

The Illicit Trade in Cultural Objects in Tanzania: An Investigative Report

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Abstract

Investigators are an important apparatus in tackling highly organized crimes committed in a state of high confidentiality. In Africa, surveillance techniques are commonly used to expose many crimes including serious offences against individuals or a society. However, ethnographic objects and other cultural remains have received less investigative attention, and as the result they have been illegally exported out of the continent for economic benefits. Ethnographic objects refer to objects made, modified or used by humans that collectively represent cultural references and they are protected by law, rules, or customs. Cultural remains refer to tangible movable objects made, shaped, painted, sculptured, inscribed, and produced or modified by human agency. In Tanzania, like in many other African countries, relics and ethnographic objects have been plundered and illegally traded in underground economy across the world. People engaged in trading of ethnographic objects use souvenir markets as decoys and shipping passage to send goods abroad. This article presents the results from a recent investigation conducted at one of the souvenir markets in Mwenge, Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, where cultural relics and ethnographic objects from Tanzania and other African countries have been brought together and shipped abroad for commercial interests. A joint team of undercover intelligence agents and key informants participated in a confidential work to investigate the process by which ethnographic objects are collected, marketed and distributed to local and foreign markets. Mwenge is one of the largest and most popular souvenir centers with large and unique artefacts shops operating as tourism attractions. During this investigation, which spanned six months, our team identified 530 ethnographic objects which were on the market, ready to be sold and exported, despite their legal status under Tanzanian law, according to which their sale and export are unlawful. This study revealed that people who are engaged in the illicit trading activities of relics and ethnographic objects are knowledgeable, use legitimate business license, collection- and export permits to conceal their illicit trade of ethnographic objects. Furthermore, they are aware of the poor monitoring institutions and the illiteracy among security officials at ports of exits. This article discloses some of the techniques used to conceal the trafficking of cultural objects in Tanzania and proposes suitable measures to counter the problem.

Keywords: Ethnographic Objects, Cultural Relics, Detective Measures, Illicit Trade, Curio-Market

Introduction

Tanzania, which lies on the Indian ocean, is located in the southeastern part of East Africa and is endowed with over 120 ethnic groups with varied cultural backgrounds (1). All these ethnic groups are linguistically unified by the Swahili language, which is widely spoken across the country (2). Tanzania is one of the largest country in the region with a 945,087 km² and a population of over 55 million people (3). Geographically, Tanzania borders Kenya and Uganda in the north; Rwanda, Burundi, and the Democratic Republic of Congo in the west; and Malawi, Mozambique, and Zambia in the south.

In terms of cultural heritage, Tanzania possesses a wide range of cultural objects ranging from archaeological artefacts, historic remnants and ethnographic objects. Archaeological artefacts include cultural objects made and used by human ancestors during the Plio-Pleistocene. These modest tools with a straight-forward design were used to perform various activities including acquisition of food (tubers) with preserved microscopic residues, i.e. trace elements left on stone tools. In Tanzania the oldest archaeological artefacts, commonly referred to as the Oldowan cultural traditions, come from Olduvai Gorge in Arusha and have been dated between 2.0 and 1.7 million years old (4). They were succeeded by the Acheulian, Middle Stone Age (MSA) and Later Stone Age (LSA) implements which can be found scattered in various places across the landscape. The innovation made during the LSA paved the way towards the adoption of sedentary lifestyle during the Neolithic period, around five thousand years ago (5)(6).

As most of the earliest Stone Age implements ever recovered and recorded were found across East Africa, it is widely accepted by paleoscientists that the East African region was the ‘Cradle of humanity’ (4)(7). The post-Neolithic culture is characterized by iron working communities, around 3,000 years ago (9). Those communities have been recognized as powerful and highly organized social systems with advanced technology, culture, and political systems (10)(9)(11). Therefore, it should be acknowledged that there are two aspects of “Iron working communities”: first, those directly linked to the “Bantu speakers”, in accordance with linguistic and archaeological evidence (9); second, those indirectly linked to the Bantu language because as the languages spread, people’s material culture (including iron working technology, ceramics, agriculture, and animal domestications) spread too. These early iron-using communities of eastern Africa show a very remarkable degree of technological and practices, subsistence patterns, and local ecological adaptation preserved in the archaeological record (11) (12).

