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AFRICA IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY.

Yale University, Ph.D., 1974
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**PLANTATION SLAVERY ON THE EAST COAST OF AFRICA
IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY**

A Dissertation

Presented to the Faculty of the Graduate School

of

Yale University

in Candidacy for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

by

Frederick Cooper

December 1974

ABSTRACT

PLANTATION SLAVERY ON THE EAST COAST OF AFRICA IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

Frederick Cooper

Yale University 1974

In the early nineteenth century Arabs from Oman began to settle on the island of Zanzibar and grow cloves with the use of slaves imported from the African mainland. Subsequently, Arab and African inhabitants of the mainland coast developed large plantations, producing grain and coconuts by use of slave labor. This dissertation examines that process of economic development and its impact on the slave system, focusing on variations in the economic and social structure of the islands of Zanzibar and Pemba and the mainland towns of Malindi and Mombasa.

Before the development of plantation agriculture, there were no labor-intensive, large-scale industries in either Oman or East Africa. Slaves were more important as domestic servants, political retainers, and concubines than as productive workers. Above all slaves were members of their master's entourage. Not only did their presence confer prestige upon their owner, but they added to the political and even military strength of his communal group. Islamic norms and laws emphasized the subordination of slaves to their master, but specified that slaves were members of the Muslim community and entitled to certain clearly-defined rights. Slaves were part of a stratified social order.

The expansion of plantation agriculture was a threat to the economic basis of such a form of slavery. Production for a market demanded efficient organization of labor and repressive measures to raise productivity. As the importance of production for the market grew, the role of the slave

might be transformed from follower to laborer.

These tendencies affected East Africa as clove, grain, and coconut plantations came to play an important part in the economy. Large numbers of slaves were set to work in the fields of rich plantation owners, and for the first time gang labor came into use. In parts of the coast where land was most abundant, where crops required year-round labor, and where the economy and society were centered on agriculture, the organization of labor became more regimented and efficient. Where the importance of productivity was less and the social dimension of slavery more valued, looser forms of organization and supervision prevailed. However, the Indian Ocean market was limited, and as production in East Africa increased, prices fell, reducing the incentives to continue the process of plantation development. The social and political structure of the coast continued to require slaves in their familiar roles. The new economic forces did not result in a simple erosion of older notions of status, power and the roles of slaves in society. Rather, the growth of plantations as self-contained rural economic and social units transformed the nature of the slaves' dependency.

Despite the increased economic importance of slaves, the amount of work required of them and the use of physical coercion were less than in most plantation societies of the Western Hemisphere. The most striking differences, however, were in the slaves' social life. Slaves were allowed to live with relatively little supervision, to congregate together in their leisure hours, and to engage in economic activities on their own behalf once their required tasks were done. Although slave-owners strongly desired that their slaves become Muslims and learn the language and customs of the coast, slaves were able to preserve some

of the customs of their homelands. Masters tolerated this degree of independence precisely because of their conception of slavery as an institution of dependence. In a society divided into competing communal groups, slaves could only find a place in the social order as inferior members of their masters' communal groups. Viewing themselves as protectors and their slaves as dependents, masters could expect loyalty from their slaves without a constricting apparatus of social control. Because slaves were integrated into a world view based on communal solidarity and patriarchy -- reinforced by Islam -- there was less need for slaveowners to work out an ideology of domination based on race than in such slave societies as the Southern United States.

This study compares plantation slavery on the East African coast with plantation slavery in the Western Hemisphere and is particularly concerned with distinguishing the forms of paternalism that evolved in East Africa and the Southern United States. It is based on accounts by European travellers, missionaries and officials, local documents, and interviews with the descendants of slaveowners and slaves.

PREFACE

My desire to pursue the topic of this dissertation arose from a fascination with the complex and cosmopolitan culture of the East African coast and from an interest in the diverse forms of the institution of slavery in different economic and social situations. Coastal society cannot be understood without a thorough understanding of the institution of slavery, while students of comparative slavery can learn much from this East African case study because it does not fall neatly in any one category, but reflects a variety of tendencies and forces. I will be stressing the similarities and differences between slavery on the East African coast and in the Americas, particularly the Southern United States. I chose this comparative reference because both cases involve plantation slavery, which makes a controlled comparison feasible, and because the issue of slavery in the Americas has led to a stimulating debate among historians and the production of excellent monographs.

This dissertation covers a larger geographical area than most monographs on African history. This necessitates compromising one of the virtues of most recent work in African history, the detailed discussion of the local setting. The gain, however, is worth the cost, for discussing a single institution in a number of localities allows us to isolate the variables which affect the forms of slavery. The East African coast has a common culture, subject to numerous local variations, and in the nineteenth century was part of a single political entity, the Sultanate of Zanzibar, and a single trading network. I am focusing on four specific

areas of the coast: the islands of Zanzibar and Pemba, where the clove industry was built up in the nineteenth century through the use of slave labor, and two towns in what is now Kenya, Mombasa and Malindi, which were centers of grain and coconut plantations.

Like most studies of economic and social history, this one has no sharp boundaries in time. It begins in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries with an analysis of slavery in southeastern Arabia, where the founders of Zanzibar's clove plantations originated. It then examines the process of agricultural development, between approximately 1820 and 1850 on the islands and 1840 to 1885 on the mainland. It will take the analysis of economic trends up to the 1890's, when the European takeover of East Africa injected new variables into its society and economy. The analysis of the institution of slavery is based on sources from a wide span of time, but the data are best from the 1840's to the 1890's. Slavery was abolished in 1897 in Zanzibar and 1907 in Kenya.

I have had the good fortune to obtain much of my information from the wazee (elders) of the Kenya coast, and not just from documents. The experience of working with them in pursuit of a shared goal of preserving knowledge of the past has helped make this endeavor personally valuable to me. I deeply appreciate the time and effort which these men, the sons of slaves as well as slaveholders, gave me. I have included a list of the names of informants in Appendix B and wish to express my gratitude to all of these individuals. Here, I would like to say a special word about three of them. Al-Amin Said Al-Mandhry was more of a teacher than an informant. I came to him numerous times for insight into Islamic law, coastal culture, agriculture, slavery, and the history of Mombasa. Mohammed Maawia introduced me to his home town, Malindi. Not only was his knowledge

and understanding of the economy and society of the town impressive, but he also was able to give me introductions to the elders of his community, the Washella, and many people from other communal groups as well. He also helped guide me through the intricacies of the records of the Land Office in Mombasa, where he works. Finally, Awade Maktub, born of slave ancestry in the declining years of slavery, provided me with a view of Malindi society from the point of view of the people who worked in the fields.

I am also grateful to the many archivists and librarians, whose institutions are mentioned in the bibliography, for helping me locate obscure material. I am especially happy to have had the opportunity to work in the archives and government offices in Kenya. I would like to thank Dr. Farouk Topan for showing me the illuminating biography of his grandfather Tharia Topan written by Dr. Topan's father. The comparative dimension of this study owes much to Eugene D. Genovese's forthcoming book, Roll, Jordan, Roll, which Professor Genovese generously allowed me to cite in advance of publication.

I have also benefitted from being a Research Associate of the Department of History of the University of Nairobi, in particular from the advice and criticism of Kenyan historians and the opportunity to have a scholarly base in Kenya. Fortunately, my stay on the coast of Kenya overlapped the field work of several other students of coastal history, and the atmosphere of common effort that existed among us was intellectually healthy and personally rewarding. I would like to thank Peter Koffsky, William McKay, Karim Janmohamed, and Margaret Strobel for sharing notes, leads on informants, and ideas with me. Especially useful to me, were the transcripts of interviews with Swahili women which Margaret

Strobel showed to me.

In addition, I want to thank my mother, Ruth Cooper, for sparing me the task of translating some important works in German and William Freund for giving me a summary of a thesis in Dutch. My final preparations of the manuscript were eased considerably by help from Carol Wasserloos, Rachel Klein, and Cleo Thompson.

Finally, my teachers, colleagues, and friends have given me much thoughtful criticism of early versions of the dissertation. Drafts of the manuscript in its voluminous entirety were read by Leonard Thompson, David Robinson, David Brion Davis, Margaret Strobel, Carol Wasserloos, and William Freund. I received helpful advice on particular chapters from members of colloquia at the University of Nairobi and Yale University, as well as from Marie-Noëlle Bourguet, Marcia Wright, David Yudelman, Kennell Jackson, and Sidney Mintz. Most of all, I am deeply grateful to Leonard Thompson, not only for encouragement, advice, and criticism, but for generously fulfilling the obligations of a patron without expecting me to behave in the role of a client.

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SWAHILI TERMS

I have used Swahili terms only when they contain a nuance not in a simple English equivalent or when I am discussing Swahili usage. I have tried to use Swahili words in a form that would be acceptable to coastal people. Swahili plurals are generally formed by altering or adding a prefix to a root, so that most words, whether singular or plural, can be recognized by the non-Swahili-speaker simply by looking at the root. Some terms used several times are (plurals in parentheses):

hamali (mahamali): port worker, carrier

heshima: respect, honor, dignity, rank

huru (mahuru): manumitted slave

kibarua (vibarua): day-laborer (lower status than hamali)

mkulia (wakulia): slave who was brought up locally (i.e. who was bought as a child)

mtama (mitama): millet

mtumwa (watumwa): slave

mwungwana (waungwana): free person without slave descent

mzalia (wazalia): locally-born slave, person of slave descent

nokoa (manokoa): supervisor on a plantation

shamba (mashamba): farm or plantation

toro (watoro): runaway slave

ARABIC TERMS

kafa'a: Islamic law of equality (or suitability) in marriage

Qadi: Judge under Islamic law

Seyyid: Lord or master, honorary title used by Omanis, especially for the Sultan of Muscat and Zanzibar

Sharī'a: Islamic law

MONEY AND WEIGHTS

Currency is expressed in Maria Theresa Dollars (\$). They were officially exchanged at par with United States dollars during the nineteenth century. During most of the period of this study the exchange rate at Zanzibar for a pound sterling was \$4.75.

Small amounts are expressed in pice, at the rate of 128 pice to one dollar.

The only local weight that is referred to is the frasila, equal to 36 pounds.

ABBREVIATIONS USED IN THE NOTES

- a/c Adjudication Cause: records of hearings on applications for titles to land on the coast of Kenya, 1912-24, Land Office, Mombasa.
- CMS Church Missionary Society Archives, London.
- CP Coast Province Collection, Kenya National Archives, Nairobi.
- FO Foreign Office files, Public Record Office, London.
- FOCP Foreign Office Confidential Prints, Slave Trade and Africa Series, Public Record Office, London.
- Ind. Of. India Office Records and Library, London.
- INA Indian National Archives, Foreign Department, excerpts from material on Zanzibar, prepared by Dr. Abdul Sheriff, microfilm in the library of the University of Dar es Salaam.
- KNA Kenya National Archives, Nairobi (except for Coast Province Collection).
- MAE Archives du Ministère des Affaires Etrangères, Paris. (Correspondance Commerciale, Zanzibar, except as noted.)
- MAL Notes of interviews at Malindi, Kenya, 1972-73. Numbers refer to a list of informants in Appendix B, pp. 449-53.
- MSA Notes of interviews at Mombasa, Kenya, 1972-73. Numbers refer to a list of informants in Appendix B, pp. 453-56.
- NEMA New England Merchants in Africa: A History through Documents 1802 to 1865, ed. by Norman R. Bennett and George E. Brooks, Jr. (Boston: Boston University Press, 1965).
- O.I. Océan Indien file, Archives de l'Ancien Ministère d'Outre-Mer, Paris.
- Reg. Registers of deeds, 1891-1912, Mombasa Land Office. In citations, the letter "A" after a number refers to the series of volumes on transactions (sales, mortgages, etc.) involving land, and "B" refers to the volumes of deeds not dealing with land.
- Réunion Réunion file, Archives de l'Ancien Ministère d'Outre-Mer, Paris.
- RGS Royal Geographical Society, London.

TBGS Transactions of the Bombay Geographical Society.
UMCA Universities' Mission to Central Africa, London.
UP University Press
US Consul Despatches from United States Consuls in Zanzibar, National
Archives, Washington.

INTRODUCTION: PLANTATION SLAVERY IN COMPARATIVE PERSPECTIVE

People of diverse races and cultures, in all parts of the world and in all periods of history, have developed a variety of ways to force others to work for them. In relatively undifferentiated societies where all inhabitants toiled in the fields to produce their own food, political leaders sometimes mobilized kinsmen, clients, subjects, or slaves to build their houses or perform other special tasks. In many parts of the world, powerful groups captured weaker outsiders and set them to work tilling the soil or carrying water. Landowners in other places reduced their own subjects to serfdom and enjoyed the fruits of their labor. As these forms of unfree labor were abolished in the name of humanity or progress, the concentration of land and other means of production in a limited number of hands made it impossible for most people to live without working for others. In modern industrial society, self-subsistence is rarely an alternative, and people find themselves part of a system which encourages work not only in the name of necessity, but in the name of deeply ingrained and carefully nurtured social values emphasizing work and success for their own sake. Labor for the benefit of others has always had an element of compulsion, whether the pain of the whip, the fear of starvation, or the pressures of social conventions and ideology.

Slavery is one form of labor. It is not the only one responsible for vast human suffering and its abolition has not always relieved the misery of its victims. Yet it has, more than other forms of labor, captured the imagination of those who were sensitive--as reformers or as scholars--to the subservience of man to man. A slaveowner not only controlled the labor of his slave, he owned his very person. The worker became a commodity that could be bought and sold. No more dramatic symbol of the subordination of humanity to the greed of the wealthy and the powerful could be imagined.¹

In another sense, slavery, more than other forms of labor, recognized the humanity of the slave. He was not simply a factor of production, with whom the employer maintained a limited relationship for a limited portion of each day, but a part of the master's household, plantation, or factory. The slaveowner was responsible for a slave's maintenance and welfare, whether the slave was actually working, at rest, or ill. He was responsible at law for the slave's actions against other members of the society. The master derived not only labor from his slaves, but the satisfaction and status of having dependents. If the labor market is an instance of the dominance of the principal of gesellschaft in modern economic organizations, the master-slave relationship was characteristic of the gemeinschaft of an earlier age.²

¹ A slave is a person who is legally defined as property and whose labor and person both have economic value. In non-Western societies a slave can often be distinguished from other dependent persons by the fact that he has lost all association with his own descent group. M. I. Finley, "Slavery," in International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences (New York: Macmillan, 1968), Vol. XIV, p. 308.

² Eugene D. Genovese calls slavery "archaic" in comparison with the modes of production in Europe at the time the plantations evolved.

Dependence and labor are two dimensions of slavery found in varying degrees in different slave systems. In studying slavery in such places as the United States South, Brazil, and Cuba, scholars have looked for --and found--evidence that slavery, to a degree not found in free labor systems, reduced slaves to economic objects. Severe physical punishment, bad living conditions, and deprivation of family life were all part of an attempt by masters to maximize their profits and insure a compliant labor force. Other scholars studying the same regions have looked for --and found--evidence that slavery was an organic social institution, that slaves were treated as inferior members of a hierarchy, and that the relationships between masters and slaves, if unequal, were essentially human.³ Slavery has in fact been seen as an essentially pre-capitalist system, a social form de-emphasizing the impersonal relationships of the labor market in favor of a system in which the employer and employees interact as total people.⁴ The differences in views reflect not only

The World the Slaveholders Made (New York: Pantheon, 1969), p. 22. In terms of the relationship between master and slave, he is correct, but in terms of the ability of the labor system to meet the demands of the economy the point is debatable. Agriculture based on slave labor often lacked the flexibility of wage labor, but in its prime brought high returns on investment.

³Labor is emphasized by Kenneth Stampp, The Peculiar Institution (New York: Vintage, 1956); Stanley J. Stein, Vassouras: A Brazilian Coffee County, 1850-1900 (Cambridge: Harvard U.P., 1957); and Franklin W. Knight, Slave Society in Cuba During the Nineteenth Century (Madison: Wisconsin U.P., 1970). Dependence is stressed by Ulrich B. Phillips, Life and Labor in the Old South (Boston: Little, Brown, 1929); Gilberto Freyre, The Masters and the Slaves: A Study in the Development of Brazilian Civilization, trans. Samuel Putnam, abridged from 2nd ed. (New York: Knopf, 1964); and Herbert Klein, Slavery in the Americas: A Comparative Study of Virginia and Cuba (Chicago: Chicago U.P., 1967).

⁴Eugene D. Genovese, The Political Economy of Slavery (New York: Pantheon, 1965). In his latest work, Genovese refers to the "uniquely nonbourgeois character of the antebellum regime despite its many capitalist

differences in the ideologies and temperaments of the investigators, but also changes in the socio-economic situation over time and from place to place within these nations. Slavery in Cuba, to take one example, changed fundamentally in the nineteenth century with the development of massive exports of sugar. Within a relatively short period of time and without a drastic cultural transformation of the Spanish-speaking slaveowners, a relaxed and paternalistic slave society became a brutally exploitative one.⁵ Slave society may be an organic social institution, but it can be mobilized to provide intensive and efficient labor when the need arises.⁶

Studies of differing plantation societies have revealed much about the universal elements of plantation slavery and about the differences among these systems. The focus of the work published so far has been limited to white, Christian slaveowning classes whose plantations were part of the dynamic system of international trade centered on Europe that was developing by the sixteenth century. Many of the questions that have been asked have also been directed towards unravelling the intricacies of the racial problems that were the legacy of slavery in the Western hemisphere, and they have been limited by the range of social organization in the overseas colonies of European states. This dissertation will study masters who were black or brown, who were Muslim, and whose economy

features and its commitment to production for a world market." Roll, Jordan, Roll (forthcoming). The most recent formulation strikes me as more reasonable.

⁵ Knight, Slave Society.

⁶ A recent study of the economics of slavery in the United States stresses both its efficiency and the mildness with which slaves were treated. Apparently Southern slaveowners had their cake and ate it too. Robert William Fogel and Stanley L. Engerman, Time on the Cross: The Economics of American Negro Slavery (Boston: Little, Brown, 1974).

was part of the Indian Ocean commercial system. Hopefully, such a study will stretch the limits of the questions now being asked and raise the possibility of more global comparisons of related institutions.

The development of slave plantations on the East African coast and in the Western Hemisphere are comparable phenomena. In both cases, people founded plantations in tropical areas which they had colonized and imported slaves from a third region. The indigenous populations of both regions were too independent or too scattered to be an adequate labor force and remained, for the most part, outside the plantation system. The need to organize a slave labor force in the New World forced the leaders of the colonies and officials in Europe to alter or create legal systems and techniques of control to maintain order among their laborers. New forms of social organization evolved from the interaction of the European slaveowners with their slaves in the context of a plantation economy. In East Africa, older laws and norms governing relations between masters and slaves--codified in Islamic law and influenced by the social needs of earlier periods--had to be adapted to the demands of an expanding agricultural economy.

Many of the slaveholders of East Africa were Arabs from the southeastern corner of Arabia, Oman, while a smaller number came from the southern coast of Arabia, the Hadramaut. Others were Swahili, the long-time inhabitants of the East African coast. They were a mixed people, the product of centuries of intermarriage and cultural mixture between Africans, Arabs, Persians, and others in the trading centers of the coast. They spoke a language that was, like the languages of most of their neighbors, part of the Bantu group of African languages, but which contained many Arabic loan words. Swahili culture varied from place to place along

the coast, but it invariably bore a greater similarity to that of neighboring African peoples than to any of the Asian cultures which had also influenced it.⁷

All of these slaveowners were Muslims and so shared in the legal and social heritage of the heartlands of Islam. The Islamic heritage was important--for it was a written tradition shared by the great variety of peoples who had accepted the Islamic creed--but it manifested itself differently in varying social settings. Slavery had been a part of Arabian society even before Islam developed there in the seventh century A.D., and it was also common in many parts of the Middle East and Central Asia both before and after they became Muslim. Despite the immense variety of social organization and culture in these regions, the forms of slavery had many common features throughout Islamic societies, as much because of parallel economic developments as the influence of Islam itself. In most cases, slavery was more an urban than a rural phenomenon, closely connected to the development of prosperous commercial and official classes in Islamic towns. The overwhelming majority of slaves were household servants, artisans, soldiers, common laborers, and concubines. In only a few instances before the nineteenth century did slaves engage in the large-scale production of commodities, agricultural or otherwise.⁸ Slaves

⁷ Historical and anthropological studies of Swahili culture are sadly lacking. For an introduction, see A. H. J. Prins, The Swahili-Speaking Peoples of Zanzibar and the East African Coast (London: Oxford U.P., 1961), and N. Chittick, "The Coast before the Arrival of the Portuguese," and F. J. Berg, "The Coast from the Portuguese Invasion," in B. A. Ogot and J. A. Kiernan, eds., Zamani: A Survey of East African History (Nairobi: East African Publishing House, 1968), pp. 100-41.

⁸ The most important exceptions, as far as is now known, were the salt flats of Iraq in the ninth century; salt mines in the Sahara, agriculture in parts of Central Asia in the nineteenth century, and the East

were more often an item of consumption than a factor of production.⁹ Wealthy people sought slaves to make their lives more comfortable and to display their status.

Slaves were valuable as servants and followers precisely because of their extreme dependence on their master. In Islamic societies, as in most others that used slaves, the slave was a foreigner. Torn from his own home and family, the slave was dependent on his master for whatever pleasure he was to get from life. The slave had no kinsmen who could support him or who could insist on his loyalty to them.

Unlike slaves, most people in non-western societies were part of a broad nexus of kinship. A powerful man relied on his kinsmen for protection and political support, but even his own sons and brothers were a potential threat, for they stood to inherit his position after his death. Outsiders could be enlisted, and often were, but they had their own kinship groups and so had divided loyalties. Slaves could be an additional source of strength and were especially valuable in sensitive positions. Household servants could be made into bodyguards, and a king could make slaves into soldiers or officials. He would have to take steps to insure their loyalty, but because of their dependence the loyalty of slaves was often easier to obtain--by rewards and threats--than that of free people. Hence, in many Islamic states one finds slaves not only as water-carriers,

African coast. The best survey of the varieties of slavery in Islamic societies is Gavin R. G. Hambly, "Islamic Slavery: An Overview," in C. Duncan Rice and Gavin R. G. Hambly, eds., Comparative Slavery (forthcoming).

⁹Economically, slaves whose primary functions were to cook their master's food, serve his guests, or satisfy his sexual desires were consumption items. Slaves who tilled fields or mended hoes were factors of production.

but as soldiers, military commanders, bureaucrats, and high state officials, often wielding considerable power over free people. The paradox of the lowly slave occupying a high position was what made slaves especially loyal followers.

In addition, slaves were valued as sources of prestige. Especially in societies where few items of conspicuous consumption were available, the presence of a dependent following--junior kinsmen, clients, and slaves--was one of few ways of distinguishing the important man from the ordinary. The cost of slaves, the permanence of their tie to their master, and the extent of their dependence helped make slaveownership a particularly significant source of esteem.

These uses of slaves imply a suppleness in the concept of slavery that is unfamiliar to most Westerners. Slaves were assumed to be social inferiors, but they were not associated with a particular place in the economic order. Their varied functions were most important to a sociopolitical order that placed a high value on dependent followers.¹⁰ However, the development of an industry with a high demand for slave labor would be likely to alter the image of the slave in the minds of all members of society--the slave would become less of a dependent and more of a laborer. Such an industry could arise only in the context of a large market. This dissertation examines one of few such instances in the Islamic world. It assesses the impact of a changing market for slave-produced goods, and a consequent shift in emphasis on the functions of

¹⁰The connection between kinship, power, and status and slavery in African societies is discussed in Frederick Cooper, "Slavery and Society in Africa," in Rice and Hambly. The relevance of these concepts to southeastern Arabia is discussed at greater length in Chapter I.

slaves, on an established slave system that had long stressed the role of slaves as dependents.

The importance of slaves for prestige and political support was by no means unique to Islam. It was pronounced in social systems that emphasized kinship and in which power and status derived more from control over people than from control over resources. However, Islam made the norms associated with these forms of slavery into a written code. Islam does not separate law from religion, a fact which gives particular weight and permanence to norms deriving from social conditions at a special period in Islamic history. The Koran specified that only non-Muslims could be enslaved and that it was the duty of the master to convert them to Islam. Slaves were the spiritual brethren of their masters, but their social inferiors. Their inferior social position--as much as their ultimate spiritual equality--should be accepted by all Muslims as God's will. An individual's social inferiority was the result of the will of God, not of the degraded or inherently inferior nature of the slave himself.¹¹ The social position of slaves was regulated in great detail by the Koran and the legal scholars, although they had little to say about the organization of work. The social aspect of slavery was foremost in their minds. Slavery was a defined social status--both restricted and guaranteed.

Before the nineteenth century, neither South Arabia nor the East African coast developed any labor intensive industries that could break

¹¹This was the ideal. Muslims, being subject to the same prejudices as Christians, often associated slaves with slavishness and tended to regard the slave himself, not just his social position, as inferior. See Franz Rosenthal, The Muslim Concept of Freedom Prior to the Nineteenth Century (Leiden: Brill, 1960), and Bernard Lewis, Race and Color in Islam (New York: Harper, 1971).

down the social basis of this type of slave system. Slaves, of course, had to work, but the demands on them were not sufficient to undermine the primacy of dependence. The Arabs and the Swahili were trading peoples, but commerce had not yet altered the organization of production. Nothing comparable to the economic and social transformations of early-modern Europe had affected the Western half of the Indian Ocean.

The expansion of commerce in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries eventually created the linkages between the fertile lands of the East African coast and markets in distant parts of the Indian Ocean that made possible the transformation of agriculture. Trade in ivory, rhinoceros horn, gum copal, and slaves created the infrastructure that facilitated the delivery of slaves to plantations and agricultural products to buyers. Along the East African coast, more and more land was brought under cultivation between, roughly, the 1820's and the 1870's.

The first half of this dissertation is a study of that process of economic development, stressing the changes--and the limits of the changes--in economic organization, markets, and credit supply as well as in the social structure of the Arab and Swahili slaveowners. It will assess, as well as limited sources of information permit, the extent to which traders became farmers. The second half will focus on the type of slave system that emerged from these changes, evaluating the impact of heightened incentives to exploit a labor force on a slave system that had previously emphasized dependence.

The approaches of scholars to analyzing and comparing slave systems are as varied as the institutions themselves.¹² This is not the

¹²A particularly good introduction to methodological problems of

place for me to survey these approaches systematically or to attempt what others have failed to accomplish--create a typology of slave systems.¹³ However, it is important to look at the types of factors that previous scholars have decided determine the nature of slave systems and to see how they can be extended.

Much of the literature on comparative slavery argues that differences in the way slaves were treated in various societies originated in the differing institutions, values, or economies of those societies. Frank Tannenbaum and Stanley Elkins saw the Catholic Church and Crown in Spanish and Portuguese South America as two institutions which recognized the slave as a human being. These institutions were lacking in North America, leaving the planters--who saw slaves as economic objects--unfettered. According to Tannenbaum and Elkins, the presence of these institutions in South America and their absence in North America was directly related to the relative mildness of treatment in South America. The mildness of slavery was in turn correlated with mild race relations after abolition.¹⁴ This approach, however, ignores the way in which economic imperatives created countervailing forces which had contradictory effects on the treatment of slaves and altered the institutions themselves.

comparative slavery is Laura Foner and Eugene D. Genovese, eds., Slavery in the New World: A Reader in Comparative History (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1969), especially the articles by Sidney Mintz, David Brion Davis, and Eugene Genovese.

¹³The most noteworthy such attempt was Stanley M. Elkins, Slavery: A Problem in American Institutional and Intellectual Life (Chicago: Chicago U.P., 1959), pp. 52-80. Various critiques of Elkins are included in the Foner and Genovese reader.

¹⁴Frank Tannenbaum, Slave and Citizen: The Negro in the Americas (New York: Knopf, 1946), and Elkins.

Winthrop Jordan has emphasized attitudes, although his rich and detailed text does not exclude other factors. He notes the antiquity of the prejudice of English people against black Africans and sees in this "the indispensable key to the degradation of Africans in English America."¹⁵ Jordan has rightly drawn attention to a common human trait, to regard people who are obviously different as loathsome or inferior. But the fundamental question about prejudice is what one makes of it. A despised group only becomes an exploited one if economic conditions make this possible and desirable. In turn, the process of exploitation alters attitudes towards the exploited. Dislike--a vague attitude--must be transformed before it becomes an ideology justifying exploitation on the grounds of difference.¹⁶

Economic determinists have seen markets as the determining factor of slavery. Eric Williams and Marvin Harris believe that religious and racist beliefs were rationalizations to justify a system that was organized solely for material reasons. They fail to see society in a dynamic manner--to note that economic change does indeed alter values

¹⁵ Had he termed attitudes "an indispensable key" he would have been on firmer ground. Instead, he dismisses the importance of the economic roles of slaves by saying, "It may be taken as given...." The point is reductionist: the ways in which slaves were used in the economy are by no means obvious and the implications of these ways on forming and transforming racial attitudes is similarly complex. Winthrop D. Jordan, The White Man's Burden: Historical Origins of Racism in the United States (New York: Oxford U.P., 1974), p. 50. A fuller version of Jordan's work was published as White Over Black: American Attitudes Towards the Negro, 1550-1812 (Chapel Hill: North Carolina U.P., 1968).

¹⁶ For a penetrating critique of Jordan, see George M. Fredrickson, "Why Blacks Were Left Out," New York Review of Books, February 7, 1974, pp. 23-4. For a broad survey of Western ideas about slavery and race that avoids the problems in Jordan, see David Brion Davis, The Problem of Slavery in Western Culture (Ithaca: Cornell U.P., 1966).

and institutions, and that these values and institutions in turn influence the way economic change affects society.¹⁷

These scholars, in common with many modern social scientists, have emphasized correlation at the expense of process. They have tried to show that a particular variable, say the Catholic religion, is associated with a particular form of slavery. The problem with this approach is not merely the number of variables that determine the nature of a slave system, but the fact that they interact and influence one another. The scholar not only must understand all aspects of a slave society--culture, institutions, values, goals, as well as economic imperatives--but must also unravel the ways in which these variables affect one another. It is also necessary, as Eugene Genovese has argued, to realize the impact of the master-slave relationship itself on values and institutions. In comparing, for example, the Old South of the United States with Northeastern Brazil, Genovese notes the strong differences in the European backgrounds of the two ruling classes: the former from the most bourgeois economy of Europe, liberal in politics, repressed in personal and sexual relationships, the latter seigneurial, traditionalist, hierarchical, and more relaxed and free in personal relationships and sexual mores. Yet both evolved towards paternalistic slave societies--with a high value placed on the social dimension of slavery--because of "the enormous social, ideological, and psychological power of the master-slave relationship when embedded in a plantation-based society."¹⁸ He emphasizes, in the

¹⁷ Eric Williams, Capitalism and Slavery (New York: Capricorn, 1944), and Marvin Harris, Patterns of Race in the Americas (New York: Walker, 1964). The most trenchant criticism of this point of view is Eugene D. Genovese, "Materialism and Idealism in the History of Negro Slavery in the Americas," in Foner and Genovese, pp. 238-55.

Old South, that the coincidence of the cotton boom with the closing of the slave trade between the 1770's and 1808 actually reinforced the paternalistic tendencies because profit-maximization itself then required a self-reproducing slave force and hence humane treatment. Without this type of reinforcement, the weaker paternalistic tendencies of the eighteenth century would likely have withered--instead of being consolidated--in the nineteenth century cotton boom. In Brazil--where institutional and cultural comparisons with the Old South would lead everyone to conclude that paternalism would be much stronger than in the Old South--such paternalism materialized under some circumstances, but in others it broke down. The expansion of coffee planting in parts of Brazil, coming at a time when the slave trade was still open, led to a more bourgeois form of slavery, as profit maximization dictated an intense exploitation of slave labor.¹⁹ The differences in the institutional and cultural legacies of these two regions did have lasting impacts, for example in attitudes towards miscegenation and manumission. Nevertheless, values and institutions could themselves be changed in response to economic considerations or the problems of plantation society.²⁰ The attitudes that different peoples had towards slaves, their perceptions of what type of beings slaves were, depended on the actual roles which slaves filled in the economic order as well as on preconceptions and values. Images and reality could

¹⁸ Genovese, World, p. 96.

¹⁹ Ibid., pp. 75-102; Stein, Vassouras.

²⁰ Genovese, World, p. 97. One lesson of this comparison is that there is no such thing as "Brazilian slavery." The institution can be fundamentally different in different places and times. The same can be said of "Islamic Slavery."

be contradictory or mutually reinforcing.

Such considerations are most relevant to studying slavery in East Africa. This is a study of people with institutions and values that are very different from our own. Important as religion was to these people, there was no such thing as an "Islamic" conception of slavery. Rather, the image of the slave depended not just on the words of the Prophet Mohammed, but on the social, political, and economic roles which slaves filled at any given time. The nineteenth century was a time of profound change in East Africa and it is essential to see what elements in the older roles and images of slaves were being undermined or reinforced by the changes which were taking place.

Still, scholars who have stressed the determining role of institutions, attitudes, or markets have laid an indispensable groundwork for more complex analyses. Before trying to put the variables together in the case of the East African coast, it is well to consider what they are. The following list is not comprehensive, but it is designed to suggest fruitful lines of inquiry.

Race: Today's racial problems are one reason why American scholars have been so interested in slavery, and the racial dimension may in fact have been over-stressed. Since the 1950's, a scholarly debate has taken place over the issue of whether racial prejudice led to slavery or whether slavery led to racial prejudice in the United States. On the side of the former viewpoint is the fact that even before slavery developed, Englishmen were revolted by the appearance of Africans. Initially using white indentured labor as well as black slaves, the American colonists eventually chose black slavery because they were able to regard blacks as inferior and were willing to create the machinery necessary to keep

them in a degraded role. Advocates of the latter position argue that notions of racial inferiority grew out of a labor system that was chosen for economic motives.²¹ Black labor turned out to be more plentiful, less expensive, and more easily controlled than white indentured labor. As blacks became predominant in the labor force, the planters ceased to worry about the "giddy multitude" of white and black workers and began to emphasize the distinction between black and white.²² It is still necessary to say why they perceived race to be an important distinction. The relationship between slavery and color prejudice was dialectical. Each reinforced the other as slavery evolved. Prejudice--a hostile reaction to other people's distinctiveness--evolved into racism--a systematic ideology of domination based on the inherent inferiority of the subordinate group.²³

²¹The issue was first raised by Oscar and Mary Handlin, "Origins of the Southern Labor System," William and Mary Quarterly, 3rd ser., VII (1950), pp. 199-22. Their view that the rise of slavery transformed the position of the Negro in American society was challenged by Carl N. Degler, "Slavery and the Genesis of American Race Prejudice," Comparative Studies in Society and History, II (1959), pp. 49-67.

²²For a sophisticated analysis of this question in a specific case, see T. H. Breen, "A Changing Labor Force and Race Relations in Virginia, 1660-1710," Journal of Social History, 7 (1973), pp. 3-25.

²³Racism also emerged in a special political context, the interaction of rich slaveowners and poor whites in a democratic political system. Racism offered poor whites a sense of superiority over blacks in a society that stressed success and gave the upper class a way of obtaining the support of the white lower class. Racist ideology developed at a time when slaveowners were being challenged morally and politically by abolitionists (beginning in the 1830's), while the cotton boom was making the need for slave labor greater than ever. See George M. Fredrickson, The Black Image in the White Mind: The Debate on Afro-American Character and Destiny, 1817-1914 (New York: Harper, 1971), esp. Chapter II.

In the New World, it is hard to find a correlation between early attitudes towards race and the particular type of slave system that emerged. Perhaps, as H. Hoetink has suggested, Spanish and Portuguese slaveowners perceived Africans as being less different from themselves than did Northern Europeans. However, this perception did not prevent Spanish and Portuguese slaveowners from treating their slaves brutally when economic conditions so demanded.²⁴ It is equally difficult to find a correlation between unusually brutal treatment and racism of exceptional virulence in post-abolition society.²⁵

Differences in racial perceptions did, however, have important social implications. In the West Indies and in South America, mulattoes emerged as a distinct social category with a social status intermediate between that of blacks and whites; in the Old South society was rigidly divided into two racial groups.²⁶

The complexity of the connection between race and slavery in the New World should serve as a warning to students of slave systems elsewhere. Bernard Lewis has shown that prejudice against blacks existed in Islamic societies as well as in Christian ones.²⁷ In East Africa, as in the

²⁴H. Hoetink, Caribbean Race Relations: A Study of Two Variants, trans. Eva M. Hooykaas (London: Oxford U.P., 1967). On Spanish and Portuguese brutality, see Knight and Stein.

²⁵Carl Degler looked for such correlations in his comparative study, but did not find them. Neither Black Nor White: Slavery and Race Relations in Brazil and the United States (New York: Macmillan, 1971).

²⁶The mulatto category in Brazil turns out, in Degler's comparison, to be the major point of difference with the United States. Ibid. See also Winthrop D. Jordan, "American Chiaroscuro: The Status and Definition of Mulattoes in the British Colonies," in Foner and Genovese, pp. 189-201.

Western Hemisphere, virtually all the slaves who worked the fields were black, coming from a distant part of Africa. The masters were either Arabs or racially mixed Swahili. Before the vast expansion of plantations and the influx of black slaves, these people had owned white and brown slaves as well as blacks, although the last group was most numerous. There was a tendency for blacks to occupy the more menial roles, but there was no identification of the legal and social category of slave with any particular race. Even as the black slave force became predominant, the racial divisions did not evolve into the black-white dichotomy of the United States South or the black-mulatto-white gradation of South America and the Caribbean. People were sensitive to color--Arabs paid more, for example, for a light-skinned concubine than for a black one. But color itself did not define social categories. Unlike any Western Hemisphere society, the child of a black concubine by her Arab or Swahili master was considered legitimate and an equal member of its father's family. The Swahili people themselves, although slaveowners, were dark skinned. The distinction between free and slave was clear, but neither category was uniquely associated with a physical type.

Religion: In his pioneering work on comparative slavery, Frank Tannenbaum attached considerable importance to differences between the Catholicism of Latin America and the Protestantism of North America. Catholics recognized all people as potential converts, but saw a common religion as no barrier to making social distinctions among Catholics. Protestantism was internally more democratic, but more discriminating

²⁷ Lewis, Race. Lewis advances convincing reasons for the development of prejudice, but does not analyze its social implications.

about who should be allowed to join. Moreover, the Catholic Church was an institution independent of slaveowners. Protestant churches lacked this worldwide perspective. Tannenbaum and Stanley Elkins claimed that the slave in Catholic countries received more recognition as a person than the slave in Protestant countries, for both ideological and institutional reasons. Their critics argue that the transfer of the Catholic Church as an institution, and also of its ideology, was imperfect and see little actual evidence that priests or theological concepts were of much help to slaves when the price of sugar or coffee encouraged intensive labor.²⁸ Furthermore, the religious convictions of Protestant slaveowners--in a social and economic situation that encouraged them--could also form part of a paternalistic ideal.²⁹ However, the moral repressiveness associated with Protestantism may have given paternalism less of the social and personal intimacy which it often had in South America. Religion was not irrelevant to shaping a slave system, but its influence could be subtle and complex.

Ideological and institutional aspects of Islam are important parts of the study of East African slavery. Islamic norms of an organic society in which all accept their place bear some resemblance to the ideal type of Iberian Catholicism. The impact of religion was particularly strong because East African Islam was much less secularized than the most Catholic countries of Europe in the sixteenth to nineteenth centuries. Religious norms and laws were one. Concepts of social order were based

²⁸Tannenbaum; Elkins; Davis, pp. 223-61; Charles R. Boxer, Race Relations in the Portuguese Colonial Empire 1415-1825 (Oxford: Clarendon, 1963), pp. 101-27.

²⁹Genovese, Roll.

on Islamic principles. Moreover, there is considerable evidence of institutional transfer, a weak point in the argument of Tannenbaum and Elkins. Islamic institutions were transplanted from Arabia to East Africa, and Zanzibar, in particular, had an active and influential religious community. Islam made social norms into religious imperatives. It is therefore important that the Koran deals with the ethics of slavery more specifically than does the Bible, and legal scholars in the early centuries of Islam developed the laws of slavery in detail. The Koran insisted that masters had obligations towards their slaves, to look after their material and spiritual welfare and to take responsibility for their behavior as members of the Muslim community. As in other slave systems, there were other influences on the masters, some reinforcing Islamic norms, some pushing the masters in the opposite direction.

Of equal importance was the clear sanction which Islam gave to slavery within its prescribed limits. Muslims did not have to search for rationales for slavery, since the Koran gave it explicit recognition. No abolitionist movement developed among Muslims in East Africa or elsewhere. The security of slavery's ethical foundations at least meant that slaveowners did not have to defend the morality of the institution by denying their slaves' humanity. The latter tendency appeared in evangelical Protestantism, whose tenets--in some influential interpretations--could only be reconciled with slavery by arguing that slaves were not fully human. If Islam was at one pole in sanctifying slavery as part of a social order, evangelical Protestantism was at the other extreme, and Catholicism in the middle.

Law: Spanish and Portuguese officials had a more continuous experience with slavery before the rise of plantations than Northern

Europeans, and this experience was reflected in the enactment of slave codes governing the treatment of inferior subjects. Elkins attaches much weight to the fact that the Crown, not the slaveowners, made the laws and that it had an interest in slaves as subjects, not as economic objects.³⁰ English colonies lacked the established legal enactments to cope with slaves, and the greater local autonomy allowed to overseas Englishmen meant that "the slave laws of the British colonies were made directly by a slave-owning ruling class."³¹ Spanish law treated slaves as an inferior subject, English law as a special kind of property.³² David Brion Davis, Charles Boxer, and others have questioned how much such distinctions in theory meant in a situation where the checks on a planter's authority over his own slaves were minimal.³³ Elsa Goveia has also stressed the point that regardless of the legal framework, local officials saw slavery as primarily a problem of public order. Slaves had to be kept from threatening security, and if the freedom of planters to do as they pleased occasionally had to be restricted, it was largely to prevent individual masters from jeopardizing their fellows rather than to protect slaves.

The maintenance of public order is an essential function of any legal system, but it is heightened whenever the ruling classes see an

³⁰ Elkins.

³¹ Elsa V. Goveia, "The West Indian Slave Laws of the Eighteenth Century," in Foner and Genovese, p. 119.

³² Ibid.

³³ Davis, pp. 223-61; Boxer, pp. 101-27.

³⁴ Goveia, pp. 113-37.

immediate threat to security. Such was the case in societies containing high concentrations of laborers separated from the rest of society by wide racial, social, and economic gaps. Some important traces of the different legal heritages remained--for example a fuller framework providing for manumission and the enfranchisement of freed slaves in Iberian areas--but all legal systems were pushed in the same direction by the predominance of the problem of social control.

The questions to be studied in East Africa, then, are not only what Islamic law had to say about slaves, but whether the normative basis of that law was still relevant to nineteenth century East Africa, as it undoubtedly was during the formative years of Islamic jurisprudence. To be sure, Islamic laws were derived from the Koran rather than from the will of a legislature or sovereign. The law therefore had a fixity which English law lacked, but it could still be manipulated by those in charge of enforcing it, as could Spanish law. It is necessary to ask whether Islamic law was a stubborn anachronism or a viable and accepted part of nineteenth century East African society.

Socio-political organization: The impact of a legal system is partly determined by the strength of the state which enforces the law. Weak as governments in the Americas often were, central governments with bureaucracies did at least exist. The Africanist is particularly aware that the power of political units varies greatly, and that central government does not necessarily exist. In some African societies, collective decisions were made by councils of elders from the various lineages that made up society. Conflict within the society was kept in check by the relative balance of the kinship groups, to which individuals attached primary loyalty. Equilibrium was not always maintained, and families

often sought to expand their political importance by expanding their size. In fact, slaves often served this purpose, for foreigners captured in war or bought from slave traders could become junior members of their owners' families. Slaves contributed on the same basis as free kinsmen to the economic welfare of the kinship group. Slave women, as wives or concubines, swelled the group's numbers by bearing children. In many such cases, slaves were incorporated, in a number of years or after one or more generations, into the lineage or clan as equals. In this situation, the role of slaves and their social standing was conditioned by the primacy of the need of kinship groups to recruit supplementary members and by the absence of sufficient economic differentiation to place slaves in a unique economic position.

Where differences in the power of individuals or groups had emerged, a powerful person had greater access to slaves than others. He could use them not only to increase his wealth, but also to supplement his own kinsmen as political supporters. Having a following--slave and free--gave the man prestige, and if necessary military support. They could help make him wealthy, which would in turn enhance his prestige and contribute to his ability to buy more slaves or recruit more free supporters. In such cases, status differentials between slaves and free men could be clear, but slaves were still attached to an individual and his kinship group, whom they served in diverse ways.³⁵

In such fluid societies, individuals rose and fell and struggles

³⁵ These points are developed more fully in Cooper, "Slavery." A detailed study of the diverse roles in which slaves supported chiefs and kings in a group of African kingdoms is E. A. Oroge, "The Institution of Slavery in Yorubaland with Particular Reference to the Nineteenth Century," Ph.D. thesis, University of Birmingham, 1971.

took place over the very nature of power. The underlying conflict was generally between the desire of all kinship groups to maintain their place in society and the desire of particular individuals and their kinsmen to dominate the others. Kingdoms emerged when a particular kinship group was able to consolidate and institutionalize its domination, but in Africa, kinship groups usually remained strong even within kingdoms.³⁶ The use of slaves in various roles was part of the struggle of kinship groups to maintain or overthrow the balance of power.

Such considerations are relevant not only to non-Western societies, but to all areas where some kind of central authority had not been consolidated and where bureaucratic structures were not fully developed. Max Weber described this type of authority--based on the mobilization of followers on the basis of personal ties--as patrimonialism.³⁷ Kinship was often the nucleus of support, but it had to be transcended to obtain power.³⁸

In all slave societies, prestige as well as economic gain was derived from slaveholding, but in places like the Old South and the British West Indies, the political role of slaves was minimal. In Brazil

³⁶The kinship groups often triumphed in such conflicts, and many African societies remained essentially egalitarian or were divided into small chiefdoms. Kingdoms could also break down. African history does not indicate any linear progression towards centralized authority.

³⁷Max Weber, The Theory of Social and Economic Organization, trans. A. M. Henderson and Talcott Parsons (New York: Free Press, 1947), pp. 347-54.

³⁸The extension of a lineage system, in part by the absorption of slaves, took place in the Niger Delta when the demands of trade required more adaptable organizations. See K. O. Dike, Trade and Politics in the Niger Delta, 1830-1885 (Oxford: Clarendon, 1956), and Kannan K. Nair, Politics and Society in South Eastern Nigeria, 1841-1906 (London: Cass, 1972).

and other parts of South America, especially before the nineteenth century, the seigneurial origins and de-facto independence of slaveowners made political support important. The plantation was a political entity, and the landlord needed to surround himself with relatives, clients of various origins, freed slaves, and slaves for his very safety. The followers, slaves included, received protection by being part of a large and organized unit.³⁹ The patriarchal dimension of slavery in Brazil can only be understood if the socio-political significance of the slave plantation is appreciated.

The importance of patriarchy implied personal ties between master and slave. It did not, however, preclude severe punishment. Punishment in fact reinforced the idea of hierarchy, and patriarchy, although it implied reciprocal obligations, was basically an unequal relationship.⁴⁰ The hierarchy was an internal one, within the plantation, and was based on ties between the individual slaves and their master. Slaveowners in Brazil were not simply members of a class, defined by a common relationship to the means of production. Each slaveowner was the head of an organization which crossed class lines.⁴¹

One can thus extend the comparative dimension of Genovese's comments on the pervasive influence of the master-slave relationship. The plantation was a social unit in all cases except where absentee ownership predominated. But its socio-political role was more crucial to some

³⁹ Genovese, World, pp. 77-80; Freyre, Masters.

⁴⁰ Genovese, Roll.

⁴¹ Genovese notes that paternalism linked members of oppressed classes to their oppressor as individuals, not as a class. Ibid.

societies than to others. The weaker the central government and the less slaveowners could count on one another for mutual protection, the more masters needed followers who were linked to them by personal and diffuse ties. In many African kingdoms, the importance of slaves as followers predominated. In the early history of Brazil, the economic dimension was very important, but the plantation was still a hierarchy, held together by ties of loyalty and the need for protection, as well as by the powers of coercion which the master possessed. In the Old South, the social and economic dimensions of slavery were both strong, but with a central government and militias of local whites, masters and slaves had little need of each other for protection against the outside world. The political dimension of slavery was weak. In parts of the British and French West Indies, the plantation was viewed as a place to make money, not a place to live. Security depended on militias or colonial troops. There the social dimension was also truncated, and ties between masters and slaves were highly specific, limited to work and discipline.

Before the rise of clove, coconut, and grain cultivation in nineteenth century East Africa, the slaves of Arabs and Swahili strengthened the political power of competing kinship groups. Neither group had developed the bureaucratic kingdoms that had grown up in the central Islamic lands soon after the time of Mohammed. Power was essentially patrimonial. In parts of East Africa, competition between communal groups continued into the nineteenth century, and so too did their use of slaves as supporters and soldiers. Meanwhile, economic incentives were increasing, altering the requirements masters had of their slaves. It is necessary to examine the interaction of these divergent demands on slaves and the impact the changes had on the lives of the slaves and the conceptions

their masters had of them.⁴²

Markets: Plantations were money-making institutions, whatever the social forces that shaped them. The growth of plantations in North and South America was to a large extent a response to Europe's demand for sugar, and later for cotton, coffee, and other commodities. In some cases--notably the British and French West Indies--planters bought land to grow crops for the market, without settling there permanently themselves. In the Old South and many parts of South America, slaveowners sought both the social rewards of plantation life and the economic rewards of selling crops on the world market. Especially with a highly labor-intensive crop like sugar and a competitive world market, the imperatives of the market could be overwhelming. From the point of view of the slaves, the cultural and legal differences between eighteenth century Jamaica and nineteenth century Cuba were lost in the overwork and brutality required to make them produce as much sugar as possible.⁴³ Conversely, where prices were lower and less money could be milked from slaves, slave societies sometimes evolves towards "a more relaxed paternalism."⁴⁴ But whatever pre-

⁴²The type of political group into which slaves were incorporated as followers varied with the political system. One can distinguish kinship groups--defined by descent from a common ancestor--from communal groups, which are usually extensions or federations of kinship groups. Communal groups are defined both by common culture and historical traditions and by participation in common political institutions. On the East African coast, kinship groups were relatively unimportant politically, and communal groups were the primary foci of loyalty, group identity, and political action. The word tribe is used as a shorthand for communal group.

⁴³Knight; Orlando Patterson, The Sociology of Slavery (Rutherford, N.J.: Fairleigh Dickinson U.P., 1967).

⁴⁴David Brion Davis, "The Comparative Approach to American History: Slavery," in Foner and Genovese, p. 67.

tensions slaveowners had towards gentility, whatever cultural pressures encouraged benevolence, the slaveowners of the Western Hemisphere lived in a capitalist world. Money was rarely their only concern, but the expansion of European capitalism was a powerful force pushing them to develop a regimented, closely supervised, intensively employed labor force.

Not all slaveowners responded in the same way to market forces. Some individuals were more ambitious than others, and some societies encouraged profit-seeking more than others. Men in all societies--non-Western as well as Western--want to make money, but the limitations on such ambitions are determined by economic and social structures.⁴⁵ One should ask, to what extent status derives from wealth, or to what extent status comes from other factors such as birth or religious learning? What opportunities for consumption and investment exist for the person who acquires wealth? And finally, to what extent can the need to run

⁴⁵ Leading economic anthropologists, notably Karl Polanyi and George Dalton, have emphasized that societies with non-existent or limited markets make economic decisions on the basis of social considerations, whereas modern societies follow economic rationality. Such concepts are of little use to the historian interested in change, for some "primitive" economies are quite responsive to changes in supply and demand while "modern" economies are filled with irrationalities. A. G. Hopkins has offered not only a critique of this view, but an application of the principle that African economic history can be adequately explained by such factors as demand for local products and labor costs. An Economic History of West Africa (London: Longman, 1973), p. 6 and Chapter II. In this study, a sufficient explanation for changes in agriculture on the East coast of Africa can be made by assuming that the people there were rational men responding to their economic situation. This does not mean that all people respond to such factors in the same way. Economic decisions are made in a context, but it is a particular context--particular values and particular cultures--that must be analyzed, not such catch-alls as "traditional" or "modern" society.

an efficient and profitable enterprise be ignored without falling victim to competitors and creditors? These factors help determine the extent to which slaveowners want to obtain as much output from their slaves for as little cost as possible, whether they look at the plantation as a profit-maximizing venture, or simply a profit-making one.

These distinctions underlie Genovese's distinction between seigneurial and bourgeois master classes. The ambitions of Jamaica's absentee slaveholders, to take one example, revolved almost exclusively around profits, while slaveowners in the United States South sought social as well as economic rewards. The former class was essentially bourgeois, the latter showed strong seigneurial tendencies.⁴⁶ These distinctions form part of a broader continuum. From a distant vantage point--the Indian Ocean before 1800--all New World slave societies had a relatively high stress on productivity and profits. Southern Arabia and the East African coast presented fewer reasons to make slaves work hard, simply because the markets for their produce did not yet exist. Few opportunities for accumulation or consumption existed, and prestige was derived more from family and followers than from property and income. But as markets expanded in the early nineteenth century, the labor of slaves in the fields became more profitable. From a slave society stressing dependence more and labor less than even the most seigneurial New World slave society, the East African coast was moving in the direction of the profit-orientation characteristic of the New World.

Class: Genovese has placed most emphasis on class as the primary analytic tool with which to dissect a slave system.⁴⁷ This approach

⁴⁶ Genovese, World, esp. p. 28.

has more universality than others which stress a single factor, for master-slave distinctions are by definition forms of class distinctions, the division of society into the owners and the owned. Wherever slaveholding was an important part of the social and economic order, the number of slaves a man owned was also an important way of making class distinctions among free people.⁴⁸ Genovese is correct in observing that once one has labelled a particular group a "slaveholding" or "planter" class, one has said very little: one must try to understand particular slaveholding classes with particular cultures, institutions, values, and goals.⁴⁹ Although Genovese, like most Marxists, emphasizes the primacy of a group's relationship to the means of production as the determinant of class, he believes that ideology or other facets of the superstructure could have a deep impact, retaining its importance even after the material conditions out of which they grew had passed. Slaveholders did not merely assess the material alternatives each time they made a decision; they acted on the basis of a vision of the world that grew from, but was not exclusively determined by, the material situation. This suppleness in the concept of class makes it useful to analyze a variety of societies. Whether slaveowners sought slaves as dependents or as workers, they wanted slaves

⁴⁷ He eventually decides that slavery in the Americas must be understood "not simply as a class question, but as a class question with a profound racial dimension." Ibid., p. 113.

⁴⁸ Where slaveowning was so important that it affected all social values, one can refer to a slave society. Where it was only one of several elements defining economic life and social status, the less forceful term slave-owning society should be used. Finley, in Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences, Vol. XIV, p. 308.

⁴⁹ Genovese, World, pp. 19-20.

to bolster their superior position in the social order.

Terms like slaveholding class are useful, however, in defining ideal types. When the importance of owning slaves was such that economic position and social status depended mainly on the number--or perhaps the quality--of one's slaves, slavery defined the class system. Slaveholders, non-slaveholders, and slaves constituted the classes. A variant of this developed in the United States South, where being a large slaveowner was a crucial element in defining upper class status among whites, but where racial criteria--regardless of whether a person was slave or free--placed blacks beneath everyone else. At another extreme, in societies that absorbed slaves as equals, slavery had little significance to the class system. Many such societies, in fact, had no class system at all. In between these ideal types many variations existed. The concept of class was more relevant to the structure of some societies than to that of others, and slavery was more relevant to defining some class systems than to others.⁵⁰

The key question in trying to apply these concepts to the East African coast becomes, did the expansion of agriculture create a planter class or just planters? In other words, did ownership of the means of production--land and slaves--define the principal social groups in society? Or did other criteria of stratification predominate? Did slaveowners

⁵⁰ Stratification in pre-industrial societies is a thorny issue. In most African societies, land--the principal means of production--was readily available, so possession of land could not define an upper class. However, in some societies, a king, the royal lineage, and leading chiefs could be sharply separated from the rest of the people by their political power and by their access to great wealth. With control over land impossible, control over people--power--emerged as the basis of stratification. M. G. Smith has written a perceptive analysis of these theoretical issues. "Pre-Industrial Stratification Systems," in Neil J. Smelser and Seymour Martin Lipset, eds., Social Structure and Mobility in Economic Development (Chicago: Aldine, 1966), pp. 141-76.

come to be a group, conscious of their common place in the social order, or were other ways of dividing society more relevant? Such questions cannot always be answered directly, for the slaveowners left little written evidence of their values and self-image, but they can at least be approached obliquely.

Slave Culture and Behavior: Most explanations of the formation of slave systems have focused on the masters. This is to a large extent justified--no one asked slaves what their preferences were. Yet slaves did have an impact. In the Americas, the slaves had a lasting influence on the culture of both whites and blacks. The same was true of East Africa. To a large extent, probably greater than anywhere in the Americas, the slaveowners of East Africa made efforts to assimilate slaves in to their own culture, but slaves--most of whom came from distant parts of the interior of East Africa--also brought elements of their own culture to their masters. It is also important to ask if there were elements of the slaves' experiences in their home countries that helped them cope with the problems of life under slavery on the East African coast.⁵¹

The slaves could also influence by their own behavior the type of treatment they received. Stanley Elkins claimed that in the United States, but not Latin America, slavery was such a total institution that the personality development of slaves was impaired, leaving them with submissive, infantile personalities.⁵² No part of Elkins' work has been more criticized than this.⁵³ Most scholars would now acknowledge that

⁵¹Richard Price, "Introduction," Maroon Societies (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1973), pp. 25-30.

⁵²Elkins, pp. 81-139.

while some slaves did become submissive "Sambos," others became rebellious "Nats." In between, many tried to adjust to a harsh reality as best they could, preserving what they could of their own social life, getting back at their masters when the opportunity arose, but not making matters worse by futile acts of defiance.⁵⁴

Even in paternalistic slave regimes, the objectives of masters and slaves invariably contained a basic element of conflict. Masters wanted workers and dependents; slaves wanted to live their own lives. The odds were stacked in favor of the masters, but the slaves still had some sanctions--refusal to work, slowdowns, sabotage, flight, suicide, murder, and rebellion. The threat of punishment could force slaves to use these sanctions only in extreme cases. The severity of the treatment would depend to a large extent on the balance between the will and ability of slaves to resist and the will and ability of the master to force their slaves to do what they wanted. Effective police forces plus a relatively high number of whites in the area, as in the Old South, were among the factors which could limit the slaves' freedom of action. The presence of inaccessible and unpopulated terrain near plantations--as in Jamaica--facilitated escape. Social factors are more elusive but equally important. Gerald W. Mullin found that different categories of slaves in eighteenth century Virginia had different modes of rebellion. Recent arrivals from Africa left--sometimes in groups--to try to escape the slave

⁵³ See Ann J. Lane, ed., Slavery and Personality: The Elkins Thesis and Its Critics (Urbana: Illinois U.P., 1971).

⁵⁴ The opposing stereotypes are described by John W. Blassingame, The Slave Community (New York: Oxford U.P., 1972), pp. 137-43. See also Price; Patterson, Sociology, pp. 260-83; and Gerald W. Mullin, Flight and Rebellion: Slave Resistance in Eighteenth-Century Virginia (New York: Oxford U.P., 1972).

society altogether. Slaves who had been on a plantation longer were the least likely to escape and often directed their rebellion at the plantation itself, for example by sabotage. The most acculturated slaves made use of their knowledge of their masters' language and society to hide within a town and pass as free men.⁵⁵

The extent of rebellion, escape, and resistance to plantation routines tell the scholar something about the slave society--about the pressures placed on slaves and on the freedom of action they had. It can serve as a corrective to popular ideas of leniency of treatment--it is a way of assessing what the slaves thought.⁵⁶ Such actions were also ways of forcing masters to be more lenient. Escape was of particular importance in East Africa, where weak police forces made it relatively easy.

Flight and rebellion had an important impact on the masters' view of their own slaves. They could introduce elements of doubt into a master who thought of himself as a paternalist, perhaps making him more lenient, perhaps more angry and resentful. Rebellion had an especially serious impact, for it was a threat to the lives of individuals and the way of life of a class. Rebellion--actual or potential--increased fear, which encouraged slaveowners to step up the level of repression, thereby giving them more cause to fear their slaves. Fear was a prominent feature of most plantation societies of the New World, and it rose markedly whenever a rebellion occurred or a plot was uncovered. Abortive plots such as

⁵⁵ Mullin.

⁵⁶ The extent of escape in Northeastern Brazil is a good reason to doubt the benign picture of slavery painted by Freyre. See Stuart B. Schwartz, "The Mocambo: Slave Resistance in Colonial Bahia," in Price, Maroon Societies, pp. 204-7.

Gabriel's in Virginia in 1800 or Vesey's of 1822 led to waves of repression and attempts to restrict the freedom of movement of slaves, even if it meant restricting the freedom of the masters to do as they wished. It is particularly striking to find that fear of slave revolts was not an important factor in the East African coast, despite the fact that slaves were often severely treated and despite the fact that many slaves were sufficiently distraught at their lot to run away. The passivity of slaves does not go very far towards explaining this difference. Nor does the presence or absence of a paternalistic ideology--both the Old South and the East African coast can be described as paternalistic. Clearly, paternalism can have different qualities and different implications in various societies. The question of why some slaveowners feared their slaves and others did not is a central one, and it is part of the broader question of what attitudes masters had to their slaves. What kind of person was the slave? What did he think about his role in society? Did he accept his lot?

The attitudes and behavior of masters towards slaves--or of slaves towards masters--can only be understood if one unravels the ways in which the various components of a slave society contradict, reinforce, or transform one another as the society evolves. Such analyses are not likely to yield simple typologies of slave societies. But comparisons of different societies are likely to illuminate what the relationships among the variables are. The changes and interrelations of the variables must be analyzed in the case of particular slave societies. Hopefully, comparisons can then be made, not just of static institutions, but of processes of change themselves.

PART I

AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT ON THE EAST AFRICAN COAST

CHAPTER I: THE ARABS OF OMAN AND THE GROWTH OF TRADE IN EAST AFRICA

The slaveowners and the slaves of East Africa were Muslims. They shared the beliefs, laws, and traditions of one of the world's largest religious communities. They were also part of a specific society that was influenced by other social, political, and economic currents. This chapter will examine the heritage of the slaveowners of East Africa. It will explain what Islamic texts, laws, and traditions told slaveowners about the ethics of slavery, and it will assess the actual experiences with slavery of the Arabs of Oman, who were to play the most important role in the development of plantation slavery.¹ Finally, it will examine the expansion of Omani commerce in the early nineteenth century in order to analyze the forces that were bringing about major changes in the significance of slave labor.

Slavery, Status, and Power in Islamic Societies

The significance of Islam lies not only in the importance of religion to East African society, but in the fact that Muslims, wherever and whenever they lived, were influenced by written laws and traditions that originated at another point in history. The primary purpose of this

¹The Swahili people of the East African coast are discussed in Chapter III.

section is to describe the main principles of Islamic ethics and laws regarding slavery, but their impact cannot be assessed properly without an understanding of the kind of society they were designed to govern. It is important to know whether Islamic concepts were as relevant to nineteenth century East Africa as they were to the society out of which they arose. Scholarly knowledge of the social conditions in which Islam developed is hazy, and I do not pretend to be a specialist, but it is still useful to build a model of early Islamic slavery in order to clarify subsequent departures from this ideal type.

There is no question of the importance of kinship to pre-Islamic Arabia. Local groups, some sedentary, some nomadic, consisted of a chief, who was often the oldest or most respected of a group of kinsmen, free families related to the chief, strangers who had joined the group, and slaves.²

Social systems in many parts of the world have a similar emphasis on kinship, and anthropologists have developed concepts to explain how they maintained the social order even in the absence of any central authority.³ In many cases, the various kinship groups into which society was divided remained in a state of equilibrium, but there was always a potential that one kinship group would dominate the others. Lineages

²On pre-Islamic Arabia, see Irfan Shahīd, "Pre-Islamic Arabia," in P. M. Holt, A. K. S. Lambton, and B. Lewis, eds., The Cambridge History of Islam (Cambridge: Cambridge U.P., 1970), Vol. I, pp. 3-29, and W. Robertson Smith, Kinship and Marriage in Early Arabia (Cambridge: Cambridge U.P., 1885).

³Classic studies along these lines are M. Fortes and E. E. Evans-Pritchard, eds., African Political Systems (London: Oxford U.P., 1940), and John Middleton and David Tait, Tribes Without Rulers (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1958).

or clans therefore had to maintain their numbers or expand their strength. In a patrilineal, polygynous society, this could be accomplished by marriage. A man who acquired more wealth than others could pay the brideprice for more wives. Their children would swell the membership of his lineage or clan. In societies where one individual or kinship group was increasing its power, chiefs or kings often married large numbers of women, whose sons provided the nucleus of support for the royal lineage.⁴ The men could also recruit clients, who were attracted to men of power and influence, as well as purchase or capture slaves. These slaves not only added to the wealth of the kinship group by their labors, but they could be absorbed into it and contribute to its fighting strength and political influence. In general, the offspring of slave women by their master were considered legitimate, and contributed to his strength in the same manner as the children of free wives. Marriage, clientage, and slavery were political institutions, means of recruiting followers for a potential or actual conflict.⁵

These concepts make it possible to understand the functioning of kinship groups in a society about which little direct evidence is available.

⁴ Monica Wilson, "Changes in Social Structure in Southern Africa: The Relevance of Kinship Studies to the Historian," in Leonard Thompson, ed., African Societies in Southern Africa (London: Heinemann, 1969), pp. 78-79. In a matrilineal society the children of a wealthy or powerful man belonged to his wives' kinship groups rather than his own. He had to mobilize more diffuse kinship ties to expand his followers, obtain slaves and pawns, or marry slave women, whose children--in the absence of maternal kin--would become members of the father's kinship group. See Mary Douglas, "Is Matriliney Doomed in Africa?", in Mary Douglas and Phyllis M. Kaberry, eds., Man in Africa (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1971), pp. 127-29.

⁵ For a more extended discussion of the importance of slaves to those seeking to enhance their power, see Frederick Cooper, "Slavery and Society in Africa," in C. Duncan Rice and G. R. G. Hambly, eds., Comparative Slavery (forthcoming).

Arabian kinship groups also sought to expand their strength. A chief married several wives, whose children belonged to his patrilineal descent group, acquired clients, and obtained slaves. When strangers joined a group, rituals created a fictional kinship tie between the clients who joined and offered service and the patrons who offered protection. Between kinship groups the blood-feud prevailed: if a member of the group, even a lowly client, was aggrieved by an outsider, the whole group was obliged to come to his defence. Although flexible, the kinship system's ability to maintain order was strained by the expansion of trade that occurred in Arabia, most strikingly in the region of Mecca, where Islam developed in the seventh century A.D. As people from different kinship groups had to do business with one another on a regular basis, as differentials of wealth developed, and as long-distance caravans had to be arranged, new types of relationships--bonding all the participants--were needed. A new system of adjudicating disputes was needed to replace the disruptive blood feud. Complex as the origins of Islam were, its success owed much to the fact that it offered the people of Arabia a new way of organizing the social order. It united all those who accepted the faith in a common belief system and a common institutional framework capable of enforcing business agreements and settling disputes. From the start, Mohammed and his followers did not separate the acquisition of converts from the creation of a polity.⁶

⁶ My argument has been particularly influenced by Eric R. Wolf, "The Social Organization of Mecca and the Origin of Islam," Southwestern Journal of Anthropology, 7 (1951), pp. 331-50. See also Robertson, passim, and for general background, Bernard Lewis, The Arabs in History (New York: Harper, 1958), pp. 21-48; W. Montgomery Watt, Muhammad at Mecca (Oxford: Clarendon, 1953); and Maxime Rodinson, Mahomet (Paris: Editions du Seuil, 1961).

The new religion did not create a totally new social order, but it engineered the adaptation of an old one to new conditions. The Muslims recruited individuals and friendly tribes much as Arabs had long recruited clients and allies. Islam emphasized the existence of "one community over and against mankind," in which all Muslims were brethren. But it did not eliminate the importance of kinship groupings, and the succession to Mohammed himself soon became a dynastic question.⁷ Moreover, Islam recognized both clientage and slavery, two of the most important types of relationships between non-kinsmen of pre-Islamic Arabia.⁸

It is precisely this type of society, where politics is based on both kinship and patrimonialism, that has the greatest need for slaves as followers. The Muslims were also seeking to develop community norms, so that the importance of slaves as dependent followers became enshrined in the Koran and the Shari'a (law). Muslims accepted slavery as part of the social order, but worked out in considerable detail regulations which governed social interaction between the free and the slaves and which defined the slaves' place in the community. These social questions occupied the legal commentators in the centuries after Mohammed; they had little to say about the conditions of labor.⁹

⁷Wolf, pp. 346-47. Some of the principal schisms in the Islamic state arose over the question of in which line the succession was to go, while others refused to accept the hereditary nature of the succession at all.

⁸Reuben Levy, The Social Structure of Islam (Cambridge: Cambridge U.P., 1957), p. 58, and Paul G. Forand, "The Relation of the Slave and the Client to the Master or Patron in Medieval Islam," International Journal of Middle East Studies, 2 (1971), pp. 59-66.

⁹The fact that Islamic law of slavery was worked out at a time when slaves were primarily in domestic or skilled occupations is stressed by Gavin R. G. Hambly, "Islamic Slavery: An Overview," in Rice and Hambly.

As befits a community that aspired to maintain internal order, the enslavement of other Muslims was forbidden. Only foreigners captured in a war with the Muslims could be taken as slaves. As a member of a growing community, the captor or purchaser of a slave was required to convert him to Islam. The slave became a member of the Islamic community--he was a spiritual equal. But what slaveowners needed, after Mohammed as much as before, was followers, and so the Koran emphasized that slaves were socially subordinate and had to obey their masters. Certain rights of slaves were circumscribed, such as rights to property, but what rights they had--including food, shelter, and marriage--were guaranteed. For some crimes slaves suffered only half the punishment of free persons; the Muslims believed that a slave received only half the pleasures of life and so should suffer only half the pain. The master was responsible for the slave's economic transactions and crimes against others. Slaves had their place in the social order, at the bottom of society, but they were clearly within the Muslim community. The subsequent absence of any serious questioning of the morality of slavery was largely based on the belief that the position of slaves--or anyone else--in the social order was determined by the will of God, and if a true Muslim, the slave could still look forward to Paradise. Explicit as was the recognition of the slave's humanity, he was still property that could be bought and sold. Islamic law usually treated slavery as part of family law, but it had the same ambiguities in the concept of slaves as other slave societies.¹⁰

¹⁰ Hambly; Levy, pp. 75-7; R. Brunschvig, "'Abd," in Encyclopedia of Islam (Leiden: Brill, 1960), Vol. I, pp. 25-31.

