

# **The Writings of Bruno Gutmann: A Gift to the Wachagga, People of Kilimanjaro**

**By**

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**Städtepartnerschaft Tübingen-Moshi e.V. (Tübingen – Moshi partnership Association)**

Since 2014, there exists a town partnership between Moshi (northern Tanzania) and Tübingen (southern Germany). In 2016, a partnership association, a not-for-profit Community Based Organization was founded to set impulses and accents for developing the town partnership based on civil society commitment.

Collaborator:

**Kilimanjaro Heritage Society**

Kilimanjaro Heritage Society (KHS) is a not-for-profit Community Based Organization (CBO) that was founded by Dr. Steven Sharra in 2018, and formally registered with the Moshi Municipal Council with registration number MMC/CBO/1125/2018. Many descendants of Mangi Rindi are represented in it. The KHS works closely with other institutions that want to research, preserve and develop the Wachagga cultural heritage into the future, such as Old Moshi Mashariki (OMM) Ward, Moshi Town and Moshi District Council, Kilimanjaro Council of Chiefs and others. There is also close contact with the schools and the school authorities.

**Summary:**

During the colonial rule of Germany in Tanganyika, besides objects and human remains, a considerable amount of intangible cultural heritage of the native people was collected and brought to Germany. The people from the societies of origin do not have access to this heritage, although it is theirs. Mainly because this heritage is written and stored in the Germany in German language in the form of books and other publications, this project tries to jointly develop models on how this intangible cultural heritage can be returned to the societies of origin in the form of knowledge sharing and repatriation. The knowledge will be of great use to the contemporary communities of origin and even a large audience. This project refer to the work of the missionary and ethnologist Dr Bruno Gutmann, who researched, recorded and published the social system, legal system, ethnic teachings and historical tradition of the Wachagga, the people living around Kilimanjaro. The restitution of this knowledge requires further research work in archives and libraries, scientific research and monitoring, digitalisation and transcription of the texts, and a rough translation into English of Gutmann's works. Translation of such works into Kiswahili, field research in the Wachagga community, to find out and document what is known today and still present as tradition. Conduct community engagement to disseminate the results of this project. This project will digitise seven main books by Gutmann and translate one of them in a first step. The project should also be an opportunity to raise awareness in Germany about our shared history with Tanzania, broaden our knowledge of the societies there, question entrenched thinking patterns, and see our shared history as an obligation and starting point for a shared future. The digitised books will be made available freely on the Tübingen\_Moshi friendship web page, the Kilimanjaro region web page, local libraries in Kilimanjaro, the University of Dar es Salaam library and its online repository. It will also be part of the Imagining Futures online repository.

## Research context

Germany and Tanzania: two countries with a common history.

Tanganyika was the focus of German colonial interests from the early 1880s and was a German colony between 1890 and 1916 as Deutsch-Ostafrika. The resistance of the people living there was brutally broken in many war campaigns, and they were subjected to German rule. Many ethnographic objects were forcefully taken from the local communities and brought to Germany during this time. This included public capital punishment, robbery, extortion and loot in the war campaigns, but also as gifts or legally acquired and stored in museums, depots or exhibited in Germany. Human remains were also brought to Germany in large numbers in the name of research material for "anthropological" investigations. The countries and societies from which these objects and human remains originate intensely demand their return. A broad discussion has arisen about this only too legitimate demand, and the first steps have been taken.

However, what has wholly disappeared from awareness in Germany is that intangible cultural heritage was also collected in Tanganyika during colonial rule and is now stranded in archives or libraries in Germany. Missionaries studied the many languages of the people there, transcribed them and created dictionaries and grammar. Songs, proverbs, fairy tales, legends and information on pre-colonial history were also collected. Explorers and military personnel have "collected" objects and conducted ethnological research. This wealth of knowledge and record sleeps in archives or is published in German, accessible only by those who can understand German, and completely excludes the communities who otherwise own the knowledge. Thus, there is now an incomprehensibly large and almost unmanageable amount of knowledge in Germany that has been removed from the societies of origin and of which the people there know little or nothing, let alone have access to it.