Early artifacts (typically hand-held tools) which were used to carry out a variety of activities, as well as ornamentation and symbolic objects such as rock art, beads, and ochre, are extraordinary records of human creativity (8)(6). Therefore, they were often exported by pioneers during the colonial period or were carried abroad by researchers without a permit allowing them to lawfully export such items. The majority of these archaeological and ethnographic remains (hominins, archaeological artefacts, mammalian fossil fauna and other cultural materials) are thus now stored or exhibited in various institutions and museums worldwide, rather than in their countries of origin.

The movement of cultural objects outside of the country was further facilitated by Tanzania’s location as it has long been part of an important trade network. Coastal communities in east African have had a long and continuous history of maritime interaction with the international community. For centuries, coastal communities have traded with East Asia, the Mediterranean region, and the Persian Gulf with trade links reaching to lands as far as China. Furthermore, the Swahili coast exhibited several thriving cities such as

Mombasa, Malindi and Lamu in Kenya, Kismayu in Somali, Bagamoyo and Kilwa in Tanzania and Sofala in Mozambique. These towns developed extensive maritime links and were gateways for trading networks north to the Mediterranean and Arabian Peninsula and on the east to India and China. Additionally, trade routes existed that connected the coastal area with the hinterland of Africa where traders and mercenaries raided villages (captured slaves) and plundered communities. They collected merchandise that were internationally traded (15)(16)(17). The ingenious inhabitants of the East Africa coast established trading networks with the rest of the world from 500 BC to 1500 AD.

In addition to its trading history, the colonial period further impacted the movement of cultural objects from the region. After 1500, the coast of East Africa entered into a colonial period, which started with the arrival of Portuguese, Arabs and Germans (16)(10)(18). The Germans ruled East African countries (Tanzania, Rwanda & Burundi) until they were defeated in World War I in 1919, then the country was put under the British protectorate (19). Most of East African countries were ruled by Britain until the 1960s, when they gained their independence (18). Nearly all of the exported African cultural relics were taken in fraudulent manner during the colonial period (20). At the time of independence, most of African countries were left with only a few of their cultural treasures since most of their finest works of art showcasing their creativity and skills were plundered and taken away (20). Since then, African institutions and communities seeking the repatriation of plundered and illegally acquired African cultural heritage from the northern hemisphere, with UNESCO promoting an open and inclusive dialogue on the question of return and restitution of cultural heritage (13)(14).

Tanzania still have some remarkable fossil evidence displaying morphological differences of hominin species; trends in technological innovations and diversity of implements made and used by ancient communities over time; the use of symbols to represent ideas and artistic expressions; and utensils representing social networks, mobility, and social hierarchies. But, even in post-colonial Africa, treasure hunters continue to export cultural relics and ethnographic object abroad. These relics must be protected and stay in Tanzania as they represent African ingenuity and are essential due to their uniqueness and their universal cultural and economic values.

The Illicit Trade: An Ongoing Issue

To address with the intensified trading in illicit cultural objects, Tanzania passed the Antiquities Act, Cap 333 in 1964. The Act sets conditions for exporting cultural objects, and describes the nature, scope and meaning of relics and ethnographical objects. Accordingly, **an ethnographical object refers to** “any movable object made, shaped, painted, carved, inscribed or otherwise produced or modified by human agency in Tanzania after the year 1863, for use in any social or cultural activity whether or not it is still being used by any community in Tanzania, but does not include any object made, shaped, painted, carved, inscribed or otherwise produced or modified by human agency in Tanzania for sale as a curio”. **A relic refers to** “Any movable object made, shaped, painted, carved, sculptured, inscribed or otherwise produced or modified by human agency in Tanzania before the year 1863, whether or not it shall have been modified, added to or restored at a later date and includes any human or other vertebrate faunal fossil or botanical fossil or impression, found in Tanzania”. Conferring to Tanzania Antiquities Act, Cap 333 (ss 14-15) relics and ethnographic objects are thus protected by the law as national treasures and are not allowed to be sold in souvenir markets. Therefore, trading of cultural relics and protected objects is prohibited and there is a well-established legal framework to safeguard them. Furthermore, the export of such objects may also be

unlawful according to the UNESCO Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property, which was adopted in 1970, which has been ratified by Tanzania. According to its Article 3: “*The import, export or transfer of ownership of cultural property effected contrary to the provisions adopted under this Convention by the States Parties thereto, shall be illicit.*” (14) (21). In other words, the export archaeological material and other cultural relic for scientific research and education are absolutely prohibited to be sold in the curio markets and/or exported.

