere assumed leadership, there was little if any evidence from the *Wabagamoyo* of nationalist sentiment; in fact, according to one survey taken after independence in 1961, TANU activists had difficulty whipping up support in Bagamoyo because "many inhabitants did not believe that this country was theirs but that of the English."³ While this attitude might reflect the taint of British propaganda as disseminated through their schools, it also reflects the longstanding local orientation of a community which was incorporated into a larger system of administration that was

¹ Interview, Lila Rajabu.

² Aside from what has already been demonstrated in this dissertation with regards to TAA activities in Bagamoyo, Nimtz's own research is also in agreement with this conclusion. Nimtz, Chapter 9.

³ Habari za TANU, Questionnaire: Bagamoyo District, 23/2/1964, cited in Nimtz, 155.

imposed upon them from the outside. In other words, Tanganyika was a colonial creation of which Bagamoyo became a part. The town may have been made up of peoples who came from all corners of the former German colony but, as the quotation above illustrates, there did not exist a strong sense of nationalism among the Bagamoyo populace. The various ethnic groups localized and became *Wabagamoyo* themselves, not German East Africans or Tanganyikans. One of my oral informants, Mzee Kitwana Kawaka, described the aftermath of WWI in terms that support this idea: “the United Nations saw that Bagamoyo was a town that had no governance and that was when they decided to give the town to the British, it was like a British mandate. The British ruled Bagamoyo for about forty years until 1961 when we got Independence.” Instead of mentioning the colony as a whole, Mzee Kawaka only refers to Bagamoyo.⁴ While certainly the *Wabagamoyo* were aware of the world beyond their town limits – as a major trade entrepot, how could they not? – they understood the world in terms of how it connected with their town. Outsiders to their community remained outsiders; the *Wabagamoyo* concerned themselves predominantly with local issues and whatever affected them on an everyday basis.

Although Nimtz stresses the role Sheikh Mohammed Ramiya played in awakening nationalist sentiments in Bagamoyo, Ramiya was certainly prompted by influences external to Bagamoyo. The oral testimonies I gathered attest to this. It was Nyerere himself, some of my informants divulged, who explained to them that all Africans in Tanganyika had to work together to push out the British and take over the country. Lack of unity, Nyerere explained to the *Wabagamoyo*, was why their town had

⁴ Yet, when referring to Julius Nyerere, TANU and independence, Mzee Kawaka then refers to Tanganyika as a whole.

fallen to the Germans in the first place.⁵ As one informant explained, “Nyerere is the one who told us to do this and that; he is the one who opened our eyes. During the time of the British we just used to go to the ocean and fish but when Nyerere came he opened our eyes and taught us a few things.”⁶ Nevertheless, I must agree with Nimtz on the crucial role Ramiya – and others – played in winning over the *Wabagamoyo* to Nyerere’s side. Nyerere would visit Bagamoyo four times before 1961, and he stayed at the home of Ramiya on two of those occasions. Associating himself with Ramiya was important to Nyerere and the central TANU body in Dar es Salaam: as Nimtz explains, on account of the great reputation Sheikh Mohammed Ramiya enjoyed in Bagamoyo, the townspeople listened to him and trusted him to take their best interests to heart. One informant told me that the elders of the town did not entirely trust Nyerere because he was a Christian and they were concerned that Nyerere would not represent the interests of the Muslim community. The most important job that Ramiya and his acolytes performed on behalf of Nyerere was convincing these *wazee* that they would not be betrayed by Nyerere.⁷ Ramiya’s efforts were successful; Bagamoyo became overwhelmingly a TANU town.⁸

TANU meetings were held in Bagamoyo on a monthly basis beginning in 1955. They were held in Mangesani *mtaa* at first, a neighbourhood that was some distance from the district administration headquarters in the south of the town. While the British did not mind these activities, they forbade any of their employees from joining the party.

