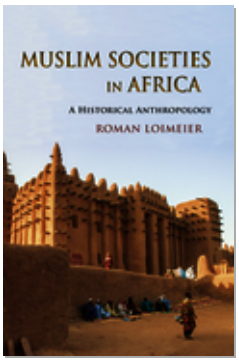
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Muslim Societies in Africa

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10 The East African Coast

Historical and Thematic Patterns

Whereas seas of sand connect the northern and southern shores of the Sahara, the Indian Ocean and annual monsoon winds connect the East African coast with the shores of India and Arabia. The regional orientation toward India and southern Arabia also informed the development of East Africa's Muslim societies. The Shāfiʿī school of law came to predominate in eastern Africa, whereas the Muslims in sub-Saharan West Africa joined the Mālikī school of law. In contrast to the bilād al-maghrib, the Sahara and the bilād al-sūdān, as well as the Nile Sudan and even Ethiopia, Islam in East Africa remained confined for almost one thousand years to the littoral zones, the sawāḥil, where a Muslim culture developed, characterized by a common language (Kiswahili) and a culture of seafaring and long-distance trade. In the East African interior, Islam started to spread, again through Muslim traders, in the nineteenth century only. The possible emergence of Muslim states, as in Buganda, was stopped by encroaching colonial rule. We have to understand thus the historical development of Muslim East Africa as two separate histories: the long history of the Muslim societies on the coast which were oriented toward the Indian Ocean; and the short history of the Muslim populations of the East African interior, upcountry Kenya, Uganda, mainland Tanzania, and also eastern Congo, where small Muslim communities started to develop from the late nineteenth century. While the history of Islam in the East African hinterland is a comparatively recent development, Muslim societies on the coast could look back, in the nineteenth century, on a history of more than one thousand years.

Despite their linguistic, cultural, religious, and economic homogeneity, Muslim coastal societies have been characterized by a history of competition (Swa. mashindano) between different coastal towns such as Brawa, Lamu, Pate, Malindi, Mombasa, or Kilwa, most of which are situated like a string of pearls on peninsulas or islands off the coast. The trading centers and towns of the East African coast never came to form empires in the Sudanic style, and at those times when the East African coast was united in political terms it was united by external powers, namely the Portuguese in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, and the Sulṭānate of Oman in the nineteenth century. The history of the western Indian Ocean was equally characterized by the fact that the west and south Asian continental empires, such as the Sulṭānate of Delhi, the Moghuls, and the Safawids in Iran, never attempted to establish and sustain political hegemony over the ocean by building and maintaining a navy, unlike

the Mediterranean and Atlantic, where littoral powers such as Venice, Genoa, France, Spain, and the Ottoman empire tried to gain hegemonic control over the seas. The Mediterranean concept of naval domination and armed trade was imported by the Portuguese into the western Indian Ocean in the sixteenth century, defeating the efforts of the Ottoman empire to gain a foothold there. In the seventeenth century, other European powers, as well as Oman, eventually joined the competition for hegemonic control over the western Indian Ocean.

As mentioned above, East Africa's coastal ("Swahili") settlements never achieved political unity, although trading centers such as Mombasa and Kilwa tried to control large stretches of the coast. Coastal settlements can thus be seen as a series of independent and competing centers of trade, each ruled by a patriciate of aristocrats, nobles, religious scholars, and rich traders. These elites cultivated trade interests across the western Indian Ocean and often invested in ships or plantations, yet were not really interested in establishing (costly) political domination over the hinterland, the bush (Swa. nyika). Equally, coastal settlements competed among each other and were prepared to conclude alliances with external powers, which promised to damage the interests of local competitors. At the same time, coastal settlements developed symbiotic links with their immediate neighbors, the "bush people" (Swa. wanyika). These included the Pokomo on the Lower Tana, who came to supply the islands of the Lamu archipelago with grains; the Digo, the Mijikenda, and other groups in the neighborhood of Mombasa; the Segeju of Vanga; or the Zaramo on the mainland opposite Zanzibar. These wanyika populations supplied the settlements and towns of the Swahili on the coast and on the islands off the coast with specific foods and raw materials, such as mangrove poles, which were then traded across the Indian Ocean. The East African coastal strip between the Juba in the north and the Rufiji in the south can thus be understood as a narrow stretch of more or less fertile land along the coast, which did not extend more than ten to fifteen kilometers inland, perhaps more along rivers such as the Juba/Shebelle, the Tana, and the Pangani, and acted, at least until the nineteenth century, as a transmission belt for trade further inland.

Although the wanyika populations on the coastal strip developed symbiotic relationships with the Swahili proper, they remained anchored in African religious traditions until the nineteenth century, when a movement of conversion to Islam began. The Pokomo, Segeju, Mijikenda, Digo, and Zaramo on the East African coast thus cannot be regarded as being an intrinsic part of Swahili history and society until the nineteenth century. Rather, the wanyika villages of the coastal strip formed a node between the Swahili settlements on and off the coast as well as the trading groups from the hinterland, linking the coastal strip with the upcountries of East Africa. At the same time, the Swahili settlements on the coast or on the islands off the coast constituted the node for the trade across the ocean. The Swahili settlements focused on their gardens, their crafts, and the sea and saw no need to establish direct contact with the inland trade. Only in the nineteenth century, with the increasing integration of the wanyika

It should be mentioned in this context that the term Swahili (Arab. sawāḥila) became current only in the nineteenth century, and originally was a derogatory Arabic term for "de-tribalized" Africans living on the coast, often of slave descent. This term was accepted, however, in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries by an increasing number of coastal Africans, who used the term to identify themselves with an esteemed coastal culture and to create a distance between themselves and more recent migrants to the coast from the East African hinterlands. European visitors equally adopted the term as an umbrella label for coastal Africans, who were seen as having corrupted pure Arabic Islam while having abandoned at the same time their authentic and rustic African village traditions.

populations into Swahili society, and the expansion of Indian and Omani traders on the coast, did coastal traders start to go beyond the coastal strip, establishing direct contacts with the hinterland while hinterland trading groups started to bring their goods directly into the settlements and towns of the Swahili.

In the greater trade network of the western Indian Ocean, the East African coast seems to have provided iron ore, at least in an early stage of commercial development up to the eleventh century, which was eventually replaced by a much more valuable product, gold. Gold came to dominate the exports of the coast from at least the thirteenth century. In addition, the harbors of the coast exported ivory, mangrove poles, and grains, as well as slaves. Slaves from the East African harbors were identified in Arabic and Persian ports as Zanj (Pers. black) and were exported from East Africa at least from the seventh century onward. Major destinations were India, the oases of southern Persia, the Gulf, and Oman, as well as the large irrigation-fed plantations of southern Mesopotamia, where Zanj slaves became notorious for their repeated rebellions in 695, 751, and 869, recorded by Arab historians such as al-Ṭabarī. The major rebellion of the Zanj in 869 led to the establishment of an independent state of former slaves in southern Iraq. In 869, Zanj armies not only destroyed the major city in southern Iraq, Baṣra, but also held out against ʿAbbasid repression until 883. In general, the history of the East African slave trade may be divided into two boom periods, which are difficult to assess in terms of numbers, due to lack of sources: an early period from the seventh to the tenth centuries, and a later period from the seventeenth to the nineteenth centuries. In the second peak period, slaves were still brought from the East African hinterlands to southern Arabia, Persia, and India, but an increasing number went to the European sugar plantations on Mauritius and Reunion, or to plantations established on the East African coast proper, in particular on the islands of Unguja and Pemba, as well as the hinterlands of the northern coastal towns of Lamu, Malindi,

At least from the eleventh century, Zanj slaves from East Africa, as well as Ḥabshi slaves from Ethiopia, were brought to India, in particular to Sindh, Gujarat, and Karnataka. From the harbor cities on India's western coast, slaves were traded to the Sulṭānate of Delhi, to Bengal, and to the principalities of the Dekkan, where they were employed as military slaves (Arab. mamlūk). In Bengal, African military slaves eventually became so powerful that they were able to take over the government in 1483 and to rule over Bengal until 1493. In the Bahmani kingdom of Dekkan, which had split from the Sulṭānate of Delhi in the late fourteenth century, Ḥabshi slaves took power in 1481 for a short period of time. Not all Ethiopians in Arabia or India were slaves, however. In the context of his maritime journey down the Indian Malabar coast in the early fourteenth century, Ibn Baṭṭūṭa reports that transport security and protection against pirates was ensured by archers from Ethiopia: "wa-kāna fīhī khamsūn rāmiyan wa-khamsūn min al-muqātila al-ḥabasha wa-hum zuʿamāʾ hadha al-baḥr wa-idhan kāna bi-l-markab aḥad minhum tuḥāmāha luṣūṣ al-hunūd wa-kuffārihim" (". . . and on it [the ship] were fifty archers and fifty Ethiopian warriors. They are the guarantors [of peace] of this ocean and if only one of them happens to be on the ship, he protects it against the Indian pirates and unbelievers") (Ibn Baṭṭūṭa 1985 2: 632).

and Mombasa. In the Gulf, in southern Persia, in Arabia, and in Oman, East African slaves were employed in crafts, such as pearl diving, the maintenance of irrigation channels, or work in the date palm groves and plantations. In the nineteenth century, the fight against the slave trade from East Africa served as a legitimization for European intervention on the East African coast, and the trade was eventually suppressed in the late nineteenth century.

In contrast to the neighboring wanyika of the coastal strip, or the "washenzi" (savages) from the hinterlands, the inhabitants of the coastal settlements saw themselves as waungwana (civilized, free). In addition, they conceived of themselves as citizens of Lamu, Pate, Malindi, Mombasa, or Zanzibar, and thus not as a single people or even a nation, but rather as a plethora of coastal populations, united by a common culture yet divided by a multitude of parochialities. Within the coastal settlements, the citizens of Lamu or Mombasa made internal distinctions between families of Arabic (Omani, Ḥaḍrami, Yemeni, Ḥijāzi), Persian, or Indian origin, or by identifying themselves as coming from other coastal cities such as Brawa or Malindi. A major identifying factor for life in the Swahili settlements was that they combined a multitude of occupations: traders, fishermen, farmers, gardeners, craftsmen, and scholars lived side by side in

coastal settlements which were semi-urban and semi-rural, stone houses mixed with huts and gardens. Swahili settlements consisted of village-like quarters (Swa. mikao); the inhabitants of a quarter were bound by alliances of mutual help, cooperation, and exchange, and in cases of a serious external threat they would form a greater alliance with the other quarters of the respective town (Swa. mji). Only some settlements, such as Kilwa, Malindi, Pate, Mogadishu, Brawa, Lamu, and Mombasa, as well as Zanzibar from the nineteenth century, acquired a more urban character; here, gardens and plantations gradually disappeared from the towns, and were replaced by an increasing number of two- or three-storey stone houses. Within such an old town (Swa. mji mkongwe), communities remained stratified, however, with established waungwana populations forming ruling elites, which relegated slaves and immigrants in both spatial and social terms to the lower and outer spheres of the settlement. For these marginal populations, conversion to Islam came to mean a way into the town and into social acceptance. This dynamic also applied to slaves. Within a few generations, they could aspire to rise from their status as plantation slaves to the status of (Muslim) house slaves, and thence to the status of former slaves, employed as educated servants, and eventually to the status of independent craftsmen, tenant farmers, fishermen, and sailors, in other words non-propertied but free people who could even start their own trade in slaves with the hinterland. The spread of coastal culture can thus be understood as the expansion of a way of life rather than the spread of a political model. This way of life was characterized by the blending of different economic activities, with a distinct coastal architecture, religion, and language. And although Kiswahili eventually came to comprise about twenty local dialects from Kiamu (Lamu) in the north to Kingajiza on the Comoros in the south, and later also Kingwana on the Upper Congo, it became a language of communication that was understood not only on the coast but also in the African hinterlands, as well as in other port cities of the Indian Ocean, particularly in Southern Arabia.

