

Senior Fellowship for Dr. Elinaza Mjema "Natural Catastrophes and Human Coping Strategies along the Eastern African Coast during the First and Second Millennia AD"

Initiative: Wissen für morgen – Kooperative Forschungsvorhaben im subsaharischen Afrika (beendet)

Ausschreibung: Postdoctoral Fellowships in the Humanities in Africa

Bewilligung: 21.06.2020

Laufzeit:

In Eurasia and the Americas, archaeological research on natural disasters has increased significantly with archaeologists paying more attention to the potential cultural effects of natural disasters. In East Africa, however, few archaeological studies have yet considered the impact of natural disasters on local communities. In the region, very few studies have generated lessons from the past that can feature in the discussion aiming at solving current global climate challenges. The proposed research aims to determine the long-term history of interaction between coastal communities and extreme environmental changes resulting from catastrophic external events including abrupt (e.g., paleoflood events), gradual (e.g., dry/wet climatic conditions) and anthropogenic activities for the period between c. AD 500 and 1850 along the eastern African coastal landscape. The study examines how coastal communities adapted, survived or influenced these extreme environmental changes. The study assess ancient pathways developed by the coastal communities to adapt to such events and learning lessons from the past to strengthen the resilience of current coastal communities. To address the research questions, the researcher plans to conduct extensive surveys as well as mapping and test excavations at Pangani Bay followed by laboratory analyses of sediments sampled during fieldwork. The overall goal is to characterize the landscape evolution of the study area and recover and examine cultural-environmental records in order to establish human coping strategies over time. Besides geoarchaeological and archaeological fieldwork, this transdisciplinary project involves collaborations between geologists, archaeobotanist, paleo environmentalists, historians, and archaeologists.

Projektbeteiligte

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