

The Impact of Military Strategies during the Maji Maji War on Non Combatants: Women and Children in Songea District

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ABSTRACT

Throughout human history, war and military tactics have been a constant. The establishment of the colonial rule in Africa produced a number of wars that impacted on both combatants and noncombatants. This study examines the military strategies during the Maji Maji War and its impacts on non-combatants especially women and children in Songea District. It also examines the survival strategies during and soon after the war. Three theories served as the foundation for the study: the just war theory, the just and unjust war theory, and the empathic war fighting theory. Both primary and secondary sources were employed in the investigation. Oral accounts and archive sources served as the primary data sources while secondary sources were obtained from books and journal articles. The triangulation of several sources of data collection is aimed to decrease the subjectivity and exaggerations. Songea District was chosen for the study because it had a long history of violent conflict. The results exposed a number of problems with both German and Ngoni military tactics. At first, the Germans sought vengeance in the mistaken belief that they could quickly suppress the opposition. The Ngoni used their conventional military tactics to contain the Germans. Finally, the Germans employed the most devastating military tactic “scorched earth policy”, by setting villages on fire. Burning of shelters and food supplies led to starvation and numerous fatalities. In order to maintain their food, health, and security, women and children gathered food and conventional medicine covertly at night out of dread of the German militias.

Keywords: Maji Maji War, Military Strategy, Combatants, Non Combatants, Women, Children.

Introduction

A robust military approach was used to impose colonial rule on Africa, and Tanganyika in particular. Africans were not simply passive victims, despite what colonial rulers and historians said. To protect their rank and authority from colonial rule, they put up a lot of resistance. One of these African endeavours was the Maji Maji War, which took place between 1905 and 1907 in the southern region of Tanganyika, now Tanzania. The African uprising against colonial rule during the Maji Maji War caught the German colonial government off guard in the first decade of the 20th century. Iliffe (1979) asserted that, Men in Nandete organized to uproot cotton trees in June 1905 in order to declare war on the Germans. The *Maji* “water” treatment that Kinjikitile Ngwale provided greatly helped the Africans’ confidence in battle. Everyone who drank water would not be wounded by German bullets, according to the war’s guiding doctrine. Similar to this, it was stressed that the Germans’ bullets would turn to water during the intense conflict. One month after it began, the fighting from Nandete had expanded to Ungoni (Songea District). When Omari Kinjala delivered the *Maji* medication to the area, this took place. Although it was difficult to be accepted, Kinjala convinced Mkomanilea female *Nduna* (sub-chief) of the Ngoni and finally he managed to introduce the medicine (*Ibid*). Although its validation cannot be easily acknowledged, water played a critical role towards organization of the fighters as it provided moral support.

Throughout human history, military tactics and combat conduct have posed a menace. Elshtain (1992), Allhoff et al., (2013), Orend, (2013), Lango, (2014), Farrell, (2013) and Sjoberg, (2006) noted that, in order to prevent genocides, particularly against civilians, the use of restrictive military tactics has been promoted. Non-combatants participate in conflicts to aid in winning. Blahuta(2013) made the hypothesis that during times of war, civilians engage in economic activity. As an illustration, non-soldiers engage in agricultural work to feed combatants. Non-combatants are impacted either directly or circuitously as conflicts escalate. The goal of this study is to evaluate how non-combatants, such as women and children, were impacted by the Maji Maji War.

Dinstein, (2022), Henckaerts and Doswald-Beck, (2005), Tienfenbrun, (2010), Falk, (2015), Hutler, (2015), and Arai, (2009) postulated that globally, diverse tactics used in conflict have been primarily associated with violent obliterations. Scorched earth policy was utilized as a military tactic to defeat the opponents. Even while international law and the ethics of war discourage the deployment of such war tactics that harm non-combatants, there have been instances where such defenseless victims have been impacted. For instance, Hulter(2015) has pointed out that the scorched earth policy has been employed as a military tactic to win the conflict, particularly for the protection of national territory against invasion.

In a similar vein, Mwakikagile (2000) and Fitzpatrick (2010) investigated how non-combatants were impacted by the Germans' scorched earth tactics during the Maji Maji War. In areas where rebel tribes lived, Mwakikagile noted that "the Germans initiated an arson campaign and burned down the entire communities and destroyed harvests. The majority of their livestock was also lost." Fitzpatrick further claimed that Germans employed the "scorched earth" policy, which involved setting grain silos and fields on fire in numerous villages. The social structures that were founded on the community system and heavily dependent on the production of grain crops were impacted by this kind of damage.