## Tübingen and Moshi: a town partnership

Since 2014, there exists a partnership between Moshi in northern Tanzania and Tübingen. From Moshi (today's Old-Moshi), the Wachagga, people living on Kilimanjaro were subdued in several military campaigns and their resistance was broken. The submission ended on March 2<sup>nd</sup> 1900 when 19 Mangi (chiefs) and other leading men of the Wachagga (including Mangi Meli from Moshi, son and successor of Mangi Rindi) and from the neighbouring areas of Arusha and Meru were publicly hanged in Moshi by the Germans under the command of Captain Kurt Johannes.

In 2016, a partnership association was founded, which aims to set impulses and accents for the development of the town partnership based on civil society commitment. In recent times, the need to confront and come to terms with the colonial past in the Moshi region has grown more and more.

## Dr Bruno Gutmann

This project highlights anthropological works in Tanganyika by Dr Bruno Gutmann in the early 1900s. The project will present a model in which a return of other intangible heritage to countries of origin could be realised. Dr Bruno Gutmann (1876-1966)— A missionary and an ethnographer in the Chaggaland, Tanzania, East Africa—native of Dresden, Saxony, Germany. As a young evangelist in the early 1900s, eager to spread the Gospel in the third world, he critically learned diverse social science theories and later developed the social philosophy that pushed him deeper into ethnographic research. The Lutheran church posted him in Tanganyika for pastoral services, and found his way into Kilimanjaro in 1902. He fell in love with the Chagga people and lived with

them for 36 years. Besides his daily pastoral works, Gutmann became famous for studying the Chagga social system and customs. He did an insurmountable work among the Chagga, especially in identifying the life power in the Chagga daily life.

While in Kilimanjaro, Gutmann wrote many books about the Chagga. He managed to live in almost all major parts of Kilimanjaro: He worked at Masama in Machame, west Kilimanjaro, Ashira in Mamba, eastern Kilimanjaro and Old Moshi, central Kilimanjaro where he did most of his writing. The major challenge to Gutmann's works is that 99% of his writings are in the old German language (in German and printed in old fonts). The remaining 1% has been translated into English. Nevertheless, some of Gutmann's great works, such as "Das Recht der Dschagga"—'The Law of the Chagga'—have earned him recognition, particularly with the Erlangen and Wurzburg Universities and most of these works are being used by various European and American universities as reference books in anthropology.

### Cultural transfer from Africa to Germany

What is particularly remarkable about Dr Gutmann's work is his idea of a cultural transfer from Africa to Germany. Usually, linguistic and ethnological research at that time aimed at preparing the ground for implementing Western and European views. Above all, in a religious sense: missionary works, i.e. spreading Christianity among the "heathens", but also with a political, colonial goal: enforcing the colonial rule. Dr Gutmann opened up a different path. He saw so much value and example in the life of the Wachagga that he published his research and knowledge in German in Germany. He did so with the attitude that Germany and Europe could also learn from Africa. This attitude is opposed to the prevailing attitude and view of Africa in his time, namely as a "historyless" continent whose "underdeveloped" and "uncivilised", "primitive and less complex" people must be subjected to the "blessings" of European "civilisation". Gutmann believed that the Chagga socio-political and even economic systems presented a robust community organisation that other African and European communities could learn from it. Gutmann had a unique reverence and patriotism for the Chagga community and strongly advocated perpetuating the traditional systems, such as legal, educational, and religious systems. He believed such systems worked better if they were left uncontaminated. The Chagga have not been able to enjoy this rich collection of their history mainly due to language and accessibility barriers.