⁵ Nimtz, 158-159; Interviews, Salum Tamim, Samahani Kejeri, and Makinga Rajabu.

⁶ Interview, Makinga Rajabu.

⁷ Interview, Abdallah M. Jembe.

⁸ There was, actually, a decisive political battle that was fought in Bagamoyo between TANU and the Tanganyikan African National Congress (TANC) in 1960. TANU was anxious enough about losing the district to TANC that it sent its most high profile members to rally support in Bagamoyo while Ramiya toured the hinterland to do the same outside of the town. Consequently, TANU won the Bagamoyo seat. Nimtz, 161.

Mangesani, therefore, allowed a degree of secrecy for those who wished to be a part of TANU but were anxious about the consequences. Once the British accepted elections of African representatives to the Legislative Council in 1958, TANU held public rallies at Mwanamakuka, comprising the *mitaa* of Pumbuji and Pangapanga, and adjacent to the district headquarters. The first such meeting took place on May 27, 1958 and drew no less than 3,000 *Wabagamoyo* to hear Julius Nyerere and Bibi Titi Muhammed, among others, make speeches. This was the first mass rally TANU held in Bagamoyo and many townspeople became card carrying TANU members that day.⁹

The local branch of the TANU Youth League featured prominently in going door to door and spreading the word among the *Wabagamoyo* about upcoming TANU meetings and rallies.¹⁰ Women were also actively encouraged to join and their role was primarily to whip up local enthusiasm through song and dance performances and to greet visiting TANU VIPs; however, the Youth League also performed these functions.¹¹ But beyond these standard political crowd pleasers that occurred on a national level, the *Wabagamoyo* also had a sense of contributing to the goal of independence on a local community level. This included fasting and praying in the mosques for the well-being and success of Julius Nyerere, contributing financial donations to send Nyerere to the

⁹ TNA, Acc. 7/42/7, W.B. Thomas to Chief Broadcasting Officer, "Kufikiwa na Mkuu wa Chama cha TANU", 5/6/1958; Interviews, Abdallah Jembe, Salum Tamim, Habasi Choka, Mwanahamisi Rajabu, Makinga Rajabu, & M.S. Waziri. The site of the first TANU meetings in Bagamoyo is commemorated by a tower in Mangesani, along Mangesani Road.

¹⁰ Interview, Abdallah Jembe.

¹¹ Interviews, Selemani Abdallah Issa, Habasi Choka, Siwatu Hassan, M.S. Waziri, and Asha Mwinjuma. See also Iliffe, 532.

United Nations in 1955, and also providing Nyerere with a lorry to use for politicking in the interior.¹²

When independence came to Tanganyika, it was celebrated with due ceremony: feasts, football matches, music, *ngomas*, swimming and dhow racing competitions – very much like the coronation ceremony that had taken place in town eight years earlier. What is interesting to note is an observation Nimtz made in his research. With independence, the system of governing through the *liwalis* came to an end and was replaced with a new magistrate position known as a *hakim* in July 1962. The *hakim* differed very little from its predecessor in terms of judicial authority. In Bagamoyo, the first *hakim* appointed was Sheikh Mohammed Ramiya. Of the ceremony held in Bagamoyo in honour of Ramiya's nomination, Nimtz remarks, "the largest procession and celebration ever to take place in Bagamoyo, one even larger than the independence celebrations, were held to celebrate Sheikh Muhammad's selection." One of Nimtz's informants had the following to comment on who had given the authority to appoint Sheikh Muhammad and why: it was the

results of the inhabitants of Bagamoyo as a whole. The people agreed to ask (the government) to make Shaykh Muhammad the Hakim for two or more reasons. The first reason – he is a person who is well versed in religious matters . . . The second reason – the trust of the people of Bagamoyo.¹³

The people of Bagamoyo had not been consulted by an administering authority as to who should govern them directly since 1916 when the interim British occupying forces chose Sheikh Muhammad's father as *liwali* after consulting the town elders. Since 1928,

¹² Interviews, Interviewee #6 (Male), 05/01/2005; Maksud Mtumwa, 06/01/2005; Omari Mfaume, 26/01/2005; Fatuma Ramadhani, Mrisho Saidi, Maalimu Liwasila Rajabu, Abdallah Jembe, and Salum Tamim. The lorry was donated by Mtumwa Maksud but others take pride in the fact that the lorry was provided by an Mbagamoyo.