The old and new elements of Islamic conceptions of slavery are clear in relation to marriage and concubinage. Muslims were only allowed to have four wives. However, the Koran allowed a man to take an unlimited number of concubines, who had to be his own slaves. Their children by their master, as long as he acknowledged his paternity, were legitimate, fully the equals of the offspring of free wives. All other forms of sexual conduct were illegal. The persistence of the communal character of Muslim society is evident in the insistence that the children of concubines were legitimate--in that way the master's extra-marital sexual activity would strengthen his kinship group. However, the Muslims' need to maintain social order might be threatened should a particularly powerful or wealthy kinship group monopolize Muslim women at the expense of other men. There was nothing wrong, however, with strengthening the kinship group at the expense of outsiders, hence the limit on the number of wives combined with the legalization of concubinage. The law also protected the concubine who had borne her master a child, making it illegal for her to be sold and providing for her manumission at her master's death. The typical European image of concubinage--a lecherous old Arab taking lascivious delight in his vast harem--misses much of the point of that institution. The master was as concerned with the political and social advantages to be gained from his concubines' offspring as with the pleasures of begetting them.¹¹

The evolution of Islamic lands after Mohammed generally did not threaten the role of slaves as dependents, and it was in the subsequent

¹¹On marriage and concubinage see Hambly; Levy, pp. 64, 77, 117-18; and Brunschvig, pp. 28-9. The interpretation of the origins of these regulations is my own.

centuries that the various schools of law elaborated the basic Koranic principles regarding slavery.¹² To be sure, when labor-intensive industry did develop, slave labor was exploited, but the economy of the Middle East rarely created the conditions for such a development.¹³ As in Mecca, slavery was to a great extent a concomitant of urban, commercial prosperity. Slaves performed necessary work in trading operations and in crafts, but they were also the household servants of the wealthy and indicators of prestige. Concubinage was common throughout the Islamic world.¹⁴ As central government developed in certain Islamic lands, the political role of slaves was enhanced. The slave of an ordinary man might serve as a guardian or henchman, but the slave of a king could become a mamluk, a member of the army of the state. Some slaves rose to the highest ranks. Others served in bureaucracies. The dependence of slaves on their masters for all the benefits of life made them much desired for these roles, for free members of another kinship group had divided loyalties and a ruler's own kinsmen stood to inherit the kingdom in case of his death.¹⁵

¹²The schools agreed on the most basic aspects of the laws of slavery. Brunschvig, pp. 26-31.

¹³The most famous exception is the salt-flats of Iraq in the ninth century A.D., where the mistreatment of African slaves was bad enough to provoke a revolt. Lewis, Arabs, pp. 103-6.

¹⁴However, the social conditions that underlay the Koranic concepts of concubinage did not always exist. When patrimonial authority was replaced by more centralized states, a large royal dynasty could be more of a nuisance than a source of political strength. When feuds were no longer endemic, ordinary men had less need of a large kinship group and could become sensitive to the fact that inheritance would be divided among all legitimate heirs. In such cases invidious distinctions were likely to crop up against the children of concubines. I am indebted to Gavin Hambly for making this point clear to me. See also note 17 below.

¹⁵Hambly; Claude Cahen, "Economy, Society, Institutions," in Holt et al., Cambridge History, p. 516.

Slaves were obtained from all areas along the fringes of the expanding Islamic world. "White barbarians," Turks, Slavs, and so on, were enslaved as were brown-skinned Ethiopians and black Africans. At least as early as the ninth century A.D. the importation of black Africans into the central Islamic lands was massive. Elaborate stereotypes developed regarding the talents and weaknesses of slaves from different ethnic groups. Elites generally preferred white or light-skinned peoples as concubines or trusted deputies. Black slaves tended to be shunted into less prestigious tasks. Such discrimination developed at a time when distinctions between Arabs and non-Arabs generally were becoming important as a result of the military conquests by the Arabs. It was the coincidence of subordination with a distinctive appearance that made blacks stand out among non-Arabs and helped form color prejudice. In addition, Arabs had less respect for the political strength and civilization of Africa than they did for other societies, including India and Europe, principally because African societies were less like their own. Finally, economic factors were important. Black Africans, owing to patterns of conquest and trade, became the most numerous and cheapest available slaves, while the prestige of owning white slaves was enhanced by their scarcity value.¹⁶ The process of domination could erode the ideals of the Koran.

Yet by law a slave was a slave, regardless of his origins, and in practice the absence of a distinct economic role for slaves in a productive industry reduced the impetus to associate a particular race with a particular occupation. The prevalence of concubinage ensured that even

¹⁶ Bernard Lewis, Race and Color in Islam (New York: Harper, 1972), esp. pp. 25-9, 38, 64-5.

members of the slaveowning group would become darker.¹⁷ The association of blackness with low-status slaves was a tendency, but structural distinctions based on race did not emerge.¹⁸

Masters and slaves were the only clearly defined status groups, with different rights, recognized by the Koran.¹⁹ The legal recognition given hierarchies in medieval and early-modern Europe was not part of Islamic law. Islam, in fact, had a strong egalitarian thrust. Mohammed himself was not from the most prestigious Meccan family, and many of his early converts came from relatively low strata. Nevertheless, distinctions between the powerful and the weak, the rich and the poor, as well as those between different categories of Muslims soon emerged. The process of Islamisation itself could create status distinctions among Muslims, especially between conquering Arabs and conquered non-Arabs. The orthodox Caliphate was strongly affected by such differentiation, as well as by the growing gap between the rulers and the ruled.²⁰ Islam became the

¹⁷ In some cases, however, the child of a black concubine was looked down upon, but in others the children of slave mothers, including Africans, attained high positions. Lewis, *Race*, pp. 94-5; Levy, p. 64; Ignaz Goldziher, *Muslim Studies*, trans. C. R. Barber and S. M. Stern (Chicago: Aldine, 1967), pp. 120-21.

¹⁸ Lewis, unfortunately, fails to go beyond his expose of Arab prejudice into an analysis of its significance for social structure. *Race, passim*. For a discussion of how people in one part of the Islamic world defined the major structural divisions in society see Albert Hourani, "Race and Related Ideas in the Near East," in Melvin M. Tumin, ed., *Comparative Perspectives on Race Relations* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1969), pp. 162-63.

¹⁹ Islamic law also recognized clientage, which is an unequal relationship. However, the client is not a different category of person from the patron.

²⁰ Maxime Rodinson, "Histoire économique et histoire des classes

religion of highly stratified kingdoms, but in other places it was the religion of egalitarian, nomadic societies.

In the centuries after Mohammed, some of the school of Islamic law solidified these divisions through the doctrine of kafa'a, equality or suitability of marriage. Ideally, marriage took place between equals. However, a man could legally marry someone beneath his status, for the children of such a marriage would take their father's status regardless of the mother's. Women could not marry men of lower status, for their children would then be of lower status than their mother's kinsmen. Inequality could be a matter of tribe (Arab vs. non-Arab), occupation (child of a merchant vs. child of a menial), income (rich vs. poor), or religion (Muslim family vs. recent convert).²¹ Marriage was the testing ground of social status.

These notions of stratification, which developed mainly after the time of Mohammed and mainly in the central Islamic lands, meant that the master-slave distinction could be part of a broader social hierarchy. The basis of stratification varied from place to place, and the ways in which status was measured in turn influenced the ways in which slaves could contribute to their masters' social position.

The variety of systems of stratification illustrate an important

sociales dans le monde musulman," in M. A. Cook, ed., Studies in the Economic History of the Middle East (New York: Oxford U.P., 1970), pp. 141-47; Levy, pp. 55-60; Cahen, pp. 513-15.

²¹The most elaborate status distinctions were made by the Shafi and Hanafi schools. The Maliki school, to which many blacks belonged, made the fewest distinctions. Levy, pp. 62-4, 67-8; Abdalla S. Bujra, The Politics of Stratification: A Study of Political Change in a South Arabian Town (Oxford: Clarendon, 1971), pp. 13-53, 93-114. I am also indebted to the Chief Qadi of Kenya, Sheikh Abdalla Saleh Al-Farsy, for explaining the intricacies of kafa'a to me. MSA 21.

point which scholars of Islamic societies often ignore. To speak of "Islamic Civilization" or "Islamic Society" implies that there is one civilization or social structure that can be characterized in that way.²² The heritage of Mohammed's Arabia and the classical period of Islam--expressed in the Koran, the sayings of the Prophet, the works of legal scholars, and oral traditions--is to this day a strong and vital one wherever people say, "There is no God but Allah." But Islam is not transmitted as an inviolable entity across time, space, and cultural differences. Just as Islam developed in a particular social environment, its impact on diverse peoples depended on their environments as well.

The Society and Economy of Oman

A study of slavery in the Islamic society of nineteenth century East Africa must begin in the homeland of the people who were to play the most dynamic role in the beginnings of agricultural development there.²³ The Arabs of Oman--like their brethren of the nearby Hadramaut--had been seafarers and traders for well over a millenium before their commercial activities reached new heights in the late eighteenth century. Yet even the expanded commerce left Omani society essentially intact, and the most

²²For a critique of the Cambridge History of Islam along these lines, see Roger Owen, "Studying Islamic History," Journal of Interdisciplinary History, IV (1973), esp. pp. 297-98.

²³The principal sources on Omani society in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries are European travel accounts, especially those of Niebuhr, Maurizi, and Wellsted, which are cited below. Officials of the Indian Government kept an eye on the economy of the Persian Gulf and Oman. One valuable Arabic chronicle (Salil-ibn-Razik) has been translated and others were used by R. D. Bathurst in the only scholarly monograph on pre-nineteenth century Oman. For comments on the problems of using such evidence see Appendix B, Part I.

significant economic and social changes occurred only in the nineteenth century and principally among those Omanis who emigrated to East Africa.

Oman was affected by currents emanating from conflict in the Islamic Caliphate in the generations after the Prophet's death. The orthodox Caliphate was opposed by two groups, Shi'as, who believed that the Caliphate should be hereditary in the line of Mohammed's cousin and son-in-law, Ali, and Kharijites (from an Arabic word meaning to go out or secede), who denied the right of succession to the Caliphate altogether. They believed that no one class or family was entitled to rule the Muslims, but that the community of the faithful could elect a leader. He could command obedience only when he himself remained faithful to the law. The Kharijite challenge to the Caliphate failed by the end of the eighth century A.D. and the Kharijites fled, surviving only in the region of Algeria and Libya and in Oman. Oman came under the domination of Kharijites descended from 'Abd'allah bin Ibad, and the followers of this sect are known as Ibadis.²⁴ Ibadis believed strongly in adherence to the letter of the law laid down by Mohammed. Puritanical and ascetic, they saw the creation of a truly Islamic social order, the imamate (after imam, religious leader of the community), as the only earthly task for man. All other pursuits were vanity. An eighteenth century European visitor to Oman remarked that the people there "abominate Luxury and Pride."²⁵ Ibadis

²⁴ Elie Adib Salem, Political Theory and Institutions of the Khawarij (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins U.P., 1956), pp. 14-29; Tedeusz Lewicki, "Al-Ibadiyya," Encyclopedia of Islam (Leiden: Brill, 1971), Vol. III, p. 652; Robert G. Landen, Oman Since 1856: Disruptive Modernization in a Traditional Arab Society (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1967), p. 45; Wendell Phillips, Oman: A History (Great Britain: Reynal, 1967), pp. 8-9.

²⁵ Alexander Hamilton, A New Account of the East Indies 1688-1723 (Edinburgh: Mosman, 1727), Vol. I, p. 62.

legal writing retained the egalitarian emphasis of Mohammed to a much greater degree than other schools of law. No privileged, hereditary groups were recognized, and early Kharijites were joined by many non-Arabs because of their openness to foreigners. In Kharijite theory, all believers in their version of Islam were equal. Even a slave could aspire to be imam, the leader of the faithful.²⁶

The Arabs of Oman were divided into a number of tribes, such as Al-Ya'rubi, Al-Busaidi, Al-Mandhry, al-Mazrui, and Al-Harthi. Although all of them had undoubtedly absorbed members of various origins, each claimed common descent and a common historical tradition. They were the primary focus of political loyalty. The tribe was obliged to fight for the individual and the individual for the tribe. Partly because the Ibadi imamate had never developed into a strong central authority, the tribes retained much greater strength than analogous communal groups did elsewhere in the Islamic world. The idea of an Islamic state superimposed on a society divided into tribes bore a greater resemblance to seventh century Arabia than to subsequent developments in the Islamic heartlands. Not surprisingly, the imam tended to come from one particular tribe, but his power was weak, feuds chronic, and dynasties unstable.²⁷

²⁶ Salem, pp. 56-7, 62; Landen, pp. 42-4; Lewicki, p. 658; T. Lewicki, "The Ibadites of Arabia and Africa," Cahiers d'Histoire Mondiale, 13 (1971), p. 556; Interview with Abdalla Saleh Al-Farsy, MSA 21. The Hadramaut, the southern portion of the Arabian peninsula, was most hierarchical. See Bujra, pp. 13-5, and R. B. Sergeant, "Société et gouvernement en Arabie du Sud," Arabica, 14 (1967), pp. 285-91.

²⁷ For analyses of Omani society and politics see Landen; R. D. Bathurst, "The Ya'rubi Dynasty of Oman," D.Phil. Dissertation, Oxford University, 1967, and J. B. Kelly, Sultanate and Imamate in Oman (London: Oxford U.P., 1959). The centrality of communal conflict to Omani history is clear in the chronicle of Salil-ibn-Razik, History of the Imams and Seyyids of 'Oman from A.D. 661-1856, ed. and trans. by G. P. Badger (London: Hakluyt Society, 1871).

The ascetic Ibadis of Oman were favored with better material circumstances than many other Arabs. Certain areas along the eastern shores of Oman and some interior valleys were sufficiently well watered for the cultivation of subsistence crops and date palms.²⁸ However, Oman's greatest economic advantage was its position commanding the junction of the Persian Gulf with the Indian Ocean. Sailing vessels travelling between East Africa and India crept along the coast, passing Oman, while much trade from Turkey, Persia, and other areas near the Gulf had to pass by Oman's main port and capital, Muscat. Oman offered great opportunity to the sailor, the merchant, and the pirate, and at various times Omanis practiced all these professions.²⁹

As early as the first century A.D., Omanis were sailing, and even settling, along the East African coast, seeking the luxury goods from the hinterland.³⁰ The traders did not always make progress and suffered particularly during the period of Portuguese hegemony in the Indian Ocean in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.³¹ The decline of Portuguese

²⁸ Landen, pp. 32-3. For descriptions of Omani agriculture in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, see Hamilton, Vol. I, p. 63; James B. Fraser, Narrative of a Journey into Khorosan in the Years 1821 and 1822 (London: Longman, 1825), pp. 8-9; W. F. W. Owen, Narrative of Voyages to Explore the Shores of Africa, Arabia and Madagascar (London: Bentley, 1833), Vol. I, p. 338; and J. R. Wellsted, Travels in Arabia (London: Murray, 1838), Vol. I, pp. 89-93, 115, 132.

²⁹ Landen, passim.

³⁰ Ibid., pp. 52-3.

³¹ Justus Strandes, The Portuguese Period in East Africa, trans. J. F. Wallwork (Nairobi: East African Literature Bureau, 1961); Charles R. Boxer and Carlos de Azevedo, Fort Jesus and the Portuguese in Mombasa 1593-1729 (London: Hotton and Carter, 1960).

power enabled the Omanis to reassert themselves. They expelled the last Portuguese forces from Muscat by 1650 and set about strengthening their military position in the Persian Gulf area and in East Africa, led by their imam Seif bin Sultan Al-Ya'rubi. Omani seamen developed improved sailing vessels and used them in raids and trade. Seif bin Sultan himself became a wealthy merchant and owner of ships, date plantations, and slaves.³²

However, by the 1720's, Oman was torn by internecine warfare. Conflict between commercial success and Ibadi conceptions of the imamate was superimposed on tribal feuds. The Ya'rubi dynasty of Seif bin Sultan found itself increasingly occupied with the needs of a commercial and military state. The imam himself was doubtlessly concerned with the management of his 24 large ships, 28 smaller vessels, and his extensive date plantations.³³ Ibadis in the interior were not subject to the moderating influences of commercial success. Inter-tribal feuds, religious disagreement, and urban-rural conflict were too much for the Ya'rubi to handle. Their weakness eventually led to Persian intervention and domination in the 1730's and 1740's.³⁴ When Oman emerged from that debacle, it was under the rule of a forceful, dynamic, and ruthless ruler from a rival tribe, Ahmed bin Said Al-Busaidi. Al-Busaidi rule did not mean the end of tribal wars or religious differences, but the new dynasty was at least sufficiently strong to retain political power in Oman, to regain

³² Bathurst, pp. 173-76; Landen, pp. 54-5; Phillips, p. 51.

³³ Salil-ibn-Razik, pp. 92-3; Bathurst, p. 205.

³⁴ Landen, pp. 56-8; Phillips, pp. 53-6.

military hegemony in the Persian Gulf, and to provide the stability necessary for trade to expand.³⁵ Ahmed bin Said himself did not take the title of imam, but styled himself Seyyid, meaning lord or master.³⁶ He became, besides a strong military leader, a successful and prosperous trader. His successors followed in his footsteps.³⁷

By 1800 the Arabs of Oman were considered the "best mariners in all Arabia" and were sailing throughout the Indian Ocean.³⁸ The British authorities in Bombay were alarmed at the "amazing increase in the shipping and navigation of the Subjects of the Imam of Muscat" and feared that they would encroach on the carrying trade within the Indian subcontinent. Not only did the number of dhows used in long-distance commerce increase, but Omanis began to use square-rigged vessels built for them in India. One source estimated that Muscat possessed 15 ships of 400-700 tons, 3 brigs, and a large number of dhows.³⁹

³⁵Carsten Niebuhr, Travels through Arabia (Edinburgh: Morison, 1792), Vol. II, pp. 120-22; Landen, 58-61.

³⁶This term should be carefully distinguished from the way seyyid is used in the Hadramaut, where it refers to a descendant of the Prophet. In Oman, it is a more general term of respect which was adopted by the Al-Busaidi dynasty. Later, the term Sultan came into use, and is still used by East Africans to refer to the ruler of Oman and Zanzibar. See J. B. Kelly, Britain and the Persian Gulf 1795-1880 (Oxford: Clarendon, 1968), p. 12.

³⁷On Al-Busaidi business activity, see Niebuhr, Vol. II, p. 122; Edmund Roberts to Louis McLane, 14 May 1834, NEMA, p. 156; A. de Gobineau, Trois ans en Asie, de 1855 à 1858 (Paris: Grasset, 1823), Vol. I, p. 109; S. B. Miles, The Countries and Tribes of the Persian Gulf (London: Cass, 1919, repr. 1966), pp. 266-67; Phillips, pp. 62-8.

³⁸Niebuhr, Vol. II, p. 123; Samuel Manesty and Harford Jones, "Report on British Trade with Persia and Arabia," 15 December 1790, Ind. Of., G/29/21, p. 223.

The port of Muscat was essentially an entrepot; dates were its only significant export and most imports were re-exported. Much of its prosperity was derived from the coast of Africa. Arab traders brought cowrie shells, rice, wood, wax, hides, and--of greatest importance--slaves and ivory from East Africa. European products, metals, cloth, rice, sugar, and other goods came from India. Pearls and drugs came from Persia and coffee from the Hadramaut. Muscat was a major center of distribution of these goods to India, the Persian Gulf, and the Red Sea.⁴⁰ Trade had become "a never failing source of wealth."⁴¹ Customs revenues have been variously estimated at \$47,000 (1765), \$141,000 (1802), and \$180,000 (ca. 1815).⁴² Profits from trade were reinvested in further expansion of Omani trade in the Indian Ocean. Officials in Bengal in 1807 referred to the "enormous and annually increasing capital" involved in Arab trade with the subcontinent. They estimated the capital at \$2,464,000 plus the value of 15,000 tons of shipping, worth \$666,000.⁴³

³⁹"Report on the External Commerce under the Presidency of Bombay, 1803/04," Ind. Of., P/419/41, para. 49, 52, 53; Seton to Bombay, 9 July 1802, Bombay Political Consultations, Proceedings for 27 August 1802, Ind. Of., P/381/33, p. 3613; Manesty and Jones, pp. 210-11; Owen, Vol. I, p. 334.

⁴⁰Seton to Bombay, p. 3615; "External Commerce, Bombay," para. 56; Niebuhr, Vol. II, p. 116; Owen, Vol. I, p. 340; J. S. Buckingham, "Voyage from Bushire to Muscat," Oriental Herald, XXII (1829), p. 89; Manesty and Jones, pp. 210-11. See also Landen, pp. 61-3; Kelly, Britain, pp. 14-6; and Abdul Mohamed Hussein Sheriff, "The Rise of a Commercial Empire: An Aspect of the Economic History of Zanzibar, 1770-1873," Ph.D. Dissertation, University of London, 1971, pp. 42-3.

⁴¹Manesty and Jones, pp. 210-11.

⁴²Niebuhr, Vol. II, p. 116; Seton to Bombay, p. 3609; Vincenzo Maurizi, History of Seyd Said, Sultan of Muscat (London: Booth, 1819), p. 29.

This commercial expansion was partly a revival of older patterns of trade. Oman's renewed political vigor gave her merchants and sailors a chance to take advantage of her geographical position. A progressive Sultan, himself a trader, kept duties low, gave his own merchants free rein, and assured foreign merchants that, Ibadi particularism notwithstanding, their business was welcome in Muscat.⁴⁴ The political conditions for Omani trade were fostered by the installation of Omani governors in Zanzibar, Mombasa, Kilwa, and other East Africa ports in the middle or late eighteenth century. They provided traders with protection and collected duties, even though they left local communal groups (mainly Swahili) largely alone and did not penetrate inland. The Omani empire remained a commercial one.⁴⁵

Demand for African produce in India and Europe was probably greater than it ever had been. Omani and other traders brought goods to the ports of Calcutta, Malacca, and Batavia, where they were used or put on board European ships that called there. An Omani monopoly within the western Indian Ocean never existed, but they were the most dynamic element in a growing economy. As traders pioneered the trade routes, forged links with business partners, and encouraged suppliers from the Interior of Africa to fill their demands, they made it easier for subsequent traders to follow in their footsteps. The prosperity of the traders in turn enhanced the demand for luxury goods, including slaves. In leading ports,

⁴³"Report on the External Commerce of Bengal, 1806-7," Ind. Of., P/174/18, para. 59, 65.

⁴⁴Wellsted, Vol. I, p. 7; Owen, Vol. I, p. 339.

⁴⁵This is the major theme of Sheriff, passim.

notably Muscat, groups of men whose fortunes were linked to international commerce were becoming prominent.⁴⁶

The extent to which Omani society was being transformed should not be exaggerated. Not all the benefits of Muscat's role as emporium fell into Arab hands. A substantial Indian trading community lived there, estimated at 1200 in the late eighteenth century and 4000 in the early nineteenth.⁴⁷ They were the "Bankers of Arabia," on whom others depended for finance. Even the Sultan, the richest merchant of all, borrowed from Indians to finance his trading ventures. The job of collecting customs duties was entrusted to an Indian.⁴⁸ Certain branches of trade, such as pearls and coffee, were largely controlled by Indians, while Persians and Indians were also among the major shipowners.⁴⁹

Omani Arabs did become merchants in Oman and East African ports, and they dominated the actual shipping of merchandise. Vessels were entrusted to captains, who were paid a monthly wage, while the crew brought their own food, and only received a wage if the voyage produced a profit.⁵⁰ Crew members and sometimes captains were often slaves. Even in the

⁴⁶ Ibid., pp. 33-5, 41-3; Landen, pp. 60-3. The Hadramaut also participated in Indian Ocean commerce. In earlier centuries, most of the Arab emmigration to East Africa probably came from the Hadramaut, and the Africans of the coast learned the Sunni form of Islam from them, rather than the Ibadi creed of the Omanis. See Bujra, pp. 1-4; Serjeant, pp. 284-97.

⁴⁷ Niebuhr, Vol. II, p. 116; Maurizi, p. 23.

⁴⁸ Maurizi, p. 29; Owen, Vol. I, p. 340.

⁴⁹ Wellsted, Vol. I, pp. 19, 23-4; "External Commerce, Bombay," para. 54.

⁵⁰ Journal of Horace B. Putnam 184, Essex Institute, NEMA, p. 404.

twentieth century southern Arabian and Persian Gulf dhows were captured by men who were bound to the owners by personal ties and by debt, while the crews received small shares of the profits. The real opportunities for captain and crew lay in the chance to do petty trading on their own while transporting the consigned goods.⁵¹ The monsoon winds permitted only one trip from Arabia to Africa per year. Dhows stopped along the way, buying or selling as the opportunity was offered and sometimes picking up passengers. Dhows were not tied to the trade in any one type of merchandise, but generally carried a variety of goods.⁵²

External commerce did not transform the internal economy of Oman. Date production may have increased, probably owing to improved access to markets, more money to invest, and better supplies of slaves, but the evidence that this actually occurred is sparse. Annual date exports from the Persian Gulf to Bombay alone were worth over \$50,000 in the first decade of the nineteenth century. But even this was a small fraction of Muscat's commerce, and Oman had no other economically significant agricultural products.⁵⁴ Internal trade was modest, because, as one traveller put it, people of the interior were frugal and had few wants,

⁵¹On slaves as sailors, see below, p. 61. Alan Villiers, "Some Aspects of the Arab Dhow Trade," The Middle East Journal, 2 (1948), pp. 403-4, 410-11.

⁵²Wellsted, Vol. I, pp. 23-4. The description of dhow voyages in the twentieth century by Villiers is similar to that of Wellsted a century earlier. Villiers, pp. 400-4.

⁵³Captain Loarer, "Ile de Zanguébar," O.I., 5/23, Cahier 5; Sheriff, p. 41.

⁵⁴"Report on the External Commerce under the Presidency of Bombay," 1807-8, 1808-9, table 3; Buckingham, p. 89; Wellsted, Vol. I, p. 279.

which could be supplied by their own cultivation. Nor was there much domestic industry.⁵⁵

That money was being brought into Oman did not mean that the religious values of the people were negated. To be sure, signs of material prosperity were evident to visitors: J. R. Wellsted, who explored Oman in the 1830's, was surprised by the high proportion of Muscat's population that enjoyed "independence and comfort."⁵⁶ However, most observers were struck by the simplicity of life even in the prosperous port of Muscat. Carsten Niebuhr, travelling in Arabia around 1790, remarked on the modesty of dress, houses, and mosques, even among wealthy people, and attributed this to the Ibadi creed. Vincenzo Maurizi, an Italian physician who lived in Muscat from 1809 to 1814, noted the simplicity of life and the absence of personal wants. And a later visitor remarked of the Omani Arab, "He enjoys a tranquil life."⁵⁷

The interior of Oman remained largely the province of the various tribes of Oman, living off pastoralism and small-scale agriculture, often fighting with each other and with the Sultan. Their desire for a purified Ibadi imamate remained largely unshaken. The inhabitants of the coast were essentially urbanized, commercialized tribesmen--retaining kinship ties with their rural homelands--rather than a different type of social group. Never far beneath the surface, Ibadi political and social ideals

⁵⁵ Wellsted, Vol. I, p. 317; A. Germain, "Quelques mots sur l'Oman et le Sultan de Maskate," Bulletin de la Société de Géographie (Paris), 5^e série, XVI (1868), p. 344.

⁵⁶ Wellsted, Vol. I, pp. 347-48.

⁵⁷ Niebuhr, Vol. II, p. 188; Maurizi, pp. 104, 111-12; Germain, p. 352.

remained strong enough to reassert themselves in mid-nineteenth century in the form of a powerful, and partly successful, movement to restore the old imamate.⁵⁸

Although Al-Busaidi Sultans dropped the title of imam, they stuck to other qualities of the old fashioned ruler. They recruited personal armies, relying in part on slaves whose loyalty would not be compromised by tribal ties, and they did not forget that their rule depended on the good will of the tribes and leading families.⁵⁹ A key element of a Sultan's rule was generosity, for followers were obtained largely by the distribution of rewards. Al-Busaidi Sultans supported their relatives, entertained important guests, and gave even the poorest Arabs who called on them tokens to remember their visits and to emphasize the personal nature of political bonds. At a lower level, other political leaders had to behave in the same fashion towards their supporters.⁶⁰ Oman's progressive businessman-Sultan followed familiar patterns of recruiting personal followers and slaves, strengthening personal ties with his subjects, and distributing personal wealth among supporters. He was a patrimonial ruler.

Like Europeans in the fifteenth to eighteenth centuries, the Omanis at the dawn of the nineteenth century were extending their horizons to distant lands in search of items to trade. However, in Europe, the great

⁵⁸ Wellsted, Vol. I, pp. 232-3, 366. On urban-rural and commercial-purist conflict see Landen, passim, and J. B. Kelly, Sultanate, pp. 5-6.

⁵⁹ Wellsted, Vol. I, pp. 380-81; Germain, pp. 352-53. See also Kelly, Sultanate, p. 5.

⁶⁰ Wellsted, Vol. I, pp. 349, 380-81.

period of long-distance trade went hand-in-hand with the transformation of the domestic economy. The productivity of agriculture, the organization of labor, internal markets, religion, state organization, and social values had changed considerably since the Middle Ages. Omani society was not static, but it did not experience a comparable transformation. That wealth was entering the Omani economy and that Omanis were venturing all over the Indian Ocean in search of profits is undeniable, but so too are the absence of changes in agriculture, the limitations of the domestic market, the dependence on foreigners for financial transactions, and the continued, if no longer unchallenged, strength of an anti-materialist religion.⁶¹ A portion of Oman's population was moving in the direction of a commercial economy, but it was not approaching a capitalist one.

Slaves in Omani Society

At the beginning of the nineteenth century, the demands which Omani society placed on slaves were not inconsistent with older Islamic conceptions of slavery. Oman--lacking the centralized political structures and complex social categories of states in the Islamic heartlands--bore a closer resemblance to the communalism of seventh century Arabia than did the successors to the Prophet's Islamic state. Slavery existed in pre-Islamic southern Arabia and was an important institution in the eighteenth century. Imam Seif bin Sultan Al-Ya'rubi was reputed to own 700 male slaves. In the early nineteenth century, slaves were reported to be "very

⁶¹ Perhaps asceticism indirectly contributed to economic development by encouraging investment instead of consumption. Ibadis from North Africa were also notably successful in commerce, especially in the trans-Saharan trade. Lewicki, "Ibadites," pp. 51-130.

numerous."⁶² Muscat had become a "great mart for slaves," to which Omanis and other peoples of the Persian Gulf came to make their purchases.⁶³

A large number of the slaves in Oman were house servants. Prosperous Arabs had two or more servants to assist in domestic tasks. The rich often had more than a dozen, and the Sultan himself reputedly had over a hundred.⁶⁴ However, the amount of work demanded of servants was often not great, for the "wants of any individual are few."⁶⁵ Certain servants had responsible positions in large households.⁶⁶ Domestic servants were intended as much for display as for relief from the drudgery of daily life.⁶⁷

Other slaves were trained to be sailors. If they proved their loyalty, they were often put in command of ships and entrusted with valuable merchandise.⁶⁸ Sultans made many of their slaves into soldiers.

⁶² Shahīd, p. 7; Hamilton, Vol. I, p. 63; Salil-ibn-Razik, pp. 92-3, 165; Maurizi, p. 132; Fraser, p. 6; Edmund Roberts, Embassy to the Eastern Courts of Cochin-China, Siam and Muscat, 1832-4 (New York: Harper, 1837), p. 334.

⁶³ Wellsted in 1838 estimated that 4,000 slaves were sold in Muscat each year. Vol. I, p. 388; see also Maurizi, p. 131, and W. G. Palgrave, "Observations Made in Central, Eastern and Southern Arabia during a Journey through that Country in 1862 and 1863," Journal of the RGS, 34 (1864), p. 151.

⁶⁴ Wellsted, Vol. I, pp. 195, 390-91; Memorandum by J. S. Buckingham, 20 June 1842, in FO 54/4; R. Mignan, A Winter Journey through Russia, the Caucasian Alps and Georgia, thence...into Koordistan (London: Bentley, 1839), Vol. II, pp. 239-40.

⁶⁵ Maurizi, p. 104.

⁶⁶ Buckingham, "Voyage," p. 92; Wellsted, Vol. I, pp. 390-91.

⁶⁷ A similar conclusion was reached by an ethnographic survey. "Eastern Arabia," in Human Relations Area Files, Subcontractor's Monograph 51 (1956), pp. 178-79.

The Ya'rubi imam reportedly had a guard of 100 slaves armed with guns, while Ahmed bin Said Al-Busaidi, when he became Sultan, bought 1000 East African slaves and 100 Nubians to guard his fortress. Even in the nineteenth century, Seyyid Said bin Sultan employed slaves as soldiers.⁶⁹ Slave-soldiers who distinguished themselves could be made into officers or even governors of cities.⁷⁰

Concubinage was common. Omanis who could afford it preferred Ethiopian women and were willing to pay more for them than for Central African slaves.⁷¹ As a result of concubinage and the recognition of children as legitimate, the "pure Arab element" in Oman was "remarkably small."⁷² The Arabs of the hinterland were fairer than those of the coast, suggesting that miscegenation with Africans was most characteristic of those Arabs with the most involvement in commerce and the most wealth.⁷³ The price difference between Central African and Ethiopian slaves is clear evidence

⁶⁸ Memorandum by E. C. Ross, incl. Ross to Argyll, 25 January 1873, Letters from the Persian Gulf, Ind. Of., L/P+S/9/22; Wellsted, Vol. I, p. 391; Mignan, Vol. II, p. 240.

⁶⁹ Hamilton, Vol. I, p. 66; Salil-ibn-Razik, p. 165; Wellsted, Vol. I, p. 381; Maurizi, pp. 29-30.

⁷⁰ Buckingham Memorandum. Seyyid Said's governor of Zanzibar was an Ethiopian slave. See Chapter V.

⁷¹ Wellsted, in 1838, wrote that Galla slaves from Ethiopia sold for \$100 to \$150, whereas black slaves from the Zanzibar coast were worth \$40-60. Vol. I, p. 389. See also Buckingham, "Voyage," p. 92.

⁷² A. S. G. Jayakar, "Medical Topography of Muscat," Muscat, Annual Report, 1876/77, p. 102, Ind. Of.

⁷³ Wellsted, Vol. I, pp. 17, 33. Wellsted's claim that the "highest orders" of Arabs retained a purity of Arabian descent probably refers to the tribal leaders of the interior.

that Arabs were color-conscious, considering the brown Ethiopians with their somewhat Caucasian features more desirable than the black, Negroid slaves from Central Africa.⁷⁴ But concubinage meant that color was not a good indicator of status; the son of an African woman by her Arab master could be a man of high status, as much an Arab, and fully the equal, of his fair brothers.

Date production, although second in importance to commerce, was a major industry, and it employed slave labor. There were two types of date cultivation. In the interior, dates were grown by tribal people. Although they owned slaves, free men did not require much labor to handle the scale of cultivation in which they were engaged. As Wellsted wrote in regard to one group of date growers, "With no other employment than tending their dates, which occupies but a small portion of their time, they lead an idle life...."⁷⁵ On the coastal belt, however, date palms were grown on individually owned plantations. The trees were a favorite investment and they produce a cash crop. Marriage dowries and legacies largely consisted of date groves: "Their wealth," wrote Wellsted, "consists in a great measure in their date groves."⁷⁶ Some estates had 3000

⁷⁴ Ethiopian males also commanded a high price and were often used in responsible jobs in the household or business. Buckingham, "Voyage," p. 93; Kemball to Robertson, 8 July 1842, pp 1843, LIX, 337, p. 26.

⁷⁵ Wellsted, Vol. I, pp. 52-3. Wellsted's references to slaves in the interior do not indicate any role for them in agriculture. *Ibid.*, pp. 63-4, 70, 187. For more recent information on agriculture in the interior of Oman, see Human Area Relations Files, 51, pp. 164-65.

⁷⁶ Wellsted, Vol. I, pp. 189, 347-48; Fraser, p. 18; Muscat, Annual Report, 1876/77, p. 79, Ind. Of.

to 5000 trees.⁷⁷ The Sultans of Oman invested heavily in dates. Imam Seif bin Sultan allegedly planted 30,000 date plants and owned 1700 slaves. Al-Busaidi Sultans also owned large date plantations, some of which were rented out to tenants.⁷⁸ Few Omanis, however, cultivated dates on this scale, and some landowners leased their estates to tenants rather than farm it with the aid of their own slaves.⁷⁹

The date tree, on large units as well as in tribal areas, is not a difficult tree to cultivate. To be sure, careful, tedious work is required to plant new trees. The soil around the trees must be broken in the first years. With mature trees, watering may be necessary and there is an annual harvest.⁸⁰ With some exaggeration, Maurizi wrote that the date tree "yields its nutritious and abundant produce almost spontaneously," so that the agriculturalist was "free from that life of severe and unre-mitted toil, to which so large a portion of the population of Europe is always condemned."⁸¹ At the beginning of the twentieth century, a detailed commercial report on Oman by the French consul claimed that in good date country a single worker could care for 1000 date trees. Where well-water

⁷⁷ Fraser, p. 18. Some of the wealthiest Omani families now in Mombasa used to have date plantations in Oman. MSA 14 and MSA 27.

⁷⁸ Bathurst, p. 205; Seton to Bombay, 9 July 1803, Bombay Political Consultations, Proceedings for 27 August 1802, Ind. Of., P/381/33, p. 2609; Fraser, p. 16.

⁷⁹ Wellsted, Vol. I, pp. 347-48; Fraser, p. 18.

⁸⁰ F. S. Vidal, "Date Culture in the Oasis of Al-Hasa," reprinted in Abdulla M. Lutfiyya and Charles W. Churchill, eds., Readings in Arab and Middle Eastern Societies and Cultures (The Hague: Mouton, 1970), pp. 209-10.

⁸¹ Maurizi, p. 110.

was required, he could still tend 200 trees.⁸² Contemporary observers occasionally saw slaves in date groves or other farms, but reported no evidence that slaves were closely supervised or overworked.⁸³ This was not necessarily the result of their masters' benevolence, but of the limited demands of Omani agriculture.

The evidence from observers on the treatment of slaves is subjective and general. However, in so far as it is valid, there is virtual unanimity that slaves, whether house servants or field hands, were treated with "kindness," "consideration," or "indulgence." "Public opinion," wrote a British official, condemned cruelty to slaves.⁸⁴ Some observers claimed that slaves were treated as members of the families which they served.⁸⁵ According to Wellsted, a slave who was mistreated could go to the gadi (judge) and demand a public sale. Although the master could sell, exchange, or punish slaves, he could not inflict the death penalty on his slaves without public trial.⁸⁶ Young slaves were given an Islamic education and the children of slaves, unless they were freed, were treated with more familiarity than new slaves and given house servants' duties.⁸⁷

⁸² Ottavi, "Rapport commercial sur l'Oman et Mascate," 1900, MAE, Correspondance Commerciale, Mascate, II. See also Human Area Relations Files, 51, p. 179.

⁸³ Fraser, p. 18; Ross Memorandum; diary of Lieutenant-Colonel Disbrowe, entry 16 April 1865, PP 1867-68, LXIV, 657, p. 126.

⁸⁴ Fraser, p. 18, Ross Memorandum; Wellsted, Vol. I, pp. 390-91; Mignan, Vol. II, pp. 239-40; W. G. Palgrave, A Narrative of a Year's Journey through Central and Eastern Arabia (1862-63) (London: Macmillan, 1865), Vol. II, p. 272.

⁸⁵ Ross Memorandum; Germain, p. 351.

⁸⁶ Wellsted, Vol. I, p. 390.

The only contrary evidence comes from British ships, later in the nineteenth century, which picked up slaves who had fled their masters, sometimes complaining of mistreatment.⁸⁸ The data, while not conclusive, suggest that slaves, although regarded as inferiors, at least had the mixed benefits of paternalism.

Manumission was apparently a common practice in Oman. William Palgrave, who visited Oman in 1862-63, claimed that most slaves who did not die young were eventually freed, so that about one-fourth of the population of Oman consisted of freed African slaves and their descendants.⁸⁹ The death of the master was the principal occasion for freeing slaves.⁹⁰ Some of the manumitted slaves were able to settle in the countryside, at times intermingled with the free population, at times living in separate villages. Some were able to acquire land. Intermarriage with free people occurred, but was not common.⁹¹ In the city of Muscat, few ex-slaves rose above the lower rungs of society. They were servants, drivers, water carriers, gardeners, sailors, and the like. Others lived on the edge of Muscat, picking dates in season and looking for odd jobs the rest of the year.⁹² A few, mainly Ethiopian ex-servants, were able to become

⁸⁷ Ibid., p. 391; Ross Memorandum.

⁸⁸ Commander Needham to Sir F. Richards, 10 May 1887, FOCP 5616, p. 85. Around 1900, the Persian Gulf patrol was picking up about 50 fugitive slaves per year. "Précis on the Slave Trade, 1906," Ind. Of., p. 52. An earlier source, however, claimed that desertion was rare. Germain, p. 351.

⁸⁹ Palgrave, Narrative, Vol. II, p. 272; Germain, p. 351.

⁹⁰ Wellsted, Vol. I, p. 390; Palgrave, "Observations," p. 151.

⁹¹ Ibid., pp. 151-52; de Gobineau, Vol. I; p. 113.

substantial merchants.⁹³ Freed slaves had no share in the government, which was the province of Arabs, specifically those Arabs whose family connections and economic importance earned them a share.⁹⁴ Freed slaves, in practice, were less than the equals of their former masters. A slave, whatever Ibadi theory maintained, could never have become Sultan. No legal barriers or hereditary class distinctions set ex-slaves--or other poor people--off from the rest of society, but they had the least chance to acquire wealth or the esteem of their fellow Muslims.

The Arabs of Oman were familiar with slavery as an institution and with African slaves as people. They used slaves to perform a variety of tasks, but the position of slaves was conditioned by the absence of labor-intensive industries. It was perfectly normal for slaves to serve as ship captains and soldiers, not just as menial laborers. Islam considered slaves as social inferiors, not degraded and inherently inferior beings, and the economic situation did not foster the belief that slaves were capable only of mindless labor under close supervision. Slaves were as much a consumption item--domestics or living displays of wealth--as a productive one. In a society divided into feuding communal groups, slaves were valued as reliable soldiers and trusted retainers. Never considered the social equals of their masters, the slaves of Oman were above all else an integral part of a stratified social order.⁹⁵

⁹² Palgrave, Narrative, Vol. II, pp. 272, 366; Germain, p. 351; Maurizi, pp. 100-1; J. B. F. Osgood, Notes of Travel or Recollections of Majunga, Zanzibar, Muscat, Aden, Mocha and Other Eastern Ports (Salem, Mass.: Creamer, 1854), pp. 92-3.

⁹³ Buckingham, "Voyage," pp. 92-3.

⁹⁴ Palgrave, "Observations," pp. 151-52.

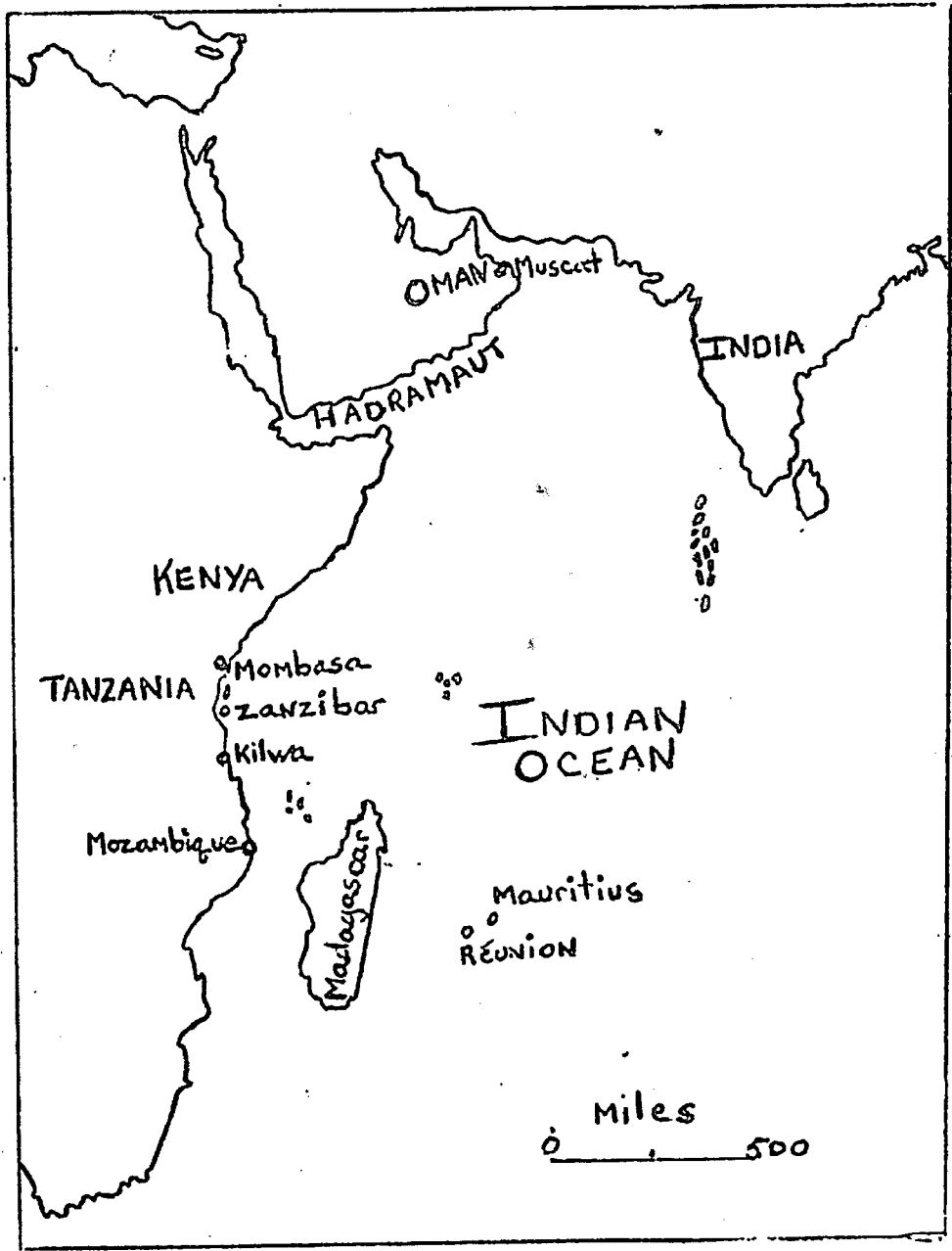
Trade on the East Coast of Africa, 1800-1860

The city-states of the coast of East Africa were a product of centuries of trade with distant lands along the Indian Ocean. Ethnically mixed populations and a lingua franca, Swahili, grew up in the ports. The towns were united mainly by common economic interests and the Muslim faith, although from time to time one town was able to bring others under its control. The local hereditary rulers or federations of Swahili-speaking tribes jealously guarded their independence. From the twelfth to the fourteenth centuries Kilwa was the most powerful of the ports, controlling the lucrative gold trade from more southerly sections of the coast. Later, the star of Mombasa rose. The Swahili people farmed, fished, and traded, obtaining products like ivory, rhinoceros horn, and slaves from the peoples of the interior. Political alliances were sometimes formed between particular interior tribes and coastal factions, but both groups remained independent. All along the coast, the peoples of the interior were strong enough to curtail whatever territorial ambitions the coastal people might have. They occasionally raided coastal cities. Such incidents reminded the Swahili of the need to cooperate with the people of the hinterland, and it was on such cooperation that the long history of trade in African produce was based.⁹⁶

⁹⁵Slavery in the Hadramaut also did not involve labor-intensive industry, and foreign observers thought it basically similar to slavery in Oman. Wellsted, Vol. II, p. 434; J. Theodore Bent, "Expedition to the Hadramut," The Geographical Journal, 4 (1894), p. 322. See also Serjeant, p. 287, and "Southern Arabia," Human Area Relations Files Sub-contractor's Monograph 52 (1956), p. 130.

⁹⁶Sheriff; John Gray, History of Zanzibar from the Middle Ages to 1856 (London: Oxford U.P., 1962); and F. J. Berg, "Mombasa under the Busaidi Sultanate: The City and Its Hinterland in the Nineteenth Century," Ph.D. Dissertation, University of Wisconsin, 1971.

MAP I: The Indian Ocean



Long-distance trade waned during the century of Portuguese domination, but revived after the Swahili, with help from the Omanis, chased the remnants of the declining maritime power from the scene in the early eighteenth century.⁹⁷ The Omani governors who replaced the Portuguese had little influence beyond the towns in which they resided, and even there the governors dealt with the local residents more by a "system of influence and common economic interests than by political and military force."⁹⁸ Nevertheless, they were able to make ports like Zanzibar conducive to trade, and in such places as Mombasa, Swahili and Arabs, were able to forge links with the people of the hinterland and prosper in trade.⁹⁹ The following pages examine the expansion of trade along the coast and the way in which it created a situation conducive to agricultural development.

Of the many commodities that came from East Africa, ivory and slaves contributed the most to the expansion of trade after the late eighteenth century. The inability of traders in Mozambique to supply Indian demands for ivory, partly the result of excessive taxation by the Portuguese, encouraged traders to develop the northern ports around the turn of the century. To this was added a spurt in British demand for ivory, especially the "soft" variety which could only be obtained in East Africa, and then a new demand from the United States. At the same time, increased supplies of cotton goods from Britain and then the United States lowered the price

⁹⁷ Gray, pp. 31-108; Strandes; Boxer and de Azevedo.

⁹⁸ Sheriff, p. 3.

⁹⁹ C. S. Nicholls, The Swahili Coast: Politics, Diplomacy and Trade on the East African Littoral, 1798-1856 (London: Allen and Unwin, 1971), pp. 84-5, 88-90.

of the leading import to East Africa. With lower prices for imports and higher prices for exports, trading conditions were generally good in the first half of the nineteenth century.¹⁰⁰

Oman, Persian Gulf countries, and India had long imported slaves. This trade continued, and probably increased, in the early nineteenth century. But the development of European plantations in the islands of Bourbon and Ile de France altered the situation. The sugar plantations had a large appetite for humans. The slave population of Bourbon grew from 387 in 1708 to 30,000 in 1779 and 50,000 in 1809-10, while that of Ile de France rose from 19,000 in 1766 to 55,000 in 1809-10.¹⁰¹ The principal sources for these slaves were Mozambique and, by the 1770's, Kilwa. In the late 1770's, the French were obtaining about 1,500 slaves per year from Kilwa and 4,500 from Mozambique.¹⁰² By 1804 the Omanis were diverting the exports of Kilwa to Zanzibar by charging the French lower duties at the latter port.¹⁰³ The slave trade to the European islands from Kilwa and Zanzibar was not numerically large, but its development at a time when Omanis were extending their trading network helped stimulate the creation of a slave trading infrastructure.¹⁰⁴

¹⁰⁰ Sheriff, pp. 101, 124-26, 207-14, 267.

¹⁰¹ Auguste Toussaint, Histoire des iles Mascareignes (Paris: Berger-Levrault, 1972), pp. 335-36.

¹⁰² Nicholls, p. 84; E. A. Alpers, "The French Slave Trade in East Africa (1721-1810)," Cahiers d'Etudes Africaines, 10 (1970), p. 104.

¹⁰³ Sheriff, p. 78.

¹⁰⁴ The peak occurred in 1785-94, precisely when the Omani position in East Africa was being consolidated. Alpers, p. 110.

Zanzibar became a base for slave traders and a central market where slaves could be obtained to meet the needs of Europeans and Asians. Slaves were brought to Zanzibar through a complex series of transactions. Most were sent by Arab or Swahili traders in Kilwa. The Africans in the Kilwa hinterland would not allow Arabs or Swahili to go inland in search of slaves. The Africans acquired the slaves themselves and brought them to Kilwa for sale.¹⁰⁵ With time, the growing demands for both ivory and slaves induced Arabs and Swahili to mount expeditions to the interior themselves, although they usually forged alliances with local leaders. Meanwhile, inland peoples like the Nyamwezi and Yao took ever greater initiatives in bringing goods to the coast. The hinterland of the East African coast was in a state of flux for much of the nineteenth century. Chiefs could acquire guns and fortunes, carving out for themselves a sphere of control that their fathers would never have dreamed of possessing, but the losers in battle could find themselves en route to a slave ship. As new groups came to be involved in the trade in ivory and slaves, an infrastructure was being set up in the interior, capable of procuring and transporting goods, human and otherwise. Africans and Arabs were learning how to organize slave raids and caravans. Alliances and trading relationships were being established. From the point of view of the Arabs and other coastal people, the hinterland was being "opened up" in the beginning of the nineteenth century.¹⁰⁶

¹⁰⁵ Nicholls, pp. 84-5.

¹⁰⁶ The impact of the expansion of trade on the interior is the focus of much current research. See the papers of a recent conference at Boston University reprinted in African Historical Studies, IV (1971), pp. 477-657, and R. Gray and D. Birmingham, eds., Pre-Colonial African Trade (London: Oxford U.P., 1970).

As the trade routes expanded into the interior of East Africa, the system of distribution became increasingly centered on Zanzibar. The development of Zanzibar as an entrepot was in part the result of Omani policies to concentrate trade in the area of tightest Omani control. More fundamentally, the rise of Zanzibar was a consequence of geography. With a fine, easily accessible harbor, Zanzibar was more accessible and safer than other ports. Above all, the need of sailors to follow the patterns of the monsoon winds made the entrepot economically viable until the days of steam navigation and deep-water berths in coastal harbors. Along the East African coast, winds blow from the north from roughly November to March and from the south from April to September. It is difficult to sail against these winds, but during periods of variable winds it is possible for small coasting vessels to shuttle between Zanzibar and the adjacent mainland. This permitted goods to be stockpiled in Zanzibar so that the large dhows could obtain all their loads there and use the short period of monsoon winds to maximum efficiency.¹⁰⁷ Coastal ports did not lose their importance--and some thrived on the shipment of goods from the mainland to Zanzibar--but Zanzibar came to be the commercial center of all of East Africa.¹⁰⁸

At first, Omani shipping benefitted from the absence of European vessels in the western end of the Indian Ocean. Omanis were able to carry goods that Europeans wanted to distant places where Europeans were willing to go. In the 1830's American merchantmen from the port of Salem began

¹⁰⁷ Sheriff, pp. 24, 28-9; Nicholls, pp. 74-7.

¹⁰⁸ Walter T. Brown, "The Politics of Business: Relations between Zanzibar and Bagamoyo in the Late Nineteenth Century," African Historical Studies, IV (1971), pp. 631-44.

to stop at Zanzibar, to be followed by British, French, and German ships. Although trade with India, the Persian Gulf and other lands remained important, this development adversely affected the Omani long-distance carrying trade. However, it increased the total commerce passing through Zanzibar and, by lowering the cost of transportation and foreign imports, stimulated the total trade of East Africa. The purchase, transportation, and sale of goods in mainland East Africa and Zanzibar remained in African, Arab, and Indian hands until near the end of the century.¹⁰⁹ Table 1 shows the expanding nature of East African trade throughout the first half of the nineteenth century.

The roles of Arabs and Indians of this growing trade is a fascinating but elusive problem. Early references to trade suggests that Arabs filled the crucial roles at that time. Morice in 1776 said that the Arabs of Zanzibar were "richer, more business-like and more commercial than the Moors" (i.e., the Swahili).¹¹⁰ Smee, who visited Zanzibar in 1811, wrote that the trade was principally in the hands of Arabs from Muscat, Maculla, etc. He referred to the Indians of Zanzibar as "a few adventurers" from Cutch and Sind. These Indians were made to pay heavy exactions according to the whims of the governor, while Arabs only paid a 5% duty. Nevertheless, some of these "adventurers" were already occupying the best houses in Zanzibar and were among the wealthiest people there.¹¹¹

¹⁰⁹ Nicholls, pp. 324-75.

¹¹⁰ Morice, "Memoir concerning the East Coast of Africa, 15 June 1777," translation in G. S. P. Freeman-Grenville, The French at Kilwa Island (Oxford: Clarendon, 1965), p. 92.

¹¹¹ Smee in Burton, Zanzibar, Vol. II, p. 512; Lieutenant H. Hardy, Report, 1811, Ind. Of., L/MAR/c/586, pp. 166, 186; Smee, "Description of the Island of Zanzibar," ibid., p. 102.

TABLE 1: The Sultan's Income from Customs at Zanzibar

1807-8	\$ 30-40,000
1811	60,000
1819	80,000
1834	150,000
1842	150,000*
1844	125,000
1862	200,000

*The total revenue of the Sultan, of which duties were the largest, but not the only, portion.

Sources: Henry Salt, A Voyage to Abyssinia and Travels into the Interior of that Country (London: Cass, 1814, repr. 1967), p. 91; Captain Smee, "Observations during a voyage of research on the East Coast of Africa from Cape Gardafui south to the island of Zanzibar," (1811), reprinted in Richard Burton, Zanzibar, City, Island, Coast (London: Tinsley, 1872), Vol. II, p. 491; Fortené Albrand, "Extraits d'un memoire sur Zanzibar et sur Quiloa," Bulletin de la Societe de Geographie (Paris), 2^e serie, X (1838), p. 78; Captain H. Hart, "Extracts from Brief Notes of a Visit to Zanzibar....1834," in Papers of Sir John Gray, Royal Commonwealth Society, London, Box B1; Atkins Hamerton to Aberdeen, 21 May 1842, FO 54/4; Michael W. Shepard, "Log Book of Bark Star, 1844," copy in Gray Papers, Box B2; Speer to Seward, 26 November 1862, US Consul, 4.

The French explorer Loarer, who visited Zanzibar in the 1840's, and was the best informed of all the early visitors to that island, wrote that at the beginning of the century, Arabs dominated commerce at Zanzibar, a large portion of which was trade in slaves. However, according to Loarer, in the 1820's trade shifted largely to African products, notably ivory, and in this form of trade, Arabs were unable to compete with Indians. Arabs remained the masters of navigation between Zanzibar and India, Arabia, Persia, the Red Sea, Madagascar, and the East African coast. Indians owned the cargoes, the Arabs the boats.¹¹²

Loarer underestimated the extent to which Arabs were able to adjust to new trading conditions, but his observations suggest a tendency for commerce to be divided along communal lines.¹¹³ The task of shipping produce from coastal ports to Zanzibar, and the freightage to Asian ports, was done by Arabs. As coastal traders penetrated inland in search of trade items, Arabs and Swahili were able to play a leading role in this traffic.¹¹⁴ But the business of the merchant--the man who purchased produce and sold it to foreign vessels or consigned it for sale in distant ports--fell increasingly into Indian hands. So too did finance. The Arab who sailed to a coastal port or who ventured up-country most likely brought with him trade goods--cotton cloth, beads, or guns--that were advanced to him by an Indian merchant. He would then repay the Indian creditor with the proceeds of the ivory or slaves bought from interior peoples in exchange for these trade goods, and often was bound to sell these items to his creditor.¹¹⁵ The growing Indian role in the Zanzibari

¹¹²Loarer, O.I., 5/23, Cahier 1. See also Hamerton to Willoughby, 17 August 1843, Political Consultations for 11 November 1843, INA, reel 1, and Hennell to Willoughby, 15 May 1837, Political Consultations of 31 July 1837, ibid.

¹¹³Abner Cohen argues that in pre-industrial societies, the organization of commerce along communal lines is a rational way to do business. Trade depends on precise timing and coordination, and any one phase of it can best be arranged when handled by people who speak one language and are familiar with one another. Where different communal groups intersect, leading members of each group can develop the necessary relationships of trust to do business. Abner Cohen, Custom and Politics in Urban Africa (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1969), pp. 20-2.

¹¹⁴Burton, Vol. I, p. 328; Hennell to Willoughby, 15 May 1837.

¹¹⁵On Indian merchants see Hamerton to Willoughby, 28 September 1841, FO 54/4; Ward to U.S. State Department, 7 March 1847, US Consul, 2; Burton, Zanzibar, Vol. I, p. 328; and C. P. Rigby, "Report," 1860, reprinted in C. E. B. Russell, General Rigby, Zanzibar and the Slave Trade

economy is underscored by the increasing Indian population of the port. Smee in 1811 saw only "a few" Indians. A visitor in 1819 said there were 214; one in 1834 said that 350 were there; but the American consul in 1850 estimated their numbers at 1800 to 2000. After 1830, the Indians of Zanzibar tended increasingly to settle and establish permanent businesses.¹¹⁶

The clear communal division seen by foreign observers may well be an exaggeration, probably the result of Indian domination of trade with European merchantmen. The large trade with Indian Ocean peoples may well have left considerable scope to Arab merchants, unbeknownst to foreign observers.¹¹⁷ Moreover, in the 1830's and 1840's, there were at least four Arab merchant-brokers who did business with Europeans and at least one important Arab financier.¹¹⁸ The Sultan's family itself was also heavily involved in commercial ventures. Not just a major shipowner, Seyyid Said bin Sultan was able to gather a cargo worth \$100,000 and send it to England.¹¹⁹ His son Khalid was an astute businessman. His

(London: Allen and Unwin, 1935), p. 329. On finance, see Hines to Seward, 25 October 1864, US Consul, 5, NEMA, p. 532; Captain Guillain, "Rapport Commerical," Vol. I, p. 51, O.I., 2/10. See also Nicholls, pp. 78-9, and Sheriff, passim.

¹¹⁶ Smee in Burton, Zanzibar, Vol. II, p. 512; Report by Albrand, 1819, cited by Nicholls, p. 79; W. S. W. Ruschenberger, A Voyage round the World including an Embassy to Muscat and Siam in 1835, 1836 and 1837 (Philadelphia: Cary, Lea and Blanchard, 1838); p. 35, Ward to Clayton, 20 July 1850, US Consul, 2, NEMA, p. 467; "Memorandum by Sir Bartle Frere regarding Banians or Natives of India in East Africa," PP 1872, LXI, -767, pp. 99-100.

¹¹⁷ Although European sources give a similar simplistic picture of an Indian monopoly of commerce in the Kenya coast in the nineteenth century, oral evidence gathered in Mombasa and Malindi indicates that there were Arab businessmen of substance.

¹¹⁸ Loarer, O.I., 5/23, Cahier I; Sheriff, pp. 39-41.

commercial success, and his failure to live up to Omani standards of generosity, earned him the nickname, "The Banian," after the Indian trading caste.¹²⁰ Success in commerce was not limited to Indians, but in the minds of local people commercial orientation was associated with Indians.

This difference in values and patterns of economic activity lies at the heart of Indian commercial and financial success in Zanzibar. Few Indians came to Zanzibar with extensive capital.¹²¹ Most Zanzibari Indians came from Kutch. Although trade was a regular part of life there, the region was arid, famines frequent, and the life-style spartan. As reports spread about East Africa, the temptation to leave and make one's fortune exerted a strong pull.¹²² Observers were struck by the frugality of Indians; Loarer claimed they could live on \$25 per year. They were also willing to sell at the lowest possible price and be content with the smallest possible margin of profit.¹²³ They used family and communal ties to set up links with older firms in Zanzibar, with traders on the mainland coast, and with firms in India. Meanwhile, some firms developed close relations with European firms in Zanzibar. Skill in ordering produce

¹¹⁹ Owen, Vol. I, p. 340; Hart, "Extracts"; Ward to Buchanan, 13 March 1847, U.S. Consul, 2, NEMA, p. 384.

¹²⁰ Loarer, O.I., 5/23, Cahier I; Cap. Loarer, "L'Ile de Zanzibar," Revue de l'Orient (Paris), IX (1851), p. 296.

¹²¹ Sheriff, pp. 344-47.

¹²² Ibid., pp. 126-28.

¹²³ Loarer, O.I., 5/23, Cahier I. These patterns are clear in the life story of Tharia Topan, a poor trader from India who rose to become the wealthiest Indian of all. See Mohamed Hussein Tharia Topan, "Biography of Sir Tharia Topan, Knight," MS written 1960-63, in possession of Farouk Topan, Department of Linguistics, University of Nairobi.

that would be in demand in East Africa, plus manipulation of the increasing value of African produce in comparison with cotton goods paid off for the more skillful Indian merchants.¹²⁴ Families only came over once the trader had established himself.¹²⁵ On the other hand, Omanis came from an economic system of more longstanding viability in which a high proportion of the people were accustomed to modest but adequate levels of consumption. Social values de-emphasized material success. Without the strong incentives of recent poverty, most Omanis did not have the urge to succeed characteristic of Indians in East Africa, and coming from a society that valued generosity, the pressures for immediate distribution of profits were greater. Perhaps the Ibadis took Islamic prohibitions on usury more seriously than other Muslims (most Zanzibari Indians were Muslim), so that Omanis tended to shun the financial aspects of commerce. Omanis did not create firms, with agents in various ports, as did Indians. The differences between Indians and Omanis were certainly not inherent, and social systems are subject to change, but different ambitions and social values conditioned different approaches to economic activity.¹²⁶ The old patterns of Omani commerce--organized around the individual dhow voyage, doing business all along the route and then dividing the profits--persisted.¹²⁷ Quite probably, if Indians were not

¹²⁴ Sheriff, pp. 344-47.

¹²⁵ This was the case with Tharia Topan.

¹²⁶ No one has yet attempted a thorough explanation for Indian success in East Africa. A study asking some of the same questions as Max Weber in his work on the Protestant ethic should illuminate some of the matters which are only touched on here.

¹²⁷ Villiers, pp. 400-4, 410-11.

willing to take on the roles of finance and large-scale merchandising, the Omani Arabs would have done so as they became caught in the exigencies of commerce. But the Indians took on the more entrepreneurial roles within the system, while the Arabs showed daring and initiative mainly within their traditional framework of the overseas trader and adventurer.

Sheriff, following the evidence of the explorer Loarer, has argued that competition from Indians, combined with a decline in the slave trade, weakened opportunities for Arabs in commerce. This decline, in Sheriff's view, was the reason Omanis turned to plantation agriculture in the 1820's.¹²⁸ The transition was made from a position of economic weakness, in a search of a new source of income. In my view, the events can better be explained by stressing the uncertainties of trade rather than a long-term decline. Profits could still be made in the ivory or slave trade, but Omanis looked to clove plantations as a safer investment for their profits. This nuance of interpretation is important, for Sheriff's view implies a direct transition by Omanis from traders to planters, while my view suggests that the transition was halting and incomplete.

In the case of commerce in ivory and similar products, the evidence that Indians improved their position in the first half of the nineteenth century is better than the evidence that the Arab position declined. The areas where Omanis predominated, the carrying trade and up-country caravans, were crucial--and expanding--parts of the economy. An up-country trader, even if he borrowed from an Indian, could be very successful, as the career of Tippu Tip illustrates.¹²⁹ Arabs in coastal ports like

¹²⁸ Loarer, O.I., 5/23, Cahier I; Sheriff, passim.

¹²⁹ See his fascinating autobiography, Maisha ya Hamed bin Muhammed el Murjebi yaani Tippu Tip kwa maneno yake mwenyewe, ed. and trans. by W. H. Whitely (Nairobi: East African Literature Bureau, 1966).

Bagamoyo and Mombasa made use of their contacts with nearby African peoples to undertake flourishing trading operations.¹³⁰ Fortunes could still be made.

Money could also be made in the slave trade, but the early nineteenth century was a time of uncertainty. Omanis proved very responsive to changes in the market and not only profited as slave dealers, but invested in slaves when prices were low. Sheriff has argued that the decline of the slave trade to the European-held islands of the Indian Ocean around 1820 was a grievous blow to Arab slave traders, which could not be offset by trade to Arabia, the Persian Gulf, or other areas to the north. There is little evidence to go by, but on the whole it does not support Sheriff's position.

The slave trade to the Mascarene islands was undoubtedly lucrative, and its timing stimulated the expansion of a slave trading network in the hinterland. However, it was never numerically very large. Between the 1770's and 1810, the slave population of Bourbon and Ile de France rose from about 55,000 to 105,000, or by about 1,700 per year. Even ignoring reproduction and assuming a high mortality rate, the total imports to the Mascarenes were probably around 6,000 per year. Moreover, the principal source of slaves was the Portuguese-controlled coast of Mozambique, not the Omani ports of Kilwa and Zanzibar.¹³¹ The only available figures

¹³⁰ Brown, pp. 631-44; Berg, "Mombasa."

¹³¹ See above, p. 72. On the origins of slaves in the islands, see Cole to Bathurst, 22 February 1827, PP 1828, XXV, 1, pp. 78-107. See also Sheriff, pp. 52-3; E. A. Alpers, The East African Slave Trade (Nairobi: East African Publishing House, 1967), pp. 7-8; and M. K. Jones, "The Slave Trade at Mauritius, 1811-29," B.Litt. Thesis, Oxford University, 1936, p. 172.

regarding Omani exports are from a treaty signed by the Frenchman Morice and the Sultan of Muscat in 1776, agreeing to the export of 1500 slaves per year to the French.¹³² A British source in 1802 claimed that the French sent only 5-10 vessels of 100-200 tons to Zanzibar each year for slaves.¹³³ When a French captain named Dallons stopped at Zanzibar in 1804, he found that the slave merchants were far from dependent on the French market. He reported that black slaves were sold at auction and taken to Muscat, the Red Sea, and the Persian Gulf. The slave dealers were not receptive to his offers to purchase slaves, perhaps, he felt, because they did not want to sell to a non-Muslim. When he eventually obtained some slaves, he was charged a duty of \$11 each, instead of the \$1 that the Zanzibaris paid. He concluded, "they do all they can to keep us away from the island."¹³⁴

Nor was the decline of this modest European slave trade complete. The trade was certainly hampered by Anglo-French fighting, the British takeover of Ile de France (renamed Mauritius) followed by a ban on slave importation in 1821, and a treaty which the British induced the Sultan of Muscat to sign in 1822 that banned the export of slaves by Omanis to Christian nations.¹³⁵ However, Bourbon (renamed Réunion) remained in

¹³² Morice, in Freeman-Grenville, p. 64.

¹³³ Seton to Bombay, 9 July 1802, Proceedings of 27 August 1802, Bombay Political Consultations, Ind. Of., P/381/33, p. 3610.

¹³⁴ Cap. P. Dallons, Report in Mauritius Archives, 1804, in G. S. P. Freeman-Grenville, The East African Coast: Select Documents (London: Oxford U.P., 1962), p. 199. Seven years later, the British captain Smee reported that Zanzibaris sold some 6-10,000 slaves per year to Muscat and India, as well as to Ile de France.