Gwasa, (2005), Iliffe, (2007), Koponeni, (1994), and Stollowsky and East, (1988) have focused on its general causes and structure of the Maji Maji war, from Matumbiland expanding to other regions of southern Tanganyika to *Ungoni*. The *maji* ideology that governed the war from its inception till its eruption has received attention from other academics. However, some researchers have focused on the general effects of the War, such as starvation and population decline. Few academics have explored Mkomanile, a female *Nduna* of Mshope who weds Kinjala, a significant War figure. Mapunda, (2010) noted that Namabengo is a female leader of the Ngoni, according to a small number of scholars. Little research has been done on the military tactics used by the Germans and the Ngoni during the War, as well as how these tactics affected civilians.

Statement of the Research Problem

The reasons, conduct, and outcomes of the Maji Maji War have drawn the attention of numerous academics. The study of military tactics used during battle and their effects on non-combatants has received little attention. Additionally, only a small number of academics have examined the War from a local perspective, particularly its effects on women and children who were among the most vulnerable. There is obviously a lack of knowledge regarding the military tactics used throughout the conflict and how they affected Songea District's non-combatants. The purpose of this study was to fill this gap. It evaluated military tactics used during the Maji Maji War and their effects on civilians, particularly women and children. Additionally, it evaluated how the war had an effect on local human security.

The Ngoni Military Strategies during the Maji Maji War.

The Ngoni employed traditional military strategies throughout the Maji Maji War. Since there was no modern army, the chief and *Anduna* served as the military commandants, and they were founded on the chieftdom system. According to Adam (2007), the immediately trained soldiers employed tried-and-true combat techniques like ambushes, raids, camouflage, and field craft. The chiefs were in charge of preparing those subjects for the fight. The benefit of Ngoni ethnic group was that they lived in a way that was reminiscent of conquest-related warfare. They were terrible to the Songean people because of the war discipline they upheld throughout their lives.

The Ngoni soldiers adopted guerilla and ambush tactics as their main methods of attack once they arrived in Songea. When they found it difficult to prevail in a pitched fight, they opted to use ambush and guerilla tactics. It should be kept in mind that although the *maji* medicine offered emotional support, the combatants were actually wounded by the gunshots. Highlands and stones that were employed as hiding places after they lost the pitched fight assisted the ambush strategy. The Maji Maji fighters did not have regular camps for military formations, in contrast to the current military defense forces. As a result, administrative leaders rather than trained military commanders issued the instructions or commands for the wars. There were a few places that were temporarily

designated as camping hubs, including *Lumecha*, *Chandamali*, *Mleta*, and *Namabengo*.

Other highly technical tactics employed by Maji Maji militants included customary signs that were difficult for Germans to decipher. For instance, they organized the fighters using the traditional song called *ligiu*. Other indications included the usage of regional terms like *gwazai*, which means “fire,” to synchronize the fighters and start the war. The Maji Maji fighters upheld discipline towards their leaders, who served as military commanders, in accordance with current military doctrine. Despite using conventional weaponry, the Germans had trouble suppressing the fighters because they were so compliant.

The bull-and-horns formation was another military tactic the Ngoni utilized to assault the German troops. This arrangement was made up of one troop on each side acting as the horns and several troops crowded closely together in the center, or head. The horns were highly developed, enclosing the enemy and trapping everyone inside. When the Germans tried to capture Chief Songea, he repeatedly employed this tactic to trap their soldiers. His mountaintop home provided him the primary ability to spot threats. The leader arranged his forces in a bull-and-horns configuration to trap them before they invaded him. The Germans had been disturbed by this military tactic for a long time. Germans’ rage over the incident increased, and they began formulating new, disastrous military plans as a result. According to Lesesne, (2014), Beck, (2000), Kamulu, (2007) and Mazrui, (1977) this military tactic was also known as the “V” formation approach when attacking the adversaries.

