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**THE DIALECTICS OF CULTURAL HERITAGE
RESOURCES: EXPERIENCES FROM THE MAKONDE
OF TANZANIA**

Festo W. Gabriel¹

¹Stella Maris Mtwara University
College – STEMMUCO
(A Constituent College of St.
Augustine University of Tanzania –
SAUT)
Mtwara, Tanzania

ABSTRACT

Cultural heritage resources have been understood based on professionals' perspectives with little attention given to local communities' conceptions. The conservation of these heritage resources has also depended very much on professional strategies. There has been passive local communities' engagement in the interpretation of cultural heritage resources but also little intervention in the conservation of cultural heritage resources. This paper focuses on local communities understanding of cultural heritage resources with experiences derived from the Mtwara Region of Tanzania. The paper further presents local communities perceptions on the conservation status of cultural heritage resources in the Mtwara Region particularly intangible heritage resources. The data for this study were collected using community-based methods mainly interviews and archaeological ethnography. It has been found in this study that local communities interpret cultural heritage resources differently depending on their cultural backgrounds, experiences and cultural practices. The paper uncovers some dialectical understandings and contrasting perceptions upon the meaning and conservation of cultural heritage resources among the local communities of the Mtwara Region.

KEYWORDS: *Cultural heritage resources, conservation, local communities, professionals, tangible and intangible heritages.*

INTRODUCTION

The cultural heritage of a country constitutes what has been invariably categorized in numerous UNESCO documents as the cultural heritage or property of a country. The underdevelopment of archaeology in Africa has meant that the newly emerging discipline of cultural heritage management is also underdeveloped. The discipline aims at both the protection and preservation of cultural heritage and in ensuring that the planning and undertaking of socio-economic development activities does not result in the destruction of both identified and unidentified cultural heritage resources (Mturi, 2005).

The meaning and value of our material culture change according to the memory and needs of society. Sometimes those meanings and values are forgotten (Cody and Fong, 2007). Any successful approach to conservation education must look at the specific concept of heritage in the region or country concerned. Until fair recently, African approaches to conservation education were based on Western concept of heritage. According to Dawson Munjeri, former vice President of ICOMOS, the concept in Europe and America was created based on the cult of the physical object and its aesthetic. That is, the materials, style and monumental character are the foundation on which heritage has been understood, and they form the basis for conservation action.

Cultural heritage is perceived as a product of collective memories, values, practices, material and spiritual expressions that regulated lives and guided actions of the past society (Juma et al, 2005). Included also in cultural heritage resources are oral traditions, customs, languages, music, dance, rituals, festivities, traditional medicine and pharmacopoeia, the culinary arts and all kinds of special skills connected with the material aspects of culture, such as tools and the habitat (UNESCO, 2001). It is a people's legacy from the past, what they live with in the present and what they pass on to future generations, to learn from, to marvel at and to enjoy (SAHRA, 2005).

The concept of cultural heritage has been continually broadened over decades. Apart from tangible elements such as monuments and sites, cultural heritage encompasses ethical values, social customs, belief systems, religious ceremonies and traditional knowledge systems of which intangible heritage is the sign and expression (UNESCO, 2003). Cultural heritage is a medium through which identity, power and society are produced and reproduced (Munjeri, 2003). Other aspects not mentioned in the UNESCO meaning include social systems and beliefs, social relations, philosophies, ideas and values, and traditional knowledge. These aspects of society are usually perpetuated through daily life and activities, social situations and institutions. They grow, change and die as the social situation demands (Mulokozi, 2005). Given the breadth of cultural heritage as a concept, this study focuses on intangible cultural heritage resources although in some circumstances tangible cultural heritage resources have also been

discussed. It is due to these inheritability characteristics that this study abides to the use of the term "cultural heritage resource".