¹³⁵ On anti-slave trade diplomacy, see Sir Reginald Coupland, East Africa and Its Invaders (Oxford: Clarendon, 1938), and Nicholls, passim.

French hands and continued to receive illicit shipments of slaves, including shiploads from Zanzibar.¹³⁶ Over the next few decades, French and Spanish slaving vessels were also observed in various East African ports, including Zanzibar, Mombasa, Takaungu, and Lamu, while Omani traders also took slaves to southern portions of the coast, where they could be collected by European vessels.¹³⁷ In the 1840's and 1850's, the French recruited labor for their Indian Ocean islands under the guise of the "free labor" system. Slaves of Zanzibari Arabs had to sign a labor contract specifying that they were going voluntarily before their masters could be paid by French agents. "Free laborers" came from Zanzibar, Kilwa, and Mozambique in such quantities that the British consul in Zanzibar claimed, at one point, that they had caused the price of slaves to double.¹³⁸ The Sultan was also upset at the extent of slave exports, but could do nothing against his people who saw profit in selling their slaves to European agents.¹³⁹ It is impossible to quantify the extent

¹³⁶Memorandum by Farquahr, incl. Farquahr to Hastings, 11 May 1821, Bombay Proceedings for 10 October 1821, Ind. Of., P/385/12; Jones, p. 116.

¹³⁷Cole to Seyyid Said, 10 September 1826, incl. Cole to Bathurst, 29 October 1826, CO 167/85; Owen to Cole, 4 August 1825, State Papers, 1825-26, XIII, p. 329. Ludwig Krapf, Journal, 28 December 1842, CMS CA5/016/164; Hamerton to Aberdeen, 20 September 1846, FO 84/647; Hamerton to Wyvill, 8 May 1850, FO 84/815; Christopher to Percy, 8 May 1843, PP 1844, XLVIII, 497, p. 176; Coghlan to Anderson, 1 November 1860, and Rigby to Wood, 28 August 1860, FO 84/1120.

¹³⁸The "consent" was obtained in such a way that the slave had no effective choice. Hamerton to Bidwall, 27 April 1843, FO 54/5; Rigby to Anderson, 13 September 1868, Pol. Consultations for 31 December 1858, INA, Reel I. See also Cap. Fournier to Ministre de la Marine, 12 July 1854, Réunion, 135/1035.

¹³⁹Hamerton to Clarendon, 13 April 1854, and Seyyid Said to Clarendon, 18 April 1854, FO 84/949; Memorandum by FO, 15 March 1860, FO 54/17.

of these forms of trade in human beings, and it probably was less than the European slave trade of previous decades. Nevertheless, the enterprising Arab slave trader of Zanzibar could still find profit in the sale of slaves to Europeans.

The ups and downs of the slave trade to Arabia and the Persian Gulf will probably never be elucidated. If the statistical information comparable to that used by Philip Curtin in his study of the Atlantic slave trade were available for the Indian Ocean, it would be possible to assess the viability of the slave trading business with some precision. The only available figures are rough estimates of visitors and naval officers who at no point actually counted slaves or saw import-export data. They are useful only for suggesting the order of magnitude of the trade, not for a detailed analysis of trends.¹⁴⁰ Table 2 shows estimates of various observers of the imports of slaves into Zanzibar, for both local use and re-export.

Besides indicating the somewhat random nature of slave-trade statistics, Table 2 suggests that in the first half of the nineteenth century, the slave trade of Zanzibar was usually in the range of 10,000 to 15,000 per year. This is consistent with the more solid data based on customs statistics for the 1860's.¹⁴¹ Its periods of decline, notably 1847-50,

¹⁴⁰ Sheriff tries to milk the statistics for more than they are worth. For example, in trying to assess the demand for slaves in Oman in the eighteenth century, he takes a figure from an Arabic document that reports that the Sultan owned 1700 slaves and that one-third of the date trees in Oman belonged to him. He then multiplies 1700 by three to get the total number of agricultural slaves, and adds an arbitrary figure of 700, representing all domestic servants in Oman, to obtain the total number of slaves in Oman. All these figures are arbitrary and the calculation provides little more than an illusion of quantification. Sheriff, pp. 45-6.

¹⁴¹ See Chapter II.

TABLE 2: Imports of Slaves to Zanzibar

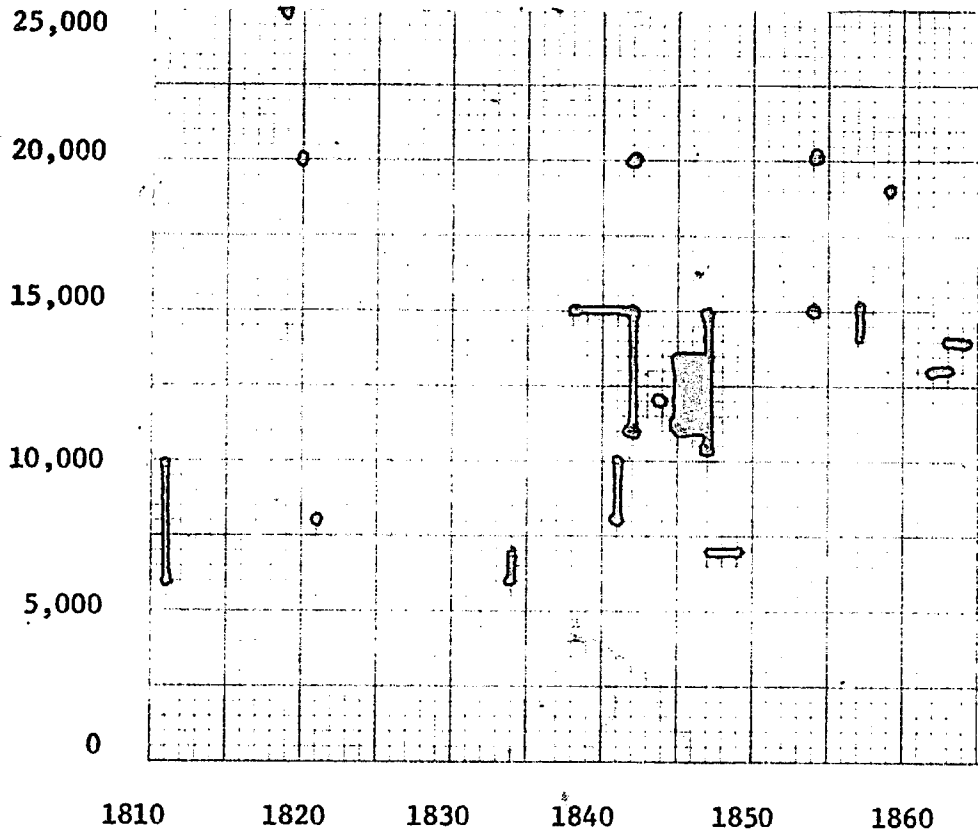
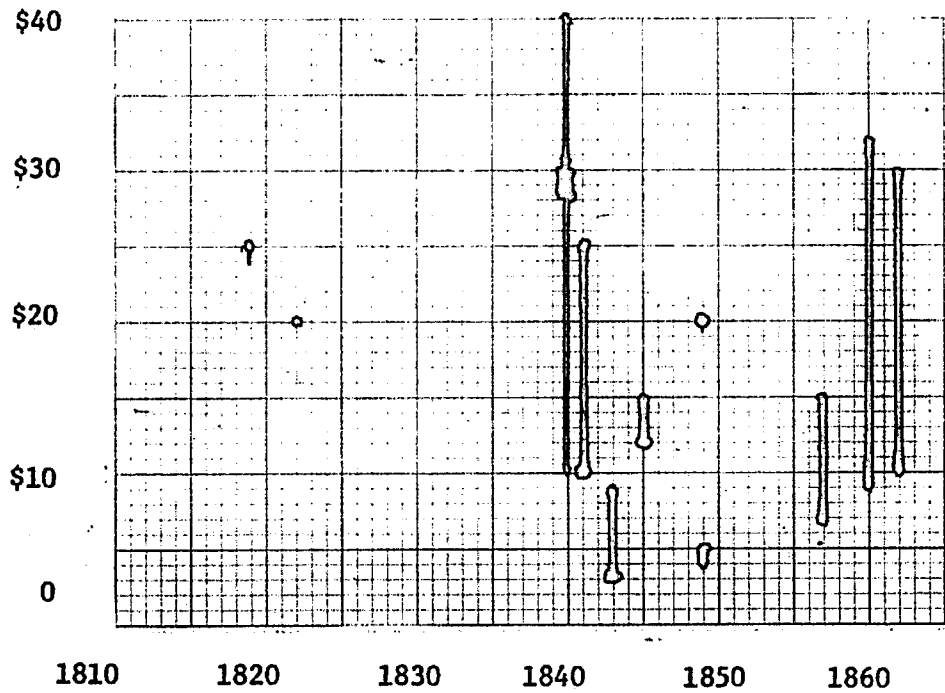


TABLE 3: Prices of Slaves (General or Adult Male) at Zanzibar



Notes on Tables 2 and 3

Vertical lines indicate a range, e.g. 6,000 to 10,000 slaves or \$10 to \$30.

Horizontal lines indicate that an estimate applies to several years, e.g. annual imports of 15,000 slaves in 1838-42.

Dots indicate a specific estimate at a specific time.

Sources for Tables 2 and 3

- Smee in Burton, Zanzibar, Vol. II, p. 493 (1811)
 Maurizi, History of Seyd Said, p. 140 (c. 1819)
 Albrand to Milius, 1 June 1819, Réunion, 72/472
 Moresby to Bombay, 25 September 1822 Bombay Political Proceedings for 2 October 1822, Ind. Of., P/385/26
 Massieu to Ministre de la Marine et des Colonies, 9 October 1822, O.I., 17/89
 Ruschenberger, Voyage, p. 34 (1835-37)
 R. O. Hume, "Extracts from the Journal of Mr. Hume," Missionary Herald, 36 (1840), p. 62
 Hamerton to Bombay, 13 July 1841, Gray Papers, Cambridge, Box 1
 Fremantle, Extract from Report to Adm. King, 20 May 1842, incl. Admiralty to FO, 11 January 1843, FO 54/5
 Hamerton to Bombay, 21 May 1842, FO 54/4
 Hamerton to Bombay, 2 January 1842, PP 1844, XLVIII, 1, pp. 419-20
 Waters Papers, Notes, 18 October 1842, NEMA, p. 253
 Hamerton to Bidwall, 27 April 1843, FO 54/5
 Rapport politique et commercial sur Zanzibar par le capitaine de Le Syrene, 9 June 1844, O.I., 15/65
 Extract from report of Cap. Roman Desfossés to Ministre de la Marine et des Colonies, 11 February 1846, O.I., 15/65
 Ward to Buchanan, 7 March 1847, US Consul 2, NEMA, p. 375
 Loarer, Ports au Sud de Zanguebar, O.I., 2/10, Cahier B (1847-49)
 Loarer, Ile de Zanguebar, O.I., 5/23, Cahier V (1847-49)
 Guillaïn, Rapport Commercial, O.I., 2/10, Vol. I (1847-49)
 Osgood, Notes of Travel, p. 49 (c. 1850)
 Krapf, Journal, 18 February 1850, CMS CA5/016/175
 Ward to Abbot, 13 March 1851, US Consul, 3, NEMA, p. 479
 Cap. Laguerie to Ministre de la Marine et des Colonies, 4 January 1854, Réunion, 135/1035
 Burton, Zanzibar, Vol. I, pp. 462-63, 465 (1857)
 E. Quass, "Die Szuri's, die Kuli's und die Slaven in Zanzibar," Zeitschrift für Allgemeine Erdkunde, Neue Folge, IX (1860), p. 437
 Rigby, Report, 1860, in Russell, p. 333
 Rigby, to Anderson, 14 May 1861, FO 84/1146
 "Administration Report on Zanzibar," 1862-64, reprinted in TBGS, XVII (1864), p. 286

were temporary, and probably more slaves were imported to Zanzibar in the 1840's and 1850's than ever before. Keeping in mind that the French trade was about 6,000 and that the Zanzibari share was a small portion of that, it is hard to argue that the business of slave trading experienced a substantial overall decline. The slave trading business, not just the use of slaves, was a fact of Zanzibari life throughout the first half of the century. It remained so until at least the 1870's.

This does not mean that the owner of a slave dhow always experienced smooth sailing. Slave trading, in periods of boom and bust, in the Atlantic or Indian Oceans, was always a risky business. Supplies depended on unpredictable events in the interior, and cargoes of humans could perish. Slave traders also had to face the external factor. East Africans first faced British opposition to their occupations when the export of slaves to Mauritius was banned in 1821, and that to all Christian nations in 1822. These measures did not eliminate, but they did curtail, the European slave trade. As a result, prices fell to \$20 per slave in Zanzibar in 1822, as opposed to \$25 a few years earlier, and much higher prices before that.¹⁴² One would expect that the demand for slaves in Persian Gulf and Oman would be greater at the lower price than at the higher one of previous years.¹⁴³ The net effect of these changes cannot

¹⁴² I am ordinarily skeptical of comparing prices given by different observers. But when the source specifically mentions, as is the case here, that prices were declining, I am willing to give his evidence more credence. Massieu to Ministre de la Marine et des Colonies, 9 October 1822, O.I., 17/89. See also Table 3.

¹⁴³ Demand for slaves was probably also rising because of the overall growth of commerce in the Indian Ocean. Slaves, primarily a luxury item, would be one of the main consumption items of successful merchants. Date production may also have been rising. More research on the economic history of Indian Ocean lands would allow a more precise study of this question.

be assessed without reconstructing the supply curve for slaves--which is impossible--but the slave traders were clearly forced to respond to a situation that was beyond their control. It was no coincidence that the 1820's were the years of Zanzibar's first experiments with clove cultivation.

The drop in slave prices, as Table 3 indicates, was temporary, although prices constantly fluctuated. In time, the slave traders were able to redirect the traffic. The increasingly numerous observers who came to Zanzibar in the 1840's and thereafter found that the slave trade was still a big business. Zanzibar remained an entrepot of the slave trade, collecting slaves not just for its own use, but for export to northern countries and, at times, to Europeans. A British naval officer, Commander Fremantle, who visited Zanzibar just after the 1842 slave trading season, was told that 300-400 dhows had left the harbor carrying cargoes of 20,000 slaves. These figures may well be excessive, but they do suggest that the northern trade was substantial. Fremantle stated that only a "small portion" of the slaves brought to Zanzibar stayed there; the rest were sent to Oman and other nearby ports.¹⁴⁴ In Arabia and the Persian Gulf, officials and visitors saw slaves arriving from East Africa, although it is impossible to quantify their numbers.¹⁴⁵ Similarly, French and American consuls and visitors to Zanzibar noted that slaves were

¹⁴⁴ Extracts of a report by Admiral Fremantle to Admiral King, incl. Admiralty to FO, 11 January 1843, FO 54/5.

¹⁴⁵ T. McKenzie (Acting Resident in the Persian Gulf) to Bombay, 6 October 1840, FO 54/3; D. Wilson (Resident in Persian Gulf) to Williamson, 28 January 1831, PP 1837-38, LX, 697, p. 90; Commander Nott to McKenzie, 18 September 1840, FO 84/387. See also Wellsted, Vol. I, p. 388, and Kelly, British, pp. 414-16.

numerous and the trade extensive. A French naval officer estimated that 16,000 slaves were sent each year to Muscat in the mid-1840's, while 6,000 to 7,000 supplied the needs of Zanzibar.¹⁴⁶

Before the mid-1840's, then, a significant local demand for slaves --a subject to be discussed in Chapter II--co-existed with a large external trade. The relationship between the two could be close. Hamerton, in the early 1840's, wrote that on arrival male slaves were sold to different plantations or kept by their owners as domestics, field hands, or artisans. They were then sold off as the opportunity arose or when the owner needed cash. Female slaves might be used as concubines for a while and then, if they had not borne children, resold.¹⁴⁷ Later on, observers reported that it was considered a disgrace for a slaveowner to sell a domestic slave.¹⁴⁸ This change suggests an alteration in the values of Omanis living in Zanzibar as they moved--in a general and incomplete fashion --from slavetraders to slaveowners. The former, venturing to distant

¹⁴⁶ Extract of a report by Cap. Romain Desfosses, commander of the naval station of Bourbon and Madagascar to Ministre de la Marine et des Colonies, 11 February 1846, O.I., 15/65. Loarer wrote that before 1847, two-thirds of the 12-14,000 slaves passing through Zanzibar were destined for Arabia. O.I., 5/23, Cahier V. For the views of two American consuls, see Waters Papers, Notes, 18 October 1842, and Ward to State Department, 21 February 1846, US Consul, 2, NEMA, pp. 253, 357.

¹⁴⁷ Hamerton to Bombay, 2 January 1842, PP 1844, XLVIII, 1, p. 419.

¹⁴⁸ Loarer, O.I., 5/23, Cahier V; Burton, Zanzibar, Vol. I, p. 352; James Christie, "Slavery in Zanzibar As It Is," in Bishop E. Steere, ed., The East African Slave Trade (London: Harrison, 1871), p. 45. This ideal was still violated at times. See the testimony of Consul Churchill before the Select Committee on the slave trade, PP 1871, XII, 1, p. 29, and G. L. Sullivan, Dhow Chasing in Zanzibar Waters (London: Sampson Low, Marsten, Low and Searle, 1873), p. 202.

lands, would regard slaves as a commodity which was temporarily in their care while awaiting transfer to others. As the actual possession of slaves became more important to them, they would increasingly regard slaves as a permanent part of the social order. The lines were never drawn so neatly, but the meaning of slaves to the Omanis of Zanzibar was slowly changing.

The emphasis on the local use of slaves was increased in 1847, the year when the second major anti-slave trade initiative of the British came to fruition. Seyyid Said, under strong pressure from the British, signed a treaty banning the exports of slaves beyond his dominions in East Africa. The slave trade to the Persian Gulf and Arabia was now illegal.¹⁴⁹ The Frenchman Loarer, whose visit coincided with the imposition of the treaty, reported a drop of 25% in the prices of slaves from 1845-46 levels.¹⁵⁰ Hamerton felt that the elimination of the northern slave trade had knocked the bottom out of the slave market. Imports to Zanzibar were "not one-tenth" of what they had been before the treaty went into effect.¹⁵¹ Loarer, on the other hand, claimed that the number of slaves exported from Kilwa did not decline significantly, because proprietors in Zanzibar and Pemba took advantage of the drop in prices to buy "unaccustomed quantities of slaves." This prompt response to increased supply and lowered prices of slaves was responsible, in Loarer's view, for the agricultural development of Zanzibar.¹⁵² As the next chapter

¹⁴⁹ On the treaty, negotiated in 1845, and effective two years later, see Gray, pp. 245-48.

¹⁵⁰ Loarer, "Ports au Sud de Zanguebar," O.I., 2/10, Cahier B. See also Tables 2 and 3.

¹⁵¹ Hamerton to Palmerston, 10 February 1848, FO 84/737; same to same, 20 August 1850, FO 84/815; Ludwig Krapf, Journal, 18 February 1850, CMS CA 5/016/175.

will show, Loarer's picture of a logical and rapid reaction to a changing economic situation was closer to the truth than Hamerton's picture of despair.

However, the shift away from the northern slave trade in 1847 was temporary. Slave traders soon realized that the British were making no serious efforts to prevent slave dhows from reaching Arabia and the Gulf. In the first season after the treaty, Arabs took few slaves to Arabia, but by the next year they were carrying slaves again.¹⁵³ In the 1850's and 1860's, slaves were divided between the coast of East Africa--the islands and the mainland--and Arabia. More slaves than ever were needed by the expanding agricultural economy of East Africa, but the demand in Arabia and the Persian Gulf remained high.

Loarer felt that the extension of the clove industry which he was observing would produce too many cloves for even the increased number of slaves--100,000 of them in his estimate--to pick.¹⁵⁴ But another Frenchman, writing in 1854, found that Zanzibar was amply stocked with slaves; he thought it would be a good market for planters from Réunion to look for "free laborers."¹⁵⁵ At that time, according to still another French naval officer, Zanzibar was importing roughly 15,000 slaves each year and retaining half of them.¹⁵⁶ At the end of the decade, the British

¹⁵² Loarer, O.I., 2/10, Cahier B; O.I., 5/23, Cahier 5.

¹⁵³ Ibid.

¹⁵⁴ Ibid., Cahier 4.

¹⁵⁵ Cap. Fournier to Ministre de la Marine et des Colonies, extract, 12 July 1854, Réunion, 135/1035.

consul also claimed that half the imports, which totalled some 20,000 per year, were retained in Zanzibar, while half were exported.¹⁵⁷ The value of the slaves cited in import statistics for 1861-62 came to \$120,000.¹⁵⁸ Slave trading, for both local use and export, was a big business. It remained that way until effective anti-slave trade measures were finally taken in the 1870's.

The problem with Omani commerce--in slaves and other products--was not so much that it was declining as that it was uncertain. A far-sighted slave trader, having to adjust to a series of measures over which he had no control, might well have seen the handwriting on the wall. Undoubtedly, many Arab traders, dhow owners, and caravan leaders experienced financial failure, while others made profits. It is more plausible to argue that Arabs took up agriculture from a position of strength than from a position of financial weakness. In the expanding commerce of East Africa, there were opportunities for Arabs as well as Indians. However, the successful trader had to worry about competition from more organized firms and the whims of a distant power. Moreover, investment of profits in agriculture was familiar and socially acceptable to people originating from a date-growing country. Hence, Omani Arabs, especially in the periods of anti-slave trade activity during the 1820's and 1840's moved into agriculture. They did so over several decades, a pace which suggests an

¹⁵⁶ Cap. Laguerre to Ministre de la Marine et des Colonies, 4 January 1854, ibid.

¹⁵⁷ Rigby to Anderson, 14 May 1861, FO 84/1146.

¹⁵⁸ "Extracts from the Administration Report of the Political Agent for the two past Years Ending with the 31st of May 1846," TBGS, XVII (1864), p. 280.

effort to find a safe investment for trading profits rather than a retreat from a collapsing business.

The ups and downs of the slave trade provided the means of agricultural development as well as the incentive. An infrastructure capable of bringing slaves many miles was organized. When slave prices fell temporarily, slaves could be profitably diverted to agriculture.

An infrastructure also existed for the disposal of agricultural produce. Dhows were not built to carry specific commodities, and typically were loaded with whatever produce was available. The expansion of commerce from the eighteenth century onward put the fertile areas of East Africa in communication with the areas of Arabia and Asia where the demand for spices or grain was high. Arabs continued to trade throughout the century, but many invested their profits in agriculture. The archetypical Omani was probably Tippu Tip, owner of plantations in Zanzibar, caravan leader, merchant, slave trader, and personal leader of a large group of loyal followers. The transition from a merchant class to a planter class was slow and incomplete; Tippu Tip himself flourished in the latter half of the nineteenth century. The growing of agriculture owed at least as much to positive incentives as to negative ones, to the attraction of cloves, coconuts, grain, and sesame as to problems with the slave trade.

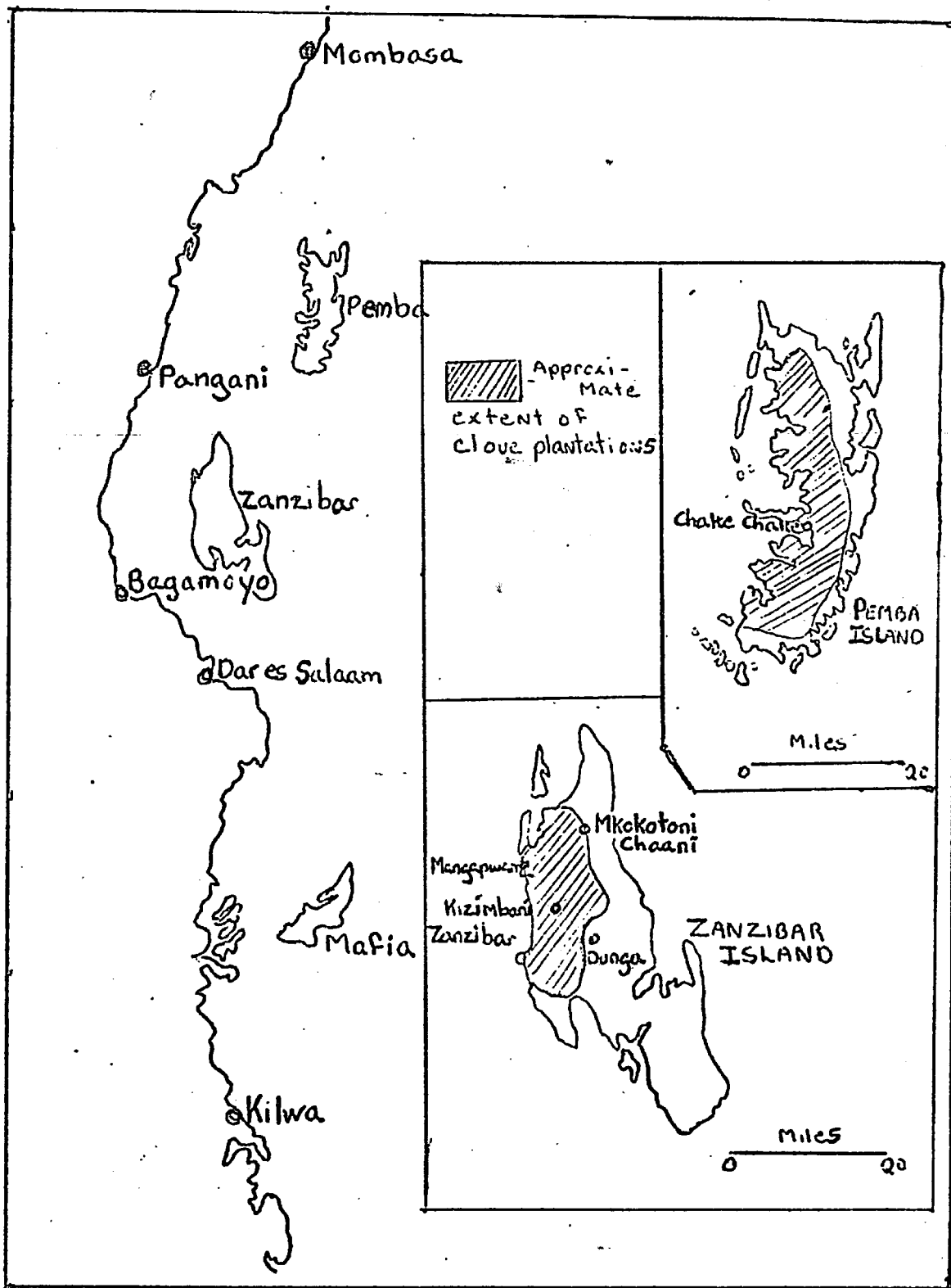
CHAPTER II: TRADERS AND PLANTERS--THE DEVELOPMENT
OF CLOVE CULTIVATION IN ZANZIBAR, 1810-1872

The Beginnings of Agricultural Development, 1810-1850

Zanzibar is the Garden of Eden of East Africa. Even the casual visitor, today as well as in the past, cannot help being awed by the density and variety of fruit-bearing trees and field crops. Before the days of cloves, the Arab and Swahili population of Zanzibar grew crops such as fruits, cassava, millet, and rice. Coconut products were all that Zanzibar contributed to the export trade.¹ Early visitors were not impressed by the extent or intensity of cultivation. Two British naval officers, Smee and Hardy, who visited Zanzibar in 1811, found that Zanzibar was "at present not half cultivated," and that little effort was put into farming even where it was done. Fortené Albrand, a Frenchman who visited Zanzibar in 1819, also found that large portions of the island were covered with forest while cultivation was "very negligent and the means which are used

¹M. Morice, Questions and Observations, 1777, in G. S. P. Freeman-Grenville, The French at Kilwa Island (Oxford: Clarendon, 1965), p. 181; Captain Smee, "Observations during a voyage of research on the East Coast of Africa from Cape Gardafui south to the island of Zanzibar," reprinted in Richard Burton, Zanzibar, City, Island, Coast (London: Tinsley, 1872), Vol. II, pp. 494, 500; Fortené Albrand, "Extraits d'un memoire sur Zanzibar et sur Quiloa," Bulletin de la Société de Géographie (Paris), 2^e Série, X (1838), p. 69.

MAP II: Zanzibar and Pemba



are primitive and defective." He attributed this to the "ignorance and laziness" of the Zanzibaris.² Land was not considered valuable except in the immediate vicinity of the port. Elsewhere, anyone could obtain land for growing rice by giving the local Swahili chief some rice each year.³ Only a small number of Omani Arabs, living near the port, had "large landed property."⁴ Slaves were used in agriculture, but Smee and Albrand both stress that the state of the farming economy was such that "the operations of agriculture are not numerous." Cassava and fruit, the principal crops, were easy to grow, so that the work was "not very tiring," and discipline "indulgent."⁵

Pemba was more important as a grain producer than its sister island. In Portuguese times, Pemba supplied Mombasa with rice; she still did so in the 1820's.⁶ Visitors wrote that it "exceeds any place I ever saw in fertility," and that it was "said to be the most fertile Island known."⁷ A small number of Arabs, as well as Wapemba, the Swahili of Pemba island, lived interspersed among one another, cultivating rice and other produce.⁸

² Smee, p. 500; Albrand, p. 66, 70; Report of Lieut. Hardy, Ind. Of., L/MAR/c/586, p. 167.

³ Albrand, pp. 70-1.

⁴ Smee's logbook, 20 March 1811, Ind. Of., L/MAR/c/586, p. 87.

⁵ Smee, in Burton, Zanzibar, Vol. II, pp. 494-95, 500; Albrand, p. 73.

⁶ John Gray, A History of Zanzibar (London: Oxford U.P., 1962), pp. 63, 68, 78. On grain shipments to Mombasa, see Chapter III, p. 202.

⁷ Captain W. Fisher of H.M.S. Racehorse, Report, incl. Bertie to Pole, 11 January 1810, ADM 1/62; "Note by Cap. Owen on Replies of Prince Membarrook," incl. Cole to Bathurst, 19 June 1824, CO 167/72.

In the second decade of the nineteenth century, Zanzibar's and Pemba's agricultural potential was not being realized. The development of clove plantations changed that, substantially altering the economic structure of the islands and the relationship of masters and slaves. The extent of the transformation, while profound, was limited by its context: the small size of the market for cloves and the continued importance of trade to the Zanzibari economy.

Before 1820, the crop that was to transform the Zanzibari economy was being grown in a few places in the Indian Ocean region. Cloves were indigenous to a small number of islands in the Moluccas group of southeast Asia. They were first used by the Chinese, at least as early as the first century B.C. Arab traders introduced them to Europe, and they were regularly imported after the eighth century A.D., at a very high cost. After the Dutch occupied the Moluccas, they attempted to restrict cultivation to one island and obtain a monopoly of this spice. However, cloves spread to Penang and later to Ile de France and Bourbon. By 1800 Bourbon was producing cloves on a commercial basis, and in 1813 Ile de France was exporting 20,000 pounds of cloves annually.⁹

Zanzibari traditions indicate that cloves were brought to Zanzibar from Reunion (formerly Bourbon) by an Omani named Saleh bin Haramil Al-Abry.

⁸ John Middleton, Land Tenure in Zanzibar (London: HMSO, 1961), pp. 52-3; Zanzibar Protectorate, "Report on the Inquiry into claims to certain land at or near Ngezi, Vitongoji, in the Mudiria of Chake Chake in the District of Pemba," by John Gray (Zanzibar: Government Printer, 1956), pp. 30-1; Oscar Baumann, Die Insel Pemba (Leipzig: Duncker and Humblot, 1899), pp. 9-10.

⁹ H. N. Ridley, Spices (London: Macmillan, 1912), pp. 158-61; Madeleine Ly-Tio-Fane, Mauritius and the Spice Trade: The Odyssey of Pierre Poivre (Port Louis, Mauritius: Esclapon, 1958), pp. 1-18.

He was the brother of a governor of Zanzibar, and the two of them had displeased the people and their sovereign, Seyyid Said bin Sultan. The brother was jailed, but Saleh escaped and travelled widely. He met a Frenchman named Sausse with whom he went to Réunion. There he saw clove trees and obtained some seedlings. Thinking he could win the Sultan's pardon by giving him these valuable products, he returned to Zanzibar. He was indeed pardoned, and he planted the trees on the Sultan's plantation at Mtoni.¹⁰

Albrand mentions that cloves were brought to Zanzibar by a M. Sausse and a M. Desplants from Réunion. On his visit in 1819, he saw "several clove trees" and noted that they had been brought to Zanzibar seven years previously, that is 1812. The trees had reached a height of 15 feet and had begun to bear.¹¹ Sausse had been scheming to annex Zanzibar for France, and Saleh bin Haramil was known as an agent and interpreter for Frenchmen operating in Zanzibar.¹² Moreover, two plantations of the Sultan where cloves were first seen were confiscated from Saleh around 1828 because of his alleged dealing in slaves in violation of the 1822 accords with England.¹³ The various accounts suggest that cloves were first planted

¹⁰ Abdulla Saleh Farsy, Seyyid Said bin Sultan (Zanzibar: Mwongozi Printing Press, 1942), p. 29. Farsy dates these events after the arrival of Seyyid Said in Zanzibar in 1828, but since cloves were seen in Zanzibar as early as 1819, his dating is in error. See also F. B. Pearce, Zanzibar: The Island Metropolis of Eastern Africa (London: Fisher Unwin, 1920), p. 297.

¹¹ Albrand, pp. 69-70; Albrand to Milius, 1 June 1819, Réunion, 72/472; another Frenchman also saw only a few clove trees--Fremelin to Milius, 22 May 1819, incl. Milius to Ministre de la Marine et des Colonies, June, 1819, Réunion, 72/472.

¹² Milius to Portal, 1 February 1820, ibid.; Abdul M. H. Sheriff, "The Rise of a Commercial Empire: An Aspect of the Economic History of Zanzibar, 1770-1873," Ph.D. Dissertation, University of London, 1971, pp. 176-79.

on Saleh's land, either by Saleh himself or by a Frenchman with whom he was associated, in the early or mid-1810's and that these trees were subsequently taken over by the Sultan.¹⁴

It takes the clove tree at least six years to reach the bearing stage and longer to attain maximum productivity. Cloves are a form of investment that pays off only in the long run. The people of Zanzibar, with other profit-making ventures to engage in, took to cloves only slowly. Most of the initial development was done by the Sultan and his governor. Even before the confiscation of Saleh's plantations, a French visitor saw cloves growing on the governor's shamba. He saw one plantation which supposedly had the first clove trees and was told that the governor had planted 2,000 shoots on another. He remarked, "The Governor is almost the only person on the island who has on his lands these precious trees which seem so suited to the soil of Zanzibar."¹⁵ Seyyid Said moved to Zanzibar around 1828 and took a personal interest in cloves. As a British naval officer wrote in 1834, "He has lately built a palace at Zanzibar and is giving every encouragement to trade, and improving the island, by planting clove trees and sugar cane, which thrive in a remarkable manner." At this time,

¹³ Gray, pp. 129, 153; Charles Guillain, Documents sur l'histoire la géographie et le commerce de l'Afrique Orientale (Paris: Bertrand, 1856-58), Vol. 2/1, p. 50.

¹⁴ Ibid. My own reading of the evidence agrees with that of Abdul Sheriff, pp. 176-80.

¹⁵ Massieu to Ministre de la Marine..., 9 October 1822, O.I., 17/89. An American visitor in 1828 gave a long list of Zanzibar's exports but did not include cloves. He did remark that the Government had "turned their attention" to spices, along with several other products." Edmund Roberts to Levi Woodbury, 19 December 1828, copy in papers of Sir John Gray, Royal Commonwealth Society, London.

the Sultan's plantations were in their "infancy," and provided "little more than a few cloves." Some of them were shipped to Bombay: clove exports had made their modest beginning.¹⁶

In the mid-1830's the trees of Zanzibar began to produce significant quantities of cloves. In September, 1835, the American Ruschenberger saw slaves in the Sultan's Kizimbane plantation picking cloves. He said that the plantation had nearly 4,000 trees, each of which was producing six pounds of cloves annually. But the world had not yet come to know of Zanzibar's cloves.¹⁷ Statistics from Bombay, a leading consumer of cloves, show imports from Zanzibar becoming significant around 1837-38, and five years later Zanzibar was dominating all other sources of cloves on the Bombay market.¹⁸

The estimates by various visitors of clove exports, shown in Table 4, indicate a tremendous expansion in the 1840's, levelling off after 1850. As the clove tree takes about six years to bear, the peak of planting must have occurred between 1835 and 1845.¹⁹ This was also a period of large-

¹⁶ Captain H. Hart, "Extracts from Brief Notes of a Visit to Zanzibar," 1834, in Gray Papers. Another visitor a few years earlier had mentioned only grains and sugar as the principal crops. Lieut. Wolf, "Narrative of Voyage to explore the shores of Africa, Arabia and Madagascar, performed by His Majesty's Ships Leven and Barracouta, under the direction of Captain W. F. W. Owen, R.N.," Journal of the RGS, III (1833), p. 211.

¹⁷ W. S. W. Ruschenberger, A Voyage Round the World including an Embassy to Muscat and Siam in 1835, 1836 and 1837 (Philadelphia: Carey, Lea and Blanchard, 1838), p. 50, 51.

¹⁸ Zanzibar's exports to Bombay exceeded those of Ile de France and Bourbon (other sources being insignificant) for the first time in 1837-38, \$29,600 to \$21,800. Zanzibar's share continued on this order of magnitude until 1843-44, when it hit \$97,000, while the Mascarene Islands' share trailed off to virtually nothing. Bombay Commerce, Ind. Of., P/419/56-87.

TABLE 4: Clove Exports of Zanzibar, 1839-56

<u>Year</u>	<u>Volume (frasilas)</u>	<u>Price (\$/frasila)</u>
1839-40	9,000	5-5 $\frac{1}{2}$
1843-44	30,000	4
1846-47	97,000	
1849	120-150,000	
1852-53	128,000	
1853-54	140,000	
1856	142,857	2-3

Sources: Loarer, "Ile de Zanguébar," O.I., 5/23, Cahier 4; Guillain "Rapport Commercial," O.I. 2/10, Vol. I, p. 15; Burton, Zanzibar, Vol. I, pp. 364-65; Sheriff, p. 186, note 55.

scale trade in slaves and ivory, and it was some two decades after the events which, according to Abdul Sheriff, forced Omanis to move from trade into clove cultivation. The timing therefore confirms my view that cloves were an investment made by successful traders over a long period of time, not a retreat from failing commerce.

During this period, clove cultivation spread to a significant portion of the Omani community. Before 1835, almost all observers mentioned only the plantations of the Sultan or his governor, although it is of course possible that others escaped their attention. But in 1835 Ruschenberger reported that cloves "are found to thrive so well that almost every body on the island is now clearing away the coconut to make way for them."²⁰

¹⁹Loarer in fact dates the introduction of cloves from 1831-32, but this reflects the real breakthrough in planting rather than the actual introduction. "Ile," O.I., 5/23 Cahier 4. See also Com'der Fremantle, "Extract from Report to Admiral King," 20 May 1842, incl. Admiralty to FO, 11 January 1843, FO 54/5.

Loarer, in the late 1840's, wrote:

The easy profits which plantations of clove trees provide after the first years caused all the inhabitants of Zanzibar to turn their eyes towards this crop. On all sides, people were cutting down coconut trees, fruit trees of all varieties, even orange trees. They were neglecting the cultivation of cassava, potatoes, and grains in order to plant clove trees....One only saw this tree in all of the deforested part of the island.²¹

Loarer's colleague Guillain asserted that everyone with a little extra land planted clove trees.²² Other visitors and consuls noted that rice and other grains were being neglected in favor of cloves, so much so that these staples now had to be imported.²³

Not only did farmers switch to cloves, but traders invested in them as well. Arabs would participate in three or four caravans to the interior of Africa, invest the profits in land, and become clove cultivators. Some people with relatively small land holdings began to prefer this activity to the strain of the caravan.²⁴ Even some Indians invested

²⁰Ruschenberger, p. 51.

²¹Loarer, O.I., 5/23, Cahier 4.

²²Guillain, Documents, Vol. 2/1, p. 145.

²³Guillain, "Rapport Commercial," O.I., 2/10, Vol. I; Hamerton to Aberdeen, 2 January 1844, FO 54/6; J. B. F. Osgood, Notes of Travel or Recollection a Majunga, Zanzibar, Muscat, Aden and other Eastern Ports (Salem: Creamer, 1854), p. 23; Lewis Pelly, "Remarks on the Tribes, Trade, and Resources around the Shore Line of the Persian Gulf," TBGS, XVIII (1863), p. 66. Sheriff doubts that clove growing reduced rice production on the basis that cloves are grown on hills or ridges while rice is grown in valleys. However, the fact that simultaneous production was theoretically possible does not mean that people were oblivious to the comparative advantage of the more profitable clove crop. Sheriff, p. 187.

²⁴Loarer, O.I., 5/23, Cahier 1.

in clove mashamba.²⁵

By the 1840's, the leading Arab families of Zanzibar had become deeply involved in plantation ownership. According to an American whaler who spent several months in Zanzibar in 1842, wealthy Arabs possessing 200 to 300 slaves owned most of the plantations. The American Consul in Zanzibar wrote that Arabs were "generally the lords of the soil," although some went on ivory expeditions.²⁶ Other visitors noted that members of the Sultan's family and entourage were among the leading proprietors. One close associate reputedly owned 12,000 clove trees, and the Sultan's Prime Minister, Seyyid Suleiman bin Hemed, was producing 5,000 to 6,000 frasilas of cloves per year in the late 1840's. He supervised his land and slaves closely, and reportedly harvested the highest quality cloves in Zanzibar.²⁷ The oldest Omani tribe in Zanzibar and the leading rivals of the Al-Busaidi, the Al-Harthi, became the owners of "large landed estates and numerous slaves." Their leader, Abdalla bin Salim, allegedly owned 1,500 slaves.²⁸ The other leading Omani tribes of Zanzibar and Pemba,

²⁵ Ibid.; Mohamed Hussein Tharia Topan, "Biography of Sir Tharia Topan Knight," MS (1960-63), p. 86. When an Indian went bankrupt in 1847 owing an American firm money, he had among his assets three clove plantations and 175 slaves. Charles Ward to James Buchanan, 7 March 1847, US Consul, 2, NEMA, p. 376.

²⁶ The whaler visited a number of plantations himself. J. Ross Browne, Etchings of a Whaling Cruise with Notes of a Sojourn on the Island of Zanzibar, etc. (Cambridge: Harvard U.P., 1846, repr. 1968), pp. 434-35, 438-40. Ward to State Department, 7 March 1847, US Consul, 2.

²⁷ Loarer, O.I., 5/23, Cahier 4; Richard Waters, Journal, 15 October 1839, NEMA, p. 212; Adrien Germain, "Note sur Zanzibar et la Côte Orientale d'Afrique," Bulletin de la Société de Géographie (Paris), 5^e Série, XVI (1868), p. 534.

²⁸ Rigby to Bombay, 4 April 1859, encl. to Secret Letter 57 of 23 May 1859, Ind. Of., L/P+S/5/140; Rigby to Anderson, 26 July 1859, Political Consultation of 30 September 1859, INA, Reel I.

such as Al-Ruwehi, Al-Riami, Al-Mandhry, and Al-Mazru'i--recent immigrants and old residents--became clove cultivators.²⁹ By 1860, the British Consul in Zanzibar, Christopher Rigby, was referring to "Arab landed proprietors" as a "sort of aristocracy."³⁰ From an experimental venture, the cultivation of cloves had over a period of some 40 years grown into a major underpinning of the upper stratum of Zanzibari society.

Omanis had settled in Zanzibar before the development of cloves. Some came to trade, some to follow the Sultan's court--with its opportunities for patronage--when it moved to Zanzibar.³¹ But cloves stimulated migration from Oman. The growth of the Omani population is hard to quantify, since all population figures are guesses. Estimates of the number of Omanis in Zanzibar vary from 300 in 1776 to 1,000 (including other Arabs) in 1819 and 800 in 1844, while visitors in 1854, 1857, and 1872 all said there were 5,000 Omanis in Zanzibar.³² Immigration continued into the latter part of the century. In 1877 alone, some 1,000 Arabs emigrated from Oman to Zanzibar.³³

²⁹MSA 3, 15, 21, 26, 34, 36.

³⁰C. P. Rigby, "Report on the Zanzibar Dominions, 1 July 1860," reprinted in Mrs. Charles E. B. Russell, ed., General Rigby, Zanzibar, and the Slave Trade (London: Allen and Unwin, 1935), p. 328.

³¹Gray, Zanzibar, p. 167.

³²Morice to de Cossigny, 4 November 1776, in Freeman-Grenville, French, p. 79; Albrand, "Extraits," pp. 72-3; Hamerton to Bombay, 2 January 1842, PP 1844, XLVIII, 1, p. 420; Hamerton to Aberdeen, 2 January 1844, FO 54/6; Osgood, p. 35; Burton, Zanzibar, Vol. I, p. 368; Mgr. Gaume, Voyage à la Côte Orientale d'Afrique pendant l'année 1866 par le R. P. Horner (Paris: Gaume frères, 1872), p. 258.

³³Report of S. B. Miles in "Report of the Persian Gulf Political Residency and Muscat Political Agency for the Year 1877-78," in Selections

In the 1840's clove cultivation spread to Pemba. Long considered even more fertile than Zanzibar, Pemba is particularly well suited to cloves because it gets an average of 80 inches of rain per year, 20 more inches than Zanzibar. At picking time the weather is drier in Pemba, so that cloves can be picked over a longer period time without rotting.³⁴ The first cloves were introduced to Pemba around 1840, and nearly 2,000 frasilas of cloves were produced in Pemba in 1845, 10,000 in 1849.³⁵ Some of the best properties in Pemba were developed by rich inhabitants of Zanzibar, including the Sultan and Seyyid Suleiman, who left their slaves to work under a trusted overseer, often a slave himself.³⁶ Not only Arabs from Zanzibar, but the older Arab inhabitants of Pemba and the Wapemba themselves took to clove cultivation.³⁷ Pemba, however, did not fully realize its potential until after 1872 when a disastrous hurricane struck its politically dominant neighbor to the south.³⁸

from the Records of the Government of India, no. 152 (Calcutta, 1883), pp. 2, 129. Absentee landlordism was common in Oman, even in good date country, because Omanis preferred to stay in Zanzibar. Robert G. Landen, Oman Since 1856 (Princeton: Princeton U.P., 1967), p. 414. The first systematic survey of the Zanzibar population was in 1921, at which time 18,884 Arabs--Omani and Hadrami--lived in Zanzibar and Pemba. Zanzibar Protectorate, "Report on Non-Native Census, 1921" (Zanzibar: Government Printer, 1921).

³⁴G. E. Tidbury, The Clove Tree (London: Crosby Lockwood, 1949), pp. 23-4, 27.

³⁵C. Guillain, "Côte de Zanguébar et Mascate, 1841," Révue Coloniale, I (1843), p. 538; Loarer, O.I., 5/23, Cahier 4. See also Krapf, Journal, 7 March 1844, CMS CA5/016/165.

³⁶Loarer, "Ports au Nord de Zanguébar," O.I., 2/10, Cahier D.

³⁷MSA 3, 9, 15, 21.

³⁸R. L. Playfair, "Report on the Result of the Observations and

Zanzibar's and Pemba's clove industry was not based on a breakthrough in world demand for cloves, such as the new demand for oils that stimulated the palm oil industry of West Africa in the nineteenth century. Before the development of Zanzibar's plantations, cloves brought their producers immense profits.³⁹ Zanzibar possessed sufficient rainfall, soil of the proper depth and composition for the delicate clove tree, and freedom--except for the freak 1872 hurricane--from the storms that almost literally blew over the clove industry in Bourbon.⁴⁰ It also had an ample labor supply. Zanzibar was able to produce cloves on a scale that dwarfed all others by the 1840's. Market conditions were revolutionized by changes on the supply side.

As a result of the new scale of production, the price of cloves fell from \$5 to $\$5\frac{1}{2}$ per frasila in 1840 to \$4 in 1845, and to \$2-3 in 1856.⁴¹ In the mid-1840's Seyyid Said began to fear that the clove market was becoming glutted and that his personal properties would depreciate in value. Loarer suggested to the Sultan that he impose a tax on each new tree planted and forbid the destruction of coconut trees, but Seyyid Said replied that the cost of enforcement would exceed his possible savings.⁴² Although no official move was made to deter people from planting cloves, the pace was

Enquiries made during a Tour in the Various Countries around Zanzibar, especially those more or less connected with the Slave Trade," TBGS, XVII (1864), p. 257.

³⁹ Sheriff, p. 183.

⁴⁰ Tidbury, pp. 16-7; Loarer, O.I., 5/23, Cahier 4.

⁴¹ See Table 4.

⁴² Loarer, O.I., 5/23, Cahier 4.

reduced because of the fall in price.⁴³ Clove exports levelled off around 1850, implying that 1845 ended a decade of rapid expansion in new planting.

The Indian Ocean market was limited, but the expansion of clove planting in the 1830's coincided with the start of direct trade with European and American vessels. This was a general stimulus to trade--providing investment capital and import goods. As the clove harvests increased, these ships began to take a share of the cloves. American ships took away 110,220 pounds of cloves in 1841 and 840,000 pounds (worth \$48,000) in 1859. The French began late, but spend \$47,983 on cloves in 1856 and \$60,000 in 1859. The British and Germans bought lesser amounts.⁴⁴ Seyyid Said made a deliberate effort to penetrate these markets. He sent a ship to New York in 1839 whose cargo included over 664 frasilas of cloves, for which he obtained nearly \$10,000.⁴⁵ In 1847 one of his ships brought such a quantity of cloves to Marseille that a British official thought the price would be depressed throughout Europe. He also sent cloves to London.⁴⁶ His efforts to expand the market were not altogether successful. As shown later in this chapter, India and to a lesser extent Arabia remained by far the most important consumers of Zanzibar's cloves. The clove played no significant part in the economy of Europe as did other plantation crops like sugar and cotton. European and American traders in East Africa were

⁴³ Guillain, Documents, Vol. 2/1, p. 145.

⁴⁴ C. S. Nicholls, The Swahili Coast (London: Allen and Unwin, 1971), pp. 333, 336-38, 340-41, 346.

⁴⁵ Abdurrahim Mohamed Jiddawi, "Extracts from an Arab Account Book, 1840-1854," Tanganyika Notes and Records, 33 (1952), pp. 26-7.

⁴⁶ Hamerton to Palmerston, 3 January 1847, FO 54/13; Loarer, O.I., 5/23, Cahiers 4 and 5.

interested above all in ivory and other such products.⁴⁷ The limited market and the consequent decline in price led to a cessation of expansion by the 1850's.

By that date, however, the economy of Zanzibar had been substantially altered. The scale of Omani agriculture had been transformed and the development of plantation had changed relationships of production. The basis of the new agricultural economy was slave labor.

Slaves were the most important capital good to which investment was directed. Hamerton wrote in 1844, "The people are growing rich, and able to buy more slaves and to cultivate cloves, the chief article now cultivated, and from which considerable profit is derived in a few years."⁴⁸ Although much labor is required for planting, the chief strain on the labor force occurs at harvest time. This demand was highest in the last few years of the 1840's. Loarer, in 1849, thought that the labor demands would exceed the supply. He noted that trees that had recently been planted would double the current output and put an intolerable strain on the 100,000 slaves which he thought Zanzibar possessed.⁴⁹ In fact, more slaves became available after the implementation of the ban on slave exports to Arabia in 1847. Observers in the 1850's found slave supplies adequate.⁵⁰ The slaves were able to pick even the expanded quantities of cloves. The sequence of events was crucial: an expansion of all forms of trade, producing

⁴⁷ Nicholls, pp. 324-75; see below, pp. 128-30.

⁴⁸ Hamerton to Aberdeen, 2 January 1844, FO 54/6.

⁴⁹ Loarer, O.I., 5/23, Cahier 4.

⁵⁰ See Chapter I, pp. 91-92.

investment capital, followed by a temporary increase in the availability of slaves and a drop in their price, allowing for considerable investment in slaves at precisely the time when their labor was needed.

It is difficult to assess the expansion of Zanzibar's slave population with any precision since even the off-hand estimates of visitors are not based on acquaintance with all parts of the island. Table 5 summarizes the estimates that do exist. The lower ends of the estimates

TABLE 5: The Population of Zanzibar Island

	<u>Slave Population</u>	<u>Total Population</u>
1811	150,000	200,000
1819	15,000	
1834		50-200,000
1835	100,000	150,000
1844	360,000	450,000
1846	40-150,000	60-200,000
1849	100,000	
1857	200,000	300,000
1860		250,000

Sources: Smeë, 1811, in Burton, Zanzibar, Vol. II, p. 496; Albrand, "Extraits," pp. 72-3; Hart, MS, p. 10; Ruschenberger, p. 46; Hamerton to Aberdeen, 2 January 1844, FO 54/6; Guillain, Documents, Vol. 2/1, p. 81; Loarer, O.I., 5/23, Cahier 4; Burton, Zanzibar, Vol. I, pp. 312, 462-63; Rigby, "Report," p. 328.

seem more reasonable than the higher ones. Nevertheless, it is safe to say that the Omani Arabs--under 5,000 in all estimates--were vastly outnumbered by their slaves.

Whatever the actual figures, observers did notice increased density of population in clove-growing areas. Towards the beginning of the century,

visitors were struck by the sparseness of population and cultivation. In the 1870's, travellers who explored the rural areas reached the opposite conclusion. A French visitor was struck by the population density, which he estimated at 100 per square mile in the countryside near Zanzibar town. He saw one village with 2,000 people and several with 1,000.⁵¹ A British physician, James Christie, a sensitive-observer with many years' experience in Zanzibar, considered the island "densely populated," because of the labor required for clove picking.⁵² An expanding slave population helped make it possible to grow cloves as a plantation crop, while the demands of export agriculture altered the relaxed regime of agricultural slavery described by explorers in the early nineteenth century.⁵³

The other principal prerequisite of clove growing was land. Whether Arabs expropriated land for their clove plantations or merely used vacant land is another question that can never be answered definitively. John Middleton has argued the latter position, citing archeological and genealogical evidence that the Wahadimu, the Swahili people of Zanzibar, have always lived in the southeastern portion of the island, which is not suitable for cloves. There is also evidence from the explorers Smee and Albrand that the western portions of the island, which became the centers of clove cultivation, were sparsely cultivated before the advent of cloves.⁵⁴

⁵¹ Alfred Belleville, "Trip Around the Southern End of Zanzibar Island," Proceedings of the RGS, XX (1875-76), p. 74.

⁵² James Christie, Cholera Epidemics in East Africa (London: Macmillan, 1876), p. 314. The population of the town also rose substantially, reflecting increased activity in the port. Rigby, "Report," p. 328.

⁵³ See Chapter V.

⁵⁴ Middleton, pp. 11-12. He does not spell out his sources in detail. The reports of early visitors are mentioned above, p. 94.

On the other hand, Sir John Gray, who knew Zanzibar traditions well and adjudicated land disputes during the colonial period, stressed the importance of forceful occupation. Arabs, in his view, obtained some land by clearing jungle, but they also evicted Wahadimu landowners from their plots and obtained other farms by fraud, by bribing Wahadimu leaders, or by harassing Wahadimu into selling land.⁵⁵ It is also hard to believe that all the Wahadimu would have stayed in southeastern Zanzibar, given the poor fertility of that area in comparison with the north and west.

It is quite possible that Arabs and Wahadimu had different views of what was taking place. Under local custom, land cannot be alienated permanently, although a foreigner may be granted the right to use land that is lying idle. A scattered Wahadimu population in central or western Zanzibar might therefore have been willing to allow Arabs to use some of their land, perhaps for a token rental. After all, Arabs had lived in the vicinity of the port for a long time without encroaching on the local population. However, the Arabs, accustomed to freehold tenure under Islamic law, may have regarded this transaction as a purchase.⁵⁶ Once the profitability of clove cultivation was clear, less subtle forms of expropriation may have been used to expand plantations--all authorities admit that encroachment along the fringes of clove-growing areas took place.⁵⁷ The Sultan undoubtedly supported Omanis in acquiring land, hoping

⁵⁵ Gray, Zanzibar, pp. 167-68. The explorer Baumann also believed the expropriation thesis. Oscar Baumann, Die Insel Sansibar (Leipzig: Duncker and Humblot, 1897), p. 19. Gray and Baumann, like Middleton, do not cite references.

⁵⁶ On land tenure, see Middleton, passim, and W. R. McGeach and W. Addis, "A Review of the System of Land Tenure in the Islands of Zanzibar and Pemba" (Zanzibar: Government Printer, 1945), passim.

⁵⁷ Gray, pp. 167-68; Middleton, p. 12; McGeach and Addis, p. 7.

to reward his followers, give Arabs a stake in the Zanzibari economy, and foster agricultural development. Islamic law gave individuals title to land whether obtained by clearing, seizure, or purchase.⁵⁸ In any case, a sharp division arose between Arabs cultivating cloves and other tree crops in northern and western Zanzibar and Wahadimu cultivating subsistence crops supplemented by small cash crops (mainly chillies) in southern and eastern Zanzibar. This ethnic division of land--giving the Wahadimu the less commercially desirable portion--became a major source of tension in the twentieth century.⁵⁹

In Pemba, no such clear division arose. Valleys and ridges penetrate most of the island, and fertile land is more evenly distributed than in Zanzibar. Undoubtedly Arabs acquired much of the good clove-growing land along the ridges by a combination of purchase, clearing of virgin land, appropriation by force, and appropriation by misunderstanding.⁶⁰ Arabs and Wapemba ended up interspersed among one another. Unlike Wahadimu, Wapemba became clove cultivators themselves, although on a smaller scale, and perhaps at a later date, than the Arabs of Pemba.⁶¹ Living far away from the center of Omani society in Zanzibar, linked to Wapemba by physical proximity, a similar rural life life-style, and common participation in clove growing, the Omanis of Pemba developed closer social relations

⁵⁸McGeach suggests that the Sultan either gave his fellow Omanis grants of land or permission to clear. *Ibid.*

⁵⁹Michael F. Lofchie, Zanzibar: Background to Revolution (Princeton: Princeton U.P., 1965).

⁶⁰Baumann, Pemba, p. 9; Addis, in McGeach and Addis, p. 19; Gray, pp. 172-73; Zanzibar, "Inquiry into certain claims," p. 11.

⁶¹See below, p. 147.

with Wapemba than the Omanis of Zanzibar did with Wahadimu.⁶²

The once abundant land of Zanzibar became scarce and relatively expensive after the expansion of the clove industry took place. In 1860 a large estate could be bought for \$5,000. Consul Rigby considered this cheap, but in a country where agriculture had only recently become monetized and where total government revenue was only \$200,000, it was a very substantial sum.⁶³ In 1870 English missionaries looking for land in the clove-growing area not far from the port learned that "There is no great stretch of fertile land which is not already occupied...."⁶⁴ Having found some land, but seeking to expand in 1875, the mission was asked for \$3,000 for a large but relatively infertile shamba and more for a smaller but more fertile one.⁶⁵ Even the daughter of the Sultan had trouble acquiring a plantation where she wanted one, because all the land was owned and nobody wanted to rent it.⁶⁶ The explorer Joseph Thomson reported in 1879

⁶²There was a political dimension as well: Wapemba had sought the help of Seyyid Said when they wanted to get rid of the overrule of the Mazrui of Mombasa. The Al-Busaidi replaced the Mazrui in 1823 on the basis of an agreement with the Wapemba. In the twentieth century, Arabs had better relations with Wapemba than the Wahadimu. Gray, Zanzibar, pp. 171-73; Lofchie, p. 170.

⁶³Rigby, "Report," pp. 341, 342.

⁶⁴Bishop Steere, Answers to Queries of Sir Bartle Frere, 15 January 1873, PP 1873, LXI, 767, p. 127.

⁶⁵Steere to Festing, 2 June 1875, UMCA Archives, A1 (III), Box 1, Folio 1200. Scattered data on plantation prices contain such figures as \$1,100, \$1,750, and \$14,000 for an immense plantation owned by a Frenchman. See deeds, dated 1879 and 1892, in the papers of Sir John Gray, Cambridge University Library, Box 28, and Donald Mackenzie, "A Report on Slavery and the Slave Trade in Zanzibar, Pemba and the Mainland of the British Protectorate of East Africa," Anti-Slavery Reporter, Series IV, XV (1895), pp. 73-4.

⁶⁶Emily Ruete, Memoirs of an Arabian Princess: An Autobiography

that so much land had been cleared for clove and coconut trees since Burton's visit in 1857 that the climate had been altered and Burton's meteorological measurements no longer applied.⁶⁷ Nevertheless, the value of an estate was largely determined by the amount of slave labor that could be mustered. Land was no longer abundant, but land without slaves was useless.⁶⁸

The process of economic development described above was a response to economic forces: the age-old demand for spices, the extension of communications from Zanzibar, the growth of capital, the vagaries of the slave trade, and the availability of land. It is also a story with a central character, Seyyid Said, who played the key role in translating these forces into a specific type of commercial enterprise. He both reflected the changing economic and social climate around him and served as a catalyst for change among his fellow Omanis.⁶⁹

Although he did not bring cloves to Zanzibar himself, he did take over and develop the first clove plantations. As late as 1840, two-thirds

(New York: Appleton, 1888), p. 258. Emily Ruete, or Bi Salima, was a daughter of Seyyid Said by a concubine, who eloped with a German merchant, causing what must have been the biggest sex scandal of Zanzibari history.

⁶⁷ Joseph Thomson, To the Central African Lakes and Back (London: Cass, 1881, repr. 1968), Vol. I, p. 16.

⁶⁸ Pelly to Forbes, 1 February 1862, Proceedings for May 1862, INA, Reel II; Hamerton to Bombay, 2 January 1842, PP 1844, XLVIII, 1, p. 419; Christie, Cholera, p. 328.

⁶⁹ Earlier historians have, as Abdul Sheriff astutely observed, tended to overstress the Sultan's role, finding in Seyyid Said's individual initiatives the answer to the paradox of how Africans and Arabs--who were thought to be economically backward--were able to develop their economy without European assistance. Sheriff takes his point too far: on the specific question of cloves, Seyyid Said's personal role was considerable.

of the 8,000 frasilas of cloves being produced in Zanzibar came from the Sultan's own plantations. His plantations continued to expand, but the industry was catching on among the Arab population in the 1840's, so that his personal share dropped. In 1845 he accounted for one-third of the 30,000 frasilas produced in that year.⁷⁰ In 1851, the American Consul estimated that the Sultan grew one million pounds of cloves, out of a crop that varied between two and three million pounds.⁷¹

The Sultan's plantations were a model for others. Ruschenberger admired the work of the slaves who cared for the 4,000 clove trees on one shamba in 1834: "The whole is in the finest order, presenting a picture of industry, and admirable neatness and beauty."⁷² Another American described a plantation in the romantic tones that only a Yankee could have for a plantation:

One of the most beautiful sights I ever beheld was the extended plantation of clove trees. His Highness has two hundred thousand on this plantation. They are set out in rows of a mile or more in length, and about 20 feet apart. The tree grows to about 20 feet in high [sic] and it is a most beautiful green. The air for some distance around is strongly impregnated with cloves....⁷³

Seyyid Said reputedly acquired 45 plantations.⁷⁴ Guillain claimed that he

⁷⁰Loarer, O.I., 5/23, Cahier 4. Guillain says the Sultan produced two-fifths of the total cloves around 1843. "Rapport Commercial," O.I., 2/10, Vol. I.

⁷¹C. Ward to G. Abbot, 13 March 1851, US Consul, 3, NEMA, p. 479. See also Osgood, pp. 23-4.

⁷²Ruschenberger, p. 50.

⁷³Richard Waters, Journal, 2 August 1837, quoted in Philip Northway, "Salem and the Zanzibar-East African Trade," Essex Institute Historical Collections, XC (1954), p. 384.

had 6,000 to 7,000 slaves on one plantation alone, while his daughter reported that most plantations had 50 to 60 slaves, with 500 on the major ones. Each had an Arab overseer.⁷⁵ When Seyyid Said died in 1856, he left the following property:⁷⁶

Frigates, corvettes, brigs	\$195,814
Trading ships	23,256
Plantations and houses	173,933
Horses	6,360
Arms, jewels, etc.	25,000
	<hr/>
	\$425,363

As Zanzibari law and custom made no distinction between the private property of the Sultan and state property, the first item included the navy. However, he used these vessels for trade more than fighting.⁷⁷ The Sultan's wealth was concentrated in the means of maintaining his power, his trading interests, and his landed property. These assets reflect both the old and the new in Omani society.

On his death, the Sultan's estate was divided, in accordance with Islamic law, among his many children. Each son received property worth \$57,917 and each daughter \$28,958.⁷⁸ The extreme concentration of clove

⁷⁴Farsy, p. 61; Ruete, p. 87; Guillain, Documents, Vol. 2/1, pp. 50-1.

⁷⁵Guillain, Documents, Vol. 2/1, p. 48; Ruete, p. 87.

⁷⁶Rigby to Bombay, 18 September 1860, reprinted in William Coghlan, "Proceedings connected with the Commission appointed by the Government to investigate and report on the Disputes between the Rulers of Muscat and Zanzibar" (Bombay, 1861), Ind. Of., L/P+S/5/145, p. 113. Slaves are not mentioned, and it is unclear whether they were included with plantations. Domestic slaves were freed, but shamba slaves were not.

⁷⁷Pierre-André Gervais to MAE, 22 May 1847, MAE, 1; Gray, Zanzibar, p. 225.

⁷⁸Gray, Zanzibar, p. 225.

growing land in the Sultan's hands was thus replaced by a more widespread division within the royal family. Moreover, the princes and princesses intermarried with other leading Arab families--a personal fortune was being transformed into the basis of an aristocracy.⁷⁹ In 1862-63, the income of the new Sultan, Seyyid Majid, for his clove plantations was \$15,000 out of total clove exports from Zanzibar of \$232,087.⁸⁰ Eye-witnesses still marveled at the size of the Sultan's plantations, but they were by then a small part of a vastly expanded economy.⁸¹

Seyyid Said, then, played a catalytic role in clove cultivation. He developed the first plantations and proved their profitability, after which they became widespread. In the 1840's, he feared--as Loarer reported--that the competition of his fellow Arabs would hurt him, but Burton insisted that he still required all plantation owners to plant three clove trees for each coconut tree to encourage the clove business.⁸² It is not known whether Seyyid Said took other measures to encourage clove growing, such as the distribution of seedlings, but given his initial near monopoly, it is hard to imagine where else Arabs could have obtained seedlings.

⁷⁹ Under Islamic laws of inheritance, daughters receive half the share of sons, so that a substantial portion of a fortune can be transferred to another family when the daughter marries and has children. See P. A. Lienhardt, "Family Waqf in Zanzibar," East Africa Institute of Social Research Conference Paper, 1958, pp. 9-10.

⁸⁰ R. L. Playfair, "Extract from the Administration Report of the Political Agent for the two past years ending with the 31st of May 1864," reprinted in TBGS, XVII (1864), pp. 280, 283.

⁸¹ Speer to Seward, 26 November 1862, US Consul, 4.

⁸² Burton, Zanzibar, Vol. I, pp. 218-19. Sheriff, p. 182, believes that the regulation was designed to protect the coconut tree rather than promote the clove, and Burton's phrase is indeed ambiguous.

The Sultan did assist clove plantations by a restrained tax policy. The only clove tax during Seyyid Said's lifetime was a tax of $\frac{1}{4}$ per frasila on the cloves of Pemba, all of which had to be shipped to Zanzibar for re-export. This was a high tax, although it did not stop the extension of clove plantations on that island. Zanzibar clove growers remained free of all taxes on land, production, or export.⁸³

More than just promoting the production of a lucrative crop, the Sultan encouraged profound changes in Zanzibari society. His move to Zanzibar from Muscat was crucial, for it transformed a provincial trading center into the capital of the Omani people, a place to settle permanently. In addition, the Sultan himself set a model for plantation life. Seyyid Said spent four days each week in his big house on the plantation of Mtoni. On Mondays and Fridays, he held court in Zanzibar town. Foreign consuls and visitors were expected to visit him at Mtoni.⁸⁴ He spent much time on his other plantations as well. According to one of his daughters, two plantations had genuine palaces for his use, and six or eight had villas.⁸⁵ As the leading Arab in Zanzibar, Seyyid Said was setting an example of life in rural comfort. He was not just a rich Sultan exploiting slaves and land, but a landlord enjoying life on his property.

The Plantation System at Its Height, 1850-1872

By 1850 the importance of the clove industry had been established, and its growth had slowed down. It remained stable until the destructive

⁸³Loarer, O.I., 5/23, Cahiers 2, 4.

⁸⁴Ibid., Cahier 1; Farsy, pp. 57, 59; Ward to State Department, 21 February 1846, US Consul, 2; Guillain, Documents, Vol. 2/1, p. 30.

⁸⁵Ruete, p. 87; Farsy, pp. 61-2.

hurricane of 1872. This natural disaster and the political disaster the following year of a treaty with Great Britain that legally ended all transportation of slaves by sea marked a new challenge to the economy of Zanzibar. The following two sections discuss the clove economy of Zanzibar in relation to other agricultural activities, commerce, and the slave trade.

The data on clove exports, summarized in Table 6, is scanty and sometimes conflicting, but taken as a whole shows that the clove industry reached a plateau in the 1850's and 1860's.⁸⁶ The slowing down of clove planting, beginning around 1845, was a long-term trend, which was mainly the result of declining prices. There was less incentive to plant clove trees in the 1850's when the price was \$2 per frasila (less in the 1860's) than in 1840 when it was \$5. In the 1860's, landowners sometimes did not replace dying clove trees because of the low price.⁸⁷

A second cause of the lack of expansion, particularly in the 1860's, was the first flurry of anti-slave trade activity directed at Zanzibar itself. The British offensive against the slave trade was actually a series of fits and starts until the 1870's. The 1847 ban on the slave trade to Arabia was not enforced. In 1861 British warships began apprehending slave dhows, sometimes burning Arab dhows in an indiscriminate fashion. Even this failed to stop the slave trade to Arabia and did not directly affect the supply of slaves to the plantations, which remained

⁸⁶ Harvests varied greatly, partly because of weather and partly because pickers, in a good harvest, damaged the tree by pulling off stems along with the clove buds, so that the next year, the crop was especially bad. G. E. Seward, "Report," Political Consultations, December 1866, INA, Reel II.

⁸⁷ J. A. Grant, A Walk Across Africa (Edinburgh: Blackwood, 1864), p. 15.