¹³ Interview, Mzee Mshindo b. Sudi, quoted in Nimtz, 164.

Gulamrasul Sherdel had served as *liwali* of Bagamoyo (with the exception of a couple of years when Musa Pishoki served as acting *liwali*) after having been appointed by District Officer Woodhouse without consulting the majority of the townspeople. It was truly a sweet moment for the *Wabagamoyo*, one which was invested with much more meaning than the general celebration of national independence. For the *Wabagamoyo*, Sheikh Muhammad's assumption of the role of town *hakim* was the local embodiment of the broader significance of Tanganyika's independence – his appointment affected them more directly than the abstract meaning of a national flag being hoisted up a pole.

When asking my informants about the benefits that independence brought them as an urban community, they responded with mixed emotions. While some acknowledged that there had been some development – running water, electricity, a maternity clinic, a new school, a new fish market – many of these developments were a long time coming after 1961; in fact, most of the development occurred in the 1970s, beyond the scope of this study. Even still, most households in Bagamoyo today rely on water drawn from wells or communal taps and most people cook their food over the traditional *jiko*, or hearthstones using charcoal, since electricity is neither universal nor reliable. The condition of the roads connecting Bagamoyo with the rest of the country remained abysmal until foreign aid arrived in 2002 allowing the 75km stretch of highway between Dar es Salaam and Bagamoyo to be paved. Until that time, on a dry day, the drive could take as long as three hours, whereas on a paved road the journey takes less than sixty minutes. When the heavy rains came, the town was inaccessible to road traffic. Dhows, therefore, have never lost their importance to this seaside port.

The town's African population increased by 26% between 1956 and 1970, but the town lacked any obvious signs of development.¹⁴ It was not as though there was a lack of concern among the townspeople over the condition of their town: in 1949 there had been some discussion over converting Bagamoyo's *boma* into a hotel to increase tourism. This was the same *boma* which had been built by the Germans in 1897 to replace the old fort as the district administrative headquarters, and it had been used as such ever since.¹⁵ In a bizarre turn of events, the *Wabagamoyo* elders met together to express their "sadness" and concern over this possibility and wrote a petition to the District Commissioner asking him to choose another building in Bagamoyo for the purposes of opening a new hotel. The petition was signed by thirty elders. The reason for their objection appears to be on account of their association of this impressive, imposing building with administrative power; in other words, the thought of turning this building into a tourist hotel was demeaning to the status of the building as the seat of colonial authority for over fifty years.¹⁶ It is difficult to discern what other motives these *Wabagamoyo* may have had in voicing their disapproval towards such an obvious symbol of colonial subjugation, but the petition suggests that the local elders had developed an attachment towards the building and adopted it as their own. One oral informant stated that the *boma* remained an important landmark in Bagamoyo Town because "everything was held there and

¹⁴ Nimtz, 97.

¹⁵ There were plans in motion to build a new district administrative station for Bagamoyo. TNA, 40628, ? to PC Eastern Province, 11/11/1949; Acting PC Eastern Province to Hon. Member of the Local Government, 17/1/1950.