Recognizing that histories require more than artefacts and material culture, archaeologists in Africa have reached deep into local repertoires for ways of seeing the past, sorting through contradictory texts, seeking congruence, and finding ways to understand anomalies – often key to unlock the past (Schmidt and Walz, 2007). Several academic and professional conferences, workshops and reports have highlighted the need for greater attention to be paid to the objectives, theories, subject areas, methodologies and practical skills concerning conservation education (Cody and Fong, 2007). This is for the purpose of sensitizing inclusive approaches in the conservation strategies. Gilbert Pwiti raises similar concern with examples from Zimbabwe, when emphasizing that cultural heritage management in Zimbabwe and perhaps elsewhere in Africa, have been concerned mainly with the preservation and conservation of archaeological monuments primarily from a technical point of view (Pwiti, 1997). Local community in the words of Cody and Fong is clearly a determining factor in defining heritage and conservation. "Heritage is no longer defined as just a monumental work of the past which is separated from contemporary society (Cody and Fong, 2007: 271). In this case, community participation is a necessity, though the question remains how best this approach should be inclusive and build the kind of trust that collaboration suggests.

LOCAL COMMUNITIES' PERSPECTIVES ON CULTURAL HERITAGE RESOURCES

This section examines the local communities' perceptions on the concept 'cultural heritage resources'. This examination was guided by the question on local communities' understanding of cultural heritage resource. The question in this case intended to assess the meaning of cultural heritage resources in local communities' perspectives as opposed to professional or academic conception. This was born out of a preconceived thesis that the local communities' perspectives on cultural heritage resources are different from the academic or professional meaning of the concept. The basis for this argument is that archaeology has to a large extent been exclusively dominated by professional practices and interpretations, giving less concern on local communities' involvement. As a result, this tendency creates dialectical understanding of cultural heritage resources whereby professional approach to the meaning of cultural heritage resources would very much differ from local communities' framework. As Colwell-Chanthaphonh and Ferguson point out "descent communities" is perhaps the best phrase to describe all of the groups that link themselves intensely to archaeological heritages because of their cultural, social, and historical affinities. These communities do not necessarily

have more rights (legal or otherwise) to the past than other communities, including the archaeological community itself (Colwell-Chanthaphonh and Ferguson, 2008:8).

Following the above thesis, some representatives from the local communities in the Mtwara Region of Tanzania were interviewed to get their understanding on cultural heritage resources. For example, in one of the group interviews the following were local communities' understanding on the concept "cultural heritage resources" or "urithi tamaduni" as commonly understood in Kiswahili language.

Urithi tamaduni ni mambo mbalimbali ya kijadi au kimila yaliyofanywa na wazee wetu kama vile matambiko, Jando na Unyago, pamoja na ngoma za asili. Kulikuwa pia na miiko mbalimbali, – Mfano, mtoto akitoka Jando alikuwa haruhusiwi kuingia nyumba ya baba yake, ilikuwa ni mwiko pia kwa watoto kwenda makaburini. Hayo yote ni mambo ambayo ni ya zamani lakini bado yanaendelea kufanyika mpaka sasa japo si kwa kiwango kama cha zamaniⁱⁱ

Translation: [Cultural heritage resources are those diverse traditions or customs which were performed by our ancestors such as ritual offerings, Jando and Unyago (i.e male and female initiation ceremonies respectively) and traditional dances. There were also different taboos, for example, a boy coming from Jando initiation was forbidden from entering his father's house. It was a taboo for children to attend funeral ceremonies. While these cultural practices are attributed to the past, they are still relevant in contemporary society to a certain extent].

Another elder informant associated the meaning of cultural heritage resources to witch-craft and traditional healing. He narrated a number of circumstances by which people could not make some decisions without consulting their ancestral spirits. The following are some of his explanations;

Nijuavyo mimi mambo hayo ni pamoja na mila za zamani kama vile matambiko kabla ya kufanya jambo fulani lililohitaji ridhaa ya wahenga. Matambiko haya yaliambatana na baadhi ya masharti ikiwemo kufanya pepezi iliyoongozwa na bibi kikongwe aliyekoma kuzaa au binti ambaye bado ni bikra (kihinja) ambaye hajaanza kufanya ngono. Pepezi hili lilifanyika ili kuomba kuondokana na balaa fulani katika jamii au kuomba jambo fulani litokee . Kwa mfano, katika kijiji chetu cha Mjimwema mtu asingeweza kuhamia tu kijijini pasipo kuomba ridhaa ya wazee/wahenga wa kijiji. Ikionekana kuwa wahenga wameridhia

mgeni kukaa katika kijiji alipewa kinga itakayomfanya aishi kijijini kwa amaniⁱⁱⁱ.