The history of the East African coast has been interpreted and reinterpreted over time. Colonial discourses, for instance, stressed external sources of inspiration as being paramount for the development of the coastal culture, and saw East African coastal history as being informed by a series of immigrants from southern Arabia, Iran, and India; by contrast, postcolonial historians have stressed the Africanité of East African coastal history and deemphasized external influences, interpreting coastal culture as Bantu. In recent years, a readjustment of these paradigms of explanation has taken place, and East African coastal history is increasingly viewed as a result of both African and Indian Ocean influences, remixed in many different ways in different coastal microhistories. Having said this, it has to be stressed that both colonial and postcolonial paradigms of interpretation rely on the formulation of precolonial histories and myths. Depending on the time and the respective cultural orientation, local histories were presented as being formed by immigrants from Oman, Ḥaḍramawt, or Shiraz, or as a history of symbiotic relationships between the populations of a specific coastal

region, such as Mombasa and its immediate hinterland. The development of Islamic traditions of learning on the coast has indeed been influenced by the migration of Muslims to the East African coast from across the Indian Ocean. East African coastal history has consequently been presented as a history of immigration of Muslims from Arabia, India, and Persia. Due to the development of local centers of Islamic learning in coastal settlements such as Mogadishu, Brawa, Lamu, Pate, Mombasa, Malindi, or Kilwa, historical sources on the East African coast are fairly comprehensive, as in the bilād al-sūdān, and give a good impression of the development of the coast from the early sixteenth century.

The first instances of Arab (Muslim) immigration may have occurred in the seventh century, bringing Muslim dissident groups from Oman as recorded in the chronicle of Pate. In the eighth century, other dissident groups may have come from Syria (Shām), coming to be known in Kilwa and Pate as Wa-Shami, although the Nabahānī family in Pate which claimed Syrian origin in fact came from Oman. The thirteenth century saw the first large wave of migrants from Ḥaḍramawt to the East African coast, and from this time onward Ḥaḍramī migrants came to represent a major immigrant group in many settlements. In particular, families of sharīfian descent from Tarīm and Shibām established trade interests and even took power in Kilwa around 1300.

The Comoro islands (Arab. juzur al-qamr) may be regarded as the remotest point of Muslim expansion on the East African coast except for Madagascar. Four major islands, Ngajiza, Nzawani, Mayuta, and Mwali, form a continuation of the East African coast toward the south. At the same time, the Comoros have acquired a distinct character due to their closeness to Madagascar and strong historical links to the Ḥaḍramawt. The Comoros have been a major place of Islamic learning and produced a number of eminent scholars in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Since the sixteenth century, the Comoros have been split into small Sultanates, each ruling over a few valleys only. From the late eighteenth century, the Comoros, like parts of the East African coast, suffered under Betsimisaraka and Sakalava slave raids. These raids increased between 1795 and 1816; only in 1817 did Betsimisaraka and Sakalava raids come to an end, when the Omani navy destroyed a large fleet of Sakalava outrigger war-canoes in the Ruvuma delta. In the 1820s, both the Sakalava in western Madagascar and the Betsimisaraka in northeastern Madagascar were defeated by the Imerina kingdom of central Madagascar, while the Comoros came under the influence of the sultanate of Zanzibar and remained formally part of Zanzibar until 1886, when France took control of Ngajiza.

A further but very small group of immigrants were Khātimī Arabs from al-Andalus, who reached the East African coast in the early sixteenth century, looking for a new home and eventually settling in Brawa and Pate. In the sixteenth century, a second wave of settlers from Ḥaḍramawt came to the East African coast and reached the Comoros. These immigrants strengthened local centers of Islamic learning and helped coastal settlements to fight Portuguese hegemony and Christian mission endeavors in this period. In the nineteenth century, a third wave of immigrants from Ḥaḍramawt reached the East African coast, as did a considerable number of families from Oman. In 1850, about 85 percent of all religious scholars on the East African coast were affiliated with Ḥaḍramī families. It has to be stressed, however, that these migrations were never sizeable enough to dominate coastal society. The migrants blended into the local societies and were seen as local by the next generation of immigrants. In addition, migrants from either the African interior or the immediate coastal hinterlands equally settled on the coast and on the islands, and formed a majority of the population in the Swahili settlements. As a result, each coastal settlement developed a unique history of immigration and interaction with migrants of different origins. These different historical legacies were recorded in local chronicles, often serving to support efforts at legitimization in respect of political change in specific places and at specific times.

As in the bilād al-sūdān of sub-Saharan West Africa, the East African coast saw a veritable explosion of local literatures in the nineteenth century, when existing disciplines of Islamic learning, as well as historical records and poetry, were complemented by new literary genres, such as biographies and travel accounts. A literary genre which developed in the nineteenth century in the context of the emergence of the celebration of the mawlid al-nabī was madḥ (praise) poetry. Mawlid celebrations were initially based on the solemn recitation of the mawlid barzanjī, which seems to have been translated into Kiswahili relatively early, and which was then transformed into a rather ecstatic "mawlidi ya Kiswahili." The popularity of new rituals in the nineteenth century, and their contextualization in Kiswahili, was closely linked with the influx of non-Muslim migrants and slaves to the coast from the African interior in this period of time. These newcomers saw conversion to Islam and participation in Islamic ritual as a way of achieving integration in coastal society and gaining the acceptance of local Muslims. In the context of their social rise, migrants and slaves adopted Islamic rituals and practices but often transformed the Arabic versions of these rituals into local versions, which were eventually condemned by established religious scholars as un-Islamic innovations.

Conversion to Islam and the adopting of Islamic lifestyles was thus an important factor in the development of an East African coastal identity. A major obstacle for converts, however, was the fact that control over Islamic institutions, mosques, schools, and religious foundations, as well as the administration of Islamic law, lay in the hands of the Waungwana elites who refused to accept conversion and the social integration of converts. Due to the exclusion of slaves and immigrants from the sphere

of established religion and social institutions, converts started to organize their own Islamic ritual life. Islamization was also expressed in patterns of dress, in the spread of Islamic amulets, in the acceptance of male circumcision, and in rituals of healing. Even if problematic from a short-term perspective, integration into established coastal society was viable from a long-term perspective, and while conversion to Islam was an important step, the acquisition of symbols of status such as a house of stone, ownership over a shamba (farm), education, and dress were important as well.

The development of Islam on the coast was thus influenced by three major factors. In the course of time, Muslims in the coastal settlements formed local traditions of learning which continued to evolve over time in the context of local dynamics of development. At the same time, local traditions of learning and Muslim modes of daily life received inspiration from other parts of the Muslim world, mostly other regions of the Indian Ocean, often in the form of a movement of reform. These traditions of learning and Muslim modes of life finally had to come to terms with the immigration of non-Muslims from the African hinterlands, often slaves and workers, a fact which has often been neglected in the history of the East African coast. The development of Islamic traditions of learning and the emergence of Muslim modes of life on the coast can thus be understood best as a process of cumulative adoption of Islam, and as the gradual intensification of an Islamic coastal identity from Mogadishu in the north to Sofala in the south (see map 18).

From Shungwaya to Kilwa

The center of origin of a distinct coastal culture was probably a region called Shungwaya, where first settlements developed, such as Lamu, Pate, Shanga, Faza, and Siyu. These settlements were set in a maze of islands north of the delta of the Tana River, protected by inlets, sandbanks, and reefs against enemies from both the hinterland and the ocean. The name of the region, Shungwaya, also came to connote the early phase of the history of the coast from the seventh to the eleventh centuries. This period of time can be regarded as the formative period of a distinct coastal culture and as the period in which Islam became the dominant religion on the coast, although the origins of Swahili culture are still obscure and not documented by local sources. Chronicles provide hard data for the history of places like Kilwa and Pate from the sixteenth century only, while Arabic sources are silent about the historical roots of Swahili society. From Shungwaya in the north, Swahili culture spread to other places in the north such as Mogadishu, Brawa, Marka, and Kismayo, as well as down the coast, and eventually reached the region of Kilwa, south of the Rufiji in the eleventh century.

In the twelfth century, Swahili culture already reached so far south that Arab geographers started to use three terms for the different sections of the coast: Shungwaya in the north, often also called Berber, then Zanj in the center, dominated by Malindi, and finally Sofala, the land of gold, in the south. The first proper description of the East African coast by the Arab geographer al-Masʿūdī (d. 956) mentions that a

king of the Zanj was called mfalme (chief, pl.: wafalme). The Zanj regarded their rulers as sacred, and the island of Qanbalu (possibly a location on Pemba) had a Muslim population speaking a Zanj language (al-Masʿūdī 1982: 185). More detailed information was offered by al-Idrīsī, who named a number of places such as Malindi, Mombasa, Sofala, and Angatija (Ngazija). Al-Idrīsī also mentioned that the Muslim population of the East African coast knew healers (maqanqa; Swa. mganga, pl. waganga). A number of other Arab geographers added to this knowledge of the coast in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, pointing out that Mogadishu in the north had a black population and that there was a whole series of settlements down the coast, apart from Lamu, such as Qanbalu on Pemba, Gedi between Mombasa and Malindi, or Manda, as well as Pate, Kilwa, and Unguja Ukuu. In the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, further settlements emerged, such as Marka and Brawa in the north, Faza in the Lamu archipelago, or Vumba and Kilwa further south. These all rose to regional prominence, although many experienced a period of decline later, often due to the fact that harbors silted up and had to be refounded on other stretches of the coast or on islands off the coast.

A second and better documented period of East African coastal history started in the eleventh century and saw the emergence of a number of Shirazi ruling families, first in Mogadishu and later in coastal settlements further south. Due to the major historical importance of the Shirazi, the period of cultural and economic blooming from the eleventh to the early sixteenth century has been labeled the Shirazi period. At the same time, the Shirazi period marks a regional shift of the center of Swahili culture from the north to the south, and saw the emergence of Kilwa as the paramount urban center on the coast. The Shirazi period was a period of cultural and economic boom on the East African coast: numerous new settlements were founded, trade with the African hinterland developed, more and more houses were built in stone, larger mosques were constructed, and Islam became the established religion on the coast. Also, Swahili developed as the language of communication on the coast and the Shāfiʿī school of law became the accepted school of Islamic law. Still, coastal settlements and towns kept their independence and tried to gain maximum control over the coastal trade, in competition with other settlements. In this competition, Kilwa achieved a paramount role since it controlled the sea routes down the coast to Sofala. The history of the coast thus was characterized by a shift from one major city to another, each trying to control as much of the coast as possible, while smaller settlements would be keen to guard their independence.

Whereas Mogadishu seems to have been paramount in the north until the thirteenth century, Kilwa rose to prominence in the south in the early thirteenth century. At the same time, Mogadishu's role in the north was eclipsed by Pate. Under the reign of Muḥammad II b. Aḥmad (1291–1331), Pate gained hegemony within the Lamu archipelago and was eventually able to extend its influence over the Bajuni islands in the north, then Brawa and finally even Mogadishu. Muḥammad II b. Aḥmad's son ʿUmar (r. 1331–1347) expanded Pate's influence south to Manda, and perhaps even Mombasa.

From the eleventh century, a number of migrant groups on the East African coast became known as Shirazi, credited with having established a number of ruling families. In a chronicle of the Comoros, the advent of the Shirazi was described as follows: "Seven sons of the king of Shiraz, each one with his own ship, came to the East African coast: one to Qumr (Comoros), one to Swahili, one to Zanzibar, one to Kilwa, one to Nguji (Angoche, on the African coast opposite the Comoro islands), one to Nzuwani (Anjouan, another island of the Comoros) and the last to Bukini (Madagascar). In each place, the Shirazi took power and became the kings" (quoted in Rotter 1976: 25). Trade and seafaring in the Indian ocean have indeed been informed by Iranian influences, as expressed in Persian loanwords in Kiswahili or the celebration of the Iranian new year festival Nauroz on the East African coast. Also, Siraf, a major harbor on the Iranian coast of the Gulf between the eighth and the tenth centuries, could have constituted a link between Shiraz and the East African coast. Followers of the Shīʿī Buyid dynasty, who ruled both Shiraz and Baghdad from 945 but were defeated by the Sunni Saljuks in 1055, could have fled from Shiraz through Siraf to the East African coast in the eleventh century and were seen there as noble outsiders and cultural heroes: Shirazi descent thus provided a tale of dynastic legitimacy for a number of new ruling families on the East African coast and served to demonstrate the connectedness of the new rulers with a prestigious center of the Islamic world. Shirazi Iranian descent could be claimed particularly by southern coastal settlements in their endeavors to distinguish themselves from competing sharīfian Arab legacies on the northern coast. Shirazi descent could equally express the wish of Shungwaya populations to show their newly acquired rootedness in an increasingly metropolitan Muslim identity, similar to the way in which dynastic changes in Kānim or Gao expressed reorientation toward Sunni Islam in the eleventh century.