¹⁶ TNA, 40662, PC Eastern Province to Chief Secretary, DSM, 7/12/1949; Enclosure, Wazee wa Mji wa Bagamoyo to Bwana Shauri Mkubwa (District Commissioner), Bagamoyo, 29/11/1949.

people with problems used to go there so that they could be helped.”¹⁷ In the end, the petitioners got their way and the hotel conversion idea was scrapped.¹⁸ The following recommendation was made by a government authority (possibly the Chief Secretary) in response to the incident: “I should have liked to see [sic] a miniature Development Commission set up, with local Africans on it, to control the plan. There may be a danger (as we have seen already in Bagamoyo) of direct action from above creating local difficulties.”¹⁹

In another example of local concern over town development, Bagamoyo elders pointed out to a visiting development officer in 1960 “that Bagamoyo being an old town though historical [sic] has been completely forgotten particularly [from a] social point of view.”²⁰ This was in reference to recent government interest in preserving Bagamoyo as a historical site in Tanganyika, a process that began in 1957 with the establishment of a monument to commemorate the one hundred year anniversary of Burton and Speke’s departure from Bagamoyo/Kaole to find the source of the Nile River.²¹ In the same year, Bagamoyo became the site of the Department of Antiquities “where it was hoped the proposed East African School of Archaeology should also be set up.”²² The Department

¹⁷ Interview, Kitwana Kawaka, 02/01/2005. Philip Stigger, a former District Officer of Bagamoyo, noted that the most interesting aspect of a District Commissioner’s day was the daily arrival of 15-20 *Wabagamoyo* to the Boma to discuss various issues, needs and concerns. Email correspondence with Philip Stigger, 2005.

¹⁸ TNA, 40662, ? (Note) 6/7/1950.

¹⁹ TNA, 40628, ? to PAS (Agriculture and Natural Resources), February/March 1950.

²⁰ TNA, Acc. 7/51/2, Saidi to Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Local Government and Housing, 2/10/1960.

²¹ *Baragumu*, 19/8/1957, p.4-5; *Mwangaza*, 9/8/1957, p.1. There is no indication that this event was brought about by local initiative; however, the newspapers display several photographs which indicate that the inauguration ceremony of the commemorative monument involved many *Wabagamoyo* of all backgrounds.

²² ZNA, BC32/1, Annual Report of the Department of Antiquities, 1957.

was run by Neville Chittick, the renowned archaeologist of the East African littoral. But while all this interest was taken in preserving Bagamoyo's heritage, the townspeople felt little was being done to move them into the future.

Like the rest of the country, the administration of Bagamoyo was reorganized after independence. Bagamoyo lost its status as a township and was governed by an Urban Divisional Council after 1961. This system only lasted two years and was replaced by two Village Divisional Councils which administered the former township.²³ District administration headquarters were still located in Bagamoyo Town and so it never lost its status as the centre of Bagamoyo District. In 1965 the town was restructured on a grassroots level akin to the Chinese communist system: every ten contiguous homes in Bagamoyo elected a cell leader to represent their interests to higher authorities and to transmit information from those same authorities to their constituents.²⁴

Despite this new order to facilitate communication and development, local officials complained throughout the 1960s of the lack of progress Bagamoyo was making in terms of meeting the goals of the first five year development plan, instigated in 1964. One official reported that "the participation of town people in Nation Building have [sic] been very discouraging."²⁵ At the end of the first year of the Five Year Development Plan it was further remarked, "the greatest hindrance to Community Development and work in this District is that . . . Bagamoyo people have a belief that they *know*. In this

²³ Nimtz, 162-163.

²⁴ TNA, Acc. 540/CD/BDMR/72, Kisenge to Regional Commissioner Development Officer (RCDO), 30/9/1965.