Translation: [To my understanding cultural heritage resources include past traditions like ritual offerings before doing anything that needed consent of the ancestors. These ritual offerings were accompanied by some conditions include conducting pepezi which was led by an old-woman who had reached at menopause or rather a virgin lady (kihinja in vernacular) who had not yet engaged in sexual relations. The pepezi ritual was done in request to get rid of some misfortunes or to ask for a certain event to happen. For example, here at Mjimwema village a person would not just come to live here without asking for consent from the ancestors of the village. If it happened that the ancestors accepted a new comer to settle in a village he/she was given protection to ensure that he/she lives in peace].

A total of 36 (60%) out of 60 informants who responded to the above question confined the meaning of cultural heritage resources to intangible cultural practices. These would mainly include Jando and Unyago initiations, traditional dances, taboos, sacrifice, sacred places, traditional games (e.g. Ndingi, Bao, Mdomo), traditional foods (e.g. chikandanga, Ming'oko), traditional medicine and witchcraft. Eighteen (18) informants (30%) confined their meaning to past histories and oral narratives. For example, one elder narrated a story that shows the importance of elders in the society, where he concludes by saying "Uzee ni Dawa", Literally translated as "Old is Gold"^{iv}.

The story above and similar ones not mentioned here indicate a dialectical view by local communities regarding cultural heritage resources. To them, cultural heritage resources are the wisdom embedded in traditional narratives they inherited from their ancestors. Apart from the wisdom communicated through folklore, cultural heritage resources were also attributed to moral up-bringing of the youngsters. Elders in the community were charged with watching the steps of their children in various social aspects to ensure that they are morally acceptable. For example, in one of the group interviews participants had the following views:

Wakati wa chakula wazee walikuwa makini sana kuangalia jinsi watoto wao wanavyokula. Kwa mfano, mtoto akionekana kukata tonge kubwa mzee angeweza kumuuliza 'mnakula na nani? Au tonge hilo litapita mdomoni?^v

Translation: [During meal time, elders closely monitored their children's table manners. For example, when a child took a big lump of food the elders would reprimand him/her, 'with whom are you

eating? or 'will that lump go through your mouth?'

[...]

Wakati wa Jando, vijana wa kiume walifundishwa mambo mengi ya kimila ikiwemo namna ya kutunza familia zao. Walifundishwa pia namna ya kuwa jasiri na wakakamavu kwa lengo la kutoa ulinzi kwa jamii. Hata watoto wa kike nao kwenye Unyago wao walifundishwa maadili mbalimbali yanayowahusu akina mama ikiwa ni pamoja na namna ya kujitunza wenyewe na waume zao^{vi}.

Translation: [During Jando initiations boys were taught a number of traditional issues including how to take care of their families. They were also trained on how to be courageous and strong in order to protect the community. Similarly, girls in Unyago rituals were taught different women-related morals including how to take care of themselves and their husbands].

Initiation rites appear to serve as the defining moment that determines when female youth can start making decisions relating to sexuality, including whether to engage in any sexual activity. It is also at this moment that female youth are taught on how to become responsible women after marriage and how to handle family matters. It was noted by one informant that nowadays female initiation rite is not as serious as it was in the past. The current practice of initiation rites has been changed into a fashion as people do not adhere to the required age of the initiates. In the past female youth were taken for Unyago initiation rite during their puberty stage, but today most of the female youth are taken before puberty. As a result, most of them fail to grasp what they are taught during initiation rites as these are not reflected in their post-initiation times as matured women.

Other informants associated cultural heritage resource with wisdom, taboos and oral narratives about the past which they inherited from their grandparents. Worth noting is the fact that although the study area had a number of built heritage resources, the informants tended to give less value to them as compared to intangible cultural heritage resources. Even at the Mikindani historical site which is so rich in built heritage, still informants' responses were dominated by intangible cultural practices. They associated Mikindani historical site with Arab history, slave trade and German colonialism, giving very little attention to the value of the still standing architectural monuments. The following are some of their views;

Mambo ya kale ni kama vile historia ya Waarabu waliotawala hapa Mikindani kwa miaka mingi pamoja na historia ya biashara ya utumwa. Lakini baadaye walikuja wajerumani ambao ngome yao kubwa ikiwa ni pale Boma^{vii}

Translation: [Ancient things are like the history of Arabs who ruled here at Mikindani for many years as well as the history of the slave trade. Later on came the Germans whose administrative base was at the Old Boma].