### What has been stored must be given back!

In the age of restitution and reparation, particularly of the cultural heritage damage done during the colonial period, the Chagga, like many other African communities, demands to be heard and redress their culture. The Tübingen-Moshi friendship association is better positioned to assist their Chagga friends in fighting this battle. And one of the ways to help is by addressing the history and cultural heritage of the Chagga. All the books written by Gutmann contain valuable information about the Chagga. Information that could be very useful to the modern Chagga. However, as mentioned, these works are all in German and inaccessible to the Chagga and Tanzania community. Unlike the objects now in German museums, many of which were taken from the people of Africa by murder, robbery or coercion during colonial rule, the intangible cultural heritage of the Wachagga was freely given and carefully preserved with great appreciation in the writings of Gutmann. Nevertheless, decency and awareness of the terrible crimes committed during German colonial rule in what is now Tanzania dictate that every effort be made in Germany to make this treasure available again to the people of Tanzania, whose very own it is. Below are some quotes from members of the Kilimanjaro Heritage Society testifying to the deep desire and great need to reclaim this heritage:

“Furthermore in Chagga land, Reverend Bruno Guttmann's place and integrity is held high beyond what most people in Germany can imagine.

I know Mchungaji (Reverend) Daniel Lyatuu who was baptized by Reverend Bruno Gutmann, he is still living. So we will be able to get a good review collected from elders who actually saw Gutmann.

Wachagga gave him the title of Osaoye O Wachagga (Elder of the Wachagga), Similar to the Morenja (Chief advisors to Mangi), this traditional role and title was held high during the days of Mangi Rindi. So for Reverend Bruno Gutmann to be given that name it means he meant a lot to the Old Moshi people.”

“[...] many people whom I have spoken too are very anxious for the biography Kiswahili translation. It is 1st time we have a detailed story of an exemplary leader of times before Tanganyika was born let alone Tanzania as a nation. We think Mangi Rindi biography can inspire braveness and ambitions to young people who have by large forgotten history or have lost interests in it due to hearing funny stories of some chiefs who exchanged land for bottles of whiskey and mirrors.

Mangi Rindi biography gives us a story of a naturally intelligent born and gifted leader that can even be turned into a documentary film in the future in order to reach as many people as possible. In short Wachagga are waiting anxiously for the translation of the selected books.”

“For Wachagga of Old Moshi, this is like us getting our royal crown back again. Old Moshi suffered the loss of Mangi Rindi Mandara ever since he died. We have not produced a leader of his calibre after we lost Mangi Meli .

We wouldn't have the written history of Kilimanjaro if it was not for Old Moshi , Mangi Rindi and the "Wosaoye O Wachagga" (Elder of the Wachagga) as we called him, the beloved Reverend Bruno Gutmann.”

## **Aims**

The project will endeavour to translate and digitise the listed Guttmann's work and make them accessible freely worldwide. The primary goal is to digitise seven books and as a starting point translate one of them. The translation will be from the German language to the Kiswahili language. To make them accessible to the wide community, especially the Chagga people of Kilimanjaro. The research also aims to talk to the contemporary Chagga community to see how they remember Guttmann as a person and his works in Kilimanjaro. This will link with other projects in Kilimanjaro on restitution, such as the “Mangi Meli remains” project and, more recently “Marejesho” project both initiated by the Berlin group “FlinnWorks”.

## **Material**

From the large number of publications by Guttmann, we have identified the following as the most important :

„**Die Stammeslehren der Dschagga**“, 3 Bde., München: Beck 1932-38 [bilingual, Kimoshi and German, detailed introduction], 1947 pages

„**Das Recht der Dschagga**“. Mit einem Nachwort des Herausgebers, in Krüger, Felix. Zur Entwicklungspsychologie des Rechts, München: Beck, 1926, 778 pages

„**Häuptling Rindi von Moshi**“. Ein afrikanisches Helden- und Herrscherleben, Köln: Schaffstein, 1928, 87 pages

and the following smaller publications

„**Die Kerbstocklehren der Dschagga in Ostafrika**“, in Zeitschrift für Eingeborenensprachen, 13, 1922-23, S. 81-109, 205-35, 260-302 [bilingual, Kimoshi and German, detailed introduction], 103 pages