²⁵ TNA, Acc. 540/CD/BDMR/72, Kisenge to RCDO, 4/5/1965.

case the desire for them to learn or to adopt to [sic] new changes is very little.”²⁶ This latter statement points to a certain town pride among the *Wabagamoyo* regarding being told what to do. Some of this attitude also surfaced during my interviews with a few of the *Wabagamoyo* who believed that little changed in Bagamoyo after independence because it was always a “free” place. In other words, there was a sense that people in Bagamoyo had never really felt oppressed; two of my informants went so far as to say that the reason Nyerere came so frequently to Bagamoyo was to tap into its spirit of freedom.²⁷

This town pride or, better expressed, community spirit was not something that just appeared in Bagamoyo to annoy nationalist developers. This level of resistance that the African District Commissioner encountered was really no different from the resistance that all other outsiders to Bagamoyo Town had experienced throughout its history. While the *Wabagamoyo* had now become enfranchised, the District Commissioner still remained appointed and, in light of the creation of the position of *hakim*, the DC ranked below this vestige of traditional local authority, sanctioned by the *Wabagamoyo* in the personage of Sheikh Mohammed Ramiya. The DC and the other TANU officials, as representatives of national development, could be viewed as not having the interests of the Bagamoyo community at heart. Their agenda was to develop Tanganyika as a nation

²⁶ TNA, Acc. 540/CD/BDMR/72, Evaluation of the 1st Year of the 5 Year Development Plan, n.d. (1965?).

²⁷ Interviews, Lila Rajabu & Rehema Juma. See also Interview, Fatuma Ramadhani. I should note here that the *Wabagamoyo* were remarkably candid with me in narrating their personal histories within the town. It was also relatively easy to find people who were trusting enough to share their stories with me. My colleagues in the field, Laura Fair and Corrie Decker, who both had experience in collecting interviews in Zanzibar, both expressed surprise at the number of interviews I was able to conduct in such a short period of time and even more surprised at some of the criticism my informants shared with me regarding the Tanzanian government since independence.

and the programmes they initiated reflected this; as the Bagamoyo *wazee* informed the official above, they felt TANU was neglecting the issues which were important to them.

Conclusion

The quotation that heads this final chapter, taken from an interview with one of the *Wabagamoyo*, succinctly captures the historical diversity of Bagamoyo's community. Drawn from all over east central Africa, the western Indian Ocean rim, and parts of western Europe, the *Wabagamoyo* represent a goodly mix of the world's peoples. Yet, despite their diverse backgrounds these people found ways of forging ties across, rather than splitting along the lines of, race, ethnicity, religion or culture. This dissertation has described how this phenomenon occurred.

Previous scholars explain this phenomenon using the Swahili culture as the unifying catalyst of these diverse peoples; not just for Bagamoyo, but for many coastal towns up and down the central East African littoral. By doing so, they homogenize the historical experience of these coastal inhabitants. While it is true that many towns shared similar characteristics – language, population make-up, economic base, architecture, religion – this did not mean that a homogenous group of people called the Swahili emerged in East Africa. As examined at the end of chapter two, the Zanzibari “Swahili” porters who arrived with Stanley in Bagamoyo were not welcomed by the local “Swahili” because of the disrespectful behaviour of the former. In chapter three, I showed how the presence of “Swahili” rebels from Pangani, Saadani and Windi was also not appreciated by the “Swahili” of Bagamoyo in 1888/1889. The former group resorted to looting,

kidnapping and plundering in the town – behaviour which the out-of-town rebels did not feel particularly guilty about since they possessed little to no loyalty to Bagamoyo.

Each urban center along the coast was exposed to a different set of variables regarding the characteristics described above. Bagamoyo had a larger Asian population than Pangani, whereas Pangani had a larger Omani Arab population. The Zaramo dominated Bagamoyo's hinterland whereas the Zigua surrounded Pangani. Bagamoyo's economic base was marked by a far greater caravan trade; Pangani's economy was driven by its sugarcane plantations. Bagamoyo looked out upon a shallow ocean roadstead while Pangani overlooked a riverbank. Such variables led to different identities among the so-called Swahili towns. This dissertation, using the case study of Bagamoyo, has made the argument that a placial framework is needed to better understand identity and the historical experience along the East African coastline.