The local communities' responses revealed that their approach to the meaning of the concept cultural heritage resources differs from the professionals' approach (see Figure 1). It was clearly noted from the interviews that local communities' understanding of cultural heritage resources was mainly skewed towards intangibles with little interest in tangible cultural heritage resources. Typically, traditional dances, initiation ceremonies such as Jando and Unyago^{viii}, traditional foods, witchcraft, traditional medicine, local beliefs and taboos, ritual practices such as pepezi and many other traditional practices characterized their responses. This is different from the professionals' understanding of cultural heritage resources. The professionals' views about cultural heritage favour most the tangible cultural heritage resources as compared to intangibles.

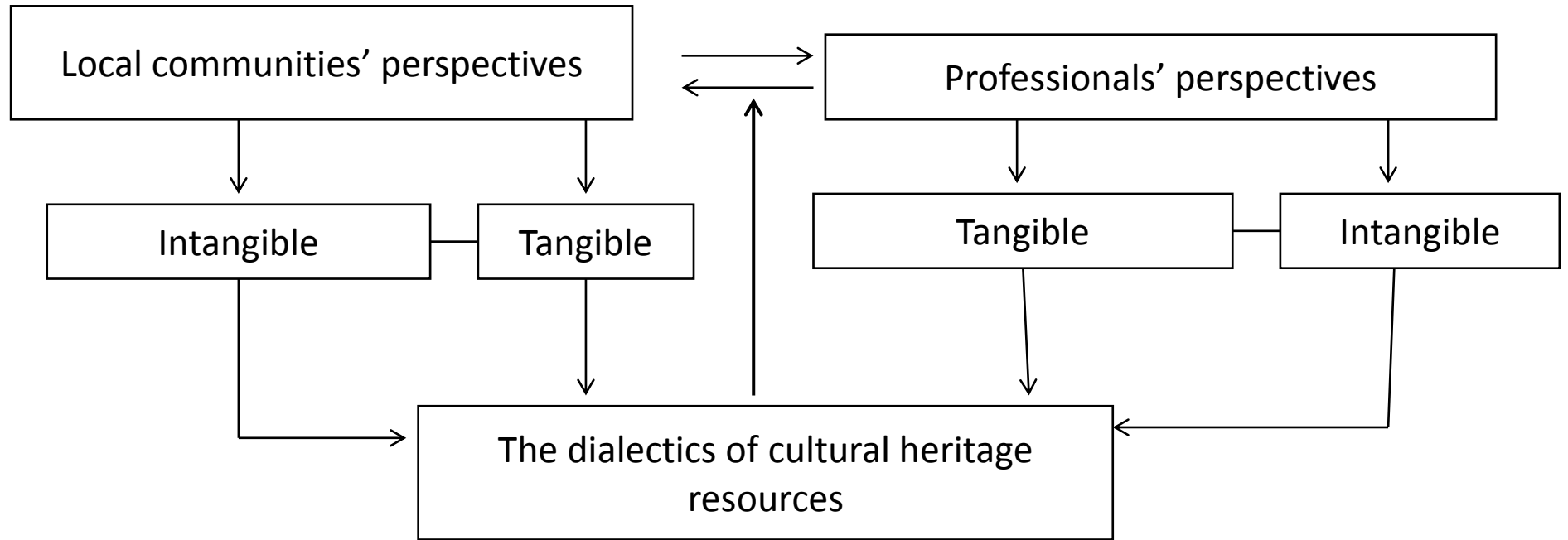


Figure 1: A model showing dialectical perspectives on cultural heritage resources (A model by the Author)

There were a number of ritual sites in the research area which were mentioned by the informants as sacred places for ritual practices. Some of these sites including the *Limbende* ritual site in Nanguruwe village and Mvita ancient settlement were visited for further observation. The ethnographic survey to these sites revealed some rituals attached to these sites. For example, one local informant at Nanguruwe village explained how the *Limbende* ritual site was so popular to the local

communities due to rituals and traditional beliefs attached to that site. The local communities would perform some offerings in the site for different purposes such as asking for rain, overcome misfortunes and ask for protection of the village. Some ritual practices were also observed at Mvita ancient settlement site where a carcass of cat was found slaughtered on top of a grave together with some scatter of bones (Figure 2).