„**Das Rechtsleben der Wadschagga im Spiegel ihrer Sprichwörter**“, in Zeitschrift für Eingeborenensprachen, 14, 1924, S. 44-68 [bilingual, Kimoshi and German, detailed introduction], 25 pages

„**Bruchstücke aus den Kerbstocklehren für Mädchen nach dem „Mreho fo ljangö**“, in Zeitschrift für Eingeborenensprachen, 15, 1925, S. 1-19 [bilingual, Kimoshi and German, detailed introduction], 19 pages

„**Lieder der Dschagga**“, in Zeitschrift für Eingeborenensprachen, 18, 3, 1928, S. 161-195 [bilingual, Kimoshi and German, detailed introduction], 35 pages

For his most important work, "Die Stammeslehren der Dschagga" (The tribal teachings of the Chagga), 3 volumes (published in 1932, 1935 and 1938), he developed pioneering methods of ethnological research and recording of orally transmitted knowledge that are still valid today. These books provide a fascinating example of how, in the highly complex Wachagga society of the pre-colonial period, social rules and cohabitation were structured and preserved through oral tradition. The oldest of the word-for-word dictated tribal lore dates from the mid to late eighteenth century! All volumes are published bilingually: in Kichagga (Kimoshi) and a congenial German translation. They are accompanied by illuminating commentaries and a detailed preface in which Dr Gutmann reveals his method and also names his informants.

In his book "Das Recht der Dschagga" (The Law of the Chagga), published in 1926, not only is the complex legal system of the Wachagga described in detail and handed down, but he also gives important examples of the orally transmitted 'writing' of history, a method later followed up by Kathleen M. Stahl in her groundbreaking work "History of the Chagga People of the Kilimanjaro".

In a first step, these books will be scanned, digitised and made accessible to the public via a dedicated website. In a second step, they will be gradually translated, first from German into English, then into Kiswahili.

## **Starting Point**

We found this amount of material available so overwhelming and unmanageable: some thousands of pages, published in rare editions and other material stored in handwritten form in archives, the task so big, that we have decided to make a pre-selection. We think, that projects have to be developed that are manageable, that can be realised. With these projects we can gain experience, they can be models for further work.

As a starting point, we would like to focus on one of the most important historical figures and leaders of the Wachagga: Mangi Rindi of Moshi.

## **Mangi Rindi of Moshi**

One example of 'writing' history based on orally transmitted sources is Gutmanns biography: "Häuptling Rindi von Moschi, ein afrikanisches Helden- und Herrscherleben" (Chief Rindi of Moshi, an African hero's and ruler's life). This biography is a unique attempt to describe the life of an African leader on the eve of colonial conquest. Unlike accounts by explorers and later missionaries and military officers, who give no more than incidental anecdotes, Gutmann takes as his starting point carefully researched eyewitness accounts and the handed-down oral tradition. He traces the whole life, from birth to death, also describes the defeats and backlashes and does not leave out the problematic, less sympathetic sides of this leader's personality. Although the person of

Mangi Rindi is the main focus, the book also provides a lot of valuable and fascinating insights into the life of the Wachagga, their everyday life, culture and social interaction in the pre-colonial times. The biography was published in German in 1928 in the then very popular series of the "Schaffsteins grüne Bändchen" in Cologne. It stands here in a very special context of political biographies (Freiherr vom Stein, Napoleon I, Fürst Bismark, Charlemagne and other great rulers), descriptions of voyages of discovery and reports glorifying militarism.

In his Rindi biography, Gutmann's writing style is very special: he uses many old and unusual words and grammatical constructions. He tried to write it like an old German heroic epic. Probably, he was inspired by the old German heroic sagas, and perhaps also by the Greek heroic sagas of classical antiquity. These writings, were very popular at the time (see for example the book by Gustav Schwab: "Sagen des klassischen Altertums", (Sagas of Classical Antiquity), published in 1840). Of course, it is also about information, but he writes of Mangi Rindi as a poet and singer who uses his songs to communicate with his people. Many of these songs are reported in the book and here Gutmann writes also in a very particular and ancient German in an attempt to translate these songs into German. It should be noted that the Wachagga used various informal ways to pass knowledge and other conventions to the young (Silayo 2017 and 2022).

