



# Introduction

Many visitors to Bagamoyo fail to notice the Old Stone Town to their right, at the shore of the Indian Ocean, when they head for the Catholic mission station with its museum a few kilometers to the north of the center of the town. If they return for a tour through the town, which was placed in 2006 on Tanzania's Tentative List as a potential World Heritage site, they may experience the closed, often abandoned houses, and the tranquility of the streets. Guides will volunteer, for a negotiable sum, to take the tourists to the buildings correctly or incorrectly associated with the history of the slave trade. Horrors of the past are here mixed with the beauty of the palms along the coral sand beach and the genius loci or the spirit of the town, described by many as its slow rhythm and fresh air. Hidden behind the massive stone walls and solid carved-wood doors and under the dust on the narrow streets and lanes is a both fascinating and frightening history.

Heritage-making, a concept purposely selected in this research to capture the various processes in the identification, formulation, and presentation of a cultural heritage, implies that different options may be available to identify a heritage, what it represents, and how it shall be presented. Memories are created and often used to express aspirations and claims. Heritage-making is an ongoing process of forming an identity.

Inherent in this process is that a heritage, particularly a world heritage, ideally should carry only one interpretation, image, or story. This should be captured in its "outstanding universal value," the criteria that a cultural heritage must meet to become a world heritage. This logic implies that alternative stories or interpretations are silenced. Additionally, interpretations or claims of rival groups at the local level, in the academic world, and among experts on heritage conservation are often marginalized through processes of exclusion when a particular interpretation is selected and promoted in the branding of the heritage.

Heritage-making may be seen as a force that at the same time promotes nationalism and globalization since the same forces are behind these two processes, which are occasionally seen as contradicting each other. Both result in standardization and homogenization. Nationalism does this through an expected or imagined sociocultural similarity among the population within a given geopolitical territory. Globalization, on the other hand, does this in the standardized creation of the World Heritage List. In recent years, the world has had to witness the violent and purposeful destruction of world and cultural heritage as a means of resisting and rejecting both processes. This is partly a reaction against the heritage-making processes that are seen the results of a Western-dominated globalizing world, and in attempts to erase what are seen as challenging and misinformed concepts, interpretations, traditions, and visions.

One of the paradoxes in world heritage-making is that it is both an effect of and a force behind globalization and nationalism. The race among UNESCO's (United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization) member states to have their cultural heritage inscribed on the World Heritage List (WHL) bolsters national pride and global homogenization or standardization, through the packaging of the heritage, which, by itself, is a globalizing force. UNESCO's efforts to create a balance among the continents regarding the number of inscriptions on the WHL, which nurtures heritage-making in underrepresented continents, is both a force that promotes, and, at the same time, exemplifies the effects of globalization.

The efforts to have Bagamoyo inscribed on the World Heritage List may be explored through the processes of heritage-making and globalization. Both processes contribute to the disembedding, or lifting out, of the heritage from its local context, when it is presented to a global audience. The world heritage expert system in the form of trained experts, rules, and power structures regulates the world heritage phenomenon. This system imposes a hegemonic matrix over a locally embedded cultural heritage. This is not to say, however, that the local understanding of a world heritage is dictated by the values ascribed to it at the global level, as shown, for example, by the destruction of Sufi tombs and mosques in Timbuktu, Mali, to which UNESCO ascribes "outstanding universal values." These were acts on the ground to disembed the place from a globalizing world. It therefore seems more common that the interpretations at national and global levels correspond, since a potential world heritage, in order to be recognizable and recognized on the global scene, has to be identified, described, and presented according to UNESCO's "best practice" format.

The "best practice" concept implies the application of a normative power in the hands of UNESCO in heritage-making. The demand placed on applicants to the WHL to follow the "best practice" concept creates ho-

mogenization and standardization. Furthermore, the accepted formulas, procedures, and technical language that surround the promotion and acceptance of a potential world heritage may further contribute to its disembedding from the local context. UNESCO's normative power is exercised when the qualities of both old and new sites are evaluated by using the defined norms.

