

Oswald Masebo

**Epistemological Silences in Tanzania-Germany
Entangled Histories**

A View from Hamburg's Twin City, Dar es Salaam

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Epistemological Silences in Tanzania-Germany Entangled Histories

A View from Hamburg's Twin City, Dar es Salaam

Oswald Masebo

Introduction

Tanzania and Germany have a deeply entangled history that can be traced from the mid-nineteenth century to the present. From around the 1860s and 1870s, numerous German missionary groupings started to operate in many parts of Tanzania. During the Berlin Conference of 1884–1885, as European powers divided Africa into colonies, Germany acquired the present-day area of mainland Tanzania, which then included the areas that would later become Burundi and Rwanda. The boundaries of the Germany colony were created through successive agreements between Germany, Great Britain, and the Sultan of Zanzibar. The Anglo-German Agreements of 1886 and 1890 defined the concrete boundaries of present-day mainland Tanzania. Following the settlement of the Anglo-German Agreement of 1890, Germany embarked on an ambitious project to create a colony in East Africa – to be known as ‘German East Africa’. The 1890s witnessed German colonial conquest and consolidation that continued until the First World War, through which Germany lost all of her African colonial possessions in 1919. The period from the late nineteenth century to the end of the First World War in 1918, therefore, witnessed momentous transformations in the history of Tanzania’s making.

For the first time in history, the German colonial project had unified over 120 diverse ethnic communities into a territory framed in the context of imperial rule. The period also witnessed major economic, political, social, cultural, landscape, and ideological changes. For example, the Germans introduced colonial economies in the form of agriculture, mining, trade, and forestry; imposed new colonial politics; introduced socio-cultural and ideological institutions such as Western education, Christianity, racism, and racialism; built roads and railways that enhanced import-export trade between Tanzania and Germany; reorganized nature and landscape; and created state institutions such as colonial armies, prisons, courts, and government branches. The legacies of the German colonial project established from the late nineteenth century to the end of the First World War formed the foundation for imagining the entangled histories that continue to

shape relations between Tanzania and Germany today. Those legacies have also molded Tanzania and Germany into the nations they are now. Since 2010 Dar es Salaam, a key port city in East Africa, and Hamburg, similarly so in Europe, have been twin cities. They are not only connected by their geographical location and economic role, but also by their intensely shared history. I am therefore grateful to have the opportunity to draw attention to ‘epistemological silences’ regarding Germany’s colonial history in Tanzania, which also seem relevant to both cities’ past and present.

This chapter assesses the state of historical knowledge that has been produced on those entangled histories between Tanzania and Germany in the past one hundred years. It proposes that the nature of this historical knowledge is imbalanced because it has positioned the Germans at the center and relegated Tanzanians to the margins. This imbalance is a result of major ‘epistemological silences’, a term used in this chapter to refer to issues that should have taken center stage in historians’ quest to write about the entangled histories of Tanzania and Germany but which have unfortunately remained on the margins of scholarship.

There are many of these epistemological silences. This chapter highlights four of them. They include the power and ability of Tanzanians to survive the difficult landscape that Germany colonialism created; the thoughts and practices of Tanzanians who shaped and reshaped German colonial relations; indigenous modes of expression and capture of memory; and colonial legacies in the making of national history and identity in postcolonial Tanzania and Germany alike.

Background to Entangled Histories

Clarifying the background to entangled histories between Tanzania and Germany is necessary for making sense of the epistemological silences that have remained an enduring feature of the production of historical knowledge about the ongoing ties between the two nations. During the last quarter of the nineteenth century, European nation-states such as Great Britain, France, Portugal, Italy, and Belgium entered into an unprecedented ‘scramble for Africa’. Germany joined this race as well. This competition for colonies was so intense that it almost resulted in a war between these European nations. The notorious Berlin conference of 1884–1885, convened on the invitation of Otto von Bismarck, averted the possibility of war. It created a legal and institutional framework for peacefully dividing up African colonies among European powers. By 1900, virtually all parts of Africa had come under colonial occupation, except probably Liberia and Ethiopia.

Germany acquired Namibia in southwest Africa, Togo and Cameroon in West Africa, and Tanzania in East Africa, which by then included present-day Burundi and Rwanda.