Despite initiatives made at the national and international platforms to combat crimes related to the illicit trading of cultural relics, they are still being stolen and exported abroad through coordinated and well-organized trafficking systems (22)(23)(24). In every corner of the globe there are markets that run this illegal trade (25); those markets are also flooding online business platforms (26). Evidence garnered through this study indicate that in some cases people engaged in illegal trading of cultural relics and ethnographic objects collaborate with corrupt government officials who offer them export permits. Unfortunately, some of the export hubs and responsible officers are either less knowledgeable about the nature and scope of trading on prohibited cultural relics or are part of the syndicated illicit trade.

Study Methodology

The investigation which spanned six months was conducted using an undercover agent and key participants, which is one of the most effective methods in criminal investigation(27)(28)(29). The undercover agent was a police officer who joined curio shops and traders at Mwenge market in Dar es Salaam. The agent became part of the traders' network as he thoroughly researched and collected all the basic information about how they acquire, curate, sell and export relics and protected ethnographic objects at the local markets. Some key participants were former illicit traders collecting ethnographic objects in Tanzania and from neighboring countries, who are now retailers selling and exporting a number of African countries including Tanzania, Mauritius, and Morocco. At some point, they were also engaged in exporting curios to Europe, America, and Asia. A total of eight traders participated in this investigation, accepted to disclose details of ethnographic object trafficking schemes on condition of anonymity as law-abiding citizens. These two methods of using key participants and an undercover agent in this study were developed based on a great deal of intelligence and exposure to the tactics used by criminals trading in cultural heritage objects. Documentation of all data collected in the investigation was done using audio recorders, notebooks and photographing objects in the trafficking process or stored in curio shops. This helped to preserve records that were later analyzed by being interpreted and arranged in tables indicating number of identified relics and protected ethnographic objects in the illicit trade market, country of origin, means of acquisition, licence and export permit, lastly provided the results of the investigation. The analysis emphasised on the illicit trade in cultural objects in Tanzania basing o the objectives of the research. Under the Tanzania Ethics Clearance guidelines and Tanzania Police Procedures, these documents are protected and can be provided under special request due to their sensitive nature.

Results

The data gathered revealed a wide range of practical operations employed in acquisition of cultural relics and ethnographic objects used in illicit trading. This includes individuals pretending to be heritage managers (con heritage managers) representing the National Museum engage in collection of ethnographic objects from targeted families and convince them that what they are doing is for the future preservation of the objects at the National Museum. They manage to convince families possessing ethnographic objects to donate them to the museum where they will be preserved as part of their legacy for future generations. These connen establish close relationships with the families by showering them with gifts and enticing them with cash. In return, many members of these families feel pressured to reciprocate as a way of maintaining their friendship with them. Through these insignificant gifts, families find themselves trapped and give away some of their treasured ethnographic objects to these so-called heritage managers.

However, the most common and detrimental activity in illicit cultural heritage trading is treasure hunting. In Tanzania, one of the myths that fuel treasure hunting activities is a quest to recover once hidden German and British colonialists' treasures left behind. German colonialists left the country at the end of the WW1 in 1919 and the subsequent British colonial power left in 1961, when the country gained its independence. Many amateur archaeologists and treasure hunters have applied for Treasure Hunting Licenses with the Director of Antiquities with the aim of recovering hidden German and British treasures left behind after independence. The Antiquities Act of 1964 (amended in 1979) gives exclusive power to the Director of Antiquities to grant individuals with Treasure Hunting permits to people interested in collecting treasures. Routinely, the treasure hunters use the permits given by the Director of Antiquities in the wrong ways. Many use it to buy relics and protected ethnographic objects for commercial use. Indeed, unscrupulous treasure hunters routinely buy ethnographic objects and other cultural relics from the local communities and sell them in the underground economies or curio shops within and outside the country.