The Ngoni did not readily embrace the concept’s feasibility when it arrived in the Songea district. Omari Kinjala decided to persuade Mkomani, a female *Nduna* of Mshope, after sending the medication to the area. It was done with the purpose to win support and sway a powerful figure who could persuade the chief and other *Anduna*. Despite some resistance from Chabumba and Mputa himself, Kinjala was successful in his methods. Chabumba and Mputa pushed for studies to back up the efficacy of the drug. When the medication was originally tested on a dog, it was unsuccessful. As directed by Kinjala, this was

done as a means of understanding the power of water. For the purpose of good organization, most of the Ngoni drank the water.

The Ngoni warriors would gather at night after consuming the drug and would typically engage in guerilla warfare and ambushes. For instance, *Nduna* Songea planned the day's activities for his group during the evening at his camp in the Chandamali Hills. After ingesting the *maji* medication, the Maji Maji warriors acquired the morality of battle. Anyone who refused to take the *maji* medicine was viewed as a traitor and refused to work with the group. Those who chose not to take the medication and instead enlisted in the military frequently displayed specific military inconsistencies. Ebner (2009), for instance, has discussed the case of Putire Gama, who refused to take the medication because he was engaged in a military fight with Mharure. In a same vein, Yao leader Mataka resisted joining the Ngoni because of his previous military clashes with *Nduna* Songea. It should be kept in mind that many other ethnic groups were attacked by and fought with the Ngoni throughout their time of migration in Songea. They overcame and raided the Yao, among others, and chief Mataka fled and made his home beside the Ruvuma River in the southern section of Songea. The Yao then took the decision to work as reliable porters in the Arabs' trade. *Nduna* Songea penned a letter during the war asking for his assistance. Due to their earlier contradictions, Mataka did not consent to join, though.

The Germans' Military Strategy during the Maji Maji War in Songea District

War was a factor in the establishment of German rule, particularly in Tanganyika and Songea. This was because the new rule, which altered nearly all traditional patterns of life, was not welcomed by Africans. Since they initially set up shop along German East Africa's coast, the Germans had encountered fierce resistance. For instance, Abushir bin Salim of Pangani reacted aggressively on the battlefield beginning in 1888 against the Germans' rule. Abushir and other Arabs started the conflict, which was later expanded to include many Africans, particularly those living in Tanganyika's coastline regions. Briggs, (2006) emphasized that when Abushir's men broke into the German mission in Dar es Salaam in November 1888 and murdered three priests, things got worse. When Kaiser's troops assaulted Abushir's army in April of the following

year, they exacted revenge for this military tactic by compelling him to submit. After the Germans overpowered Abushir's army, they chose to hang him in Pangani. German military tactics were limited and focused on fighters, particularly their leaders.

The strength of the Hehe under the able leadership of Mkwawa, who fought their regime in September 1891, also astounded the Germans. The Germans were worried by the conflict since it was challenging to simply subdue the African warriors. The conflict continued until 1894, when the Germans finally subdued the African rebels and took control of Kalenga *Boma*, the capital of Mkwawa. According to Lowry (2015), guerilla movements persisted up to 1898. Both sides' warriors lost a number of lives. Peers (2012), for instance, asserted that up to 1894, around 250 German *Askaris*, 100 porters and 260 Hehe warriors perished. The Germans fought valiantly the entire time of the conflict to seize Mkwawa. Jonassohn, (1998) evidenced that due to the fact that Mkwawa already had Arab-made weapons at the time, its struggle against the Germans was successful. During the battle, civilians were not substantially targeted. The limited approach, the just war doctrine, continued to be the cornerstone of German military policy.

Isike organized the Nyamwezi to battle the Germans in the central plateau. (Peers, 2012) affirmed that when the Germans were able to subdue the Nyamwezi warriors and arrest their leader, the fighting became serious between 1892 and 1893. Likewise, between 1891 and 1893, Mangi Meli organized the Chaga to fight against the German colonial government in Tanganyika's northern region. The Germans also put an end to the conflict by capturing its instigator. The capture of African leaders as a means of putting a stop to the hostilities has been explained by many researchers who have dealt with African primary initiatives against German colonial rule.

The Germans employed their common military strategy, which comprised capturing and hanging war leaders during the Maji Maji War. When the Matumbiland War broke out, the German colonial power focused on putting an end to it by exclusively capturing African commanders and warriors. They did not consider injuring non-combatants because they were confident they would quickly put an end to the war, which they referred to as a rebellion. They mentioned how they had been

able to subdue, capture, and ultimately hang the leaders of earlier uprisings. Because Abushir bin Salim of Pangani and Mkwawa of Iringa were arrested and executed, the German colonial government found it very easy to utilize the same military tactic to defeat the Maji Maji soldiers.