TABLE 6: Exports of Cloves from Zanzibar

<u>Year</u>	<u>Volume (frasilas)</u>	<u>Amount (dollars)</u>	<u>Price (\$/fra)</u>
1852-53	128,000		
1853-54	140,000		
1856	142,857		2-3
1859	138,860	250,000	= 1.8
	200,000	382,000	= 1.9
1859-60		210,000	
1860*	200,000		
1861-62		175,000	
		201,840	
1862*	200,000	400,000	= 2.0
1862-63		275,000	
		343,000	
		232,087	
1863-64	137,220	155,000	= 1.5
		179,498	
		214,000	
		206,498	
1864-65		469,400	
		227,000	
		335,000	
1865*	100 - 342,000		
1865-66		304,000	
1866-67		237,000	
1867-68		273,000	
		300,000	
		125,644	
pre-1872*			1-1.5

* Estimate of average at this time.

= Calculated from Volume-Amount data.

More than one figure for the same year indicates estimates of different observers.

Sources: Burton, Zanzibar, Vol. I, pp. 364-65; Rigby, "Report," p. 343; Playfair, "Report," TBGS, p. 283; Seward, Report on Commerce, 1864-65, Political Consultations, December 1866, INA, Reel II; Playfair to Russell, 1 January 1865, FO 54/22; Kirk, Report, 1870, FO 84/1344; Hines to Seward, 25 October 1864, Ropes to Seward, 5 October 1865, Ropes to State Dept., 31 December 1865, and Webb to State Dept., 10 March 1869, US Consul, 5; Jablonski to MAE, 28 December 1863, 31 December 1865, 28 May 1866, 31 December 1866, 31 December 1867, 31 December 1868, and Guillois to MAE, 10 December 1873, MAE, 2, 3; Sheriff, p. 186 note 55.

legal.⁸⁸ However, the British Consul, Rigby, decided to enforce an Indian regulation that prohibited Indians, as British subjects, from engaging in the slave trade or owning slaves. Some 8,000 slaves, including many field hands, were confiscated.⁸⁹ This was a small percentage of Zanzibar's slaves, but it had a considerable effect on investment. If Indians were unable to own slaves, they would be unable to make use of land in their possession. As they were the principal financiers in Zanzibar, and their loans were secured on mortgages on land, this made it less advantageous for Indians to foreclose. As a result, Indians were somewhat reluctant to supply capital for land or slaves.⁹⁰ This problem too was a temporary phenomenon, for Rigby's successors after 1862 did not enforce this policy. The attack on Indian slaveholding was only resumed in 1874.⁹¹

After the expansion of clove planting had ceased, the exports of Zanzibar's clove plantations were distributed as shown in Table 7. These figures underline the dependence of Zanzibar on the spice market of India. The failure to make large and consistent inroads into other parts of the world was the major limitation on the growth of the clove industry.

An important implication of the stabilization of the clove industry was the fact that Zanzibar did not neglect its other agricultural resources.

⁸⁸ If anything, measures against the Arabian slave trade increased the supply at Zanzibar. See Chapter IV.

⁸⁹ Rigby, Diary, 3 September 1861, quoted in Russell, General Rigby, p. 95; Rigby to Anderson, 21 March 1860, FO 84/1130. Sheriff considers the legality of Rigby's move dubious. Pp. 426-27.

⁹⁰ Dériché to MAE, 2 May 1860, MAE, 2; Pelly to For. 12 February 1862, Pelly Papers, FO 800/234; Webb to Cass, 1 September 1860, US Consul, 4, NEMA, p. 512.

⁹¹ Prideaux, Report, 1873-74, FOCP 2915, p. 80.

TABLE 7: Distribution of Clove Exports of Zanzibar, by Percentage

<u>Exported to:</u>	<u>1859</u>	<u>1864-65</u>	<u>1867-68</u>
Arabia	6.4%	9.5%	2.8%
India	40.0	63.0	62.0
England	4.2	7.9	
United States	19.2	3.1	22.0
France	24.0	8.8	7.6
Germany	6.4	7.9	5.2
	<u>100.2%</u>	<u>100.2%</u>	<u>99.6%</u>

Sources: Rigby, Report, 1 May 1860, FO 54/17; Jablonski to MAE, 28 May 1866, 31 December 1868, MAE. Vessels often stopped in Muscat or India after Zanzibar, so the European share may be an overestimate.

The trend towards the replacement of other crops by clove trees that was noted in the 1840's did not continue. Of greatest importance to the export economy was the coconut tree. Long a popular crop, the coconut palm "almost covered" Zanzibar in 1819.⁹² In the 1840's, coconuts were sent to the Red Sea countries, Arabia, Madagascar, and India, while about 40,000 frasilas of coconut oil, worth \$50,000, were also exported.⁹³ Because of the eagerness to plant cloves, coconut trees were at one time uprooted, but by the mid-1850's they had regained their former status.⁹⁴ Owing to the declining price of cloves and the ease of caring for coconut trees, the popularity of coconuts continued to increase in the 1860's.⁹⁵ Table

⁹² Albrand to Milius, 1 June 1819, Reunion, 72/472.

⁹³ Loarer, O.I., 5/23, Cahiers 3, 5, and "Rapport politique et commerciale sur Zanzibar," by the Captain of La Syrene, 9 June 1844, O.I., 15/65.

⁹⁴ Burton, Zanzibar, Vol. I, pp. 218-19.

8 indicates the importance of this industry. The principal customer was France, which bought coconuts or dried coconuts (copra) for conversion

TABLE 8: Exports of Coconuts and Coconut Products, in Dollars

1859	\$ 90,500
1861-62	102,117
1862-63	143,126
1863-64	200,000
1864-65	152,500
1867-68	200,000

Sources: Rigby, Report, 1 May 1860, FO 54/17; Kirk Report, 1870, FO 84/1344; Hines to Seward, 25 October 1864, and Webb to State Dept., 10 March 1869, US Consul, 5; tables compiled from U.S. consular reports in NEMA, p. 553.

into coconut oil. The oil itself was sometimes manufactured by camel-driven presses and exported from Zanzibar. The price fell as the supply increased, but not as drastically as that of cloves. Burton reported that the price was \$12.50 per 1,000 coconuts in 1857, and the American Consul said it ranged from \$6 to \$10 in 1864.⁹⁶

Unlike the clove tree, the coconut tree is important to the local economy. It is a source of oils, beverages, food, building material, and firewood. For this reason, wrote an American Consul, "The Arab Planter seems to have a genuine affection for the cocoanut palm," which he did

⁹⁵ Seward, "Report," INA, Reel II; Hines to Seward, 25 October 1864, US Consul, 5, NEMA, p. 528.

⁹⁶ Burton, Zanzibar, Vol. I, p. 221; Hines to Seward, 25 October 1864, US Consul, 5, NEMA, p. 528; William E. Hines, "Dominions of the Sultan of Muscat--Zanzibar," 1864, United States Commercial Relations, 1865, p. 506.

not have for the clove tree.⁹⁷ Travellers in Zanzibar were struck by the widespread distribution of the coconut tree. While cloves were mainly grown on hills or ridges, much of the rest of Zanzibar was a forest of coconut and other fruit trees.⁹⁸ The coconut was less of a plantation crop than the clove. An agricultural expert, William Fitzgerald, who toured Zanzibar and Pemba in 1891, found that coconut palms were irregularly planted and the nuts haphazardly collected. A few large coconut plantations did exist, but for the most part coconuts were not grown on large-scale units. Many people had small plots with a variety of trees, of which the coconut was one, while large proprietors planted coconut trees near their houses and allowed their slaves to do the same.⁹⁹

Besides clove and coconut trees, visitors who walked through the countryside of Zanzibar saw a fantastic variety and richness of vegetation. They saw orange trees, mangoes, banana, pineapple, lemon, jack fruit, bread fruit, and others. These trees grew in the less fertile southern and eastern portions of the island as well as in the plantation areas. A variety of grains and other starchy plants also grew in Zanzibar

⁹⁷ Consul Pratt, "Zanzibar," 1887, United States Commercial Relations, 1887, p. 838.

⁹⁸ This included the areas occupied by Wahadimu and not just the Arab-dominated areas near town. Rigby, "Report," 1860, p. 327; Speer to Seward, 26 November 1862; US Consul, 4; Belleville, pp. 69-74, Baumann, Sansibar, p. 35, Baumann, Pemba, p. 12.

⁹⁹ W. W. A. Fitzgerald, Travels in the Coastlands of British East Africa and the Islands of Zanzibar and Pemba (London: Chapman and Hall, 1898), p. 523; F. C. McClellan, "Agricultural Resources of the Zanzibar Protectorate," Bulletin of the Imperial Institute, XII (1914), p. 420; M. Jablonski, "Notes sur la géographie de l'Ile de Zanzibar," Bulletin de la Société de Géographie (Paris), 5^e Série, XII (1866), p. 361.

and Pemba. Rice, millet, and cassava were most often mentioned, and a number of vegetables were plentiful as well.¹⁰⁰ Before the days of cloves, Pemba exported grain. However, by the 1840's, Zanzibar had to import wheat, maize, and rice to compensate for the decreased interest in growing grain and the increased population. Between 1860 and 1872 grain imports varied between \$48,000 and \$157,000 each year.¹⁰¹ Most of the grain was imported from India, Madagascar, and Mozambique, but the fertile fields of the adjacent mainland also made their contribution.¹⁰² In part, the result of the growth of clove plantations, Zanzibar's demand for grain in turn encouraged the development of grain plantations on the mainland, a process discussed in Chapter III.

However, the slave population of Zanzibar mainly ate a locally grown crop, cassava. This root crop was generally grown by the slaves themselves in small gardens near their huts. They also grew sweet potatoes, maize, and the other items which they required. Imported grain, especially rice, was important to the rich but only supplemented the diet of the poor.¹⁰³

¹⁰⁰ Albrand, "Extraits," p. 69; Ludwig Krapf, "Additional remarks on the island of Zanzibar or Ongoodja," incl. Krapf, to Coates, 10 January 1844, CMS CAS/016/25; Guillain, Documents, Vol. 2/1, pp. 124-25; Burton, Zanzibar, Vol. I, pp. 228-48; Browne, pp. 341, 436; Belleville, pp. 69-74; Rigby, "Report," 1860, p. 338; Playfair to Anderson, 15 November 1862, FO 84/1204.

¹⁰¹ Guillain, Documents, Vol. 2/1, pp. 124-25, 145; Loarer, O.I., 5/23, Cahier 3; Rigby, "Report," 1860, p. 339; Kirk, Report, 1870, FO 84/1344; Speer to Seward, 20 November 1862, US Consul, 4; tables, NEMA, p. 553; Prideaux, Report, 1873-74, FOCP 2915, pp. 97-100.

¹⁰² Kirk, Report, 1870, FO 84/1344; Prideaux, Report, 1873-74, pp. 97-100.

¹⁰³ The food supply for slaves is discussed in Chapter V.

In addition to cloves, coconuts, and the local staples, Zanzibari farmers attempted to grow two other crops for sale. One was chilli pepper, whose contribution to Zanzibar's exports rose from \$5,000 in 1867-68 to \$36,000 in 1880-81.¹⁰⁴ If late nineteenth century patterns were true earlier, the principal producers of this crop were the Wahadimu.¹⁰⁵

The second crop was sugar. Zanzibaris had long grown sugar cane for local use, and in 1819 a Frenchman saw two sugar factories of low quality, which produced enough sugar for their owners.¹⁰⁶ Seyyid Said made a major effort to make sugar into a commercial crop. In 1842 he bought 700 slaves for a sugar plantation and obtained two old sugar mills from Europeans in Mauritius and Réunion. Although some of the French and English "experts" who were providing technical advice cheated him and others quickly succumbed to tropical diseases, the Sultan was able to manufacture 250,000 pounds of sugar in 1847. A steam mill was still functioning on his property in the 1850's.¹⁰⁷ His successor, Seyyid Majid, also attempted to found a sugar plantation, this time in cooperation with an Englishman named Fraser. With the Sultan providing land and slaves,

¹⁰⁴ Hines to Seward, 25 October 1864, US Consul, 5, NEMA, p. 528; Kirk, Report, 1870, FO 84/1344; Report of Consul Batchelder, 1881, United States Commercial Relations, 1880-81, p. 396.

¹⁰⁵ Baumann, Sansibar, p. 37; Fitzgerald, pp. 541-43.

¹⁰⁶ Massieu to Ministre de la Marine..., 9 October 1822, O.I., 17/89; Albrand, "Extraits," pp. 76-7; Krapf, "Remarks," CMS CA5/016/25.

¹⁰⁷ Waters Papers, Notes, 18 October 1842, Ward to Buchanan, 13 March 1847, US Consul, 2, and Ward to Shepard, 14 December 1848, Ward Papers, in NEMA, pp. 253, 384, 398; Loarer, O.I., 5/23, Cahier 5; Extract, Commandant de la Station de Réunion de Madagascar to Ministre de la Marine..., 10 September 1850, O.I., 15/65; Osgood, p. 24; Burton, Zanzibar, Vol. I, p. 222.

and Fraser the machinery and know-how, the partners managed to start growing sugar, but Fraser went bankrupt a few years later.¹⁰⁸ That was the end of efforts to make sugar into an export crop. The attempts reveal two Sultans' conscious desire to develop a second plantation crop and reduce the island's dependence on cloves. Afterwards, a few Zanzibari planters continued to grow sugar for home consumption, and some small mills, driven by steam on the Sultan's plantation and by animals elsewhere, continued to operate.¹⁰⁹

In 1841, when clove production was still in an early stage of development, Seyyid Said told Hamerton that all the people of Zanzibar could subsist on their little farms.¹¹⁰ Before that time, the agricultural economy was essentially based on production of a variety of edible products largely for local use. The export economy was simply an extension of the subsistence sector. Cloves, however, were grown especially for export. By the 1860's, the Sultan's picture of self-sufficiency was less true than it was in 1841. Cloves had forced Zanzibar into importing grain, while the sources of income and the style of life of its leading citizens depended on an export crop. Nevertheless, the transformation into an export-oriented economy was far from complete. Even on the plantations of the Sultan and the wealthiest Arabs, a great number and variety of fruit trees and other crops remained. Subsistence crops were being

¹⁰⁸ Reginald Coupland, The Exploitation of East Africa 1856-1890: The Slave Trade and the Scramble (London: Faber and Faber, 1939), pp. 178-81.

¹⁰⁹ Kirk, Report, 1870, FO 84/1344; Prideaux, Report, 1873-74, FOCP 2915, p. 99; Belleville, p. 71, Fitzgerald, p. 516.

¹¹⁰ Hamerton to Willoughby, 20 August 1841, FO 54/4.

grown. The coconut tree, which brought Zanzibar nearly as much money as the clove by the end of the 1860's, was not solely a plantation crop. The southern and eastern portions of the island of Zanzibar remained out of the clove economy. In Pemba, much rice was still produced in the valleys, and a variety of tree crops flourished. The clove plantation, in short, became part of, but did not replace, the earlier agricultural patterns of Zanzibar.

Nor did agriculture come to dominate the export economy of Zanzibar. The port remained an entrepot, and ivory, gum copal, and other products of the mainland of Africa continued to move through the port on their way to India and Europe, while cloth, brass wire, beads, guns, and other European imports spread from Zanzibar over much of East Africa. Table 9 shows the total trade of Zanzibar.

This period, unlike the previous decades, was not one of impressive growth. In fact, trade declined in 1861. The crackdown by Rigby on Indian slaveholding damaged the credit system for traders as well as for plantation owners. Wars in the interior of Africa cut off the supply of export items, while the American Civil War made cotton, the major import, scarce and expensive. These factors were temporary, and trade returned to its former level.¹¹¹

With annual clove exports usually in the \$200,000 to \$300,000 range, it is clear that Zanzibar's business did not depend solely on that crop. Cloves generally accounted for 10% of total exports, although the other exports did not actually come from the islands. The Sultan himself derived much less revenue from his cloves than from the customs farm, very

¹¹¹Jablonski to MAE, 2 February 1862, and 28 December 1863, MAE, 2.

TABLE 9: Trade of Zanzibar, 1859-1876, in Dollars

	<u>Value of the Customs Farm*</u>	<u>Imports</u>	<u>Exports</u>
1859	196,000	4,080,000	3,400,000
1861-62	200,000	1,809,185	2,140,080
1862-63	190,000	2,692,430	2,338,970
1863-64	195,000	3,230,384	3,649,761
1864-65	310,000	3,612,180	3,479,874
1867-68	310,000	3,587,754	1,856,000
1870-71	310,000		
1872-73		3,356,959	
1873-74		3,093,150	
1875-76	450,000		

*The right to collect and keep duties was rented to an Indian for a negotiated sum. See below, p. 163.

Sources: Rigby, Report, 1860, p. 344; Speer to Seward, 26 November 1862, US Consul, 4; Playfair to Bombay, 15 June 1863, FO 54/20; Hines to Seward, 25 October 1864, US Consul, 5; Playfair to Russell, 28 June 1865, FO 84/1295; Ropes to State Department, 5 October 1865, US Consul, 5, NEMA, p. 538; Kirk, Report, 1870, FO 84/1344; Prideaux, Report, 1873-74, FOCP 2915, pp. 97-100; Kirk to Derby, 25 August 1876, FO 84/1454.

little of which was derived from taxes on cloves.¹¹²

Arabs, as noted in Chapter I, remained active in commerce, especially in the carrying trade and caravan leadership. Arabs, including poor Omanis and members of leading families of Zanzibar, continued to participate in the slave trade. Some invested their profits in clove

¹¹² Less than 10% of the Sultan's income in the 1860's came from the produce of his estates. The customs farm was by far the largest item, and only cloves from Pemba were then subject to taxation. Playfair to Bombay, 15 June 1863, FO 54/20; Kirk, Report, 1870, FO 84/1344.

plantations, but others still went upcountry or traded by sea.¹¹³ Tippu Tip, the most successful of all, followed in his father's footsteps as an upcountry trader. He gradually became wealthy, acquired plantations in Zanzibar, but still ventured upcountry. As all traders aspired to do, he acquired a large following of slaves and others, so that he was a military, as well as a commercial, figure in parts of Tanzania and the eastern Congo.¹¹⁴ Other Arabs of Zanzibar became powerful and wealthy leaders in such trading centers as Unyanembe, Tabora, and Uji i. At times, some members of a family resided in Zanzibar, while their relatives stayed upcountry.¹¹⁵ Burton, who visited Zanzibar in 1857, could still say, "The Arab noble is still, like those of Meccah in Mohammed's day, a merchant...."¹¹⁶

Continuities in the Slave Trade, 1860-1873

The period of large and steady clove harvest coincided with the time when the export of slaves from the interior of East Africa was greater than ever. Recovering rapidly from the recession in the export

¹¹³Hines to Seward, 26 October 1864, US Consul, 5; James Christie, "Slavery in Zanzibar as It Is," in E. Steere, ed., The East African Slave Trade (London: Harrison, 1871), p. 35; Memorandum by Sir B. Frere on "Connection of British Subjects with East African Slave Trade," 27 August 1872, FOCP 2269, pp. 4-5; Henry M. Stanley, How I Found Livingstone (London: Sampson, Low, Marston, Low and Searle, 1873), p. 13; Elton to Prideaux, 2 March 1874, FOCP 2499, p. 6; Maisha ya Hamed bin Muhammed El Murjebi yaani Tippu Tip, ed. and trans. W. H. Whitely (Nairobi: East African Literature Bureau, 1966), pp. 43, 45, 57, 61.

¹¹⁴See the fascinating autobiography of Tippu Tip, ed., Whitely.

¹¹⁵This theme was discussed at a Conference at Boston University in 1971. See the papers reprinted in African Historical Studies, IV, 3 (1971).

¹¹⁶Burton, Zanzibar, Vol. I, p. 376.

trade to Arabia after 1847, hardly pausing when British cruisers began to burn slave dhows in 1861, the slave traders were able to supply slaves to the old markets in Arabia and the Persian Gulf and to the expanding plantation economy within East Africa. The links between Arab and African slave traders deep inside East Africa, slave merchants and financiers on the coast, and markets in Arabia and Africa were functioning efficiently. A conservative idea of the extent of the trade can be seen in Table 10,

TABLE 10: Slaves Sent from Kilwa to Zanzibar, 1859-72

<u>Year</u>	<u>Slaves</u>
1859	19,000*
1862-63	13,000
1863-64	14,000
1864-65	13,821
1865-66	18,344
1866-67	17,538
1868-69	11,944
1871	14,392
1872	14,721

*Total imports to Zanzibar, estimated.

Sources: Report of the Select Committee on the East African Slave Trade, PP 1871, XII, 1, p. v; Kirk to Clarendon, 1 February 1870, FO 84/1325; Kirk to Granville, 25 January 1872, FOCP 4206, p. 3; Rear-Adm. Cummings to Admiralty, 10 January 1873, FOCP 4207, p. 226.

which summarizes the customs records of slaves paying duty at Kilwa for shipment to Zanzibar, records which ignore other slave trading routes as well as smuggling. In addition, Zanzibar received between 400 and 3,000 slaves each year from the mainland coast directly opposite the island. Beyond this were slaves brought in by the Sultan's family, who

did not have to pay duty, and by smugglers, who chose not to do so. Most likely, between 15,000 and 20,000 slaves passed through Zanzibar each year. Other slaves were sent from Kilwa directly to ports along the northern coast or--in violation of the treaties--to Arabia. The figures of the customs house at Kilwa indicated that 3,000 to 5,000 slaves per year were exported to ports of the Zanzibar Sultanate other than the capital city itself.¹¹⁷ Altogether, the slave trade of the northern section of the East African coast was in the neighborhood of 20,000 to 25,000 slaves per year. Not until the eighteenth century had the Atlantic slave trade--drawing slaves from a wider area and exporting to a more dynamic economic system--surpassed this magnitude.¹¹⁸ The trade itself, apart from the actual use of the slaves, was a big business in Zanzibar. Consul Rigby estimated that the slaves exported from Zanzibar in 1860 were worth £55,666.¹¹⁹

These slaves were divided between the local market and the export trade. Within the East African dominions of the Sultan, the trade in slaves was legal up to 1873. The export trade to Arabia was not. This makes it impossible to account with any precision for the distribution of slaves. Although the ban on exports beyond East Africa was ineffectively enforced before 1873, British ships were operating in the Indian Ocean

¹¹⁷ See the sources for Table 10. Sir Bartle Frere noted that slave trade statistics based on customs figures were underestimates because of laxity in the collection of duty and smuggling. Frere to Granville, 29 May 1873, PP 1873, LXI, 767, p. 147.

¹¹⁸ Philip D. Curtin, The Atlantic Slave Trade: A Census (Madison: Wisconsin, 1969), p. 266.

¹¹⁹ Rigby to Anderson, 27 August 1860, Fort William Proceedings for April, 1861, INA, Reel II.

after 1861 and passes were required for shipments within the legal slave trading zone. As a result, slaves destined for Arabia were often sent under passes to the northernmost port of the Sultan's dominions, Lamu. Others were obtained clandestinely by slave traders from Arabia by purchase or kidnapping.¹²⁰ The available statistics on slaves exported under passes from Zanzibar, shown in Table 11, thus overestimate the number of slaves retained in the Sultanate and on the island of Zanzibar itself, and omit the slaves sent to Arabia. Comparing Table 11 with Table 10,

TABLE 11: Legal Exports of Slaves from Zanzibar, 1866-72

<u>Year</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Destination</u>			
		<u>Pemba</u>	<u>Mombasa-Malindi</u>	<u>Tanzania Coast</u>	<u>Lamu</u>
1866	8,708	2,389	720	338	5,044
1867	7,819				
1868	7,855				
1869	5,990				
1870	4,472	1,060	624	151	2,637
1871	8,462				
1872	9,381				

Sources: Memorandum by Seward on the Slave Traffic in the Port of Zanzibar, n.d. [1866], FO 84/1279; Kirk to Granville, 27 June 1871, FO 84/1344; same to same, 25 January 1872, FOCP 4206, p. 3; Rear-Adm. Cummings to Admiralty, 10 January 1873, FOCP 4207, p. 226.

it would appear that over half of the slaves imported to Zanzibar stayed there, but the real number was much less, although unquantifiable. The figures for Mombasa and Malindi may be realistic, for they were rarely

¹²⁰ On the contest of skill and will between the slavers and the British Navy, see Reginald Coupland, Exploitation; and J. B. Kelly, Britain and the Persian Gulf 1795-1880 (Oxford: Clarendon, 1968).

used as ports for the export of slaves. Both areas were undergoing an expansion of agriculture during this period. Pemba and Lamu were both staging areas for the illicit trade to Arabia, and so a high proportion of slaves supposedly sent there ended up in Arabia.¹²¹

All officials agree that during the 1860's and early 1870's, the slave trade to Arabia was flourishing.¹²² Zanzibar, Pemba, and the northern section of the mainland coast were kept supplied by well under half of the slaves torn from their homelands in East and Central Africa. Their numbers appear to have been ample for the needs of the plantation economy. Rigby wrote in 1860 that the supply of slaves in Zanzibar was "abundant."¹²³ His successor as British Consul believed that the supply exceeded the demand.¹²⁴ A decade later, Sir Bartle Frere, reporting on the slave trade for the British Government, found that this was still the case. Bishop Steere, a missionary resident in Zanzibar since 1866, agreed.¹²⁵ Their conclusions are supported by data on prices. All estimates of prices of field hands or male slaves between 1860 and 1873 are in the range of \$10 to \$30, roughly on the order, or slightly less, than the prices which

¹²¹ Committee Report, PP 1871, XII, 1, p. vi; Testimony of Bishop Steere, *ibid.*, p. 73; Kirk to Granville, 22 February 1871, FO 84/1344.

¹²² See for example, Consul Playfair, Administrative Report for 1864-65, incl. Playfair to India, Ind. Of., L/P+S/9/42; Committee Report, PP 1871, XII, 1, pp. iii-x; William G. Palgrave, A Narrative of a Year's Journey through Central and Eastern Arabia (1862-63) (London: Macmillan, 1865), Vol. II, p. 362.

¹²³ Rigby, Report, 1860, p. 342.

¹²⁴ Consul Pelly, Memorandum submitted to the Government of Bombay, 12 November 1862, copy in Pelly Papers, FO 800/234.

¹²⁵ Frere to Granville, 29 May 1873, PP 1873, LXI, 767, p. 149; Testimony of Bishop Steere, PP 1871, XII, 1, p. 75.

prevailed in the early 1840's.¹²⁶ The vastly increased demand for slave labor to harvest the continued large clove crops were being met.¹²⁷

All was not going smoothly, however. The growing conflicts over the slave trade among Omanis were an indication in part that Zanzibar had taken the place of Muscat as the center of the trading network and in part that the interests of the Omani migrants to Zanzibar had been changed by the clove economy. In the 1860's, Zanzibar was a successful entrepot and a productive agricultural area. Oman, on the other hand, was losing the eastern end of its trade routes--both with India and the lands of the Persian Gulf--to steamships and Indian traders. Declining trade in Oman induced Omani traders to turn increasingly towards slave trading and piracy, not that fine distinctions among such activities had ever been drawn. Meanwhile, measures taken by the British against piracy in the Persian Gulf encouraged those in search of dubious profits to turn southward.¹²⁸

¹²⁶ Germain, "Zanzibar," p. 546; H.M.'s Commissioner's (Cape of Good Hope) to Russell, 19 May 1864, PP 1865, LVI, 1, p. 66; Speer to Seward, 26 November 1862, US Consul, 4; Christie, "Slavery," p. 32; Richard Burton, The Lake Regions of Central Africa (London: Longman, Green, 1860), Vol. II, p. 376; Captain Colomb, Slave Catching in the Indian Ocean (London: Longmans, 1873), pp. 56-7; Kirk to Granville, 22 July 1873, FOCP 4207, p. 126; Playfair to Russell, 30 May 1865, FO 84/1245.

¹²⁷ The slave traders were able to adjust to such calamities as a cholera epidemic that swept across East Africa in 1869-70, hitting the slave population of Zanzibar as well as slaves then en route, and the hurricane which hit Zanzibar's clove trees in 1872 and caused an increased demand for slaves in Pemba, which had escaped the storm and a decreased one in Zanzibar. Only temporary dislocations were caused by these problems. Christie, Cholera, pp. 415-16; Kirk to Granville, 25 January 1872, FOCP 4206, pp. 2-3; same to same, 22 May 1872, FOCP 4206, p. 55.

¹²⁸ Landen, Oman, p. 148.

The distinction between planters and slave traders was not in itself clear, and Zanzibaris and Omanis were close kinsmen, but after 1856 a political division arose. When Seyyid Said died in that year, his Omani dominions passed under his will to his son Seyyid Thuwain, while Zanzibar and East Africa were inherited by another son, Seyyid Majid. Majid got by far the larger half of the loaf, so much so that Thuwain mobilized his followers in Oman and sent an expedition to Zanzibar. British intervention prevented a war between Oman and Zanzibar, and the agreement which British diplomats arranged provided for an annual subsidy of \$40,000 to be paid by the Zanzibar Sultanate to Oman. The agreement, however, did little to ease the bitter conflict.¹²⁹

Thereafter, Omani slave trading took on an increasingly predatory aspect, and the stable statistics of the trade conceal a widening gulf between the interests of the traders and planters of Zanzibar and the slave traders of Oman. Zanzibar was plagued throughout the 1860's by large numbers of Northern Arabs, as the British called them, who came to Zanzibar in search of slaves, by purchase or by kidnapping. Even before the death of Seyyid Said, the influx of slave traders from the North--with no permanent attachment to Zanzibari society--had presented problems of maintaining order.¹³⁰ In 1860 the problem was acute. Rigby wrote that Northern Arabs had raided Mombasa and Pemba to steal slaves from the local people. In 1861, Arabs from the Omani port of Sur and elsewhere came down with the monsoon and were in "great force" in Zanzibar

¹²⁹ William M. Coghlan, "Proceedings," Ind. Of., L/P+S/5/145.

¹³⁰ Letters from Hamerton, 1849, 1851, cited in Gray, Zanzibar, p. 252.

town. They kidnapped slaves from their local owners, clashed with the Sultan's troops, and terrorized the servants of foreigners.¹³¹ Each year after that, the monsoon brought Northern Arabs who subjected Zanzibar to a wave of kidnapping, although they bought slaves as well.¹³² Consul Kirk estimated in 1870 that they stole 2,000 slaves each year.¹³³

While many Zanzibari undoubtedly profited from the sale of slaves to northern slave traders, the fragile power of the Sultan could not ensure order when the Northern Arabs were in town. A British sailor wrote that Zanzibaris would "quake in fear" whenever the northern dhows were in the harbor. Rigby claimed that the Swahili of Zanzibar hated the Northern Arabs because of their kidnapping and depredations. Sultan Majid even had to distribute money among them in an attempt at appeasement.¹³⁴ This threat to tranquility and political stability was combined with a threat to the Zanzibari economy--slaves were needed in Zanzibar.¹³⁵ These dangers increased the willingness of Seyyid Majid to give increasing power to the British navy to accomplish what he could not--to restrain the Northern

¹³¹ Rigby to Anderson, 28 March 1860, FO 84/1130; Rigby, diary, 8 March 1861, in Russell, p. 90.

¹³² Pelly to Forbes, 12 February 1862, Pelly Papers, FO 800/234; Devereux, Cruise, pp. 109-10; Seward to Bedingfield, 27 November 1866, FOCP 4201, p. 71; Cap. Bowden to Com. Montresor, 30 June 1865, FOCP 4199, p. 153; Ibrahim bin Sultan to Sultan of Zanzibar, 7 January 1869, PP 1870, LXI, 701, p. 46; Hines to Seward, 31 March 1864, US Consul, 5, NEMA, p. 525; de Vienne to MAE, 19 August 1869, MAE, 3; Frere, Memorandum on the Position and Authority of the Sultan of Zanzibar, incl. Frere to Granville, 7 May 1873, PP 1873, LXI, 767, p. 116.

¹³³ Kirk to Clarendon, 1 February 1870, FO 84/1325.

¹³⁴ Devereux, Cruise, p. 366; Rigby, quoted in Coghlan, "Proceedings," p. 98; Statement of Claims and Grievances presented by Seyyid Majid, 14 October 1860, in ibid., p. 119.

¹³⁵ Testimony of Rigby, PP 1871, XII, 1, p. 44.

Arabs. Consul Pelly wrote in 1862 that the Sultan and his government "earnestly desire the destruction of the northern slave trade."¹³⁶ In March, 1861, Seyyid Majid requested a British naval vessel to clear the port of piratical dhows. That year, two British warships began for the first time to enforce the treaty banning exports of slaves to Arabia, burning dhows accused of such smuggling.¹³⁷ Zanzibaris soon learned the price of their weakness, for the British sailors--paid a bounty for each dhow condemned--were often indiscriminate in deciding which dhows to burn.¹³⁸ The export of slaves to Arabia was not stopped, and the depredations of Northern Arabs continued even if they no longer threatened the regime, but a dangerous precedent for British intervention had been set.

The Arabs of Zanzibar were by no means innocent of slave trading. British sources often claimed that "lower classes" of Swahili and Zanzibar Arabs, as well as Northern Arabs, were the perpetrators of this business. They were attracted by the high price differentials between Kilwa and Zanzibar and again between Zanzibar and Arabia, and they were able to financial backing from Arabs or Indians in Zanzibar.¹³⁹ Other evidence, however, suggests that the leading Arab families of Zanzibar had not completed the transition from slave traders to genteel estate owners. Rigby

¹³⁶ Pelly to Forbes, 12 February 1862, Pelly Papers, FO 800/234.

¹³⁷ Rear-Adm. Walker to Com. Dupre, 27 November 1861, and Walker to Admiralty, 19 December 1861, FOCP 4196, p. 263.

¹³⁸ Cap. P. D. Henderson, "Précis of Correspondence relating to Zanzibar Affairs from 1856 to 1872," Ind. Of., L/P S/18/150a.

¹³⁹ Ludwig Krapf, Memorandum on the East African Slave Trade, 1853, CMS CA5/016/179, p. 30; Hamerton to Malet, 29 August 1851, Ind. Of., R/15/1/0/121; Elton to Prideaux, 2 March 1874, FOCP 2499, p. 7; Kirk to Derby, 28 April 1876, FO 84/1453. For an insight into the Indian role in financing the slave trade see Topan, "Biography," pp. 235-55.

claimed that both the Al-Busaidi and Al-harthi families sold slaves. Although Seyyid Said himself gave up the slave trade, his son Khalid was reportedly involved in it, and the missionary Ludwig Krapf once rode on one of Khalid's dhows that was transporting slaves from Zanzibar to Mombasa.¹⁴⁰ In the course of searching dhows, the British discovered that the Sultan's sister, his brother, and his nephew were involved in the trade, as was Seyyid Suleiman, the Prime Minister, and his daughter.¹⁴¹

Zanzibaris, whether "lower classes" or respectable families, generally participated in a different branch of the trade than the Northern Arabs. In the 1860's, only East African subjects of the Sultan of Zanzibar could get the permits required to transport slaves within East African waters.¹⁴² Hence, the nearly 20,000 slaves legally imported to Zanzibar in 1866, and the 8,708 slaves subsequently exported under passes to other ports of East Africa, were carried by the East African subjects of Seyyid Majid. Most of the 5,044 slaves allegedly sent to Lamu probably ended up in Arabia. Coastal people, then, were responsible for the trade within East Africa and for abuses of the slave trade restrictions. Their brethren from Arabia flagrantly ignored these restrictions.

Despite the profits which East Africans could obtain by smuggling

¹⁴⁰Rigby, diary, 3 August 1861, in Russell, pp. 93-4; Rigby to Bombay, 4 April 1859, encl. to secret letter no. 57 of 23 May 1859, Ind. Of., L/P+S/5/140; Hennell to Willoughby, 20 and 31 August, 7 September 1841, cited by Kelly, Britain, pp. 447-48, Ludwig Krapf, "Journal," in Church Mission Intelligencer, I (1850), p. 232; Krapf, "Additional Remarks on the Island of Zanzibar or Ongoodja," incl. Krapf to Coates, 10 June 1844, CMS CA5/016/25.

¹⁴¹Rigby to Anderson, 14 May 1861, FO 84/1146; Rigby to Pelly, 4 September 1861, Pelly Papers, FO 800/234; Kirk to Granville, 29 May 1873, FOCP 4207, p. 55.

¹⁴²Playfair to Russell, 5 October 1863, FO 84/1224.

slaves to the north or selling them to Northern Arabs and despite the kidnapping of slaves that supplemented the market mechanisms, the slave-owners of Zanzibar appear to have obtained adequate supplies of slaves for their plantations. On the mainland, agriculture based on slave labor was expanding during these years, most dramatically, as the next chapter will show, in Malindi. Nevertheless, the vulnerability of the system was apparent by 1873. Seyyid Said had built a large commercial empire on shifting political sands.¹⁴³ His control over the African peoples of the East African coast was virtually non-existent, and his control over Omani Arabs limited. He lacked a significant military force. His son had to turn to the British to hold off his brother Thuwain and again to defeat a rebellion in his own backyard by his brother Bargash. He could not solve the chronic problem of the depredations of the Northern Arabs unaided. When the formerly rebellious brother Bargash succeeded Majid in 1870, he was no longer in control of the international situation. This weakness threatened the slave economy at its most exposed position, the supply routes.

The slave trade brought people of diverse origins into Zanzibari society. By the time that Zanzibar began to retain a high proportion of its imports of slaves, Kilwa was its leading supplier. Its prominence continued until the British interfered with shipments of slaves by sea in 1873. In 1860 about 75% of Zanzibar's slaves came from Kilwa; in 1866 the figure was nearly 95%.¹⁴⁴ Kilwa, with a substantial community of Arab and Swahili traders and Indian financiers, drew its slaves from a

¹⁴³This problem is treated effectively by Sheriff, passim.

¹⁴⁴Rigby, "Report," p. 333; Sheriff, p. 440.

wide area, most notably the region of Lake Nyasa and the northern part of what is now Mozambique. Slaves of Makua, Makonde, Ngindo, and Yao origin were mentioned as early as 1811.¹⁴⁵ Yao and Ngindo slaves remained numerous throughout the history of slavery, although Makonde and Makua diminished somewhat.¹⁴⁶ By the 1840's, the importance of slaves from near Lake Nyasa was increasing.¹⁴⁷ So numerous were they during the period when the slave trade was at its height, that "Wanyasa" became a generic term for people of slave origin.¹⁴⁸ Various peoples in the interior of Tanzania, notably the Nyamwezi, made their contribution to the coastal population.¹⁴⁹ Peoples of the Mrima, the mainland coast adjacent to Zanzibar, were very important in the early nineteenth century, but were being eclipsed by slaves from the deep interior that came to Zanzibar via Kilwa by 1860. They increased in importance in the 1880's, when the Kilwa route had been hampered by British activities and when a famine struck the Mrima.¹⁵⁰

¹⁴⁵ Smee, log, 7 April 1811, Ind. Of., L/MAR/C/586; list of slaves captured in 1810 by a naval vessel, cited by Sheriff, pp. 79-80.

¹⁴⁶ Guillain, "Rapport Commercial," O.I., 2/10; Burton, Zanzibar, Vol. I, p. 112; statistics on origins of slaves freed in 1901, incl. Last to Raikes, 5 February 1902, PP 1903, XLV, 955, p. 8.

¹⁴⁷ Guillain, "Rapport," Loarer, O.I., 5/23, Cahier 5.

¹⁴⁸ Rigby, "Report," p. 333; Germain, "Zanzibar," p. 545; Report, PP 1871, XII, 1, pp. iii, iv; Wanyasa were the most common among the slaves freed in 1901. Last, p. 8. The significance of the local use of the term "Wanyasa" is discussed in Chapter VI.

¹⁴⁹ Guillain, Documents, Vol. 2/2, p. 305; Holmwood to Granville, 8 September 1881, FOCP 4626, p. 339; Last, p. 8.

¹⁵⁰ Lt. Hardy, Report, 1811, Ind. Of., L/MAR/C/586, pp. 188-90; Guillain, Documents, Vol. 2/2, p. 305; Rigby to Anderson, 21 March 1860, FO 84/1130; Rigby, "Report," p. 333.

Notable by their absence were slaves from the nearby peoples, such as the Wahadimu of Zanzibar or the Mijikenda of Kenya.¹⁵¹ Living close to the plantations of the slaveowners themselves, these peoples were too much of a threat to be antagonized by slave raids. It was more prudent for the coastal people to purchase slaves from people deep in the interior or to foster slave trading there by selling guns and other goods and occasionally by direct raids.

The slavetrading network, linking distant parts of Africa with the Indian Ocean trading system, made possible the rise of a plantation economy in Zanzibar, and continued to supply both the internal and external slave markets. The increased emphasis on local use of slaves altered the needs and outlook of Zanzibari Arabs, but many of them continued to profit from the sale, as well as the use, of African slaves.

Towards a Plantation Society

While many Omani migrants to Zanzibar continued to sail and trade, these same individuals invested in land and slaves. Others gave up trade and settled down. By 1860, as noted earlier, officials were referring to Arabs as a landed aristocracy.

As in all plantation societies, not all planters were wealthy aristocrats. At the top of society was the Sultan. Despite the continual division of property at the death of each Sultan, successors were able to obtain more land and slaves. In 1872-73, Seyyid Bargash was earning some \$25,000 per year from his estates. He owned extensive plantations

¹⁵¹ Rigby, "Report," p. 333; Germain, "Zanzibar," p. 545; W. Christopher, "Commanding H.M.S. Tigris in the East Coast of Africa," Journal of the RGS, XIV (1844), p. 102.

and, according to one source, 4,000 slaves. As late as the 1890's, the Sultan possessed many large plantations run by overseers and worked by an estimated 6,000 slaves.¹⁵² Other close relatives were wealthy, with estates valued at up to \$88,000. Seyyid Bargash's sister, Bibi Zem Zem, reputedly owned 500 to 600 slaves. Other members of the Al-Busaidi tribe were large proprietors, most notably Seyyid Suleiman, who owned over 2,000 slaves.¹⁵³

Other Omani Arabs had large estates. Visitors said that the largest landlords owned 1,000 to 2,000 slaves.¹⁵⁴ Tippu Tip at first had no plantation of his own, although his wife owned considerable property. He invested some of the proceeds from his trading in slaves and ivory in land and Zanzibar, and his property was reportedly worth £50,000 at the end of the century.¹⁵⁵ In 1895, according to Donald Mackenzie, who visited

¹⁵² Prideaux, Report, 1873-74, FOCP 2915, p. 79; Mgr. R. de Courmont, "Le Sultanat de Zanguébar," Missions Catholiques, XVIII (1886), p. 384; Fitzgerald, pp. 507, 519, 535-36; Hardinge to Salisbury, 7 December 1895. (telegram), FOCP 6805, p. 148; "Summary of Scheme Submitted by Sir John Kirk," 12 December 1896, FOCP 6838, p. 4.

¹⁵³ Churchill to Stanley, 19 August 1868, FOCP 42-2, p. 154; Germain, "Zanzibar," p. 534; Kirk to Bombay, 30 August 1871, FO 84/1344; Macdonald to Salisbury, 3 March 1888, FO 84/1906; Rashid bin Hassani, "The Story of Rashid bin Hassani of the Bisa Tribe, Northern Rhodesia," in Margery Perham, ed., Ten Africans (London: Faber and Faber, 1963), p. 106. Rashid was a slave of Bibi Zem Zem.

¹⁵⁴ Ruschenberger, p. 34; Guillain, Documents, Vol. 2/1, p. 52; Osgood, p. 51; Burton, Zanzibar, Vol. I, p. 466; Germain, "Zanzibar," p. 533; Christie, "Slavery," p. 31.

¹⁵⁵ Heinrich Brode, Tippoo Tib: The Story of His Career in Central Africa, trans. H. Haveland (London: Arnold, 1907), pp. 48, 248, 253; Robert Nunez Lyne, An Apostle of Empire Being the Life of Sir Lloyd William Mathews (London: Allen and Unwin, 1936), pp. 214-15. Mackenzie, pp. 92-3, said he owned seven mashamba and 10,000 slaves, which is a way of saying he owned "many" slaves.

Zanzibar on behalf of the Anti-Slavery Society, one Abdalla bin Salim owned six mashamba and 3,000 slaves, while his wife owned seven small mashamba and 1,600 slaves. Five others owned over 250 slaves each. In Pemba, Mohamed bin Juma bin Said had seven plantations and 2,000 slaves, as well as additional holdings in Zanzibar.¹⁵⁶ Fitzgerald also mentions Mohamed as one of the richest in Pemba, adding that he had "plenty of slaves."¹⁵⁷ His cousin Mohamed bin Juma bin Ali said that he owned 500 himself, which Mackenzie thought to be an underestimate, while a leading official in Pemba was said to own 500.¹⁵⁸ A few landowners from the Hadramaut had vast landholdings; Mohamed bin Abdalla, for example, had valuable estates in Pemba and Mombasa and smaller ones in Malindi.¹⁵⁹

These large landowners were a small fraction of the total. The British Vice-Consul in Pemba thought that the average landlord owned 30 slaves. Mackenzie calculated an average of 67 per shamba by comparing lists of mortgages with an estimate of the number of slaves in Zanzibar. The mortgage lists which he saw mentioned 3,296 mashamba, 2,350 in Zanzibar and 946 in Pemba. He added 20% for unregistered mortgages and divided this into an estimate made by Seyyid Bargash that there were

¹⁵⁶ Mackenzie, pp. 77, 92-3.

¹⁵⁷ Fitzgerald, pp. 594, 602.

¹⁵⁸ Mackenzie, pp. 73, 75. The British Vice-Consul in Pemba said that the richest Arab there was Ali bin Abdulla El-Thenawi, who owned 500 slaves, while three or four others owned 300 or more. Report by Mr. O'Sullivan upon the Island of Pemba, incl. Hardinge to Salisbury, 18 June 1896, PP 1896, LIX 395, p. 41.

¹⁵⁹ Euan-Smith to Derby, 26 February 1875, FOCP 2915, p. 203. For a biography of this unusual man see Mbarak Ali Hinawy, Al-Akida and Fort Jesus, Mombasa (London: Macmillan, 1950).

266,000 slaves on the islands to arrive at his figure of 67.¹⁶⁰ However, Bargash's figure, compared to other estimates, is very high, and the mortgage lists are likely to yield a low estimate of plantations. Therefore, Mackenzie's calculation errs in the direction of excess, and the Vice-Consul's figure of 30, although a rough estimate, appears to be in the right neighborhood. These figures do reflect a decrease in the slave population in the 1880's, but as shall be shown in Chapter IV, this was not as drastic as had previously been believed.

Mackenzie, believing 15,000 Arabs lived in Zanzibar and Pemba, calculated that an average of five or six Arabs lived on each shamba.¹⁶¹ His population estimate is high, and a figure of three or four Arabs plus 30-40 slaves per shamba is as reasonable a guess for the late nineteenth century as one can make. This would represent one family plus its slaves. While some landlords owned many plantations and large numbers of slaves, others lived in Zanzibar town without land or with a small shamba. One thing can be said with a fair degree of certainty: a large number of Arabs had slave holdings in the middle range.

On the bottom of the scale was the smallholder. In Pemba in 1875 there were many small patches of cloves worked by one or two slaves.¹⁶² Even citizens of Zanzibar town who acquired a little money bought land and a few slaves. If so inclined, they settled the slaves on the land,

¹⁶⁰ Mackenzie, p. 94. In 1875, an Indian who had been employed by clove growers to estimate yields told British officials that there were 1000 clove plantations in Pemba, which is close to Mackenzie's estimate. Holmwood to Kirk, 10 May 1875, FOCP 2915, p. 185.

¹⁶¹ Mackenzie, p. 94.

¹⁶² Holmwood to Kirk, 10 May 1875, FOCP 2915, p. 185.

with orders to bring in the produce, and enjoyed the pleasures of urban life.¹⁶³ At a later date, many people owned small plots with all the products of Zanzibar on them: cloves, coconuts, mangoes, cassava, etc.¹⁶⁴

The clove growers of Zanzibar were principally Omani Arabs. Some Hadramis did become plantation owners, but more typically they were town dwellers. Many came as port laborers and invested their earnings in slaves, who in turn worked in the ports for their masters' benefit.¹⁶⁵ Other immigrants from Madagascar, the Comoro Islands, and other places in the Indian Ocean generally worked in town, as servants to Europeans and supervisors or else they sailed and fished. Successful ones sometimes bought slaves and hired them out to others. They generally lived by themselves and did not become integrated into Zanzibari society until a later date.¹⁶⁶ These immigrants formed part of an urban working population, but over the years tended increasingly to become the owners of workers. Free laborers were marginal to the Zanzibari economy, and on the plantations, virtually all labor consisted of slaves.¹⁶⁷

¹⁶³ Edward Steere, Some Account of the Town of Zanzibar (London: Bell and Daldy, 1869), p. 12.

¹⁶⁴ W. W. A. Fitzgerald, "Report on the Spice and Other Cultivation of Zanzibar and Pemba Islands," incl. Portal to Rosebery, 2 October 1892, FOCP 6362, p. 101.

¹⁶⁵ Rigby to Anderson, 11 February 1860, FO 84/1130. Port labor is discussed at greater length in Chapter V.

¹⁶⁶ Tozer to UMCA, 24 December 1864, in Gertrude Ward, ed., Letters of Bishop Tozer (London: UMCA, 1902), p. 100; Christie, Cholera, p. 332; Germain, p. 552; Baumann, Zanzibar, pp. 32-3. A few Africans from the adjacent coast came to Zanzibar to flee from enemies or famine. They fished or became tenants on small mashamba, where they grew subsistence crops. Burton, Zanzibar, Vol. I, pp. 344-45.

The Wahadimu of Zanzibar participated very little in the clove economy. Whether by choice or because of the loss of their land, they lived on the eastern and southern portions of the island, which were not suitable for cloves. Some Wahadimu owned slaves, but there was no large-scale agriculture in which to use them. The leader of the Wahadimu, the Mwenye Mkuu, was one of few, if not the only, major slave owner. Wahadimu society was relatively egalitarian, and trade was marginal to an economy based on farming and fishing.¹⁶⁸ The Wapemba, living interspersed among the Arabs of Pemba, took to clove growing to a greater extent. They generally did so on a smaller scale than their Arab neighbors, although they too used slaves.¹⁶⁹ Sometimes Arab men married Wapemba woman, an act which gave them access to Wapemba land.¹⁷⁰ In short, most plantation owners, including virtually all the major ones, were Omanis, and almost all the plantation workers were slaves.

The small clove plantation was a marginal proposition in terms of a monetary economy. The major limiting factor for the smallholder was the number of cloves his slaves could pick. According to the Vice-

¹⁶⁷ E. Quass, "Die Szuri's, die Kuli's und die Slaven in Zanzibar," Zeitschrift für Allgemeine Erdkunde, Neue Folge, IX (1860), p. 443; Hamerton to Bidwall, 27 April 1843, FO 54/5; M. S. Nolloth, "Extracts from the Journal of Cap. M. S. Nolloth, H.M.S. Frolic," Nautical Magazine, 1857, p. 137; Hardinge to Buxton, 26 November 1896, Anti-Slavery Society Papers, Rhodes House, Oxford University, G5. See also Chapter V.

¹⁶⁸ Pelly to Forbes, 12 February 1862, Pelly Papers, FO 800/234; Christie, "Slavery," p. 49; Hardinge to Salisbury, 8 September 1897, PP 1898, LX, 559, p. 12; Baumann, Sansibar, pp. 35-8; Last to Raikes, 8 February 1903, FOCP 8177, p. 71.

¹⁶⁹ Farler to Mathews, 31 January 1899, PP 1899, LXIII, 303, p. 35; Mackenzie, p. 80; Farler to Rogers, 15 August 1904, FOCP 8382, p. 108; Zanzibar, "Inquiry into Claims," p. 5.

¹⁷⁰ "Inquiry," pp. 30-1.

Consul of Pemba, the desirable proportion of pickers to trees during the relatively short season was 10 pickers for each 100 trees, but the island made do with 5 per 100.¹⁷¹ Taking the latter figure, 30 slaves could only handle 600 trees. Figuring an average yield of 6 lbs. of cloves per tree per year, this would mean 3,600 lbs. of cloves or a little over 100 frasilas. At the prices prevailing in 1839, this would yield \$500, an enormous sum by local standards. The market value of 30 slaves would at that time be \$600 to 900, so that slaves could very quickly produce their own value of cloves. However, by 1870 the price was below \$2, and the 30 slaves could only produce \$200 worth of cloves. This is relatively close to a contemporary estimate by Dr. Christie, that the profit per slave was less than \$5 per year.¹⁷² These calculations are naive, but given the data, there is no point in trying to use a more sophisticated methodology.¹⁷³ The calculations probably underestimate productivity, for not all clove trees ripen simultaneously and labor could sometimes be shared with neighbors. Nevertheless, the large expansion of the clove industry between 1835 and 1850 drove down the price to the extent that a small clove plantation provided modest cash revenue.

The prevalence of fruits and other crops was therefore crucial to the economic viability of cloves. Some grain was imported, but additional grain, cassava, and fruit were grown on the shamba. Slaves grew

¹⁷¹ O'Sullivan-Beare, Report on Pemba, 1900, Foreign Office, Diplomatic and Consular Series, No. 2653, p. 11.

¹⁷² Christie, "Slavery," p. 32.

¹⁷³ One might compare the evidence available for Zanzibar with that used by Robert Fogel and Stanley Engerman, Time on the Cross: The Economics of American Negro Slavery (Boston: Little, Brown, 1974).

much of their masters' food and provided their own food and housing. Cash income from cloves could be devoted to replacing or buying more slaves or else to luxuries. Given the self-sufficiency of the plantation and the relative absence of goods bought on the market, even \$200 a year was a fair income. However, when the slave owner wished to expand beyond this scale, he had to borrow.¹⁷⁴ It is easy to understand how much of Zanzibar's land came to be mortgaged. For the majority of Zanzibar's slaveholders, cloves provided a cash income, but without subsistence agriculture they could not have survived. However self-sufficient American slave plantations were, they were far more committed to the cash nexus than the clove plantations of Zanzibar.

For those relatively few Arabs with large numbers of slaves, the position would be comfortable. 1,000 slaves could care for 20,000 trees yielding 120,000 lbs. of cloves worth about \$7,000 at 1870 prices. In Zanzibar such a sum was truly enormous, but only the Sultan, leading followers like Seyyid Suleiman, and unusual entrepreneurs like Tippu Tip could approach it. Islamic laws of inheritance--providing that all sons by wives or concubines receive an equal share, while daughters receive a half share, and other relatives obtain varying portions--meant that estates tended to fragment rather than accumulate over the generations.¹⁷⁵

¹⁷⁴ A plantation owner with 30 slaves and a 10% attrition rate (birth and death rates are not known), or one seeking to expand by 10%, would have to pay \$60 to \$90 for the slaves, not counting interest, the cost of raising young slaves, etc. This would absorb a high percentage of the total income. However, slaves in Zanzibar cost vastly less than slaves in the United States, where prices could be as high as \$800 in 1850. Fogel and Engerman, p. 76.

¹⁷⁵ On inheritance in Zanzibar, see Lienhardt, passim.

For both the smallholder and the large property owner, the transition from the commercial life characteristic of Omanis at the beginning of the century to an agriculture life was an important one. For some, plantation ownership was simply an investment, and the plantation could be left in the charge of slaves. In the 1840's, Guillain and Loarer wrote that relatively few plantation owners actually lived on their estates. They came to their plantations at harvest time to insure that a sufficient supply of cloves was collected.¹⁷⁶ Such a pattern suggests that this income was a supplement rather than a necessity, and that the plantation life was not yet attractive. The Sultan, however, chose to live a largely rural life, and other leading Zanzibaris began to spend much time at a "country seat."¹⁷⁷ With time, more Arabs established residences on their estates. In 1860 Rigby visited the country houses of Omanis. The American Consul noted in 1862 that Arab shamba owners took their families with them to their estates and lived there throughout the picking season.¹⁷⁸ By the 1870's some Arabs still resided in the town and left their estates to their slaves, with a landless Arab or a trusted slave as overseer. Others preferred to "lead a quiet retired life on their estates, and only visit the town to dispose of their produce, transact business, and visit their friends."¹⁷⁹ Many retained "large handsome houses" in Zanzibar

¹⁷⁶ Guillain, Documents, Vol. 2/1, p. 81; Loarer, O.I., 5/23, Cahier 4.

¹⁷⁷ Richard Waters, for example, visited an "Arab Merchant," named Haji Merthead at his country estate. Journal, 3 June 1838, NEMA, p. 208.

¹⁷⁸ Rigby, "Report," 1860, p. 327; Speer to Seward, 26 November 1862, US Consul, 4.

¹⁷⁹ Christie, "Slavery," p. 31, and Cholera, pp. 312-13.

town, but came to town only for a visit, a ceremony, or a call on the Sultan on his twice-weekly court sessions. As Sir Bartle Frere wrote after his visit to Zanzibar in 1873:

Their time is for the most part passed at their 'shambas,' estates in the country, where they live a life of indolent ease, surrounded by slaves, borrowing money with facility from Indian traders if their estates are flourishing, doing without it if the estate is in difficulties. At the worst, the poorest estate in this rich island will always yield enough food and shelter for them and their slaves, however numerous, and it is one of the peculiarities of the Arab character that, with great capacity for luxurious enjoyment, the Arab seems never to lose his power of living content and respected on the most frugal supply of the base necessities of life.¹⁸⁰

Skeptical as one must be about English statements regarding Arab indolence, Frere's comment reveals a shift to a more rural life-style and an adaptation to the rhythm of clove cultivation. The explanation for what Frere observed was not laziness in the Arab character, but the fact that the Zanzibari economy provided subsistence even when it failed to provide cash and that the Omani social system did not identify respectability with affluence. Arabs could afford not to succeed. High clove prices in the 1840's encouraged development of the rural areas, while declining prices thereafter strengthened rural self-sufficiency. As Pemba came to be settled, this was even more the case, for there were no urban centers in that island to distract from plantation life.¹⁸¹

¹⁸⁰ Sir Bartle Frere, "Memorandum on the Position and Authority of the Sultan of Zanzibar," incl. Frere to Granville, 7 May 1873, PP 1873, LXI, 767, p. 112.

¹⁸¹ The importance of the rural-urban distinction to Arab landowners was explained to me most clearly by Ahmed Abdalla Al-Mazrui, MSA4.

Frere also reveals the flexibility in social values that went along with the new agrarian character of Zanzibari society. As before, hospitality was highly valued by the Arabs. They spent much time calling on one another or meeting in the bazaar. This required a certain amount of display for the benefit of visitors.¹⁸² As in many Islamic societies, women of upper class families were expected to live a life of leisure. With restrictions on going out, there were few outlets for women to display wealth, except for the weddings and other ceremonies where they could show off their clothes, jewels, and servants.¹⁸³ But with the wealth acquired from trade and cloves and with foreign goods coming into Zanzibar, Arabs acquired some taste for western items, such as furniture, mirrors, and china.¹⁸⁴

However, some of the foreign consuls, interested in selling more of their countries' produce, found the Arabs' new interest in such items to be distressingly modest. As the French Consul wrote,

The very restrained needs of the inhabitants, the simplicity, and I would say, the originality of their taste will for a long time be an obstacle to the introduction in these regions of French products, which in general are little sought after.¹⁸⁵

¹⁸² Steere, pp. 12-3; Guillain, Documents, Vol. 2/1, pp. 32-3; Burton, Zanzibar, Vol. I, pp. 388-90; Henry Stanley Newman, Banani: The Transition from Slavery to Freedom in Zanzibar and Pemba (London: Headley, 1898), p. 62; Pearce, pp. 217, 230; Robert Nunez Lyne, Zanzibar in Contemporary Times (London: Hurst and Blackett, 1905), pp. 216-17.

¹⁸³ Steere, p. 14; Guillain, Documents, Vol. 2/1, pp. 86-7; Burton, Zanzibar, Vol. I, pp. 386-88.

¹⁸⁴ Rigby, "Report," 1860, p. 332.

¹⁸⁵ Cochet to MAE, 15 January 1857, MAE, 2.

The Arabs selected only those items which they wanted from the luxuries which Europe had for sale. A few mirrors, carpets, pictures, and some old china would be sufficient for a homeowner to give an affectation of luxury. Otherwise, houses were simply furnished. Europeans were sometimes impressed by the luxury-goods which they saw in Arab homes, but often they took the simplicity of the surroundings to be a sign of sloth.¹⁸⁶

In addition to the new fancy for European produce, two older items were particularly valued as symbols of wealth: doors and daggers. As the visitor to Zanzibar can still observe, the Zanzibari house is designed around its elaborate and often beautifully carved door. These are the work of local craftsmen, including slaves, and are in many houses the one external mark of distinction.¹⁸⁷ The respectable Arab rarely ventured out his door without his sword or dagger, preferably an ornamented, silver one.¹⁸⁸

This ability to be content with a minimum of luxuries was one reason why so many European writers asserted that Arabs were lazy. Hamerton wrote that as soon as Arabs were producing sufficient cloves "to enable them to sleep away their lives and procure women for their harems," they would turn over their mashamba to an overseer and "appear to care little how matters are carried on."¹⁸⁹ An American Consul felt that Arabs were

¹⁸⁶ John Robb, A Medico-Topographical Report on Zanzibar (Calcutta: Government Printer, 1879), p. 5; Browne, pp. 435, 438-40.

¹⁸⁷ On slaves as artisans, see Chapter V. Door-carvers were also observed by Baumann, Sansibar, p. 42.

¹⁸⁸ Burton, Zanzibar, Vol. I, pp. 384-86; Guillain, Documents, Vol. 2/1, p. 88.

¹⁸⁹ Hamerton to Bombay, 13 July 1841, copy in Gray Papers, Cambridge University Library, Box 1.

content with the "quiet enjoyment of their shambas, slaves and seraglios."¹⁹⁰ More harshly, a French visitor wrote of the Arab, "inaction and laziness are the only rules of his life," while another Frenchman claimed that most Arab landowners led "an idle life."¹⁹¹ Seyyid Majid himself observed to the American Consul that "My subjects are indolent and do not know how to make business."¹⁹² These visitors missed the point, perhaps because they had insufficient insight into the values which made people in their own societies function. It was not a question of indolence so much as a social system that placed relatively little value on work and wealth for their own sake.

In Zanzibar, as well as Oman, the religious element of life remained important, even as business became a more central occupation. Arabs spent much time in the daily prayers prescribed by their religion.¹⁹³ A recent study by B. G. Martin has demonstrated that a community of Islamic scholars developed in Zanzibar. Some of these scholars travelled to Arabia and the Middle East to make the pilgrimage to Mecca or to study. All based their scholarship and teaching on texts by scholars throughout the Muslim world, and some produced original work of their own. The most famous had pupils from many places in East Africa and other parts of the Indian Ocean region. They served as a connecting link between East Africans

¹⁹⁰ Speer to Seward, 26 November 1862, US Consul, 4.

¹⁹¹ Germain, "Zanzibar," pp. 552-53; Courmont, p. 393. See also Krapf, Journal, 7 March 1844, CMS CA5/016/165.

¹⁹² Speer to Seward, 26 November 1862, US Consul, 4.

¹⁹³ Steere, pp. 12-3; Burton, Zanzibar, Vol. I, pp. 388-90; Guillain, Documents, Vol. 2/1, p. 95. Etienne Marras, "L'Isle de Zanzibar," Bulletin de la Société de Géographie de Marseille, 5 (1881), p. 195.

and intellectual movements in the central Islamic lands. They and their pupils played essential roles in the government, serving as qadis (judges) and as advisors to the Sultan.¹⁹⁴ They were among the most respected men of Zanzibar, and some were remembered long after their deaths.¹⁹⁵

Some of the families that furnished the leading scholars were notably successful in business, and it is likely that economic success contributed to the creation of a society that could afford the time needed for a scholarly life. The Ruwehi family supplied Zanzibar with some of its leading Ibadī scholars, and this family also owned extensive clove plantations. Several of the leading Sunni scholars came from active trading families.¹⁹⁶

That these families chose to take success in business as an opportunity to pursue a scholarly life and that Zanzibaris in general continued to enjoy a life of little material extravagance points to the enduring quality of Omani social values. Nevertheless, by 1870 society had undergone profound change. The plantation had become important as an investment and as a way of life. Omanis were deriving profit from the labor.

¹⁹⁴ B. G. Martin, "Notes on Some Members of the Learned Classes of Zanzibar and East Africa in the Nineteenth Century," African Historical Studies, IV (1971), pp. 525-45; Abdalla Saleh Al-Farsy, Terehe ya Imam Shafi na Wanayyuoni Wakubwa wa Mashariki ya Africa (Zanzibar: Education Department, 1944), pp. 76-7. Many of the leading scholars were Hadramis, but Seyyid Bargash also encouraged Ibadī scholarship and brought about the publication in Zanzibar of important Ibadī works. Joseph Schacht, "Bibliothèques et manuscrits abadites," Revue Africaine, C (1956), pp. 375-98.

¹⁹⁵ See the biographies of some of these scholars in Farsy, Terehe, which he wrote for the benefit of Zanzibaris in 1944.

¹⁹⁶ Joseph Schacht, "Notes on Islam in East Africa," Studia Islamica, XXIII (1965), p. 121; MSA 34; Martin, pp. 531-41.

of their slaves as well as from their trading ventures. Money was earned and enjoyed; businessmen astutely altered their investments in response to price changes; traders went on arduous and risky journeys in search of gain; and farmers experimented with new crops.

Perhaps a continuation of high prices for cloves over several decades would have undermined Omani values. But as soon as the clove industry came to dominate the world market, overproduction began to force the price down. Instead of an export economy dominated by high price incentives, Zanzibar's rich and varied agriculture gave rise to plantations as integrated units, providing both subsistence and cash income.

There was little point in carrying the search for profit to an extreme, for new investment opportunities were lacking and the needs and wants of the people were limited. Most important, the upper stratum of Zanzibari society was not defined by success as planters or as traders. What defined them is best expressed by the term still used by Arabs and Swahili today, heshima, meaning, literally, respect. It implied sufficient wealth to have a decent home and wear decent attire and purchase the few luxury goods that were valued. It implied being able to provide guests with hospitality. In both Oman and Zanzibar, heshima meant having a retinue of domestic slaves, whose presence was itself proof of wealth. It also meant coming from a good family and from an Omani tribe whose power and place in society was recognized. It implied being a good Muslim, learned as well as pious. Wealth was part of this picture, but it was little valued for its own sake, and greed was condemned.¹⁹⁷ If the price

¹⁹⁷ Jan Knappert, "Social and Moral Concepts in Swahili Islamic Literature," Africa, 40 (1970), p. 35.

of cloves fell or that of slaves rose, it threatened one's business, not one's entire sense of personal worth.¹⁹⁸ The very process by which Omanis became more wealthy--the development of agriculture--provided them with security in the form of rural self-sufficiency. There were incentives to make profits, but little reasons to maximize them, either for display of wealth or investment. Wealth derived from plantations was incorporated into older and broader concepts of status.

Omani values and notions of status did not become anachronisms; rather they remained--in altered form--a viable part of mid-nineteenth century life. In earlier times, the maintainance of a following was politically vital to each family. Feuds between tribes continued to erupt, but Zanzibar was more peaceful than Oman ever was. When conflict did arise, as we shall see, slaves were still mobilized to fight. However, the key social role of slaves--their presence as dependent followers--was changing its meaning. They were on the shamba, living, taking care of themselves, and working for their master. They remained a source of prestige as they had been in Oman, but their economic role increased as their political role diminished.

By 1870 a large proportion of Omanis in Zanzibar were clove planters.¹⁹⁹ As a group, the upper stratum of Zanzibari society cannot accurately be called a planter class, in the sense that income from plantations was the dominant material basis of the class and that the social fact of plantation ownership was the primary determinant of status. Commerce, including

¹⁹⁸Note the Swahili proverb, "Kupata si kwa werevu; na kukosa si ujinga" ("Getting is not of cunning and lacking is not stupidity"). W. E. Taylor, African Aphorisms or Saws from Swahili-Land (London: Sheldon, 1891), Nos. 191, 192.

¹⁹⁹A planter is a person who has someone else plant for him.

that in items unrelated to plantations, was also important to a large segment of the Omani elite, and the ownership of land and slaves, as well as the income derived from them, were elements, but not dominant elements, of social status. Political power, moreover, was a matter of dynastic and communal politics, not a derivative of plantation ownership. The ruling family incorporated cloves into its other, more substantial, sources of wealth--commerce, taxes, and tribute. Plantations had become an important part of Zanzibari life, but they did not dominate it, as they did life in the Southern United States, the Caribbean, and Brazil. The existing structures of Omani society were able to absorb the changes wrought by the development of commercialized agriculture.

Problems of the Plantation Economy

In many parts of the world, slaveowners have made enormous profits. One scholar has even argued that the profits of West Indian slave plantations, as well as the trade in sugar and slaves that derived from them, contributed much of the capital that financed the English industrial revolution. Other scholars emphasize that plantation societies have almost always failed to sustain their growth and that even in times of prosperity had serious internal weaknesses.²⁰⁰

The controversies have been spelled out most fully in reference to the United States South. Eugene Genovese believes that the slavery introduced archaic, pre-capitalist values into a society that was an offshoot of the world's most capitalistic nation, England. The choice of

²⁰⁰ Eric Williams, Capitalism and Slavery (New York: Capricorn, 1944). For the debate on the economics of slavery in the United States, see Hugh G. J. Aitken, ed., Did Slavery Pay? (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1971), and Fogel and Engerman.

slaves as a labor force committed slaveowners to tremendous investments in fixed capital, which compromised their flexibility. More important, slavery affected the planters' values, causing them to measure their social status in terms of the number of slaves they had around them and the plantation life which they were able to maintain. Since slaveowners dominated Southern politics, the society was in the hands of people who did not merely seek to protect and expand their economic power, but who were committed to a specific social system. With capital concentrated in land and slaves, and with the political and economic leaders discouraging other forms of endeavor, the South was unable to diversify or industrialize. Since slaves were kept at near-subsistence levels, internal demand was minimal and the South could not sustain its own industries. Slavery, in this view, implied dependence on outsiders for finance and for whatever industrial development took place within the South.²⁰¹

Other scholars, most recently Robert Fogel and Stanley Engerman, have claimed that statistical analysis proves that Southerners received a reasonable rate of return on their investment in slaves and that the Southern economy grew at an impressive rate until destroyed by war. Claims of Southern industrial and commercial backwardness were exaggerated, and in any case, comparative advantage implied that the Southern concentration of investment in slaves and land was perfectly rational, so high was the rate of return as compared to alternatives.²⁰²

²⁰¹ Eugene D. Genovese, The Political Economy of Slavery (New York: Pantheon, 1965). See also Douglas F. Dowd, "Slavery as an Obstacle to Economic Growth in the United States: A Comment," in Aitken, pp. 288-95.