Therefore, it is high time now and it would make a lot of sense to find a corresponding equivalent in Kiswahili for a back translation and a wider community benefit. This project will complement the current debate about the return of Mangi Meli's remains as well as any other ethnographic objects. It will also provide a complete history of the Moshi chiefdom as it will give a snippet of the background of Mangi Rindi and initiate ways to honour and remembrance of these leaders by the Chagga community today. It will help to stage a conversation on what would be the views about him and what role he plays in the community. In the end, this information may be used to update or serve as a fine addition to the biography of Dr Gutmann.

**Mangi Rindi of Moshi** (ca 1841 - 1891), juvenile name Makindara, also known as "Sultan" Mandara, was one of the great Wachagga leaders of Kilimanjaro. He turned the small, insignificant chiefdom of Moshi into one of the most important centres of power on Kilimanjaro and twice succeeded in bringing more than half of the Kilimanjaro region under his influence. Gifted with great intelligence and equally great diplomatic skills, he quickly recognised the possibilities and advantages of an intensive exchange with the Swahili Coast and Zanzibar and the contact with the first Europeans. From the 1860s onwards, Moshi became the gateway to Kilimanjaro and was known far into Europe. In the 1880s, he negotiated with both the British and the Germans, playing them off against each other, and finally signed a "protection treaty" with the German East African Trading Company in 1885 but also opened Moshi to the first british missionaries. In 1891, through deliberate and skilful disinformation, he finally succeeded in pushing the German "Schutztruppe" under Heinrich von Wissmann into a war campaign against his main rival Mangi Sina of Kibosho, which ended with the latter's defeat and subjugation (See also Silayo 2016). Mangi Rindi died shortly after this triumph on the eve of the final colonial submission of the Kilimanjaro region. Under him and later his successors, the previously insignificant Moshi became the seat first of the German, then the British colonial administration.

## **Method**

This project will involve digitising and translating the sampled Gutmann's works. The works have been selected purposefully because of their content and relevance to the Chagga community. The knowledge in the chosen works will speak strongly to the Chagga traditional systems and benefit contemporary society. The project will also use focus group discussion to elicit an understanding of

the modern community of knowledge about Gutmann and the contribution of his works in Kilimanjaro.

To disseminate the findings from this project, there will be a community workshop that will bring members of the community, local and regional administrators, educators, religious institutions, CBOs, NGOs and cultural organisations. These will be informed of the presence of Gutmann's works and how they can access them.

## **Ethics**

The project will adhere to the University of Dar es Salaam research and ethics policy but will also be guided by the values of the people of Tübingen and German. The project will involve different groups of respondents, from primary school to college students, administrators and the general public. Therefore, all the ethical procedures must be followed. This will include processing a research clearance from the university and relevant authorities in Tanzania.

## **Project management**

This project will be managed jointly between Tübingen, Moshi Town and the University of Dar es Salaam under the Department of Archaeology and Heritage Studies. The Department of Archaeology and Heritage Studies, in collaboration with Dr Valence Silayo, project PI, will be the overall administrator of the project. The department will also conduct and organise all the project activities in Tanzania, such as research and community engagement in Kilimanjaro and translation of the work from English to Kiswahili. Liaison with Moshi town and Kilimanjaro Heritage Society (KHS) to ensure that there will be a smooth environment during fieldwork as well as help translate sections of Gutmann's work that were initially written in Kichagga to Kiswahili. Mainly the Moshi town will ensure that poets and singers or storytellers who could be ready to partake in this project to help interpret and translate the work are readily available. While collaborating with Tübingen town, Städtepartnerschaft Tübingen-Moshi e.V. (Hartmut Andres), will endeavour to organise and prepare selected books, digitise them and translate one of the books from German to English, and conduct further research in German archives (e.g., in the estate of Gutmann in Nuremberg, archives of the Leipziger Missions Gesellschaft, ...) if necessary.