The disembedding process reveals another paradox in both heritage-making and globalization. To be qualified for the World Heritage List, an item of cultural heritage must be of "outstanding universal value," which means that it must be both outstanding in comparison with all other heritage sites or a phenomenon on the global level in its own category, while being of universal interest. It must, in other words, be presented both as something unique but recognizable as a thing of interest for global heritage experts and tourists. The demand for both outstanding and universal places the identification, formulation, and presentation of the heritage squarely in the hands of experts despite the good intentions of UNESCO to have the local population's acceptance and perspectives included in this work. The reliance on international experts and organizations easily implies that the presentation of the heritage is further disembedded from the local context.

The identification and presentation of a potential world heritage site's outstanding universal value is therefore an act performed on a tightrope between what is internationally accepted and acclaimed as world heritage, and what is locally understood as a lived in or lived with cultural heritage. The nomination dossier of a heritage site proposed for inscription onto the WHL must be stringent, coherent, and convincing. Although a world heritage site is inscribed on the WHL on the basis of fulfilling a number of criteria, the coherence expected in the interpretation and presentation of its uniqueness not only invites, but also demands, a univocal text or monocular image of what the heritage site represents. This fosters a tunnel view, as alternative interpretations, stories, or images tend to be muted or made invisible. This is what happened, as will be shown below, when the government of Tanzania in 2006 decided to present Bagamoyo as a representative site of the East African slave routes on the country's Tentative List, a step before the heritage is formally nominated to the World Heritage List.

When the heritage site is meant to attract global tourists, it risks becoming further disembedded from its local context. Packaged and presented in order to increase the flow of money from tourists, the heritage site is conveniently framed in a way which makes it recognizable and attractive for a specific category of global citizens. This is rarely as obvious as it was in the opening speech delivered by the Tanzanian Minister for Tourism

at the 2002 International Conference arranged in Bagamoyo. She claimed that “it is necessary to put Bagamoyo on the World Heritage List so that people in America and the West Indies can come to Bagamoyo and trace their backgrounds” (author’s field notes, September 2002).

With this, the history of the place was lifted out of its local context and translated into the global metastory of slavery and the slave trade. This transformation was taken one step further in 2006 at the launch of the site on the country’s Tentative List, when it was explained that “not even 150 years ago, millions of Africans had to bear a cruel fate. They were captured by slave hunters, chained together and forced to walk sometimes hundreds of kilometers to be sold for example to planters who used them as cheap labor in their fields” (UNESCO 2006). The presentation places itself squarely within the global metastory of the slave trade and slavery, which is modeled on the Atlantic slave trade and the US form of plantation slavery. The disembedding of the heritage was followed by the re-embedding of a different story from a different part of the world and from a capitalist free market system into the pre-capitalist East African context.

Different influences from the global heritage scene contributed to the branding of Bagamoyo, despite existing knowledge, as a representative of the slave routes. One was UNESCO’s launching in the mid-1990s of a number of route themes as the Slave Route Project (hereafter SRP) and the Trade Route Project. The SRP had, at the time of the 2002 International Conference, contributed to both the growing research activities on the role of the slave trade and slavery in West Africa, the Caribbean, and North and South America, and the declaration of slavery as a crime against humanity at the 2001 conference in Durban. There is today a more nuanced understanding of both the local effects of the slave trade on the societies in West Africa, of the plantation systems in the western hemisphere, and the dark and destructive history of colonialism.

The devastating effects of the slave trade on African societies have been known for centuries. Rosalind Shaw has more recently shown in her publications (1996, 2002) how the incredible cruelty during the centuries of slave hunting and trade in western Africa contributed to an increase in witchcraft accusations. The incomprehensible violence, blood-sucking character of the business of the slavers, extraordinary richness concentrated in a few hands, and the breaking up of social ties, obligations, and solidarity were projected onto witches who lived, and still live, in a separate world called the “Place of Witches” from where they interfere in the lives of those in their communities. Here the witches live in affluence like members of the post-colonial kleptocratic class. It seems plausible that the increase during the slave trade in witchcraft beliefs and accusations today find new fuel and targets through the inequalities and lack of trans-

parency that characterize many post-colonial societies and that the slave trade still affects the lives of people today.

The SRP has also stimulated an increased interest among tourists to visit places associated with the slave trade. This is particularly prominent on the west coast of Africa with its slave castles and underground chambers, which have become sites of conscience. The tourist industry that grew up around these sites has been called “dark tourism” (Lennon and Foley 2000) or “thantourism” (Seaton 1996), while the places of memory themselves have been termed “places of dissonance” (Turnbridge and Ashworth 1996).