²⁰² Fogel and Engerman. The use of a slave labor force per se did not preclude industrialization, for a recent study has shown that slave labor could be used efficiently and profitably in industry. Robert S. Starobin, Industrial Slavery in the Old South (New York: Oxford U.P., 1970).

Whatever the inherent limitations which slavery placed on economic development, the evidence shows that slavery did--under the circumstances of ante-bellum America--bring in profits. Slaves, no matter how important socially to their masters, were a good investment in a narrow economic sense. But the evidence of Southern growth rates and returns on investment cannot answer the deeper points of Genovese and others: whatever the rate of growth, the structure of the economy that evolved necessarily limited the options available to the South. The fundamental issue was power, economic and political. Slavery supported a very particular upper class. Even when the comparative advantage of cotton no longer held and when slave labor no longer existed, it sought to preserve the order it had long dominated. A small upper class sought to maintain an uneducated, unskilled, and dependent work force, tenants if no longer slaves, white as well as black. As two critics of Fogel and Engerman wrote, "Economies based upon an exportable resource produced by unskilled and uneducated forced labor can advance extremely rapidly--until conditions change and a more complex, more diversified response is required."²⁰³

The use of slave labor enabled Zanzibar to develop its clove industry rapidly between 1820 and 1850, but its development slowed as soon as the price of cloves fell. Like other plantation producers, it was dependent on the external market. Zanzibar's planters did not develop the commitment to cloves that Southern planters had to cotton, but they too became deeply committed to a certain way of life. With traditional Omani notions

²⁰³ Marvin Fischbaum and Julius Rubin, "Slavery and the Economic Development of the American South," in Aitken, pp. 339-40. See also Dowd, in ibid., pp. 294-95. On the other hand, South Africa has been able to industrialize on a forced labor base. See Heribert Adam, Modernizing Racial Domination (Berkeley: California U.P., 1971).

of patriarchy reinforced by the rural self-sufficiency of the plantation, Zanzibari slave society provided Omanis with prestige within the role of slaveowner. Omanis left some of the most lucrative aspects of the clove economy to Indians.²⁰⁴ The limitations of the internal structure of the clove economy compounded the plantation owners' vulnerability to external forces.

One of these was the marketing of cloves. Often, slaves carried the produce of their masters' estates on their heads to Zanzibar town, where it was sold to a broker.²⁰⁵ However, Indians managed to obtain a role for themselves as middlemen, buying directly from the producer, arranging for transportation, and selling to a clove broker in the town. Their presence in clove growing areas so annoyed Seyyid Bargash, who claimed that they bought cloves directly from the slaves without ever paying the master, that he issued an order in 1870 banning Indians from the clove growing areas. He did not--and probably could not--enforce it.²⁰⁶ Tharia Topan, who became the wealthiest Indian in East Africa, started his career as a clove carrier. According to a biography written by his son, Tharia came from India as a young man with only a small sum of money, which was stolen from him en route. He went to work for the customs master, Jairam

²⁰⁴In the Americas, many planters found themselves in dependent positions in respect to the factors, on whom they relied for both credit and merchandising. See for example, Richard Pares, "Debtors and Creditors in the British Caribbean," in Eugene D. Genovese, ed., The Slave Economies (New York: Wiley, 1973), Vol. II, pp. 75-113; Stanley J. Stein, Vassouras (Cambridge: Harvard U.P., 1957), pp. 17-9, 30.

²⁰⁵Christie, "Slavery," p. 35; Kirk to Wedderburn, 27 January 1872, FOCP 4206, pp. 6-7.

²⁰⁶Seyyid Bargash to Churchill, 31 October 1870, and Churchill to Bombay, 17 November 1870, FO 84/1325; Kirk to Bombay, 25 March 1871, FO 84/1344.

Sewji (who was a Hindu, while Tharia was an Ismaili), but did not like the job. Through a fellow Ismaili who had contacts at the Palace, he obtained an audience with the Sultan and asked him for a loan of two donkeys and carts to go to distant plantations to collect cloves and crops. The request was granted and Tharia hired a servant to help him. The pair set out and some 24 miles from town called on an Arab to whom Tharia had an introduction. He purchased 64 frasilas of cloves, as much as the donkeys could carry, returned to town, and sold them to a broker for a profit of \$73. Later, he ventured further, for the price of cloves declined rapidly with distance from the town. Tharia allegedly made over \$1,000 the first season and over \$4,000 the second. He got to know the plantation owners and made arrangements to ensure a regular supply. Living simply, he was able to buy several slaves and set them to work with the carts. Meanwhile, he invested in the import business and in his own clove plantations. He also travelled to India and made agreements with Ismaili firms to purchase cloves. Eventually, he reached the stage where he could keep cloves in his own warehouse and wait for an advantageous price. Tharia's biographer claims, undoubtedly with much exaggeration, that he bought and sold one-half of the clove crop of Zanzibar.²⁰⁷ Tharia Topan's story reads like homily to the virtues of working hard to rise from the bottom. More fundamentally, the story indicates the importance of building an integrated firm--linking the clove plantation with the market in India, while controlling trade in imports as well. A number of Indian firms did this, and other Indians advanced by working with these firms, while several

²⁰⁷Topan, pp. 55-90, 154, 167. On the Indian role in clove marketing, see also Ward to Buchanan, 7 March 1847, US Consul, 2, NEMA, p. 375; O'Sullivan, Report on Pemba, PP 1896, LIX, 395, p. 40.

formed long-standing arrangements with American and European firms. The reports of foreign Consuls of an Indian monopoly of business in Zanzibar were probably exaggerated, but the Indians did dominate trade with Americans and Europeans.²⁰⁸ Omani Arabs did not establish integrated firms or close relations with Americans and Europeans.

One indication of the limitations of Omani aspirations in business was the fact that until the advent of colonial rule, the Sultan chose to farm out the job of collecting customs to an Indian for a rental rather than to entrust the job to his own people. Jairam Sewji was customs master for many years, followed in 1876 by Tharia Topan. The customs master was not only able to collect vastly more in duties than he paid for the privilege, but he was able to use his position to establish close contacts with merchants for his personal business. Jairam Sewji and his agent Ludda Damji realized a fortune of between £1 and 2 million and invested £434,000 in loans and mortgages to Arabs, Indians, and Europeans. Tharia Topan was probably the wealthiest man in all of East Africa upon his death in 1891.²⁰⁹

A second weakness of the Arab economy was its dependence on Indians for finance. When field hands cost \$20 to \$30 and income from a small plantation was low, expanding a plantation almost certainly required credit.

²⁰⁸ Rigby, Report, 1860, p. 329; Ward to Buchanan, 7 March 1847, NEMA, p. 375; Hamerton to Willoughby, 28 September 1841, FO 54/4. The best discussion of trade in the period before 1877 is Sheriff, passim.

²⁰⁹ Kirk to FO, 8 October 1871, incl. Kirk to Ind. Of., 8 October 1871, Ind. Of., L/P+S/9/49; Memorandum by Sir Bartle Frere respecting Banians or Natives of India in East Africa, 1873, PP 1873, LXI, 767, p. 102. An interesting picture of the relationship between Tharia Topan and a leading foreign merchant emerges from the latter's letters that have been published in Norman R. Bennett, ed., The Zanzibar Letters of Edward D. Ropes, Jr., 1882-1892 (Boston: African Studies Center, Boston University, 1973).

To be sure, some Arabs and Swahili lent money on landed security at interest rates of 15-20% per year, evading or ignoring the Koranic prohibitions on usury.²¹⁰ But as early as 1843 British officials began to note that Arab plantations were being mortgaged to Indians.²¹¹ By 1861, Consul Rigby feared that Arab property would pass into the hands of their Indian creditors.²¹² Actually, officials went on making such predictions --without their coming true--until the 1930's.²¹³ Even if the foreclosures did not take place, the extent of indebtedness was considerable. An official who served in Zanzibar in the 1870's and 1880's estimated that two-thirds of the property in Zanzibar and Pemba was mortgaged to Indians. When many planters tried to rebuild after a hurricane in 1872, they needed credit from Indians. An important Arab who died in 1888 left an estate worth \$50,000 against which there were several mortgages worth about \$10,000 and a balance of accounts of \$8,200 due Jairam Sewji. A visitor who saw mortgage records in 1895 estimated that Indians held £220,000 in mortgages.²¹⁴

²¹⁰ Burton, Zanzibar, Vol. II, p. 407.

²¹¹ Hamerton to Willoughby, 9 October 1843, Political Consultations for 8 June 1844, INA, Reel I.

²¹² Rigby to Anderson, 14 May 1861, FO 84/1146.

²¹³ See for example, Memorandum by Frere on Banians, PP 1873, LXI, 767, p. 102; "Report on the Indebtedness of the Agricultural Classes, 1933, by C. A. Bartlett and J. S. Last" (Zanzibar: Government Printer, 1934), "A Note on Agricultural Indebtedness in the Zanzibar Protectorate by Sir Ernest M. Dowson" (Zanzibar: Government Printer, 1936).

²¹⁴ Memorandum by Fredric Holmwood on the Clove Trade of Zanzibar, 4 February 1888, FO 84/1915; Guillois to MAE, 15 October 1873, MAE, 3; Macdonald to Salisbury, 3 March 1888, FO 84/1906; Mackenzie, p. 94; Baumann, Sansibar, p. 27, Pemba, p. 12.

Even Zanzibar's most progressive businessman and most extensive landlord, the Sultan, turned to Indians to raise funds. Seyyid Said took a year's advance in revenue from Jairam Sewji, and his son Majid was deeply in debt to Jairam as well. The debt had to be deducted from the customs farm.²¹⁵

The impact of Indian finance was limited by the law, enforced by Rigby in 1860-61 and more effectively by John Kirk after 1874, that Indians could not own slaves. After foreclosure, they could only resell or lease a plantation, but could not work it themselves. Although some Indians, like Tharia Topan, had owned plantations before being forced to free their slaves, many preferred to remain only in commerce. Even after abolition, when Arabs and Indians alike had to compete for legally free labor, Indians were reluctant to foreclose and take on the task of farming.²¹⁶ Often, when a debtor defaulted, the Indian creditor would rewrite the debt. Thereafter the creditor could collect as much of the interest and principal as the debtor could afford, while maintaining control over his property. As interest payments kept mounting, the debtor stood little chance of ever being able to pay.²¹⁷ This arrangement was to an extent mutually

²¹⁵ Webb to Ward, 27 September 1851, Ward Papers, NEMA, p. 488; Churchill to Bombay, 4 March 1868, FOCP 4207, p. 137; Prideaux, Report, 1873-74, FOCP 2915, p. 79.

²¹⁶ Even when Indians foreclosed, the former owner often remained on the plantation, legally a tenant. Zanzibar, Annual Report, 1913, cited by Dowson, "Agricultural Indebtedness," pp. 3-4; C. F. Strickland in "Zanzibar: The Land and Its Mortgage Debt," 1932 (London: Waterlow, 1932), p. 4; Christie, "Slavery," p. 50. Indians, like Omanis, stuck to certain roles in the economy.

²¹⁷ Report by Lieutenant C. S. Smith, incl. Kirk to Granville, 13 March 1884, PP 1885, LXXIII, 390, p. 50. Interest rates were high--up to 20-25%. Ibid.; Bartlett and Last, "Indebtedness of the Agricultural Classes," p. 6; O'Sullivan, Report on Pemba, PP 1896, LIX, 395, p. 44.

beneficial--the debtor did not lose his plantation or his status and the creditor received payments, even if they were less than he was entitled to receive, without losing financial control over the property. This control could be used to force the owner to sell cloves to him.²¹⁸ Such arrangements enabled the plantation system to go on, even when the ability to foreclose, normally considered an essential part of finance, was severely curtailed. It was not conducive, however, to encouraging landowners to develop their properties further, since they would only be making foreclosure more inviting. Nor did financial failure result in the transfer of property to more efficient or progressive landlords.

Zanzibar shared other problems with most societies that were primarily devoted to agricultural production. Incomes were subject to variations depending on weather and other factors beyond the control of the grower. Clove production fluctuated greatly from year to year.²¹⁹ But when a hurricane struck Zanzibar in 1872, half or more of the trees were levelled. This disaster had one beneficial effect. The price of cloves rose from below \$2 per frasila to about \$9, and this encouraged renewed planting at a time when price levels had been low for over a decade and interest in cloves sagging. In particular, it encouraged the landowners of Pemba, which had been spared the damage, to expand cultivation. When these trees began to bear, the price fell again, but by that time the expanded plantations of Pemba were added to the rebuilt plantations of Zanzibar.²²⁰

²¹⁸ On clove marketing see ibid., p. 43.

²¹⁹ Even when the statistics improved, annual harvests fluctuated. See R. H. Crofton, Statistics of the Zanzibar Protectorate, 1893-1930 (Zanzibar: Government Printer, 1931).

Also beyond the control of Zanzibaris were the British, and their power affected Zanzibar's slave supply. British anti-slave trade measures in 1822 and 1847 actually stimulated the clove industry. The action against Indian slaveholding in 1860 contributed to the end of expansion. A year after the hurricane, a treaty between the British and the Sultan cut-- on paper--the lifeline linking Zanzibar with its sources of slaves in the interior of East Africa. This was one of the most serious threats to the Zanzibari economy, something the Zanzibari's, with minimal military power, could not challenge directly. The ways in which this threat was met are discussed in Chapter IV.

Of greatest importance was the problem of limited demand. Most of Zanzibar's cloves--on the order of 70%--went to India and Arabia, where they were principally used in cooking. More went to Europe, where cloves had a modest popularity, mainly for medicinal purposes.²²¹ The spice trade was once a source of great profit, but that was precisely because only small quantities were available. Once clove production was organized on a plantation basis, it had become too efficient and undermined the entire basis of the spice trade.²²² Even though Zanzibar had no significant competition in the international clove market, overproduction became a problem almost as soon as the trees planted around 1840 came into bearing. Some kind of production controls might have helped the situation, but

²²⁰ See Chapter IV.

²²¹ Tidbury, pp. 13, 196-206.

²²² Cloves were thus a very different product from sugar. Sugar plantations suffered from competition, low profit margins, and soil exhaustion, rather than from lack of demand. See E. J. Hobsbawm, "The Seventeenth Century in the Development of Capitalism," in *Genovese, Slave Economies*, Vol. I, p. 151.

twentieth century governments have enough trouble organizing such holdbacks, let alone a Sultanate with no bureaucracy and weak control over kinship groups. The ethnic separation between producers and sellers did not make matters easier; the sellers would most likely have been the only group capable of organizing a holdback and the only ones to profit.

Ultimately, the planters of Zanzibar kept their land and social position because their commitment to the plantation economy was not total. They also had trading interests, and their reliance on cloves was reduced by a second, and older crop, the coconut although the coconut did not have a particularly promising future either by 1870.²²³ However, the development of the agricultural sector, followed by a drop in clove prices, caused Omani Arabs to adopt a more rural, more self-sufficient life than they had as traders. In addition, clove cultivation allowed slaves sufficient time to care for their own and their masters' subsistence. The implications of this fact were social as well as economic: slaves were performing money-producing tasks for only part of the time; much of their importance still lay in their presence, in making the plantation a social, not just an economic unit.

The weaknesses of the Zanzibari economy in 1870 should not hide the fact that it had undergone a deep transformation. The productive relationships within society were changed, something that did not happen during the earlier period of expanded commerce. This did not just change

²²³The coconut benefitted from the same increase in demand in Europe for oils that stimulated the palm oil industry in West Africa. Both palm oil and ground nut oil were competitors of coconut oil, and the discovery of still other lubricants further damaged the future of all the African oil crops. See A. G. Hopkins, An Economic History of West Africa (London: Longmans, 1973), pp. 125-28, 131-32.

men's relation to material goods, but their human relationship as well. Slaves remained a source of prestige, but they had become a means of production as well. The ways in which the changing economy affected the master-slave relationship will be the subject of Part II.

CHAPTER III: ARAB AND AFRICAN SLAVEOWNERS ON THE MAINLAND COAST

The mainland coast was part of the same Indian Ocean trading system as Zanzibar and was buffeted by the same winds of change in the nineteenth century. Trade between coastal cities and the interior was expanding, and the scale of agricultural production was increasing. While Zanzibar profited from a valuable new crop, the coast found its role in the Indian Ocean network by producing old ones, grain and coconuts. Not only did exports of agricultural produce increase from a little in the 1820's to a lot in the 1880's, but in parts of the coast--most strikingly Malindi--new ways of organizing production were developed. The characteristic coastal farming unit--a family supplemented perhaps by a few slaves working alongside it¹--gave way, to plantations, a large-scale operation based

¹A fine discussion of Swahili agriculture may be found in Janet Bujra, "An Anthropological Study of Political Action in a Bajuni Village, Kenya," Ph.D. Dissertation, University of London, 1968. It is hard to prove that the type of agriculture described by Bujra existed before the mid-nineteenth century, for no detailed descriptions exist. The predominance of small-scale agriculture is inferred from the observations of Lieutenant Emery in Mombasa in 1824-26, which are discussed below, pp. 202-3. The use of slaves along the coast was mentioned, but not described, by Don Francisco d'Almeida in 1505 and Monsieur Morice in 1776. These documents are reprinted in two books edited by G. S. P. Freeman-Grenville, The East African Coast: Select Documents (London: Oxford U.P., 1962), pp. 106, 109, and The French at Kilwa Island (Oxford: Clarendon, 1965), p. 107.

on closely supervised slave labor.

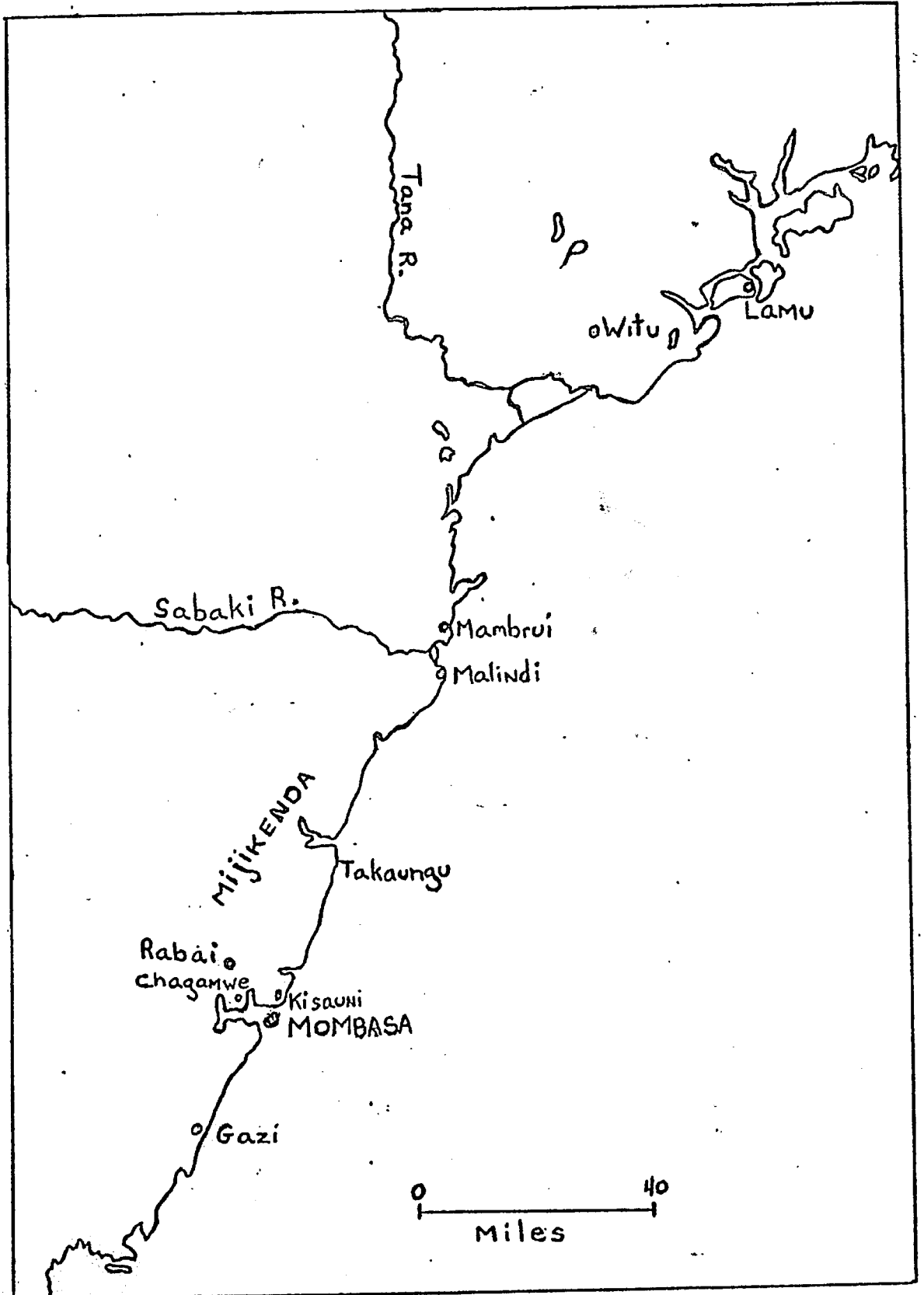
The expansion of grain-growing became more feasible in the early nineteenth century through the same extension of trading networks that had stimulated the clove industry of Zanzibar. Food-poor areas in Arabia and the Horn of Africa were linked with the fertile coastal zones by heavy dhow traffic, while the wealth which Arabs of Oman and the Hadramaut were obtaining from their trading activities made them able to import more foodstuffs. Meanwhile, Zanzibar itself, with a higher population and lowered interest in growing grain, lost its self-sufficiency in food and began to import grain. Millet was much in demand in Arabia and Zanzibar, while sesame--a seed from which oil was extracted--fed an expanding market in Arabia as well as the demands of French traders in Zanzibar for oil-producing crops.² To the increased demand for agricultural products was added another factor which had also stimulated agriculture in Zanzibar: the availability of slaves, a consequence of the slave trading infrastructure that developed in the late eighteenth century. At times, the uncertainties of the export trade to Arabia made more slaves available for local use.

Grain cultivation expanded all along the coast. Parts of what is now Tanzania contributed much to Zanzibar's own grain requirements. To the north, the coast of Kenya from Vanga to Lamu supplied markets in Somalia and Arabia as well as Zanzibar.³

²On the demand for grain and sesame, see Cap. Loarer, "Ile de Zanguebar," O.I., 5/23, Cahiers 2 and 3; Cap. Guillain, Documents sur l'histoire, la géographie et le commerce de l'Afrique Orientale (Paris: Bertrand, 1856-58), Vol. 2/2, pp. 313-16, 336-37; Ladislas-Cochet to MAE, 15 January 1857, MAE, 2.

³See Chapter II, p. 125. On the Tanzania coast see John Iliffe, Agricultural Change in Modern Tanganyika (Nairobi: East African Publishing House, 1971), p. 10.

MAP III: The Coast of Kenya



This chapter will examine agriculture in two parts of the Northern coast, Mombasa and Malindi. Mombasa, long a small-scale grain producing area, extended its fields further into its hinterland in the 1840's. Malindi developed rapidly in the 1860's and 1870's to become the leading grain-growing area of the coast. These two places embrace the most important variations in response to the changing economic situation. Malindi was a new settlement, founded solely for the purpose of exploiting its rich and largely unoccupied lands. Mombasa was an old city, dominated by a trading community with long traditions of urban life. This chapter will show the different ways that the economy and society of these towns were affected by the expansion of agriculture, and Part II will examine the impact of these changes on the organization of agricultural labor and the lives of the slaves.

Malindi: The Growth of a Plantation Town

In the 1850's, Malindi was an abandoned ruin, visited occasionally by passing dhows and by Galla hunters and pastoralists who lived in its hinterland.⁴ In Portuguese times it had been a center for the cultivation of fruit and other products as well as a trading port of some significance. The Sultan of Malindi took advantage of the arrival of the Portuguese to form an alliance against his old rivals, the people of Mombasa. He eventually went off to Mombasa to serve the Portuguese conquerors, and the shift of political and commercial attention to Mombasa

⁴William Owen of the British Navy and the missionary Krapf both saw the ruins in the early nineteenth century. William F. W. Owen, Narrative of Voyages to Explore the Shores of Africa, Arabia and Madagascar (London: Bentley, 1833), Vol. I, p. 402; Ludwig Krapf, Travels, Researches and Missionary Labours during an Eighteen Years' Residence in Eastern Africa (Boston: Tricknor and Fields, 1860), pp. 124-25.

began the decline of Malindi. It was finished off in the late eighteenth century as Galla nomads moved south, sacking whatever was in their path. However, by mid-nineteenth century, fortunes were changing once again. The power of the Galla, besieged from the North by Somali, was declining.⁵

There are as many different versions of the refounding of Malindi as there are ethnic groups in the town, but all stress the arrival of people by sea in search of agricultural land. The most definite evidence available comes from two Europeans, the German Van der Decken and the American Thornton, who in November, 1861, saw the stone houses of the town being rebuilt by fifty settlers, 150 Baluchi soldiers, and 1,000 slaves sent by the Sultan of Zanzibar.⁶ The farms may have been started a few years previously.

Today, four distinct ethnic groups exist in Malindi and Mambrui, a sister village about twelve miles up the coast. These are the Washella, Swahili from a town on Lamu island further up the coast, Bajuni, Swahili from elsewhere in the Lamu Archipelego, Omani Arabs, and Hadrami Arabs. Most Washella and Bajuni informants believe that their ancestors had been farming in the Malindi-Mambrui area, without settling permanently, before the Sultan sent the expedition observed by the explorers. This was an extension of farming patterns in the Lamu region. Many people there lived on islands where they tended coconut trees. The coral or sandy soil was

⁵ For a general introduction to the history of Malindi, see Esmond Bradley Martin, The History of Malindi: A Geographical Analysis of an East African Coastal Town from the Portuguese Period to the Present (Nairobi: East African Literature Bureau, 1973).

⁶ Otto Kersten, Baron Carl von der Decken's Reisen in Ost Afrika (Leipzig: Winter, 1871), p. 419; Richard Thornton, diary, 1 November 1861, in H. A. Fosbrooke, "Richard Thornton in East Africa," Tanganyika Notes and Records, 58-9 (1962), p. 54.

not suitable for grain, and they went to the mainland to farm, keeping permanent residences on the islands.⁷ The Washella and Bajuni were also inveterate travellers, and in this way, according to informants, they discovered the unusually fertile farming country near Malindi. They built huts to live in while farming, but returned home for the harvest. The part of Malindi where the Washella supposedly built their huts is to this day known as Shella. Their biggest problem was the Galla, who attacked or kidnapped anyone who went alone to get water from the Sabaki River. Most Washella informants say that for this reason, the Washella sought the protection of the Sultan, who sent the Baluchi soldiers and who were followed by Arab settlers.⁸ The Sultan later sent a Governor to administer the city. According to the Washella--and other groups agree--the different peoples who had come to Malindi concentrated in their own quarters of the town, but lived in relative harmony. Most Bajuni gravitated to Mambrui, a village twelve miles to the north.⁹

Most Omani Arabs, on the other hand, claim that Malindi was re-founded on the order of the Sultan of Zanzibar. Seeking to expand cultivation in his dominions, he sent some of his fellow Omanis from Muscat and Zanzibar, along with Baluchis to protect them from the Galla. Once

⁷MAL 1, 66. Farming patterns among Bajuni are discussed at length by J. Bujra.

⁸MAL 1, 9, 17, 27. Thornton noticed that the recently arrived Baluchis were stationed along the route to the Sabaki River because "a good many slaves have been killed and mutilated by Gallas at or on the way to the water." Diary, 2 November 1861. This portion of the diary is not in Rhodes House, Oxford, and I was shown a copy by Peter Koffsky, who obtained it from H. A. Fosbrooke.

⁹MAL 4, 17, 26, 27, 36, 41, 45, 46.

the area was pacified, other settlers of various origins came and began to farm.¹⁰ Hadrami Arabs most often went to Mambrui and Omanis to Malindi, although all four communal groups were well represented in each village.¹¹

There is no way to make a certain choice between these two versions. The Washella-Bajuni version sounds slightly more plausible for it is consistent with these peoples' habits of seeking mainland farms on which to grow grain, whereas the Omani version postulates a specific expedition to develop an area that had not been an agricultural center for generations.¹² But both versions acknowledge the most important elements of the others' stories: the Arabs admit that the Washella and Bajuni came to Malindi seeking land, while the Washella and Bajuni admit that Omanis and Hadramis came for the same purpose and that the Sultan sent troops and a governor to protect and control the settlement. Even if the Washella and the Bajunis pioneered the development of the area, the arrival of the Baluchis and Arabs was essential to the development of a weak agricultural extension of Lamu into a self-sustaining town.¹³

¹⁰ MAL 18, 28, 56, 59. A person of slave origin, brought up in an Omani household, gave the same version as his master's people, while someone whose ancestors were slaves of an Mshella gave the Washella version. MAL 30, 31.

¹¹ Charles New, who visited Mambrui in May, 1866, was told by the Governor, Hemed bin Said Al-Busaidi, that he had founded the town seven months previously. Charles New, "Journal, 1 May-8 June 1866," United Methodist Free Church Magazine, X (1867), p. 500. A similar version of the founding of Malindi was given by the grandson of the alleged founder, MAL 28. Some Hadrami Arabs in Mambrui say that Hemed bin Said founded the city; others say it was Bajuni. MAL 40, 44.

¹² Shortly after this, Sultan Majid arranged to have Dar es Salaam built. Foreign Office files contain much correspondence relating to this. There is no mention of any similar venture in Malindi.

¹³ A Baluchi informant, descended from one of the original soldiers,

Whether a remarkable first crop or the result of a few years of farming, much grain had already been harvested by November, 1861. Shortly before the arrival of Van der Decken and Thornton, a British cruiser searching for slave dhows had entered Malindi harbor, skirmished with local soldiers, and burned three dhows. According to Thornton, all three dhows were grain carriers, and one contained 5,000 bags of grain.¹⁴ Malindi soon became an import grain-exporting center. A missionary in 1862 noted that grain was being sent from Malindi to Arabia. By 1866, according to another missionary, Charles New, Malindi contained "some thousands of slaves."¹⁵

By 1874, Malindi was well established. When Frederic Holmwood of the British Consulate at Zanzibar visited it, he saw "fine farms well stocked with slaves extending for miles in every direction." Areas which had been jungle at the time of his visit the previous year were now under cultivation.¹⁶ Between Malindi and Mambrui, plantations extended up to

stressed the role of the Baluchis in pacifying the area, but admits that Washella may have come earlier to farm, suffering greatly at the hands of the Galla. MAL 5. No informants mentioned that the governor initially paid local Galla \$450 to keep them from attacking. Holmwood, FOCP 2915, p. 16.

¹⁴ Thornton Diary, 1 November 1861. The incident is also described by a soldier on the British vessel, who says it took place on 15 October 1861. W. Cope Devereux, A Cruise in the Gorgon (London: Dawsons, 1869, repr. 1968), pp. 137-38. Two informants in Malindi described the death of one of their ancestors, an Omani Arab, under circumstances which could only have been this incident, MAL 59, 60.

¹⁵ Rebmann to CMS, 28 April 1862, CMS CA5/M3; New, "Journal," p. 504. Later, New wrote that Malindi had a population of 10-15,000, which is a vast exaggeration. Charles New, Life, Wanderings and Labours in Eastern Africa (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1873), p. 166.

¹⁶ Frederic Holmwood, Report, incl. Prideaux to Derby, 24 November 1824, FOCP 2915, p. 7.

six hours marching time inland. Consul Kirk estimated grain exports to be around \$150,000 in 1873.¹⁷ Each year, 30 dhows left Malindi with millet, destined principally for the Hadramaut, while 15 to 20 took away sesame. Other dhows took grain to Zanzibar.¹⁸ The French Consul in Zanzibar cited Malindi, along with Lamu, as the principal source of millet, which was sent to Arabia. A countryman, passing through Malindi, learned that \$80,000 to \$120,000 worth of grain was exported each year.¹⁹

Malindi had become, in the words of Consul Kirk, "the granary of Eastern Africa." Among Swahili, the town became known as "Mtama," millet.²⁰ As the intense cultivation near the sea exhausted the soil, the fields were allowed to lie fallow and cultivation was extended inland. The plantations reached 10 to 15 miles inland by 1877, while behind Mambui the whole area was "one extensive field."²¹

The 1880's were the height of Malindi's prosperity. A visitor called it "a vast sea of mtama."²² Vice-Consul Gissing, a British official, touring the area in 1884, found the soil "rich and very carefully cultivated." Although the area being farmed was still increasing, the "available

¹⁷Kirk to Granville, 6 November 1873, FOCP 4207, p. 209.

¹⁸Holmwood, Report, filed with Prideaux, Administrative Report on Zanzibar, 1873-74, FOCP 2915, pp. 86-7.

¹⁹Guillois to MAE, 10 December 1873, MAE, 3; H. Greffulhe, "Voyage de Lamoo à Zanzibar," Bulletin de la Société de Géographie d'Etudes Coloniales de Marseille, II (1878), p. 328.

²⁰Kirk to Derby, 4 April 1877, FOCP 3868, pp. 562-63; MAL 9, 26, 28, 36.

²¹Kirk to Derby, 4 April 1877, FOCP 3686, pp. 562-63.

²²Frederick Jackson, Early Days in East Africa (London: Arnold, 1930), p. 51.

extent of land for increase is practically without limit."²³ Agricultural exports, as Table 12 shows, were large and growing. Meanwhile, coconut

TABLE 12: Exports of Malindi and Mambrui

	1884 <u>frasilas</u>	1887 <u>frasilas</u>	<u>dollars</u>
Millet	500,000	500,000	150,000
Sesame	220,000	250,000	150,000
Beans	120,000	200,000	80,000
Other	20,000	3,000	1,800
Total Value	\$275,000		\$381,800

Sources: Gissing to Kirk, 16 September 1884, FOCP 5165, p. 247; Frederic Holmwood, "Estimates of Present Customs Duty upon the Trade of His Highness the Sultan's Dominions between Wanga to Kipini inclusive," 6 May 1887, in Sir William Mackinnon Papers, Africa, IBEA, No. 943, School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London.

trees were being planted in large numbers, and mangoes and other fruit trees were planted as well. By 1890, there were "forests" of coconut, mango, orange, and other trees, although the fruit was mainly consumed locally.²⁴

Most of the grain was carried away by big dhows owned by people from Arabia and the Persian Gulf which came down each year with the monsoon winds. Smaller dhows, owned by Lamu people and occasionally by

²³ Gissing to Kirk, 16 September 1884, FOCP 5165, p. 247.

²⁴ Gissing, FOCP 5165, p. 247; Alexandre Le Roy, "Au Zanguébar Anglais," Missions Catholiques, XXII (1890), p. 606; W. W. A. Fitzgerald, "Report on the Native Cultivation, Products and Capabilities of the Coast Lands of the Malindi District," 1891, copy in Royal Commonwealth Society Library.

Malindi people, also took grain to the arid coast of Somalia. Local dhows brought grain to Zanzibar as well. The export of grain was handled by firms in Malindi and Mambui. Most were Indian--with connections with merchants in Mombasa or Zanzibar--but a few were Hadrami. Grain was brought to Malindi on the heads of slaves or on donkeys and sold to the grain merchants, who then sold it or consigned it to the dhows.²⁵

Malindi's extraordinary development from an abandoned town to the granary of East Africa in a period of about fifteen years owed much to a factor common to most plantation areas--the low population density and political weakness of the previous inhabitants. The once-powerful Galla were at first held off by the Baluchi garrison and appeased by a payment of \$450 per year by the Governor. By 1874, the number of soldiers was down to 30 and shortly thereafter the payments ceased.²⁶ African agriculturalists at this time lived further to the south, and although the Mijikenda were expanding northward in the late nineteenth century, they did not reach the Sabaki River until about 1890, by which time the Arab and Swahili settlers were firmly in control of the rich coastal plain.²⁷

The evidence of Holmwood, Gissing, and others suggests that land was available for those who could clear the bush in the 1870's and 1880's.²⁸

²⁵ Holmwood, FOCP 2915, pp. 86-7; Greffulhe, p. 340; MAL 8, 10, 18, 26, 27, 42.

²⁶ Holmwood, FOCP 2915, pp. 15-6; Weaver to Craufurd, 23 July 1896, CP/1/75/46.

²⁷ The migrations of Mijikenda to the Sabaki River were noted by Le Roy, p. 607; Binns to Lang, 28 January 1890, 19 February, and 26 March 1890, CMS G3/A5/0/1890/33, 49, 157.

²⁸ Holmwood, FOCP 2915, p. 7; Gissing to Kirk, 14 September 1884, FOCP 5165, p. 247. A British official in 1896 wrote that 75,000 of the

Most informants agree that new land was claimed simply by clearing it. Applications for land titles during the early colonial era frequently claimed land on the grounds that it was "cleared by myself" or "cleared by my slaves."²⁹ Once cleared, land was generally used for one to three years and then allowed to revert to bush and restore itself. The original owner retained title under Islamic law, but went on to clear a new ghamba.³⁰

The size of plantations, therefore, was mainly determined by the number of slaves one owned. As one informant put it, "nguvu ni watumwa," strength is slaves.³¹ Some settlers came to Malindi with their slaves; others came as relatively poor people and bought slaves with the proceeds of their own labor.³² In 1866, 217 of the slaves legally exported from Zanzibar were consigned to Malindi, but they were undoubtedly supplemented

160,000 acres of fertile land in the Malindi-Mambrui area was unappropriated. He probably misunderstood the Muslim law on abandonment, but is right in finding no pressure on land. Weaver to Craufurd, 23 July 1896, CP/1/75/46.

²⁹ Muslim law makes no distinction between land that is seized by force and land that is purchased--both are property and can be used, sold, or mortgaged in much the same way as under English law. Charles Hamilton, The Hedaya, or Guide (London: Bensley, 1791), Vol. IV, pp. 129-32; Testimony of Sheikh Mohamed bin Omar Bakar, former chief Qadi of Kenya, 12 July 1934, hearing re a/c 2WS of 1919, Lamu; Interview, current Chief Qadi, Abdalla Saleh Al-Farsy, MSA 21. On the situation in Malindi, see Gissing, FOCP 5165, p. 243; a/c, passim; MAL 5, 9, 17, 26, 36, 40.

³⁰ W. W. A. Fitzgerald, Report, incl. IBEA to FO, 15 October 1891, FO 84/2176; Weaver to Craufurd, 23 July 1896, CP/1/75/46; testimony of slaves of Abdulla bin Abdulla Hussein, a/c 23D 1914; MAL 35, 40, 44, 58.

³¹ MAL 40. The same point is made in the report by Fitzgerald cited above and by other informants; MAL 44, 52, 59.

³² MAL 12, 27, 28, 30, 31, 36.

by others who avoided the duty at Zanzibar.³³ Kirk in 1873 estimated that Malindi was importing 600 slaves per year just to maintain its stock of 6,000 slaves. This postulates a 10% attrition rate, which is plausible.³⁴ Malindi's growth occurred in a time of trouble for slave traders. As explained in Chapter IV, the slave trade by sea was harassed by British warships in the 1860's and outlawed in 1873. By making exports to Arabia more difficult, these measures may have contributed to the expansion of slave plantations in Malindi, although it was only after 1873 that the Arabian trade was effectively curtailed. Even after 1873, Malindi continued to draw most of its slaves from distant parts of East Africa, but they had to be marched along the coast from Kilwa instead of being sent by sea. In 1874, Holmwood estimated that Malindi was absorbing 1,000 slaves per year from the land route. His estimate is the same as that for Mombasa, which had a larger free population.³⁵ Kirk noted in 1877 that Malindi had an "immense" demand for slaves, but that it "has in one way or another been supplied."³⁶ Only in the mid-1880's did the supply run low.³⁷

It is difficult to ascertain the number of slaves and slaveowners

³³ Memorandum by Seward on the Slave Traffic in the Port of Zanzibar, n.d. [1866], FO 84/1279. Some slaves were obtained from the Galla, probably by purchase. Kirk to Granville, 27 June 1871, FO 84/1344.

³⁴ Kirk to Granville, 6 November 1873, FOCP 4207, p. 210.

³⁵ Holmwood, FOCP 2915, p. 8.

³⁶ Malindi was second only to Pemba in slave imports. Kirk to Derby, 4 April 1877, FOCP 3868, p. 563.

³⁷ Malindi generally relied on Kilwa for its slaves until the mid- or late-1880's. See Chapter IV.

in Malindi in the 1870's and 1880's. Kirk in 1873 said that there were 4,000 to 5,000 field slaves plus 1,000 supervisors and domestics in Malindi. A contemporaneous French visitor estimated the total population of the town at 6,000 to 7,000 excluding the slaves in the countryside. Holmwood said that 5,000 people lived in Malindi and 500 to 600 in Mambrui, but ten years later Gissing said that Mambrui had a population of 3,000.³⁸ My own estimate is that Malindi and Mambrui together had 5-10,000 slaves and 1-2,000 Arabs and Swahili. There were about 500 mashamba held by these groups in 1912-15, making the average number of slaves per shamba in the range of 10-20. The rich owned more than one shamba.

Local people say that many slaveowners had only two or three slaves, while someone whom they would consider a very big slaveowner had 100-150.³⁹ Some concrete figures come from records of confiscation of slaves of some planters who ran afoul of the British in the early 1890's. Suleiman bin Abdalla Al-Mauli, one of the richest slaveowners in the entire area, had 261 slaves. Khamis bin Nassir Al-Darenki had 120, while two kinsmen had 32 and 24.⁴⁰ These figures hint that considerable concentration of wealth in slaves and land may have taken place.

The size of plantations also varied greatly. The Coast Land Settlement, conducted in 1912-15 in Malindi and 1922-24 in Mambrui, gives a rough idea of the varying degrees to which different individuals and communal

³⁸ Kirk to Granville, 6 November 1873, FOCP 4207, p. 210; Greffulhe, p. 340; Prideaux, Report, 1873-74, FOCP 2915, p. 86; Gissing FOCP 5165, p. 242.

³⁹ MAL 17, 35, 45, 52.

⁴⁰ Bell Smith to de Winton, 5 January 1891, incl. Sultan of Zanzibar to Euan-Smith, 30 January 1891, FO 84/2146; Macdougall to Craufurd, 28 April 1897, CP/1/75/46.

groups acquired land. This data does not correspond exactly to the situation in the nineteenth century, but the pace of economic change in Malindi was then relatively slow.⁴¹ The landholdings of the four original ethnic groups of Malindi are shown in Table 13.

TABLE 13: The Size of Mashamba in Malindi

<u>Acreage</u>	Number of plots held by members of each ethnic group			
	<u>Omani</u>	<u>Hadrami</u>	<u>Washella</u>	<u>Bajuni</u>
less than 5	14	8	8	11
6-10	17	8	4	13
11-40	43	23	33	29
41-100	44	15	18	20
101-500	31	3	11	2
Over 500	3	2		
Total plots	152	51	74	75
Total acres	11,643	3,802	3,883	2,316
Average acres	77	75	52	31
Average acres excluding large owners cited in text	43	46	42	30

Source: Calculated from a/c, Malindi. Where communal affiliation was not given in the transcript, the information was obtained from informants, who were generally able to identify the names of plot holders.

These plantations were much larger than those near Mombasa, as comparison with Table 17 indicates. Enough land was available to make grain-growing feasible. At first glance, Table 13 suggests that Omanis

⁴¹ For a fuller discussion of these problems see Appendix B, Part II.

owned the largest plantations. This would not be surprising, since their commercial experience would have provided more capital than Washella or Bajuni were likely to have. Omanis did indeed own most of the largest plantations and a disproportionate share of the total available land. However, further examination reveals that the imbalance is attributable to the enormous landholdings of a few families. Among the Omanis, the former Governor of Malindi, Salim bin Khalfan Al-Busaidi and his sons Ali and Seif owned 56% of all Omani-owned land (54 mashamba of 6,492 acres). To be sure, some of this was acquired in the years just before the Settlement, for Salim bin Khalfan was one of relatively few Arabs who was as successful under the new regime as under the old. Nevertheless, records of the Settlement hearings and oral testimony indicate that much of this land was cleared by his own slaves or bought at an earlier date. Another Omani group, the Daremki tribe, accounted for 17% (27 mashamba of 2,030 acres) of the Omani share. If one excludes the land of these families, the average shamba owned by an Omani was 43 acres. Similarly, one Hadrami family, the children of Omar bin Abud bin Saad Handwan owned 1,665 acres, or nearly half of the Hadrami land. Among the Washella, 2,358 acres, 60% of that community's share, was owned by the descendants of Abdulla Hussein and his brother Abubakar Hussein. Finally, 21% (499 acres) of land owned by Bajuni was in the possession of the children of Lali Hadaa. These families together owned 60% of the land retained by members of the four original communal groups in 1912-15. If one recalculates average plantation size excluding these five families, the variations among ethnic groups are considerably reduced. The average Bajuni holding was 30 acres, the average Omani holding 43.

A similar picture, as Table 14 indicates, prevailed in Mambrui,

TABLE 14: The Size of Mashamba in Mambrui

<u>Acreage</u>	Number of plots held by members of each ethnic group			
	<u>Omani</u>	<u>Hadrami</u>	<u>Washella</u>	<u>Bajuni</u>
less than 5		5		1
6-10	3	12		2
11-40	11	25	4	4
41-100	11	25	5	7
101-500	5	12	1	2
Over 500	1			
Total plots	31	79	10	16
Total acres	2,328	4,557	660	1,102
Average acres	75	58	66	68
Average acres excluding large owners cited in text	47	41	44	49

Source: a/c, Mambrui.

except for the increased concentration of Hadrami and Bajuni landowners, large and small, in that area. Much of the Omani share consisted of two immense mashamba owned by Salim bin Khalfan and his son, while the descendants of a fellow Al-Busaidi, Hemed bin Said, Governor of Mambrui, owned an equal amount (1,618 acres between the two families). The descendants of Ali bin Salim and Ahmed bin Salim Basharahil (two brothers) owned 1,783 acres, while the children of Islam bin Ali Al-Kahtiri owned 636, over half of which were made over to the Islam bin Ali Mosque. Washella and Bajuni holdings were more modest, but a Bajuni and an Mshella owned 423 and 306 acres respectively. These leading families owned 54% of the land possessed by Omani, Hadrami, Washella, and Bajuni landowners in 1922-24. Discounting

these families, the average size of a shamba only varied from 41 to 49 acres among the four ethnic groups.

A small elite, then, owned most of the land in the Malindi area. It is worth pausing to look at these families. The richest of all was Salim bin Khalfan Al-Busaidi. He came to Malindi from Muscat, probably before 1870, as a man of modest means. One informant said that Salim worked alongside his slaves in the fields when he first arrived.⁴² Much of his land was obtained by clearing forest, but as time went on he purchased land from others, often for a few pieces of cloth or dates.⁴³ He became Governor of Malindi sometime around 1870 and from 1885-87 and again from 1891 until his death in 1920, he was Governor of Mombasa.⁴⁴ As an official, it was natural that people in financial distress should turn to him--he became a leading money lender, as the Mombasa records attest. He is not remembered as a harsh usurer, even among rival tribes, but informants do state that much of his land came from mortgages that had not been repaid.⁴⁵ He continued to buy or otherwise obtain both urban

⁴²MAL 17.

⁴³MAL 12, 28. Evidence of his skill as a land speculator is his purchase of a plot in Malindi in 1890 for \$1,000 and his sale of the land a week later for a 14% profit. 31A 1893, Reg.

⁴⁴A report from 1874 says that when his nephew was Acting Governor of Mombasa, he looked to his uncle for advice, which suggests that he was an experienced official by then. Holmwood, FOCP 2915, pp. 15-6. For his tenure in Mombasa, see Fred James Berg, "Mombasa under the Busaidi Sultanate: The City and Its Hinterland in the Nineteenth Century," Ph.D. Dissertation, University of Wisconsin, 1971, pp. 334-36.

⁴⁵MSA 12, 14, 25. Informants also stress the fact that he bought land very cheaply at a time when most people did not think it had significant monetary value. MSA 3, 14; MAL 3, 12, 17. There is a record of a foreclosure by Salim bin Khalfan in Mombasa. 61A 1893, Reg.

and rural land, and he became the largest Arab landowner in the Mombasa area as well as in Malindi. As Mombasa developed from a modest trading center to a major port, he was able to rent or sell this land for enormous sums. By the time of his death at the age of over 80, his property was worth £175,000, a sum which no other Arab could approach.⁴⁶

Other leading Omani families in Malindi did not engage in land speculation and money lending, but stuck to farming. Suleiman bin Ghaith Al-Daremki received word in Muscat, according to a descendant, that the Sultan wanted Omanis to settle in Malindi. He went and cleared a shamba to plant millet and sesame. Later, he acquired other plantations and added coconuts and mangoes to his grain fields. He sent for his two sons who had been born in Muscat and had a third by an African concubine in Malindi. He later returned to Arabia, where he died. One of his Muscat-born sons, Seif, served as Governor of Malindi at various times and was Acting Governor of Mombasa while Salim bin Khalfan, his uncle, was away. Seif was known as a very religious man, and so detested the idea of being subject to a non-Muslim ruler that he left Malindi (for the first time since his arrival) when the British moved in. He owned 24 slaves, but his kinsman Khamis bin Nassir owned 120. The descendants of Khamis received title to 318 acres of land, while those of another kinsman, Amur bin Suleiman, obtained 476, and the family of Hemed bin Amur 1,192.⁴⁷ This was a wealthy family,

⁴⁶The tremendous appreciation of his urban property in Mombasa accounted for most of his fortune at the time of his death. By value, 81% of his landed property was on Mombasa, less than 3% in Malindi and Mambui, even though he was by far the biggest landowner there. His property at his death is listed and assessed in Probate and Administration Cause 114 of 1920, on file in the High Court, Nairobi. The deed registers in Mombasa contain many land purchases and mortgages made by him.

but it did not neglect religious values or political service.

Suleiman bin Abdalla Al-Mauli, although one of the wealthiest Omanis in Malindi, retained the fierce tribal independence of his forebearers. He did not merely acquire vast lands near Mambrui and many slaves --261 at the time of their confiscation by the British--but made himself into an independent potentate. He is still a legendary figure in Malindi because of his pugnaciousness and his refusal to accept Al-Busaidi domination. He is known as Suleiman Kimenya, from the verb kumenya, meaning to beat or thrash. He armed his own slaves and did not hesitate to use them for fighting. In 1890, Suleiman sided with the Sultan of Witu in an armed conflict against the Sultan of Zanzibar and his British backers. For this unsuccessful revolt he was executed and his lands confiscated.⁴⁸

If Suleiman exemplified the Omani values of tribal independence and the political importance of maintaining a following, Bi Salima binti Masudi Al-Hasibi typified the values of paternalism. Born in Muscat, she came to Malindi by way of Zanzibar.⁴⁹ She married another Omani,

⁴⁷ When Seif and Khamis went to Arabia, they took some slaves with them, and were accused of trying to sell them. Statements of Seif bin Suleiman and Khamis bin Nasor Al-Daremkee to the British Agent and Consul, Muscat, 19 August 1893, incl. Acting Agent and Consul in Zanzibar to Piggott, 28 March 1894, CP/1/Addms.2; Macdougall to Craufurd, 28 April 1897, CP/1/75/46; Holmwood, FOCP 2915, pp. 15-6; and interviews with a descendant and another old Omani. MAL 56, 18.

⁴⁸ Bell Smith to de Winton, 7 January 1891, incl. Sultan of Zanzibar to Euan-Smith, 30 January 1891, FO 84/2146; J. M. McGuhaie to Euan-Smith, 7 November 1890, incl. Euan-Smith to Salisbury, 8 November 1890, FO 84/2066; MAL 18, 26, 30, 44.

⁴⁹ One of my informants was an mtoto wa nyumbani (a person of slave origin raised in the master's house) of Bi Salima. His mother was herself an mtoto wa nyumbani of Bi Salima, while his father was a slave of the Sultan of Zanzibar. According to this informant, Bi Salima went to Malindi at the request of the Sultan and his own parents were sent to join her. MAL 30.

Mselem bin Hemed Al-Khalasi. However, her plantations and her slaves were her own property. Mselem soon died, apparently in the attack on three dhows in Malindi harbor in 1861 by the British anti-slave trade squadron. She later married Ali bin Nassir Al-Busaidi, but he left Malindi to become Governor of Mombasa.⁵⁰ With a strong personal interest in her own slaves and land, she ignored Islamic principles regarding the seclusion of women. She would go to her land from her house in town on a donkey, carrying a gun and a machete, to supervise her slaves, of which she had at least 64.⁵¹ Today, old people say she was "hodari sana," (very skillful), or "kali sana," (very fierce), but informants of slave origin, including one raised in her house, claim she was a kind slaveowner, who treated her slaves well and who never had problems with runaways. Herself childless, she brought up a number of slave children in her house and gave them a Koranic education. She also helped raise the children of Salim bin Khalfan, a close personal friend. She was much admired in the town for sending food to the mosques each evening during Ramadan. She died shortly after 1900, leaving her land to a kinsman from Arabia. He received six mashamba with 402 acres, while one shamba of 330 acres registered to Salim bin Khalfan had been bought from her.⁵² Her success as

⁵⁰ She apparently completed the mosque which her husband had started. Some call it the mosque of Ali bin Nassir, some the mosque of Bi Salima. Official documents indicate that she made two houses into waqf for the benefit of this mosque. List of property made over to mosques in Malindi, filed in MAL/2/1.ADM 7/1, KNA.

⁵¹ In 1886 she bought 64 slaves from Ali bin Nassir and mortgaged them to Abdalla Hussein. 124A 1894 Reg.

⁵² Her heir was named Abdulla bin Jundub. The best informed people on her life were her mtoto wa nyumbani, Awade bin Maktub, MAL 30, a classmate of Awade in the Koranic school sponsored by Bi Salima, MAL 18, and

a landowner did not prevent her from maintaining Omani values of generosity and paternalism.

While the economic activities of the leading Omani families, with the exception of Salim bin Khalfan, were limited to farming, some Hadrami Arabs combined farming with trade in farm produce. The largest Hadrami landowner in Malindi, Abud bin Saad Handwan, came to the town from the Hadramaut and grew rice, sesame, and millet. His sons added coconuts and mangoes to the family's expanding farms, while one of them bought three dhows, which took produce to Lamu and Mombasa.⁵³

Most Hadramis in the nineteenth century gravitated to Mambrui. This may have resulted from the successful resolution of one of the few cases of communal feuding in the area. The Governor of Mambrui, Hemed bin Said Al-Busaidi, seems to have retained more of the old clanish fighting spirit than most. When an immigrant from the Hadramaut named Islam bin Ali Al-Kathiri settled in Mambrui and built a modest house of wood and mud, he had no objection. Islam had been a trader in Lamu and had heard of Mambrui's reputation for farming. After starting to farm, he went to Zanzibar and bought some slaves. He then started new plantations in several places inland from Mambrui. Now an established planter, he wanted to build a stone house not far from the Governor's own stone house. Hemed bin Said refused to allow this. Islam then went to Zanzibar and obtained permission from Seyyid Bargash to build as large a house as he

a kinsman, MAL 59. Other valuable observations came from a relative of her first husband, MAL 60 and MAL 24, 26, 27, 38.

⁵³ Interview with great-grandson of Abud bin Saad Handwan, MAL 47. He was also mentioned by MAL 26, 27 and others.

wished. Islam not only took the precaution of obtaining a letter from the Sultan, but he also bought guns and some slaves who knew how to use them. When he returned, according to his grandson, he shot off a cannon in celebration and refused the Governor's summons to his court. Instead, he sent the Sultan's letter and prepared to fight. An uneasy standoff ensued. Meanwhile, Islam proceeded to build his house. With high stone walls, gun ports on the top floor, an interior well, and an interior garden, the house was actually a fort. The Governor decided it would be prudent not to intervene, and Islam continued his life as a prosperous farmer, helping other Hadrami Arabs in Mambrui get started.⁵⁴

A less colorful figure, but a bigger landowner and a major trader, was Ali bin Salim Basharahil. Born in the Hadramaut, he came to Mambrui while his brother Ahmed went to Lamu. They worked together as grain exporters. Ahmed owned two dhows and Ali owned a camel-driven mill for making sesame oil and a large warehouse and store. The oil, sesame, millet, and other produce, as well as goats and skins, were sent to Arabia and India. Ali, meanwhile farmed. The heirs of Ali and Ahmed received title to 14 mashamba with 1,783 acres, the largest totals in the Mambrui area.⁵⁵

⁵⁴The most detailed narrative of these events comes from the grandson of Islam bin Ali Al-Kahtiri, MAL 40. It is confirmed in its essential details by others of various origins: MAL 36, 37, 44, 45. The best evidence of all is the fortified house of Islam bin Ali, still standing and occupied by his grandson. His sons owned five mashamba with 301 acres (acreage figures for one of them are missing), and the Ali bin Islam mosque in Mambrui had been given an additional seven mashamba of 335 acres.

⁵⁵Interview with grandson of Ali bin Salim Basharahil, MAL 43. Another informant's grandfather brought produce to Ali bin Salim's warehouse on a camel. MAL 37. An old Indian trader in Mambrui was also well-informed about this family, MAL 42.

The big farmers in Malindi were not all Arabs. Outstanding among the Washella was Abdulla Hussein. Born in Shella, Lamu, he was one of the original Washella settlers in Malindi. He was considered a leader of his community, the man to whom Washella turned to settle disputes or to support them in the informal workings of local politics. He also acquired numerous slaves and much land. As of 1912-15, his heirs (principally his grandchildren) owned 23 mashamba totalling 1,842 acres. Some of these were cleared by his children, but oral evidence and testimony at the land hearings confirm that his slaves cleared much of the land.⁵⁶ Even as substantial an Omani planter as Bi Salima once borrowed \$7,000 from Abdulla Hussein, for which she mortgaged 64 slaves and land. The slaves and the land later passed into Abdulla Hussein's possession.⁵⁷ His brother Abubakar was also an early settler and a large landowner. His descendants ended up with 10 mashamba of 840 acres in Malindi and two with 306 acres in Mambrui.⁵⁸

The Bajunis, more than any of the other groups, generally had small plots. Lali Hadaa did not. He worked on a dhow before moving from his home north of Lamu to Malindi. Then he gave up seafaring and devoted his life to farming. He had mashamba in several areas of the plain behind

⁵⁶ On one shamba he had 40 slaves. See the testimony in a/c 7D 1914, 23D 1914, 38D 1914.

⁵⁷ The transfer of property to Abdulla Hussein took place in 1886. 1A 1894, Reg., Msa.

⁵⁸ The Malindi figures cited here include a plantation of 324 acres sold to Ali bin Salim Al-Busaidi before the title allocation. The account of the two brothers is based on Abdalla Seif, the leading Mshella elder, MAL 17, two descendants of slaves of Abdulla Hussein, MAL 24, 31, and other knowledgeable old men, MAL 12, 18, 26.

Malindi, most of which he obtained by clearing them. Each shamba had a slave-supervisor (msimamizi), while three slaves (manokoa) were in overall charge of his land. There are records of 12 mashamba of 499 acres in the possession of his descendants.⁵⁹

Not surprisingly, the agricultural prosperity of Malindi attracted Indian merchants. In 1870, there were 21 trading houses in Malindi and two in Mambui. The Indian population was then all male and limited to the Bohora community. By 1874, there were 49 houses, and other Indians from Mombasa visited Malindi during the millet and sesame harvests. By 1887, the Indian community had apparently become more stable, for there were 34 women and 49 children living in Malindi and Mambui in addition to 54 adult males. Aside from a few Khojas and one Hindu, all were Bohoras --communal ties were important to setting up a trading group.⁶⁰

The most successful Indian firm in Malindi was that of a Bohora named Jivanji Mamuji. He was born in India and was old enough to have had three children before he left. He first went to Mombasa, where he had a son named Gulamhussein around 1875. He then went to Malindi and opened a store in a part of town that later became known as Kwa Jiwa, the place of Jivanji. He bought maize, millet, and sesame from the local planters and sent it to Mombasa, Zanzibar, and Arabia, where agents disposed of it. He also brought goods from Mombasa to Malindi to be sold at his store. His son Gulamhussein later went into the grain-exporting

⁵⁹The principal source is a kinsman, MAL 26, and MAL 24, 31.

⁶⁰John Kirk, Administrative Report, 1870, in FOCP 1936, p. 23; Holmwood, FOCP 2915, p. 86; Kirk to Granville, 6 November 1873, FOCP 4207, p. 208; Census of British Indian Subjects, August, 1887, incl., MacDonald to FO, 19 December 1887, FO 84/1854.

business in Malindi along with his younger brother Abdulhussein who took care of the Mombasa end of the business. The firm of Abdulhussein-Gulam-hussein owned four or five dhows, but much of their grain exports were sent by the Arabian dhows that came during the season for grain. They invested in property, both in town and in the country, and were among the leading money-lenders of Malindi. Their property was never developed, but some of it was sold later at a profit.⁶¹ These successful traders and financiers preferred not to become planters themselves.

A number of common features emerge from these brief biographies, some of which were shared by less successful families. Malindi was built up in a generation. The elite consisted of immigrants, with no local roots, but with connections in their places of origin--Lamu, Muscat, the Hadramaut, and Zanzibar. Their wealth was based on the rapid growth of agriculture and on trade in agricultural produce. Some, particularly Omanis, came with capital; others made a fortune from humble beginnings. Malindi's elite was essentially nouveau riche, but most of its members nevertheless sought to maintain their political independence, their religious values, and paternalistic relations with their dependents.

As in other plantation societies a few planters owned most of the land, while others owned small plots and most fell between the two extremes. The landowners of Malindi differed from planters in most areas of the New World by their ethnic diversity.⁶² They came from different places and kept

⁶¹As of 1912-14, they owned seven mashamba with 450 acres. The grandson of Jivanji Mamuji was most informative, as was another Bohora. MAL 10, 81.

⁶²This diversity was not simply a matter of different origins, but of variations in culture as well. Recent immigrants from Oman spoke Arabic as a first language, and Swahili only as a second. They practiced the

close ties among themselves, but still managed to live in relative harmony. Informants so relish tales about the exceptions to this generalization--the activities of Suleiman bin Abdalla and Islam bin Ali--that one can be confident it is accurate. After all, Malindi was no more the ancestral home of one group than another, and all could obtain a living from the abundant land. The welfare of some did not depend on the sacrifices of others, but on the toils of slaves brought in from outside.

The four groups, however, remained distinct, and people to this day are conscious of their communal affiliation and of the traditions of their group.⁶³ In the nineteenth century, the groups were largely self-governing. The governor, an Omani appointed by the Sultan of Zanzibar, had only 30 troops in 1875, and could hardly rule without consensus. Each group had an informal structure of leadership, and people turned to respected men whenever there was a problem to settle.⁶⁴ Traditions record no actual fights among the four main groups, although the dispute over Islam bin Ali's stone house nearly turned into a Hadrami-Omani confrontation. In that case, Islam relied on the support of his personal

Ibadi version of Islam rather than the Sunni version followed by Swahili. They differed in habits of dress, in the intricacies of kinships systems, and in other matters. They have since moved towards greater cultural similarity, more on the terms of the Swahili than on those of the Arabs.

⁶³ Narrower kinship groups, such as lineages, were of little political importance and were not the focus of loyalty. Since everyone was an immigrant, there was not enough time to build up these kinship networks, and only the broader affinities of common origins and culture were a meaningful basis for association.

⁶⁴ People mentioned by informants as leaders in the old days turn out to be among the original settlers of the town as well as, in general, successful planters.

entourage, his slaves. So too did Suleiman bin Abdalla in challenging the power of his fellow Omani, the Sultan. Power--whenever someone chose to exercise it--depended very much on having a dependent following. This was an important continuity in Omani and Swahili politics and in the role of slaves. But most often, Malindi's planters preferred the enjoyment of their lands to the exercise of power. Participation in similar economic activities and common residence created common bonds, even though they did not break down group identity.⁶⁵

The prosperity of Malindi was exclusively derived from agriculture. The traders specialized in grain exports and importing a rather small range of items--cloth, soap, salt, sugar and the like--which were needed in Malindi. A few attempts were made to trade with the Galla, but items like ivory and gum copal, so important to Mombasa only 80 miles away, were of negligible value to Malindi.⁶⁶ Until trade with the recently arrived Mijikenda became significant after 1890 nothing arose to diminish the exclusive reliance of the people of Malindi on the produce of their own fields and their own slaves.

As the town became established as a center for grain exports and a home of planters, stone houses were built. An explorer saw 20 of them in 1874. The less fortunate Arabs and Swahili lived in houses made from mud on wooden frames.⁶⁷ The rich were the most likely to live in the

⁶⁵The importance of village solidarity to Swahili communities--over and above the communal cleavages that exist within them--is stressed by G. E. T. Wijeyewardene, "Some Aspects of Village Solidarity in Ki-Swahili Speaking Communities of Kenya and Tanganyika," Ph.D. Dissertation, Cambridge University, 1961. One of the villages he studied was Mambrui.

⁶⁶Holmwood, FOCP 2915, p. 86.

⁶⁷Greffulhe, "Voyage," p. 340; MacDougall, Quarterly Report, last quarter, 1900, incl. Eliot to Lansdowne, 22 February 1901, FO 2/445.

town, where they could enjoy their homes and rely on slaves to bring them their food and take care of the farms.⁶⁸ Visitors, however, were not impressed by the appearance of the town, in contrast to that of the lush fields.⁶⁹ Even people like Bi Salima and Salim bin Khalfan, with houses in town, had second houses on their estates, where they sometimes stayed, especially during busy periods of the agricultural cycle.⁷⁰ Even today, some people stay on their mashamba during the week and come to Malindi on Friday for prayers. Other town dwellers walked or rode a donkey to their fields each morning, returning to town in the evening.⁷¹

The people of Malindi, a small town in the midst of vast farms, were more preoccupied with the rural life than the people of Mombasa or Zanzibar town, who had an urban society and trading interests to divert them. The town of Malindi was to a large extent a place to pray. Farmers came in from the fields on Friday for prayer. Successful planters, like Salim bin Khalfan, Bi Salima, and Abdulla Hussein, had mosques built at their expense and in their names. A gadi, appointed by the Sultan of Zanzibar, was in charge of enforcing Islamic law, although no local scholarly tradition evolved.⁷² The town was, for some, a place to live,

⁶⁸ MAL 17.

⁶⁹ For an early view see Devereux, Cruise, pp. 403-4, and for a later one Gissing, FOCP 5165, p. 241.

⁷⁰ MAL 1, 30, 34, 58.

⁷¹ MAL 1, 17, 18, 37, 45; A. G. Smith to Lang, 24 January 1891, CMS G3/A5/0/1891/61.

⁷² The gadi in the late nineteenth century was the son of an Omani planter. He later became gadi of Zanzibar, an indication of the lack of scope for an able Islamic jurist in Malindi. This man was Ali bin Mselem Al-Khalasi, son of the husband of bi Salima binti Masudi by a previous

but the desire to turn a town residence into a display of wealth--evident in the elaborately carved doors of Zanzibar--was lacking in Malindi. Some of Malindi's people, notably Salim bin Khalfan, earned a fortune and went on to fulfill higher political and business aspirations elsewhere. Some--like Seif bin Suleiman Al-Daremki--returned to their ancestral homes. But most stayed, and their descendants still reside in Malindi. The planters of Malindi came to farm, spent their time supervising their plantations, and developed a deep love for their land.⁷³

They had every reason to love the land, for it treated them well. The absence of statistics on yields per acre or yields per slave makes it impossible to calculate productivity. Kirk, who visited Malindi in 1873, did say that a slave could produce \$42 worth of grain and sesame in one year, which was approximately equal to his purchase price at that time. If Kirk's estimate of 4,000 to 5,000 field slaves is accurate, they would in theory be able to produce \$168,000 to \$210,000 worth of grain, a figure which is consistent with available export data.⁷⁴ Kirk's estimate of productivity is probably high, but his estimate of the number of slaves may be low. There is much room for error without shaking the conclusion that high yields brought high profits to Malindi. Grain prices rose in the 1870's and remained relatively stable. Millet sold for \$30 per frasila in 1884, the same in 1891, although sesame fell from \$50 to

wife. MAL 59, 60. The building of mosques by members of Malindi's planter community was mentioned by MAL 17, 18, 26, 44.

⁷³These points were emphasized by almost every informant.

⁷⁴Kirk to Granville, 6 November 1873, FOCP 4207, p. 210. This compares with estimates of agricultural exports of \$80-120,000 (1874) and \$275,000 (1884). See pp. 178-79.

\$30.⁷⁵ I have been told that a man could become rich in one season, and the life histories of people like Salim bin Khalfan suggest that this may have been only a modest exaggeration.⁷⁶ Once established, a planter could do very well indeed. Suleiman bin Abdalla was paying an export duty of \$940 on his crop at one time. This would correspond to sales of \$7,500 of millet.⁷⁷

Malindi had a major advantage over Zanzibar in that the price of grain was not as likely to plummet with overproduction as that of cloves. In addition, Malindi was even more self-sufficient than Zanzibar. The local people did not develop the taste which their sophisticated urban compatriots had for rice, and ate the same product which they produced for export, millet.⁷⁸ Oil was made locally from sesame or coconuts. Fish was plentiful, and goats and chickens were kept. Several informants have told me emphatically that in the old days there was little on which to spend money. As a result, profits were invested in land and slaves, mainly slaves.⁷⁹

As in Zanzibar, Indians were active in certain areas of the economy, but their predominance was less clear. Firms like that of Jivanji Mamuji were the most important import-export houses, but Hadrami Arabs like Ali

⁷⁵Kirk to Derby, 4 April 1877, FOCP 3686, p. 563; Gissing, FOCP 5165, p. 246; Fitzgerald, Report on Malindi, p. 4.

⁷⁶MAL 44.

⁷⁷Bell Smith, Report on Malindi-Takaungu Districts, December 1892, incl. IBEA Co. to FO, 18 March 1893, FO 2/57.

⁷⁸MSA 14.

⁷⁹MAL 40, 44, 52, 59.

bin Salim Basharahil also did well in this line. Indians financed plantations, but Salim bin Khalfan did so on a large scale as well, and there are records of large mortgages by an Mshalla, Abdulla Hussein.⁸⁰ There is no evidence of the extensive mortgaging of land to Indians described in the case of Zanzibar, but data on the nineteenth century is virtually non-existent. A file of deeds beginning in 1903--a difficult time for Arabs and Swahili, when debts should have been high--does shed some light on credit patterns. Between 1903 and 1906, there were more mortgages on houses or town plots than mashamba, 24 as compared with 15. Of the 15 mashamba, 8 were mortgaged to Indians, and 5 of these transactions occurred in 1906, on the eve of the abolition of slavery in Kenya.⁸¹ The applicability of this data to earlier periods is uncertain, but it does seem to indicate a reluctance to mortgage mashamba at all and only a limited reliance on Indians for whatever mortgages were made. In the small-town atmosphere of Malindi, people may have turned to personal contacts for financial help, rather than to regular financiers. With a more self-sufficient economy, they may also have had less need for loans. However, nothing is known about finance in the period when slaves--the principal investment item--were available. Still, it would appear that Indians had an important--but not exclusive--role in trade and finance.