In most cases, exporters of cultural relics and protected ethnographic objects within or outside the country tend to use illegal ports to send goods abroad. These traders normally use informal routes that are not regularly inspected by law enforcement and heritage investigation officers. In Tanzania, cultural relics and ethnographic objects are shipped abroad through makeshift ports to Zanzibar, Comoro and Madagascar. From there they are easily smuggled further to the global markets in Mauritius or Morocco and as far away as Europe, Asia and Northern America. Sometimes traders engaged in cultural relic trading, use legalized export permit issued to researchers to carry research material abroad for further laboratory works. Furthermore, certified souvenir agents use woodcarvings, ornaments, adornments, statuettes or figurines to conceal their illicitly trafficking activities. Cunning curio agents and treasure hunters sometimes use legalized export permits or curio licenses for export to sell cultural relics abroad.

In Tanzania, the Tanzania Forest Service Agency (TFS) issue curio licenses to artisans and curio exporters. In most cases, the TFS officers granting curio licenses have limited knowledge of protected ethnographic objects and other cultural relics as spelled out in the Antiquities Act of 1964; a loophole that gives room to dishonest curio agents to conceal their illegal trafficking of protected objects. Furthermore, export clearances issued by the National Arts Council of Tanzania (NACT) to artists, or individuals intending to embark on art-gallery exhibitions abroad have been used to conceal illicit trading of relics and protected objects. Usually, artists travelling aboard for artistic exhibitions are permitted to carry curio-objects for demonstrations. Corrupt people use such opportunities to export ethnographic objects from one country to

another. For example, the investigation found that many ethnographic objects sold at the Mwenge curio market in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania were from other African countries, such as Senegal, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Congo, Zambia, Malawi and Mozambique and that those objects were traded with a using legal curio-license. Cultural relics listed in Table 1 below includes a variety of ethnographic objects, cultural orientations, diverse age estimates, wide range of tool types and extensive subject matter in terms of cultural diversity.

Evidence accumulated through this study indicate that in most cases illicit trading on cultural relics and ethnographic objects are committed through the digital platforms using social media such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and WhatsApp. People engaged in illicit trading communicate with customers interested in ethnographic objects by posting images of items on the market, their values, cultural significances, and place of origins. In some cases, traders in developing countries receive orders of highly valued items in advance from their foreign counterparts or trade-partners from European, American, and Asian countries. Sometimes, foreign illicit traders access the local markets as tourists. While in Africa, they place the list of items in high demand online and leave their contacts to local traders. Once the listed items have been acquired, preparation for transaction and transportation are organized. Various means of transportation and exportation are used, including marine shipping, use of cunning curio agents, and dishonest art exhibitors and other fraudulent entities at Mwenge curio market that acts as the export center to send ethnographic objects abroad (Figure 1).

Table 1: Some Relics or Protected Objects Sold at the Curio-Market at Mwenge in Dar Es Salaam, Tanzania

Number of identified ethnographic objects	Country of origin	Means of acquisition	Exporting techniques from place of origin
64	Tanzania	Erroneously donated to dishonest people who claimed to be curators from the National Museum of Tanzania.	Brought to the curio market through illegal trafficking people claiming to be patrons of the National Museum of Tanzania
159		Illegally purchased from rural area by treasure hunters using the Antiquity Treasure Hunting Exploration Permits.	Brought to the curio market through illegal trafficking using Treasure Hunting Exploration Permits and Export Clearance from the TFS.
42		Objects given as a symbol of friendship to illicit traders masquerading as good friends of the families possessing the cultural artifacts.	Brought to the curio market through illegal trafficking using Export Clearance from the NACT and TFS.
103	Congo	Illegally purchased from rural area by treasure hunters and agents for curio objects.	Inexplicable transportation from country of origin to the curio market in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania.
87	Mozambique		
14	Cameroon		
9	Senegal		
3	Central Africa		
5	Malawi		
2	Zambia,		