It is important to understand why European nations, including Germany, scrambled for colonies in Africa during the last quarter of the nineteenth century. This question has generated a great deal of debate and yielded diverse answers. Two key debate strands can be identified. The first camp is represented by scholars who privilege sociopsychological and political motives for the European colonization of Africa, emphasizing factors such as spreading Christianity and introducing ‘civilization’,¹ Social Darwinism,² social atavism,³ balance-of-power and strategic considerations,⁴ nationalism, as well as prestige.⁵ The second camp, meanwhile, is represented by scholars who emphasize the economic drivers behind colonialism, linking it to the needs emerging in the wake of the industrial revolutions of the second half of the nineteenth century. This was the period when nations such as Germany and France joined Great Britain in rapidly industrializing. Germany and other European nations needed colonies for four specific economic reasons: namely to produce the agricultural goods and raw materials used by the growing industries in Europe; to exploit a cheap African labor force in order to reduce the cost of production; to expand markets for the manufactured industrial commodities; and to find new areas where they could invest surplus capital.⁶

Entangled histories between Tanzania and Germany were created through the complex process of colonial conquest and consolidation that involved creating different institutions. These became the foundation of both tangible and intangible Tanzania-German heritages in the two countries. Military, economic, ideological, state, social, and political institutions were thus inaugurated to transform Tanzania into a colonial space.

The creation of military institutions was an important intervention the Germans pursued to facilitate their building of a colony in Tanzania. Germany’s imperial initiative was

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- 1 Inspired by the travels and writings of nineteenth-century European travelers, explorers, and missionaries such as: John Hanning Speke, *Journal of the Discovery of the Sources of the River Nile* (Edinburgh: Blackwood and Sons, 1863); David Livingstone, *The Last Journals of David Livingstone in Central Africa, from 1865 to His Death* (London: John Murray, 1874).
 - 2 Derived from and inspired by the work of Charles Darwin, *The Origin of Species by Means of Natural Selection or the Preservation of Favoured Races in the Struggle for Life* (6th edition, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010). First published in 1876.
 - 3 See: Joseph A. Schumpeter, *The Sociology of Imperialisms* (Tübingen: Mohr, 1919).
 - 4 Ronald Robinson, John Gallagher and Alice Denny, *Africa and the Victorians: The Official Mind of Imperialism* (London: Macmillan, 1961).
 - 5 Hamilton Russell Cowie, *Imperialism and Race Relations*, (5th revised edition, Melbourne: Nelson Publishing, 1982).
 - 6 Buluda Itandala, “The Anglo-German Partition of East Africa” *Tanzania Zamani* 1/1 (1992), pp. 7–18.

met with different forms of resistance from all local ethnic groups. The European nation resorted to military conquest, hiring Sudanese mercenaries and incorporating them into the invading colonial force. Between 1890 and 1900, different Tanzanian communities waged about fifty-seven wars of resistance against the German invasion.⁷ Unfortunately, the end result was defeat. Resistances against colonialism continued even after the turn of the century as Tanzanians sought to combat economic exploitation, social exclusion, racism, and other forms of inhumane treatment. The Germans used forced African labor that was either very lowly paid or not remunerated at all. In fact, it was African resistance against forced cotton cultivation in southern Tanzania that led to the famous Maji Maji Wars of resistance from 1905 to 1907. Many German and local soldiers (*askaris*) died during the Maji Maji wars. It is estimated that over 300,000 Tanzanians died during the Maji Maji War either in military combat or through sheer starvation.⁸ The scale of the war, its death toll, and its spatial coverage exceeded that of the Nama-Herero wars of resistance against German colonialism in Namibia, which scholars such as Jürgen Zimmerer have studied.⁹ Tanzanians were defeated because of their relatively weak military capacity, lack of unity when it came to fighting the enemy, and due to the natural disasters that struck East Africa during the late nineteenth century. By 1910, the Germans had firmly imposed military rule in Tanzania. Many of the military posts and garrisons that the Germans built in Tanzania as they established their colonial presence can be found across the country today, in areas such as Tanga, Rungwe, Songea, Mahenge, Moshi, Tabora, and Singida.

Economic institutions were also created to support the colonial enterprise, and they left deep markers that remain visible even now. While imposing a military administration in Tanzania, the Germans moved decisively to create colonial economies geared toward meeting the needs of the growing industrial base back home. Emphasis was on creating plantations that would produce agricultural raw materials such as sisal, cotton, coffee, tea, rubber, and timber. This saw the creation of commercial agricultural and mining economies that continue to be major sources of income and employment even today. They are one of the important legacies demonstrative of the entangled history between Tanzania and Germany.