The Germans fought valiantly early on in the Maji Maji War to put down and execute those who were thought to be plotting uprisings. For instance, the Germans subdued the individuals who had destroyed the cotton trees at Nandete by capturing their commanders. Similar to this, they captured and killed the accused attackers of Bishop Kassian Spiss, such as Abdallah Chiami, in an effort to put an end to the war. Roupp, (2015) and Lipschutz and Rasmussen, (1986) revealed that, just one month after men in Nandete declared war on the Germans, Kinjikitile Ngwale was attacked and killed on August 4th, 1905. This might be seen as the Germans' initial military plan to assure the continuation of their rule in Africa. After killing the leaders, they reasoned that African soldiers wouldn't band together on their own to start fighting.

Similar to this military tactic, the Germans believed in taking revenge and engaging African warriors directly in combat. The Germans killed several Africans on the battlefields through such retaliations. However, due to the nature of the combat weaponry they employed, the retaliations were more destructive. They would not treat the guns they used in the same manner as traditional weapons like *chinjenje*, *chibonga*, bows, and arrows. The Germans murdered numerous African soldiers who were attempting to reclaim their lost strength as an act of vengeance. For instance, according to Asante (2018), the Germans murdered almost 75,000 people as retaliation for African Maji Maji fighters. As a result, the majority found the Germans' military tactics—including the capture and execution of leaders—to be traumatizing.

In the Songea district, the Germans began by making efforts to force the Ngoni to submit at the outset of the war. To prevent the majority from joining the conflict, they imposed onerous conditions on them. According to Adam, (2007), the inciters and witchdoctors were obliged to stop engaging in war-related matters by German colonial administration. At the outset of the conflict, the German colonial power compelled the Ngoni to surrender all of their military traditional

weaponry, including bows and arrows. This was part of an ideologically motivated campaign to terrorize the Ngoni. The Germans claimed that Africans' use of military weaponry was too archaic to compete with modern armaments (fire arms). However, the Songea district Maji Maji fighters did not surrender, which gave the war more momentum. The situation deteriorated when the Ngoni who surrendered and turned in their combat weapons were penalized. They were required to pay three rupees, which made them feel compelled to perform low-wage labour in exchange for payment. The Ngoni were made to perform labor-intensive fort building tasks. The cruel deeds fueled the Ngoni's already-raging rage. The Ngoni organized to conduct a full-scale war against the Germans in response to such horrific events.

The next German military plan was to capture and exact retribution on the Ngoni commanders, particularly those who had been in the forefront during the War's early stages and later stages. Richter, the German District Commissioner (DC), initially made an effort to persuade Chabruma not to join the conflict. Chabruma refused, therefore the DC took vengeance and led a conflict with Chabruma that was meant to put an end to the conflict. Ebner, (2009) said that in that incident, 200 or so warriors perished. Because of the chief Songea's repeated invasion attempts, the Boma's defense was also strengthened.

Songea experienced worse conditions than other locations, even when compared to earlier resistance wars. This was partially a result of the Ngoni's military prowess and confidence during the conflict. In order to lessen the tension, the Germans asked Iringa and the western region of German East Africa for more *Askaris*. Due to their effective military organization, the Ngoni resisted such German military intentions and instead remained steadfast. The Germans established a makeshift jail close to the Songea *Boma* to detain the leaders of the Maji Maji in order to carry out their military plan. The Maji Maji commanders were jailed and hanged as part of the plan's serious implementation in late 1905 and early 1906.

According to both recorded and oral accounts, the Maji Maji War continued even after the leaders were hanged. The Ngoni were still engaging in guerilla warfare, which astonished the Germans. They came to the conclusion that the fighting would not end since the civilians

were still giving the Maji Maji soldiers food. By burning crops that would produce harvest and setting villages on fire, they implemented the scorched earth doctrine. Zita Mapunda claims that the Germans attacked Maposeni hamlet and burned down crops in order to persuade the Maji Maji fighters to submit and stop the conflict. The scorched earth policy affected non-combatants directly and indirectly, and it heightened animosity between Germans and Africans. Numerous non-combatants perished as a result of the region's fragile starvation caused by the scorched earth strategy. From there, the conflict was fought using both fair and unjust philosophies of war in a disastrous manner. This paints a picture of how a conflict may begin just and finish unjust for no other reason than the desire to win the game. Based on the type and strength of the adversaries, military strategy would alter during the course of the conflict