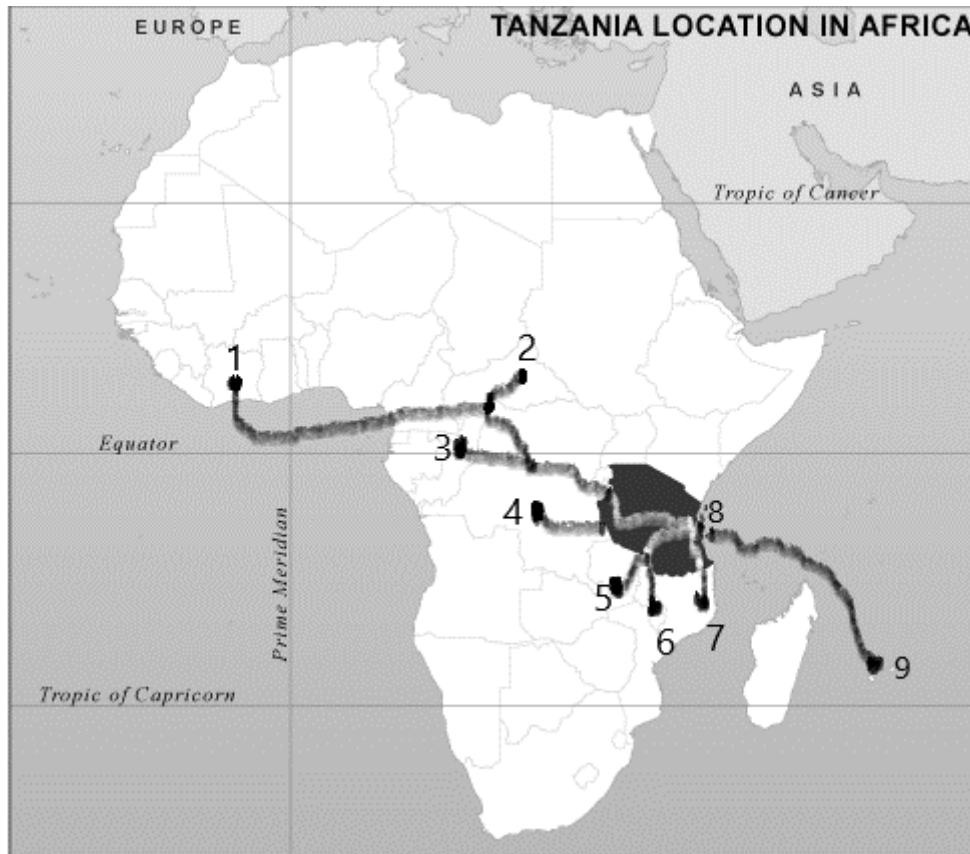


Figure 1: A map of Africa showing illicit trafficking routes of ethnographic objects from country of origin to the curio market at Mwenge in Dar es salaam, Tanzania and then Mauritius

Legend: 1. Senegal; 2. Côte d'Ivoire; 3. Central Africa; 4. Democratic Republic of Congo; 5. Zambia; 6. Malawi; 7. Mozambique; 8. Tanzania; 9. Mauritius

Discussion

It is widely acknowledged that most of African heritage legislations are primarily amendments of the grandfathered colonial laws (20) (30). Colonial legislations were created to protect the minority rulers in Africa while providing them with loopholes that allowed them to plunder and amass resources which they were able to export back to Europe. Resources such as trophies and cultural relics were part of the goods that the colonists exported out of Africa to Europe. Some of the best examples of such plundering of Africa's cultural heritage can be seen in museums such as the Royal African Museum ethnographic collection in Tervuren in Belgium, the collection at the Frobenius Institute in Frankfurt and the Ethnologisches Museum (Staatliche's Museum Zu Berlin) in Berlin Germany, just to name a few. Colonialists imposed authoritarian heritage legislations restricting indigenous people from accessing their sacred and ritual spaces that served their religious interests (31).

In addition, a set of beliefs and principles taught by western churches subjugated Africans from their own culture; they neither incorporated indigenous knowledge connected to traditional cultural relics nor encouraged local people to play a role in heritage management of their own cultural history, other cultural norms, and values (32). Over an extended period, western religious doctrines and heritage laws deprived

people from recognizing and respecting their own culture (8)(32). The disconnect of contemporary African communities from their traditional customs and norms created a gap in cultural knowledge. Lack of coherent ideas to conceptualize daily life with the inherited cultural heritage resulted in the devaluation of such materials. Therefore, ethnographic objects are consequential, and they deserve higher considerations. Adhering to the right code of behaviours that are acceptable, will place relics and protected objects at a high priority and will ensure that they are not sold illegally as curio in souvenir markets.

Accordingly, illicit traders smuggling relics and protected objects from rural areas to curio markets in cities, are aware of the processes and have ceased their moral obligations as members of the community and encourage people in rural areas to take part in illicit trade instead of helping to protect cultural relics. Fraudulent individuals use illiteracy and misinformation on local community members to collect and sell relics and protected objects the expenses of cultural heritage.