7 Hedge Kjekshus, *Ecology Control and Economic Development in East African History: The Case of Tanganyika, 1850–1950* (London: James Currey, 1977).

8 G. C.K Gwassa, *The Outbreak and Development of the Maji Maji War 1905–7* (PhD Thesis, University of Dar es Salaam, 1973), p. 389; John Iliffe, *A Modern History of Tanganyika* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979), p. 200.

9 Jürgen Zimmerer and Joachim Zeller (eds), *Genocide in German South-West Africa: The Colonial War (1904–1908) in Namibia and Its Aftermath* (Monmouth, Wales: Merlin Press, 2008).

The Germans also created ideological institutions whose legacies are evident today, notably Christian religious and educational ones. Some of these saw the introduction of religious denominations that Germany used as cultural agents to help spread Christianity. One of these denominations was the Moravian Church, which first put down roots in the areas of Rungwe, Ileje, and Kyela located on the northern frontiers of the Lake Nyasa region in 1890. In the mid-1890s, the Germans introduced the Moravian Church in areas around Tabora to venture into central and western Tanzania. The Germans also introduced the Lutheran Church in many places in Tanzania, with the earliest churches being established in the areas of Mwakaleli, Njombe, Mannow, Makete, Iringa, Dar es Salaam, and around Kilimanjaro. They also introduced the Roman Catholic Church, which took root in areas such as Masasi, Peramiho, Tabora, Dar es Salaam, and Moshi. Tanzania is home to a number of late nineteenth-century churches. They remain some of the country's largest ideological institutions, with many churches built during the German colonial period still being used for religious activities at present.

The introduction of Western education was an equally important ideological institution. The Germans built a range of schools. Some of the educational facilities founded during the German colonial period continue to be used even today, such as Tanga School. Remnants of similar facilities can be found in Dar es Salaam, Tukuyu, Mahenge, and Moshi. The Germans utilized such ideological institutions as a tool of cultural colonization to make Tanzanians accept the imperial project.

The Germans also built health institutions. The motive for this was to take care of the Germans living in the colony, to keep in check epidemics, and to safeguard the colonial labor force. Most of these health institutions were established in urban centers where many Germans resided, such as in Tanga, Dar es Salaam, Tukuyu, Iringa, Moshi, and Mahenge. They also built health facilities and provided medical care in areas around key sites of economic investment such as sisal plantations, and in places that were vital transit zones for migrant and forced laborers heading to and from core economic sites. Apart from such institutions built by the colonial state, a great deal of healthcare provision also came from German missionaries. Many of the stations established by the latter also built healthcare facilities like dispensaries and hospitals, which were used to spread European/Western medical ideas and practices and to legitimate the German colonial project. Some of these facilities are still in use today, such as Ocean Road Hospital in Dar es Salaam.

The Germans built, furthermore, institutions supporting transport and communication as integral components of colonial expansion. Railways, roads, and ports were inaugurated to integrate Tanzania into the German economic system. Two notable



Fig. 1: The former *Kaiserliches Gouvernements-Krankenhaus*, today Ocean Road Hospital. Photo: C. Vincenti, Bildbestand der Deutschen Kolonialgesellschaft, Universitätsbibliothek Frankfurt am Main, 006-1147-29, <https://nbn-resolving.org/urn:nbn:de:hebis:30:2-820993>.

railway lines can still be witnessed today. The first is the famous Central Railway that runs from Dar es Salaam along the Indian Ocean and then inland to Kigoma on the western tip of Tanzania, along Lake Tanganyika. This railway line branches at Tabora to Mwanza. The Germans built another one starting from Tanga that reached Moshi before the outbreak of the First World War. This line was extended to Arusha during the British colonial period. The construction of ports and promotion of shipping lines was an equally important investment that the Germans pursued to make the colony economically viable. Dar es Salaam, Tanga, Bagamoyo, Lindi, Mtwara, Mwanza, Ujiji, and Lake Nyasa provided geographic spaces that made it possible to build ports for shipping. Some of the ships built during the German colonial period continue to be used at present, such as MV *Liamba* – which runs on Lake Tanganyika. Such institutions of transport and communication were built to promote colonial economies, to transport raw materials and minerals from the interior to the coast before shipping them to Germany, to move the colonial army, and to transfer laborers to different sites of economic investment. These networks are typical reminders of the entangled histories that exist between Tanzania and Germany.