Only when the Portuguese established control over the East African coast was Pate's paramount position broken and taken over by both Mombasa and Malindi. Until the late fifteenth century, Kilwa was the most important center of the southern coast, however. The Kilwa chronicle, a sixteenth-century record of the city of Kilwa, documented Kilwa's development. Being situated, like most coastal settlements, on a small island off the coast, south of the delta of the Rufiji, Kilwa was probably founded in the tenth century and was integrated fairly early into the transoceanic network of trade,

probably by the early eleventh century. Before the early thirteenth century, however, Kilwa was less important than Manda, Qanbalu, Malindi, or Mombasa. In the eleventh century, Kilwa had come under the control of a new ruling family which claimed Shirazi descent. In the Kilwa chronicle, this episode acknowledged Hanzawān (Anjouan, Comoros) as the place of immediate origin of the new rulers:

> The first man to come to Kilwa came in the following way: There arrived a ship in which there were people who claimed to have come from Shiraz in the lands of the Persians. It is said there were seven ships. . . . They say all the masters of these six ships were brothers, and that the one who went to the town of Hanzuan was their father. God alone knows all the truth. (quoted in Freeman-Grenville 1962: 75)

Under the rule of its first Shirazi kings, ʿAlī b. al-Ḥasan and his sons, Kilwa saw a quick rise to prominence on the southern coast. This rise was linked with the building of townhouses of stone, as well as a large mosque. Due to its strategic position, south of all other major Swahili settlements, and the fact that the monsoon winds enabled ships to make the journey from Arabia and India to Kilwa but not further south and back in one monsoon season, Kilwa was able to control the sea routes beyond Cape Delgado to Sofala. Control over the southern stretches of the coast was important, because this meant control over access to the Zambezi and thus access to the empire of the Mwene Motapa, the major source of gold in East Africa for a number of centuries. In the late thirteenth century, Kilwa's Shirazi rulers were deposed, however, and replaced by the Mahdalī, a family of sharīfian descent from Ḥaḍramawt which also settled in Brawa on the northern coast. Under Mahdalī rule, Kilwa's paramount role and wealth increased. This wealth was expressed in representative buildings in Kilwa, such as a large palace, a market, and an even larger mosque. The Mahdalī rulers introduced a new architectural technique in Kilwa, namely the cupola which enabled Kilwa builders to expand the roofs of their buildings. The new palace of Kilwa, in particular, seems to have caught the attention of Muslim travelers at this time, as it had a huge court for receptions, illuminated by hundreds of lamps in the night. The palace was surrounded by numerous shops of the various trading families which attested to the size of Kilwa's commercial enterprise. Kilwa's wealth was attested by Ibn Baṭṭūṭa, who visited Kilwa in 1331:

> We sailed to Mombasa, a big city . . . and then continued our journey to Kilwa, an outstanding city on the coast whose inhabitants are Zanj and black. Their faces are tattooed. . . . A trader told me that Kilwa is situated half a month of travelling from Sufāla, and Sufāla again a month of traveling from Yūfī in the bilād al-līmīyīn and that the gold of Yūfī was brought to Sufāla. Kilwa is one of the most beautiful and best built cities of this world. The roofs of the houses are built with mangrove poles. . . . The most important characteristics of its inhabitants are their faith and their religious devotion. They follow the Shāfiʿī school of law. When I arrived in Kilwa, Abū l-Muẓaffar Ḥasan was the sulṭān. . . . He often organizes raids into the lands of the Zanj, attacks them and makes booty (wa-yaʾakhadha al-ghanāʾim), keeping one-fifth,

The empire of the Mwene Motapa (in Kiswahili, "mwinyi mtapo" can mean either the master of fear or the master of ore) was formed in the early fifteenth century by Rozwi migrants from the Katanga region who had crossed the Zambezi and managed to submit most Karanga (today Shona) populations south of the Zambezi. The first Muslim traders reached the royal residence (zimbabwe) of the Rozwi ruler Nyatsimba Mutota in the mid-fifteenth century. Under his successors, the Rozwi state continued to expand and was divided into a number of semi-autonomous provinces ruled by paramount chiefs (mambo). By the late fifteenth century, some of these paramount chiefs, in particular Changa, the mambo of Gurushwa claimed independence. He was recognized by Muslim traders as the amīr (ruler) of his fiefdom, which came to be known as Changamire in Portuguese sources. By the late fifteenth century, thousands of Muslim traders were living on the Zambezi and at the court of the Mwene Motapa and linked this region of Africa with the Indian Ocean. When the Portuguese arrived on the Sofala coast, internal rivalries multiplied and Muslim traders as well as Portuguese traders tried to evict the respective other from the trade with the Mwene Motapa. A Portuguese mission to the court of the Mwene Motapa failed in 1561, however, due to the opposition of the Muslim party at the court of the Mwene Motapa. In retaliation, the Portuguese destroyed the Muslim settlements in the Zambezi valley in 1568 and established their own rule over the Zambezi. Despite their control over the lower Zambezi valley, the Portuguese were never able to occupy the Zimbabwe of the Mwene Mutapa. In the seventeenth century, the Changamire kingdom confined the Portuguese to some few fortifications on the Zambezi. Traces of the Muslim presence at the court of the Mwene Motapa can be found in Zimbabwe until today: the Waremba populations of the region claim Arab ancestry, as shown in names such as Ali, Sharifi, Bakari, or Mustafa. Also, they place a taboo on pork and practice the ḥalāl slaughter of animals.

as prescribed by the Qurʾān. The part which is due to the shurafāʾ is stored separately in the treasury and when shurafāʾ visit Kilwa, they get their share of the booty. The shurafāʾ are coming from ʿIrāq, Ḥijāz, and many other countries. I have seen shurafāʾ from all parts of the Ḥijāz. . . . The sulṭān himself is very modest, he eats and sits with the poor, respects the holy men and the shurafāʾ. (Ibn Baṭṭūṭa 1985 2: 283–84)

In the sixteenth century, the East African coast experienced a major crisis, however, and old settlements declined while new settlements were able to develop. This

crisis was linked with two disruptive forces which threatened the very survival of coastal societies: the invasion of the Zimba as well as the establishment of Portuguese control over much of the Indian Ocean and major parts of the East African coast. Even when Portuguese control eventually collapsed in the mid-seventeenth century, most coastal settlements were not able to regain their former autonomy, but came under the control of the Sulṭānate of Oman, which dominated the East African coast until the late nineteenth century. These developments also informed the history of Kilwa. Destroyed three times by the Portuguese, Kilwa experienced a revival in the seventeenth century which was linked with the fact that the Yao populations of the African interior developed a new trade route to the coast near Kilwa, thus linking Kilwa with a very profitable item of export, ivory. However, Kilwa remained under Portuguese domination until 1698 and was only then able to achieve independence with Omani support, although the Portuguese retook Kilwa in 1726 for a short period of time. When Oman established control over Kilwa again in 1744, the Yao shifted their trade route to Mozambique, which subsequently became the most important center for the southern trade on the East African coast. When trade on the central Coast revived in the late eighteenth century, the Yao moved north and brought their trade back to Kilwa which had a permanent Omani garrison from 1786. At the same time, Mozambique suffered from attacks by Sakalava fleets from Madagascar. The Sakalava threat was stopped in 1817 only, when an Omani fleet defeated the Sakalava in the Ruvuma delta. This provided much needed security for the southern trade route and granted Kilwa a new lease of activity. In 1850, Kilwa already had a population of 10,000–12,000 and was

The Zimba were Marawi (Malawi) warriors from the lower Zambezi valley. Until the early sixteenth century, Marawi lords had controlled the trade up and down the Zambezi. When the Portuguese blocked the Zambezi delta, took Sofala in 1506, and even sailed up the Zambezi in order to gain control over the trade themselves, reaching Tete in 1531, the up-river Marawi had to find a new route to the coast in order to bypass the Portuguese forts on the lower Zambezi. After a series of disputes among the Marawi, one group, the Phiri, tried to break the paramount position of the Lundu on the lower Zambezi in the 1570s, yet failed due to Portuguese support for the Lundu. As a reaction, the Phiri took a more northern route to the coast, attacked Kilwa in 1588, and massacred the population. In 1589, they attacked Mombasa and Malindi but were eventually defeated off Malindi by a coalition of Portuguese and Malindi forces. In order to eliminate the Phiri threat in the south, the Portuguese again allied with the Lundu in 1608 and, after a war of more than fourteen years, Phiri power collapsed in 1622.

the most important coastal settlement south of Zanzibar. The history of Kilwa shows that rise and decline of power and wealth were closely linked and were intrinsically connected with control over the sea trade in the Indian Ocean, as well as access to trade routes into the African interior.

The Portuguese Interlude

The establishment of Portuguese control over the East African coast was linked with the fact that since the early fifteenth century Portugal had sought to circumnavigate Africa in order to establish an independent link to the spice markets of Asia. While the attacks of the Zimba in the late sixteenth century had a devastating short-term effect on a number of coastal settlements, Portuguese trade policies in the Indian Ocean defined the development of the East African coast for almost 200 years. In 1498, the first Portuguese expedition under Vasco da Gama had reached the Indian Ocean and sailed from Malindi to India, guided by an Indian pilot, "Malemo Canaqua" (Sheriff 2010: 110). Thus, the sea route to India via the Cape of Good Hope had been explored and became a major oceanic highway under Portuguese control. In a series of naval raids, the Portuguese attacked and destroyed a number of harbor cities in the Indian Ocean, including Mogadishu in 1499, Kilwa and Mombasa in 1505, Brawa in 1507, Malakka in 1511, Hormuz in 1515, Diu in 1538, and Daman in 1559. As Portuguese caravels were larger than most dhows in the Indian Ocean, the Portuguese soon became the unrivaled naval power in the Indian Ocean. Caravels could also carry more bulk as well as heavy artillery, and they had a flexible rigging technology. Thus, the Portuguese were able to outmaneuver and outshoot any other ship in the Indian Ocean and to block every harbor. The Portuguese were too weak numerically, however, to establish permanent settlements on all coasts of the Indian Ocean. They thus built a few coastal fortifications only, such as Mozambique, Fort Jesus in Mombasa, Masqaṭ in Oman, and Diu and Goa in India, and were otherwise happy to control the seas and the coasts from their ships: any ship that was not registered by the Portuguese and did not pay tribute was plundered and sunk, and coastal settlements which refused to pay tribute were bombarded by the Portuguese ships until they eventually gave in. Kilwa was destroyed three times until it accepted Portuguese dominion. Portuguese control over the East African coast relied on a system of commandantes who leased their positions from the Crown and then tried to make good their expenses by exploiting their respective territories. Thus, the Portuguese raised a tax of 100 mithqāl (gold coins) annually on Zanzibar, 1,500 mithqāl on Mombasa, and 2,000 mithqāl on Kilwa. In addition, the Portuguese commandantes prevented all non-licensed naval activity, and thus maintained Portuguese naval hegemony in the Indian Ocean. Less important settlements such as Malindi exploited the decline of places like Mombasa to rise to prominence as allies of Portugal.

In their endeavors to control the coast, the Portuguese relied on a policy of violence against those places which refused to pay tribute, such as Mombasa, Kilwa, and

In a curious twist of world history, Portugal lost its only male heir to the throne in a war with Morocco in 1580. As a consequence, the house of Habsburg, which ruled Spain, inherited the Portuguese crown. Spain thus acquired the Portuguese colonial empire without firing a shot. Due to the fact that Spain had lucrative possessions in Mexico, Peru, and Colombia, as well as in the Caribbean, it was not interested in maintaining costly possessions in Africa, the Indian Ocean, and South East Asia. Portuguese domination in the Indian Ocean consequently collapsed, and other European powers, in particular the Netherlands, France, and Britain, established a foothold in the India trade. On the East African coast, the united Iberian empire retained only three major bases: Mozambique, Malindi, and Mombasa. In 1640, when Portugal regained its independence, it tried hard to recapture its lost territories. But by this time, other European powers were solidly entrenched, and Portugal lost control not only over the trade with India but also over its possessions in the Indian Ocean, with the exception of the colony of Goa in India and the colony of Mozambique in southeastern Africa.

Brawa, and alliances with otherwise secondary coastal settlements, such as Malindi and Lamu, which hoped to gain political influence by allying with the Portuguese. However, the northernmost Swahili town, Mogadishu, escaped Portuguese control and consequently became a major center of local resistance to Portuguese domination on the coast. The only real threat to Portuguese domination of the East African coast, apart from the Zimba attack on Mombasa and Malindi in 1589, materialized in 1585, when an Ottoman fleet sailed down the coast and occupied Mogadishu, Brawa, and Mombasa, as well as Pate and Lamu. In Faza, a small settlement in the Lamu archipelago, the Ottoman naval commander, Amīr ʿAlī Bey, established an Ottoman dynasty which survived into the late nineteenth century. Only Malindi rejected Ottoman over-rule and was eventually relieved by a Spanish-Portuguese fleet which reestablished Iberian control over the coast. Amīr ʿAlī Bey was taken prisoner and deported to Spain. As a consequence of both Zimba raids and Portuguese control over the seas, East African coastal identity became even more accentuated in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries as an exclusive coastal culture defined by simultaneous rejection of the nyika, the bush, as well as intruders from the sea. Following the collapse of the trade with the African interior, due to the Zimba raids in the south, as well as a series of Oromo raids in the north between 1600 and 1650, the coastal settlements suffered an economic crisis which was overcome in the eighteenth century only, when trade with the hinterland resumed.