These sites have become moorings for the descendants of those displaced through the slave trade. Rosabelle Boswell, writing about descendants of former slaves on the Seychelles and Mauritius in the Indian Ocean, states that “slaves and others like them lost more than their identities, they lost the rich and diverse possibilities that could have made them into self-affirming human beings” (Boswell 2008, 20–21). The enforced displacement and open cruelty deprived many slaves of their families, ancestral graves, the characteristics of the familiar setting and landscape into which so much of the memory is anchored in an oral culture.

The tangible heritage from the slave trade may assist to enrich the intangible memory of the trade. Iron chains and slave castles may, besides representing a dark memory, communicate new knowledge and feeling among the descendants of slaves. They are concrete evidence of an open racism and systematic discrimination where the visitors may easily connect their own experience of racism and discrimination with the misdeeds of the past. This compression of time provides explanations and may give rise to strong emotions, as captured by Lisa McNair during a visit to a West African slave castle: “as the tour guides were explaining and walking through it, you could feel the spirit of our ancestors upon you. I don’t think you ever outgrow the experience of that feeling. Grown men in the group shed tears” (McNair 1998).

The branding of Bagamoyo as a slave port, stimulated by the SRP and UNESCO’s wish to also include the Indian Ocean region in the project was, however, not based on solid information and evidence. Furthermore, the branding meant, as will be shown, that only one aspect of the caravan trade was lifted out and merged with a globally recognized metastory. The cultural heritage of Bagamoyo, the caravan trade along the central routes from Lake Tanganyika, and beyond, to the Indian Ocean, was transformed into a slave route in an attempt to attract the growing “roots tourism”: people from the Americas go in search of their origins in places like Bagamoyo. When the image of the slave route was selected, the alternative stories of the East African caravan trade were muted.

The East African caravan trade during the nineteenth century developed into an institution. A rather uniform caravan culture emerged where the caravans often appeared as a whole society. This included sometimes three to four thousand men, women, and children, on the move, together with goods and other cultural elements such as languages and religions. The conventional view of nineteenth-century East African history was created by the many “explorers” who set out from, for example, Bagamoyo to “discover” the interior of the continent. What is less well known is that they followed well-trodden paths, established by caravan porters and traders from the interior of the continent. These porters and traders, at the end of the eighteenth century, began to extend their trading networks to reach the port towns on the Mrima coast, the area between the Tanzanian/Kenyan border and Dar es Salaam.

They brought their trade items, primarily ivory, but also slaves, in exchange for cotton cloth, weapons, and ammunition, which they obtained from traders in the coastal towns. This initiative was later followed by traders with caravans organized from the coast that set out to reach the heart of Africa. Bagamoyo became the interface connecting the trading networks on the continent with the Indian Ocean networks and further afield to markets in China, Japan, Europe, and in the Americas.

The demand for cotton cloth and the tastes of the peoples in the interior of the continent stimulated both the industrial development of the textile industries in North America and India and influenced the textiles they produced. Simultaneously, the desire in Asia, the Americas, and Europe for ivory and copal, and the increasing demand for slaves in societies in and around the Indian Ocean and in the Americas triggered an increased caravan trade. This consisted of trading ivory from the interior, copal from the coast, slaves from the entire region, and cloth, weapons, and ammunition mainly from India, Europe and the Americas.

The demand for trade items carried by the caravan porters to a trade town like Bagamoyo generated hectic processes of globalization. During the second half of the nineteenth century the town annually received tens of thousands of caravan porters, predominantly from the Nyamwezi area east of Lake Tanganyika and south of Lake Victoria. The lucrative caravan trade also attracted traders and financiers from India and the Arabic peninsula. European colonialists, first Germans and then those from the British Isles, trained to think in terms of tribes, soon ran into difficulties to comprehend what they met and saw when they tried to take political control over the cosmopolitan town. This study, therefore, is an illustration on how a more comprehensive understanding of an early phase of globalization may correct the previous view created by early colonialists, “explorers,” missionaries, and anthropologists.