Fig. 2: Residence of the German Governor, ca. 1904. Photo: Vincenti, C., Bildbestand der Deutschen Kolonialgesellschaft, Universitätsbibliothek Frankfurt am Main, ID 006-1157-14, <https://nbn-resolving.org/urn:nbn:de:hebis:30:2-774522>.

The Germans also built state institutions to govern the colony and to ensure peace and security there. These included the army, government branches, courts, and prisons, further to the introduction also of numerous laws and regulations. Many of the present-day state institutions have their roots in the German colonial past in Tanzania, even if they have evolved quite significantly since. Some of the physical structures of these state institutions built between the 1890s and 1914 can be seen today, and some continue to be used by the postcolonial state in Tanzania. The State House in Dar es Salaam, which continues to be used as the Tanzanian president's official residence, can be traced back to German colonial influence. It was the official residence and seat of power of the colonial-era German governors, later being adapted by the British and then by the postcolonial government. Buildings such as the High Court one in Dar es Salaam were also built by the Germans.

These institutions were microcosms of the complex interactions that would evolve between Tanzania and Germany during the period from the late nineteenth century to the end of the First World War. Many of the so-called entangled histories were created through the consolidation of colonial relations in Tanzania. German colonialism, which lasted for twenty-five years only, was short-lived compared to British imperial rule,

which ran for over forty years between 1918 and eventual independence in 1961. Despite this difference in lifespans, the traumatic experience associated with German colonialism far exceeded that accompanying British rule. Many of the tangible and intangible painful colonial memories in Tanzania were actually imprinted under the Germans.

Based on these institutions of cultural heritage, historians have paid attention mainly to studying how the Germans built an empire in Tanzania and elsewhere. They have demonstrated extensively how the Germans were able to establish the colonial project and its attendant culture in Tanzania and other African colonies. As such, they have documented how the Germans conquered Tanzania and its peoples, created and operated a colonial state, founded supporting economies and political institutions, waged war, and ensured peace and security locally, all while producing and reproducing colonial ideologies and cultures. However, there remain rather loud epistemological silences.

Epistemological Silences

We know a great deal of the entangled histories between Tanzania and Germany in terms of the colonial motives involved; German military conquest and selected wars that Tanzanians waged to resist the establishment of colonialism; the measures taken by the German colonial state to create supporting economic, political, cultural, environmental, and social relations in Tanzania; the demise of German rule in Tanzania following the end of the First World War; and the economic and cultural effects of the German colonialism in Tanzania. Taken together, these issues represent the privileging of the history of Germans in Tanzania for the period from the 1880s through the end of the First World War. They are histories that have documented German actors in terms of their lives, their forms of work, their actions, their ideas, and the challenges they faced in establishing the colonial project. Reflecting back on the nature of the historical knowledge that has been produced on the entangled histories between Tanzania and Germany in the past one hundred years, this chapter makes modest attempts to identify four main epistemological silences that need to be clarified in order to enrich it.

The first epistemological silence centers on the ideologies, routines, and experiences that helped Tanzanians to navigate through the difficult realities of German colonialism. The latter was the most violent disaster that Tanzanians had experienced. It continued the trauma of the Arab-led slave raids of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Despite these violent and destabilizing processes, Tanzanians overcame them and managed to maintain their humanity in many ways. The thoughts and practices of Tanzanians, their lived

experiences, as well as their power to maintain core aspects of family life, cultural values, taboos, and traditions throughout the traumatic colonial period are important insights that need to be told by historians in order to develop a full and accurate understanding of the entangled histories between Tanzania and Germany. Yet these important questions of how Tanzanians survived, coped with, and made life bearable in the difficult colonial situation remain one of the major epistemological silences in the existing scholarship.

Nationalist and materialist historians have done an excellent job of documenting German colonial conquest, the imposition of colonialism, the creation of German economic, political, military, and ideological institutions, and the rendering of Tanzanians colonial subjects. These histories have played a significant role in uncovering the violence of German colonialism; in revealing its repressive and dictatorial nature; and in documenting its exploitative and dehumanizing modes of operation. In addition, these histories have documented that Germany, through colonialism, pumped out natural resources that simultaneously contributed to national self-development and to Tanzania's stunting.¹⁰