Malindi was a plantation town. Its only reason for existence was agriculture. This degree of emphasis on export production is unusual

⁸⁰ See the brief biographies, above, pp. 187-95. Mohamedbhai Taibji in Malindi and Taibji Waliji in Mambrui are also mentioned as money lenders. MAL 10, 42.

⁸¹ Of the 24 town plots or houses mortgaged, 14 were to Indians. Loans of Indians to Indians have been excluded. For background on this deed file, see Appendix B, Part II.

for African towns and villages, even though there are many instances of African institutions responding to changing economic situations to produce for a world market.⁸² Malindi did not adapt, but was built up from scratch. The peoples who came there were experienced with small-scale agriculture and with the use of slaves, but they had not lived together or farmed on anything like the scale of Malindi.

Mombasa: Agriculture in a Port City

Mombasa also participated in the expansion of agriculture on the East African coast, but not so dramatically as Malindi. Lacking vast stretches of unoccupied land, the opportunities for expansion were less, while extensive and growing trade with the interior provided alternative sources of income, and the urban environment offered a different pattern of life from that of an agricultural outpost.

Mombasa, like Malindi, was growing farm produce as far back as Portuguese times. Nevertheless, when the British established their short-lived protectorate in Mombasa in 1824, they did not find agriculture in a very advanced state. Mombasa was even importing grain. Lieutenant Emery, who lived in Mombasa for two years, often wrote in his diary that dhows were arriving from Pemba, Lamu, Faza, or simply "the North" with grain.⁸³ Not all this grain was for local use, for Mombasa was a distribution

⁸²The most obvious comparable case in West Africa is the dramatic increase in palm oil production in the nineteenth century at a time when the external slave trade was declining and demand for palm products rising. Slave labor played an important part in this transition. See A. G. Hopkins, An Economic History of West Africa (London: Longman, 1973), pp. 125-35.

⁸³Lieut. James B. Emery, "Journal of the British Establishment of Mombasa and Remarks on Mombas," with Master's log of H.M.S. Barracouta, 1824-26, ADM 52/3940, entries for 28-9 September, 4, 5, 27 October, 25

center in the extensive grain trade up and down the coast.⁸⁴ The people of Mombasa also worked hard in their own fields. Emery often noted, "Most of the inhabitants at their shambas," "Most of the inhabitants employed at the shambas on the main," "the natives are to the Northward collecting their grain." They grew grain and sesame, which they brought across the narrow space of water separating the island of Mombasa, where most people lived, from the more fertile mainland.⁸⁵ Emery's account suggests that if slaves were used on the mashamba of the people of Mombasa, they worked alongside, and not in place of, their masters.

Trade was more developed than agriculture. Although lacking the trade routes that led to vast supplies of ivory and slaves, the people of Mombasa obtained some ivory as well as gum copal, honey, beeswax, rhino horn, skins, cattle, and other such products from their Kamba and Mijikenda neighbors.⁸⁶ According to Emery, an average of 150 vessels entered Mombasa each year, paying duties of \$11,000 in cash and \$5,000

November 1824, 29 January, 20 March, 25 April, 12 September, 28 October 1825, 5 July 1826, and others. The previous decade, the explorer Thomas Smee happened to pass a boat headed from Lamu to Mombasa carrying grain, as well as slaves. Log of Smee's voyage in Ind. Of., L/MAR/c/586, entry for 18 February 1811.

⁸⁴ Emery, Journal, entries for 8, 14, 31 March 1825, 18 April 1826; Thomas Boteler, Narrative of a Voyage of Discovery to Africa and Arabia Performed by His Majesty's Ships Levin and Barracouta from 1821 to 1826 (London: Bentley, 1835), Vol. I, pp. 375-77.

⁸⁵ Emery, Journal, 3 October 1824, 28 April 3, 7 May, 1, 6 June 1826. At one point, Emery complained that the Fort could not be repaired because the inhabitants were so busy harvesting grain. 14 September 1824. See also ibid., 14 September, 5 October, 6, 20 November 1824, and 22 June 1826, as well as Emery to Cooley, November 1833, and Emery to Cooley, 18 December 1835, Emery Papers, RGS, London.

⁸⁶ Emery to Christian, 22 July 1826, ADM 1/70; Emery to Cooley, November 1833, and 20 December 1833, Emery Papers, RGS.

in kind. There was a sizable trade with Bombay, Cutch, and Surat, and many Indians were attracted by the trade to settle in Mombasa.⁸⁷

The farmers and traders of Mombasa were mostly Arabs of Omani origin or local Swahili. The oldest inhabitants of Mombasa were Swahili. Although closely related to neighboring African peoples in terms of appearance, language, and culture, the Swahili have also been influenced by Arabs, Persians, and others with whom they traded and intermarried over many centuries. Swahili have long been Muslims, although local religious beliefs--as in other parts of the Islamic world--strongly affected the character of East African Islam.⁸⁸

The Swahili of Mombasa include people from various parts of the coast. Migrants from different places have formed distinct groups, known as the Twelve Tribes, although all Swahili groups have been open to absorbing migrants from different areas and the ties of common origin are largely mythical. Sons remained members of their father's tribe. By the nineteenth century, these tribes had formed two confederations, the Nine Tribes and the Three Tribes. Each tribe was both a collection of kinship groups and a political body united to promote the interests of its members.⁸⁹ A small number of Omani Arabs had also settled in Mombasa

⁸⁷ Emery to Cooley, 19 May 1835, Emery Papers; William Owen, Replies of Prince Membarrok, incl. Cole to Bathurst, 19 June 1824, CO 167/72. The Indians of Mombasa were then in such a weak position that the Governor was able to make them extend loans to him which he had no intention of repaying and to harrass them in other ways. Emery to Christian, 22 July 1826, ADM 1/70. This and other problems of Mombasa in the period 1824-26 are discussed by Sir John Gray, The British in Mombasa 1824-1826 (London: Macmillan for The Kenya History Society, 1957).

⁸⁸ The best study of Swahili Islam is Peter Lienhardt, "Introduction," to The Medicine Man: Swifa ya Nguvumali (Oxford: Clarendon, 1968), pp. 1-80. See also J. Spencer Trimingham, Islam in East Africa (Oxford: Clarendon, 1964).

long ago. Members of the Mandhry tribe, for example, have resided there since at least the sixteenth century.⁹⁰ Numerically predominant, the Swahili have also dominated the cultural life of the town, and Omanis gradually adapted eating habits, dress, house style, dances, and other, less visible, aspects of culture from their Swahili neighbors. The common practice of Omani men marrying Swahili women no doubt accelerated this process. Most Omanis in Mombasa eventually went over to the Sunni version of Islam observed by the Swahili, while in places like Malindi and Zanzibar, lacking a numerically and culturally dominant Swahili population, the Omanis held onto their Ibadi creed.⁹¹

The political history of Mombasa is characterized by intrigue and factionalism, as well as by the tenacity with which communal groups clung to their independence. Rarely, however, did political factions divide along Arab-Swahili lines. More often, certain of the Twelve Tribes allied with certain Arab tribes to oppose similar combinations, while both sides tried to form alliances with the Mijikenda peoples living in the hinterland. Swahili sought the support of the Sultan of Oman to throw out the Portuguese from Mombasa in 1698 and again to re-expel them when they returned briefly three decades later. Their victory left Mombasa with an

⁸⁹ F. J. Berg, "The Swahili Community of Mombasa, 1500-1900," Journal of African History, IX (1968), p. 40. Actual kinship groups, as opposed to these tribes, had minimal political significance. Ibid., pp. 40-2.

⁹⁰ F. J. Berg and B. J. Walter, "Mosques, Population and Urban Development in Mombasa," in B. A. Ogot, ed., Hadith 1 (Nairobi: East African Publishing House), p. 60.

⁹¹ These points were explained to me by MSA 9, 14, 19. Margaret Strobel's research on women in Mombasa will also shed a good deal of light on Arab-Swahili interaction.

Omani governor. However, when the Al-Busaidi dynasty replaced the Ya'rubi in Muscat, the governor, a Mazrui, did not recognize the new regime. He established a Mazrui dynasty which received much support from Swahili. It took Seyyid Said many years until he finally dislodged the Mazrui in 1837, and he only did so when a substantial portion of the Swahili went over to his side. The defeated Mazrui were allowed to settle in Takaungu and Gazi, but they never lost their desire to regain hegemony over Mombasa until British rule ended their chances. On several occasions between 1837 and the advent of British rule, the Mazrui were joined in uprisings by some Swahili leaders and received vital military support from their own slaves. Meanwhile, the Al-Busaidi ruled Mombasa with a gentle touch, allowing the leaders of the Twelve Tribes to administer most of their own affairs.⁹² In short, communal affiliation remained an important part of Mombasa life. The maintenance of group solidarity, as shall be seen in Part II, was a significant force for preserving older notions of slavery: it was important that slaves have a sense of participation, even as inferiors, in a social group, since all its members might be needed for political action.

People from various communal groups were able to acquire considerable wealth as a result of economic development after 1840. In Emery's time, most of the trade, besides that done by Indians, was in the hands of Arabs rather than Swahili, and only a few Arabs were actually involved. The leading merchant before the ejection of the Mazrui in 1837 was a member of the ruling family, Rashid bin Salim, whose dhows were often loaded, in Emery's presence, with ivory, gum copal, rhino horn, and grain. However,

⁹²Berg, "Swahili Community," pp. 35-56.

wrote Emery, "All the *Sohilis* are poor, having only the cultivation of the grounds for their support." They did trade in agricultural produce, mainly grain and cassava, but had not yet penetrated the market in African products that were in demand in distant parts of the world.⁹³ They were to share, however, in the increased prosperity of the mid- and late-nineteenth century.

After the Al-Busaidi victory in 1837, trade increased at Mombasa, as a result more of the general pattern of penetration inland than of the policies of Seyyid Said. Never as extensively used as the Southern trade routes, the trading area behind Mombasa was only a minor slave trading zone. However, the tempo of trade in ivory and other such items with the Mijikenda and Kamba was stepped up, and later Swahili and Arab traders began to venture from Mombasa deep into the interior of East Africa.⁹⁴

Agriculture in Mombasa broke away from the small scale described by Emery in the 1840's. The missionary Ludwig Krapf observed in 1844 that the Muslims of Mombasa were settling inland towards the hills behind the coast. He was surprised how "systematically the Mahomedans encroach upon the Wanica [Mijikenda] land in this direction." They erected small hamlets along the hills and peopled them with their slaves, who were set

⁹³ Emery to Cooley, November 1833, Emery Papers; Emery, *Journal*, 19, 22 September, 5 October 1824; Boteler, Vol. II, p. 206.

⁹⁴ Trade with the Mijikenda and Kamba in the late 1840's and 1850's is described by Charles Guillain, Documents sur l'histoire la géographie et le commerce de l'Afrique Orientale (Paris: Bertrand, 1856-58), Vol. 2/2, pp. 265-66, 273, 382-83; Richard F. Burton, Zanzibar: City, Island, and Coast (London: Tinsley, 1872), Vol. II, pp. 45-6; and Ludwig Krapf, Travels, Researches, and Missionary Labours during an Eighteen Years' Residence in Eastern Africa (Boston: Tricknor and Fields, 1860), pp. 99, 105. See also Berg, "Mombasa," and John Lamphear, "The Kamba and

to work growing rice and maize. They gave trifling presents to the Mijikenda and traded with them. The more land the Muslims got, the more slaves they wanted, and the more land they could then clear. Krapf termed the increase in the number of slaves "fearful."⁹⁵ This expansion was part of a coast-wide process of economic development, but it was aided in 1847 and 1848 by a temporary abundance of slaves resulting from the impact of the treaty banning the slave trade to Arabia.⁹⁶

French visitors in the late 1840's also found a different situation from that described by Emery. Boats came from Zanzibar to buy maize, and Mombasa was exporting about 3,000 tons of grain. Some of this was obtained by traders from the Mijikenda, but the rest was grown by slaves. Sesame was also being grown at Mombasa, and some oil was being processed locally.⁹⁷

Information on the years following the changes witnessed by Krapf is spotty. In 1860 Consul Rigby in Zanzibar claimed that the production of sesame and rice on the mainland was increasing and that nearly \$94,000

the Northern Mrima," in Richard Gray and David Birmingham, eds., Pre-Colonial African Trade (London: Oxford U.P., 1970), pp. 75-102.

⁹⁵ Krapf to Coates, 25 September 1844, CMS CA5/016/28; Krapf, "East Africa Mission from letters, September 1844," Church Missionary Record, XVII (1846), p. 3; Krapf, Journal, 29 December 1848, CMS CA5/016/172.

⁹⁶ Krapf specifically mentions the abundance of slaves in Mombasa. Krapf to Venn, 16 November 1848, CMS CA5/016/74. Most came from Kilwa, but some came from Chagga country in northern Tanzania which was experiencing internal warfare. Ibid., same to same, 20 November 1846, CA5/016/64; Guillain, Documents, Vol. 2/2, p. 267.

⁹⁷ Loarer, "Ports au Nord de Zanguebar," O.I., 2/10, Cahier D; Guillain, Documents, Vol. 2/2, pp. 261, 315-16, 336.

worth had been exported from Mombasa and Lamu. He attributed this increase to the reduction of the slave trade to Arabia.⁹⁸ The American Richard Thornton hiked through some of the Mombasa hinterland in 1861 and saw mashamba "well cultivated containing coconuts, mangoes, caju-guava, lemons, manioc, beans, etc." At about the same time the missionary Charles New saw "thriving plantations" on the mainland north, west and south of the town. The land was "very fertile" and "well cultivated."⁹⁹ In 1866, Mombasa imported 720 slaves, according to records kept in Zanzibar. Some of these may have been sent on to Takaungu or Malindi, while others may have arrived without being registered in Zanzibar, but this is quite a large figure for a town whose total population was probably less than 10,000.¹⁰⁰ Slave-based agriculture was apparently still expanding.

In the 1870's Frederic Holmwood of the Zanzibar Consular staff visited the mainland to investigate the slave trade and saw rice, other cereals, and cassava being grown for local consumption, while millet, maize, and sesame were being cultivated for export. The maize was largely grown by the Mijikenda, but the millet was grown on plantations near the island by slave labor. He also estimated that, with the slave trade by sea recently prohibited, the land-based slave trade was supplying the town of Mombasa with 500 slaves per year and the surrounding district with an additional 500.¹⁰¹ These slaves, like those of Zanzibar and

⁹⁸ Rigby to Anderson, 11 February 1860, FO 84/1130.

⁹⁹ Richard Thornton, Journals, entry for 10 June 1861, Rhodes House, Oxford University, MSSAfr. s49, Vol. III. New, Life, pp. 52-4.

¹⁰⁰ Seward, Memorandum, 1866, FO 84/1279.

¹⁰¹ Holmwood, FOCP 2915, pp. 8, 85.

Malindi, came from deep within the interior of East Africa and were brought to Mombasa by the same slave trading network.¹⁰²

By 1884, the port of Mombasa was a major center for the export of grain and coconut products. Table 15 shows the estimates of Vice-

TABLE 15: The Exports of Mombasa, 1884

	<u>Quantity (frasilas)</u>	<u>Value (Dollars)</u>
Millet	100,000	\$30,000
Maize	200,000	40,000
Beans	3,000	1,500
Sesame	20,000	10,000
Copra	13,000	13,000
Coconuts	100,000 nuts	1,000
		<hr/> \$95,500
Non-Agricultural items (e.g. ivory)		92,150
		<hr/> \$187,650

Source: Gissing to Kirk, 16 September 1884, FOCP 5165, p. 246.

Consul Gissing, who was temporarily stationed in Mombasa, of its exports. Agricultural produce accounted for about half of Mombasa's exports, ivory taking up most of the remainder. The largest portion of the agricultural produce came from the "coast districts." Gissing was most impressed by the cultivation in the area north of Mtwapa Creek, especially Kurwitu and Takaungu, rather than the area closer to Mombasa.¹⁰³

¹⁰²The continued importance of Kilwa as the source of Mombasa's slaves is stressed in Burton, Zanzibar, Vol. II, p. 46; Holmwood, FOCP 2915, p. 85; and Euan-Smith to Derby, 26 July 1875, FOCP 2915, p. 204. On the slave supply after 1873, see Chapter IV.

¹⁰³Gissing, FOCP 5165, pp. 246-47.

Gissing's observation is in line with the opinion of other Europeans and local informants that the people of Mombasa, although they had vastly extended their farming since 1840, did not carry out cultivation as intensively as the inhabitants of Takaungu or Malindi.¹⁰⁴ With a larger population than Malindi in 1884, Mombasa exported one-fifth as much millet as Malindi and one-sixth as much sesame. Mombasa exported coconut products, while Malindi only used these items locally, but Mombasa's overall agricultural exports were worth just over one-third of Malindi's.¹⁰⁵ This difference was mainly the result of differing economic opportunities.

On the positive side, Mombasa remained a trading center, exporting ivory, gum copal, and other produce gathered by the African peoples of the interior. Interior trade grew after the 1840's and accounted for half of Mombasa's exports in 1884, compared with none of Malindi's. In a collection of deeds from the 1890's, 173 transactions involved ivory.¹⁰⁶ As Table 16 illustrates, all communal groups were active in this trade. Arabs and Swahili were also active in up-country caravans and the dhow trade, while Indians were concentrated--but not to the exclusion of Arabs --in import-export businesses and finance.¹⁰⁷ The wealthiest Arab and

¹⁰⁴ A. C. Hollis, "Report on the Rights of the Natives at the Coast between the Tana River and Mombasa," 30 September 1907, incl. Sadler to Elgin, 22 October 1907, CO 533/32; MSA 14, 20, 26, 37.

¹⁰⁵ See Tables 12 and 15.

¹⁰⁶ Reg., B-series. This file contains 566 deeds from the period 1892-99, excluding those that did not involve some kind of sale or loan. In a 20% sample of the A-series, a file of deeds involving land sales or mortgages, 18 debts of ivory, with land or houses as collateral, were recorded. The total size of this sample was 547 deeds.

¹⁰⁷ In 1887 there were 483 Indians in Mombasa, compared with 82 in Malindi. Macdonald to FO, 19 December 1887, FO 84/1853. For more on trade, see Berg, "Mombasa," esp. pp. 198-208.

TABLE 16: Participants in Credit Transactions Involving Ivory, 1893-99

	<u>Debtor</u>	<u>Creditor</u>
Omani	12%	21%
Twelve Tribes	31	7
Arab-Swahili name, ethnic group not known	19	4
Slave origin	14	1
Indian	1	40
Baluchi	10	19
Other, not known	12	8
	<hr/> 99%	<hr/> 100%

Note: In these deeds, the debtor was engaged in trading ivory, being financed by the creditor. It cannot be ascertained which transactions involved up-country purchases and which trade in Mombasa itself.

Source: Reg., B-series.

Swahili families generally based their affluence on a combination of trade and agriculture.¹⁰⁸

On the negative side was the absence of vast stretches of land suitable for grain cultivation, the key to the success of Malindi. The most striking data come from the Coast Lands Settlement during the colonial period and give a rough indication of the distribution of land in the late nineteenth century. Table 17 shows the size of mashamba in Kisauni,

¹⁰⁸The Mandhry family, included a number of traders and money-lenders, although they owned land as well. See below, pp. 218-9. Another rich Omani, Mohamed bin Khamis Muhashamy, exported agricultural products and copra in addition to owning land. MSA 12. Salim bin Kassim Al-Mazru'i traded up-country when young, owned dhows, and later became an exporter of agricultural produce. MSA 3. Some Swahili were deeply involved in the ivory trade. The deed file (Reg., B-series) includes 11 ivory transactions involving the children of Khamis bin Shaibu, of the Kilifi tribe (one of the Nine Tribes).

TABLE 17: The Size of Mashamba in Kisauni

Number of plots held by members of each ethnic group

<u>Acreage</u>	<u>Omani</u>	<u>Hadrami</u>	<u>Three Tribes</u>	<u>Nine Tribes</u>	<u>Arab-Swahili</u>	<u>NK</u>
Less than 5	45	17	25	42	74	107
6-10	17	2	9	15	22	7
11-40	27	5	2	11	17	15
41-100	8				1	
Total plots	97	24	36	68	114	129
Total acres	1,205	157	166	407	810	472
Average acres	12	6.5	4.6	6.0	7.1	3.7

Notes: Other ethnic groups are not included, notably Europeans and Indians, most of whom acquired land recently.

Arab-Swahili refers to a recognizable Arab or Swahili name for which no ethnic affiliation was listed.

NK means not known and is likely to include Mijikenda, ex-slaves, Swahili with ambiguous names, and foreigners.

Source: a/c, Mainland North.

one of the principal agricultural areas of the mainland adjacent to Mombasa. Whereas 52 plantations in Malindi were over 100 acres, not one in Kisauni was that large, and only nine were over 40 acres.

Few of these plots could support an export-economy based on grain in the same manner as the vast plantations with large numbers of slaves in Malindi. This view is supported by testimony at land hearings and court cases in the early years of British rule as well as by oral evidence gathered in 1972-73. Some slaveowners had two slaves some six. One of the largest Swahili landowners of all reputedly had 40. This compares with known, and probably conservative, figures of 120 and 261 for two

Malindi landowners.¹⁰⁹ On the small mashamba which predominated, local sources insist that it was more profitable to sell coconuts and copra than grain.¹¹⁰ Besides providing \$14,000 worth of exports in 1884 (from coconuts and copra), coconuts were used locally for cooking and for oil, while other fruits were important parts of the diet. Gissing wrote that the availability of fruit, even if the grain crop failed, made Mombasa "the paradise of the poor."¹¹¹ Trees--as in Zanzibar, but unlike Malindi--acquired a relatively high monetary value independent of the land on which they were planted.¹¹² The small size of plots and the predominance of fruit trees, which require less labor than grain, were important determinants of the nature of slave labor.

The small size of plots was to a large extent the result of the high Swahili population. There were only a few hundred Arabs in Mombasa, as in Malindi, but there were several thousand Swahili in Mombasa and fewer in Malindi.¹¹³ Moreover, considerable quantities of land on the

¹⁰⁹ See the testimony of Farsiri bin Aziz and Ahmed bin Matano in the case of Abdullah bin Sheikh bin Yunus on behalf of the Thelatha Thaifa vs. Wakf Commission vs. Government of East Africa, Land Registration Court, Mombasa, 1912, a/c 15N of 1912 (referred to hereafter as Three Tribes Case); testimony of Mwinyi Amadi, Civil Case 928 of 1898, District Court Mombasa; MSA 9, 29, 31, 32.

¹¹⁰ MSA 3, 14, 35.

¹¹¹ Gissing to Kirk, 14 September 1884, FOCP 5165, p. 238.

¹¹² See deeds for sales of trees in Reg., Msa, 305A 1907, 306A 1907, and the deeds filed with a/c 229N 1916. On Zanzibar, see John Middleton, Land Tenure in Zanzibar (London: HMSO, 1961).

¹¹³ It is impossible to be more precise than this owing to the absence of population statistics and to the fact that the observers whose off-hand estimates we do have were often unable to distinguish slaves from Swahili. Guillain in 1847 estimated that the city of Mombasa had a

fringes of the Mombasa farming area belonged to Mijikenda. Some encroachment on their land did take place, but many remained on the coastal plains as well as in the hills behind the city.¹¹⁴ Finally, Islamic law provides for the division of property among all children and a wider group of heirs after the owner's death, so that in an area that had been occupied for several generations, land ownership would become highly fragmented.¹¹⁵

With many people of diverse origins desiring access to land, land ownership and use became intricate problems. The island of Mombasa had some arable land, which was taken up at an early date, but most people preferred to cultivate on the adjacent mainland.¹¹⁶ As more Arabs settled in Mombasa in the early nineteenth century, they sent slaves to the mainland to cultivate for them.¹¹⁷ However, the two confederations of Swahili

population of 3,000 and the surrounding countryside 6,000, of whom 220-230 were Arabs and three-fourths slaves. Burton in 1857 gave the population as 8,000-9,000, including 350 Arabs, while Holmwood in 1874 said the population was 12,000, most of whom were Swahili. A population count at the end of the century in the city (not the district as a whole) found 496 Arabs and 14,574 free Swahili, plus 2,667 slaves. Guillain, Documents, Vol. 2/2, pp. 235-37; Burton, Zanzibar, Vol. II, p. 75; Holmwood, FOCP 2915, p. 85; "Report by Sir A. Hardinge on the Condition and Progress of the East Africa Protectorate from Its Establishment to the 20th of July, 1897," PP 1898, LX, 199, p. 8. On Malindi, see above, p. 183.

¹¹⁴ Guillain, Documents, Vol. 2/2, p. 239; Krapf, in Church Missionary Record, 1846, p. 3; MSA 31, 32.

¹¹⁵ J. N. D. Anderson, Islamic Law in the Modern World (New York: New York U.P., 1959), p. 79; MSA 3, 11, 14.

¹¹⁶ Richard Thornton, Journals, 8 June 1861, Rhodes House; Price to Hutchinson, 27 February 1875, CMS CA5/023/15.

¹¹⁷ MSA 31. Many claimants for land based their claims on the assertion that their slaves had cleared the land. See the testimony of Ahmed bin Matano, Farsiri bin Aziz, Ali bin Mohamed Hinawi, and Shariff Mohamed Nur Balawi, Three Tribes Case; Khamis bin Khalfan, Hamed Tahir, and Said Abdulrahman, a/c 42N 1918 (Nine Tribes Case); Mwana Khashi binti Bahari, a/c 94N 1917.

in Mombasa claimed different spheres of interest. The Three Tribes claimed land on the southern part of the island and on the adjacent mainland to the south and west. The mashamba of the Nine Tribes were mainly located in Kisauni, to the north. In several bitterly argued land cases in the early twentieth century, the elders of both confederations asserted that they had the right to all land in their spheres of interest. The Swahili used to clear this land collectively, but once cleared, it was divided into individual plots, which were held as freehold under Islamic law.¹¹⁸ In the land cases, Swahili leaders claimed that an individual could sell land to an outsider provided that he obtained the consent of the elders of his confederation, but this claim may be the result of a new interest in selling land at a time when its market value was increasing. It is likely that, as in the Wahadimu areas of Zanzibar, the use but not the ownership of land could be granted to an outsider.¹¹⁹ It is also likely that Arabs regarded as a sale what Swahili thought to be a rental.¹²⁰

¹¹⁸ Khamis bin Khalfan, Nine Tribes Case; Abdalla bin Sheikh Mtangana and Abdulrehman bin Gulam Mchangamwe, Three Tribes Case; Mwijahi bin Sudi Mchangamwe in Charlesworth and Marsden vs. Salim bin Khalfan, Civil Case 37 of 1913, High Court, Mombasa. Collective clearing of land was described to me by MSA 9, 22, 24.

¹¹⁹ Abdalla bin Sheikh Mtangana and Mzee Mohamed bin Matano Mkilindini, Three Tribes Case; Said Abdulrehman, Nine Tribes Case. On Zanzibar, see Middleton.

¹²⁰ This misunderstanding, deliberate or otherwise, is still a source of bitterness on the coast. It surfaced, for example, in interview conducted by a reporter with elders in a Swahili village near Mombasa. They admitted they had allowed Arabs to borrow land, but vigorously insisted that the Arabs had taken the land from them. See Neta Peal, "Mwakirunge -- Site with Historic Past," Daily Nation (Nairobi), 17 April 1970. Arabs denied that the Swahili had any right to this land, and that plots were the freehold property of whoever cleared them. Testimony of Ali bin Salim Al-Busaidi and Rashid bin Sud Shikeli, Nine Tribes Case.

Whatever the case, Arabs, Baluchis, and others acquired tracts of land in the nineteenth century. The Swahili did not dispute the testimony at the land hearings that these non-Swahili had in practice cultivated land for many decades in the areas over which the Swahili claimed hegemony.¹²¹ The British rejected communal claims to land, and the Kisauni land settlement summarized in Table 17 reflects allotments on the basis of evidence of long occupation or purchase by individual Swahili and non-Swahili alike.¹²² Plots owned by Swahili, Omani Arabs, Hadrami Arabs, Muslim Mijikenda, Baluchi, ex-slaves, and others were interspersed throughout the area claimed by the Nine Tribes. Omanis, whether justly or not, were awarded the largest share, while the Three Tribes actually had significant land holdings in the sphere of the Nine Tribes.¹²³

To make matters more complicated, the Swahili also practiced shifting cultivation, so that portions of land were left fallow (remaining the property of their owner) while the owner or user cultivated elsewhere.¹²⁴

¹²¹ Seif bin Salim Al-Busaidi, Ali bin Salim Al-Busaidi, and Rashid bin Sud Al-Shikeli, Nine Tribes Case; Shariff Mohamed Nur Balawi, Three Case.

¹²² The procedures in these cases favored anyone with a written deed or who could easily round up neighbors to testify that he had been cultivating that particular plot. It discriminated against those who cultivated irregularly. These procedures favored Omanis more than Swahili, and in particular the members of leading families. Its net effect was to rigidify a system of rights in land that had in fact been flexible.

¹²³ Some of the land owned by members of the Nine Tribes was inherited by the children of Three Tribe males and Nine Tribe females, who belonged to their father's communal group. This was even more true of Arabs and other outsiders, who married into a Swahili group to obtain access to land. Hamis Salim Janeby, Ali Mohamed Hinawi, Three Tribes Case; Seif bin Salim Al-Busaidi, Nine Tribes case; MSA 9.

¹²⁴ New, Life, p. 62; Seif bin Salim Al-Busaidi and Said Abdulrehman, Nine Tribes Case; MSA 19, 22.

Much land was therefore vacant at any given time. Paradoxically, there also seems to have been underutilization of land, perhaps because it was only available in parcels that were too small to make grain cultivation worthwhile. In the 1870's, the Church Missionary Society (C.M.S.), while looking for land for a mission station in Kisauni, found relatively sparse cultivation except near villages. The land they purchased in 1878-79 was described in many deeds as waste land and sold for \$2 to \$5 per shamba.¹²⁵ Yet elsewhere in the vicinity, visitors noted many mashamba that were well cultivated.¹²⁶ Much of this confusion probably reflects a flexible attitude towards land. There was enough for people to cultivate to supplement other income, but not enough for it to acquire very much monetary value until the colonial period.

The smallholder predominated in Mombasa, just as the large landholder predominated in Malindi. Nevertheless, some families acquired considerable wealth, through both land and trade. A look at one of the oldest Omani groups in Mombasa, the Mandhry tribe, illustrates this combination. Resident in Mombasa since at least Portuguese times, the Mandhry built their houses not far from Fort Jesus and farmed mainly on the northern mainland. Said bin Rashid Al-Mandhry was one of the major landowners of Kisauni, receiving title to five mashamba with a total of 123 acres in 1916-18. He also was a leading trader and a money-lender, sometimes working in partnership with his relatives. A deed, for example, dating from 1895,

¹²⁵ Later, this waste land was cultivated by Africans connected with the mission. Price to Hutchinson, 27 February 1875, CMS CA5/023/15; Lamb to Wright, 30 November 1876, CMS CA5/M4; deeds filed with a/c 101N 1915.

¹²⁶ Gissing to Kirk, 14 September 1884, FOCP 5165, p. 238; Holmwood, FOCP 2915, p. 85; New, Life, p. 54.

shows him consigning trade goods worth \$2,000 to Rashid bin Khamis Al-Mandhry, who was to exchange these goods for others and hand over two-thirds of his profits to Said. Other deeds involve loans against property, and financing of trade, as well as the buying and selling of land. Members of the Mandhry tribe also describe him as a trader and money-lender.¹²⁷ Ali bin Salim bin Ali Al-Mandhry was a land speculator in the late nineteenth century and thereafter. He was also at one time a trader.¹²⁸ Majid bin Ali Al-Mandhry was an up-country trader, dhow owner, money-lender, and landowner as well. Other kinsmen were also landowners and traders, while the wealthiest members of the other leading Omani families of Mombasa --Mazrui, Shikeli, and Muhashami--had the same combination of occupations.¹²⁹ One of the best known Hadrami families of Mombasa, the Shatry, also owned land in Kisauni while engaging extensively in trade.¹³⁰

¹²⁷ Reg., 94B 1895; see also Reg., 120B 1894, 181, 216, 25A 1894, 131, 201A 1896. MSA 14.

¹²⁸ He eventually became embroiled in a major land case when he sold an Indian land which he had bought from members of the Jibana tribe, which they had no right to sell. Jibana Tribe vs. Abdulrasol Alidina Visram, Civil Case 60 of 1913, copy in CP/1/25/271.

¹²⁹ In the 20% sample of deeds involving land, 1891-1899, the size of transactions--sales and mortgages--were substantially larger for the Mandhry than for the general populace. 39% of the Mandhry's transactions were for property worth over Rs 500 (\$235), as opposed to 18% of Omanis in general, and 15% for Swahili. The individuals mentioned in the text appear often in the deed registers, and I have also learned much about them from Al-Amin bin Said Al-Mandhry and Said bin Mohamed bin Ali Al-Mandhry, MSA 14, 15. The other Arab tribes cited are often mentioned as being among the wealthiest, and their members do frequently appear in the deed registers. MSA 3, 9, 12.

¹³⁰ Kisauni land records indicate that members of this family had six mashamba there, the largest being 22 acres. Information on the family comes from two descendants, MSA 16, 17.

Such prosperity was not limited to Arabs. Swahili were the most numerous group among the ivory traders, as Table 16 reveals, and several Swahili were leading up-country traders.¹³¹ Others were among the most extensive landowners and slaveowners in Mombasa. A missionary claimed that Khamis bin Kombo Mutafi, a leader of the Nine Tribes, owned 500 slaves. This is an exaggeration, but it does indicate that he owned many slaves.¹³² When his property was confiscated as punishment for joining the Mazrui in a rebellion in 1895, he owned three mashamba worth \$1,643, a stone house in Mombasa worth \$376 and a clove plantation in Pemba worth \$469.¹³³ The registers of deeds involving land indicate that a number of Swahili were among the owners of the most valuable land in and around Mombasa. Oral evidence confirms that Shafi bin Matano Al-Tangana, Mwijabu bin Isa and Juma bin Muhunzi Al-Changamwe, and Mohamed bin Juma Mutafi were extensive landowners. In fact, one of the leading Arab families in Mombasa reputedly owed much of its fortune to a wise marriage to an heiress of the last-named Swahili.¹³⁴ Swahili prosperity is also underscored by fact that Swahili--including some of the people mentioned above--founded

¹³¹ Jackson, Early Days, p. 190; MSA 19.

¹³² Shaw to Lang, 4 June 1887, CMS G3/A5/0/1887/222; Mackenzie to Sanderson, 21 January 1896, FO 107/65.

¹³³ Minute to Sadler to Secretary of State for Colonies, 2 December 1907, CP/1/63/76.

¹³⁴ Interview with Shamsa binti Mohamed Muhashamy by Margaret Strobel, 25, 31 January 1973. See deeds on sales from the estate of Shafi bin Matano, 469-50A 1905, sale of property by the children of Mohamed bin Juma Mutafi, 148A 1906, 538A 1905, transactions of the children of Juma Muhunzi, 799A and 933A 1906, and list of property made over as wakf to the Mosque of Mwijabu bin Isa in a letter shown to me by Mohamed Umeya of Mombasa. MSA 25, 28, 37.

five mosques between 1837 and 1895, while Arabs founded four and renewed three others.¹³⁵ It is probably fair to argue that as a whole Arabs prospered more than Swahili, but this reflects the fact that most Swahili were smallholders rather than the absence of Swahili from the ranks of the very wealthy.¹³⁶

While in Malindi, Omanis generally stuck to farming, Omanis in Mombasa such as Said bin Rashid Al-Mandhry were actively involved in trade, along with Hadramis and a large number of Indians from the Bohoro, Ismaili, Ishansheri, Sindi, and Hindu communities. The credit situation seems similar to that of Malindi in that Indians predominated in mortgages on urban property and mashamba as well as in financing the ivory trade, although Omanis still had a substantial share.¹³⁷

The difference between Mombasa and Malindi was not just the difference between small plots and large ones, or between a trading elite and a planter elite. There was a difference in the ambiance and social life of the two towns. People lived in Mombasa because it was their home and because it was their parents' home. Malindi, founded around 1860,

¹³⁵ Berg and Walter, p. 86.

¹³⁶ Ibid. Despite the prominence of certain Swahili landlords, 36% of the deeds by which Swahili sold or mortgaged land were for less than 100 rupees (\$47). For Omanis, 22% of such transactions were for less than 100 rupees. Reg., A-series.

¹³⁷ Data from the B-series in the 1890's indicates that Indian creditors accounted for 43% of ivory debts and 60% of loans without collateral. The sample of A-series deeds indicates that Indians made just over half of the loans against houses, urban land, or mashamba. Omanis were next in importance, and a few Baluchis were important money-lenders. The biggest money-lender of all in Mombasa was Salim bin Khalfan. As in Malindi, urban property was mortgaged more often than farm land. Only 27% of loans in the A-series (land) involved mashamba.

was still a town of immigrants in 1890--people came there to farm. Only people who were motivated to give up, at least temporarily, their accustomed life and live in a frontier boom town would go to Malindi. Social life and leisure were more valued in Mombasa, as they were in Zanzibar. Two French missionaries in the 1880's described the importance of visiting and companionship to the people of Mombasa:

At any hour of the day one encounters them, visitors or visited, seated in front of their houses, on benches known under the name of baraza, wetting their lips with their small cups of coffee, speaking of the bad weather or saying nothing, but always looking serious.¹³⁸

One of these visitors remarked elsewhere on the slow pace of life, of the pleasures of walking slowly, "saying a few words in passing or stopping at the door of friends" before going to the mosque or returning home.¹³⁹

Such visitors tended to ascribe such behavior to lethargy, but they failed to understand a culture that valued social relationships more than profit.

Mombasa was also a center of religious scholarship and Swahili poetry. The Mazrui tribe, in particular, included a number of the leading Islamic scholars of the area.¹⁴⁰ Several poets achieved local fame, and helped contribute to the development of this art form.¹⁴¹ Such activities

¹³⁸ A. Le Roy and R. de Courmont, "Mombase (Afrique Orientale)," Missions Catholiques, 19 (1887), p. 533.

¹³⁹ A. Le Roy, "Au Zanguébar anglais," Missions Catholiques, 22 (1890), p. 465. The importance of such a life style of Arabs and Swahili is also emphasized in a fascinating description of Swahili life by a British official in the early colonial period. Mervyn Beech, MS on Swahili Life, in the library of Fort Jesus, Mombasa.

¹⁴⁰ Several of them came from the Mazrui family. They are mentioned in Al-Amin bin Ali, "History of the Mazru'i Dynasty of Mombasa," trans. James M. Ritchie, copy in History Department Archives, University of Nairobi.

are by no means incompatible with the pursuit of wealth--in fact scholars and poets cannot be supported without it. Rather, they suggest a more cultured, genteel style of life than was possible in Malindi.

The antiquity of Mombasa was an important determinant of the way its people defined status. Being a member of an old, recognized family was an important source of prestige in Mombasa. People are still highly conscious of family origins and take pride in proclaiming the number of generations they lived in Mombasa.¹⁴² This certainly was not the only criterion of prestige--wealth and power were also important--but such sensitivity runs counter to the rapid rise in fortune in a place like Malindi, where there was no established elite against which to measure one's position. In Mombasa, there was more stress on heshima, a quality of respectability that attached to persons of good family, pious conduct, and at least a reasonable income.

These factors did not negate the importance of the profits that were earned through the expansion of cultivation after the 1840's or of the money that was made through trade. They did place limits on the importance of success in farming or trade. On the one hand, membership in an established family guaranteed a certain status, while on the other, both birth and wealth--as well as conformity to social and religious norms

¹⁴¹Several Swahili poets of Mombasa are mentioned in an account of the participation of one of them in political intrigue in the 1870's published by Mbarak Ali Hinawy, who includes a long poem by Abdalla bin Masud Al-Mazrui. Mbarak Ali Hinawy, Al-Akida and Fort Jesus, Mombasa (London: Macmillan, 1950). See also Jan Knappert, Traditional Swahili Poetry (Leiden: Brill, 1967).

¹⁴²This has been clear from many of my interviews and is also one of the findings of Margaret Strobel in her research on Swahili women. See also Lienhardt, Medicine Man, p. 19.

--were necessary to achieve high status. The people of Malindi were not isolated from these values and notions of status characteristic of the Muslims of the East African coast, but the local situation did not reinforce them to the same degree.

Mombasa exhibited a greater degree of continuity in its social and economic structure than did Malindi, Zanzibar, or Pemba. Yet it too was far from static. In the 1820's, Mombasa's economy was based on the activities of small-scale Swahili and Arab agriculturalists and a few Arab traders. By the 1880's, the area of the hinterland that was under cultivation by the people of Mombasa had expanded, and agricultural production--making use of slave labor--had increased substantially. A number of families, including Arabs and Swahili, had become a wealthy elite. As in Malindi, the expansion of scale in farming was not limited to any one ethnic group, but communal groups remained distinct. They continued to play important parts--as groups--in the politics of Mombasa. The solidarity of these groups, which crossed distinctions of wealth, remained strong. 143

Most of Mombasa's people were still smallholders in the 1880's, and the wealthy were most often traders as well as planters. With agriculture less likely to provide a large income, with other sources of wealth remaining important to the elite, and with a social climate that emphasized other sources of status, the incentives to transform the organization of agriculture were less in Mombasa than in either Zanzibar or Malindi. As Chapter V will make clear, the intensity with which mashamba were exploited, as well as the extent to which they were expanded, was less in

143 Berg, "Swahili Community," pp. 52-5.

Mombasa than in Malindi or the clove-growing islands. The changing nature of slavery was a response to particular situations. Where the new forces of the market predominated, the change was greatest; where the old norms remained most relevant to the local situation, the change was least. However, in all parts of the East African coast, slaveowners had to respond to a variety of imperatives: slavery remained an institution of dependence even where its economic dimension was enhanced. It was the balance of the different goals that varied from place to place.

CHAPTER IV: THE SLAVE SUPPLY AND AGRICULTURE, 1873-1890

The slaveowners of East Africa, like their counterparts in other parts of the world, relied on distant sources of labor. They utilized slave labor in the first place largely because of the great distance between sources of labor and the areas where suitable crops could be grown, where markets were accessible, and where the planters wanted to live. Moreover, the geographical barriers between slaves and their homelands helped maintain the system, for they made escape more difficult and attacks on the plantations less likely. Slaveowners generally avoided enslaving their neighbors, such as the Wahadimu on Zanzibar or the Mijikenda in Kenya.¹ As a result, the long land and sea routes linking the sources of slaves in the interior of East-Central Africa with the plantations were vital to the development and maintenance of the coastal economy.

These routes became issues in a European controversy based on political and moral arguments that meant little to the Arabs and Swahili of East Africa. The reasons for the British fervor directed against the East African slave trade--a continuation of their assault on the Atlantic slave trade--are beyond the scope of this study, as are the details of

¹ Consul Rigby wrote that no slaves came from North of Mombasa because the tribes were "too fierce and warlike." "Report on the Zanzibar Dominions," 1 July 1860, reprinted in Mrs. Charles E. B. Russell, General Rigby, Zanzibar and the Slave Trade (London: Allen and Unwin, 1935), pp. 332-33.

the anti-slave trade campaign.² Whatever determined British policy, the Sultanate was ill-equipped to resist the might of the British Navy. It had even needed British help in solving its own dynastic difficulties in the 1860's. The central question of this chapter is whether the slave-owners, in the face of British action, were able to obtain the supplies of slaves they needed to maintain their economic and social position.

Restrictions on the Slave Trade, 1873-1890

When the British finally pressured the Sultan of Zanzibar, Seyyid Bargash, to issue a decree banning all trade in slaves by sea, they were extending a policy that had begun a half-century earlier. It was only to reach its logical conclusion when slavery itself was abolished in 1897 on the islands of Zanzibar and Pemba and in 1907 in Kenya. This record of gradual restriction of the slave trade is summarized in Table 18.

TABLE 18: Anti-Slave Trade Measures, 1822-90

1822	Treaty between British and Sultan of Muscat banning all export of slaves by the Sultan's subjects to Christian nations (including India and Mascereene Islands).
1839	Extension of above treaty restricting area of Indian Ocean in which the slave trade was allowed and giving the British Navy the right to search Omani dhows.
1841	First British consul sent to Zanzibar.

²The most thorough study of these questions remains Sir Reginald Coupland, The Exploitation of East Africa 1856-1890: The Slave Trade and the Scramble (London: Faber and Faber, 1939). Coupland's Eurocentric approach is no longer accepted, but critics who have questioned Coupland's belief in the predominance of humanitarian motives in England's actions in East Africa have so far failed to take a second look at the massive documentary evidence which Coupland used. See R. M. A. Zwanenberg, "Anti-Slavery, the Ideology of 19th Century Imperialism in East Africa," Historical Association of Kenya, Annual Conference, 1972; and Richard D. Wolff, The Economics of Colonialism: Britain and Kenya 1870-1930 (New Haven: Yale U.P., 1974), pp. 30-46.

- 1847 Treaty, signed in 1845, between British and Sultan of Muscat goes into effect, banning shipment of slaves outside the African dominions of the Sultan.
- 1860-61 Consul Rigby confiscates slaves belonging to Indians in Zanzibar. This policy was not continued by his successors after 1861. British naval vessels begin to confiscate slaves and burn dhows that were in violation of 1845 treaty. Attempts made to force Northern Arabs out of Zanzibar harbor.
- 1862-64 Regulations by Sultan of Zanzibar designed to hinder Northern Arabs. Only East African subjects of Sultan allowed to obtain licenses to carry slaves within his African dominions. No slave shipments allowed January-April, the period of favorable winds to the North.
- 1868 Decree of Sultan ordering that anyone involved in export trade (Northern Arabs or Zanzibaris who sell slaves to them) be punished. Provisions for enforcement established.
- 1873 Sir Bartle Frere pressures Seyyid Bargash to sign treaty abolishing all shipments of slaves by sea and giving the British Navy the right to search vessels and bring them to Zanzibar for trial if they contained slaves. Public slave markets closed.
- 1874 Consul Kirk renews policy of confiscating slaves of Indians.
- 1876 Treaty between the British and the Sultan of Zanzibar bans all slave caravans on land. Penalties to be imposed on slavers. Sultan's officials enforce it on mainland, while the navy continues to capture slave dhows.
- 1888 Imperial British East Africa Company given concession to coast of what is now Kenya by the Sultan. Posts set up in Mombasa, Malindi, and elsewhere. Blockade of Tanganyika coast as a consequence of the German takeover and resistance by the local people.
- 1889 Proclamation by the Sultan declaring that all children born to slaves after 1890 would be free. Never publicly announced or enforced.
- 1890 Zanzibar becomes a British Protectorate. Proclamation of Sultan declares all slaves acquired after 1890 are free. All sales of slaves banned and inheritance of slaves limited to the master's children only. Slaves of Mijikenda (or other local) origin declared free on Kenya coast.

Before 1873 it was legal to take slaves to Zanzibar and the mainland coast. Moreover, the earlier treaties were not enforced until 1861, when British warships began to search dhows for illicit cargoes. The

attempts to stop the export of slaves to Arabia in the 1860's should, if anything, have increased the local supply of slaves. It was doubtful that it did even that, for the number of slaves captured each year varied from 202 to 1,117, whereas the total slave trade of East Africa was in the neighborhood of 20,000 to 25,000. Supplies in Zanzibar and the mainland were adequate and prices remained approximately what they had been in previous years.³

The failure to cut off the trade to Arabia was one reason why the British decided to end all slave trading by sea--the coexistence of legal and illegal branches of the trade made enforcement too difficult.⁴ Seyyid Bargash, threatened with a British blockade and other dire consequences, agreed in 1873 to ban the slave trade by sea, as well as to close public slave markets. This measure had a more serious impact on the slave trade than the previous efforts. The British kept naval vessels in the waters off Zanzibar and thus blocked the sea routes in the relatively narrow area between the mainland and the islands. Since dhows had to pass this stretch of water to get from Kilwa to Arabia, this was a relatively effective way of stopping exports.

The slave traders responded to this threat with their usual imagination. As before, there was at first a period of uncertainty during

³On the slave trade in the 1860's, see Chapter II, pp. 130-42. The figures on captured slaves come from Christopher Lloyd, The Navy and the Slave Trade (London: Longmans, 1949), p. 278.

⁴At one point the British considered setting a quota of slaves that could be imported into Zanzibar for local use. See the testimony of Sir Bartle Frere and Crespigny Vivian before the Select Parliamentary Committee on the East African Slave Trade, PP 1871, XII, 1, pp. 7, 34. On the 1873 treaty, see Coupland, pp. 182-216; and R. J. Gavin, "The Bartle Frere Mission to Zanzibar," Historical Journal, 5 (1962), pp. 122-48.

which supplies were held up at Kilwa and prices fell. Then the traders began to move slaves by land through Dar es Salaam, Bagamoyo, Pangani, Mombasa, Malindi, and north as far as Somalia. Although long and grueling, the trek by land was legal. Mainland plantations had little trouble obtaining the slaves they wanted. Vice-Consul Holmwood, visiting the mainland in 1874 to assess the effects of the previous year's measures, found that all the major settlements were buying many slaves. His estimates of purchases, shown in Table 19, are probably high, but the fact

TABLE 19: Slaves Supplied to Mainland Settlements, 1874

	<u>Number</u>	<u>Price</u>
Pangani, Tanga	1,000	\$20-25
Mombasa and region	1,000	25-30
Takaungu	5,000	25-30
Malindi	1,000	30-35
Lamu and region	2,200	35-40
Somalia	unknown	35-45

Source: Frederic Holmwood, Report, incl. Prideaux to Derby, 24 November 1874, FOCP 2915, p. 8.

that large caravans were making their way to these coastal towns is certain--Holmwood observed them himself, as did other eyewitnesses.⁵ So

⁵ Frederic Holmwood, Report, incl. Prideaux to Derby, 24 November 1874, FOCP 2915, p. 8. Holmwood apparently extrapolated his figures from counting slaves that passed during a high point in the trade. Prideaux to Derby, 9 March 1875, FOCP 2915, p. 121; Kirk to Derby, 9 April 1875, *ibid.*, p. 139. For other accounts of the land traffic, see Frederic Elton, Travels and Researches among the Lakes and Mountains of Eastern and Central Africa, ed., H. B. Cotterill (London: Murray, 1879), pp. 94, 104; Rev. W. S. Price, "Pictures from East Africa--Notes by the Rev. W. S. Price," Church Mission Gleaner, II (1875), p. 42; H. Greffulhe, "Voyage de Lamoo à Zanzibar," Bulletin de la Société de Géographie et d'Études Coloniales de Marseille, II (1878), p. 335.

successful was the trade by land, with the trade by sea uncertain, that prices on the mainland fell. Holmwood's figure of \$30 to \$35 at Malindi represents a substantial drop from Kirk's estimate of \$40 to \$55 the previous year.⁶ Holmwood also found that cultivation along the mainland was flourishing. New farms had been cleared since his visit the year before.⁷

Supplying the islands was a more serious problem. The demand was greatest in Pemba, where clove plantations were expanding rapidly in response to the high prices following the hurricane of 1872. Instead of shipping large cargoes of slaves from ports like Kilwa, the slave traders marched slaves to the mainland opposite Pemba, and then slipped them into the island at night on canoes or small dhows.⁸ Landowners in Pemba paid the canoe owners a commission, and the purchaser of the slaves absorbed the risk. Canoe owners were charging \$2 per slave for this service in 1884.⁹ It was difficult for the British to capture small vessels at night,

⁶Holmwood, FOCP 2915, p. 8; Kirk to Granville, 6 November 1873, FOCP 4207, p. 210.

⁷Holmwood, FOCP 2915, p. 7.

⁸See the following dispatches of consular officials, all from FOCP 2915; Prideaux to Derby, 27 February 1875, p. 113; Holmwood, cited in same to same, 9 March 1875, pp. 124-25; Kirk to Derby, 9 April 1875 and 12 November 1875, pp. 139, 260; Holmwood to Kirk, 10 May 1875, p. 185. The shift to small dhows is clear from a comparison of figures on the number of slaves per dhow in 1866, when exports to Pemba were legal, and the number of slaves in dhows caught off Pemba after 1873. In 1866, 14 dhows going from Zanzibar to Pemba had over 50 slaves. In 1876 and 1879, no dhows captured off Pemba had that many slaves and the largest number (6 of ten in 1876 and 11 of 14 in 1879) had fewer than ten. See Memorandum by Consul Seward on the Slave Traffic in the Port of Zanzibar, n.d. [1866], FO 84/1279; MacDonalld to Admiralty, 28 May 1877, FOCP 3686, pp. 727-28; Adm. Corbett to Admiralty, 8 August 1879, FOCP 4286, pp. 638-39.

⁹Prideaux to Derby, 9 March 1875, FOCP 2915, p. 121; C. S. Smith to Kirk, 5 July 1884, incl. Kirk to Granville, 25 July 1884, FO 84/1678.

but slaveowners had to give up the efficiency of larger dhows.

British officials believed that they had effectively stopped the large-scale export of slaves to Arabia, but they admitted that they had failed to stop the trade to Pemba. Slaves were being smuggled illegally across the water from the damaged plantations of Zanzibar to the productive ones of Pemba, while fresh slaves were arriving from the mainland. Some dhows and canoes were captured, but both naval officers and consular officials believed that more got by.¹⁰ Holmwood, after inspecting Pemba, concluded that as early as 1874, the island had met its special demand for slaves. Slaves from a variety of mainland areas, as well as older slaves, were plentiful on the clove plantations of Pemba.¹¹

When the slave trade by land was abolished in 1876, the usual pattern of temporary despair followed by new techniques of evasion was once again repeated. However, this time the blow struck against the traffic in human beings was more serious. It was now possible for Arab officials in coastal towns, acting on orders of the Sultan, who was in turn pressured by the British, to arrest slave dealers. The traders could no longer claim that their slaves were intended for the legal branches of the slave trade--there were no such branches any more. The Governors and soldiers

¹⁰ Kirk to Granville, 27 May 1873, FOCP 4207, p. 54; Vice-Admiral MacDonald to Admiralty, 28 May 1877, FOCP 3686, p. 724; Holmwood to Kirk, 10 May 1875, FOCP 2915, p. 185; Euan-Smith to Mackinnon, private letter, 1 July 1875, Mackinnon Papers, School of Oriental and African Studies, London; Kirk to Derby, 1 May 1876, FO 84/1453. The view from Zanzibar that the Arabian slave trade was substantially ended is confirmed in the Annual Reports of the Persian Gulf Political Residency and Muscat Political Agency, 1875-76, p. 77, and 1876-77, p. 78, in Selections from the Records of the Government of India, nos. 128, 138, Ind. Of.

¹¹ Holmwood, Memorandum, incl. Prideaux to Derby, 9 March 1875, FOCP 2915, p. 125; Holmwood to Kirk, 10 May 1875, incl. Kirk to Derby, 27 June 1875, ibid., p. 185; Kirk to Derby, 3 May 1881, FOCP 4626, p. 254.

of the Sultan arrested slave dealers and freed slaves in such coastal ports as Windi, Lindi, and in the Bagamoyo-Pangani area, from which slaves had been shipped to Pemba.¹² In Kilwa, long the principal slave-trading port, the slave trade ceased at the time of the 1876 Decree, revived when the Governor connived in it, and ceased again when he was removed by the Sultan.¹³ Caravans began to avoid Kilwa and other coastal ports, moving further inland to avoid the Sultan's soldiers.¹⁴ The situation at Kilwa was bad enough for the slave traders that they sold large numbers of slaves to the nearby Makonde--previously among the most common victims of the trade--who used them in their fields. With more manpower and fewer sources of income the business of rubber collection picked up near Kilwa.¹⁵

The effort of the British Navy to blockade Pemba continued, while the Sultan's soldiers sometimes captured newly landed slaves on the islands. Between 1876 and 1884, many small groups of slaves and occasional large cargoes were captured. On the whole, however, the number of captures was

¹²Kirk to Derby, 1 May 1877, FOCP 3686, p. 498; same to same, 6 April 1877, *ibid.*, p. 564; Cap. Tracet to Kirk, 6 March 1878, FOCP 3928, p. 358; Holmwood to Kirk, 30 January 1880, FOCP 4498, p. 430; Kirk to Granville, 3 May 1881, FOCP 4624, p. 253.

¹³Kirk to Derby, 11 December 1876, 5 February 1877, FOCP 3686, p. 487, 520-21.

¹⁴Vice-Admiral MacDonald to Admiralty, 28 May 1877, FOCP 3686, pp. 734-35; Kirk to Salisbury, 18 June 1878, FOCP 3928, p. 413; Kirk to Granville, 3 September 1881, FOCP 4626, p. 315.

¹⁵Increased cultivation in the former slave-exporting areas of the southern coast as well as expanded sales of slaves to African peoples near the coast or inland were important trends after 1876. Kirk to Derby, 11 December 1876, FOCP 3686, p. 487; letter of Chauncy Maples, missionary in Masasi, reprinted in Anti-Slavery Reporter, Series IV, III (1883), pp. 229-30; Holmwood to Kirk, 30 January 1880, FOCP 4498, p. 428.

smaller than officials expected. They concluded, probably correctly, that this reflected a real decline in the slave trade to Zanzibar and Pemba.¹⁶ In addition many of the slaves caught near Pemba turned out to be experienced slaves being moved from Zanzibar.¹⁷

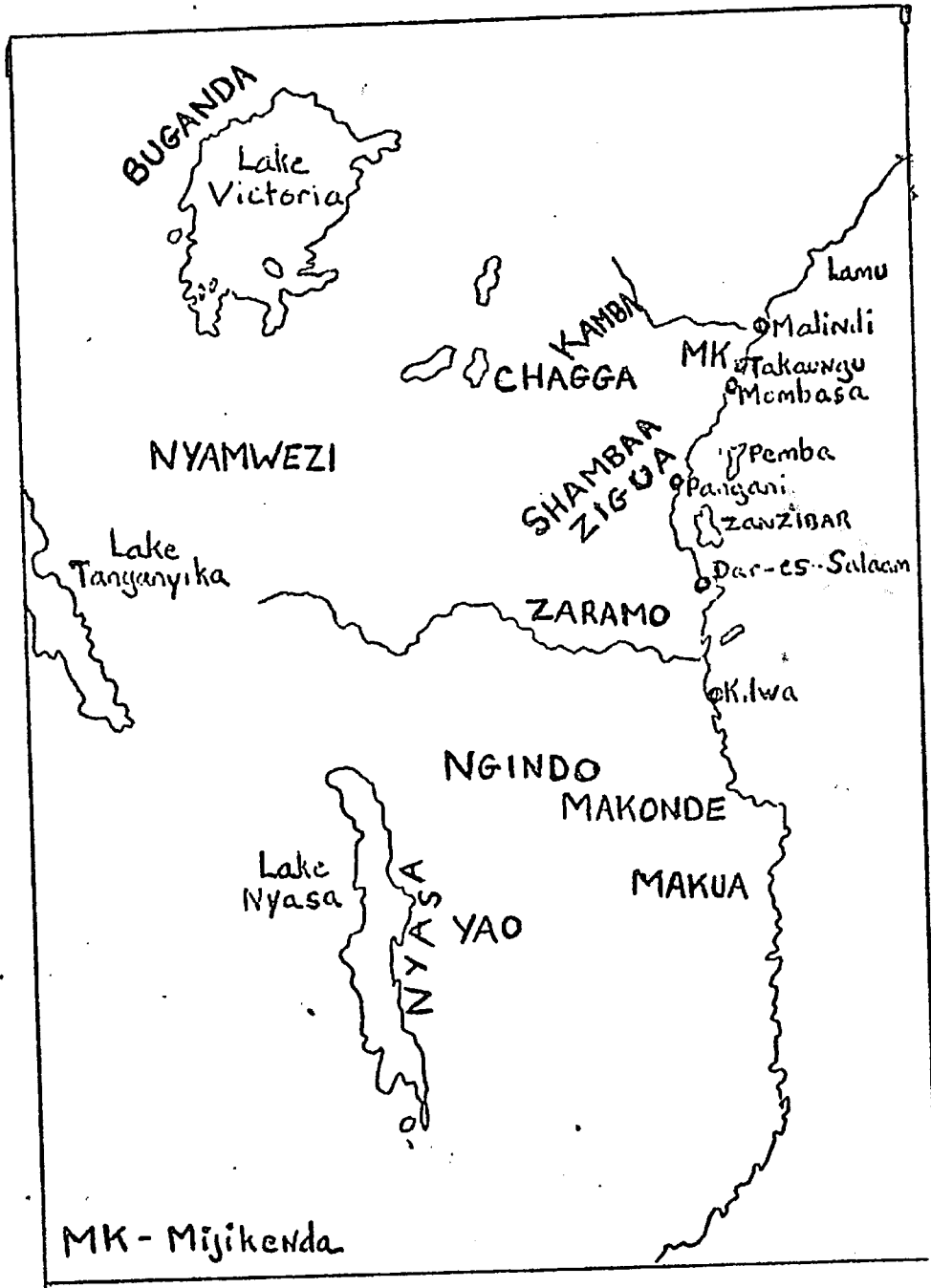
Slave traders also seemed to be obtaining slaves from sources closer to Pemba, instead of relying solely on the long and dangerous routes to the deep interior. People such as the Shambaa and Zigra living inland from the coast opposite Pemba, were torn by wars. The wars produced captives and were in turn exacerbated by the guns and trade goods which local leaders could obtain for slaves.¹⁸ Such slaves could be taken from concealed inlets on the nearby coast to Pemba. However, similar conflicts in the far interior--including the regions of Lake Nyasa, Uganda, and the eastern Congo--also produced slaves, and substantial numbers of them

¹⁶ Kirk to Derby, 28 June 1877, FOCP 3686, p. 629; Kirk to Derby, 4 June 1878, Cap. Sullivan to Rear-Adm. Corbett, 20 June 1878, Rear-Adm. Corbett to Admiralty, 28 June 1878, all in FOCP 3928, pp. 305, 530-31, 535; Kirk to Granville, 24 November 1883, FOCP 4914, p. 219. The reports of foreign consuls and visitors generally confirm the British viewpoint. Consul Cheney, Report, 1883-84, incl. Cheney to State Department, 1 July 1884, US Consul, 7; LeP. Charmetant, D'Alger à Zanzibar (Paris: Librairie de la société bibliographique, 1882), p. 148; Joseph Thomson, To the Central African Lakes and Back (London: Cass, 1881, repr. 1968), Vol. II, p. 272.

¹⁷ The proportion of experienced slaves among those captured increased from 7% in 1876 to 80% in 1879 and indicates the efficacy of the measures on land. Kirk to Salisbury, 23 February 1880, FOCP 4495, p. 415.

¹⁸ Steven Feierman, The Shambaa Kingdom: A History (Madison: Wisconsin U.P., 1974), esp. pp. 169-70. Similar conflicts among other Tanzanian peoples are discussed in Andrew Roberts, ed., Tanzania before 1900 (Nairobi: East African Publishing House, 1969). Further study of the connection between the slave trade and politics is needed, and it should attempt to answer some of the questions raised in relation to the Atlantic slave trade by C. C. Wrigley, "Historicism in Africa: Slavery and State Formation," African Affairs, 70 (1971), pp. 113-24.

MAP IV: Sources of Slaves



were brought to the coast in defiance of the risks of interception.¹⁹ At times, these slaves were kept near the coast until they learned Swahili and could therefore be passed off as domestic slaves in case they were caught while en route to a plantation.²⁰ As these efforts to decrease risk were being made, the old land route from Kilwa to the coast opposite Pemba and north to Mombasa and Malindi was relatively quiet, and by 1878 large caravans were no longer reaching Malindi.²¹ The problems of the northern route may have brought about increased activity along the southern end of the coast, especially in the slave trade to Madagascar.²²

The machinations of the slave traders suggest that they were having trouble getting slaves to purchasers on the islands and the plantations

¹⁹At the time of abolition, the tribes that had long provided the greatest number of slaves, the Yao and the Nyasa peoples, were still the most numerous, but Manyema from the Congo, Zaramo from near the coast, and Nyamwezi from the middle of Tanzania were common as well, and a smaller number of slaves from Buganda made it as far as the islands. Last to Mathews, 10 January 1901, PP 1901, XLVIII, 173, p. 29; and Last to Raikes, 5 February 1902, PP 1903, XLV, 955, pp. 8-9. On the nature of the slave trade in the far interior, see C. F. Holmes, "Zanzibari Influence at the Southern End of Lake Victoria: The Lake Route," African Historical Studies, IV (1971), pp. 477-503.

²⁰C. S. Smith to Kirk, 5 July 1884, FOCP 4165, pp. 219-21; S. Tristram Pruen, The Arab and the African Experiences in Eastern Equatorial Africa During a Residence of Three Years (London: Seeley, 1891), p. 223. Evidence from slave autobiographies confirms this. Many stayed for long periods near the coast before being shipped to Zanzibar. See A. C. Madan, ed., Kiungani or Story and History from Central Africa (London: George Bell, 1887), pp. 71-2; story of Persis Chimwai, Swahili MS178, Swahili Collection, University of Dar es Salaam; P. L. Jones-Bateman, ed., The Autobiography of an African Slave-Boy (London: UMCA, 1891), pp. 21-3.

²¹The views of the missionaries were cited by Kirk to Derby, 8 January 1878, FOCP 3928, p. 304. See also Kirk to Granville, 16 March 1884, FOCP 5165, p. 161; and Greffulhe, p. 335.

²²Miles to Granville, 23 June 1883; FOCP 4914, pp. 154-55. The influence of the Madagascar trade on the northern trade also needs study.

of the northern mainland. The scanty data on prices support this conclusion. A visitor to Zanzibar in 1882 found that slaves cost \$60 to \$100, while Vice-Consul C. S. Smith wrote that in 1884 prices in Pemba varied from \$50 to \$80.²³ These prices are two or three times greater than those before the crackdown. Nevertheless, the continual captures made by the navy indicate that the chances of success made it worthwhile to try to smuggle slaves.

Then, in 1884, a substantial revival of the slave trade took place. It lasted for four or five years until it fell victim to the European takeover of Africa. The revival stemmed from two factors: on the demand side, the ample supply of slaves that observers noted in 1874 had worn thin. Prices were up and, as shall be seen in the next sections, there is some evidence of shortages of labor in the fields. On the supply side, a devastating famine--still remembered today--struck the mainland from Tanganyika to Kenya. People were desperate enough to sell their neighbors, their children, or even themselves in order to survive. Wars also continued in the coastal hinterland and in the far interior. Famine and wars made slaves available relatively close to the coast of Kenya and to the mainland adjacent to Zanzibar, making it possible to avoid the risks of the march from Kilwa north.

The increase in the slave trade in 1884 was perceived by most observers on the scene, including Consul Kirk, who then had a decade of experience in Zanzibar. In October, 1884, he reported a large increase in slaves coming from Zaramo territory in famine-stricken Tanganyika.²⁴

²³ Capitaine Storms, "L'esclavage entre le Tanganika et la côte est," Le Mouvement Antiesclavagiste, I (1888-89), p. 17; Report by Lieut. Smith, incl. Kirk to Granville, 13 March 1884, FOCP 5165, p. 160; Kirk to Derby, 22 June 1876, FO 84/1453.

Other witnesses in Zanzibar and the mainland noted the increase in caravan movements.²⁵ In 1886, Kirk wrote that the slave trade was greater still, while a British Admiral found that the export of slaves from the mainland to Pemba was "more or less continuous throughout the year."²⁶ The Navy was making more captures than before, but these were only a small percentage of the illicit traffic.²⁷ The Arabs, wrote a missionary in 1889, had recently "stocked their plantations with slaves."²⁸

While Zanzibar and Pemba increasingly drew slaves from the famine-ravished coastal hinterland and the war-stricken interior, the plantation owners of Mombasa, Malindi, and other plantation zones to the north were also diversifying their sources of slaves. With the route from Lake Nyasa via Kilwa blocked or at least risky, slaves came by more direct routes from the interior. Slaves of Chagga origin from the region near Mt. Kilimanjaro came to Mombasa through the Teita hills.²⁹ Shambaa slaves

²⁴Kirk to Granville, 24 October 1884, FOCP 5165, p. 250.

²⁵Ledoux to MAE, 13 December 1884, MAE, 5; letter of J. A. Williams, missionary with the UMCA, in Anti-Slavery Reporter, Series IV, VI (1886), p. 130; Smith to Kirk, 5 July 1884, incl. Kirk to Granville, 25 July 1884; Bishop Smythies, cited by C. S. Smith, "Explorations in Zanzibar Dominions," RGS Supplementary Papers, II (1889), p. 104.

²⁶Kirk to Rosebery, 1 July 1886, FOCP 5459, pp. 321-22; Rear-Adm. Richards to Macgregor, 30 August 1886, PP 1887, LXXVIII, 313, p. 21. See also Rear-Adm. Fremantle to Admiralty, 23 October 1888, PP 1888, LXIV, 255, p. 101, and Les PP. Baur et LeRoy, A Travers le Zanguebar (Tours: Alfred Mame et fils, 1887), p. 109.

²⁷Smith to Kirk, 5 July 1884, incl. Kirk to Granville, 25 July 1884, FO 84/1678; Kirk to FO, 20 August 1889, FOCP 6010, p. 39. Lists of dhows captured each year can be found in the annual volumes on the slave trade in the Parliamentary Papers.

²⁸Memorandum by Horace Waller, 1889, in UMCA Archives, Box D4.

were sent via the Teita region to Malindi and other coastal areas.³⁰

From the interior of Kenya came some slaves of Masai, Kikuyu, and Kamba origin. Most of these slaves were brought by traders of coastal origin, but Kamba sometimes assisted them.³¹ Behind Malindi, the Sabaki River was used by slave caravans as a route between the interior of Kenya and the richest plantation area of the coast.³²

These sources had been used to only a limited extent before the impact of the 1876 treaty was felt.³³ Likewise, hardly any slaves had come from the Mijikenda. This was only prudent, for the coastal people lacked the military force to risk serious conflict with the Mijikenda or to prevent slaves from returning to nearby homes. In fact, many Mijikenda shared in the growing prosperity of the coast from the 1840's onward and purchased slaves from the slave traders of Mombasa.³⁴ However,

²⁹Gissing to Kirk, 26 June 1884, FOCP 5165, p. 216; Kirk to Granville, 31 May 1885, FO 84/1725. An informant in Mombasa mentioned ex-slaves of Chagga origin among those whom he knew in his youth. MSA 28. An old Mambrui Arab said people had Kamba, Teita, and Chagga slaves. MAL 44. However, most informants refer to slaves and ex-slaves as "Wanyasa," which suggests the preponderance of slaves from the distant interior.