The way we construct and use our heritage may help us to tackle and come to grips with some of the challenges in our often conflict-ridden world. It is hoped that this study may contribute to challenge present-day growth of nationalist movements and arguments. Contrary to the arguments by neo-nationalist agitators, people may perfectly well, as will be shown here, enjoy living in a cosmopolitan society that provides multiple means to maneuver between and among different identities in the hierarchical construction of their society. Furthermore, people may equally enjoy living in a society without strictly defined territorial borders and in a sociopolitical context that stimulates and facilitates travels and trade over land and sea allowing multiple places of residence on different continents.

This volume consists of two parts. The first is called "Heritage-Making, Branding, and Globalization," and captures fifty years of heritage-making in Bagamoyo. Special focus is placed on the efforts to have Bagamoyo nominated for UNESCO's World Heritage List as a representative of the slave trade of East Africa. It discusses world heritage-making as both an effect and a cause of globalization and the frictions and fractures that may develop during the efforts to identify and present the heritage. Frictions and fractures are likely to appear when the available information is stretched beyond its capacity to protect and promote a specific interpretation of the value of a potential world heritage site. It is argued here that this happened when the slave route theme was selected instead of the trade route theme in the launching of Bagamoyo as a potential World Heritage site.

The second part, called "Commerce, Competition, and Consumerism: Bagamoyo and the Caravan Trade," explores the memories from the caravan trade that were muted when the slave route theme was selected. It explains how the town could have been used to represent the interface between the East African caravan trade with iron, cloth, copal, and slaves, and the Indian Ocean trading networks in cloth, metal products, weapons, and ammunition. The focus in the first chapters in the second part is on the East African caravan trade as an institution; a society consisting of men, women, and children and specialized professionals oscillating between the interior of the continent and the Indian Ocean. In the last chapters, the focus shifts to the intensive process of politics of identity formation and communication that were triggered in Bagamoyo by the intense interaction of people from different backgrounds brought together by the new wealth from the caravan trade.

The vibrant processes of hierarchization and creolization were fueled by three main characteristics of the East African trade towns: commerce, competition, and consumerism. This trade was often embedded in practices and institutions that handicapped the European and American trad-

ers who expected to trade according to market principles. The focus in the last chapters is on the cultural processes of creolization, inclusion and exclusion, struggle for power and prestige, control and colonization. The wealth generated through the caravan trade created a unique culture and society, initially beyond the control of the colonizers.

The information in the first part of this work is to a large extent based on participant observation. The process of identifying Bagamoyo's "outstanding universal value" at the 2002 International Conference on Bagamoyo as a potential World Heritage site consisted of a number of meetings, workshops, and conferences that were attended by the author. The information on the process—from the arrangement of the conference to the nomination of the town on Tanzania's tentative list in January 2006—is based on interviews and written documents.

The second part of this work is a journey into the past. It is an attempt to present what was muted when the "slave route" theme was selected, at the expense of the caravan route theme. It is mainly a compilation of the rich, but scattered, information available in written documents, and a re-interpretation of the established wisdom about East African caravan and slave trade. Experiences and insights from ten years of work and residence in Tanzania have guided me through the literature used for this text.

The conventional perspective has been to view trade through the eyes of the "explorers," missionaries, and traders who traveled from the coast and westward. In the present work, the view is turned 180 degrees to follow the Nyamwezi traders and porters in their caravans from their homeland in central Arica and down to the coast. It is generally understood today that they initiated the caravan trade that, after some decades, was dominated by traders from the coastal societies.

This work is in the field of historical anthropology. The work of, for example, Johannes Fabian (2000) on the reasons behind the caravan leaders' frequent violence against their caravan porters and guides and Tanya Murray Li's (2007) research on centuries of colonial and post-colonial projects and programs to change the life of "the natives," the productivity in their cultivation systems, and the landscape on Sulawesi, Indonesia, have guided me to develop the approach adopted in this work.

The text navigates in the border area between the search for causalities as to find answers to the questions of why it was the Nyamwezi people in the interior of the continent who initiated the long-distance caravan trade or why Bagamoyo developed into the most important port and trade town on the East African coast and, on the other hand, the local and global implications of the booming caravan trade. It also navigates between the fields of social anthropology, development studies, and critical heritage studies. It is inspired by the work of Jan Turtinen (2006), Lynn Meskell (2012, 2013,



2014, 2015), Christoph Brumann and David Berliner (2016) and Brumann (2016) by reporting what has been said and done (and sometimes what was not said or done)<sup>1</sup> at meetings, workshops, and conferences aimed at the identification, branding, presenting, and, in the case of UNESCO, inscription or referral of a potential world heritage site.