Impacts of the Germans' War and Military Strategy on Non-combatants

Any war's effects on warriors who fight on the front lines may be easily and clearly seen. The combatants are engaged in direct conflict with their opponents, they die and suffer injuries right away. When attempting to evaluate how conflicts affect people who do not take part in the fighting directly, things turn out differently. Non-combatants are actually the most at risk in wars in a number of ways. One, war tactics like the "scorched earth" doctrine directly affect non-combatants. Burning villages, crops, and even cattle as part of the scorched earth doctrine has a negative impact on both fighters and non-combatants due to the ensuing starvation and horrible burns. The second is that non-combatants are impacted by the act of capturing and hanging military leaders because and as they lose their allies they are subjected to psychological suffering.

A severe famine was caused by the Germans' scorched-earth strategy during the Maji Maji War. Makong'o & Muchanga, (2006) revealed that this cruel military tactic resulted in a food crisis in the Songea district because it involved burning livestock and crops. German colonial rulers designed this cruel war plan with the intention of severing the support chain between soldiers and non-combatants. Boemeke et al., (1999) provided explanations for how hunger caused deaths from

malnutrition and other causes. For instance, Gwasa (2005) asserted that approximately 300,000 people who died during the war from famine was a result of the Germans' scorched earth tactics. Because they were unable to find food for themselves, women and children suffered the most as a result of the war. At this point, battle became unfair and was unable to uphold the rights of noncombatants.

To acquire food for their children and elders, many women were forced to relocate to the Umatengo and Nyasa areas. Paul Fusi Ngerengere claimed that the Nyasa were skilled at producing crops and fish that could fetch high prices. This process of going to Umatengo and Nyasa to get food presented two concerns that can be viewed as major obstacles. The distance between Songea and Umatengo and Nyasa was the first problem, as there was no modern transportation options. Can we fill the experience of ladies who travelled for a week carrying food on their heads? What about kids who stayed at home? According to Sophia Hemisa Haule, the Songea district experienced hunger for more than two years as a result of the scorched earth strategy. Women, children, and the elderly died from malnutrition. Ebner (2009) argued that Umatengo and Nyasa's successful harvest in 1906 was extremely fortunate.

The second problem with purchasing food from Umatengo and Nyasa that requires careful consideration is related to costs. The fathers who had provided the families with financial assistance had already passed away. How would single-parent families get the money needed to buy food? Due to the severe food crisis, Ebner (2009) noted that the Matengo and Nyasa sold their food for a high price. He stated, for example, that a load of mtama that was sold for half a rupee prior to the war was now sold for six rupees. Instead, relying on their spouses, women suddenly became responsible for finding money to buy meals. According to Sophia HemisaHaule, women assumed the role of men in order to provide sustenance for their children and elderly relatives.

Another calamity brought about by the Germans' military tactics was the development of illness. Diseases spread more quickly in Songea area as a result of mass killings committed during clashes and mass fatalities brought on by starvation. For instance, according to Sadock (2010) smallpox, dysentery, and jiggers all broke out in south-eastern

Tanganyika both during and immediately after the conflict. He underlined that the presence of unburied bodies produced an environment that was conducive to sickness. Non-combatants who had been starved, particularly women and children, were unable to bury the dead. In actuality, non-combatants who fought to defend their survival ship were afflicted by these ailments. According to Joyce Njovu, (2016) ailments that were made easier by the war caused mothers and children to suffer and pass away from them. With such justifications, the genocides brought on by the conflict were not the result of face-to-face battle but rather of diseases that afflicted non-combatants.

Another impact of the war was that, noncombatants were distressed by both the scorched earth strategy and the execution of Maji Maji leaders. It has been highlighted that during the battle, all forms of torture, including the hanging of Maji Maji leaders, were carried out in full view of women, children, and elders. That was done on purpose by the Germans to repress Africans. The psychological effects of seeing their husbands and fathers hanged before them devastated were felt by the women and children. The little son of *Nduna* Songea Mbano, as reported by Yasini Yusuph Mbano, was upset when he saw his father, and his brother, Tamatama Mbano, being hanged in front of him. He even found it impossible to stay in Songea and made the decision to go to Matimila, where the majority of Ngoni were residing. The new heads of households, women and children, were concerned by the scorched earth policy that destroyed food since there was a severe food shortage. The families would have experienced it slightly differently if it had been brought on by natural disasters.