In Tanzania, people engaged in treasure hunting activities have been blamed not only for being involved in illicit trading of ethnographic objects but also for vandalizing archaeological sites (33)(34)(32). Most treasure hunters are not professional archaeologists or heritage experts, they normally associate archaeological remains, inscriptions, and painting in rock-shelters with colonial treasures; as a result, many rock-shelters with rock art paintings have been vandalized and illegally excavated in various places in Tanzania. Such archaeological places include Kondoa in Dodoma, Singida, Iringa, and Manyara just to mention a few (34) (8). The Department of Antiquities (DoA) has been asked to stop granting the Treasure Hunting Licenses for sustainable conservation of archaeological sites and other cultural relics(33) (35). However, the DoA has so far not been able to stop the treasure hunting license granting process due to legislative and financial reasons.

In Tanzania most of curio wood products are commonly made from African blackwood, especially, granadilla or *mpingo* (*Dalbergia melanoxylon*), which is a widely harvested and traded Blackwood tree species (36)(37). As long as most of ethnographic objects traded in curio-markets are wooden products, the transaction is officially negotiated through the Tanzania Forest Services (TFS) and National Arts Council of Tanzania NACT principles (38). Curio-traders dealing with wood products are subject to the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) of 1979. And since 2017, African blackwood has been added to CITES, which means it is now considered endangered and that any trade in the wood must be controlled and certified. While the TFS is concerned with the pace in which trees are being harvested and the debt owed by people engaged in curio products and service, TFS officers are less informed about the cultural value of the objects sold abroad under their permission. Through the conversation between researchers and official from the TFS, it was revealed that many officers are unaware of the risk they are posing through the authorization of export permits of relics and protected objects to dishonest people with trading licenses of ethnographic objects and other cultural products. Even security officers at export ports such as airports and seaports lack basic knowledge that will allow them to distinguish protected objects from curio-products (20). In other hands, protected objects that are not wood products such as materials made from ceramic, metal, stone, bone, horns and animal skin lack important export control protocol, due to the lack best practices and sound heritage management guidelines.

Cultural relics and protected objects, i.e. pre 1940 ethnographic objects (or those that have been given a protected status by ministerial decree) are protected under the Antiquities Act of 1964, as amended by the Act No.22 of 1979. People claiming to be patrons of the National Museum who travel across the country

to collect ethnographic objects intentionally commit criminal offences, which constitute a serious offence under the Tanzanian Criminal Procedure (Act Cap 16 of 2019). The Act prohibits the use of concealed behavior or false information to obtain royalty or acquire objects. The Criminal Procedure (Act of 2019 Code 16) states that *“Any person who by any false pretense and with intent to defraud, obtain from any other person anything capable of being stolen or induce any other person to deliver to any person anything capable of being stolen, is guilty of an offence and is liable to imprisonment for seven years”*. Therefore, traders engaging in illegal trade, should be penalized and their licenses revoked because of their immoral behaviors and fraudulent acts for selling cultural objects which are protected under the law. Such individuals have committed the offense of obtaining business licenses and registration through fraudulent and false pretense in violation of the Business Licensing Act No. 2 of 1972 as defined within the penal code Cap 16 R.E.2019 s.309; *‘Any person who willfully procures or attempts to procure for himself or any other person any registration license or certificate under any law by any false pretense is guilty of an offence, and is liable to imprisonment for two years’*. Those who receive and trade in stolen ethnographic objects from neighboring countries should be arraigned for receiving and storing stolen items in violation of the provisions of the Business Licensing Acts No. 2 of 1972 and the Administration of Justice (Miscellaneous Amendments) Acts No.26 of 1971 s. 5; 14 of 1980 s. 14 Cap. 20, regarding illicit trading of ethnographic objects in the Antiquities (amendment) Act No. 22 of 1979 s. 9 revised from the Antiquities Act of 1964. Penal code Cap 16 R.E.2019 s.313 states that *‘Every person who, without lawful excuse, knowing anything to have been stolen or obtained in any way whatsoever under such circumstances that if the act had been committed in Mainland Tanzania the person committing it would have been guilty of an offence, receives or has in his possession of anything stolen or obtained outside Mainland Tanzania, is guilty of an offence and is liable to imprisonment for seven years’*. Of course, it is a criminal offence without excuse to any person who either unknowing or knowingly steals or obtains stolen items. Criminals deceive people and take advantages of their ignorance particularly in rural communities; they use such methods to obtain cultural relics by offering token amount of money and other gifts.