³⁰Henry Binns to CMS, 29 September 1879, CMS CA5/031/11.

³¹Smith to Kirk, 18 June 1885, PP 1886, LXII, 515, p. 124; William Astor Chanler, Through Jungle and Desert (London: Macmillan, 1896), p. 489; John Ainsworth, Report on Machakos District, 1893, incl. IBEA Co. to FO, 31 August 1893, FO 2/59; J. R. L. MacDonald, Soldiering and Surveying in British East Africa 1891-1894 (London: Arnold, 1897), p. 44.

³²W. W. A. Fitzgerald, Travels in the Coastlands of British East Africa and the Islands of Zanzibar and Pemba (London: Chapman and Hall, 1898), p. 157.

³³Greffulhe, p. 335, claims that the land route to Malindi was effective until 1878, when the actions of the Sultan's Governors along the way blocked the movement of caravans. On the primacy of Kilwa as a source of slaves before that time, see Chapter III, pp. 182, 208-10.

in times of famine--including a particularly bad one in the late 1830's --Mijikenda pawned children in exchange for grain. Apparently, the parents often attempted to redeem their children when the famine was over, but the owners frequently asked prices that the parents could not afford. Such children either remained on the coast as slaves or were shipped to Arabia.³⁵ This pattern was repeated in the disastrous famine of 1884. Large numbers of Mijikenda sold themselves or their children to the coastal plantation owners, who had been spared the drought afflicting the immediate hinterland. Most likely, the Mijikenda expected that such people could be redeemed, but this rarely happened.³⁶ Such sales were frequent throughout the famine, but as soon as it ended in 1885, they stopped.³⁷

As in many parts of East and Central Africa, captives taken in local fighting among the Mijikenda subgroups were often sold as slaves.³⁸

³⁴ Charles Guillain, Documents sur l'histoire, la géographie et le commerce de l'Afrique Orientale (Paris: Bertrand, 1856-58), Vol. 2/2, pp. 267-68; Richard Burton, Zanzibar: City, Island, Coast (London: Tinsley, 1873), Vol. II, p. 99.

³⁵ Ludwig Krapf, Memoir on the East African Slave Trade, 1853, CMS CAS/016/179; Guillain, Vol. 2/2, pp. 267-68; R. L. Playfair, "Visit to the Wanika Country in the Vicinity of Mombassa and the Progress made by the Christain Missionaries at that place," TBGS, XVII (1864), p. 274.

³⁶ Haggard to Kirk, 8 September 1884, FOCP 5165, p. 233; Kirk to Granville, 23 September 1884, ibid., p. 227; Rev. Binns, cited by J. Duckworth in Anti-Slavery Reporter, Series IV, Vol. 22 (1902), pp. 24-5; Euan-Smith to Salisbury, 30 May 1888, PP 1888, LXXIV, 255, p. 18; Hardinge, Report, PP 1898, LX, 199, p. 61. On pawnship among one Mijikenda group see H. M. T. Kayamba, "Notes on the Wadigo," Tanganyika Notes and Records, 23 (1947), p. 96.

³⁷ Kirk to Granville, 14 February 1885, PP 1886, LXII, 515, p. 106.

³⁸ Letter of J. Erhardt, 27 October 1854, Church Mission Intelligencer, VI (1885), p. 96; Kirk to Granville, 31 May 1873, FOCP 4207, p. 56; Bishop Steere to Penney, 30 June 1881, UMCA, A1 (III), Box 1, fl. 348; Smith to Kirk, 18 March 1885, PP 1886, LXII, 515, p. 122.

However, not until the late nineteenth century is there evidence of slave raids by coastal Arabs. It is impossible to date the beginning of such raids, but they may have had something to do with Arab perceptions of Mijikenda weakness after the famine of 1884.³⁹ A number of Giriama--the Mijikenda group living now behind Malindi--claim that Arabs often raided Mijikenda villages for slaves. Although Mijikenda traded with the coastal towns, it was dangerous to go there alone for fear of being kidnapped.⁴⁰ When questioned about the exact identity of the slave raiders and kidnapers, they most frequently mentioned the Mazrui followers of Mbaruk bin Rashid, Governor of Takaungu in the late nineteenth century.⁴¹ He had developed a personal following capable of military action, which he used against the Al-Busaidi in Mombasa as well as against Mijikenda. Missionaries also reported fighting between Mijikenda and Mazrui in 1879 and with greater intensity in 1884-85. In April, 1884, the Giriama repulsed a heavy attack by the Mazrui by use of guerrilla tactics.⁴² Mijikenda fighting ability was undoubtedly the main reason why more extensive slave raids did not take place.⁴³ The famine changed the balance of power

³⁹This possibility was suggested by Vice-Consul Haggard to Kirk, 8 September 1884, FOCP 5165, pp. 23-33.

⁴⁰MAL 16, 48, 49, 62. A person from another Mijikenda group, the Ribe, made similar points. MSA 8.

⁴¹MSA 8. MAL 62, 65. An informant of slave descent mentioned the Mazrui raids, and added that Suleiman bin Abdalla Al-Mauli, another man with an independent military following, also was involved in slave raids. MAL 30.

⁴²George David to CMS, 28 February 1879, CMS CA5/06/3; Handford to Lang, 16, 19 April, 17 May 1884, CMS G3/A5/0/1884/48, 57, 66; same to same, 18 February 1885, CMS G3/A5/0/1885/29.

⁴³It was also risky to keep Mijikenda slaves, since it was easy

somewhat, but the Mijikenda remained a secondary source of slaves for the coastal plantations.⁴⁴

The various techniques for obtaining slaves were ultimately negated by the takeover of East Africa by European powers. In 1888 the Germans moved onto the coast of Tanganyika in force, becoming embroiled in a conflict with the coastal people. The ensuing blockade of the coast, and more important, the German victory and assault on the interior, eliminated the best source of slaves for Zanzibar and Pemba. A British chartered company moved into Kenya in 1888, with headquarters in Mombasa and representatives in Malindi. Zanzibar became a British Protectorate in 1890, and officials kept watch for any slave smuggling. A few cases of slave trading were uncovered in all these areas throughout the 1890's, but the advent of imperial rule meant the end of that form of commerce on any significant scale.⁴⁵

for them to run away. An Arab of Mamburi said that slaveowners would not want Giriama slaves "even for free" because they would run away. MSA 44.

⁴⁴In a list of 379 slaves claimed by Rashid bin Salim Al-Mazrui, 11 were Mijikenda and 193 Wanyasa. Most of the rest were wazalia. List, included in Rashid's claim for compensation, 1908, CP/1/62/46. Most informants of slave origin say that there were few Mijikenda among their fellow slaves. MAL 24, 31, 34, 38. A different opinion was offered by MAL 35. Another informant mentioned Mijikenda slaves, along with Wanyasa, Wachagga, and Warima (from the coast of Tanzania). Bi Kaje, interviewed by Margaret Strobel, 10 April 1973.

⁴⁵Rear-Adm. Kennedy to Admiralty, 29 January 1894, PP 1895, LXXI, 143, p. 23; Rennell Rodd to Rosebery, 31 December 1893, ibid., pp. 17-8. Lists of captured dhows and reports by officials for this period may be found in Documents relatifs à la repression de la traite des esclaves publiées en exécution des articles LXXXI et suivants de l'acte général de Bruxelles (Brussels, 1892--). In 1891, the price of slaves in Pemba was \$100, even higher than in the lean years before 1884. Fitzgerald, Travels, p. 610. See also Vice-Adm. Fremantle to Admiralty, 25 February 1891, PP 1890-1, LVII, 1057, p. 2.

The success of slave traders in preserving their business between 1876 and 1890 is difficult to assess. As with most clandestine activities, quantitative information is unavailable. By the late 1870's, the systematically organized business was at an end. It is hard to imagine that the secret canoe voyages and petty kidnapping were able to accomplish the same results as the enormous and centralized supply mechanism of the 1860's. As prices rose within East Africa, however, there was less incentive to send slaves on the vulnerable sea route to Arabia, so that available supplies were concentrated on the plantations. Some people were still willing to accept the risks of linking suppliers and customers. Slaves from deep in the interior continued to reach the coast, while increased efforts were made to exploit the areas nearer the coastal plantations. Slaves of Zaramo and Zigua origin became more common to the islands, Mijikenda, Shambaa, and Chagga on the Kenya coast. The numbers of slaves that arrived were undoubtedly less than the numbers that reached Zanzibar and the Kenya coast before the late 1870's, but Arabs and Swahili devised new ways to maintain the supply as best they could. It remains to assess the state of agriculture during these trying times.

Agricultural Production, 1873-1890

The real test of Zanzibar's and Pemba's manpower was the ability of slaves to pick the cloves. In the 1860's, with slaves readily available, good harvests varied between 150,000 and 300,000 frasilas, and were more likely to be near the lower figure. With prices falling below \$2 per frasila, \$300,000 worth of exports was a good year. After the hurricane of 1872, prices rose, and slaveowners transferred slaves to Pemba to ensure that all trees would be thoroughly picked. Many planted new

trees there instead of or in addition to rebuilding their old plantations in Zanzibar. With even more fertile soil than Zanzibar, Pemba became the leading clove production area. A clove tree takes at least six years to reach maturity, more to attain maximum productivity, so that the real burden fell on the slaves around 1880. Table 20 shows the state of the clove industry.

These figures clearly show the results of the maturation around 1880-81 of the clove trees planted after 1872.⁴⁶ A further large increase occurred in 1889 and 1890. Possibly this increase reflects better reporting, but it may also result from continued investment in Pemba once that island proved its worth in the early harvests. In the 1890's, Pemba was providing two-thirds to three-fourths of the cloves shipped from Zanzibar harbor.⁴⁷ One might also speculate that the revival of the slave trade in 1884 provided slaves to increase picking. What is certain, however, is that the largest clove crops in the history of Zanzibar and Pemba were being gathered in the early 1890's. No measures had been taken to provide planters with non-slave labor, and Fitzgerald, in 1891, found that few planters used it.⁴⁸ No technological innovations occurred.

It is possible that labor was shifted to cloves from other pursuits, but

⁴⁶This point is also emphasized by the American Consul, Batchelder, in his trade report in United States Commercial Relations, 1880-81, p. 396.

⁴⁷Fitzgerald, p. 560.

⁴⁸Ibid., pp. 549-50. Fitzgerald and others noted some use of hired labor, but Pemba lacked the market in slaves for hire that existed in Zanzibar town. It would be possible to hire slaves from neighboring plantations if the period of the harvest was not uniform, and limited numbers of Wapemba were employed around 1890. Ibid., pp. 539, 549-50; Report by Lieutenant Smith on Pemba, incl. Kirk to Granville, 13 March 1884, PP 1885, LXXIII, 390, p. 50; Vice-Adm. Macdonald to Admiralty, 28 May 1877, FOCP 3686, p. 725.

TABLE 20: Clove Exports from Zanzibar and Pemba, 1867-92

	<u>Exports (frasilas)</u>	<u>Exports (dollars)</u>	<u>Price (\$/fra)</u>
1867-68		\$200-300,000	\$1-2
1872-73	=50-60,000 ^P	500,000 ^P	9
1873-74	=20,000	200,000 ^P	
1875-79			9 (av.)
1878-79	=85,000	765,000	
1880-81	140,000	1,260,000	
1883-84	300,000	1,050,000	3.75
1884-85	185,000	630,000 (av.)	=3.3
1885-86	159,000		
1886-87	.130,000 130,000	=455,000	3.3-3.7
1889	285,000 (av.)		
1890	509,862		
1891	393,640 378,000	1,134,720	=3.0
1892	357,669	=895,000	2.5-2.75

av. source indicates this is an average figure for that time.

= calculated from other data in this table.

P exports of Pemba only; Zanzibar production very small.

Sources: Prideaux, Report on Zanzibar, 1873-74, FOCP 2915, p. 82; Guillois to MAE, 10 December 1873, MAE, 3; Consul Batchelder, Report on Zanzibar, United States Commercial Relations, 1880-81, p. 396; Miles to Granville, 1 February 1883, FOCP 4914, p. 112; Trade Report on Zanzibar, 1883-84, incl. Cheney to State Department, 1 July 1884, US Consul, 7; Consul Pratt, United States Commercial Relations, 1887, p. 838; Frederic Holmwood, Memorandum on the Clove Trade of Zanzibar, 4 February 1888, FO 84/1915; H. Greffulhe, note annexed to Lacau to MAE, 16 March 1889, MAE, 6; Report on Zanzibar, Foreign Office, Diplomatic and Consular Series, no. 991, 1891, Supplement 1, pp. 6-14; ibid., 1892, p. 9; "Clove Industry of Zanzibar," Kew Bulletin, 1893, p. 20; Fitzgerald, Travels, p. 560.

the increased number of Europeans in the area was diverting urban slaves to caravan portage.⁴⁹ Possibly masters found new ways of encouraging slaves to increase productivity, but there is no evidence of this.⁵⁰ Whatever changes were made, the slave supply of Zanzibar must have been sufficient in the 1890's to perform its most exacting task.

In view of the fifteen-odd years of measures against the slave trade, an explanation of productivity must fall back on two possibilities: slaves were reproducing themselves and/or new slaves were being imported. The former possibility goes against the opinions of most observers, who believed that the birth rate among slaves was low. The latter implies that the British blockade of Zanzibar and Pemba failed to stop slave imports to those islands. Most likely, both factors helped maintain the slave population. Of slaves freed in Zanzibar in 1900-1, 31% were locally born and the rest came from the mainland.⁵¹ The opinions of observers--who had no training in demography--about the birth rate were probably exaggerated, while significant numbers of slaves were smuggled into the islands.⁵²

⁴⁹ See Chapter V, p. 340 n. 210.

⁵⁰ Finding new sources of labor after abolition required the resources of the British bureaucracy and the help of the governments of Kenya and Tanganyika. Wapemba, Wahadimu, and mainland Africans were recruited and transported to Pemba at the time of the harvest. Some of the measures used to recruit labor amounted to forced labor, while taxes forced others to work. In the early twentieth century, wage labor was also becoming important in many parts of East Africa. These resources were not at the disposal of the Sultanate. There is no adequate study of post-abolition Zanzibar, but see L. W. Hollingsworth, Zanzibar under the Foreign Office 1890-1913 (London: Macmillan, 1953).

⁵¹ Those born on the mainland had either survived 27 years in Zanzibar, which must have been close to the average life span for Zanzibaris, slave or free, or else had been smuggled in illegally after 1873. The figures are from Last to Mathews, 10 January 1901, PP 1901, XLVIII, 173, pp. 29-30; and Last to Raikes, 5 February 1902, PP 1903, XLV, 955, pp. 8-9.

Probably, neither self-reproduction nor smuggling would have sufficed by itself, but together they provided enough slaves to pick the cloves. The available evidence does not permit a more complete or certain explanation, but sufficient numbers must have been present in the clove plantations of Zanzibar and Pemba.

The reports of visitors to clove-growing areas suggest that the expanding harvests were not gathered without difficulty. The crisis period of 1876-90 began with adequate supplies of labor, despite a deadly cholera epidemic in 1869-70, the extension of planting in Pemba after 1872, and the anti-slave trade treaty of 1873. In the ensuing years 1876-84, expanding clove production coincided with the most effective enforcement of the prohibitions against the slave trade. In 1880, when the first trees planted after the hurricane were bearing, Kirk noted that the demand for slaves was high.⁵³ However, in 1882-83--by which time expanded harvests had driven down the price of cloves--Consul Miles found that the demand for slaves in Pemba had fallen. In Zanzibar, "The Arab shambas have been pretty well stocked."⁵⁴ Miles may have gone too far, for one year later Vice-Consul Smith, touring Pemba, saw underbrush growing among clove trees and land that had once been tilled reverting to bush. He attributed the deterioration in agriculture to a lack of slave labor.⁵⁵

⁵²The data do not permit any conclusive analysis of demographic trends, but the question of reproduction by slaves is discussed in Chapter VI.

⁵³Kirk to Salisbury, 23, February 1880, FOCP 4498, p. 413.

⁵⁴Miles to Granville, 15 December 1882, and 23 June 1883, FOCP 4914, pp. 93, 154-55. A French visitor in 1881 noted that the export of slaves had ceased but that local proprietors still had slaves. Charles Courret, A l'est et à l'ouest dans l'Océan Indien (Paris: Chevalier-Marescq, 1884), p. 133.

⁵⁵Smith, PP 1885, LXXIII, 390, p. 49.

Indeed, his visit coincided with the low point of the slave trade. It may well be that the slaves brought to Pemba after the famine of 1884 helped postpone the decline of the labor force. The next visitor to the plantation areas, Fitzgerald, presented a mixed picture.⁵⁶ He saw many uncultivated fields and neglected clove plantations, and blamed this under-cultivation on the scarcity of slave labor. One plantation that he visited had half the complement of slaves that was needed.⁵⁷ Some attempts were being made in Pemba to hire Wapemba to pick cloves for wages. In Zanzibar, a few proprietors allowed nonslaveowners to squat on their land and grow some cloves for their own benefit provided that they would pick the owner's trees. But such labor, he wrote, was unusual--only a few free laborers were hired in the picking season and year-round cultivation was done entirely by slaves.⁵⁸ At the same time, Fitzgerald saw other plantations that were well cared for. In fact, he saw many young clove plants--an indication that planters had enough confidence to go through the arduous process of planting new trees--and at one point observed that the cultivation of cloves in Pemba seemed to be increasing.⁵⁹

Fitzgerald's visit came in the year following a decree by the new Protectorate government that all newly acquired slaves be free and that only the children, not other heirs, of a slaveowner could inherit slaves.

⁵⁶There are indications, however, that in the interim Arab plantation owners were complaining about shortages of slaves. Vice-Consul Berkeley to Euan-Smith, 14 June 1888, FOCP 5896, p. 283; Lacau to MAE, 3 May 1888, MAE, 5.

⁵⁷Fitzgerald, Travels, pp. 539, 549-50.

⁵⁸Ibid., pp. 539, 549-50, 606-7.

⁵⁹Ibid., pp. 525, 606.

This made the earlier decrees against slave trading easier to enforce and for the first time specified circumstances under which legally acquired slaves had to be freed. The decree of 1890 was a major step towards the abolition of slavery itself, which finally came in 1897 in Zanzibar, ten years later on the Kenya coast. The year 1890 was the beginning of the end, and officials throughout the decade commented on the steadily dwindling supply of slave labor. They, like their predecessors, were probably exaggerating, for clove harvests remained large.⁶⁰

The pessimistic views of observers must be reconciled with the customs figures that indicate that more cloves than ever were being picked. Observers may well have exaggerated the extent of decline by neglecting to note that land was often deliberately allowed to revert to bush. The instances of neglected plantations--in the midst of others which were flourishing--suggest that some owners were able to master the intricacies of clandestine slave buying better than others and that some plantations had higher attrition rates of slaves than others. Finally, the extent of clove cultivation, especially in Pemba, had expanded greatly during a period of high prices when Zanzibar's plantations were temporarily out of production. The subsequent decline in the price would discourage intensive cultivation of the expanded plantations. The fact that cloves were a glut on the world market is as reasonable an explanation for under-cultivation as lack of labor. The evidence indicates that as of 1890

⁶⁰The Consul in 1892 estimated that one-fourth to one-third of the clove crop would remain unpicked for lack of labor, but failed to note that even this harvest was a glut on the market. Portal to Rosebery, 2 October 1892, FO 84/2233. See also Hardinge to Kimberley, 20 February 1895, PP 1895, LXXI, 143, p. 32; and Hardinge to Salisbury, 10 January 1896, PP 1896, LIX, 395, p. 23. On the continuing large clove harvests in the 1890's, see R. H. Crofton, Statistics of the Zanzibar Protectorate (Zanzibar: Government Printer, 1933), pp. 16-7.

the labor supply to clove plantations was a problem, and one which undoubtedly resulted in hardship for many slaveowners. But it does not point to an economic crisis. Cloves were still being grown on the plantations of the Arabs of Zanzibar and Pemba.

In fact, the economic difficulties of the Zanzibari economy must be explained in broader terms than the decline of slaves. As a single factor, overproduction did more to undermine the position of plantation owners than did lack of labor. After the major expansion of the clove industry in the 1840's, prices fell from \$5 per frasila to less than \$2, shot up to \$9 after the hurricane of 1872, and then declined to around \$2 again. Although Zanzibar had a near-monopoly of the world's cloves, it could not overcome the inherent limitations of the spice market.⁶¹

The other principal export crop continued to be the coconut. Coconut and copra exports fell during the post-hurricane period, but as the clove price fell, coconut exports rose. By the 1890's they were back to roughly the same level as in the 1860's, an earlier period of low clove prices, that is \$200,000 to \$300,000 per year.⁶² Not only did Zanzibar have to compete with the mainland coast in the trade in coconut products, but the only important buyer in East Africa was France, and she had other sources of oils in West Africa.⁶³ The only product which

⁶¹ See Chapter II, p. 167 and Table 20. In the 1890's, a higher proportion of clove exports, about 40%, went to Europe and America than before. See the figures on clove exports for 1892-93, incl. Strickland to Mathews, 31 January 1894, FOCP 6526.

⁶² Crofton, Statistics, p. 19; Fitzgerald, Travels, p. 564.

⁶³ Foreign Office, Diplomatic and Consular Report on Zanzibar, No. 1194, 1892, Table D and p. 9; Trade Report on Zanzibar, 1886-87, incl. Pratt to U.S. State Department, 20 September 1887, US Consul, 8.

experience indicated were reasonable alternatives to cloves had limited market possibilities in the Indian Ocean market.

Zanzibar's credit system was weakened by ethnic particularism. Indians remained the main source of credit into the twentieth century, and they were unable to make use of the principal form of security that was available, slaves. Consul Rigby's actions of confiscating slaves of Indians in 1860 were not followed up by his immediate successors but were repeated by Kirk from 1873 to 1875--with lasting effect.⁶⁴ Thus in the very year when Pemba was stocking its plantations with slaves, credit was threatened. Some plantation owners found it difficult to obtain credit at all, and the best credit risks had to pay high interest rates--up to 15 or 25%.⁶⁵ The loan was made either on the plantation or on the crop itself.⁶⁶ With buoyant clove prices, the Arabs of Pemba could invest heavily in slaves, but when prices fell they were in serious trouble. Meanwhile, the principal item, slaves, for which credit was desired was rising in price: from \$20-30 around 1870 to \$50-80 in 1884 and \$100 in 1891 in the principal clove growing areas. Much of the clove land of Zanzibar and Pemba was therefore mortgaged to Indians.⁶⁷ However,

⁶⁴ Kirk's actions are summarized by Coupland, Exploitation, p. 219. Tharia Topan, one of relatively few Indians who had gone deeply into clove production, had to free hundreds of slaves. According to his biography, he gave his freed slaves huts and hired many as wage laborers. Mohamed Hussein Tharia Topan, "Biography of Sir Tharia Topan Knight," MS, 1960-63, in possession of Farouk Topan, University of Nairobi.

⁶⁵ Guillois to MAE, 15 October 1873, MAE, 3; Smith, Report on Pemba, PP 1885, LXXIII, 390, p. 50.

⁶⁶ Euan-Smith to Derby, 31 July 1875, FOCP 2915, p. 209.

⁶⁷ Fitzgerald, Travels, p. 611; Donald Mackenzie, "A Report on Slavery and the Slave-Trade in Zanzibar, Pemba, and the Mainland of the

as noted in Chapter II, Indians were reluctant to foreclose--partly because they could not themselves cultivate with slave labor, partly because they preferred business to farming. The system had a fragile stability: squeezed between low prices, rising capital costs, and expensive interest payments, Arab estate owners remained on their plantations. They were still there when slavery was abolished and continued to be plantation owners even after they lost their slaves.⁶⁸ British predictions--dating from 1860--of the imminent demise of the Arab ruling class did not come to pass. They became poorer, but did not lose their position as landed proprietors.

These problems were not new. They were made worse, however, by a new tax structure designed to take advantage of the high prices for cloves in the late 1870's. An attempt to collect a 5% tax from all growers in the 1860's had proven to be too much trouble, and the only tax on cloves was the standard 5% import duty charged on cloves sent to Zanzibar harbor from Pemba for sale abroad. When prices rose to \$9 per frasila after 1872, a duty of \$2.50 per frasila was added to the 5% import duty, bringing the total tax on cloves from Pemba to over 30% of the current price.

British Protectorates of East Africa, "Anti-Slavery Reporter, Series IV, XV (1895), p. 94; Memorandum by Holmwood on the Clove Trade of Zanzibar, 4 February 1888, FO 84/1915. See also Chapter II, pp. 163-66.

⁶⁸ In a survey of clove tree holdings done in 1922, 1,218 Arabs owned 1,869 mashamba with an average of 394 trees each on the island of Zanzibar, while 2,973 Arabs owned 6,819 mashamba with an average of 130 trees on Pemba. The next largest category of clove tree owners were Swahili--i.e., Africans--who generally owned small mashamba. Indians and others constituted only 3.1% of the clove growers. The Arab owner of a large estate was still the dominant factor in the clove economy, although the African smallholder had become more important since abolition. G. D. Kirsopp, "Memorandum on Certain Aspects of the Zanzibar Clove Industry" (London: Waterlow and Sons, 1926), p. 6.

Cloves from Zanzibar--now a small portion of the total--continued to pay no duty.⁶⁹ In 1883, with prices falling, the supplemental duty was reduced to \$1.25, so that the total taxation was about 35% of the 1883 price. This tax was paid by the merchant who brought the cloves to the customs house, but he in turn deducted it from the price paid to the grower.⁷⁰ Later, the tax was changed to a 30% export tax, and in 1887 it was dropped to 25%, applying to cloves from both islands.⁷¹ The Sultan probably had little alternative to taxing his one local asset and his British successors did not figure out a way to reform the clove tax until the 1920's. The other possible source of revenue was taxing trade. Not only did treaties with European powers fix the duties on trade with those nations, but Zanzibar was used by merchants for its convenience rather than its own products, so that the Sultan could not dare tax trade heavily. Combined with low prices and high interest rates, the tax on cloves was indeed a "crushing" burden on the Arab clove growers.⁷²

The problem of taxation was indicative of the weakness of the Zanzibari economy. Its successful recovery from the hurricane of 1872 led to declining profits and increasing debt, primarily because of the limitations of the clove market and the absence of alternative sources of income, secondarily because of the high cost of slaves and the fragility of the credit system.

⁶⁹Kirk to Wedderburn, 27 January 1872, FOCP 4206, pp. 6-7; Prideaux to Derby, 31 July 1874, FO 84/1399; Smith, PP 1885, LXXIII, 390, p. 49.

⁷⁰Ibid.; Miles to Granville, 1 February 1883, FOCP 4914, p. 112; Greffulhe, note annexed to Lacau to MAE, 16 March 1889, MAE, 6.

⁷¹Hardinge to Salisbury, 4 May 1896, PP 1896, LIX, 395, p. 37.

⁷²Lacau to MAE, 3 May 1888, MAE, 5.

The mainland was not affected by declining slave imports until a later date, largely because it had done so well between 1873 and, roughly, 1878, the period when sea traffic was being curtailed more effectively than land caravans. When the slave supply began to diminish in the 1880's, it was reaching its peak as a grain-producing area. In fact, Malindi's exports increased in value by 38% between 1884 and 1887.⁷³ Its relative success cannot primarily be ascribed to a better slave supply, but to the fact that the market for grain was stronger than that for cloves. In the peak years between 1884 and 1887, prices for millet at Mombasa stayed at \$30/frasila, maize rose from \$20 to \$25, and sesame from \$50 to \$60. Grain prices remained constant until 1891, although sesame fell to \$30.⁷⁴ The market for these products, especially the grains, was mainly Somalia and Arabia. These areas were not themselves developing, and the prospects for expanding the market were not bright.⁷⁵ Nor was the dhow trade growing, and it is doubtful that it could have handled a breakthrough in exports even if the markets had been developing.⁷⁶

⁷³ See Chapter III, Table 12.

⁷⁴ Gissing to Kirk, 16 September 1884, FOCP 5165, p. 246; Holmwood, "Estimates of Present Customs Duty upon the trade of His Highness the Sultan's Dominions between Wanga to Kipini inclusive," 6 May 1887, in Sir William Mackinnon Papers, Africa, IBEA, No. 943, School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London; Fitzgerald, "Report on the Native Cultivation, Products, and Capabilities of the Coast Lands of the Malindi District," 1891, copy in Royal Commonwealth Society, p. 4.

⁷⁵ The economic decline of Oman after the mid-nineteenth century is discussed by Robert G. Landen, Oman since 1856 (Princeton: Princeton U.P., 1967).

⁷⁶ Gazette for Zanzibar and East Africa, no. 16, 18 May 1892.

After the land routes between Kilwa and the Kenya coast became hazardous, the Malindi area--with the greatest demand for slaves--experienced some of the same difficulties as the islands. Vice-Consul Gissing visited Malindi and Mambui in 1884, and wrote that the number of slaves was declining.⁷⁷ However, the severe famine occurred that year, and it is possible--although a direct causal link cannot be established--that the reopening of the slave trade enabled Malindi to expand its agricultural output between 1884 and 1887. Yet the renewed slave trade was not on the scale of former days, and in 1888 the Imperial British East Africa Company stationed representatives in Malindi, who kept an eye on illicit activities.⁷⁸ When Fitzgerald came to Malindi to manage a confiscated plantation in 1891, he found that few new slaves were arriving and slaves were growing scarcer. He blamed the extent of abandoned land which he saw on the lack of labor.⁷⁹ Nevertheless, in his thorough tours of the Malindi area, he also saw many areas of extensive cultivation. He was impressed by the care with which crops were raised on many plantations. In Mambui, he found the country "rich and productive," and wrote that "a great deal" of millet and sesame was being produced.⁸⁰ The French missionary LeRoy who visited Malindi in 1890 also observed extensive cultivation of grains and fruit, and saw dhows taking these products to

⁷⁷ Gissing, FOCP 5165, p. 247.

⁷⁸ However, as late as 1891 Fitzgerald heard reports that slave caravans were still coming down the Sabaki River to Mambui. Travels, p. 157.

⁷⁹ Ibid., p. 22.

⁸⁰ Ibid., pp. 18, 206; Report, September-October 1891, p. 5, copy in Commonwealth Office Library, London.

distant lands.⁸¹ In 1892, Malindi and Takaungu had a "very fruitful" grain harvest, so much so that it exceeded the shipping capacity of the local vessels to export it.⁸² Although nothing was done to provide alternatives to slave labor in the 1890's, several government officials in those years were still impressed by the "carefully cultivated shambas" and "splendid crops" of the coast between Mombasa and Malindi.⁸³ Labor shortages were undoubtedly a problem along the coast--hurting some slave-owners more than others--but visitors' reports do not convey a sense of a deteriorating grain and fruit economy.⁸⁴

As in Zanzibar, labor shortages were not the only problems in the late 1880's. Political instability made cultivation difficult in the hinterland of Lamu and at times in the area near Takaungu. Independent powers, like Ahmed Fumoluti of Witu and Mbarak bin Rashid of Takaungu, remained political factors until suppressed with force by the British. Malindi and Mombasa escaped most, but not all, of the disruption, but conflict did much damage to agriculture in important sections of the coast.⁸⁵

⁸¹Alexandre LeRoy, "Au Zanguébar Anglais," Missions Catholiques, XXII (1890), p. 606.

⁸²Gazette for Zanzibar and East Africa, no. 16, 18 May 1892.

⁸³Weaver to Craufurd, 24 July 1896, and Taubman to Weaver, 1 July 1896, incl. Weaver to Craufurd, 24 July 1896, CP/1/75/46; Macdougall, Quarterly Report on Malindi District, 8 April 1901, incl. Eliot to Lansdowne, 5 May 1901, FOCP 7823, p. 168; Marsden to Eliot, 24 December 1901, FOCP 7946, p. 127; "Report by Mr. A. Whyte on his Recent Travels along the Sea-Coast Belt of the British East Africa Protectorate," PP 1903, XLV, 759, pp. 3-7.

⁸⁴Fitzgerald's reports of undercultivation may have been influenced by the fact that most of his time was spent on the plantation that had been confiscated from Suleiman bin Abdalla Al-Mauli. A masterless slave plantation would be especially prone to undercultivation.

Debt was a problem on the mainland as well as in the islands. This can be seen in the case of one of the most extensive owners of slaves and land in the Malindi area, Suleiman bin Abdalla Al-Mauli. When he fell short of cash, he borrowed from a Swahili family of Lamu. Unable to pay them back, he obtained a loan from Tharia Topan, the leading Indian financier of Zanzibar. In order to pay back Tharia Topan, he mortgaged his land to Salim bin Khalfan Al-Busaidi. He was also in debt to Islam bin Ali Al-Kathiri, an Arab of nearby Mamburi. When the government confiscated his plantations because of his participation in the wars in Witu, he was almost \$10,000 in debt to Salim bin Khalfan.⁸⁶ In Mombasa, property was often mortgaged. Indians were the creditors in slightly over half of the mortgaged between 1891 and 1899. The mainland economy was partly structured along communal lines, but not to the extent of the economy of Zanzibar.⁸⁷

In 1890, the clove economy of Zanzibar and Pemba and the grain and coconut economy of Mombasa and Malindi were suffering serious problems caused by limited markets, scarcity and high prices of slaves, weak financial systems, and overtaxation. Zanzibar and Pemba--committed to an export crop that was a glut on the world market--were in worse condition than the mainland. It is impossible to calculate profit margins,

⁸⁵ For a summary of these conflicts, see A. I. Salim, Swahili-Speaking Peoples of Kenya's Coast (Nairobi: East African Publishing House, 1973), pp. 51-2.

⁸⁶ Statement of Ali bin Salim Al-Busaidi, 24 December 1908, Ali bin Salim to Provincial Commissioner, Coast, 16 July 1908, Minute by C. R. W. Lane, 15 August 1904 on petition of Raya binti Suleiman bin Abdalla, 18 June 1904, all in CP/1/62/48. See also Chapter III, p. 201.

⁸⁷ See Chapter III, p. 221.

but undoubtedly they were declining on the islands and, at best, static on the mainland. However, it was not a collapsing economy. The staples of the export economy were still being produced in large quantities, whatever the difficulties of obtaining labor, and the self-sufficiency of the mashamba protected their owners against declining prices for exports.

These problems were common to producers of primary products in many parts of the world and at various periods. They cannot be attributed solely to the anti-slave trade measures taken by the British between 1873 and 1890. Although the shortage and high price of slaves was a serious problem in 1890, the plantation system survived until abolition. The Arab and Swahili landowning elites of Zanzibar and the mainland even survived abolition, poorer than before, but with their social position largely intact. The ownership of slaves had placed them in a position of privilege, but the ownership of land kept them there. As in other plantation societies, landowners retained a dependent labor force--more expensive and less efficient than before--by acquiring tenants to replace their slaves. Some, especially in Zanzibar, were able to remain wealthy; others, principally in Malindi, retained only the facade of their former position. Lacking the political and economic power to make their tenants work, they could only enjoy the social rewards of having dependents living on their land.⁸⁸

⁸⁸ One of the reasons for this difference between Zanzibar and Malindi was government policy. The Zanzibar Government assisted the plantation owners in obtaining labor, largely because they did not want to upset the government's tax base or the social stability of the island. The Kenya Government was more interested in developing European farming than in supporting a troubled Arab elite. I intend to follow up this study of slavery with a sequel on the effects of abolition.

Had the profits of the plantation economy been greater or more lasting, the imperatives of productivity might have had more influence on the lives of slaves than they did. The economy did not collapse after 1873, but the earlier trends towards increasingly commercialized agriculture did not continue. The development of a more rural, more self-sufficient economy left Zanzibar and the mainland with a land and slaveowning elite that had only limited incentives to intensify production, and which had a cushion against the failure of the export sector. What had appeared to be a transitional stage turned out to be long-lasting. The limitations of economic change--as well as the continuities of social structure--made it possible for the old social structure to absorb the new economic roles of the slaves and their masters.

CONCLUSIONS TO PART I

The islands of Zanzibar and Pemba, as well as the mainland towns of Mombasa and Malindi, were very different places in 1870 than they were in 1820. The production of a variety of foods on a small scale and primarily for local use was superseded by the production of specific commodities for distant markets. The transformation was a direct result of changing patterns of commerce in the Indian Ocean: the expansion of trading networks, capital formation through trade, and increased slave trading followed by temporary dislocations that encouraged safer investments. Clove cultivation became widespread in Zanzibar in the late 1830's and 1840's and levelled off in the 1850's. Mombasa began to expand its grain and coconut plantations in the 1840's, while Malindi was built from the ground up in the 1860's. Plantations using slave labor became a major source of exports and a crucial basis of the wealth of leading families.

The growth of export agriculture had deep implications for master-slave relationships. While Omanis had not previously associated the category of slave with any particular race, the new slaves who harvested the cloves, coconuts, millet, and sesame were all black. Nor had the category of slave been associated with any one occupational category--some were menials, some soldiers, some concubines, but all were dependents. In mid-nineteenth century East Africa, slaves continued to serve in a variety

of roles, but the new economic structure required large numbers of laborers and made the productivity of slaves a more important goal than ever before.¹

The transformation of the coastal economy was far from complete. The trading activities of Arabs and Swahili remained important. More fundamentally, the market forces which had brought about expansion had their own limitations. The incentives for continued expansion of Zanzibar's clove production lessened as soon as the economies of plantation production drove the price down. Coconuts had to compete with other oil-producing crops. Grain was in demand only in arid regions, since the pre-industrial societies around the Indian Ocean generally grew their own food. The grain and coconut economy of the mainland coast, despite its limited potential, did well through the 1880's, but the clove economy of Zanzibar and Pemba suffered severe price instability from the 1850's

¹Slaves were chosen as laborers and blacks as slaves mainly because the establishment of slave trading routes had made them available. The Dutch ethnographer N. J. Nieboer argued that slavery is not likely to arise in a situation of "closed resources," where land is scarce and people are forced to work in order to eat. It is likely to emerge in cases of "open resources," where potential laborers can meet their own subsistence requirements and so would work for others only if compelled. The East African case appears to conform to his schema, for land was more plentiful than people, and it is hard to see how any combination of necessity and inducements could have brought sufficient clove pickers to Zanzibar voluntarily. However, Nieboer's theory has limited explanatory power here, for the planters found themselves in a situation of open resources by choice. The difficult question is why they wanted to establish plantations in the first place. Nieboer's theory suggests a direct correlation between the availability of land and the extent of agricultural slavery, and this approach is too mechanical to delve into the complex mixture of ambitions and values that underlie the will to exploit. See H. J. Nieboer, Slavery as an Industrial System, revised edition (The Hague: Nijhoff, 1910). For a critique by an anthropologist, see Bernard J. Siegel, "Some Methodological Considerations for a Comparative Study of Slavery," American Anthropologist, 47 (1947), pp. 357-92.

onward. Plantations, in the Indian Ocean as well as in the Atlantic, developed in conjunction with expanding international markets, but the countries of the Indian Ocean could not develop the enormous demand for plantation produce that Europe was able to generate.²

Besides these market considerations was the question of social values and aspirations. In early-modern Europe changing norms fed economic change, while economic development transformed values. These mutually reinforcing developments were less evident in East Africa. To be sure, the asceticism of the Ibadis was undermined by commercial success, but never to the extent that personal success became measured largely in terms of wealth.³ Status, among both Omanis and Swahili, remained more a matter of heshima, a broad personal quality embracing family origins, piety, and manner of behaving as well as wealth. The strength of these dimensions of status made the pursuit of wealth less important than it was in early-modern Europe, although more important than it had been in East Africa and Oman before the expansion of commerce. At the same time the failure of the economy to develop extensive new forms of investment or consumption minimized the extent to which the older norms were eroded.

²P. P. Courtenay defines plantation agriculture as "the large scale production of tropical crops by a uniform system of cultivation under central management." Large scale necessarily implies producing for a wide market. Jay R. Mandle notes this point but stresses the importance of the structure of plantations in determining the effect of international trade. He sees the use of coercion, in one guise or another, as a defining characteristic of a plantation economy. P. P. Courtenay, Plantation Agriculture (London: Bell, 1965), p. 7; Jay R. Mandle, "The Plantation Economy: An Essay in Definition," in Eugene D. Genovese, ed., The Slave Economies (New York: Wiley, 1973), Vol. I, p. 220.

³The classic study of the interrelation of religious values and economic development is Max Weber, The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism, trans. Talcott Parsons (New York: Scribner, 1958).

People were becoming more wealthy and more worldly, but the new did not destroy the old.

The dominance of the market therefore remained less pronounced than in even the most "seigneurial" of New World plantation societies. In criticizing Genovese's characterization of the economy of United States South as "pre-capitalist," Robert Fogel and Stanley Engerman note, "What made that society pre-bourgeois was not the absence of a commercial spirit among planters, but the wide area of legal authority which the state yielded to them."⁴ They could also have pointed to the personal and social ties between owner and workers on plantations, but their point is well taken. The Southern economy, as Genovese has himself admitted, had strong capitalist elements, largely because plantations--however personal their internal structure--existed in a capitalist world of impersonal markets.⁵ The term "pre-capitalist" fits the case of the East African coast much better than that of the United States South. The commercial spirit was not lacking among Omani and Swahili planters, but it had not developed into an end in itself. The growth of commerce and plantations, by expanding the importance of production for markets, was pushing society in a capitalist direction, but the forces pushing in that direction weakened after mid-century. The development of capitalism in Europe along with its

⁴ Robert William Fogel and Stanley L. Engerman, Time on the Cross: The Economics of American Negro Slavery (Boston: Little, Brown, 1974), p. 129.

⁵ Eugene D. Genovese, Roll, Jordon, Roll (forthcoming). In The World the Slaveholders Made (New York: Pantheon, 1969), Genovese refers to the Old South as "seigneurial," while slave societies like the British West Indies were "bourgeois," since plantations there were almost entirely devoted to profit-making. These terms are more supple than his use of the concept of pre-capitalism in his earlier The Political Economy of Slavery (New York: Pantheon, 1965).

offshoots in the Western Hemisphere was a very special historical phenomenon, and the ways in which changes in population, social structure, values, and political organization influenced and reinforced one another was not duplicated in East Africa.⁶

The fact that East Africa was not pushed steadily along the road to capitalism was not simply due to the weakness of new economic forces but also to the strength of older social structures and values.⁷ The central government of the Sultanate of Zanzibar was weak, and the political, as well as social, role of communal groups was great. Swahili groups like the Twelve Tribes in Mombasa and the Washella in Malindi and Arab tribes such as the Mandhry and Harthi were held together by common experiences and a sense of common identity, as well as by the need for political unity. Within communal groups, a structure of leadership existed. The Washella merely recognized a respected elder as leader, but the head of the Mazrui of Takaungu was a powerful leader who had to be obeyed. The group, including Mazrui themselves, clients, and slaves, was organized hierarchically. Whenever conflict erupted, each group mobilized its followers, slaves included. In these instances, society divided along vertical lines rather than along class or racial divisions. The continued political importance of ties of dependence was a countervailing force

⁶ Polly Hill has astutely shown that capitalist elements in African economies do not exclusively derive from contact with Europe. In emphasizing the capitalist tendencies which existed in many African economies, one must be careful to avoid equating such tendencies with a full-fledged capitalist economy. See Polly Hill, Studies in Rural Capitalism in West Africa (Cambridge: Cambridge U.P., 1970).

⁷ The fact that there is no one road to capitalism and that different societies evolve along different paths is stressed in Karl Marx, Pre-Capitalist Economic Formations, trans. Jack Cohen (New York: International Publishers, 1965).

working against the tendency of slaves in an expanding economy to be relegated to the role of laborers.

In the minds of Arabs and Swahili, the slaveowner did not fulfill the role of protector simply because of political necessity, but because such behavior was required by Islamic principles. Islam in East Africa antedated the growth of the plantation economy. The new planters came to towns where other Muslims lived, where judges made decisions based on the Koran, and where scholarly traditions existed. Islam remained a vital part of nineteenth century coastal society. Islamic laws governing slavery had been written in a situation where slaves were dependents more than workers, and these laws--as well as Omani and Swahili practices--emphasized that slaves should be treated in a paternalistic manner.

The type of plantation agriculture that developed in East Africa transformed, and in some ways strengthened, these ties of dependence and the paternalistic ethos. From an urban phenomenon in most Islamic societies, slavery became a predominantly rural one. More isolated than the urban household, the plantation was a social unit.⁸ Especially in remote areas like Malindi and Pemba, relations among those dwelling on a plantation could be close, and the self-sufficiency of a shamba enhanced its solidarity. On clove plantations, the element of dependence was given a new meaning by the changing economy. The number of slaves on a plantation was largely determined by the labor requirements of the harvest. At other times, slaves had work to do, but above all the master wanted a dependent work force to be present on his land to be called upon to pick the cloves.

⁸ Richard C. Wade contrasts the city in the United States South, where people of all classes could mingle, with the "semi-isolation" of the plantation, where most contacts were within the confines of the plantation. Slavery in the Cities: The South 1820-1860 (New York: Oxford U.P., 1964), p. 56.

Although the growth of export agriculture tended to undermine vertical social ties by putting slaves in a unique and menial role, it simultaneously had the reverse effect--to create a new type of social unit in rural areas.

The institution of slavery is characterized by ambivalence. It can link masters and slaves by close bonds arising out of mutual dependence and living together, and it can subject slaves to heavy demands for labor under threat of force. Depending on the goals of the masters and the constraints on their actions, a particular slave system at a particular time might emphasize one aspect more than the other. It is possible to arrange slave systems along a continuum, according to the extent to which they emphasized the incorporation of slaves as people or the use of slaves as factors of production. Such a continuum represents only some of the influences on the lives of slaves, but it is a way of classifying slave systems in terms of a crucial variable.

Ila	Oman c.1800	Zanzibar c.1870	U.S. South 19th C.	Jamaica 18th C.
slaves as kinsmen	slaves as dependents	productivity and dependence both valued		slaves as workers

The left side of the continuum is an ideal type of slave system characterized by the use of slaves to expand kinship groups. Slaves worked alongside their masters and, in the absence of distinct social and economic roles, were readily absorbed. In more differentiated societies, rulers incorporated slaves into their followings, but the society drew distinctions between slaves and free. Slaves were part of a hierarchical social order, but not specifically a laboring class. As one moves to the right along the continuum, the productive activities of slaves become relatively

more important. Their distinct economic role separated them from their masters and exacerbated the tendency to regard slaves as a distinct social category, a tendency which was always implicit in slaves' special legal status and, in most cases, foreign origin. Still, the masters and their slaves formed a social unit--personal ties crossed class lines. At the extreme end of the continuum, the slaveowner was a businessman, for whom slaves were a labor force and nothing else. The master's social ties were with other people of his class--the slave plantation was not a vertically integrated community.

Some African societies, such as the Ila of Central Africa, came relatively close to the left end, while on the absentee plantation of the British West Indies, conditions approximated the right end.⁹ A number of African chiefdoms and kingdoms, as well as Southern Arabia before 1800, treated slaves as political and social subordinates, and despite the contribution they made to their masters' economic welfare, their economic role was not emphasized.¹⁰ In the Southern United States, although the plantation was an economic unit producing for international markets, it was

⁹ For examples, see Arthur Tuden, "Slavery and Stratification among the Ila of Central Africa," in Leonard Plotnicov and Arthur Tuden, eds., Social Stratification in Africa (New York: Free Press, 1970), pp. 47-58. On the West Indies see Orlando Patterson, The Sociology of Slavery (Rutherford, N.J.: Fairleigh Dickinson U.P., 1967); and Elsa V. Goveia, Slave Society in the British Leeward Islands at the End of the Eighteenth Century (New Haven: Yale U.P., 1965).

¹⁰ For examples, see E. A. Oroge, "The Institution of Slavery in Yorubaland with Particular Reference on the Nineteenth Century," Ph.D. Dissertation, University of Birmingham, 1971; and M. G. Smith, "Slavery and Emancipation in Two Societies," Social and Economic Studies (Jamaica), III (1954), pp. 239-90. More generally, see Frederick Cooper, "Slavery and Society in Africa," in C. Duncan Rice and Gavin R. G. Hambly, eds., Comparative Slavery (forthcoming).

still a social unit in which diffuse social ties linked masters and slaves.¹¹ In East Africa, the process described in the preceding chapters can be seen as a movement towards the right along this line.

The continuum is in fact an instance of the distinction between gemeinschaft and gesellschaft, moving from an integrated society, in which all ties are diffuse, to one in which ties are specific and impersonal. Movement to the right along this line implies increasing functional specificity in the master-slave relationship. But the forces of economic differentiation were not always mounting steadily and were not the only ones impinging on master-slave relationships. Increased differentiation in the economic roles of slaves could accentuate social differentials, but it was not their sole cause. A model of this sort helps to situate the type of plantation economy that existed in East Africa with respect to other plantation economies, but it is the beginning of an analysis of slavery, not the end.

The movement towards a commercialized and differentiated agricultural organization occurred all along the East African coast, but the forms that the new developments took varied with the particulars of economic and social conditions from place to place. A comparison of different areas within East Africa underlines the importance of the various forces for change and stability. In Malindi, the influence of the growing plantation economy was greatest. The town was a new one, with no established upper class to which people deferred, no traditions of social life and scholarship, and no trade to diversify economic interests. Moreover, Malindi's fertile soil was capable of supporting several harvests of dif-

¹¹ Genovese, Roll.

ferent crops each year, while the enormous quantity of available land, in relation to the small population and simple farming technology, meant that the main limit on production was the number of slaves one owned and the intensity with which they worked. Yet the people of Malindi came to that town with similar Islamic values and similar concepts of social status to other East African Muslims. They were divided into communal groups, and although conflict rarely erupted, they relied on slaves and followers whenever it did. Opportunities for investment (other than more slaves) or for the display of wealth were even more limited in this small town than in the urban centers of East Africa.

If Malindi was the Alabama of the East African mainland, Mombasa was the Virginia. With agricultural opportunities limited by the supply of land and with trade providing alternative sources of income, the incentives to expand production were less. Mombasa did extend its cultivation into the hinterland after the 1840's, but not with the same intensity as Malindi did two decades later. On small plots, coconuts were a more profitable crop than grain, and the low demands which this crop put on slaves eased their burden and decreased the need to develop more efficient forms of labor organization. Meanwhile, the old families of Mombasa were accorded high status simply because they were familiar parts of the social and political system. Wealth was relevant to standing, but family was more important. Mombasa was also a center, although a lesser one than Zanzibar, of religious learning and Swahili poetry, both of which could be sources of prestige and gave the city a more refined tone than the agricultural outpost to the north. In comparison with Malindi, the forces of the new were weaker and the strength of the old greater. The result, which will be explained at length in Chapter V, was that regimented

forms of labor organization developed in Malindi, while looser supervision of slave labor characterized Mombasa.

Zanzibar's situation was between the two mainland towns. The clove industry was wholly new and extensive. However, near the town, the politics of the court, Islamic scholarship and prayer, and an urban life style distracted people from their plantations, while trade remained a source of income for many. Farther away, most notably in Pemba, plantation society was stronger. Especially after many Zanzibari planters moved to Pemba following a hurricane which levelled many of Zanzibar's clove trees, Pemba came to resemble Malindi as a rural society dominated by planters who came for the specific purpose of producing for a market. However, cloves did not require the continuous labor that grain production did. After 1850--and again after the recovery from the hurricane--falling clove prices discouraged more intensive cultivation of cloves, preserving Zanzibar's varied agricultural economy from the ravages of comparative advantage. The nature of the main plantation crop and the fluctuations of the clove market meant that Zanzibar's plantations were self-supporting economic and social units rather than specialized commodity-producing organizations.

In most parts of the coast, all communal groups shared the fruits of plantation agriculture. By and large, Omanis acquired the largest landholdings, mainly because they usually had more capital with which to buy slaves. Nevertheless, only a few of the richest Omanis owned enormous plantations, while Swahili like Khamis bin Kombo in Mombasa or Abdulla Hussein in Malindi were among the most extensive slave and landowners in the region. Swahili participated heavily in plantation agriculture everywhere except Zanzibar. There, the Arab strength was greater than anywhere in the Sultanate, and the Wahadimu either stayed in the relatively

infertile lands to the east and south of the town or were pushed further in those directions. Moreover, Arabs in Zanzibar primarily grew a crop that had not been grown locally and whose cultivation required obtaining seedlings from previous planters and learning new techniques. Omani Arabs were able to keep this lucrative plant to themselves. On the mainland coast, the political position of Omanis was weaker, and the coastal people had access to land, slaves, coconut trees, and grain seeds. In Pemba, where Arab dominance was weaker than in Zanzibar and where the Wapemba lived interspersed among the Arab plantations, the Wapemba often became small-scale clove growers. In the mainland towns, the boundaries between communal groups remained clear, but--except for differences in size of holdings--the organization of agriculture did not differ from group to group. As Chapter V will show, the variations in plantation organization from place to place were more a function of the economic and social situation of particular locations than of ethnicity. The behavior of slaveholders cannot be explained by reference to the characteristics of racial or ethnic groups. There was no such thing as "European" slavery, "Arab" slavery, or "African" slavery. The following chapters will look at the effects of changing economic and social conditions on the lives of the masters and the slaves, and the ties which bound them together.

PART II

THE TREATMENT OF SLAVES

CHAPTER V: SLAVES AT WORK

The most obvious question to ask about a slave system is, "How harshly were slaves treated?" Scholars of slavery in the Americas initially tried to decide which slave systems were harsher than others. The debate on their attempts to compare North and South America has made at least one point clear: a great many variables are involved and the assessment of harshness depends as much on the writer's choice of criteria as on what the slaves actually experienced. Harshness certainly includes a material element: the hours slaves worked, the way they were punished, the amount and quality of food they received, and the quality of housing they lived in. By such standards, the treatment of slaves in the United States South compares favorably with, for example, Jamaica. However, it is possible to argue that psychologically the Old South had a more deleterious impact on its slaves than did Jamaica. Slave owners in the Old South provided their slaves with more food, but at least Jamaican slaves grew their own food on small plots provided by their masters, obtaining a measure of self-reliance as well as nourishment. Jamaican masters' indifference to the lives of their slaves may have given them more scope to develop their own social and cultural practices, preserving themselves from their masters' notions of superiority. These comparisons raise a host of complex problems and illustrate the dangers of trying to

assess slave systems in such terms as "good," "bad," "harsh," or "mild."¹

An analysis of the treatment of slaves in any slave society must be firmly rooted in the details of slave life: from the way in which particular crops were cultivated to the dances slaves performed on holidays. However, social systems cannot easily be broken down and compartmentalized --they are totalities.² Even if we avoid simplistic justments, we should look for other ways to characterize slave systems. These are necessarily ideal types--attempts to simplify reality and render it comprehensible.

Slavery is fundamentally a form of subordination, and the basic task of the comparative historian of slavery is to analyze the various forms which subordination takes. The concept of paternalism is a means of understanding the nature of subordination in a wide range of societies, although not all slave systems were paternalistic. Eugene D. Genovese has used this concept to unravel the intricacies of the lives of slaves in the Southern United States. He defines paternalism as "a social system and attendant ideology within which we find strict superordination and subordination according to rules of law or custom of reciprocal obligations defined from above."³ Benevolence is not the same thing as pa-

¹ Among the best treatments of the methodological problems of comparative slavery are Eugene D. Genovese, "The Treatment of Slaves in Different Countries: Problems in the Applications of the Comparative Method," in Laura Foner and Eugene D. Genovese, eds., Slavery in the New World (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1969), pp. 202-10; Sidney W. Mintz, "Slavery and Emergent Capitalisms," ibid., pp. 27-37; David Brion Davis, The Problems of Slavery in Western Culture (Ithaca: Cornell U.P., 1966), esp. pp. 54-8, 223-61; and Eugene D. Genovese, The World the Slaveholders Made (New York: Pantheon, 1969).

² Genovese has attempted to develop categories for breaking down the problem of treatment, but in his latest work has moved towards a more holistic approach.

ternalism, but only a particular form which paternalism can--but rarely does--take. Instead, Genovese's paternalistic master does not view his slaves as mere economic objects but as "dependents towards whom he had certain duties and obligations." A master could exercise his responsibilities with kindness or harshness, but the paternalist must have a sense of obligation to his slaves, combined with the belief that the work which the slaves do is their duty. Punishment is consistent with paternalism, for it both affirms the superordination of the master and the obligations of the slaves, but a master who punishes arbitrarily is likely to jeopardize whatever sense of obligation he has instilled in his slaves. One who punishes judiciously--in terms that he himself has defined--may be able to control his slaves not just by immediate threats of force, but by getting his slaves to internalize a code of behavior. Nor is paternalism inconsistent with productivity. The emotional dimension of paternalism--the master's feelings towards his dependents--can be reinforced by the belief that they are making him wealthy, while the efficiency of labor can be enhanced by positive incentives--both affective and material--as well as by punishment.⁴ Finally, paternalism is not necessarily "good" for the slaves on any other terms except the master's own. Paternalism may do more damage to an individual's self-respect or a group's ties within itself than more outright exploitation of slave labor.

Paternalism operates on two levels. One is the day-to-day interaction of slaves and masters, in which each tries to put forward his own

³ Eugene D. Genovese, Roll, Jordan, Roll (forthcoming).

⁴ Robert William Fogel and Stanley L. Engerman, Time on the Cross: The Economics of American Negro Slavery (Boston: Little, Brown, 1974), pp. 77-8.

conception of the other's and his own obligations. Reciprocal obligations are worked out by continual testing before becoming customs, and even then the customs are maintained as much by testing as by habit. Tacit understandings about the work that will be required, the privileges that slaves will get, and the punishment appropriate to certain offences emerge from this conflict. The unequal nature of paternalistic relationships is clear in this process: the master has more effective sanctions. The slaves, however, can help the master by working more efficiently and by showing him the respect he desires or hurt him in a variety of ways, from rudeness to slow downs to escape. A variety of factors can influence the will of either side to press its demands and its ability to do so.⁵ Seeing paternalism as an interactive process, rather than a fixed pattern of behavior set by the master, allows us to understand how a plantation, no matter how deeply imbued in paternalism, can be the scene of severe whipping by the master and frequent escape by the slaves.⁶ Both are trying to put forward their inherently opposed versions of paternalism in a situation where boundaries are not rigidly defined.

Paternalism also operates on the level of ideology. An ideology is a way of looking at the world and a coherent set of norms that govern behavior. Genovese notes that the ideology of Southern planters matured slowly, influenced by religious values, legal concepts, political conflict,

⁵ Genovese emphasizes the importance of the coincidence of the closing of the slave trade with the beginning of the cotton boom to forcing masters to insure adequate material conditions and family life to their slaves.

⁶ Gerald W. Mullin refers to paternalism as a "subtle equilibrium." Flight and Rebellion: Slave Resistance in Eighteenth-Century Virginia (New York: Oxford U.P., 1972), p. 72.

economic interests, and experiences on the plantation itself. Paternalism came to be a way of defining what behavior was right. This does not mean that all masters behaved accordingly, but community standards of behavior did develop and did affect the actions of men who were conscious of themselves as a class. The actions of slaveholders were determined by both practicality and ideals.

Genovese has described in detail the operations of one paternalistic regime, and has outlined the diverse forces which produced it and the "tendencies" and "counter-tendencies" that pushed paternalistic relationships in different directions. In other paternalistic regimes, such as Northeastern Brazil in the nineteenth century, the content of paternalist ideology and the nature of master-slave relationships differed. In other cases, paternalism--while undoubtedly practiced by some slaveowners--was not the dominant ideology. On West Indian sugar plantations in periods of boom, the planter class had little interest in slaves except as laborers. A paternalistic regime could become a highly exploitative and impersonal one, as in Cuba, or weak paternalistic tendencies could be strengthened, as in Virginia.

Slavery on the East African coast in the nineteenth century fits the paternalistic model, but the precise nature of East African paternalism differed from its Western equivalents. Arab and Swahili society was divided into kinship and communal groups, which had patriarchal structures within them, which exercised a variety of functions in society, and which fostered loyalty and emotional attachment. The status of the slave was both legally and socially distinct from that of even junior kinsmen, but this inferiority was part of an institution characterized by hierarchical relationships, by the need of those at the top for followers

and of those at the bottom for protection. The paternalism of the plantations of East Africa can only be understood if one realizes that it grew out of vertically integrated social institutions. This course of evolution distinguishes East African paternalism from that of the United States South, which developed in a plantation setting among a people who had been losing their sense of a hierarchically organized, organic society. It resembles Brazil, with its seigneurial traditions, to a greater extent, but vertical ties were even more important in East Africa, largely because of their greater political role. Islam also helped shape coastal paternalism by allowing planters to see the social values of paternalism as a set of ethical principles and laws. It was instrumental in turning social practices into an ideology, to making paternalism not just something that was done, but something that was right.

Chapters V and VI will analyze the form of paternalism that emerged from the variety of economic, social, political, and ideological pressures that impinged on the East African coast in the nineteenth century. Chapter V focuses on the organization of labor: the response of the slave system to the demands for greater agricultural productivity as well as to the particularities of agricultural development that reinforced the personal and diffuse nature of the master-slave bond. It will also look at the diverse economic and social roles--retainer, soldier, servant, and concubine--in which slaves continued to serve their masters even as agriculture took on increasing importance. Chapter VI will examine the lives of slaves once their daily labor was done. It will assess the extent to which the family and social life of slaves was encompassed within a system of social relationships centered on the master and the extent to which East African paternalism gave slaves a measure of personal freedom

in their daily lives.

Slaves and Cloves

The economy of Zanzibar was transformed in the first half of the nineteenth century by the development of clove cultivation and of slave plantations as self-sufficient economic and social units. The lives of the thousands of new slaves brought from the interior of East Africa were deeply affected by the demands of the clove trees. This tree required concentrated labor for several months of the year, the picking season. There were ordinarily two clove harvests each year, a large one around November or December and a small one in July to September. Different portions of the tree, or different trees, ripened at different rates, so that a harvest lasted several months. It was necessary to pick cloves from the same tree several times, carefully picking the cloves as they ripened. On a large plantation, parts of many trees ripened simultaneously, and if not picked within a few weeks were likely to spoil. The rainy season often coincided with the large harvest, making conditions unpleasant for the pickers and drying a difficult chore.⁷ The clove is a bud that grows from the tips of the branches of the tree. The bud should be broken off together with the stem, but without injuring the branches. A careless picker is likely to damage the delicate branches of the clove tree.⁸

Slaves picked cloves, climbing trees or using scaffolds to reach

⁷ G. E. Tidbury, The Clove Tree (London: Lockwood, 1949), pp. 26-7.

⁸ Ibid., pp. 113-14; and F. B. Pearce, Zanzibar: The Island Metropolis of Eastern Africa (London: Fisher Unwin, 1920), p. 300.

higher branches, under the supervision of older, trusted slaves. Other slaves separated buds from stems. The buds were spread out on mats to dry in the sun and were taken in each night. The drying process took six to seven days, although rain, which forced the slaves to collect the cloves and keep them dry, could extend this time and sometimes lower the quality of the cloves. Women slaves were mainly responsible for the separating and drying of the cloves. A supervisor kept track of the number of baskets a slave picked, and a lax slave might find himself being beaten or deprived of a holiday.⁹ Once dried, cloves were packed in gunny sacks and carried to Zanzibar town by the slaves, or else sold to an enterprising middleman, like the young Tharia Topan, who would take them to the Indian clove brokers in town. Cloves from Pemba were shipped in small dhows to Zanzibar.¹⁰

The principal demand for large numbers of slaves thus occurred at the time of the harvest. Dr. Christie, who lived in Zanzibar in the early 1870's, said that labor could not be found beyond the estate. Others, however, said that it was possible to supplement the labor of the slaves attached to the plantation by employing vibarua--slaves who were hired out by their masters for day-labor.¹¹ Some landlords, however, did not

⁹For descriptions of clove harvests, see Loarer, O.I., 5/23, Cahier 4; Captain Guillain, Documents sur l'histoire, le géographie et le commerce de l'Afrique Orientale (Paris: Bertrand, 1856-58), Vol. 2/1, pp. 145-46; W. W. A. Fitzgerald, Travels in the Coastlands of British East Africa and the Islands of Zanzibar and Pemba (London: Chapman and Hall, 1898), p. 559; Hardinge to Salisbury, 10 January 1896, PP 1896, LIX, 395, p. 25.

¹⁰Clove marketing is described in Chapter II, pp. 161-63.

¹¹James Christie, Cholera Epidemics in East Africa (London: Macmillan, 1896), p. 314; E. Quass, "Die Szuri's, die Kuli's und die Sclaven

like to do this, believing that only their slaves would take proper care of the trees.¹² In addition, most vibarua were concentrated in Zanzibar town, far away from most plantations, so that the demands of the clove harvest essentially determined the number of slaves that a landowner required.¹³

During the harvest, these slaves had to work very hard. They picked cloves seven days per week, instead of the customary five days of labor. However, two Englishmen with long experience in Zanzibar and Pemba indicate that slaves were paid for the two extra days of work, one indicating that they were given one-third to one-half of cloves picked on those two days and the other saying they were paid four pice (about 3¢) for every pishi (about one-half gallon) picked on those days.¹⁴ According to Hardinge, slaves worked eight or nine hours per day during the harvest.¹⁵

The work was not only intensive, but skilled. A French visitor in the early days of large-scale clove growing thought the slaves were

in Zanzibar, "Zeitschrift für Allgemeine Erdkunde, Neue Folge, IX (1860), p. 443; Vice Adm. Macdonald to Admiralty, 28 May 1887, FOCP 3686, p. 725; Lieut. Smith, Report on Pemba, 1884, incl. Kirk to Granville, 13 March 1884, PP 1885, LXXIII, 390, p. 50; Fitzgerald, "Report on the Spice and Other Cultivation of Zanzibar and Pemba Islands," incl. Portal to Rosebery, 2 October 1892, FOCP 6362, p. 100.

¹²Fitzgerald, Travels, pp. 601-2.

¹³See Chapter IV, pp. 244, 246.

¹⁴James Christie, "Slavery in Zanzibar As It Is," in E. Steere, ed., The East African Slave Trade (London: Harrison, 1871), p. 34; "Report by Mr. O'Sullivan upon the Island of Pemba," incl. Hardinge to Salisbury, 18 June 1896, PP 1896, LIX, 395, p. 42; O'Sullivan to Hardinge, 26 September 1895, Zanzibar Archives, copy in papers of Sir John Gray, Cambridge University Library, Box 27.

¹⁵Hardinge to Salisbury, 10 January 1896, PP 1896, LIX, 395, p. 25.

careless and broke many branches unless carefully watched.¹⁶ However, Fitzgerald was told by a leading landowner in Pemba that he would not hire outside labor because they would not be as careful as his own slaves. One of the early agricultural experts of the colonial administration wrote that slaves were experts in clove picking.¹⁷ Because of the delicate nature of the tree, the master was dependent on the skill and care of his slaves.

This vulnerability most likely accounts for the custom of paying slaves for piece work. Zanzibari planters did not make such payments for other, less precise, agricultural tasks, and in Malindi, where careless harvesting of the annual crops could cause no permanent damage, no such payments were made. In the United States South, positive incentives often supplemented punishment for failure to complete assigned tasks, but these generally took the form of daily races or prizes--plus the possibility of advancing to a supervisory position in the plantation hierarchy--rather than a system of customary payments.¹⁸ Nevertheless, in Zanzibar the sanction of force lay behind the incentives. A difficult job had to be done and the slaves had no choice but to do it. Compared to some other slaves, the delicacy of their duties gave them a relatively strong bargaining

¹⁶ Loarer, "Ile de Zanguebar," O.I., 5/23, Cahier 4.

¹⁷ Fitzgerald, Travels, pp. 601-2; F. C. McClellan, "Agricultural Resources of the Zanzibar Protectorate," Bulletin of the Imperial Institute, XII (1914), p. 415.

¹⁸ Fogel and Engerman, pp. 148-50, 206. Positive incentives were particularly important for slaves in responsible and skilled positions. Robert S. Starobin, Industrial Slavery in the Old South (New York: Oxford U.P., 1970), pp. 99-106; Kenneth Stampp, The Peculiar Institution (New York: Vintage, 1956), p. 151.

position to obtain customary payments and set customary limits on work, but they were still slaves.

The particularities of plantation crops had a substantial influence on the lives of the slaves. The sharpest contrast with cloves was sugar. Sugar cane, the principal crop of the West Indies, had to be harvested in a short period of time and immediately processed. Economies of scale in the sugar industry were considerable, and plantations were usually large. Round-the-clock operations during the harvest were not unusual. Some skilled slaves were required, but enormous amounts of back-breaking labor were needed in the harvesting and processing.¹⁹ The extent to which slaves were overworked varied from case to case, but sugar was a more powerful force than cloves, pushing slaves towards a life of nearly unbearable labor.

Outside of the clove picking season work still had to be done. The most exacting task, also demanding skill and care, was planting new clove trees on an expanding shamba. Cloves were grown from seedlings, which were first planted in a special shaded nursery. They had to be watered each day at first, less often as they grew. After nine to twelve months in the nursery and a one or two month exposure to sunlight, they

¹⁹Richard S. Dunn, Sugar and Slaves: The Rise of the Planter Class in the English West Indies, 1624-1713 (Chapel Hill: North Carolina U.P., 1972), pp. 190-98. At least on some Jamaican plantations slaves worked over sixteen hours per day most of the year and eighteen during the harvest. Orlando Patterson, The Sociology of Slavery (Rutherford, N.J.: Fairleigh Dickinson U.P., 1967), p. 69. Franklin Knight stresses the brutal similarity of sugar plantations throughout the Western Hemisphere. Slave Society in Cuba During the Nineteenth Century (Madison: Wisconsin U.P., 1970). Most studies stress reliance on punishment, rather than positive incentives, to insure hard work, with the exception of slave supervisors. Ibid., p. 73; and Elsa Goveia, Slave Society in the British Leeward Islands at the End of the Eighteenth Century (New Haven: Yale U.P., 1965), pp. 130-31.

were planted. Slaves dug a series of holes, kept in line by a rope, each of which consisted of a 4 foot deep hole to serve as a catch-drain and a further hole one foot deeper to receive the plant. Young trees had to be watered, and the ground around them had to be weeded.²⁰ Once planted, the clove tree needed little attention and according to most observers received even less. The primary requirements were weeding between the trees and pruning. The weeding was done with hoes--there were no plows on Zanzibar. Slaves used a short-handled hoe made by local blacksmiths from iron.²¹ Visitors to clove plantations in the nineteenth century found that weeding was not done thoroughly and that the trees were rarely pruned.²²

This work--and the task of growing millet, fruit, coconuts, and other items--occupied the slaves all year round. The customary work-week, for both men and women, was five days. Slaves had Thursday and Friday off, the former to cultivate for their own subsistence and the latter to observe the Muslim sabbath.²³ According to Consul Kirk, this custom broke

²⁰Tidbury, p. 46; Fitzgerald, Travels, pp. 554-58.