(a)

(b)

Figure 2: A cat carcass (a) and scatter of bones (b) slaughtered in the graveyards at Mvita ancient settlement (Photo by the Author).

CULTURAL HERITAGE RESOURCES CONSERVATION PRACTICES

The meaning of conservation in a ‘traditional’ context is totally different from that used and perceived in professional circles. Innocent Pikirayi asserts that “archaeologists and heritage managers claim authenticity and other tangible ‘visibles’ on a site and cultural landscape and in doing so, follow a set of prescribed rules guidelines” (Pikirayi, 2011:100). Descendant communities preserve sites quite differently. In preservation it is not the rebuilding or reconstruction that matters (Meskell, 2007), but the acknowledgement of cultural heritage values (Pikirayi, 2011). The connection is mainly through the intangible as communities who acknowledge spiritual values of such places imbue it with cultural significance. It is through the intangible component that communities locate their own pasts in cultural heritage places such as archaeological sites (Pikirayi, 2011).

The understanding of heritage in Africa is insufficient. Indeed, the notion of cultural heritage as perceived in Africa, celebrates the unbreakable link between man, nature and God. African concepts of heritage have always embraced spiritual, social and religious meanings, myths, and strong relationships with ancestors and the environment. By ignoring these important aspects of heritage and focusing only on

technical solutions to problems, African professionals and their European counterparts have had difficulties in ensuring the conservation of sites (Levin, 2003).

The Eurocentric conception of cultural heritage management and conservation in Africa starts from the period of colonization, during the 19th century. However, there are enough and reputable evidence that cultural heritage management and conservation in Africa goes back to pre-colonial time. Some scholars (Ichumbaki, 2011; Ndoro, 2001; Mulokozi, 2005) have argued that heritage resources were very valued and protected by using a series of taboos and restrictions. For example, many heritage resources of South Africa were enjoying much protection by local people under the guidance of kings. Cultural leaders or kings were responsible for not only taking care of cultural heritage resources, but also for using them for daily cultural practices (Ichumbaki, 2011; Ndoro, 2001). This is what we similarly find in the Mtwara Region where local communities still conserve their cultural heritage resources through traditional means. Despite the fact that those traditional conservation practices were assuming heritage resources’ sustainability, colonial government abandoned them, resulting in resource deterioration (Ashmore and Robert, 2000; Ichumbaki, 2011).

Archaeological management in Africa does not essentially derive from European colonization, as it had its own, local traditional forms, where indigenous people were involved in the protection and preservation of known sites or places, which they held or perceived as important or sacred (Pikirayi, 2005). Archaeological heritage management is about care and continuing development of a place so that its significance is retained and revealed and its future secured (Ndoro, 2001a). Heritage management in Africa does not essentially derive from European colonization, as it had its own, local traditional forms, where indigenous people were involved in the protection and preservation of known sites or places, which they held or perceived as important or sacred (Pikirayi, 2005).

The colonial practice of cultural heritage resources conservation and management goes back to 1900s (Njombe, 1976; Kayombo, 2005). During this time some emphases were put on movable cultural heritage resources giving less attention to immovable and intangible ones. The efforts to conserve and manage monumental cultural heritage resources in Tanzania started in 1930s (Kayombo, 2005; Mturi, 1982). This was the time when colonial government enacted the Monumental Preservation Ordinance. The Tanzanian government enacted a law famously known as ‘the Antiquities Act No. 10 of 1964’. This Act which was amended in 1979 and 1985 aimed to “provide for preservation and protection of sites and articles of paleontological, archaeological, historical or natural interest and for matters connected therewith and incidental thereto”. This Act has been considered by some scholars (e.g. Mabulla and Bower, 2010) as the basic legislation for management, protection and preservation of both movable and immovable cultural heritage resources of the United Republic of Tanzania.

LOCAL COMMUNITIES AND CONSERVATION OF CULTURAL HERITAGE RESOURCES

In order to elicit the respondents’ views on the conservation of cultural heritage resources, the question on conservation status of cultural heritage resources in the Mtwara Region was posed. This question is twofold in that it sought to get local communities’ understanding on the need for conservation of cultural heritage resources. The study sought the local communities’ comments on conservation status of cultural heritage resources. The role of community has been shown in many conservation decisions. Relevant literature also recognizes the importance of community groups and their involvement. In a survey conducted in 1980, community participation ranked high when participants were asked about the value of heritage conservation. Community participation was selected as an important element of the conservation process because it engaged people in democratic decision-making about place (Datel & Dingemans, 1988).