Conclusion

The leading challenges on illicit trade of relics and protected objects emerge from the lack of awareness among the local communities about the cultural and economic significance of cultural relics and ethnographic objects. Some law enforcement departments such as Immigration and Police departments are less informed about the universal values of the cultural products they allow to be exported. There is thus an urgency to provide proper training because curbing such trade will require a lot of effort and skills needed in differentiating relics and ethnographic objects made before and after 1863 which are all sold as souvenirs in curios catering for the tourism industry.

Again, the lopsided partnership between law enforcement departments and public cultural heritage institutions such as National Museum and the Antiquities Department was identified as obstacles hindering progresses in dealing with illicit trading of ethnographic object and other cultural relics. The lack of formal collaboration extends to the local government divisions, and most of cultural officers at the Local Government Departments and at the region and district level are also less informed about the universal values of cultural heritage resources and ethnographic objects located in their regions. People need to be informed about efficient and effective processes in the conservation and effective use of ethnographic objects in a sustainable manner through public education and community-based enforcement and cultural

tourism as means of eradicating ignorance and poverty. In other ways, the public needs to be informed on the best ways to maximize benefits while minimizing negative social, cultural, economic impact that may arise from unauthorized and illegal sell of cultural relics. Local and international heritage institutions are encouraged to increase the visibility of cultural heritage resources and provide moral or intellectual benefits to local people in order to minimize negative impacts arising from illicit trading on cultural relics and ethnographic objects. These goals can be achieved by directly incentivizing tourism, developing outreach programs and local communities collaborating with research institutions, and providing access to investments in cultural services, and community wellbeing through tourism.

Recommendations

In order to address the challenge of trafficking cultural object illegally as evidenced in the study reported here, it is necessary to do the following.

- Abolishing the issuance of Treasure hunting licenses by the DoA due to the fact that the permits have been misused. Many treasure hunters use them to vandalize archeological sites and collect cultural objects in violation of the antiquity laws.
- The regulatory authorities issuing certificates for the export of curio-objects should work in collaboration with heritage managers. These authorities include (but are not limited to) the TFS, NACT, the National Museum of Tanzania, and the Antiquities Department. Their collaboration strategies should be strengthened, and at some point, the TFS and NACT should be encouraged to employ and consult archaeologists and Cultural Heritage officers in the assessment of curio objects before they are certified as curio-products.
- The Director of the Department of Antiquity should effectively supervise cultural heritage activities undertaken across the country as well as all archaeological research conducted in the country. Researchers requesting export permits must abide with the agreements and return artefacts within the granted time frame.
- The Department of Antiquities and the National Museum should establish a Heritage Security Unit (HSU). The unit could function as a platform and a commanding post deploying cultural heritage experts and detectives in curio shops, shipping hubs and ports. Such security Units will serve as a special task force to control the illegal trade of cultural relics and protected objects from within and outside the country. The HSU should also be used as a platform to search and seizure all cultural objects subjected to illicit trade.
- Heritage institutions and other stakeholders should team-up and work in a collaborative manner to improve awareness among local communities and Local Government officials at various levels (villages, wards, districts, and regions) as well as other public institutions such as TFS, Police and Immigration, Marine Ports Authorities, and Airport Customs Officers. Cooperation and awareness-raising among public officers is required to curb the illicit trafficking in cultural heritage.
- Public heritage institutions should collaborate with Interpol and an on-line patrol should be established to identify ethnographic objects from Tanzania located in various markets around the world. This will help to identify stolen Tanzanian antiquities and the alleged perpetrators and gather more evidence about the illegal trade, conspiracy and modus operandi (INTERPOL 2021).
- African countries should initiate repatriation processes in the countries with ethnographic objects from Tanzania that may have been taken illegally, including colonial-era collections taken without consent

from the public or African governments. This will clearly show our firm position in protecting our heritage.

- Heritage institutions, patrons interested with the sustainability of cultural heritage should establish a forum for exchanging of ideas and discussion regarding ensuing challenges and makes sound recommendations in combatting unlawfully conducts and making the conservation of cultural heritage assets more sustainable.

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