People were seriously displaced as a result of the Germans' military and combat methods during the War, particularly women and children. The populace was uprooted both within and between the borders. The Songea Mbano generation was relocated to Matimila, 33 kilometres away from the present-day Songea town. There are still quite a few Songea Mbano descendants in the area today. According to the traditional history, Ali Songea Mbano, the *Nduna's* little son, was freed when *Nduna* Songea Mbano bin Luwafu and his son Tamatama Mbano were hanged. Observing the Germans nearby made it difficult for the little kid to stay in the area. To avoid having to deal with the Germans frequently, he made the decision to build a new town at Matimila.

Other Ngoni ancestors were uprooted and relocated to various parts of the Ruvuma region. Some settled in Umatengo, while others chose to live along Lake Nyasa. Some women and children lingered in Umatengo and Nyasa throughout the food search to address the starvation issue brought on by the Germans' scorched earth strategy because they found it challenging to travel back to Songea. Some of them blended with the local ethnic communities. It should be remembered that the Ngoni were forced to flee and their culture dispersed as a result of the Germans' military tactics during the Maji Maji War. The Ngoni did not have this inclination prior to the war, which is why they mingled with other ethnic groups. The Ngoni preferred to rule over some areas and subjugate other ethnic groups.

Some Ngoni were uprooted even outside of the Ruvuma region. German colonial rule drove some Ngoni to leave Songea as retribution for aiding the Maji Maji warriors. For example, the Maji Maji leaders' sons who were perceived to be supporting the warriors were bound with a rope and transported to distant Bagamoyo and Tanga to work in sisal plantations. The moved Ngoni groups suffered humiliation and bad treatment along the way. The *Askaris* who accompanied such routes allegedly committed acts of violence against the civilians according to oral accounts. Women and children who were now in charge of their families at the new location lost their position of authority and were rendered defenseless against other ethnic groups.

In a similar vein, several Ngoni children were forcibly transferred across the border and relocated far away. This emigration was combined with that of the Maji Maji leaders, including Chabruma, who is rumoured to have fled to Mozambique. The Germans made an effort to track him down, but they were unsuccessful. Sangwene Songea Mbano, the son of Songea Mbano bin Luwafu, who fled to Mozambique, is the subject of interest in this study. The son never returned to Songea; instead, he fell ill and passed away in Mozambique. About the family of Songea Mbano's exiled son, nothing else is known. Other descendants created chiefdoms in Nyasaland (Malawi). The displaced Ngoni in Malawi, according to chief Mutali, have banded together and adhered to Ngoni customs. However, they recall significant things that their forefathers accomplished in Songea during the Maji Maji War. Chief Mutali and Nkosi ya Makosi (*Nduna*) Mberwa, from Malawi, attended

the Maji Maji remembrances in Songea on February 27, 2016, as evidence.

Survival Strategies of Women and Children during and after the War

The community structure practiced by African societies was impacted by the arrival of capitalism, which was based on a cash economy. African societies fought back against the imposed capitalism form of government and business in a number of different locations. The capitalist economy overtook other economic systems in African nations using both ideological and repressive instruments. The Germans altered the communally based administrative and economic structures, particularly in the Songea district. The Germans' destruction of farms and communities during the Maji Maji War caused hardship for the populace, particularly for women and children. The communally oriented communities underwent a radically new way of life after the leaders of the Maji Maji were hanged. Women and kids had a hard time coming up with answers or coping mechanisms.

Some of the crops that were still in the farms when the war started were gathered by women and children. Sophia Hemisa Haule claimed that while their fathers and husbands were at battle, women and little children surreptitiously harvested food in the farms. She went on to say that women and children were subjected to torture during the war because they occasionally gathered such food during the night out of dread of the ruthless Germans. Women and children were under great strain due to German's deadly and advanced weapons, making it impossible for them to harvest products from the farms throughout the day. For instance, women and children sheltered in the *Livanganjai* caverns when the Maji Maji War broke out at Peramiho. They went into the farms covertly in the late afternoon and occasionally into the early hours of the morning to gather food that would keep them alive in caverns.