More recently, Smith (2006) acknowledges the growing body of literature on public engagement and community participation in heritage management, interpretation and conservation work.

It is against this backdrop that 52 informants were interviewed on this question and had different perspectives on conservation of cultural heritage resources in the Mtwara Region. There were those whose views supported the presence of conservation and preservation measures upon cultural heritage resources. On the contrary, there were other informants who stated that there were no conservation measures taken upon cultural heritage resources. Apart from the contrasting views on the conservation of cultural heritage resources there were some informants who were completely unaware of this matter. Only 18 respondents (35%) were of the opinion that there were conservation measures being taken on cultural heritage resources. Their argument was based on the continued cultural practices by local communities that are handed down across generations. For example, during the interview some informants alluded to the fact that cultural traditions are still practiced as a sign of value to cultural heritage resources though not as authentic as it was in the past. This was highly emphasized by one informant who confirmed that cultural traditions particularly traditional dances are still in practice, and he belongs to one of the traditional dance troupes in his area as a secretary to that group.

Mambo ya jadi bado yanafanyika katika jamii za sasa japo si kwa kiwango kama cha zamani. Sisi tuna kikundi chetu cha ngoma ambacho ni maarufu sana na kinashirikisha watu kutoka vijiji mbali mbali vya jirani. Kikundi hiki huwa kinaalikwa kucheza ngoma hasa wakati wa matukio muhimu yanayohusisha mkusanyiko wa watu. Mimi watoto wangu wote mpaka sasa lazima wakati wa Jando niwacheze ngoma hasa ngoma aina ya beni. Ngoma hii hufanyika hapa hapa nyumbani ikitanguliwa na pepezi ambapo ule unga wa pepezi ndio wanaopakwa watoto kabla ya kutahiriwa^{ix}.

Translation: [Cultural traditions are still practiced by contemporary communities though not on the same scale as it was in the past. We have our traditional dance troupe that draws members from interested people in the neighbouring village. This group is usually invited to various occasions by the government to perform traditional dances, especially in events that involve public gatherings. I also do perform this type of dance (*beni*) to my children during *Jando* and *Unyago* initiation rites. This is done here in my homestead preceded by *Pepezi* through which the ritual flour is sprinkled upon the initiates before the circumcision rite takes place].

[...]

Kitu kingine ambacho bado kinafanyika ni mambo ya uchawi na uganga. Haya bado yanarithishwa kutoka kizazi hadi kizazi. Kwa mfano, nilipokuwa mdogo babu yangu alikuwa ananitumia sana kwenye mambo yake ya uganga...ni pale tu nilipokataa kurithi mikoba yake ndipo mjomba wangu akarithi shughuli hiyo. Maana yake kama nisingekata na mimi leo hii ningekuwa mganga wa kienyeji^x.

Translation: [Another thing which is still in practice is witchcraft and traditional medicine. These traditions are inherited from previous generations. For example, when I was a young boy, my grandfather assigned me some tasks related to witchcraft and traditional medicine...It was only when I refused to accept the paraphernalia associated with the trade that my uncle took over. Had I accepted the paraphernalia, I would be a traditional healer].

Contrary to the above, 34 (65%) of the informants were of the view that there were no conservation measures being taken to conserve cultural heritage resources in the Mtwara Region. The argument put forth was that most of these cultural heritage resources were deteriorating at an alarming rate and people seem to no longer value the past. This deterioration involves both tangible and intangible cultural heritage resources. Some of the informants, particularly elders, could really show a state of despair upon the conservation of cultural heritage resources as there were no signs of reviving the disappearing indigenous cultural traditions. In response to this question one of the informants had the following views;

Unajua swala la mambo ya zamani limebaki vichwani mwa wazee tu. Watu wengi hawathamini tena mambo ya zamani kwa kujiona kuwa ni kizazi kipya. Hivyo ni vigumu kudhani kuwa unaweza kuwashawishi kuacha maisha ya usasa na kufuata ya zamani. Unadhani inawezekana? ...Kwa hiyo katika hali hii hakuna anayeweza kusema kuwa tunahifadhi mila na tamaduni zetu^{xi}.