There are today a number of unpublished doctoral theses, as well as published books and articles, on the history of Bagamoyo and the life around the caravan trade. The rich information available in these studies, which expanded considerably in number from the mid-1990s, is used here to paint a picture of what took place when the caravan trade in ivory and cloth, but also slaves, between the interior of the continent and the coast grew and bloomed, during the second half of the nineteenth century and up to World War I. This was when the German colonizers began to use their railway between Dar es Salaam at the Indian Ocean and Kigoma at Lake Tanganyika with an extension to Mwanza at Lake Victoria, which implied the end of the caravan trade along the central routes in East Africa and a rapid decline of Bagamoyo town.

## Part I: Heritage-Making, Branding, and Globalization

The first chapter, “Bagamoyo: A History of Practices, Principles, and Partnership in Heritage-Making,” investigates the heritage-making efforts in Bagamoyo from the mid-1950s to the millennium shift. The first efforts, initiated during the British colonial regime, focused on the protection of specific objects such as doors and door frames carved before the year 1940. At the end of the 1970s and early 1980s the focus had shifted to the protection of the Old Stone Town in Bagamoyo as a lived-in conservation area. At the beginning of the new millennium that focus had once again shifted, now to Bagamoyo as a slave port together with associated sites along the central East African caravan routes and how heritage-making could be integrated into efforts to expand the tourist sector and generate resources for poverty reduction.

Chapter 2, “Heritage-Making: The 2002 International Conference” explores the search for Bagamoyo’s outstanding universal value (OUV) during the international conference arranged in 2002 in the town. The conference was arranged with international and national experts to evaluate Bagamoyo’s potential to be inscribed on UNESCO’s World Heritage List. Four themes were tested during the conference: Bagamoyo and the slave and ivory trade, Bagamoyo as the entrepôt for Islam and Christianity to the heart of the continent, Bagamoyo as the entrepôt for Kiswahili to the heart of the continent, and Bagamoyo as an archaeological site.

<sup>1</sup>“MUTED MEMORIES: Heritage-Making, Bagamoyo, and the East African Caravan Trade” by Jan Lindström. <https://berghahnbooks.com/title/LindstromMuted>

The conference agreed to recommend that the government of Tanzania nominate Bagamoyo under the heading “The Slave Port of Bagamoyo and Associated Sites and Routes of Memory” with the two *entrepôt* themes as supportive arguments.

The third chapter, “Fractures in the Image of Bagamoyo: Despair or Joy?,” focuses on how the heritage was presented and what the nomination represents as a potential World Heritage site. The name Bagamoyo, a combination of the Kiswahili terms for “heart” and “lay down,” invites at least two different interpretations. One is that the slaves from the interior of the continent “laid down their hearts” at Bagamoyo before they were shipped to unknown destinations. Another is that the caravan porters laid down their cargo and let their hearts rest after the long journey to the coast. When the first theme of suffering, humiliation, and despair was chosen in the presentation of Bagamoyo’s outstanding universal value in the nomination text, there was no room to present the caravan trade as a cultural phenomenon characterized by entrepreneurship, agency, and joy.

UNESCO’s work with the World Heritage List is both an effect of and a force causing globalization, as shown in chapter 4, “World Heritage and Globalization: The Bagamoyo Case.” One of the effects of heritage-making is standardization. The heritage shall be described, presented, and conserved according to well-established procedures, principles, and practices. Processes of heritage-making may cause disembedding and homogenization, as well as the globalization of the unique. Globalization is at the same time causing heritage-making through both the race among nation-states to have their heritage inscribed on the List and through UNESCO’s work to have more nominations from “underrepresented continents” for inscription. The invention of new categories for inscription is meant to facilitate nominations from states and continents that hitherto are not so well represented on the List. It is argued here that the metastory on slave trade in UNESCO’s Slave Route Project, launched in the 1990s, which is dominated by the experiences from the Atlantic slave trade and US form of plantation slavery, influenced the theme and tone chosen by Tanzania for the presentation of Bagamoyo.