In the mid-seventeenth century, Oman became Portugal's most dangerous enemy in the western Indian Ocean. Between 1643 and 1650, Oman managed to gain control over the Portuguese strongholds on the Omani coast, in particular Masqaṭ, and in 1652 an Omani fleet attacked Portuguese positions in Zanzibar. Although the Portuguese managed to regain control over the coast, they had to abandon Pate in 1679 and were trapped in Fort Jesus in Mombasa. After a siege of three years, the Portuguese garrison in Fort Jesus capitulated on 12 December 1698, and Portuguese control over the northern and central East African coast came to an end. At the same time, Oman was not yet capable of replacing Portuguese domination. The coastal towns consequently regained their independence and, as in the case of Mombasa, rose to regional prominence. The end of Portuguese domination also signaled the end of Malindi's brief rise to power: Malindi declined in a short period of time, was destroyed in an Oromo raid in the early seventeenth century, and was even reported deserted in 1846. Some years later, Malindi achieved a modest recovery under Omani control, when it became a major exporter of grain from the East African hinterland.

While Malindi was able to rise to regional prominence on the coast for a brief period only, Mombasa was one of those coastal settlements which tried particularly hard to gain not only local but also regional hegemony over a stretch of the coast for a longer period of time. In this endeavor, Mombasa had to compete with Pate, later Malindi, and still later Lamu in the north, as well as Zanzibar in the south. Mombasa historical tradition ascribes original settlement of the island to an alliance of twelve settlements (Swa. miji kumi na mbili), ruled by the taifa tatu (three clans), namely Changamwe, Kilindini, and Tangana. In the early fourteenth century, local power shifted to the Shirazi who controlled the town until 1592, when the Portuguese took control of Mombasa and started to build Fort Jesus. Until that time, Mombasa had suffered Portuguese attacks in 1500, 1505, and 1528. Although accepting Portuguese overlordship, Mombasa was quick to recognize Ottoman control when the Ottoman navy appeared on the East African coast in 1585 and again in 1588, establishing a garrison in Mombasa commanded by Amīr ʿAlī Bey. Consequently, the Portuguese encouraged the marauding Zimba warriors to attack Mombasa and the Ottoman troops. The Zimba massacred the population of Mombasa, while an Iberian fleet under Mateus Mendes de Vasconcelhos bombarded the Ottoman troops from the sea. The Ottoman garrison capitulated on 16 March 1588, and when the Zimba moved on to Malindi they were defeated off Malindi by united Iberian, Malindi, and Segeju forces. In reaction, the Iberian crown decided to build Fort Jesus in 1593, a task completed by 1599. The establishment of Fort Jesus also brought about the establishment of an Augustine mission. At the same time, control over the population, which had suffered considerably under the Zimba attack, was taken over by the ruling family of Malindi, in alliance with the Portuguese. In order to entrench their position on the coast, the Portuguese sent the heir to the throne of Mombasa, Yūsuf b. Ḥasan, to Goa in India for an education in a Portuguese school managed by the Augustine order. In Goa, Yūsuf b. Ḥasan

converted to Christianity, took the new name Dom Jeronimo Chingulia, married a woman from an aristocratic Portuguese family, and was eventually knighted. After his return to Mombasa in 1626, he rejected Portuguese rule in 1631, possibly due to a dispute with the Portuguese governor. Yūsuf b. Ḥasan organized a massacre of the Portuguese garrison as well as the Augustine mission and was able to hold out in Fort Jesus against a siege by the Portuguese fleet for a period of four months. In 1632, he fled and eventually reached Jidda in the Red Sea, where he died in 1638.

The return of the Portuguese to Mombasa convinced the population of the town to seek outside support, and in 1649 they sent a mission to Oman. Three years later, an Omani fleet attacked the Portuguese in Zanzibar, starting a series of raids across the ocean which eventually led to the collapse of Portuguese control over the northern and central coast. Most important, the Omani fleet defeated the Portuguese garrison in Fort Jesus in 1698, taking the major fortification on the East African coast into their own possession. The new ruler and governor of Mombasa was Nāṣir ʿAbdallāh al-Mazrūʿī. In the following decades, the Mazrūʿī governors of Mombasa not only had to fight against the efforts of the Portuguese to regain control over the town, but also to struggle against the interests of local families which resented Omani overlordship just as they had resented Portuguese control. In 1735, in the context of disputes over succession to power in Oman, in which the Bū Saʿīdī family prevailed over the ruling Yaʿrūbī family, the Mazrūʿī themselves declared their independence from Oman. As a consequence, the Mazrūʿī gained greater acceptance in Mombasa and consolidated their rule over Mombasa until 1837, when they had to accept Omani rule again.

Although the Mazrūʿī rulers of Mombasa tried to extend their control over other parts of the coast in this period, they eventually failed. In 1812, Mombasa forces suffered a humiliating defeat off Lamu, which had the support of Oman, and in 1822 Mombasa forces were also defeated off Pate and lost Pemba to the Bū Saʿīdī dynasty. By accepting British overlordship, Mombasa was able to ward off Omani efforts to take control over the city in 1829 and 1833, but in 1837 the British abandoned Mombasa to the sulṭān of Oman, who was regarded as a more important ally in the western Indian Ocean. The last Mazrūʿī ruler of Mombasa, Rashīd Sālim al-Mazrūʿī, was deposed and exiled to Bandar ʿAbbās in the Gulf. Oman imposed a new ruling family, the Mbaruk, which subsequently administrated Mombasa in the name of the sulṭān of Oman. In order to escape Mbaruk-Omani control, part of the Mazrūʿī family established a new stronghold in Gazi near Lamu. In cooperation with the Digo population in Mombasa's hinterland, the Mazrūʿī of Gazi started to destabilize Mbaruk rule over Mombasa. These politics allowed smaller settlements such as Vumba and Wasini to escape Mbaruk control in the late nineteenth century. Gazi-Mazrūʿī efforts to expand its influence over Vumba misfired, however, and in 1882 Zanzibari forces defeated the Mazrūʿī of Gazi, although they were unable to eliminate Gazi completely. This was achieved by a British military expedition in 1896. The history of competition between Mombasa, Kilwa, Malindi, Pate, Lamu, Gazi, and Vumba since the seventeenth century shows that coastal towns

and their patriciate families jealously tried to guard their independence and used every chance to reject outside control, even if such policies enabled powerful outside players such as Portugal and Oman in the sixteenth–nineteenth centuries, as well as European colonial powers such as Britain and Germany in the late nineteenth century, to impose their domination over large stretches of the coast.

Oman and the Rise of Zanzibar

The rise of Oman as a naval power in the Indian Ocean was linked with the fact that Oman had achieved political unity in 1624 under the leadership of the Yaʿrūbī family, and was subsequently able to evict the Portuguese from their positions on the Omani coast. In 1650, the sulṭān and imām of the Ibāḍiyya in Oman, Sulṭān b. Sayf, conquered Masqaṭ, the last Portuguese stronghold in Oman. In 1652, an Omani fleet sailed to the East African coast in response to an appeal by the citizens of Mombasa, Pate, and Pemba, and attacked Portuguese positions in Zanzibar. In 1660, the Omani fleet attacked Pate, Mombasa, and Faza, and in 1669 even Mozambique. In 1698, Fort Jesus was taken and Oman was able to repulse a last Portuguese effort to regain control over the central coast in 1728/29. Pax Omanica enabled many coastal settlements to recover from Portuguese domination. Also, Omani presence in East Africa remained, for the time being, weak, and was based on agreements of cooperation and alliance rather than occupation. Only in some places such as Mombasa in 1698 or Zanzibar in 1709 did Oman establish permanent bases. When Oman saw a change of dynasties in 1741, a number of allies such as Mombasa used this chance to cut their ties with the new rulers of Oman, the Bū Saʿīdī family.

Under the Yaʿrūbī dynasty, Oman had expanded its commercial activities considerably and established Omani positions in India, Iran, the Gulf, southern Arabia, and the Red Sea. Omani wealth was based on its exports of dates to India from date palm plantations in Oman's interior. These plantations were worked by African slaves. Oman thus had an intrinsic interest in protecting its trade links with East Africa as the major supplier of slaves. The success of the Omani naval expeditions to East Africa stimulated the emergence of an Omani commercial aristocracy, which soon marginalized the religio-political influence of the imāms of Oman. The change of dynasty in 1741 can thus be explained as a shift from religio-political leadership to a new political elite that was informed by commercial interests. In order to realize their entrepreneurial policies, the sulṭāns transformed Oman's armed forces of tribal warriors united by family alliances into a more conventional army and navy, which consisted of slaves from Africa and mercenaries from Baluchistan. The new army enabled Sulṭān Saʿīd b. Sulṭān (r. 1804–1856) to build a commercial empire which covered the whole of the western Indian Ocean. In this empire, the East African coast turned out to be the most profitable shore, due to its exports of slaves and ivory, and later cloves; Oman consequently started to establish a more permanent presence on the East African coast.

Oman's paramount position in the western Indian Ocean was based on its control over three maritime trade routes: the one to the East African coast, which provided slaves for Omani plantations and ivory for the Indian market, the one into the Gulf, which provided, like Oman, dates and pearls for the Indian market, and the third to Gujarat, which assured access to the Indian market. From 1798, these Omani trade interests were secured by an Anglo-Omani trade agreement which acknowledged Oman as a British ally in this region, while at the same time excluding other trade interests, in particular France. During the Napoleonic wars (up to 1815), Britain put her commercial navy in the Indian Ocean under Omani flag and thus protected her ships against French naval attacks in the Indian Ocean. At the same time, the British navy put French prize ships under Omani flag in order to provide neutral status for them. Due to this agreement, Omani tonnage expanded considerably, and by 1804 Oman had a commercial navy of fifty-five sailing ships with a tonnage of 40,000. Oman was regarded as neutral by all warring parties, and transport on safe Omani ships increased considerably. As Oman also granted comparatively low freight rates, it emerged from the Napoleonic wars with the largest commercial navy in the Indian Ocean. This situation changed slowly after 1815, due to the increasing age of the Omani commercial navy, as well as the emergence of new competitors in the Indian Ocean trade, in particular a number of emirates in the Gulf, which were able to marginalize the Omani position in the Gulf from the 1820s. As a consequence, Oman came to focus even more on the trade with India and the East African coast, and to intensify its presence in East Africa. These efforts were supported by Britain, which hoped to frustrate French efforts to gain a foothold in East Africa. As a consequence, Oman was able to establish hegemony over most East African harbor cities between the 1810s and the 1830s: in 1812 Lamu, in 1821 Pate and Brawa, in 1823 Pemba, in 1824 the rest of the Lamu archipelago, and in 1837 Mombasa. In the 1820s, Oman's supreme rule was acknowledged by most Comoro islands and even extended, for a short period of time, to Nosi-Bé, an island off Madagascar's northwestern coast.