Translation: [You know, cultural heritage resources remain in the minds of few old men. The majority of the people are no longer interested in the past because they see themselves as modern ones. Consequently, it is difficult to think that you can convince them to leave the so called modern lifestyle and embrace the past. Do you think it is possible?... So, in this situation no one can say that we are conserving cultural heritage resources]

ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESEARCH AND ITS BENEFIT TO THE LOCAL COMMUNITY

Archaeological research in Tanzania has to a large extent abided by conventional methodological approach which has left little impact to local communities. This has created a fundamental knowledge gap on archaeology between professionals and local communities. It was also my interest to assess local community's awareness on archaeological research that have been conducted in their area prior to this study. The following question was used as a guiding tool for this assessment – "What have you benefited from previous archaeological research conducted in your area? I was aware of some archaeological research conducted in the Mtwara Region before this study. These include research by Amandus Kwekason (2010) dealing with Holocene archaeology of south-eastern coast, Matthew Pawlowicz (2011) focusing on archaeological exploration of southern Tanzania particularly the Mikindani area and the study by Elgidius Ichumbaki (2011) that examined the state of management of built assets in Lindi and Mtwara Regions. It was therefore my intention to examine local communities awareness on these studies but also a lesson learnt by the public as a result of these research.

It was so unfortunate that none among the local community representatives could admit knowledge of archaeological research conducted in their areas except few government officials. This indicates that previous archaeological research in the Mtwara Region left negligible impact to local community's awareness on archaeology and cultural heritage resources in general. It was noted that in one incident, residents at Mvita ancient settlement site resisted archaeological excavation that was to take place in their area. Their claim was that the researchers had a hidden agenda of expropriating their land. Despite efforts made to convince them on the importance of conducting that research in their area, they remained unconvinced. Among the reasons that were given unawareness on archaeological research was that many researchers do their research without involving them. As a result it is difficult for the public to know what is behind the research. This was revealed by some informants who were consulted during the interview (Figures 3).

Sijawahi kuona tafiti yoyote inayofanana na hii! Kwanza nashangaa kuona kijana kama wewe ukithubutu kutafiti juu ya mambo ya zamani hasa ya mila na desturi kwa kushirikisha wazee! Ni vijana wachache wanaoweza kufanya hivyo. Nakupongeza sana na kwa kweli uendelee na moyo huo kwani historia ina thamani sana katika maisha ya sasa japo watu hasa vijana wanadharau mambo ya zamani^{xii}.

Translation: [I have never seen any study like this one! I am really surprised to see a

gentleman like you venturing into studying the past particularly traditions and customs by interacting with elders. It has been a rare practice especially by young people like you. Congrats and please keep it up as the past

have a great value to our present life though people particularly youth tend to ignore it].



Figure 3: Interview session with informants in progress. (Photo by the Author)

It was noted from a number of informants both elders and youths that many people in the community particularly youth group have given less attention to cultural heritage resources. Some reasons were mentioned as a cause for undermining cultural heritage resources among African communities particularly that of Tanzania including the Mtwara Region. These include the impact of globalization which comes as a package of western cultures but also lack of education on cultural heritage resources among local community members. Other causes were attributed to religious issues in that people find no reasons to seek social relief from traditional practices as for now religion serves that purpose. While emphasizing on this viewpoint one of the informants had the following explanation;

Zamani wazee wetu walishikilia vema misingi ya utamaduni kwa namna mbali mbali. Kwa mfano, ikitokea mtu ameugua au kupatwa na balaa lolote wanaukoo walifanya tambiko maarufu kwa makonde kama pepezi kwa miungu ili mgonjwa apone. Haya yalifanyika pia wakati wa majanga kama ukame. Kwa kupitia matambiko na maombi ya jadi kwa miungu mvua iliweza kunyesha mara moja na kuleta mavuno kwa jamii. Matambiko haya yalifanyika katika maeneo tofauti tofauti hasa chini ya miti mikubwa kama mibuyu, makaburini, mapangoni, mitoni n.k. Kutokana na ujio wa dini za kisasa watu hawaoni tena umuhimu wa matambiko kwani kila wanapopata shida wanakimbilia kwenye dini zao. Dini imegeuka kuwa ndio tulizo la matatizo yao^{xiii}.