One reason why a certain region of eastern Africa came to be called Swahili was the alleged influence the Sultan of Zanzibar wielded over it. The Swahili civilization, however, had developed long before the Sultan of Zanzibar set up his administrative center on that island; yet, in the nineteenth century, the region known as the "Swahili coast" was concomitant with the region in which representatives of the Sultan administered his business interests. Scholars have assumed that Bagamoyo, the mainland port closest to Stone Town, was the mainland port under the Sultan's greatest control. Yet, as the second chapter argues, the people of Bagamoyo maintained a sense of their own identity independent of the Sultanate of Zanzibar. Furthermore, the Sultans' own representatives in Bagamoyo – the *jemadars* and the *liwalis*, Baluchis and Shihiris

respectively – found their interests better served when they forged ties with the local townspeople.

The Sultans' men were not the only ones who learned the valuable lesson of establishing local community ties. The inhabitants of Bagamoyo graciously received the French missionaries who arrived in the late 1860s; however, when the latter attempted to steamroll their selfish agenda of property accumulation over their hosts, they ran afoul of community codes and provoked the wrath of the townspeople. Gradually they managed to resolve their differences and, year by year, the fathers established themselves as part of the social urban landscape. When rebellion broke out in 1888, the French mission became a place of refuge for thousands of Bagamoyo's citizens, and Father Etienne Baur became the central mediator between the warring parties. These acts confirmed the missionaries as members of Bagamoyo's community.

But the Swahili cultural framework, as defined by past scholars, does not allow for the incorporation of Europeans. Furthermore, since the culture was rooted in an urban center, it scorned those whose origins were rural, unless such people made the effort to "swahilicize" themselves. In the case of Bagamoyo, these rural peoples included diverse groups, from the neighbouring Wazaramo to the distant Manyema of the Great Lakes region. Most notably, however, it referred to the Wanyamwezi, the porters of the African interior. Aside from these people's rural backgrounds, Swahili culture also shunned them because they were transients – those who only stayed in town for a short while and then returned to someplace else they called home. Yet, as examined in chapter four, the economy of Bagamoyo revolved around the upcountry porters. The trade goods they brought with them from the interior attracted many merchants from around the western

Indian Ocean basin as well as western Europe and the eastern United States. The shops in town catered to the tastes of the upcountry folk and the townspeople accommodated the porters' other needs. The porters returned year after year; even when supposedly more powerful forces like the Germans attempted to divert the porters to Dar es Salaam, the porters remained loyal to Bagamoyo. Why this loyalty from a people considered barbarian by Swahili urbanites? Spatial attachment provides the explanation. Over time, the upcountry peoples forged ties with local merchants and townspeople and came to expect certain advantages or pleasures by coming back to Bagamoyo. The town gained a widespread reputation in the African interior as a "worldly" place and tens of thousands made their way annually to the breezy seaside port. The Bagamoyo community celebrated the porters' arrival into town and their presence became incorporated into the social landscape, just as the French missionaries had.

Another group seen as social outsiders to the Swahili community was the Asians. While some authors have tried to broaden the Swahili framework to include the Asians, the Asians themselves would probably have rejected this affiliation. This, however, does not mean that the Asians did not develop spatial loyalties to the urban communities where they made their homes in East Africa. In chapter four I showed evidence of such attachment. Aside from the ties they forged with urban dwellers and upcountry porters alike, some members of the Asian community expressed philanthropic feelings towards Bagamoyo by funding interracial schools and hospitals, as well as contributing to social urban pastimes like football and cinema. A Swahili framework also assumes that all the various communities blend into one shared culture; yet, these different cultural groups often upheld their own customs, even while borrowing from others when it suited them or

appealed to them. The Asian community taught their children Gujarati or Hindi; African Muslims retained some non-Muslim traditions; Omani Arabs tried to keep a social distance from others through different fashion and consumer tastes. A spatial framework not only allows for the aspects of culture that these diverse communities did share, but also for those that set them apart from one another. As witnessed in chapter two, the Muslim and Christian communities may have had their periodic falling outs, but generally speaking, they respected each other's religious rites and customs.