With the end of Portuguese domination on the East African coast in the early eighteenth century, a period of Omani overrule started that lasted until the end of the nineteenth century. With its fleet of originally seventy to eighty ships, the Sulṭānate was not only able to effectively protect its trading connections in the Indian Ocean but also to exert effective control over the East African coast north of Mozambique. As a consequence, Oman, like Portugal in the sixteenth century, was never actually forced to occupy the coastal strip and to maintain costly fortresses and bases: the Sulṭānate could cut off all seaborne communication and the trade of any coastal settlement at any time. The territorial forces of the Sulṭānate, by contrast, remained rather small: in the 1840s, they comprised about 400 soldiers, 200 of them based in Mombasa, and mostly recruited in Baluchistan or Ḥaḍramawt. Only in the 1880s was the army expanded to a force of 1,200 soldiers, which were used for military expeditions on the mainland against rebellious local rulers such as Gazi. Yet Oman's military backbone for most

Islam in Madagascar was linked with the development of a few small Muslim communities on the northern and eastern coasts of the island. The Muslim communities in Mahajanga in the northwest, and those around Antseranana (Diego Suarez) in the north, managed to remain in contact with the wider world of Islam, and the Comoros, as well as the East African coast. Portuguese naval hegemony in the Indian Ocean, however, led to the isolation of two smaller Muslim communities on the eastern coast, the Antaimoro of Manankara and the Antambahoaka of Manajary. In the late nineteenth century, these Muslim communities had became part of local society and had lost their Islamic identity, except for a few relics such as words like sorabe (writing; from sūra), a taboo on pork, and the cultivation of ʿilm al-falak, actually an array of sciences such as astrology, astronomy, and numerology, as a discipline of learning. Antaimoro were described by Muslim travelers of the time as mutawaḥḥishūn, "those who have turned wild." Despite the fact that the Antaimoro had abandoned Islam, they had conserved the Arabic script and had developed an Arabic transcription for their dialect of Malagasy. This explains why the emerging Imerina kingdom in central Madagascar started to employ Antaimoro scribes in the late eighteenth century for the administration of their kingdom. By the 1820s, a part of the Imerina elite was able to write Malagasy in the Arabic script, which was eventually replaced by a Latin transcription. The art of sorabe constituted a major legacy of the Antaimoro, although the link with Islam as a religion had been lost by this time.

of the nineteenth century was its navy. In the nineteenth century, a major part of the income of the Sulṭānate was spent in fact on the navy, the maintenance of the court, and the alimentation of numerous clients and allied families on the coast.

In the context of this development, Oman became the paramount political power on the East African coast, a development reinforced by the shift of Oman's seat of government from Masqaṭ to Zanzibar in 1840. Sulṭān Saʿīd had already come to Zanzibar in 1829 for the first time. He first stayed at Mtoni, north of Zanzibar Town, and later, from 1832, at the Bait al-Sāḥil in what was to become the Old Town. Before he died in 1856, Sulṭān Saʿīd b. Sulṭān split his empire among his sons, Mājid and Thwaynī, who now effectively ruled two separate states, the Sulṭānates of Masqaṭ and Zanzibar. Sulṭān Mājid (r. 1856–1870), the first ruler of the Sulṭānate of Zanzibar, continued the policy of expansion started by his father, although he had to overcome a number of problems such as a rebellion by his brother Barghash in Zanzibar, as well as Thwaynī's

attempt to invade Zanzibar from Masqaṭ in 1859. With British support, he was able to master these difficulties and start a program of modernization inspired by Egypt which came to be seen as a model for Zanzibar's development. Among Mājid's specific achievements was the consolidation of Zanzibar's rule over the mainland, a development that was underlined by his decision to construct a new harbor, Dar es Salaam, south of Bagamoyo, which was intended to become the sulṭān's new capital city. Mājid's successor, Barghash (r. 1870–1888), continued his policy of modernization. In 1871/72, Barghash went on pilgrimage and in 1875 he visited Syria, Jerusalem, and Egypt just before Egyptian army and naval forces started their attack on Ethiopia and the Banādir coast. From Syria, he imported Zanzibar's first printing press, which was put to work in 1879. In Egypt, he met Khedive Ismāʿīl and had a chance to acquaint himself with the processes of reform that had been implemented in Egypt. In 1872, Barghash's policies of modernization also led to the establishment of a regular postal service between Zanzibar and Aden, and in 1879 a telegraph cable was installed between Zanzibar and Aden. Zanzibar was thus directly connected with the world's emerging communication network.

Mājid's and Barghash's reforms had immediate repercussions on life on the East African coast: whereas numerous travel accounts from the mid-nineteenth century reported that the palace of the sulṭān contained only three rows of chairs, the Zanzibari court in the 1880s rather resembled the court of an Indian maharaja. A bayt al-ʿajāʾib (house of wonders) exhibited numerous mirrors, clocks, European furniture, and curiosities that Mājid and Barghash had acquired, and also had East Africa's first electric elevator. In front of the palace, a lighthouse-cum-clock tower was built in 1879, and, with the earnings from clove production, toll fees, and ivory exports, Zanzibar was able to finance a fresh water supply, street lighting with gas lamps, a fleet of six steam ships, and an army that was trained and equipped according to European models. The huts and gardens of the Old Town were increasingly replaced by stone houses; storage houses and barracks were constructed; and in the vicinity of the sulṭān's palace other representative buildings came to house consulates, hotels, trading factories, trading houses, an ice factory, new market buildings, and the rich city houses and villas of the plantation owners, notables, and aristocrats. These changes exerted strong attraction. Zanzibar and the lifestyle of the Arab-Omani elite became a new cultural model, and the ideal of coastal civilization, ungwana, was replaced by the wish to live like an Arab (Swa. ustaarabu). This cultural change was expressed in the adoption of Arab ways of dressing and Arab fashions, but also by the adoption of Arab names. Zanzibar's economic boom was expressed in the growth of Zanzibar town, which from 1838 spread across the creek, an arm of the sea that separated the Old Town "from the other side" (Swa. ng'ambo) and the rural areas. At the same time, Zanzibar's urban population grew from around 5,000 inhabitants in 1819 to around 80,000 in 1885. This population was a mix of many nations: Swahili, Somaal, Arabs, and Indians, as well as Africans from different hinterland regions. All these groups were subdivided into

social, religious, and regional identities: different Muslim Indian orientations, as well as Banian (Hindu Indians), Ḥaḍramis, Omanis, Comorians, people from Madagascar, Europeans, Baluchis, and Persians, again split into different families such as the ruling Bū Saʿīdīs, but also the Riyāmīs and Mughayrīs, Lamkīs and Barwānīs from Oman, the ʿAlawī families from Yemen, Ḥaḍramawt and the Comoros, and Indian families such as the Topans and the Sewjis.

While iron ore, gold, and slaves had been major items of export from the East African coast, the nineteenth century saw the emergence of an array of new trade goods, in particular cloves, ivory, and cocopalm-nuts as well as copra (the fibers of the coconut), but also sugar cane, oil palms, sesame, gum copal, and rice. The cultivation of clove trees started in Zanzibar in 1815, and the export of cloves soon became the major source of income for the Sulṭānate and established Zanzibar's wealth in the mid-nineteenth century. In 1823, Zanzibar sold its first clove harvest and exports to India, later also to Europe and the United States. In 1846, Zanzibar exported 99,000 frasila of cloves (one frasila corresponds to about thirty-five pounds), and by 1856 this quantity had grown to 143,000 frasila. In this year, Zanzibar was the biggest producer of cloves in the world. Due to Zanzibar's importance as a trading partner, European and North American companies concluded treaties of cooperation with Zanzibar, the United States starting in 1833, Britain following in 1841, France in 1844, and the German Hanse Cities of Hamburg, Bremen, and Lübeck in 1859. Due to the fact that the sulṭān imposed high import taxes on luxury goods, the income of the Sulṭānate grew even further and enabled investment in public works in the 1860s. In 1856, Zanzibar had become the undisputed hub of trade on the East African coast: about 300 commercial ships were recorded to have anchored alone in this year in the harbor of Zanzibar.

Trade was not only in the hands of European or North American companies, however. Zanzibar also initiated independent commercial activities: in 1839, the Sulṭāna reached New York with a cargo of carpets, dates, coffee, cloves, ivory, and copra, and returned with firearms, textiles, and gunpowder. In 1845, the Caroline reached London. Apart from slaves and cloves, as well as various other agricultural products, Zanzibar also became a major exporter of ivory in the nineteenth century. Until the eighteenth century, ivory had come mostly from Mozambique and the Zambezi, but in the nineteenth century the territories between the coast and Lake Malawi as well as Lake Tanganyika became the major sources of East African ivory, which was exported mainly to India. By the mid-nineteenth century, elephants had became increasingly rare in the hinterlands of the coast, and Zanzibari traders consequently pushed the ivory frontier further inland to the upper reaches of the Congo, as well as into the interior of the Horn. In the second half of the nineteenth century, other agricultural products also became important items of export, however, and brought increasing income for Zanzibar's trade: coffee, cotton, sisal, coconuts and copra, indigo, sugar cane, pepper, and other spices were added to the list of export items. Still, ivory kept its leading role in Zanzibar's export trade for some time: in 1859, ivory exports from

Zanzibar amounted to $733,000, while slaves came second ($400,000), followed by cloves ($278,000), cowries ($257,000), gum copal ($186,000), hides ($128,000), sesame seed ($104,000), copra ($67,000), and coconut oil ($20,000) (Martin and Martin 1978/2007: 29). Slaves thus accounted for less than 20 percent of the export value of more than 2.1 million dollars. Due to falling prices for imported goods, Zanzibar achieved a growing surplus in its balance of trade. This was invested in public works and representative buildings in Zanzibar, as well as other coastal towns, adding to Zanzibar's prestige. A peculiarity of the trading empire of Zanzibar was that the rulers of Zanzibar did not establish an administration to collect customs fees, but sold the right to collect such fees to wealthy Indian entrepreneurs for a limited period of time: in 1865, the Sewji family bought this right for a period of five years for 310,000 pounds sterling annually. In 1876, the Topan family managed to outbid the Sewji family and bought Zanzibar's customs income for 450,000 pounds, only to be outbid again by the Sewjis in 1880 with 500,000 pounds. These sums of money attest to the economic boom on the coast, which experienced a further boost after the opening of the Suez Canal in 1869, when Zanzibar's sea routes to Europe and North America became dramatically shorter and cheaper.

In political terms, the Sulṭānate of Zanzibar came under the growing influence of Britain, in particular in 1859 when Britain blocked an Omani fleet which tried to reunite both parts of the empire on its way to Zanzibar. As a consequence, Britain was able to impose first restrictions on the slave trade and to stop the transoceanic slave trade in a number of agreements with Zanzibar between 1867 and 1873. The trade on the East African coast and to the islands remained legal for the time being, though. This brought about a boom of plantations, in particular cloves (Pemba), coconuts (Unguja), sugar cane, sesame, and grains on the coast between Mombasa and Brawa, and a corresponding growth of the coastal settlements: Mombasa grew to a population of 12,000 in 1870, Lamu and Siyu to populations of about 10,000. From 1870, Mājid's successor, Barghash, was able to partly reestablish Zanzibar's freedom to act, in particular on the coast and in the African hinterland. After a devastating hurricane in 1872 which destroyed most clove-tree plantations on Unguja, Zanzibar's southern island, as well as Zanzibar's commercial navy, Barghash shifted the focus of plantation crops in Unguja from clove trees to cocopalms, and rebuilt Zanzibar's navy, this time in the guise of six steam ships. Also, the administration and the army were modernized, the possessions of the Sulṭānate were organized in provinces administered by governors (liwalis and mudirs), and all provinces got qāḍī courts. The existing rights of autonomy of the coastal settlements were curtailed.

Despite these measures, the influence of the sulṭān in Zanzibar on the quotidian administration of places like Malindi or Mombasa remained small, and the power of the sulṭān was even smaller in the hinterland regions. Zanzibar remained a trading empire without fixed boundaries, and the authority of the sulṭān was often only nominal, for instance when local rulers flew the red flag of the Sulṭānate. Yet, although

The cyclone of 1872 led to a political crisis in the Sulṭānate, which had already been hit by an epidemic of cholera in 1868/1870. The epidemic was part of the fourth cholera pandemic which reached Zanzibar from India in the nineteenth century. The first started in 1818 and arrived in Zanzibar in 1821; the second started in 1826 and hit Zanzibar in 1836; while the third started in 1842 and hit Zanzibar in 1858. The fourth cholera pandemic started in India in 1865 and hit Zanzibar in 1869. By that time, the supply of slaves to the islands had almost collapsed, due to wars between 1860 and 1865 in Unyamwesi, on the central trade route.

the sulṭān of Zanzibar had little or no power to impose his will on African hinterland territories, the very fact that the Sulṭānate controlled the coast and access to the sea, and thus access to the wider world, was reason enough to convince local rulers in the hinterland regions to comply with the wishes of the sulṭān. When a German explorer, Albrecht Roscher, was murdered on the shores of Lake Malawi in 1860, the local ruler not only caught the murderers but also handed them over to the Sulṭānate's authorities in Zanzibar, where they were subsequently executed. This episode supported the Sulṭan of Zanzibar's claim that "his writ ran far inland" (Beachey 1996: 85).