Translation: [In the past people abided strongly by their cultural roots in different ways. For example, when a family member falls sick his/her relatives could undertake some offerings famously known in Makonde communities as *pepezi* to their ancestral spirits asking for healing. This was also done when the community faced natural calamities like drought. Through traditional offerings and prayers to the ancestral spirits it could rain immediately and bring good harvest to the society. Basically, these offerings were done in different places such as under big trees like baobab trees, in the graveyards, in the cave, around water bodies etc. Now given the introduction of western religion people no longer abide by these traditional practices. Instead, religion has taken over as a source of social comfort in case of any social discomfort].

Another noted cause of unawareness to archaeological research and cultural heritage resources by the local communities and the public at large is absence of cultural heritage teachings in primary and secondary education system. The idea of incorporating cultural heritage teachings in the education system of Tanzania is not a new concern as some scholar had suggested it earlier before. For instance Mabula and Magori (2005) are of the views that “archaeology in Tanzania is still regarded as the exclusive preserve of University, Antiquities and Museum people. Even at these institutions, archaeological knowledge is restricted to the few people engaged in it, either as lecturers, students, conservators or curators... While the past is the main

focus of archaeology, there is a need to demonstrate the relevance and role of archaeology to the contemporary world". It was discovered in this study that local community in the Mtwara Region were not only unaware of what it means by archaeology but also the archaeological research which was conducted in the Mtwara Region prior to this study.

CONCLUSION

This paper reveals that heritage is not just anything though benign as Thomas Watkins (2008) puts it. Given the multifaceted views around the meaning of cultural heritage resources, it may be difficult to have a single defining direction but dialectical understandings. This study suggests that the professional meaning of cultural heritage resources should also take into consideration the local communities' understanding of the concept. This will help to avoid heritage meaning all things to all people, and yet it can be manipulated to be different things to different people. Michael Brown (2005:49) states that heritage management should "balance between heritage as a resource for all humanity

and as something that belongs to, and remains controlled by, its communities of origin". He also says heritage preservation "is or should be, a means to the end of fostering societies in which minority communities have a voice in decisions about their future and where they can attain the same prosperity available to everyone else, should they choose to do so" (Brown, 2005:53). The dialectical perceptions upon the meaning of cultural heritage resources call for some joint conservation strategies between the professionals and local communities. In this case, I support what Bertram Mapunda earlier suggested that, it is the obligation of the agencies responsible for antiquities to employ what is called public conservation techniques to ensure that the local communities are fully involved in all conservation programs taking place in and around their areas (Mapunda, 2001). This is due to the fact that professional-based conservation strategies which have been practices for a long time in Tanzania have achieved little as to the expectations. For that case therefore, sustainable conservation of cultural heritage resources, both tangible and intangible ones, remains a general public's task.

- ⁱ Meaning something culturally valuable, inheritable, and worth preserving and conserving.
- ⁱⁱ Interview notes, group interview with elders, 12/06/2013 at Mtendachi village in Mtwara Rural district
- ⁱⁱⁱ Interview with Mzee Salehe Abdalah, 18/07/2013 at Mjimwema Village
- ^{iv} Interview with an old man, 13/7/2013 at Ziwani village in Mtwara Rural district
- ^v Group interview with elders, 25/06/2013 at Mduwi village in Mtwara Rural district
- ^{vi} Fieldnotes, interview with Musa Muharami, 23/08/2012 at Tandika street in Mtwara- Mikindani Municipality
- ^{vii} Fieldnotes, interview 6/09/2012 at Mikindani village in Mtwara – Mikindani Municipality
- ^{viii} Jando and Unyago refer to initiation ceremonies whereby both male and female children get introduced to adulthood.
- ^{ix} Interview with Mzee Nakumbwa Mohamed, 02/04/ 2013 at Mjimwema village in Mtwara Rural district.
- ^x Ibid
- ^{xi} Group Interview notes, interview with elders, 16/05/2013 at Majengo street in Mtwara Mikindani municipality
- ^{xii} A Group interview with elders 14/07/2013 at Ziwani village in Mtwara rural district
- ^{xiii} Interview with Mzee Raphael Nandipa, 08/06/2013 at Mbae village in Mtwara – Mikindani Municipality

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