## Part II: Commerce, Competition, and Consumerism: Bagamoyo and the Caravan Trade

The first section in Part II turns the perspective 180 degrees. The conventional approach has been to approach the African continent, popularly presented as the “Dark Continent” from a vantage point of the coast. There is a long tradition in travelogues and other texts in describing how

the authors walk westward from the East African coast. In contrast, chapter 5, "Entrepreneurs and Explorers from the Heart of Africa," explores the role that the Nyamwezi people, living south of Lake Victoria and east of Lake Tanganyika, played in the establishment of the caravan trade. When they extended their trading network with salt and iron tools in the interior of the continent to also reach the coast, they added ivory and also slaves as the major trade items. This created a direct interface between the continental and the Indian Ocean trading networks, with Bagamoyo as the pivot. The mercantile middlemen in the Swahili coastal towns were not late to profit from the expanding trade. At the end of the nineteenth century, between forty and sixty thousand, mainly Nyamwezi, men and women walked every year during the caravan season from the interior of the continent to the coast and back again. The initial control they had over the organization of the caravans, and the fact that they both constituted the majority of, and the most sought-after of the porters, gave them a significant influence over the development of the caravan culture that emerged during the nineteenth century along the central routes through Tanganyika/Tanzania.

All Nyamwezi porters who reached Bagamoyo were not free men and women. Some were slaves. The caravan trade in ivory was intimately interlinked with slavery and slave trade, as slaves were exchanged for ivory and ivory for slaves. Chapter 6, "Pawned, Preyed Upon, Purchased, or Punished: Slaves and Slavery in Nineteenth-Century East Africa," explores the roles of slaves and slavery in the societies involved in the caravan trade and their appearance in the trade itself. Two areas have been identified in East Africa with high proportions of slaves; the Nyamwezi homeland area and the societies along the Indian Ocean coast, both heavily involved in the caravan trade. Slaves did not only appear as porters, but also as commodities to facilitate the progress of the caravan when bartered for ivory and food along the routes. Slaves were sold as merchandise at the slave markets in Zanzibar in return for imported goods like cloth, weapons, and ammunition. The caravan trade developed into a sociocultural and economic institution much more complex than the hunting of slaves in the interior and the marching of them to the plantations on the coast. And contrary to what is stated in the nomination of Bagamoyo for the tentative list, the town was never a major slave port.

The lucrative caravan trade not only attracted traders and financiers from the Indian Ocean trading networks, but also Europeans in the scramble for Africa. The former patricians in the ports on the Mrima coast, the middlemen between the two trading networks, came increasingly under pressure from two colonizing powers; the Sultanate on Zanzibar and the German colonizers. Chapter 7, "Conflicts and Clashes in the Competition

over the Caravan Trade on the Central Routes," captures the escalating struggle over the trade between the former middlemen-merchants and the intruding Arabic and European colonizers.

Bagamoyo experienced an invasion during the late 1880s by rebels from Pangani and Saadani, two port towns north of Bagamoyo, bombardment from German naval ships, invasion by German soldiers, a siege by African rebels, and a blockade by German and British naval ships. The escalating competition over the trade resulted in riots and rebellions and eventually resulted in the formal German colonization of the area.

Bagamoyo developed not only into the major terminus for the caravan trade but also became the major entrepôt not only for "explorers" and colonizers, but also for the spread of Islam and Christianity and the language Kiswahili to the interior of the continent. Bagamoyo, in other words, was not only the recipient but also the provider not only of material goods traded with up-country societies but also cultural elements that accompanied the trade. The result was the development of a cultural route through which people, goods, ideas, religions, and more flew in both directions. Chapter 8, "Bagamoyo and the Caravan Trade: The Entrance to the Heart of Africa," expands three themes discussed during the 2002 International Conference during the search for the town's OUVs. The caravans along the central routes became the avenues for the spread of Islam. Instrumental was the establishment of the Quadriyya Brotherhood in Bagamoyo from where this form of Sufi Islam spread along the central caravan routes. These routes and the caravan trade were also instrumental to the spread of Kiswahili, which further accelerated when the German colonialists decided to use Kiswahili as their administrative language in their rule over the colony from their capital in Bagamoyo. Bagamoyo also became the place for the first Catholic mission station established on mainland East Africa where missionaries were educated and sent out to form up-country congregations. The chapter also touches upon the spread of lethal diseases along the caravan routes.