The erroneous views of representatives of Europe's colonial powers regarding the alleged weakness of Zanzibar's position on the coast was based on a misconception of Zanzibari policies, which did not rely on a military apparatus and an omnipresent administration, but on the voluntary acceptance of Zanzibar's rule: the sulṭān was not regarded as an autocratic or even absolute king, but as a supreme mediator and patron of multiple local activities and interests. He was the protector of a plethora of clienteles, which were instrumental to his policy of ruling his realm by consensus and through the workings of an intricate network of family ties and commercial interests. The sulṭān cultivated links with other commercial entrepreneurs and influential families, and marginalized opponents by intrigue if he could not win their support. Only in rare cases did he resort to armed intervention. Formal symbols of sovereignty were useless in this concept of governance, although they were increasingly displayed from the 1870s, in order to counter European claims to territory. European powers did not understand these workings of local politics, assuming that the sulṭān had no power whatsoever and that the coast was in effect without a master. In 1884, the British Consul in Zanzibar, Kirk, thus described Sulṭān Barghash's policies with respect to the coast as "utter apathy to what takes place away from Zanzibar so long as he receives his revenue" (Bennett 1978: 110). However, this statement was made at a time when the British had started to show their own interest in what took place on the East African coast.

In order to counter European territorial claims, the Sulṭānate in fact started to increase its symbolic and military presence on the East African coast: in 1869, Zanzibar established a new fort in Kismayo on the southern Banādir coast, in order to protect the trade routes from the interior to the coast against Oromo attacks, as well as the coastal trade routes up and down the Banādir coast, linking Kismayo with Lamu and Malindi. In 1880, Zanzibar established garrisons in Mamboya and Usagara, about 100 kilometers inland, west of Dar es Salaam, as well as positions in Tabora and Ujiji on Lake Tanganyika. Existing fortifications and garrisons in Brawa, Mogadishu, Marka, Mombasa, Malindi, and Lamu were strengthened, and new forts were built in Vanga, Takaunga, and Gasi. By this time, Zanzibar also controlled about 100 customs stations on the coast, representing the sulṭān and administered by an akida (toll master). Even European diplomats were eventually forced to accept these new realities. Still, European arrangements regarding the division of Africa prevailed over African realities: in 1886, Zanzibar was forced to abandon her mainland territories, except for a ten-mile coastal strip, to Britain, Germany, and Italy, a fact which was eventually translated into a boundary agreement between Britain and Germany in 1890. In 1888, Zanzibar was forced by a German naval expedition to renounce the remainder of her mainland territories, and was then incorporated into the British colonial empire as a protectorate in 1890. Zanzibar's territories on the Kenyan part of the coast retained a measure of their Zanzibari identity, though, and formed an autonomous Sayyidiyye province. Zanzibar's possessions on the Banādir coast came under Italian colonial rule.

Crisis and Religious Reform on the East African Coast

In the nineteenth century, the societies of the East African coast came to experience a series of crises which were linked, in political terms, with the rise and demise of the Sulṭānate of Zanzibar and the subsequent colonial partition of East Africa between Great Britain and Germany. This was symbolized in the bombardment of Zanzibar in 1896 by British naval forces, which sealed Zanzibar's transformation into a British protectorate. In economic terms, these transformations were linked with the development of a plantation economy based on slave work on an unprecedented scale in East Africa, while in religious terms, East Africa saw the emergence of a number of movements of reform dominated by Sufi orders, in particular the Qādiriyya, the ʿAlawiyya, and the Shādhiliyya. Sufism in ṭarīqa form came to be established on the East African coast, as in the bilād al-sūdān of sub-Saharan Africa in the nineteenth century only. Yet, by contrast to Sudanic West Africa, religious scholars linked with Sufi orders did not rise to become leaders of jihād movements; rather, they supported movements of reform in the spheres of ritual practice and education. These movements of reform can be interpreted as a response to popular dissatisfaction with the economic, political, and social development of the East African coast in the nineteenth century.

The processes of social change on the East African coast were expressed in the shifting of labels: while old inhabitants of the coastal settlements had proudly called themselves waungwana (free, civilized people), in contrast to the washenzi (savages) of the hinterland regions, the migrants to the coast soon also started claiming to be waungwana in order to express their own aspirations. Established town populations subsequently switched to the term Shirazi to point out their noble descent regarding the migrant hamali (carriers) or vibarua (porter-slaves). Slave hierarchies expressed social differentiation as well: the major categories were watumwa, the lower servants and plantation slaves, as well as wazalia, house slaves, who were often born on the coast. Watumwa who worked on the plantations of their masters had the chance to become sharecroppers over time, while wazalia had the chance to rise to wafundi (craftsmen). Social differentiation was even practiced with respect to newcomers from across the ocean: thus, Waarabu (Arabs) from Oman called all strata of coastal population indiscriminately sawāḥil' (coastals). At the same time, poor Arab immigrants who had come to the East African coast looking for work were referred to (on the East African coast) as Shihiri (Ḥaḍramis from Shiḥr) or Manga (Omanis), a term derived from the Arabic naqaʿa (to soak), denoting those poor Omanis who had to sail on often overcrowded dhows, and were consequently "soaked in water" when arriving in Zanzibar (Glassman 2011: 195).

The dissatisfaction of the Muslim populations on the East African coast was due to many causes: first of all, the imposition of Omani rule produced increasing pressure on the established families on the coast, as these families were marginalized, in political and economic terms, by the new Omani elites and their Indian partners in commerce and finance. In order to differentiate themselves from the new political elites, the prominent families of Mombasa, Lamu, and Malindi stressed their cultural identity as families of noble Shirazi origin. The prominent families in the coastal towns, however, were not the only ones to be excluded from political affairs and economic development: commoners were also affected because the rapid growth in size and number of clove and sugar cane plantations on the coast led to considerable migration from the East African interior to the coast. On the coast, these non-Muslim migrants competed with local populations for work, employment, and income. Threatened from more than one side, the communities on the coast reacted by emphasizing their social position as Shirazi citizens of Lamu or Mombasa, and refused to accept the social and religious integration of non-Muslim migrants and slaves, even if these newcomers to the coast converted to

Islam. Refusal of conversion and exclusion of converts from existing social and religious structures were connected with claims to cultural superiority: while the coastal populations regarded themselves as the harbingers of civilization, as waungwana, they saw outsiders, in particular those from the East African hinterlands, as washenzi (savages), devoid of cultural and religious roots. The washenzi were perceived as an additional threat to the established social order when they started to convert to Islam, which was regarded by the waungwana as a major feature of their own culture.

From the second half of the nineteenth century, Shirazi elites came to experience pressure in the sphere of religion as well, when another series of migrants started to question their role as religious elites. This time, the migrants came not from the African interior or from Oman, but from Ḥaḍramawt, the Banādir coast of contemporary southern Somalia as well as the Comoro islands. Many migrants from Ḥaḍramawt and the Comoros were connected with the ʿAlawiyya or Shādhiliyya Sufi orders and could claim descent from the family of the Prophet, while the migrants from Banādir coastal towns were often connected with the Qādiriyya. On the coast, the immigrant scholars from Ḥaḍramawt, the Banādir coast, and the Comoros started to compete with local scholars for influence and social positions and, suffering from similar strategies of exclusion, cultivated support among the marginalized groups of the coast. Thus, a coalition of the marginalized and excluded formed, which promised slaves and migrants social emancipation through conversion while providing the new scholars with a social base. Islam consequently became an arena of dispute where matters of inclusion and exclusion were negotiated. These processes of religious reorientation gave rise to a number of problems, as African slaves and migrants adopted not only features of local and allegedly authentic Islam, but continued to practice African rituals such as ngoma (drum) dances and to mix African with Islamic ritual practices.

The development of Islamic ritual was expressed in the dichotomy between established and new forms of the celebration of the birthday of the Prophet, the mawlid al-nabī, or the different forms of Sufi rituals, especially the dhikr. From the late nineteenth century, the dhikr of the Qādiriyya, in particular, saw important ritual innovations such as the zikri ya dufu, a dhikr implying the playing of dufu drums, and the zikri ya kukohoa, a dhikr implying rhythmic inhaling and exhaling (Arab. anfās; lit. breath). With respect to mawlid celebrations, the coastal Shirazi elites tended to cultivate the mawlid Barzanjī, recited in Arabic, whereas converts tended to follow the mawlidi ya Kiswahili as practiced, for instance, by Ḥabīb Ṣāliḥ Jamal al-Layl (1853–1935) from Lamu, a form of the mawlid characterized by performance in Kiswahili and ecstatic ritual. While the new rituals, in particular the different new forms of the dhikr and the mawlidi ya Kiswahili, were perceived by converts as being part of their new Islamic identity, the Shirazi elites resented these processes of innovation and reinterpretation of coastal Islamic culture as well as their transformation into convert concepts of Islam. Consequently, they attacked the new customs as un-Islamic innovations and condemned the egalitarianism of the new rituals.

Their critique was specifically directed at the dhikr ceremonies, as female spirit possession cults had some affinities to the dhikr and women often developed dhikr groups of their own. To Muslims with little formal learning, the dhikr seemed to offer a way to spiritual fulfillment that did not depend on literary accomplishment. Sufi ritual had an inherently egalitarian appeal to newcomers to Islam, and to townspeople who had been relegated to the margins of established religious institutions. The Sufi orders were of enormous importance in bringing newcomers to Islam; their egalitarian flavor posed a great appeal to the recent migrants, upcountry converts, slaves, and ex-slaves who had been routinely excluded from power "in patrician religious institutions" (Glassman 1995: 138). By the mid-1880s, some Qādirī versions of the dhikr became a popular form of worship on the coast, especially among slaves, and by 1883 Qādirī scholars were instrumental in gaining new converts for Islam on the coast. And although many Shirazi patricians rejected the new rituals, they sooner or later resigned and even started to support them in order to maintain their influence on the commoners. The adoption of these rituals by converts acquired such momentum that even some Qādirī scholars started to criticize them: they were not prepared to accept all forms of localization of Islamic rituals. Still, the efforts of tajdīd (reform) connected with the spread of the Qādiriyya led to an opening of the Islamic ritual, in particular the mawlidi ya Kiswahili and the dhikr of the Qādiriyya. The popularization of Sufi teachings by new scholars enabled uneducated Muslims and converts to acquire access to Sufi ritual. For some converts, access to Islam was even limited to Sufi ritual. This popularization of the ritual was later repeated with respect to the reform of Islamic education, in the context of the emergence of a new generation of ʿAlawī scholars who stressed the need to open access to Islamic education to all Muslims.

The scholars from Ḥaḍramawt and the Banādir coast were thus willing to defend convert practices of Islam and to provide a certain degree of religious legitimacy. For marginal groups in the coastal areas, as well as the migrant populations, affiliation with the new scholars, and participation in their religious and social activities, came to be an important avenue for social mobility, as these ritual practices were legitimized by the new scholars in Islamic terms against the critique of the local establishment. In these local disputes over the Islamic character of ritual innovations, legitimatory references to external centers of spiritual authority in the Ḥaḍramawt, ʿIrāq, the Ḥijāz, and Egypt were activated in order to gain external support for respective claims to religious authority. Actual contact with other parts of the Muslim ecumene, such as Egypt and the Ḥijāz, remained confined, however, to a minority of religious scholars and became more widespread, as in sub-Saharan West Africa, in the context of colonial rule only and the subsequent intensification of long-distance transport, trade, and state-organized pilgrimages, as well as the introduction of new media and new means of transport from the 1920s.

The critique of the established scholars was particularly directed against the new dhikr ceremonies of the Qādiriyya, as propagated by scholars such as Shaykh Uways

b. Muḥammad al-Barawī (1847–1909). Shaykh Uways was one of the few East African Muslim scholars who had studied in Baghdad, the spiritual center of the Qādiriyya, for a fairly long period of time in the 1870s and 1880s, returning to Brawa in 1883. After his return to Brawa, he claimed to be entitled to lead the local scholarly establishment on account of his scholarship and his direct connections with the center of the Qādiriyya. Although it was rejected in Brawa, his claim found considerable recognition in other parts of East Africa, in particular in Zanzibar, which after 1884 became a major center of his activities. In addition, Shaykh Uways cultivated good contacts with a number of sulṭāns of Zanzibar, in particular Barghash, Khalīfa b. Saʿīd (r. 1888–1890), and Ḥāmid b. Thwaynī (r. 1893–1896), and was able to transform his branch of the Qādiriyya into a religious mass movement. From the late 1880s, his interpretation of the teachings of the Qādiriyya, connected with a number of new and distinctive religious practices, especially the zikri ya kukohoa, became popular among converts to Islam. The new dhikr practices were attacked as an un-Islamic innovation and polemically described as a "dhikr of coughing" by other scholars, even scholars of the Qādiriyya who had become part of the local religious establishment, such as Shaykh ʿAbd al-Azīz b. ʿAbd al-Ghanī b. Ṭāhir b. Nūr al-Amawī (1838–1896). Since the 1860s, Shaykh al-Amawī had propagated another form of the dhikr, namely the zikri ya dufu, and probably felt threatened, in his position as paramount scholar of the Qādiriyya in Zanzibar, by the rapid spread of the new dhikr movement of Shaykh Uways. The perception of the zikri ya kukohoa as an un-Islamic innovation must thus be seen as a function of local disputes: while the established Amawī branch of the Qādiriyya depicted the zikri ya kukohoa in the context of competition with Shaykh Uways as a biḍʿa, the zikri ya kukohoa was perceived by the scholars of the Uways branch of the Qādiriyya as a religious practice which could be regarded as even more authentic than the local practices of the Qādiriyya, since it was practiced in the very center of the Qādiriyya in Baghdad. The new form of the dhikr, as defended and propagated by Shaykh Uways, eventually became a major feature of convert practices of Islam, as many converts sought affiliation with the Uways branch of the Qādiriyya which, in contrast to Shaykh al-Amawī's branch, was not associated with established Islam.

