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My present research seeks to explore the use of space at Songo Mnara, a Swahili stonetown
on the Kilwa archipelago, southern Tanzania, through the use of phytolith analysis. The
project, directed jointly by Dr Stephanie Wynne-Jones at the University of York and Dr Jeff
Fleisher at Rice University, seeks to understand the use of interior and exterior, public and
private space and as such, my research encompasses themes such as the trade of plant
materials, cultivation, crop processing, animal husbandry, use of plant materials for craft and
the local environment. Due to limited preservation of plant macrofossils and pollen and
taphonomic factors governing the inclusion of plant macro remains into the archaeological
record, it is hoped that the application of phytolith analysis will shed further light on the use
of botanical resources within the Swahili culture.
This study includes