These histories have been dominant meta-narratives in the study of Tanzania-Germany historical ties since the 1960s. They have conveyed a notion that the Germans were hegemonic and had unlimited power to shape the ideas, practices, and lived experiences of Tanzanians. They have helped craft a shared history that is a one-sided story, with it situating the Germans at the center and Tanzanians at the margins. Unfortunately, this meta-narrative aggrandizing the German actors in the colonial situation has served to epistemologically silence the most interesting story in the entangled history between Tanzania and Germany. Namely how while German colonialism may have been repressive and violent it was also limited, vulnerable, and weak on the ground. It did not have sufficient resources to exert power and autonomy on the private realm of Tanzanians. It was unable to control their personal lives, kinship ties, or the reproduction of social, cultural, political, and economic relations that ensured that families, households, and communities remained intact in the context of violent colonial disruptions. This explains why, despite the violence and repression of Germany colonialism, key institutions of family, household, and community, traditions, taboos, indigenous culture, and patterns of reproduction all survived the difficult and brutal German imperialism enacted during the course of two and a half decades. Many precolonial institutions survived the harsh

10 This is the line of reasoning firmly entrenched in Walter Rodney, *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa* (London: Bogle-L'Ouverture Publications, 1972). For Tanzanian case studies, see, for instance, Martin H. Y. Kaniki (ed.), *Tanzania Under Colonial Rule* (London: Longman, 1980); Abdul Sherif and Ed Ferguson (eds), *Zanzibar Under Colonial Rule* (Athens: Ohio University Press, 1991).

test of German rule. They included individual initiatives and choices, the maintenance of family relations and networks, ideas and values regarding one's existence, and the indigenous culture structuring and nurturing daily life.

Our understanding of these entangled histories will remain partial and incomplete if there are epistemological silences on the indigenous economies that sustained households and communities during the German colonial period; if indigenous politics and governance during that era are not recovered; and if indigenous culture – in all of its manifestations, such as child-rearing, socialization, marriage, intergenerational ties, gender relations, and family bonds – remains invisible in the existing historical narrative. It is fundamental that the writing of the entangled history between Tanzania and Germany takes into consideration the survival, continuity, and change in the native institutions that enabled indigenous communities to sustain their lives and selves during the years of German colonialism. Stories and narratives of Tanzanians about their lives, experiences, and modes of survival have to be brought back and find inroads into these entangled histories.

The second epistemological silence is the documentation of the historical agency of Tanzanian individuals and communities in shaping relations between the two countries. Existing knowledge hereon is dominated by heroic narratives that depict the dynamic ideas and practices of German actors specifically during the colonial period. Histories of Christianity, for instance, are dominated by the actions of German missionaries, while Tanzanians who served in Christian missions remain invisible. Military histories of the First World War in Tanzania romanticize the singular achievements of German military officers such as General Paul von Lettow-Vorbeck while the voices of the thousands of locals who suffered so much in the course of this conflict remain inaudible.¹¹ Histories of colonial politics and governance lionize German governors, district commissioners, directors of regional departments, and experts who worked in different capacities in the colonial service. These Germans did not go about their business in splendid isolation. They worked with many Tanzanians under them, individuals holding low-level positions in the colonial bureaucracy. Historians are yet to document the inner lives of these Tanzanians. Their identities remain unknown, their work undocumented.

Histories of colonial economies, meanwhile, romanticize German settlers, plantation owners, managers, accountants, and overseers. The individual biographies of the thousands of Tanzanians who worked in those colonial economies remain largely unknown,

11 See, for instance: Robert Gaudi, *African Kaiser: General Paul von Lettow-Vorbeck and the Great War in Africa, 1914–1918* (New York: Caliber, 2017).

however. They are simply generalized as ‘laborers’, as they have come to be called. Recently, efforts have been made to study who these individuals were, but they have thus far been reduced to mere intermediaries – in being considered but ‘middlemen’.¹² Little effort has been made to bring Tanzanians back into the complex entangled history of Tanzania-Germany ties; to deal with the thoughts, actions, social positions, and lived experiences of Tanzanians in their own right as they engaged with Germans during the highly challenging colonial period.

A more sophisticated understanding hereof demands, as such, that historians now shift their angle of view from exclusive preoccupation with German colonial actors to reclaiming the Tanzanians involved and bringing them and their lives back into the story. This is necessary because German colonial officials were very few in number on the ground. They alone could not execute all the duties required for the colony’s functioning. Relations were such that it was Tanzanians who were subjugated to shoulder colonial undertakings. Thus, Tanzanians worked in Christian missions; ran the colonial economies as laborers; built railways, bridges, and ports; were involved in the defense and security forces such as the army, police, and prison service; worked in botanical gardens and forestry; and took part in the colonial public service. Considering this important role Tanzanians played in sustaining colonialism, it is vital that historians trace and reclaim their individuality, uncover their identities and biographies, and capture their thoughts and deeds. The extent to which each of these individuals and their respective collectives shaped and reshaped German colonialism remains unknown.¹³ It needs to be documented how Tanzanian and German actors interacted with and challenged each other; how they shaped and reshaped one another’s lives; how their experiences diverged and intersected as colonialism evolved.