How food was maintained in the caves is a crucial subject. Since there were few opportunities to gather food throughout the conflict, food preservation was crucial. Additionally, they stored food that would keep adults and children alive for a few days until they had another

chance to gather food. According to the oral history, food preservation was done locally and technically, and this practice was passed down from their local leaders. Food was kept fresh for a long time in conventional clay soil pots that were then sealed beneath. They preserved food underground not because they were good at it, but because it was the only practical way for them to stockpile food. They stored their food underground for two main reasons: one, so that it would be secure from the conflicts zones; and second, so that the German *Askaris* wouldn't steal it. Due to these conditions, African communal societies—particularly those of the women—became more inventive with regard to food preservation.

They inherited this method of food preservation from their regional authorities. For a long time, the Ngoni relied heavily on traditional food preservation to combat potential food shortages. According to information at the Maji Maji museum in Songea, chief Mputa preserved his food using a conventional pot. The pot was found around his house in Maposeni on December 7, 1978. The pot contained seven groundnuts when it was discovered, and it is believed that the chief stored them using a traditional underground food preservation mechanism. Both fighters and civilians survived the battles due to Africans' and Ngoni's in particular for traditional skills of food storage. The battle would have been considerably more devastating for non-combatants, especially women and children, if they had not had access to such a traditional means of food preservation.

The ability of women and children to manage agricultural tasks and food preservation during and immediately after the war helped them to survive. Both non-combatants and combatants were able to survive because of the food that had been gathered and preserved. The fact that the Maji Maji fighters were receiving food in secret gave them the courage to continue battling the Germans. Women and children continued to preserve food in order to survive, despite the Germans' use of the scorched earth policy to scare people. Women and children contributed significantly to both fighters' and non-combatants' survival during and immediately after the war.

The pre-colonial social formation struggled to sustain health security for both fighters and non-combatants. Women treated a variety of health

conditions with traditional medicine basically from trees. For instance, women treated snake bites using *mitumbitumbi* throughout the conflict. They placed chewed-up leaves on the damaged area. The wound would be entirely treated in a short period of time. In order to prevent the spread of snake poison throughout the body, a rope from the tree was occasionally attached above the afflicted area. It was thought that by using this technique, diseased blood wouldn't travel through blood vessels to other parts of the body. The fact that there were no hospitals where most people used to hide to save their lives suggests that traditional healing practice were widely prevalent. Similarly, The Ngoni employed traditional medicine such as *mlungulungwana* as a preventative measure to drive snakes away in the new settlements during the war. The Ngoni employed traditional wisdom to protect themselves from harmful animals, particularly snakes, throughout the duration of the battle. Silvanus Mbano claims that *mlungulungwana* is still employed for the same function in the Ngoni communities.

During and after the conflict, traditional medicines made from trees were also employed to treat other illnesses. Patients were treated or cured with traditional remedies derived from trees when they suffered from headache and malaria-related issues. For the families living in the caverns and woodlands, women had a significant impact in preserving the family's health security. *Mtilikanja*, for instance, was a tree employed as a headache remedy. In order to prevent the German forces from seeing the preparation of curative medicine for any patient, it was done in a very secretive manner. It was extremely difficult and risky for women to provide for the families' health security. This is due to the fact that they had to make the medicine at night to avoid being detained by Germans

Conclusion

This analysis leads to the conclusion that both combatants and non-combatants were impacted by the military strategies employed by the Germans and Africans in Songea District during the Maji Maji war. The research has shown that many women and children died from starvation as a result of the German military strategy. More harm was done to civilians (women and children) as a result of damaging military strategy, in particular the scorched earth campaign. A large number of

people perished from starvation and malnutrition as a result of the burning of villages and crops. Even after the war, up until 1910, sickness and hunger still claimed lives. According to reports, the displacement of families during and after the battle was a severe problem brought on by both fear and psychological suffering. Children and women found themselves in completely foreign environments both inside and outside of borders, particularly in Malawi and Mozambique. Some of the children came to realize that they were capable of assuming new roles, such as that of family heads. Mother and children could adjust well to such novel settings. Non-combatants, including women, children, and infants, actively fought to protect the lives of surviving family members and troops throughout the battle. While the Ngoni were engaged in the fight, the food, health, and security of their families were maintained by women and children. Women and children, for instance, gathered food from farms to feed the families. In the caves and forests where they established temporary dwellings, women were also involved in the quest for traditional medicines to treat a variety of illnesses and snake bites.

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