Bagamoyo is a comparatively recent trade town compared to some other towns in what has been called the Swahili corridor along the coast. It did not exist during the "classical" Swahili period before the Portuguese entered the Indian Ocean and destroyed much of the intercontinental trade. It grew from the early nineteenth century when it became the interface between the continental and the Indian Ocean networks. Important reasons for the establishment of Bagamoyo as the main port on mainland East Africa was the proximity to Zanzibar and the wider world to the east, which was covered by the monsoon or trade winds belt, and the attraction of Nyamwezi caravans from the west that brought ivory and slaves to the coast. The movement of people along the coast and the arrival of new

groups from the east and the west created an intricate political landscape, which is captured in chapter 9, “Old Bagamoyo,” and constant negotiations of the established power balance.

Caravan traders and financiers from societies around the Indian Ocean were attracted to Bagamoyo to organize their own caravans to the interior, when the town grew to become the most important port on mainland Africa, particularly for the ivory and copal trade. Suddenly the former mercantile class or patricians in the port towns, the long-since established middlemen between the two trading networks, saw themselves marginalized when new actors appeared on the scene, as presented in chapter 10, “Fluid Identities: Politics of Identity in Multicultural Bagamoyo.” The cosmopolitan character of the town created vibrant processes of fission and fusion, inclusion and exclusion, identity-making and boundary protection. This became particularly evident in the creation and re-creation of two broad categories of people in the coastal societies: the “civilized”, influenced by Islam and living in a town, and the porters, the “barbarian”, non-Muslims from up-country societies. The European and American “explorers,” traders, missionaries, and colonizers who entered the scene during the second half of the nineteenth century, trained to think in terms of tribes and stable monolithic cultures with well-demarked boundaries, were ill-prepared to comprehend and describe what they met in a place like Bagamoyo.

The dominant cultural codes in the coastal societies stipulated that wealth could be used to claim and maintain respect and influence. One of the most dominant means was through public displays of a trader’s or a family’s economic wealth. Precious material goods in this conspicuous consumption were the stone houses, wealth converted into food, music and dances during competitive feasting, Chinese wares, and cloth. Cloth became one of the items in highest demand along the caravan routes and became an institution in itself through its economic, religious, social, and political importance. The booming caravan trade created both a group of newly rich who tried to convert wealth into power and prestige, and increasingly indebted traders/middlemen, which gave their own dynamics to political life. Other means were to show generosity in patron-client relations or to finance feasts, which often took the form of competitive dance events, another crucial cultural feature in the Swahili world. These forms of conversion of material wealth into religious, social, and political prestige are covered in chapter 11, “Conspicuous Competitive Consumption and Communication by Means of Cloth.”

The caravan trade was embedded in specific institutions and traditions, which gave it its character. For the Nyamwezi porters, it was important to establish pseudo-kinship ties with people along the routes to and with

traders in Bagamoyo. For the traders, it was equally important to have well-functioning relations with the traders and porters who brought their goods to the coast. These relations were more of a social character with ritualized exchanges of gifts and counter-gifts rather than relations based on market principles. To the frustration of the European and American traders, they could never compete over the wealth brought to the coast with the traders in Bagamoyo. Different attempts were made by newly arrived colonialists at the end of the nineteenth century to wrench control over trade out of their hands, as explored finally in chapter 12, "Intruders and Terminators: The End of the Story." For a few years during the end of the nineteenth century, Bagamoyo was the capital in the German colony Deutsche Ost-Afrika. It was only when the German colonizers decided to move their colonial capital from Bagamoyo to Dar es Salaam that they managed to get control over trade. This occurred just before the outbreak of World War I when the Germans built the railway from Dar es Salaam to the western parts of their colony, which passed through the Nyamwezi heartland and facilitated a new trade route. This meant the end of a century-old cultural institution that had developed on the African continent during the first half and boomed during the second half of the nineteenth century.

## Note

1. See, for example, the report in C. Brumann (2016) on what was not said or done at UNESCO's 2012 Committee Session held in Saint Petersburg at the same time as the world witnessed the destruction of Sufi tombs and mosques in Timbuktu by the Ansar Dine Islamic group. For the destruction, see C. Joy (2016).