Nineteenth century European observers to Bagamoyo rarely referred to the town's denizens simply as Swahili. The Swahili – often referring to the centuries old creole mix of Africans and Arabs – were only one community among many others present: Baluchis, Shihiris, Khojas, Hindus, Wanyamwezi, Wazaramo. If Swahili was not the unifying catalyst that united these diverse communities, what was? The answer lies in the spatial framework. More than adopting a spatial identity, the people of Bagamoyo identified themselves placially. That is to say, once people invested a space with meaning through the practice of everyday life – daily routines; daily encounters with other locals; knowing the social urban landscape – a space became a place; in this case, the town of Bagamoyo. As witnessed in chapters two through five, this placial identity manifested itself particularly in the face of outsider disrespect towards the community. There may have been diverse interests among the community members, but enough social bonds and ties existed between them – whether in the form of patron/client or slave/master relationships, kinship networks, religious obligations, or social associations – to make the claim that they shared a common concern over what transpired in their shared urban space. As a placial community, the people of Bagamoyo gathered to

welcome and observe strangers to their town. They also found ways of coming together when these strangers threatened their livelihoods; when the British rationed goods during and after WWII, the townspeople developed smuggling networks to cope.

Naturally the town had its divisions. Just because people live in the same town, does not mean that they all get along; yet, these divisions did not necessarily manifest themselves along lines one might expect. Factions cut across various social lines: race, ethnicity, and even class. The Muslim community was divided between *tariqas*; wealthy members of the community were patrons of rival women's *lelemama* societies; jazz bands and football teams competed for fans based on skill and talent; and individuals sought to undermine one another when they became envious. Regardless of the nature of these competing groups and interests, they all competed for and against members of the same placial community. The reputations of various Bagamoyo leisure societies and individuals alike were locally recognized and discussed, whether the local was a Baluchi, Shihiri, Nyamwezi, Swahili, or French; outsiders to the town, however, would be hard pressed to appreciate Bagamoyo's social dynamics.

Given the variety of communities that existed within Bagamoyo there were numerous authority figures. Resolving the inevitable disputes that took place involved a public process known as a *shauri* in which all could witness. Authority figures sat in on sessions when their clients were involved, but they could also attend to advise others. The various foreign powers – Omanis, Germans, British – who got involved in Bagamoyo eventually discovered for themselves that tapping into this network of authority proved the best method of governing the town. With regards to boosting school attendance numbers, the colonial administrations not only consulted local authority

figures, but also the parents. Ultimately, while community consultation and consensus showed the limits of foreign powers over local affairs, it also demonstrated the pervasiveness of placial identity. In an urban environment composed of diverse groups, neither local authorities nor colonial governments could govern town affairs using the traditions of one people. In the end, social harmony rested on the ability to recognize how the interests of Khojas, Hindus, Shihiris, Waswahili, Baluchis, Wanyamwezi, Wazaramo, Wadoe, Wakwere, Wakami, French, German and British converged. The resolution to this challenge lay in understanding this assortment of urbanites as *Wabagamoyo*.

If this placial identity serves historians better in understanding East African coastal societies, should Swahili, then, be discarded as a referential term in studying East African history? I disagree. Swahili culture does assist historians in appreciating the geographical extent of the historical encounter between Africans and Arabs along the coastline over the past millennium. It helps historians understand the creolization that was unique to this part of the world. However, as other diverse groups increasingly made their homes along the East African littoral, they did not simply all merge into one common identity known as the Swahili. Some cultural characteristics were shared while others were not. Furthermore, as this thesis has argued, “Swahili towns” developed their own *genius loci* – a sense of identity unique from other communities glossed under the Swahili rubric. Scholars of Swahili culture and identity, then, need to qualify generalizations made about these people. The term has largely been used by foreigners to describe the inhabitants of East African port towns as opposed to being a self-referential term used by the Swahili themselves; even today, people identified as Waswahili will

identify this category as people who merely speak the language. They have a much better understanding of themselves as inhabitants of a particular place. If the very people described as Swahili do not readily identify with this then we need to understand why, as well as understand how they alternatively view(ed) themselves as an integrated community.