The third epistemological silence is a methodological one. Local opportunities that present historians with the potential to recover and make apparent the thoughts and deeds of Tanzanians in their entanglement with Germans have not received the attention they deserve. Oral traditions, oral reminiscences, historical linguistics, historical anthropology, historical archaeology, and ethnography are not privileged like colonial

12 See, for instance: Benjamin n. Lawrence, Emily Lynn Osborn, and Richard L. Robert (eds) *Intermediaries, Interpreters, and Clerks: African Employees in the Making of Colonial Africa* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2006).

13 This is a direction very much worth pursuing going forward; encouraging signs are evident in Michelle R. Boyd, *Violent Intermediaries: African Soldiers, Conquest, and Everyday Colonialism in German East Africa* (Athens: Ohio University Press, 2014).

archives are. There is a tendency among many historians when conceptualizing projects on entangled histories to start with archival sources in mind. They hence rely on the written records that German colonial officials and agents left behind. These records are housed in formal archives and museums in both Germany and Tanzania. The reality, however, is that these sources reveal much more about the stories of Germans and less about the ideas, experiences, and perspectives of Tanzanians.

No wonder, then, that much of the writing produced on these entangled histories is essentially about the narratives, ideas, and practices of the Germans who lived in Tanzania at the time. These records reflect the perspectives of Germans in the colony. They hardly capture indigenous imaginations. Even if scholars have recently suggested the possibility of reading African histories in European-authored archival sources,¹⁴ this does not rule out the fact that such documents are colonial artifacts – thus predominantly reflecting contemporary Eurocentric depictions of colonial realities as the colonizers saw them. This epistemological silence is also a product, in some ways, of an implicit assumption that the credibility of history is to be found only in empirical records: if a phenomenon is not backed by rich archival documentation, its validity is hence questioned. This assumption has made some historians approach African history, including the entangled one of Tanzania and Germany, solely on German colonialism's own terms. In the process, the status quo of the Eurocentric and Western civilization model has been maintained. Despite recent innovations in global and postcolonial studies, then, scholars have found themselves continuing to struggle with the privileged location afforded to the colonial archive in making sense of the experiences of communities whose histories have been epistemologically silenced for a long time now.

Historians hence need to engage in a robust project of de-Westernizing and decolonizing the methodological basis of their scholarly enquiries, namely by taking into account the modes of thought and expression that Tanzanian communities have long used to keep their records, narratives, and memories alive. From the 1960s to the present, historians have indeed articulated the importance of some of these methodological directions in the form of oral memories and traditions, historical linguistics and anthropology, archaeology, the organization of space and landscape, as well as rituals, taboos, and customs. The majority of Tanzanians from precolonial times through the period of

14 See, for instance, Henrietta Moore and Megan Vaughan, *Cutting Down Trees: Gender, Nutrition, and Agricultural Change in the Northern Province of Zambia 1890–1990* (Portsmouth: Heinemann, 1994); Allen Isaacman and Barbara Isaacman, *Slavery and Beyond: The Making of Men and Chikunda Ethnic Identities in the Unstable World of South-Central Africa, 1750–1920* (Portsmouth: Heinemann, 2004).

imperial rule kept records of their ideas and actions via such modes of expression. Some of them have been transmitted from one generation to another and can be recovered. Historians dealing with entangled Tanzania-Germany histories must thus go beyond archival records and embrace these local methodologies to capture Tanzanian's ideas and practices under German rule.¹⁵ This can help do greater justice to the thoughts and deeds of Tanzanians, as having a key role to play in shaping their complex interactions with Germans. Confronting this colonial past and appreciating the entangled nature of Tanzania-Germany history demands, then, a rethinking of prevailing methodological challenges and going beyond the formal archive to embrace modes of remembrance that Tanzanians have used to record their ideas and experiences for centuries.