The rapid spread of the dhikr movement was not confined, however, to Zanzibar and the East African coast, but seems to have been a major force in the conversion of non-Muslims to Islam in the East African hinterlands in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Both Glassman and Nimtz correlate the movement of conversion to Islam in Tanganyika, from the late nineteenth century, with the activities of Qādirī dāʿiya and the ritual attraction of the dhikr. The expansion of the Qādiriyya and its ritual practices led to a massive spread of new Muslim rituals, in particular the different forms of dhikr. On the basis of these new rituals, new concepts of community came to be cultivated. These concepts were no longer characterized by competition but by the communal dhikr. At the same time, the new Sufi scholars became foci for social and

religious reorientation and were able to challenge existing social and religious structures which had been characterized by their exclusivity.

While the efforts of reform of the Qādiriyya had focused on ritual, a second reform movement on the East African coast concentrated on the propagation of the mawlid al-nabī and the reform of Islamic education. This movement was represented by scholars of the ʿAlawiyya, a network of families of sharīfian descent from Ḥaḍramawt. For many years, ʿAlawī families had formed networks of scholarship and trade all over the Indian Ocean. In East Africa, Lamu, and the Comoros, ʿAlawī families such as the Jamal al-Layl and Abū Bakr b. Sālim had been established since the early sixteenth century, while other ʿAlawī families had settled in Zanzibar more recently and were represented, in the late nineteenth century, by the families of Aḥmad b. Sumayṭ (d. 1925) and ʿAbdallāh Bā Kathīr al-Kindī (d. 1925). As a religious movement, the ʿAlawiyya, like the related Shādhiliyya, traced its origin to the Andalusian scholar and saint Shuʿayb Abū Madyan (d. 1198), and stressed, as did the Shādhiliyya, the importance of Islamic law and veneration of the Prophet as the major source of knowledge and inspiration. Veneration of the Prophet was emphasized through celebration of the Prophet's birthday, and in East Africa the celebration of the mawlid al-nabī came to be known as the major ʿAlawī ritual. At the same time, the scholars of the ʿAlawiyya adopted a critical position not only toward the Shirazi religious and political establishment, but also toward the scholars of the Qādiriyya and their concepts of the Islamic ritual which allowed for ecstatic practices. ʿAlawī scholars, in particular, tried to marginalize the growing social influence of Qādirī scholars by advancing new approaches to Islamic education. These efforts at education were expressed in the foundation of new schools, such as the ribāṭ al-riyādha in Lamu, established by Ḥabīb Ṣāliḥ Jamal al-Layl, or the madrasat Bā Kathīr in Zanzibar, established by ʿAbdallāh Bā Kathīr. These new schools taught Qurʾān and fiqh as well as a wide spectrum of the Islamic canon of disciplines. At the same time, scholars of the ʿAlawiyya started to make Islamic education available to all Muslims, even slaves. The popularization of the ritual brought about by scholars of the Qādiriyya was thus repeated, in structural terms, with regard to the reform of Islamic education by ʿAlawī scholars. Yet while the Qādiriyya and, to a certain extent, the Shādhiliyya under the influence of Muḥammad Maʿrūf (d. 1905) became religious mass movements in major parts of East Africa, including rural areas, from the late nineteenth century, the efforts of reform of the ʿAlawiyya in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries remained largely confined to a comparatively small group of Muslims in the coastal areas, and mainly in the urban centers.

Muslims in Upcountry East Africa

As mentioned, Islam did not start becoming established in the upcountries of the East African coast before the mid-nineteenth century. By contrast to the bilād al-sūdān in sub-Saharan West Africa, which formed a broad belt of Muslim cultures and countries, expanding gradually from the Saharan sāḥil toward the tropical forest belt of

the Guinea coast, Muslim societies on the East African coast remained confined to a chain of settlements on the shores of the Indian Ocean and the islands off the coast until the early nineteenth century. The historical division into a Muslim coast and non-Muslim upcountries is amazing and can be explained, in part, by the deep-rooted refusal of coastal Muslims to turn their attention from benign seas to forbidding nyika hinterlands, while trade connections between upcountry regions and the coast, as far as they existed at all, were maintained by upcountry populations that saw little reason to convert to Islam when coming down to the coast to do some trade. After all, they were integrated into old networks of exchange which reached far beyond the East African coast to the great lakes and beyond, to the upper Congo and its confluences.

In historical terms, and in contrast to sub-Saharan West Africa, the East African coastal hinterland has also been characterized by fairly low population densities between the southern Ethiopian highlands and the Ruvuma, which today constitutes the boundary between Tanzania and Mozambique. Only the interlacustrine region, which was far removed from the coast, had higher populations, as well as dense trade networks. At the same time, East African upcountry populations, in particular those in the interlacustrine region, were able to cover a major part of their needs by regional trade networks. Also, the interlacustrine region did not constitute a salt sink like sub-Saharan West Africa: salt deposits such as Kibiro on Lake Albert were available and formed part of local and regional exchange networks. As in West Africa, salt and copper deposits formed the basis for indigenous long-distance trade routes at fairly early periods; but these resources were also located in the interior zones, thus providing no incentive for penetration of the nyika and "very little linkage with coastal trade until the nineteenth century" (Austen 1987: 58). Last but not least, slaves from the hinterlands could be exported to the coast only as long as they were non-Muslim. Local rulers in the hinterland regions of the central East African coast, who traded with the coast, were not keen thus on encouraging conversion to Islam in their respective realms. Widespread Muslim allegiance would have interfered with their assertion of privileged contact with the coast. Moreover, ignorance of Islam was part of what marked out slaves on the coast: the big men's customers had "no enthusiasm for Muslim slaves" (Becker 2008: 37). People who wanted to become Muslim had to go down to the coast.

The division between the coast and the upcountry regions was to change only in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, when coastal settlements developed an increasing demand for both workers (carriers, slaves) and trade goods such as ivory, and were willing and able to pay for these imports with new technologies, in particular guns and ammunition. It has to be stressed again, however, that most of the immediate hinterlands of the northern and central coasts were barely settled, except for some pastoralists and hunter gatherers; the way to the fertile and more densely settled regions on Lake Victoria, and to the other Great Lakes, was arduous and long. Thus, in pre-Portuguese times the most profitable trade routes from the coast into the East

African hinterlands were in the south, in particular the route up the Zambezi to the gold mines of the Mwene Motapa, which led to the prosperity of Kilwa and the southern coast between the thirteenth and the fifteenth centuries. After the disruptions by the Portuguese and the Zimba, southern routes were also the first to be revived in the eighteenth century, in particular those controlled by the Yao, connecting Mozambique and Kilwa with Lake Malawi.

Over time, three networks of routes from the coast to the interlacustrine regions of East Africa developed: first, the southern routes from Kilwa to the Ruvuma and

First Muslims reached Buganda in the 1840s under Kabaka (king) Suna (r. 1832–1856) in the guise of a trader called Aḥmad b. Ibrāhīm. Islam gained a major position at the court, when Kabaka Mutesa I (r. 1856–84) allowed a Muslim trader, ʿAlī Nakatukula, to instruct him in the new religion. His work was continued by another trader, Khamīs b. ʿAbdallāh, from 1867. Eventually, the Kabaka himself taught Islam to the lords of his kingdom and introduced public recitation of the Qurʾān at court. In 1867, Ramaḍān was practiced for the first time, a mosque was built, and ritual ablution was introduced, not only at the court but in all provincial centers. The growing group of Muslims was opposed by a party of tradition, which, however, suffered a massacre in 1875, resulting in mass conversion to Islam. By 1874, the Kabaka seems to have spoken both Kiswahili and Arabic, and by 1875 Arabic was established as the language of correspondence at the court. The court cultivated relations with Zanzibar. Indeed, Zanzibari fashion set the standards in Buganda. In the late 1870s, Egyptian imperial expansion up the Nile was perceived as an increasing threat to Buganda, however: in 1872, an Egyptian basis was established in Fatiko, south of Gondokoro, close to Buganda's northern borders, and in 1876 an Egyptian expedition reached Lake Victoria. This led to a revision of Buganda's politics: the Kabaka rehabilitated the party of tradition and allowed Christian missionaries to come to Buganda. Muslim critique was silenced in a massacre of prominent Muslims in late 1876. The arrival of Christian missionaries in 1877 started a period of competition between Muslims, Christians, and the party of tradition, in which the Kabaka changed sides several times. This situation did not change under Mutesa's successors, Muwanga (r. 1884–88) and Kalema (r. 1888–90). In 1890, under the impression of the advance of the Mahdiyya, the Christian party organized a revolt and defeated the last Muslim strongholds in northern Buganda in 1891.

thence to Lake Malawi. Transport on these routes was organized largely by Yao traders from the seventeenth century. Second, there were the central routes from Zanzibar and Bagamoyo via Tabora to Ujiji on Lake Tanganyika and beyond. These routes were dominated by the Nyamwesi and were extended to the Upper Congo in the second half of the nineteenth century. And finally, there were the northern routes from Mombasa and Pangani to either the north or the south of the Usambara and Pare mountains into the highlands beyond Mount Kilimanjaro and Mount Kenya, as well as, eventually, to Lake Victoria (Nyanza) and Buganda on the northern shores of Lake Victoria. Only from the early nineteenth century onward were traders from the central and northern coasts able, however, to establish those long-distance trade routes through the arid wastelands of the Maasai Mara toward Lake Victoria, which eventually connected these areas of trade with the coast. These routes, in particular the northern branches, were dominated by the Kamba and were fully developed by the mid-nineteenth century, although the Kamba lost control over this route by the 1860s. In addition, there were the even more northern routes, from Lamu, Brawa, Marka, and Mogadishu, up the Tana and Juba/Shebelle to the southern highlands of Ethiopia. On each route, African peoples of the interior were the first to establish domination over each route and controlled the trade as well as the logistics of the trade. Over time, traders from the coast, Arabs, Indians, and Swahili, established their own trade networks and concluded agreements of cooperation with local rulers, expanding gradually toward the interior.

While Muslim traders from the coast and Nyamwesi networks controlled trade on the central routes, the southern routes were dominated by Yao traders, who had established contact with Kilwa and other coastal centers of trade since the seventeenth century. Despite their long history of contacts with Muslims on the coast, the first Yao seem to have converted to Islam only in the 1870s, but conversion to Islam accelerated in the last decades of the nineteenth century, possibly under the impression of Portuguese colonialism and the increasing presence of Europeans in East African trade. At the same time, the Yao, who were not united in political terms, suffered from the political expansion of the Makua in the south. In order to escape Makua pressure, many Yao resettled in the late nineteenth century on the northern shores of Lake Malawi and established new centers of trade in this region. Lake Malawi had already been reached by a Muslim trader from the coast, Sālim b. ʿAbdallāh, in 1840, and the center of trade established by him, Kota Kota, soon became the most important center for long-distance trade on the southern routes in the interior. Sālim b. ʿAbdallāh even built a fleet of dhows on Lake Malawi and thus consolidated his paramount role in the region. Sālim b. ʿAbdallāh flew the flag of the sulṭān of Zanzibar, encouraged local chiefs to send their sons for studies to Zanzibar, and seems to have been the local ruler who handed over the assassins of Albrecht Roscher to the sulṭān of Zanzibar in 1860. During his first visit to Kota Kota in 1866, the British explorer Livingstone remarked that "indeed most of the houses here are square for the Arabs are imitated in everything" (quoted in Shepperson 1966: 254).