A placial identity is something that is taken for granted among members of Western societies who readily identify themselves by the towns or cities they were born and raised in; however, such a “modern” identity is often denied Africans, particularly historically. Instead, popular media, and even scholars, are often fixated on the ethnicity of Africans – their “tribal” origins. Further historical studies of African urban communities are needed to address this imbalance in scholarship on African identities. Instead of focusing on the historical development of a singular ethnic group, or how animosity and violence has arisen between two or more ethnic groups, there is need to appreciate how diverse groups of people could also coexist in Africa and function as communities. It is my hope that this dissertation provides a successful case study of this phenomenon by using the example of one of the most historically heterogeneous of African communities, the *Wabagamoyo*.

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 Kirk, Sir John and Lady Helen Cooke, Papers (Acc. 9942)
 Cameron, Vernon Lovett, Papers (Acc. 10120)

France

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Germany

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2. Newspapers and Periodicals

Baragumu
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Deutsche Kolonialzeitung
Deutsche Kolonialblatt
Deutsch Ostafrikanische Rundschau
Mambo Leo
Mwangaza
Tanganyika Standard
Tanganyika Gazette
Zanzibar Gazette

3. Interviews (All interviews were conducted in Bagamoyo Town except as noted)

Mz. Samahani Kejeri, 02/01/2005
 Mz. Kitwana Nzige Kawaka, 02/01/2005
 Mz. Ussi Makame Ussi, 03/01/2005
 Bi. Kwege Lona Bupe, 03/01/2005
 Bi. Asha Hassani Mtalii, 05/01/2005
 Interviewee #6 (Male), 05/01/2005
 Mz. Maksud Mtumwa, 06/01/2005
 Mz. Selemani Abdallah Issa, 07/01/2005
 Bi. Asha Mwinjuma, 07/01/2005
 Bi. Mashama Salum, 08/01/2005
 Mz. Saidi Omari, 09/01/2005
 Mz. Iddi Rajabu Mtawa, 09/01/2005
 Mz. Ali Halfan Mtengwa, 10/01/2005
 Mz. Selemani Rajabu Mkandinga, 10/01/2005
 Bi. Siwatu Hassan, 12/01/2005
 Bi. Tukae Rajabu, 12/01/2005
 Mz. M.S. Waziri, 14/01/2005
 Bi. Mwanahamisi Salama, 14/01/2005
 Bi. Hadija binti Musa, 15/01/2005
 Interviewee #20 (female), 15/01/2005
 Bi. Kidawa Abdallah, 16/01/2005
 Bi. Mwanahamisi Bori, 16/01/2005
 Bi. Shakira Waziri, 17/01/2005
 Interviewee #24 (female), 19/01/2005
 Mz. Makinga Rajabu, 19/01/2005
 Mz. Lila Rajabu, 22/01/2005
 Mz. Habasi Choka, 23/01/2005
 Mz. Omari Mfaume, 26/01/2005
 Mr. Philip Stigger, (email correspondence) 01/2005

Bi. Fatuma Ramazani, 05/03/2005
 Mz. Maalimu Liwasila Rajabu, 05/03/2005
 Mz. Mrisho Saidi Kitimbwa, 06/03/2005
 Bi. Harima Kibwana, 06/03/2005
 Mz. Salum Tamim, 13/03/2005
 Mz. Abdallah M. Jembe, 19/03/2005
 Mz. Sumwa Maneno, 05/2005
 Bi. Mama Pili, 05/2005
 Mz. Kazimoto Salumu, 05/2005
 Bw. Lucas, local contact and research assistant, Department of Antiquities, Tanzania
 Nzige Kawaka, research assistant
 Kenny Mleke, research assistant

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