The fourth and final epistemological silence is the one manifested in the little effort made thus far to study colonial legacies in the production of the history, memory, and identity of Tanzania and Germany alike. The focus of scholarship in both countries has been on colonialism for what it was: a system of oppression, subjugation, exploitation, racism, racialism, violence, and injustice. This feeling, of course, is understandable. No rational person can now defend German colonialism as a legitimate undertaking. Nobody can now romanticize and glorify it considering the ills it brought to the colonized communities in Tanzania. And the endurance of this feeling is evident today when Germans and Tanzanians meet. They both struggle to reconcile the colonial experience. When diplomats meet, they talk about contemporary relations. But you can easily notice that they all struggle to make sense of the colonial past, to reconcile themselves with it, to speak about that period in ways that unleash entanglement, connection, and sharing that goes deeper into their entangled history. Elements of sadism, guilt, and unease take center stage. Historians have a duty to clarify these uncertain circumstances. One way of dealing with the difficulties of the colonial experience is the acknowledgement that colonialism was one of the unfortunate episodes that had far-reaching implications for the evolution of ideas and practices about nationhood in both Tanzania and Germany. It makes sense to conceptualize German colonialism as one phase in the evolution of national history, memory, and identity in both countries. Any national understanding,

15 This is the direction some historians have advocated taking since the 1960s. See: Isaria Kimambo, *A Political History of the Pare of Tanzania, c1500–1900* (Nairobi: East African Publishing House, 1969); Jan Vansina, *Oral Tradition: A Study in Historical Methodology* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1965) and his revised version, *Oral Tradition as History* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1985); Yusufu Lawi, *May the Spider Web Blind Witches and Wild Animals: Local Knowledge and Political Ecology of Natural Resources Use in the Iraqwland: Northern Tanzania, 1900–1985* (PhD Dissertation, University of Boston, 2000).

whether arising in Tanzania or in Germany, cannot ignore the role of the colonial past in its emergence and subsequent evolution. It is a truism also that the way the colonial past shaped the future evolution of Tanzania and Germany differed in each nation.

The period from the late nineteenth century to the end of the First World War witnessed, for instance, momentous transformations in the history and in the making of Tanzania. For the first time in history, as noted earlier, the German colonial project unified over 120 diverse ethnic communities within a single territory. That experience of unification was an important phase in the building of a sense of nationhood, with all of the involved communities being brought together under German rule. This sense of nationhood evolved as the Germans embarked on ambitious program of building a consolidated territory in the colony, therewith connecting the diverse communities making up Tanzania for the first time. Major infrastructural investment in the realms of Christianity, transportation, education, medicine, trade, agriculture, defense, security, ideology, and the natural environment helped establish the unprecedented physical presence of the Germans in Tanzania, connected diverse groups of peoples living within the now-formalized territory, and contributed to Tanzanian communities feeling (inter)connected. The formation of Tanzania as a nation can partly be traced from these momentous developments that unfolded during the German colonial experience from the last quarter of the nineteenth century to the end of the First World War in 1918.

At the heart of this endeavor are efforts to trace the critical role that the German colonial experience played in shaping the concept of the Tanzanian nation, and thus how the established infrastructure became the foundations for later nation-building from the 1960s to the present. Key infrastructure built under German rule such as railways, roads, schools, hospitals, agricultural sites, ports, defense organs, and state apparatuses were inherited by the postcolonial government in 1961. The independent state nationalized these infrastructures and used them to bring social, economic, and cultural development to the nation from then on. For instance, the railway lines that the Germans built connecting eastern, northern, and western Tanzania continued to be used post-independence. Education institutions such as Old Tanga School, which the Germans built in 1890, continued to admit pupils after 1961, thereby utilizing the heritage created during the German colonial era. Even State House, which the Tanzanian president still utilizes to this day, was initially built by the Germans. Some medical institutions such as Ocean Road Hospital, which now specializes in cancer treatment, were built by the Germans in the late nineteenth century.

These are a few examples demonstrative of the usefulness of conceptualizing colonial legacies in terms of the entangled history between Tanzania and Germany. They also reveal the pertinence of casting local remembrance of German colonialism as part of a larger narrative of national history, memory, and identity. It is, as such, one of the epistemological silences in the correct understanding of entangled histories between Tanzania and Germany.