When Kota Kota came under British control in 1895, a majority of the population had become Muslim and Kota Kota was a major center of Islam in the region. By way of caravan trade, Muslims also reached new destinations in the East African interior and beyond: in 1841, a first coastal expedition, led by Nāṣir b. Sālim al-Ḥarthy and ʿAbd al-ʿĀl, reached the Kasai in the Western Congo, and in 1852 the first three traders from Zanzibar crossed Central Africa and reached the Portuguese harbor of Benguela on the Atlantic. In 1853, the British explorer Livingston also met a group of Swahili traders led by Saʿīd b. Ḥabīb al-ʿAfīfī in Linyati, in contemporary northern Namibia, yet, as sea routes around the Cape proved to be faster than the trade across the land, the development of a Muslim East African trade network between the Indian Ocean and the Atlantic never materialized. Still, these new trade routes contributed massively to a new flourishing of the East African coast from the early nineteenth century, based on two major items of export: ivory and slaves.

East African trade, like trans-Saharan trade, was organized in the form of caravans. Due to the fact that parts of the East African interior were infested with tsetse flies which transmitted sleeping sickness, East Africa did not have a tradition of animal-based caravans but had to rely on humans. The logistics of a caravan were complex. Caravans were organized by a majumbe or akida, a master of the caravan: they supervised the recruitment of the carriers (Swa. hamali) and were responsible for discipline in the caravan. For a number of East African societies, to work as a carrier came to mean a form of social advancement that would eventually lead to the position of a majumbe. Often a majumbe would also act as imām or as a healer (Swa. mganga) and lead the religious ceremonies during a caravan. The return of the caravan to the coast was linked with a feast, as young men saw their return as porters from a caravan as a form of initiation into the community of adult men. From the early nineteenth century, the Nyamwesi specialized as carriers and tried to earn the funds needed for proper marriage. In order to be accepted as a man, one had to have been in Zanzibar.

Due to the fact that caravans provided valuable work and income, the transport of goods never became the work of slaves: slaves were needed as unpaid workers on the plantations on the islands and on the coast, but not as hamali in caravans. A caravan thus had to recruit a sufficient number of porters for the loads carried inland, as well as back to the coast. These loads included necessities for the survival of the caravan itself and goods that were needed as toll fees in order to be granted passage (Swa. hongo) through the territories of local rulers on the way to the different markets. A caravan usually had hundreds of carriers, in addition to armed guards, the employees of the traders, their families, and numerous craftsmen, in particular smiths, carpenters, and constructors who were in charge of repairs, the manufacture of spare parts, and the construction of camps. Finally, a caravan took on a number of elephant hunters. All carriers and participants in a caravan concluded a contract with the trader or entrepreneur who organized it. The carriers, in particular, were hired for a specific period of time and often got an advance payment for their services. Still, carriers deserted

repeatedly, an experience that European caravans frequently had in the second half of the nineteenth century. Each carrier was given a load of about 25–30 kilograms, and each group of carriers had its own leader. To cover the distance from Bagamoyo to Tabora, the major center of the Nyamwesi, a caravan would need about 45–50 days, and to Ujiji another 20–25 days. Often, the caravan had to be reconstituted in Tabora, as many carriers did not want to go further and preferred to return to the coast. Also, many caravans split in Tabora and continued in different directions. The Nyamwesi had managed to establish contact with Kazembe, south of Lake Mweru, and thus with Yao trade networks leading to Lake Malawi in the south, as well as with the much larger trade networks that ran from Kazembe into Katanga, beyond Lake Tanganyika and Lake Malawi. At the same time, the Nyamwesi developed a trade route from Tabora to the north, which eventually reached Lake Victoria from the south.

The major item of export on all routes was ivory, which was a highly esteemed material for the production of jewelry in India, and which came to be highly valued for the production of piano keys and billiard balls in nineteenth-century Europe and America. In 1859, Zanzibar alone exported more than 221,000 kilograms of ivory, and this seems to have remained the annual average until the 1890s. One kilogram of ivory fetched 120–180 dollars on the market in the 1890s. The ivory craze in India, Europe, and North America led to the quick extinction of elephants on the East African coast and pushed the ivory frontier farther and farther into the East African interior. In the 1840s, on the northern and central routes, the coastal trade had reached the old trade networks in the interlacustrine regions and subsequently linked up with the trade networks which connected the interlacustrine regions with the territories on the upper Congo. The major products of trade for the interlacustrine region were textiles, palm oil, and guns from the coast, and ivory, slaves, and copper from the interior. The major center of this trade on the central route was Ujiji on Lake Tanganyika, whose ruler, Mwinyi Kheri, was eventually acknowledged as master of Ujiji by Sulṭān Barghash in the 1870s. From the 1870s, Ujiji also became the transmission belt for further expansion of the coastal trade into the Congo region, an expansion which was linked with the endeavors of two Muslim traders, ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd Muḥammad Jumaʿ al-Murjibī and Muḥammad b. Khalfān alias Rumaliza, originally a major ally of ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd Muḥammad Jumaʿ al-Murjibī, who later appropriated his properties on Lake Tanganyika.

ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd b. Muḥammad b. Jumaʿ al-Murjibī (d. 1905) was better known among European travelers as Tippu Tip (the one who flickers with his eyelids). The German consul in Zanzibar, Heinrich Brode, wrote and published his biography in 1903 under the title *Autobiographie des Arabers Schech Hamed bin Muhammed el Murjebi, genannt Tippu Tip*. Tippu Tips's great-grandfather originated from Masqaṭ in Oman, but married on the East African coast and started a trading business, which was subsequently expanded by his son, Muḥammad b. Jumaʿ, and his grandson, ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd. Muḥammad b. Jumaʿ settled permanently in Tabora, which, as the center of

the Unyamwesi region, came to form the major crossroads for trade with the African interior. The ruler of Tabora, Fundi Kira, privileged traders from the coast by exempting them from taxes, and married one of his daughters to Muḥammad b. Jumaʿ. In 1858, Tippu Tip undertook the first of many journeys with his father, traveling via Ujiji to Urua, west of Lake Tanganyika. They brought back large loads of ivory which earned a good profit in Zanzibar and helped Tippu Tip to equip his own caravan. With this caravan, he ventured into the regions south of Lake Tanganyika, to Urungu, where he again acquired a great amount of ivory. Also, he proved himself as a capable caravan leader and was thus deemed worthy of credit by the Indian bankers on the coast. On his third caravan trip, he reached the northern shores of Lake Malawi and made good gains there, then explored the Bamba region south of Lake Tanganyika, and eventually reached Itowa, southwest of Lake Tanganyika, which was ruled by Nsama, a local ruler who was known to have robbed traders from the coast. However, Tippu Tip succeeded in taking Nsama's stronghold and seizing his rich stores of ivory. In this local conflict, Tippu Tip could rely on firearms and the efficient use of them for rapid fire. This superior fire power gave Tippu Tip military supremacy over local rulers, comparable to that of the Sudanese conquistador Rābiḥ b. Faḍl Allāh, or of European military expeditions, and this is reflected correspondingly in his biography. After a first victorious encounter with the "washenzi" of Itahua, Tippu Tip describes the next attack of the shensis (i.e., washenzi, "savages"):

> The next morning, about a quarter to seven, our men went out, and saw that about 600 Shensis had fallen, and the weapons—spears, arrows, bows, drums and axes—which they had thrown away were not to be counted. They had stood in groups, you see. We waited a short time. When it was two o'clock, the Shensis advanced on us in great crowds. However, they were already frightened. We let them come close to the *boma,* then our people charged; and not seven minutes had passed when they took to flight, and 150 men had fallen, while we had been lucky—only two men fell. (Tippu Tip as recorded by Brode 1903/2000: 17)

In 1869, Tippu Tip was back in Dar es Salaam, the new harbor on the coast, and asked the Indian banker Tharia Topan to finance a new, larger caravan. He equipped his fourth caravan with a great number of firearms, and left in 1870 for the southern reaches of Lake Tanganyika, where he established a major base for his excursions into Itawa, Katanga, and Kazembe, as well as Urua and Manyema to the west of Lake Tanganyika. Equally, he aimed at the Lualaba, a tributary of the Congo River, which had been reached so far by only one trader from the coast, Jumaʿ b. Sayf Merikani, who had become famous for introducing American cotton textiles (Merikani) on the Upper Congo. On the Lualaba, Tippu Tip learned about rich ivory stocks on the upper Lomami and subsequently pushed with his troops into the tropical forests of the Upper Lomami. After defeating the Utetela, Songye, and Kasa, he reached Nyangwe, west of Lake Tanganyika, on his way back in 1874. From Nyangwe, he sent to the coast the ivory stocks he had acquired so far and continued his forays into the Upper Congo, now

from a second base in Kasongo, in western Manyema, where he also came to meet the Anglo-American traveler Henry Morton Stanley. He accompanied Stanley down the Congo to the mouth of the Ulindi and then turned west to the Lomami, where he was able to acquire further stocks of ivory. After arriving back in Kasongo, he put together a huge caravan of more than 3,000 carriers to transport his ivory to the coast. The profit he made on this caravan enabled him not only to pay all his debts, but also to finance his own caravan, and to build a stock of capital for further expeditions. These expeditions took him far west into the tropical forests of the Congo and its confluences. Here he met European travelers and explorers, who saw in him a major problem for the expansion of European trade in this region and who were not at all amused when they realized that they had to rely on Tippu Tip's logistics for the transport of their own goods from one trading center to the next. In the Congo, agents of King Leopold of Belgium, who had started to explore this vast region as his own private empire, tried to strike a deal with Tippu Tip, yet failed as he presented himself as a representative of the sulṭān of Zanzibar. In 1883, Tippu Tip in fact went to the Upper Congo in order to establish the authority and the flag of the sulṭān of Zanzibar in this region, and established a base in Kisangani, on the upper Congo, in 1884, thus disputing the claims of King Leopold (as represented by Stanley). As Kisangani was situated below the last cataracts of the upper Congo, the way downstream to the Atlantic seemed to be free for Tippu Tip and the sulṭān of Zanzibar. In a series of small expeditions, Tippu Tip secured control over the Lower Lomami and the Aruwimi in the north, which linked the Congo River system with the territories of the Zande on the upper Nile and its confluences. The Sulṭānate of Zanzibar was not able to defend these territorial claims internationally, however, and eventually lost all its mainland territories to disputing European powers in the aftermath of the Berlin Congo Conference in 1885. And although the European powers were not physically present in most of these areas, they had the naval power to force Zanzibar into submission.

Tippu Tip eventually left the territories conquered by him in the Congo to the authority of his younger brother, Bwana Nzige, who was subsequently able to stop the Belgian advance toward Kisangani, and returned to Zanzibar in 1886. In Zanzibar, Tippu Tip found that the Sulṭānate had been forced to abandon most of its mainland territories to Britain and Germany, as well as King Leopold, in an agreement reached on 7 December 1886. He still assisted Stanley in his endeavors to trace Emin Pasha alias Eduard Schnitzler, the German governor of Equatoria, a province of the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan. Unknown to Stanley, Emin Pasha had established a base in Upper Equatoria. Tippu Tip eventually returned to Zanzibar when he realized that the Belgian advance in the Congo could not be stopped. He retired in Zanzibar and was able to win a number of legal cases against his banker, Tharia Topan, against Rumaliza, who had tried to appropriate his possessions on Lake Tanganyika and the Congo, as well as against Stanley, who had falsely accused him of being responsible for the disaster of the Emin Pasha rescue operation. He died in 1905. By the time of his death, he

was the second biggest owner of plantations in Zanzibar, worked by 10,000 slaves, as well as being the owner of numerous houses.

Muslim traders in the upper Congo resented the Belgian advance and organized armed resistance, defeating two Belgian expeditions in 1892 and attacking Belgian positions on the Lomami. In 1893, Belgium was forced to equip a major military force to win this war, eventually occupying all Muslim positions on the upper Congo, including Kasongo. In 1894, the Belgians defeated a military expedition commanded by a former ally of Tippu Tip, Rumaliza, thus ending Zanzibar's political influence in the region. Still, Muslim presence on the upper Congo could no longer be denied, and was particularly prominent in Kasongo, the major base of Tippu Tip: in 1889, Kasongo had a population of about 20,000 inhabitants, consisting of Muslims from the coast, as well as a mix of peoples from the upper Congo and Manyema regions. The town had a qur'ānic school and a mosque, Swahili fashion had been established, and new crops had been introduced from the coast. Kasongo thus came to be a center for the establishment and spread of Islam in the upper Congo, and for the spread of Kiswahili as the language of communication in this region.