The legacies of colonialism have had their ongoing impact for Germany too, of course. It would not be the way it is today had it not been for the country's imperial past. Its national identity – whether cast in economic, cultural, social, or political terms – is deeply embedded in the colonial experience. The major industrialization program pursued during this period, as was the case with other Western European imperial powers too, relied substantially on the colonial economies, including the 'German East Africa' one of which Tanzania was the constituent part. The agricultural goods and raw materials sustaining many of its industries were shipped from the colonies. Gross domestic product, flourishing industries, banking institutions, insurance companies, shipping lines, railway companies, revenue streams, and taxes flows were all partly linked to Germany's colonial possessions, including Tanzania.¹⁶

A great many Germans home and abroad were employed in the sectors connected to the country's colonial operations in Africa and beyond. Similarly, some German merchants made a fortune from their nation's colonized territories during this period. The deep-rooted racism, racialism, and feelings of German superiority that culminated in Nazism in the 1930s were not accidental; they were legacies also of the country's colonial past. Such elements of Nazism, in terms of ideas and practices, had their origins in how the Germans perceived and treated their colonial subjects in Africa and elsewhere. The inhumane techniques used to suppress the Maji Maji war of 1905–1907 in Tanzania and the Nama-Herero wars in Namibia amounted to genocide; this tendency formed a precedent to the notorious persecution that became the hallmark of Nazi-era concentration camps.

Colonialism continues, then, to define the memory and identity of Germany today. Some of the heroes of the time are still glorified as the protagonists in different colonial undertakings. Some colonial-era governors, military commanders, policymakers, and scientists are commemorated. Some street names and institutions bear the names of people or places that were connected to the imperial project. Cultural sites and muse-

16 John Iliffe, *Tanganyika Under German Rule, 1905–1912* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1969), pp. 64, 100, 167.

ums spread in many German cities housing thousands of objects plundered or simply procured in Africa during the colonial era. Stories such as these have remained on the margins of recounted Tanzania-Germany entangled histories. They remain invisible in the existing literature, despite having been some of the most important domains to have shaped Germany into the way it is today.

Dar es Salaam and Hamburg: Entangled Histories Then and Twin Cities Now

Colonialism is inseparable to the making of present-day Germany and Tanzania, and nothing illustrates this connection better than the identity of Hamburg – which now has twin-city status with Dar es Salaam, Tanzania’s capital. Hamburg has a special place in Germany’s colonial history in Tanzania and in many other African countries. It was the driving force for the economies that thrived in the German colonies of Tanzania, Burundi, Rwanda, Namibia, Cameroon, and similar. Many companies that invested in African colonies were headquartered in Hamburg; those operating in Tanzania had their suboffices in Dar es Salaam. In 1908, Hamburg established a Colonial Institute for training Germans who would assume responsibility for imperial operations in Africa, such as in the domains of economy, government, medicine, and law. This Institute was one of the forerunners to the University of Hamburg, founded in 1919. Many Germans started their journeys to the colonies in Hamburg and reached Tanzania through the port of Dar es Salaam. Those who survived the colonial experience returned to Germany through Hamburg, but their journey started in Dar es Salaam. Those who died had their bodies transported from Dar es Salaam to Germany through Hamburg.

Through its international port, Hamburg was a coordinating point for a transportation network that ferried people and goods from Germany to the African colonies and vice versa. The culture of Hamburg is therefore deeply entangled in the country’s imperial past; it is essentially a typical colonial-era city. It grew, flourished, and became one of the richest cities in Europe precisely because of its entanglement with Germany’s colonies in Africa, including Tanzania. Many of Hamburg’s industries, shipping companies, insurance firms, banking institutions, and consumption patterns had a direct connection with African colonies. Many political decisions on the colonies were potentially made in Berlin; the economic basis of Germany colonialism, however, was very much in Hamburg.

Conclusion

Tanzania and Germany have a long history of complex cultural exchange that can be traced from the mid-nineteenth century to the present. Many of the lasting legacies that demonstrate the historic ties existing between the two nations were forged during the colonial period, from the 1890s to the end of the First World War in 1918. A significant amount of historical knowledge has been produced documenting the manner in which the Germans were able to conquer, colonize, and create new social, cultural, economic, military, and ideological relations and realities in Tanzania. This knowledge privileges the German actors living in colonial Tanzania. This chapter has modestly identified the epistemological silences remaining in this knowledge. Central to these epistemological silences is the missing story on the identities, biographies, ideas, and practices of Tanzanians who survived the difficult colonial situation that the Germans created. Their adaptive strategies and resilience are invisible in the existing scholarship. The methods and sources that would help re-center Tanzanians in these entangled histories have also remained on the margins of the scholarship, being little appreciated. The critical role of colonialism in shaping the identity, history, and memory of postcolonial Tanzania and Germany alike has not been rigorously examined. These epistemological silences require serious scholarly consideration, then, to give meaning and sense to the notion of an entangled history between the two countries.