²¹Speer to Seward, 26 November 1862, Consul, 4; J. B. F. Osgood, Notes of Travel or Recollections of Majunga, Zanzibar, Muscat, Aden, Mocha and Other Eastern Ports (Salem: Creamer, 1854), p. 26; Robert Nunez Lyne, Zanzibar in Contemporary Times (London: Hurst and Blackett, 1905), p. 268.

²²Portal to Chappel, no. 17, n.d. [1892], Portal Papers, Rhodes House, Oxford University, s108; R. L. Playfair, "Extract from the Administrative Report of the Political Agent for the Two Past Years Ending with the 31st of May 1864," reprinted, TBGS, XVII (1864), p. 282; Hines to Seward, 25 October 1864, US Consul, 5, NEMA, p. 527; Richard Burton, Zanzibar: City, Island, Coast (London: Tinsley, 1872), Vol. I, pp. 361-62; William E. Hines, Report, United States Commercial Relations, 1865, p. 505.

²³W. S. W. Ruschenberger, A Voyage Round the World Including an Embassy to Muscat and Siam in 1835, 1836, and 1837 (Philadelphia: Carey, Lea and Blanchard, 1838), pp. 34-5; Speer to Seward, 26 November 1862,

down to some extent after the ruin of Zanzibar's clove trees in the hurricane of 1872 and the extraordinarily high demand for slaves in Pemba, but even in Pemba the two days became customary free time again.²⁴

Daily assignments varied. Christie claimed that slaves sometimes worked from daybreak until 4 p.m., but more typically they quit by noon. On many visits to the shamba areas during the day, he only saw slaves working on their own plots.²⁵ Even the more critical visitors to Zanzibar did not feel that slaves were overworked. Rigby felt that the "Arab is too indolent and apathetic to make his slaves exert themselves."²⁶ The American Consul said that "Their labor is neither hard nor constant." Another American wrote that slaves "do less work, on an average, in a month than a Mississippi slave does in a week," and attributed this to the fact that the climate was so good that little work was in fact necessary to

US Consul, 4; Burton, Zanzibar, Vol. I, p. 466; C. P. Rigby, "Report on the Zanzibar Dominion, 1 July 1860," reprinted in Mrs. Charles E. B. Russell, ed., General Rigby, Zanzibar and the Slave Trade (London: Allen and Unwin, 1935), p. 334; Ludwig Krapf, "Additional Remarks on the Island of Zanzibar or Ongoodja," incl. Krapf to Coates, 10 June 1844, CMS CA5/016/25; Mgr. Gaume, Voyage à la Côte orientale d'Afrique pendant l'année 1866 par le R. P. Horner (Paris: Gaume frères, 1872), p. 258; Captain Colomb, Slave Catching in the Indian Ocean (London: Longmans, 1873), pp. 373-74; Kirk to Derby, 1 May 1876, FO 84/1453; Rashid bin Hassani, "The Story of Rashid bin Hassani of the Bisa Tribe, Northern Rhodesia," recorded by W. F. Baldock, in Margery Perham, ed., Ten Africans (London: Faber and Faber, 1963), p. 99; MSA 21.

²⁴Kirk to Derby, 1 May 1876, FO 84/1453; O'Sullivan, "Report," pp. 41-2. In some instances in Pemba, slaves only got Friday off, and when the British set up machinery, in connection with the decree of 1897 abolishing slavery, to receive complaints of slaves, one of the most common ones was denial of the customary two days off. PP 1898, LX, 361, p. 6.

²⁵Christie, "Slavery," pp. 34-5.

²⁶Rigby, "Report," p. 334. The same view is expressed in Pelly to Forbes, 12 February 1862, Pelly Papers, FO 800/234.

raise crops.²⁷ Loarer also noted that relatively little work was needed except at certain times, notably the harvest.²⁸ An American visitor in the 1850's, felt that Arabs generally owned more slaves than they could keep profitably employed.²⁹ These observations span the 1840's and early 1850's, when prices were high and mashamba expanding, as well as the 1860's and 1870's, when prices were low. In later years, as the slave trade came to an end, the pressures on landowners were to get as much work as possible out of the slaves without impairing their health or driving them to escape. Still, evidence from the 1890's continues to indicate that slaves were not, as a rule, overworked.³⁰

Most work was done under the direct supervision of slaves. On large estates, there were three levels of supervisors, called msimamizi, nokoa, and kadamu. The latter two, almost always slaves, dealt directly with the slaves. On a larger shamba, the msimamizi was often an Arab, a poor relative of the master or another landless person. On a smaller estate, he was more likely to be a slave or a freed slave. Other individuals were put in charge of specific tasks. Locally born slaves, termed

²⁷ Speer to Seward, 26 November 1862, US Consul, 4; J. Ross Browne, Etchings of a Whaling Cruise with Notes of a Sojourn on the Island of Zanzibar, etc. (Cambridge: Harvard U.P., 1846, repr. 1968), pp. 434-35.

²⁸ Loarer, O.I., 5/23, Cahier 5. See also Journal of Lieut. Christopher, entry for 18 July 1843, incl. Bombay to Secret Commission, no. 54, Ind. Of. L/P+S/5/60.

²⁹ Osgood, p. 51.

³⁰ Hardinge to Salisbury, 4 May 1896, PP 1896, LIX, 395, p. 37; C. S. Smith, "Slavery," in A. E. M. Anderson-Morshead, The History of the Universities' Mission to Central Africa 1859-1909 (London: UMCA, 1909), pp. 406-7. O'Sullivan, however, called the Arab "a stern and exacting task-master, often a cruel one as well." "Report," pp. 41-2.

wazalia, were preferred for these leadership roles.³¹ The master could come and go as he pleased. As indicated in Chapter II, some slaveowners in Zanzibar preferred an urban life, leaving the supervision of the estate to the msimamizi, while others lived continually on the plantation. In Pemba, lacking in urban attractions, landowners lived on their plantations. While the common practice among the wealthiest landowners of owning more than one plantation meant delegating responsibility to supervisors, most of Pemba's slaveowners probably exercised closer personal supervision than those of Zanzibar.³²

It was essential--especially given the modest returns on cloves during periods of low prices--that slaves be settled in such a way that they would not constitute a burden on their master during the long periods when they were not working full time. In virtually all cases, landowners in Zanzibar and Pemba provided slaves with land to grow their own food and a hut, or at least a place to build a hut. The master had to feed new slaves before their crops came up, and he often supplied salted fish to supplement the basic diet, but most slaves took care of their own needs.³³ Cassava--a root crop that is the staple of many parts of Africa--was the

³¹ Christie, "Slavery," pp. 31-2; Hardinge to Salisbury, 10 January 1896, PP 1896, LIX, 395, p. 25; Fritz Weidner, Die Haussklaverei in OstAfrika (Jena: Fischer, 1915), p. 33, MSA 21, 34. In this respect, Zanzibar resembled the United States, where a minority of plantations had white overseers, but diverged from the British West Indies, where --given the prevalence of absenteeism--white managers were often left in charge. See below, pp. 309-12.

³² Fitzgerald, Travels, pp. 588-604; MSA 4.

³³ Hamerton to Bombay, 2 January 1842, PP 1844, XLVIII, 1, p. 419; Christie, "Slavery," pp. 33-4; John Robb, A Medico-Topographical Report on Zanzibar (Calcutta: Government Printer, 1897), p. 16.

basic element of the slaves' diet. Although dependable and requiring little labor, cassava has a lower protein content than grains and other crops.³⁴ Slaves cared for their cassava, as well as some fruit and vegetables, on Thursdays and Fridays, and presumably during whatever free time was available on other days. They were often able to produce a marketable surplus of small crops.³⁵ According to Christie, slaves were allowed to cultivate as much land as they could in the time given them, and they kept goats and fowl as well. Masters, he felt, encouraged slaves to raise crops and animals to create an attachment to the estate.³⁶ Since only certain parts of a plantation were usually suitable for cloves, the master had little to lose and much to gain by fostering this kind of dependence. From the slaves' point of view, this form of dependence gave them a certain amount of living space: a chance to plant what they wanted, to farm at their own pace without the regimentation of collective labor, and to feel that they were providing for themselves. Dependence meant the presence of slaves on the plantation, ties linking them to the owner's

³⁴ William O. Jones, Manioc in Africa (Stanford: Stanford U.P., 1959), pp. 6-9. Cassava also had low labor requirements and could be harvested at the convenience of the farmer. Ibid., pp. 20-3.

³⁵ Ruschenberger, pp. 34-5; Loarer, O.I., 5/23, Cahier 5; Krapf, "Additional Remarks"; Rigby, "Report," p. 334; Cap. H. A. Fraser, "Zanzibar and the Slave Trade," in Steere, Slave Trade, p. 17; Burton, Zanzibar, Vol. I, p. 466; W. Cope Devereux, A Cruise in the "Gorgon" (London: Dawsons, 1869, repr. 1968), p. 107, Colomb, pp. 373-74; Kirk to Derby, 1 May 1896, FO 84/1453; Fitzgerald, Travels, p. 516; O. Baumann, Sansibar (Leipzig: Duncker and Humblot, 1899), p. 29.

³⁶ Christie, "Slavery," p. 33. This system was also used in the British West Indies, but it tended to break down when sugar demanded more land and labor. In the Leeward Islands, planters in the eighteenth century relied increasingly on imported food. Goveia, pp. 136-37; and Patterson, pp. 216-23.

land. Neither the demands of the economy nor the values of the owner required that all aspects of life be governed by plantation discipline. Here Zanzibar paternalism diverged from that of the United States South, where most food was produced by group labor under supervision and supplied to slaves by the master. Gardens were only supplementary. Slaves were deprived of a means of obtaining a sense of personal control over their own lives.³⁷

The extent of slaves' personal control over farming also derived from their ability to take advantage of the opportunities offered. Doubtlessly, slaves could have learned how to care for a garden, but they were all familiar with hoe agriculture from their homelands. All the peoples who contributed to the slave population of Zanzibar were agriculturalists, and most consumed the principal crop of Zanzibari slaves, cassava, as well as other important foods like maize and millet.³⁸ The slaves' heritage equipped them to handle many of the situations they had to face in Zanzibar.

The attachment of slaves to their master could be further emphasized by the provision of fish or meat. Tharia Topan, for example, reportedly gave his slaves fish once a week and beef or camel curry on occasional Fridays.³⁹

Slaves lived together as families in a hut near their gardens. Masters supplied slaves with the modest material--mainly wooden poles, to be used as a frame for mud, and dried coconut leaves--to build a house.

³⁷ Genovese, "Treatment," in Foner and Genovese, p. 203.

³⁸ George P. Murdock, Africa: Its Peoples and Their Culture History (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1959), pp. 295-313.

³⁹ Mohamed Hussein Tharia Topan, "Biography of Sir Tharia Topan, Knight," MS, 1960-63, p. 136.

Observers generally found the huts were "good sized" and reasonably clean.⁴⁰ Scattered among the fields, with building materials readily available, and with labor supplied by slaves themselves, housing was basically similar to that of free Africans in Zanzibar and the mainland. As with food, slaves largely provided for themselves.

Masters were supposed to supply slaves with clothing, although slaves apparently wore little of it. According to Hardinge, the customary allotment was a shirt or gown every six months for males and two pieces of cloth for females.⁴¹ However, some sources deny that slaves received clothing, forcing slaves to purchase it with the modest earnings of their plots.⁴²

Islamic law requires the master to provide food, clothing, and medicine to each slave, regardless of his ability to work.⁴³ Hardinge reported that this law obliged a master to provide for sick slaves, and another official added that it was considered disgraceful to evade this obligation by freeing a slave who was unable to support himself through sickness or age.⁴⁴ Another claimed that slaves free by European officials

⁴⁰ Rigby, "Report," p. 334; Christie, "Slavery," pp. 32-3; Fraser, p. 17; Devereux, p. 107.

⁴¹ Hardinge to Kimberley, 26 February 1895, PP 1895, LXXI, 143, p. 29; Guillain, Documents, Vol. 2/1, pp. 82-4; Donald Mackenzie, "Report on Slavery and the Slave-Trade in Zanzibar, Pemba, and the Mainland of the British Protectorates of East Africa," Anti-Slavery Reporter, Ser. IV, 15 (1895), p. 88.

⁴² O'Sullivan, "Report," p. 41; Gaume, p. 258; Baumann, Sansibar, p. 22.

⁴³ Charles Hamilton, trans., The Hedaya, or Guide (London: Bensley, 1791), Vol. I, p. 418.

⁴⁴ Hardinge to Kimberley, 26 February 1895, PP 1895, LXXI, 143, p. 29; Cave to Grey, 18 June 1906 (telegram), FOCP 8932, p. 771.

sometimes refused to accept the deed of freedom because no one would then support them when they were sick or old.⁴⁵ An old slave could be supported by the gift of a portion of the estate to cultivate for his own use, while free of obligations to work for the master. An ill slave might be sent to the seashore, a more healthy climate than the interior, to recuperate.⁴⁶ There is contradictory evidence from missionaries, however. Bishop Steere claimed that "masters turn out their sick slaves to die or get well as they may, only if they get well they claim them again." J. P. Farler discovered some children who had been cast out by their owners because they were ill, and Vice-Consul O'Sullivan reported that sick slaves were cast out, while few survived to old-age.⁴⁷ Some masters lived up to the standards of Islamic ethics; others found the cost and trouble too great.

The Prophet Muhammed said that masters should forgive their slaves seventy times each day. The master who beat a slave was warned that he could only find his redemption by freeing that slave.⁴⁸ Most of the crimes discussed in the Koran and the legal commentaries--theft, illegal inter-

⁴⁵Rodd to Rosebury, 31 December 1893, PP 1895, LXXI, 143, p. 17. An early colonial official wrote that he knew of an upper-class Arab who took a job with the government because he had inherited many old slaves and was obliged to support them. W. P. James Fawcus, "Experience in Zanzibar and East Africa," Manchester Geographical Society Journal, 24 (1908), pp. 7-8.

⁴⁶Mackenzie, p. 77; Com. Hall to Capt. Jenks, 23 May 1888, PP 1888, LXXIV, 1, p. 58. In the case described here, the slave stayed four months by the sea. His master did not send him food, and he lived mainly on fish.

⁴⁷Steere to Robins, 27 July 1878, UMCA Archives, A1(III), box 2, fl. 482; Letter of J. P. Farler, 4 July 1895, reprinted in Anti-Slavery Reporter, Ser. IV, 16 (1896), p. 49; O'Sullivan, "Report," p. 42.

⁴⁸Muhammad Kasim Mazrui, Historia Ya Utumwa Katika Uislamu na Dini Nyengine (Nairobi: Islamic Foundation, 1970), p. 5.

course, apostasy, and the like--are considered crimes against Allah. Their punishment falls under the jurisdiction of the qadi, not the master.⁴⁹ Crimes such as murder were covered by retaliation or the payment of blood money. If a slave should be killed, the master was protected against property loss. However, a master who killed his own slave did not pay blood money; he had destroyed his own property.⁵⁰

But the Koran was not written with a planter class in mind, and it offered little guidance on the punishment of breaches of plantation discipline. Certain points of jurisdiction had to be worked out between the masters and qadis. The courts tended to leave matters such as failure to finish assigned tasks and running away to the masters, provided that they did not inflict severe punishment.⁵¹ In a letter to the governor of Mombasa, the Sultan of Zanzibar in 1881 defined the jurisdictions, presumably based on Zanzibari practice: no slave should be given more than ten lashes, and if a slave's crime could not be adequately punished that way, the case should go to the authorities. In cases of cruelty, the master should be punished and the slave confiscated.⁵² Hardinge wrote in 1895 that the maximum penalty a master could inflict on his slave was nineteen lashes or a short imprisonment. A slave could complain to the

⁴⁹Hamilton, Hedaya, Vol. II, pp. 12, 13; R. Brunschvig, "'Abd," Encyclopedia of Islam (Leiden: Brill, 1960), Vol. I, p. 29; Joseph Schacht, An Introduction to Islamic Law (London: Oxford U.P., 1964), p. 177.

⁵⁰Schacht, pp. 182, 186-87.

⁵¹The jurisdictional problem was explained to me by the former and present Chief Qadi of Kenya. MSA 21, 26.

⁵²Kirk to Granville, 28 March 1881, FOCP 4626, p. 236.

gadi if excessively beaten, and if the master committed this offence twice, the gadi could force the master to sell the slave.⁵³ According to Consul Playfair, masters sent their recalcitrant slaves to the authorities to be beaten or imprisoned with hard labor.⁵⁴ Christie also claimed that most punishment was inflicted judicially and harsh measures were seldom used by slaveowners.⁵⁵ Several eyewitnesses have described the punishment of slaves by government officials--they were put in chains and assigned tasks on public works or thrown into prison. Crimes such as escape or theft were punished by the government in this manner.⁵⁶ However, others saw stocks on plantations or in town used to punish slaves personally.⁵⁷ It is difficult to tell what went on in the plantations in remote parts of Zanzibar and Pemba, but if the evidence of such observers as Hamerton, Rigby, Burton, and Christie is to be believed, whipping was not routinely used, and cruel punishments were rare.⁵⁸ O'Sullivan, however, did say

⁵³Hardinge to Kimberley, 26 February 1895, PP 1895, LXXI, 143, p. 28.

⁵⁴R. L. Playfair, "Report on the Result of the Observations and Enquiries Made During a Tour in the Various Countries around Zanzibar, Especially those more or less connected with the Slave Trade," TBGS, XVII (1865), p. 263.

⁵⁵Christie, "Slavery," p. 36.

⁵⁶Rigby, "Report," p. 331; Devereux, pp. 106-7; Mackenzie, p. 73; Jerome Becker, La Vie En Afrique ou Trois Ans Dans l'Afrique Centrale (Paris, Bruxelles: Lebeque, 1887), Vol. I, p. 27; Quass, p. 446.

⁵⁷Miss Allen, "Glimpses of Harem Life," Central Africa, I (1883), pp. 147-48; J. E. E. Craster, Pemba, The Spice Island of Zanzibar (London: Fisher Unwin, 1913), p. 212.

⁵⁸Hamerton to Bombay, 2 January 1842, PP 1844, XLVIII, 1, p. 419; Rigby, Testimony, PP 1871, XII, 1, p. 47; Richard Burton, The Lake Regions of Central Africa (London: Longmans, 1860), Vol. II, p. 375; Christie, "Slavery," p. 43.

that flogging was frequent on Pemba for small offenses, and occasional cases of extreme brutality did occur. Governmental authority was weak on that island, and masters tended to whip slaves themselves, turning over slaves to the government mainly for imprisonment.⁵⁹ The government's willingness to handle the masters' problems of controlling slaves did not mean that the slaves' offenses were studied impartially--officials took the masters' word--but at least it reduced the personal element in the punishment of slaves.

Should masters excessively punish their slaves in violation of Islamic law or Zanzibari customs, a slave had some recourse. Hamerton said that if a slave could escape to the Sultan, he would be protected and his evidence against his master received at law. Christie wrote that a gadi could order a master to sell a slave if the slave complained of cruelty.⁶⁰ According to Hardinge, masters who killed their slaves had to pay one-half the blood money for a free person into the public treasury and were subject to imprisonment at the Sultan's pleasure.⁶¹ However, Donald Mackenzie, who visited Zanzibar and Pemba on behalf of the British Anti-Slavery Society, claimed that the authorities, being themselves slaveholders, did nothing to check abuses and that slaves were in fact subject to arbitrary punishments.⁶² After the abolition act of 1897, officials

⁵⁹O'Sullivan, "Report," p. 42.

⁶⁰Hamerton to Aberdeen, 2 January 1844, FO 54/6 and Christie, "Slavery," p. 47. See also Joseph Thomson, To the Central African Lakes and Back (London: Cass, 1881, repr. 1968), Vol. I, p. 17.

⁶¹Hardinge to Kimberley, 26 February 1895, PP 1895, LXXI, 143, p. 29.

⁶²Mackenzie, p. 79.

charged with enforcing it received frequent complaints of unfair punishment from the slaves.⁶³

As in all slave societies, the practical limits of enforcing laws and group norms on individual slaveowners were considerable. Zanzibar, moreover, lacked a police force and a bureaucracy, even if its rulers had wanted to maintain standards of conduct. In areas most distant from the seat of government, especially Pemba, the influence of Islamic jurists was especially weak and there is some evidence that cruel abuse of slaves was more common than in Zanzibar.⁶⁴ Nearer the capital, slaves had some chance to complain if the customs of Zanzibar and the laws of Islam were violated, but as in most societies, judges came from the powerful, not the weak. The desire to increase productivity, plus the heat of anger at a slave, could counter the norms regarding punishment. Still, it is important to be aware of Zanzibari notions of what punishments were right, even if Zanzibaris often did what was wrong.⁶⁵

In their overall assessments of slavery in Zanzibar, European officials and visitors stressed the mildness of the work requirements and the absence of cruel punishments and abuse. Similar opinions come from people with different personalities, biases, and experiences in East Africa,

⁶³ PP 1898, LX, 361, p. 61.

⁶⁴ O'Sullivan, "Report," pp. 41-2; Hardinge to Salisbury, 10 January 1896, PP 1896, LIX, 395, p. 24.

⁶⁵ Genovese, in Roll, Jordan, Roll, places much weight on the legal system as part of a mature slave system. It allows planters to control their slaves in ways that are not merely practical, but normative. Community standards can influence slaveowners, most of whom are concerned about their reputation and standing. When, as with Islam, law and religion are equated, the impact is especially deep.

and they also span a period from the 1840's to the 1890's, as incentives to maximize productivity rose and fell with the price of cloves and changes in the slave supply.

Hamerton, the British Consul during the expansion of clove cultivation in the 1840's, wrote that, "The Slave is well fed in general, and ill-treatment or cruelty on the part of the master is of very rare occurrence." So little coercion was used that "the master has little control over his slaves."⁶⁶ Rigby, the most vigorous of the official opponents of the slave trade, acknowledged that Arabs were "not cruel to their slaves."⁶⁷ The other Consuls, from the 1860's to the 1890's, held similar opinions.⁶⁸ Hardinge was especially struck by the ways in which Zanzibari customs provided "relaxations and indulgences" not found in Islamic law. Limitations on the amount of work required were generally adhered to, while food, clothing, shelter, and medical care were provided.⁶⁹ The one official who felt otherwise was the Vice-Consul in Pemba during the 1890's, O'Sullivan, who wrote that Arabs were "often cruel" and took no interest in their slaves' welfare other than to provide them with land for their own use.

⁶⁶ Hamerton to Aberdeen, 2 January 1844, FO 54/6, reprinted in Anti-Slavery Reporter, Ser. IV, 14 (1894), pp. 54-5; Hamerton to Bombay Secretary, 2 January 1842, PP 1844, XLVIII, 1, p. 419.

⁶⁷ Rigby, Testimony, PP 1871, XII, 1, p. 47.

⁶⁸ Playfair to Russell, 30 May 1865, FO 84/1245; Rodd to Rosebery, 31 December 1893, PP 1895, LXXI, 143, pp. 16-7; Smith, "Slavery," pp. 406-7; Hardinge to Kimberley, 26 February 1895, PP 1895, LXXI, 143, p. 29.

⁶⁹ Hardinge, p. 29. Hardinge is wrong in calling the provision of food, clothing, etc., customary rather than legal, but such specific matters as the two free days per week and the land that was given to slaves were in fact customary, although designed to implement the Koranic intent that masters provide food.

Punishment was sometimes severe. He singled out the case of Ali bin Abdulla Al-Thenawi, who punished a slave who had tried to run away by flogging him and then keeping him tied to a tree in his plantation for seven months. However, other slaveowners in Pemba disapproved of Ali, and O'Sullivan admitted that he knew of other masters whose slaves "appear to be happy and contented with their lot."⁷⁰ Conditions may in fact have been worse on Pemba than in Zanzibar. Nevertheless, O'Sullivan's reports should serve as a reminder that paternalistic norms in East Africa, as in other slave societies, could be forgotten and slaves subjected to rigid discipline or wanton abuses.

The fact that missionaries shared the opinions about the mildness of slavery is significant in view of their opposition to both slavery and Islam. Bishop Steere, a man with considerable experience in Zanzibar, said, "There are all kinds of masters; some starve their slaves, and some beat them; but, as a rule, they fare well."⁷¹ David Livingstone described the cruelties of the slave trade in great detail but felt that slaves who survived the journey to Zanzibar had a better fate in store for them: "The Arabs are said to treat their slaves kindly, and this may be said of native masters; the reason is, master and slave partake of the general indolence." As civilization progressed, Livingstone believed, the wants of the masters would multiply and slaves would be driven harder.⁷² The

⁷⁰Hardinge to Salisbury, 10 January 1896, PP 1896, LIX, 395, p. 24; O'Sullivan, "Report," p. 42.

⁷¹Bishop Steere, Testimony, PP 1871, XII, 1, p. 76.

⁷²David Livingstone, The Last Journals of David Livingstone, in Central Africa, from 1865 to his Death (London: Murray, 1874), Vol. I, p. 7. For a similar argument, see Quass, p. 442.

image of the lazy oriental--Arab or African--is a racial stereotype, but Livingstone's last point shows greater perception. The treatment of slaves depends not on the race of their owner but on the extent to which the social and economic system provides incentives to increase productivity. As Part I made clear, such incentives were greatly increased by the rise of clove cultivation, but were still limited by the weakness of the clove economy and the restricted importance of wealth to Zanzibari society.

Other visitors and residents in Zanzibar made similar points. Loarer, a dispassionate Frenchman studying Zanzibar's commerce in the late 1840's, wrote that slaves suffered greatly on route, but once in Zanzibar experienced "moral and material well-being."⁷³ The British explorer John Speke found that the material conditions of slaves was better than that of free Africans in the interior. To him, the burden of slavery lay in social degradation and separation from kinsmen rather than physical deprivation, excessive work, or mistreatment.⁷⁴

A few observers went beyond such comments on the absence of material want or physical mistreatment to see the condition of the slave in the context of a social system. Captain Colomb, a British naval officer stationed at Zanzibar, thought that the good condition of slaves derived

⁷³ Captain Loarer, O.I., 5/23, Cahier 5. An American merchant who was also there in the 1840's had similar views. Michael Shepard, MS log of Star, 1844, NEMA, p. 262.

⁷⁴ John H. Speke, Journal of the Discovery of the Source of the Nile (London: Blackwood, 1863), p. xxvi. Another explorer, Richard Burton, who was particularly acute, also felt that Arabs generally treated their slaves well. Zanzibar, Vol. I, pp. 463-64, and Lake, Vol. II, p. 370. For some American viewpoints, see Speer to Seward, 26 November 1862; W. G. Webb to State Department, 11 May 1861, US Consul, 4, NEMA, pp. 517-8.

not only from the "gentle indolence" of their Arab masters, but from the fact that the Arab was the "feudal chief of his dependents, and offers them the protection we understand by the term."⁷⁵ James Christie, the physician, found the social and moral conditions of slaves in the town, where relationships were impersonal, to be inferior to that in the countryside, where slaves were more like family members. In rural areas, masters and slaves came to a tacit understanding of what they could expect from one another:

The masters, knowing the latent power they have to control, manage their slaves with great prudence and tact, and never have the least fear of a servile revolt.

The slave knows very well that there are certain orders that he must obey, and that he must do a certain amount of work for his master, but he knows equally well that the master dare not and would not transgress the understood privileges and acknowledged rights of their slaves.⁷⁶

Christie's remarks--coming from a sensitive social observer--suggest that Arabs in the 1870's retained a sense of the slaveowner's role as provider and patron. They used force as the ultimate means of discipline, but did so sparingly. This paternalism contains reflections of Islamic ideals and Omani practices of a previous era, but its continued viability in the 1870's was also the result of the particular form which economic change took. Clove cultivation demanded intensive labor for part of the year and dependents for the rest. Rural self-sufficiency, not just export agriculture, was a consequence of economic development. As a result, the ideology and practice of paternalism was not so much eroded as trans-

⁷⁵ Colomb, pp. 312, 374.

⁷⁶ Christie, "Slavery," pp. 42-3.

formed. A rural landlord, surrounded by his dependents, who would work for him when he required their help and farm their own small plots when he did not need them, was the new ideal.

Observers paint a fairly consistent portrait of Zanzibari slavery, one which does not exclude hard work and punishment, but which stresses paternalism. This may be the only written opinion, but it was not the only expressed one.⁷⁷ Many slaves indicated their refusal to accept Zanzibari slavery on their masters' terms by running away. Their actions should serve as a warning to those who might confuse paternalism with benevolence. Paternalism--in Zanzibar as in the United States South--was an uneasy equilibrium between the demands of masters for labor and deference and the desire of the dependents to live their own lives. Escape and rebellion testify to the uneasiness of the equilibrium and were also the main weapon on the side of the slaves.⁷⁸

It is impossible to quantify the extent of acts of resistance, but it is clear that they were not isolated instances. Slave resistance

⁷⁷ It would also be useful to check these views against records of mortality among slaves, but demographic records are lacking. The British Consul in 1883 estimated mortality at 8-12% annually, which he compared to an estimate of 22-33% by Hamerton in 1844. He attributed the difference to improved treatment resulting from a higher price for slaves. However, neither figure is based on any quantitative evidence, and there is another good reason for mortality to decline. The 1840's was a high point for slaves importations, and the 1880's a low point. One would expect higher mortality in the 1840's because of the new slaves' lack of immunity to local diseases. See Miles to Granville, 1 March 1883, FOCP 4914, p. 124; and Hamerton to Aberdeen, 2 January 1844, FO 54/6.

⁷⁸ Christie, and Burton as well, stress that the potential of escape was the main deterrent. Escape did occur frequently enough to make the threat a real one. Christie, "Slavery, pp. 42-3; Burton, Zanzibar, Vol. I, pp. 463-64.

sometimes took the form of committing crimes for which their masters were responsible at law. Burton said that slaves in Zanzibar town had been seen around fires, adding fuel and singing and dancing with delight. Some slaves murdered their masters.⁷⁹

More commonly, they ran away. According to Loarer, most runaways were recent arrivals on the island.⁸⁰ Although an island, Zanzibar offered opportunities for escape. One of the few European visitors to the south of Zanzibar, a coral area where cloves did not grow, found escaped slaves living there, subsisting on their crops of millet. They lived in detached huts, an indication that they did not feel in danger of attack.⁸¹ At the extreme north end of Pemba, some escaped slaves formed their own settlement, and the small government garrison at Chake Chake, at the other end of the island, did not dare attack. Other Pemba slaves took refuge on islands off the island's coast.⁸² Closer to the Arab estates themselves,

⁷⁹Burton, Lakes, Vol. II, pp. 331, 374-75. Similar actions by slaves in the New World are described by Patterson, pp. 261-66; Knight, p. 78; and John W. Blassingame, The Slave Community (New York: Oxford U.P., 1972), pp. 107-8.

⁸⁰Loarer, O.I., 5/23, Cahier 5. In the New World, recent arrivals were also among the most likely to escape. The most acculturated slaves also ran away often, although frequently to cities where their knowledge of their masters' ways would enable them to disappear. Slaves in the middle were the least likely to escape or rebel. Mullin, Flight. The Zanzibari evidence agrees with the proposition that new slaves were most likely to flee, but there is no evidence that the most experienced ones also did so. This may be the result of a high rate of manumission for slaves who had served long. See Chapter VI, pp. 400-1.

⁸¹Alfred Belleville, "Trip Around the Southern End of Zanzibar Island," Proceedings of the RGS, XX (1875-76), pp. 71-2.

⁸²Playfair, p. 257; Alexandre LeRoy, "Au Zanguébar anglais," Missions Catholiques, XXII (1890), p. 620.

Captain Fraser, an English planter attempting to grow sugar, found his estate was plagued by fugitive slaves from other plantations. They hid on his estate and stole goods.⁸³ When the Universities' Mission to Central Africa bought a shamba, it received a number of fugitives.⁸⁴ At the end of the century, fugitives fled to government stations as well as to the missions.⁸⁵ Others "simply disappeared," perhaps joining the large population of slaves, ex-slaves, and others living on their own in Zanzibar town.⁸⁶

Many runaways chose to leave the island altogether. Zanzibar and Pemba are not far from the mainland coast, and it was possible to steal a small canoe or sailboat and make it to the coast. Up to 1873 and at times thereafter, Arabian slave traders were operating in Zanzibar, and a desperate slave could sell himself--within half an hour according to one observer.⁸⁷ The same British vessels that shut off the slave trade to Arabia provide considerable evidence of the attempts of slaves between the 1870's and early 1890's to reach the mainland or obtain refuge with Europeans. The naval vessels picked up a number of canoes in which fugi-

⁸³ Sir Bartle Frere, "Memorandum Respecting Captain Fraser's Estate," 10 February 1873, PP 1873, LXI, 768, p. 35.

⁸⁴ Bishop Steere to Robins, 27 July 1878, UMCA Archives, A1 (III), Box 2, fl 480-82. The refugees included a woman who had been chained and beaten, a sick girl cast out by her master, and a man and woman who said they had lived as free for 6-7 years, but were about to be taken as slaves to Pemba.

⁸⁵ Zanzibar Government, Agriculture Department, Annual Report, 1898, p. 33.

⁸⁶ Cave to Lansdowne, 15 April 1901, FO 2/454.

⁸⁷ Colomb, pp. 372-73.

tive slaves were apparently trying to reach the mainland.⁸⁸ Others sought refuge with the naval vessels themselves. One officer wrote that on a survey of Pemba his boats were "besieged with slaves, who have requested to be taken on board, some from the land, some from canoes." Most of the fugitives complained of ill-treatment, and many showed signs of beating, chains, or hunger. The descriptions of the naval officers strongly suggest that attempts to flee the islands were closely linked with specific instances of brutal treatment.⁸⁹

Some made it all the way on their own. O'Sullivan wrote that many runaways from Pemba succeeded in reaching the mainland by canoe.⁹⁰ Officials in British East Africa, which was adjacent to Pemba, noted the presence of escaped slaves. The town of Shimoni was inhabited by 103 runaways from Pemba in April, 1897, and others arrived later in the year.⁹¹

⁸⁸ Euan-Smith to Derby, 5 July 1875, FOCP 2915, p. 193; Com. Lang to Rear-Adm. Fremantle, 6 June 1889, FOCP 6052, p. 3; Cap. Brackenbury to Fremantle, 10 May 1889, PP 1889, LXXII, 279, p. 53; Com. Festing to Admiralty, 29 September, 3 October, 29 November, and 15 December 1894, Documents relatifs a la repression de la traite des esclaves publiées en exécution des articles LXXI et suivants de l'acte général de Bruxelles (Brussels, 1894), pp. 37-40; Cap. MacGill, "Further Report on the Detention of a Canoe and 5 Slaves by H.M.S. Phoebe on 14th April 1895, FO 107/46.

⁸⁹ Com. Wharton to Rear-Adm. Corbett, 17 October 1878, FOCP 3928, p. 546; Com. Lang to Cap. Woodward, 29 November 1886, FOCP 5161, p. 40; Miles to Granville, 16 July 1883, FOCP 4914, p. 165; Lieut. Nicholas to Com. Arbuthnot, 24 April 1889, PP 1889, LXXII, 279, p. 40; Com. Boyle to Rear-Adm. MacDonald, October 1876, FOCP 3686, p. 700, and many others.

⁹⁰ O'Sullivan, "Report," p. 41.

⁹¹ District Officer, Vanga, to Craufurd, 21 April 1897, and Tritton to Rogers, 30 October 1897, CP/1/97/183. See also Henry S. Newman, "Narrative of Visit of Theodore Burt and Henry S. Newman to Zanzibar, Pemba, and the East Africa Protectorate, 1897," typescript in the library of the Society of Friends, London, MS, Vol. 204, p. 51; Piggott to Smith, 5 June 1891, FO 84/2148; de Winton to Euan-Smith, 11 February 1891, incl. Euan-Smith to Salisbury, 17 February 1891, FO 84/2146; Smith to Salisbury, 5 August 1891, FO 84/2149; Burton, Lakes, Vol. II, p. 374.

Possibly, escape became more common in the last years before abolition because the presence of British officials on the islands made the consequences of failure less severe. Some slaves did fail--most of the descriptions of the punishment of slaves cite escape as the most frequent offence.⁹²

At least one, possibly two or three, violent rebellions occurred in Zanzibar. The known incident is similar to the formation of maroon settlements in Jamaica, Brazil, and elsewhere in the Caribbean and South America by slaves who escaped en masse and defended themselves with force against recapture. It was not a direct attack on slaveowners, such as the rebellion of Nat Turner or the revolution in San Domingue.⁹³ A French naval officer writing in 1822 said that a few years previously, slaves revolted, and the Arabs, assembled by the governor, chased them out of the woods, burning trees to get at them and shooting many.⁹⁴ This appears to be the same revolt described by Richard Burton in 1860, who erroneously stated that it had occurred twenty years previously. Burton said that the rebels were all recently imported Wazigua, a people living on the mainland of what is now Tanzania. They "rose against their Arab masters, retreated into the jungles, and, reinforced by malefactors and malcontents, began a servile war, which raged with the greatest fury for six months." The revolt was put down by the governor of Zanzibar, Ahmed bin Seif, with

⁹²Newman, "Narrative," p. 43. See also above, p. 293. Some slaves drowned during the attempt. Com. Lang to Rear-Adm. Fremantle, 6 June 1889, FOCP 6052, p. 3.

⁹³Richard Price, ed., Maroon Societies (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1973). Patterson, pp. 266-83; Dunn, pp. 256-62; Marion D. deB. Kilson, "Towards Freedom: An Analysis of Slave Revolts in the United States," Phylon, 25 (1964), pp. 175-87.

⁹⁴Massieu to Ministre de la Marine et des Colonies, 9 October 1822, O.I., 17/89.

soldiers from the Hadramaut.⁹⁵ This revolt, then, took place in the early years of expanded slave populations and among a particular group that had as yet received little opportunity to become acculturated or submerged in Swahili society. One would expect such a group, sharing common experiences of freedom in their native land, to react in the most hostile and coherent way to enslavement.⁹⁶ At a later date, no such revolts took place, and in the 1870's, Christie wrote, Arabs did not even fear them.⁹⁷

Escape, even rebellion, was easier to accomplish than in most plantation areas of the Western Hemisphere, especially the Southern United States. As shall be shown in the next section, slaves in Zanzibar lived in scattered clusters of huts and had considerable physical mobility. Whereas most Western slave societies had substantial police forces and militias, there were virtually no armed forces in rural areas of Zanzibar

⁹⁵ Burton, Lakes, Vol. I, p. 125. There are two reasons to suggest that this revolt actually occurred in the 1820's. Ahmed bin Seif was governor in the 1820's, not the 1840's. (C. S. Nicholls, The Swahili Coast [London: George Allen and Unwin, 1971], p. 272.) Moreover, there were many Europeans and Americans in Zanzibar around 1840, including an American Consul who was resident there, but their accounts fail to mention any slave revolt. If an event of sufficient importance to be related to Burton twenty years later occurred, it is inconceivable that eyewitnesses or people who came shortly after the revolt would have missed it. Burton's description is similar to the less detailed statement by the Frenchman Massieu, but it is of course possible that a second revolt occurred in the 1820's. Another description of a Wazigua revolt, apparently based on Wazigua informants on the mainland, came from a French missionary in 1886, who said that the revolt occurred 50 years previously. This may also be the same revolt, or else another one by Wazigua. Père Picard, "Autour de Manderu," Missions Catholiques, 18 (1886), p. 227.

⁹⁶ In Père Picard's version of the revolt, the rebels had actually been captured in one raid and were about to be divided among their captor in Zanzibar when the revolt took place. This version, however, appears to have been inflated in the telling. Picard, pp. 226-7.

⁹⁷ Christie, "Slavery," p. 43.

and Pemba, and the only significant body of soldiers was in Zanzibar town itself.⁹⁸ Nor did Zanzibar have anything like the pass laws and restrictions on the movement and activities of blacks that evolved in the Western slave societies. On the other hand, slaves on the islands could not flee to virtually unoccupied land bordering on the plantations as could the slaves of Malindi.⁹⁹ Finding an area for a group of runaways to build a permanent settlement was difficult, but escape itself was reasonably easy for a slave who could not bear the treatment he was receiving. Masters had to keep this in mind or risk losing substantial numbers of their slaves.¹⁰⁰

Escape was the most powerful sanction slaves had to restrain a changing slave system. Between the 1830's and the 1850's, the scale of agriculture had changed drastically. Slaves of Omani Arabs, for the first time, were workers in a large scale, labor-intensive industry producing for a world market. The scale of slavery had changed--some plantations had hundreds of slaves and a hierarchy of supervisors. The intensity of slavery had changed--more work had to be done, in a more regimented fashion, and greater profits could be made. The evidence of hard work

⁹⁸ On the absence of police and the weakness of the army, see Burton, Zanzibar, Vol. I, pp. 265-66; and Adrien Germain, "Note sur Zanzibar et la cote orientale d'Afrique," Bulletin de la société de Géographie, 5e série, XVI (1868), pp. 542-43.

⁹⁹ When some of Seyyid Majid's slaves got a better chance to escape during the Sultan's visit to Dar es Salaam, on the mainland, 41 of them fled into the nearby bush. Seward to Secretary to the Bombay Government, 10 November 1866, FO 84/1261.

¹⁰⁰ According to Holmwood, slaves were aware that they were valuable property and, in the 1880's, difficult to replace. They ran away at the slightest provocation and refused to do hard work. Holmwood to FO, 14 September 1887, FO 84/1854. See also Christie, "Slavery," pp. 42-3; Burton, Zanzibar, Vol. I, p. 463; Hardinge to Salisbury, 10 January 1896, PP 1896, LIX, 395, p. 24.

is too great and reports of harsh punishments too frequent to dismiss Zanzibari slavery as mild or benevolent. It can still be characterized as paternalistic: ties of interdependence united masters and slaves. Customary privileges and rights, as well as limitations on work, came to be accepted. Paternalism was pulled by masters and slaves in opposite directions, violated by masters who made their slaves exceed customary work requirements and by slaves who resisted obligations that were deemed normal. Nevertheless, as early as the 1840's, there were fairly clear customs defining the obligations of masters and the duties of slaves. Masters could violate these customs with greater impunity than slaves, but both had some idea of what was right.

Eighteenth century Omani paternalism was not obliterated by the demands of export agriculture, but was instead transformed by the development of plantations as self-contained, rural communities. The social and economic situation of the masters and slaves, as well as the particularities of their main crop, helped shape the nature of paternalism. On the mainland, the context was different, as were the requirements of the crops and the balance of power between the masters and the slaves.

Grain, Coconuts, and Slave Labor in Malindi and Mombasa

By mid-nineteenth century, the northern part of the Sultan's mainland dominions was a rich farming area, specializing in millet, sesame, and coconuts. Slave labor was organized in a variety of ways.¹⁰¹ In

¹⁰¹In testimony in a land case in 1912, two leading Arab officials said that there were three classes of slaves on the coast: those who worked permanently on coconut mashamba, those working anywhere they liked and paying their master a yearly sum, and those growing annual crops on their masters' fields under the supervision of headmen. Testimony of Said bin Abdalla and Seif bin Salim, in case of Zanzibar Government vs. Government of British East Africa, a/c 2D of 1912.

Mombasa--where the incentives to increase productivity were least--slave-owners were generally content with loose supervision, but in Malindi--where efficient labor was most needed--slaveowners went further than in any other part of East Africa along the road to gang labor.¹⁰² In Mombasa, owners were frequently willing to let slaves work on their own, perhaps under slave headmen, perhaps not, as long as they produced an amount of goods that they deemed adequate. In Malindi, slaves worked in organized groups, under the constant surveillance of slave drivers and, in most cases, the direct supervision of the owner.

Kirk, visiting Malindi in the 1870's, observed "gangs of field labourers" at work in the Malindi mashamba.¹⁰³ Fitzgerald, the agricultural expert sent in 1891 to manage the confiscated slave plantation of a rich Malindi landowner, described gang labor in some detail. Slaves worked in groups of five to twenty under a headman who was also a slave. When cultivating, slaves worked from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. When sowing grain, they began work at dawn. The clearing of new land was done on a task basis--each slave had to clear a fixed area of bush, 100 yards by 4 yards, each day. Similarly, an area of 200 yards by 4 yards was the daily assignment for hoeing.¹⁰⁴ The only tools were a billhook for clearing bush

¹⁰² Philip D. Curtin rightly stresses the evolution of gang labor under close supervision as the major change from older patterns of European slavery as the cultivation of sugar expanded. "The Atlantic Slave Trade 1600-1800," in J. F. A. Ajayi and Michael Crowder, eds., History of West Africa (New York: Columbia U.P., 1971), p. 245.

¹⁰³ Kirk to Derby, 4 April 1877, FOCP 3686, p. 563.

¹⁰⁴ Fitzgerald, Travels, pp. 28, 31. Later, European planters near Malindi required the same tasks of their "free" laborers. Malindi District, Annual Report, 1908-9, KNA.

and a short-handled hoe for digging, planting, and weeding--field labor was indeed arduous.¹⁰⁵

Most informants in Malindi, including descendants of both slaves and slaveowners, also describe this relatively rigid organization of labor. All slaves worked, men and women alike.¹⁰⁶ Slaves usually had to clear one ngwe, named after the length of rope used to estimate the size of the plot to be cleared, each day. After that, their required work was done. Informants of slave descent (wazalia) generally said that this task took all day, while descendants of free people (waungwana) more often, but not always, claimed that an ngwe of ground could be cleared in a morning.¹⁰⁷

Slaves always worked under the supervision of a nokoa, a headman or trusted slave. The nokoa would point out to the slaves what land they were to clear and keep track of who was actually working. A nokoa was selected from among a master's experienced slaves on the basis of skill and loyalty.¹⁰⁸ Only once, in oral or written sources, did I hear of

¹⁰⁵ Fitzgerald, "Report," in FO 84/2176.

¹⁰⁶ MAL 17, 25, 35, 46. One informant, however, said that female slaves only worked on their husbands' plots and one said they worked in the home. MAL 12, 52.

¹⁰⁷ Wazalia sources on this point are: MAL 24, 31, 34, 35, 51. One mzalia said slaves were made to work even after completing an ngwe; another said they might be given household tasks. MAL 30, 35. Waungwana informants include: MAL 17, 18, 37, 40, 44, 46.

¹⁰⁸ MAL 35. His father was nokoa for a freed Abyssinian slave, who became a large slaveowner. Other sources are: MAL 5, 17, 27, 28, 44. One large slaveowner had one overseer on each of his fourteen mashamba and three manokoa supervising them all. MAL 26.

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estates and many regarded themselves as patriarchs, was still part of a competitive society, and even the most genteel slaveowners had little choice but to use their slaves efficiently or face bankruptcy. By custom, slaves had at least one day off per week plus certain holidays, but during peak periods the work week could average 70-75 hours. Free farmers worked these long hours too, although of course under different conditions.¹¹²

In Malindi, the pressure on everybody to work with such intensity was less, even though Malindi was more oriented towards efficient production than Mombasa or even Zanzibar. The work week, in the most critical accounts, could not have exceeded 40-50 hours, and according to others was considerably less. Work in the grain fields of Malindi was regimented and difficult, but the customary work load was less arduous than on most sugar or cotton estates of the New World.

A second difference between Malindi and many Western plantations was the status of supervisory personnel. Although most plantations in the United States South had no white overseer, a substantial proportion of the large ones--30% in one calculation--did. In parts of the British Caribbean, where absenteeism was rampant, estates were commonly left in the hands of white managers.¹¹³ Often a young, landless man eager to

See Stanley J. Stein, Vassouras: A Brazilian Coffee County, 1850-1900 (Cambridge: Harvard U.P., 1957), pp. 135-37.

¹¹²Fogel and Engerman, p. 208; Blassingame, p. 155; Genovese, World, p. 98; Stamp, pp. 43, 77-85.

¹¹³Fogel and Engerman, p. 201; Carl and Roberta Bridenbaugh, No Peace Beyond the Line: The English in the Caribbean 1624-1690 (New York: Oxford U.P., 1972), p. 304; Douglas Hall, "Absentee-Proprietorship in the British West Indies, to about 1850," in Lambros Comitas and David Lowenthal, eds., Slaves, Free Men, Citizens: West Indian Perspectives (Garden City: Doubleday, 1973), pp. 105-36.

enter the world of the planters, the overseer lacked the master's long-term interest in the welfare of his slaves and stood to gain by showing short-term profits. Overseers were the most hated figures on the plantation.¹¹⁴ Of course, slave supervisors had to impress their masters to gain privileges and keep their positions, but they were in a much more ambiguous position. With years of close contact with their fellow slaves and with opportunities for mobility only within the bounds allowed for slaves, the slave driver had strong emotional and practical reasons not to push the slaves too hard. If he was the representative of the master to the slaves, he was also the spokesman of the slaves to the master.¹¹⁵ In Malindi, even large plantations--with only one known exception--were managed entirely by slaves and the master himself, and in Zanzibar slave overseers predominated as well. The absence of an overseer from a different racial group, with no personal ties with slaves and with aspirations to elevate himself to the ranks of the planters, was a load off the backs of Malindi's slaves.

Informants in Malindi rarely mentioned any of the less rigid ways of organizing labor that were found elsewhere on the coast. However, some sources indicate that on coconut mashamba, slaves received a share of the harvest to encourage them to work.¹¹⁶ There are also a few recorded

¹¹⁴ Stamp, pp. 82-3; Blassingame, pp. 173-77; Patterson, p. 93; Goveia, Slave Society, p. 110.

¹¹⁵ Eugene D. Genovese, In Red and Black: Marxian Explorations in Southern and Afro-American History (New York: Vintage, 1972), pp. 124-26.

¹¹⁶ W. J. Monson, "Report on Slavery and Free Labour," pp. 1903, XLV, 745, p. 3. MAL 47. However, most wazalia informants said that the master took the whole harvest. MAL 24, 34, 38.

instances of slaves farming on their own and providing their masters with regular payments in kind or in cash.¹¹⁷ Occasionally, one master had some of his slaves working in gangs, some on coconut fields with incentive payments, and some on their own.¹¹⁸

Where gang labor prevailed, slaves were given their own plots to cultivate for their subsistence. Their size, according to Fitzgerald, varied from 200 yards by 10 yards to 200 yards by 50 yards. Slaves kept all the produce of these plots, as well as any poultry or domestic animals they raised. During the dry season, slaves were given Thursday and Friday to tend their own plots. In the wet season, they only had Friday off, but were given a ration of one-half or one kibaba of grain per day.¹¹⁹ Oral sources confirm Fitzgerald's observations, but they do not agree whether slaves had Thursday off as well as Friday.¹²⁰ Most informants

¹¹⁷ Slaves on a large block of land confiscated by Sultan Bargash in 1877 from an Arab farmed in this way, paying the Governor, who represented the Sultan as owner of the land and the slaves, a sum called in the records dachili (correct form--dakili, meaning income from a shamba). a/c 2D of 1912. Such a payment to a civilian was mentioned in the case of Secretary of State for the Colonies vs. Madina binti Jemedar, Civil Appeal 121 of 1908, High Court, Mombasa.

¹¹⁸ a/c 2D of 1912.

¹¹⁹ Fitzgerald, Travels, pp. 31-2; Kirk to Granville, 6 November 1873, FOCP 4207, p. 210; statement of Kenneth MacDougall, District Officer in Malindi in the 1890's, to H. S. Newman, reported in letter of Newman, 18 January 1897, Anti-Slavery Reporter, Ser. IV, XVII (1897), p. 15.

¹²⁰ This discrepancy actually confirms Fitzgerald's view that the number of days off varied with the season. Informants have simplified this. The different versions and their sources are: Friday only off--MAL 5, 24, 30, 35, 37; Thursday afternoon and Friday off--MAL 17, 34; Thursday and Friday off--MAL 18, 26, 27, 38, 44. Wazalia advocated all three of these positions, but most believed slaves only had Friday off. Slaves working on the specialized task of tapping coconut trees for palm wine got no free days, but could keep and sell whatever palm wine they drew on Friday. Fitzgerald, "Report," p. 7.

claimed that masters provided slaves with a daily ration of food and that the produce of the slaves' own plots was a supplement to this.¹²¹ Masters were also expected to provide their slaves with clothes.¹²²

The same types of sources that describe gang labor in Malindi present a different picture of Mombasa. Arabs and Swahili did use slaves on their mashamba.¹²³ In the 1840's, Krapf said that Mombasa Arabs were settling their slaves in "hamlets" outside of the town.¹²⁴ New in the 1860's described a "settlement of Mombassian slaves" north of the town.¹²⁵ Hardinge, in the 1890's, also described slave villages outside of the town's borders. Slaves, not necessarily belonging to the same master, lived in villages of 50 to 300 people. They lived on their own, but set aside a certain quantity of grain for their city-dwelling masters, who came by to collect it periodically. On coconut mashamba, the master would take all the coconuts, leaving all the grain to the slaves. Elsewhere, the owner might get all the millet and the slaves all the maize. According to Hardinge,

the coast Arab shows little energy in protecting his interests, and very rarely visits his land to claim his share of the crop, or to ascertain that his slaves are not keeping it

¹²¹MAL 5, 12, 18, 26, 28, 44. One mzalia and one Arab said that slaves did not have their own plots, and the master provided 1 to 1 1/2 ratili of grain per day. A ratili is about one pound. MAL 34, 37.

¹²²MAL 5, 12, 28, 46.

¹²³See the testimony of many ex-slaves in the cases brought by the Three Tribes and Nine Tribes of the Mombasa Swahili to obtain title for land. a/c 42N of 1918 and a/c 15N of 1912.

¹²⁴Krapf to Coates, 25 September 1844, CMS CA5/016/28.

¹²⁵Charles New, "Missionary Notices," United Methodist Free Church Magazine, X (1867), p. 570.

back or selling it on their own account, a practice which I have reason to suspect is by no means unfrequent among them. He is content if a certain number of bags of coconuts or of grain, which he sells to the Indian traders, are sent down to him....

This loose supervision was much more characteristic of Mombasa than of Malindi.¹²⁶

Another official, W. J. Monson, found that in theory all the produce of the masters' fields, on which the slaves worked five days per week, belonged to the masters, but in practice slaves appropriated "a great deal" of it. On coconut plantations, the slaves were allowed to keep a certain percentage of the nuts.¹²⁷ Other slaves worked on their own and paid their master a monthly or annual sum known as ijara.¹²⁸

On some of the bigger mashamba on the outskirts of Mombasa, the demands of agriculture could be similar to that of Malindi. One of the 40 slaves of Mwijabu bin Isa El-Changamwe, one of the richest Swahili of Mombasa, told a land court that the slaves would clear bush and then plant millet. The harvest occurred five months later. In the third year,

¹²⁶ Arthur Hardinge, "Report," PP 1898, LX, 199, p. 61. The tendency of masters to stay in the city, leaving their slaves in the country, is also noted by Le Roy, "Zanguébar," p. 465.

¹²⁷ Monson, "Report," PP 1903, XLV, 745, p. 3.

¹²⁸ A judge who heard the testimony of many slaves being freed under the 1907 abolition act described the ijara system as one of the two variants of coastal slavery, the other being the requirement of five days' labor on the masters' fields. Mervyn W. H. Beech, "Slavery on the East Coast of Africa," Journal of the Africa Society, 15 (1916), pp. 147-48. Specific instances of the payment of ijara are mentioned in testimony in Juma bin Farjalla vs. Abdulla bin Mohamed, Civil Case 348 of 1911, Town Magistrate's Court, Mombasa, and Ali bin Abdulrehman vs. Secretary of State for the Colonies, Civil Appeal 13 of 1909, High Court Mombasa. The amount of ijara in these cases varied from Rs 2 to Rs 5 per month. An apparent case of ijara is also mentioned in Reg., 167A 1907.

new ground had to be cleared again.¹²⁹ Other evidence indicated that many masters had only two or three slaves working on the relatively small plots that were most characteristic of Mombasa.¹³⁰

The written sources, then, suggest that agricultural labor in Mombasa was organized in a variety of ways, but that in general supervision was more lax than in Malindi. Oral sources differ considerably. Some claim that Mombasa Swahili owned few slaves and that these worked together with their masters on the mashamba.¹³¹ Another informant said that a few slaves worked on their own and paid their masters an annual rent (one or two bags of maize out of every ten), but most worked under a nokoa on their masters' mashamba. They worked for part of each day, six days per week, but were not assigned fixed tasks.¹³² Others claimed that slaves were settled on their masters' land, generally cultivated for their own use, and worked for their masters mainly when a special task requiring collective labor arose.¹³³ Finally, some informants said that slaves, as in Malindi, worked under a nokoa, each being assigned an ngwe to cultivate each day.¹³⁴

¹²⁹ a/c 15N of 1912, testimony of Farsiri bin Aziz.

¹³⁰ Testimony of Razi binti Rashid El-Jeneby, in case of Charlesworth and Arsdon vs. Ebrahimji Allibhai, Civil Case 35 of 1913, High Court, Mombasa; Musa bin Khamis to Craufurd, 1315 A.H. (=1897 A.D.), CP/1/67/14; Reg., 150A 1894; MSA 29, 31, 32. Krapf, Memoir on the East African Slave Trade, 1853, CMS CA5/016/179.

¹³¹ MSA 9, 22, 37.

¹³² MSA 14.

¹³³ MSA 12. Testimony in a land case indicated that the property in that case was divided into twelve pieces, one for each of the slaves. a/c 21N of 1917.

These variations reflect a variety of forms that slavery took in the Mombasa area, and they are most likely based on differences in the size and nature of land holdings. Informants distinguished between makonde (sing. konde), large farms relatively far from town for the cultivation of grain, and viunga (sing. kiunga), smaller gardens on or near the island with coconut trees and subsistence crops and vegetables.¹³⁵ The makonde correspond to the slave villages or hamlets that observers noted on the fringes of the Mombasa area. Krapf, New, and Hardinge all describe these as slave settlements, not closely supervised plantations. These settlements were the ones that were supervised by manokoa. Slaves had the benefits of an absentee owner without the drawbacks of an Arab overseer.¹³⁶ Such large makonde were in fact relatively uncommon in Mombasa, but were more characteristic of Malindi and Takaungu.¹³⁷

On viunga, the looser arrangements of labor described by informants were more likely to prevail. On these small plots, little profit could be made from grain, regardless of the labor input. Besides subsistence cultivation, the preferred crop was the coconut, which yielded higher profits from a small plot.¹³⁸

¹³⁴MSA 22, 29, 31. Krapf wrote that some slaves were given a daily ration of corn while others were allowed one or two days off each week. "Memoir," CMS CA5/016/179.

¹³⁵MSA 3, 14, 29, 22.

¹³⁶Only slave overseers were mentioned to me.

¹³⁷MSA 17, 19, 35, 37. Oral evidence thus confirms the analysis of plot sizes in the Mombasa area, which showed that large plots, needed for makonde, were rare. See Chapter III, Table 17.

¹³⁸MSA 3, 14, 35.

The demands of the crops affected the intensity of slave labor as much as did plot size. If slaves cultivated for themselves among the young coconut trees and kept weeds out from under the mature trees, they were doing almost all that their masters needed. One informant claimed that a single slave could care for 200 coconut trees.¹³⁹ Coconuts required care at planting and skilled work by tree climbers at harvest. Sometimes the latter task was done by specialists in tree climbing hired in the town and paid a percentage of the nuts. At other times, the plantation slaves did this work, but even then, according to some informants, only certain slaves had to climb trees, and they were given compensation.¹⁴⁰ Whatever the arrangement of the harvest, slaves on coconut mashamba did not face the continuous drudgery of their brethren on the large grain estates of Malindi.

The differences in slavery between Mombasa and Malindi were primarily in the size of slaveholdings, the regimentation of labor, and the closeness of supervision. In Malindi, with land readily available, the limits on production were set by the number of slaves on an estate and the efficiency with which they worked. Malindi offered neither opportunities for gain through trade in non-agricultural produce nor an established social and scholarly community. Malindi's planters owned larger estates than their counterparts in Mombasa, and they lived either on these estates

¹³⁹MSA 32. See also, Kirk to Granville, 22 May 1872, FOCP 4206, p. 55; Hines to Seward, 25 October 1864, US Consul, 5; Monson, "Report," p. 3. In Monson's estimate, three slaves would be needed for 200 coconut trees, which is a good-sized plantation by Mombasa standards.

¹⁴⁰MSA 3, 9, 13, 14, 26, 28, 29, 32, 35. The provision of payments for a task requiring special skill is consistent with practices in the clove harvest in Zanzibar.

or in the town, from which many made the daily walk to their fields. In Mombasa, with more people and less land, there was less use for large holdings of slaves and less reason to squeeze extra work out of the slaves which one had. The economic elite of Mombasa had trading interests as well as farms, and urban life offered attractions which Malindi lacked. Finally, its principal crop required less labor than that of Malindi. The need to develop new ways to organize agricultural labor efficiently was stronger in Malindi than in Mombasa.

One would expect that slaves would be subject to more coercion at Malindi. However, most foreign visitors did not exclude Malindi from their observations that coastal slaveowners generally did not resort to force. The most negative view of coastal slavery comes from the missionary, Charles New, who visited Malindi in the mid-1860's, precisely the time of its most rapid expansion. He stated that, "The treatment of the slaves was to the last degree heartless and cruel; it was indeed a reign of terror." He claimed to have witnessed slaves being beaten and placed in stocks under the harsh sun, while others were chained or collared with wooden beams.¹⁴¹ Yet one of the incidents which New described turned out to be the punishment of a convicted thief, and even he admitted that slaves were "not so hard driven in East Africa as they were, say, in America, simply because there is less pressure." Slaves were often treated "with humanity, upon the same principle that many men treat their horses kindly."¹⁴²

¹⁴¹ Charles New, Life, Wanderings and Labours in Eastern Africa (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1873), p. 166. Greffulhe had a harsh view of slavery in Lamu, comparing it unfavorably with conditions elsewhere in East Africa. H. Greffulhe, "Voyage de Lamoo à Zanzibar," Bulletin de la Société de Géographie et d'Etudes Coloniales de Marseille, II (1878), p. 215.

Another missionary, Krapf, who lived in the hinterland of Mombasa, did not have similar tales of cruel punishment, but emphasized that drudgery and compulsion of slave labor during the period of agricultural expansion. Muslim masters, he wrote, were harder and less pleasant than Mijikenda or Kamba slaveowners, because the latter lived and worked along with their slaves, while the Swahili had their slaves work for them. Slaves worked "under compulsion, lazily, unwillingly, and mechanically."¹⁴³ Krapf saw distinctions between different slaveowners in terms of religion and tribal identity, but his own remarks indicate that the crucial difference was between situations where close personal relations and similarity of life-style between masters and slaves prevailed and situations where a more systematic, less personal organization of labor was dominant. His description of the grudging nature of slave labor in the latter case parallels most views of slave labor in the West.

Other European observers had a more benign view of slavery on the coast. Even in Malindi, Kirk found slavery milder than it was in Zanzibar and Pemba, largely because it was easy for the slaves to escape.¹⁴⁴ Vice-Consul Gissing wrote that slaves in Mambrui were well treated because the supply was low.¹⁴⁵ The Rev. Henry K. Binns, a missionary with long experience in East Africa, said that cases of cruel treatment were rare, while Mervyn Beech, who judged many slavery compensation cases after 1907,

¹⁴²New, Life, p. 500, Thomas Wakefield, "Rev. Thomas Wakefield's 4th Journey to the Southern Galla Country in 1877," Proceedings of the RGS, IV (1882), p. 371.

¹⁴³Krapf, "Memoir," CSM CA5/016/179, and Travels, Researches, and Missionary Labours during an Eighteen Years' Residence in Eastern Africa (Boston: Tricknor and Fields, 1860).

¹⁴⁴Kirk to Salisbury, 23 February 1880, FOCP 4498, p. 414. He found slaves in Malindi "well fed and seemingly well cared for." Kirk to Derby, 4 April 1877, FOCP 3686, p. 563.

described the life of slaves--with exaggeration--as a "comfortable existence."¹⁴⁶ Hardinge believed that masters did not supervise their slaves closely, and contrasted the coast, except for Malindi, with Zanzibar and Pemba. This laxity stemmed "less from good nature or even Oriental indolence than from a knowledge that the master's hold upon his slaves is too slight to enable him to be grasping in his dealings with them."¹⁴⁷ Fitzgerald, who knew Malindi intimately, made much the same point:

It is entirely against an owner's interest to ill-treat or overwork them, for if ill-used or harshly dealt with in any way, they invariably escape to the various runaway-slave settlements up the Sabaki and elsewhere in the bush.¹⁴⁸

It is difficult to get beyond these general remarks to specific information about punishment. Hardinge claimed that slaves were rarely punished because they would take this as a cause to run off.¹⁴⁹ However, other observers, mainly missionaries, have recorded acts of severe punishment which they themselves saw. Most of them involved slaves placed

¹⁴⁵Gissing to Kirk, 14 September 1884, FOCP 5165, pp. 242-43.

¹⁴⁶Rev. Harry K. Binns, "Slavery in British East Africa," Church Missionary Intelligencer, N.S. XXIII (1897), p. 462, and Beech, p. 145.

¹⁴⁷Hardinge, "Report," PP 1898, LX, 199, p. 61. Hardinge's ability to distinguish between the condition of slaves in different social and economic environments within East Africa makes his testimony especially valuable.

¹⁴⁸Fitzgerald, Travels, p. 32.

¹⁴⁹Hardinge to Salisbury, 10 January 1896, PP 1896, LIX, 395, pp. 24-5. Another British official said that runaway slaves were not returned to their masters for punishment, but were made over to the Arab Governor, and the master was required to sell them if the slave wished to change masters. George Mackenzie to Euan-Smith, 19 October 1888, FO 84/1910.

in heavy chains that barely allowed them to walk or with yokes placed around their necks. One slave boy in Mombasa reportedly was flogged and hanged by his thumbs for infractions of discipline.¹⁵⁰

The general agreement among informants in Malindi on the specifics of the organization of slave labor breaks down on the question of evaluating the overall severity of treatment. Descendants of slaveowners, as one might expect, universally claim that slaves were treated with kindness. They do admit that slaves were sometimes punished, mainly by beatings with a cane, for disobedience or running away, and most say that only the master himself, not the nokoa, could punish a slave.¹⁵¹ Descendants of slaves agree that beating was the main form of punishment, but add-- as New saw in 1865--that slaves were sometimes put in stocks. Most agree that the nokoa could only refer disciplinary cases to the master for punishment. Slaves were punished for not working hard enough--failing to complete a ngwe in a day for example--but also for running away and disobedience.¹⁵² However, the wazalia were poles apart from the waungwana in assessing the severity of punishment. Phrases like "adhabu kubwa kabisa," or "adhabu sana" (very big punishment, much punishment), were used. Masters were "kali kabisa" (very fierce). When I mentioned that I had been told

¹⁵⁰ William Yates, Dado; or Stories of Native Life in Central Africa (London: Crombie, 1886), pp. 22-3; Price to Hutchinson, 29 May 1875, CMS CA5/023/26; Price, Journal, 21 May 1876, CMS CA5/023/76; Menzies to Hutchinson, 31 January 1881, CMS G3/A5/0/1881/24. A recently purchased woman in Malindi was put in chains to prevent her return to Mombasa, where she came from, but escaped anyway, walking 80 miles to Mombasa in her chains. Russell to Lay Secretary, 7 November 1877, CMS CA5 (M5).

¹⁵¹ MAL 17, 26, 44, 46. Only the last of these informants admitted that punishment could be severe.

¹⁵² MAL 30, 31, 34, 35, 61.

that masters and slaves used to live together in friendship, an mzalia angrily exclaimed "Urongo!" (a lie).¹⁵³ Wazalia, however, did distinguish between good masters and bad ones. The better ones treated slaves like members of the family and did not punish them. Salim bin Khalfan and Bi Salima binti Masudi were mentioned more than once as kind or gentle ("mpole") masters, and others were graded as "mpole kidogo" (somewhat gentle). Others were judged particularly bad.¹⁵⁴ Against a bad master, slaves had little recourse, for the officials to whom a slave might complain were Arabs and slaveowners, like the master, and would support the master.¹⁵⁵ Some 65 years after the abolition of slavery, the memory of cruel masters could still excite strong feelings among the sons of Malindi slaves.¹⁵⁶

Another indication that the picture of slavery was not as favorable as some observers thought was the large number of slaves who ran away. In the 1840's, the time when agriculture was expanding and slave holdings growing near Mombasa, a village inhabited chiefly by runaway slaves from Mombasa grew up to the south of the town. Other slaves fled Mombasa for Gazi, where the Mazrui, eager to obtain adherents, took them in.¹⁵⁷ Slaves

¹⁵³MAL 30, 34, 35.

¹⁵⁴MAL 30, 34, 35, 38.

¹⁵⁵MAL 30.

¹⁵⁶This legacy of bitterness can be compared to the narratives of ex-slaves from the Southern United States collected in the 1930's by the Works Progress Administration. See George Rawick, ed., The American Slave: A Composite Autobiography (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood, 1972).

¹⁵⁷The settlement was known as Muasangombe. Ludwig Krapf, "Journal," Church Missionary Intelligencer, I (1849), p. 41. The village also appears on a map by Rebmann, dated 22 September 1848, CMS CA5/024/52. On slaves in Gazi, see Guillain, Documents, Vol. 2/2, pp. 263-64.

continued to run away from Mombasa until the end of slavery, and many of them came to the mission stations at Rabai, Ribe, and Freretown, where their presence caused much friction between the missions and their former masters in Mombasa.¹⁵⁸ From at least the 1870's, Malindi was also plagued

by runaways. Kirk noted in 1873 that Arabs had unsuccessfully attacked a runaway-slave settlement and that in retaliation the runaways, known as watoro (from kutoroka, to run away), were killing slaves on outlying plantations.¹⁵⁹ The Arab officials of Malindi also tried to get the Galla

to return runaways to Malindi as part of the \$450 annual subsidy they were being paid.¹⁶⁰ Most of the substantial number of slaves fleeing from Malindi went to the watoro villages that were established in the vicinity of the Sabaki river. Jilore, Makongeni, Chakama, Yameza, and Mlangobaya were all watoro villages. Missionaries said that there were 300 watoro at Jilore in 1878 and 1000 at Makongeni in 1890; Fitzgerald reported that 600 people lived in two of the watoro villages in 1891.¹⁶¹

These figures seem excessive in relation to the number of slaves in Malindi

¹⁵⁸ Norman R. Bennett, "The Church Missionary Society of Mombasa 1873-1894," in Boston University Papers in African History (Boston: Boston U.P., 1964), Vol. I, pp. 159-94.

¹⁵⁹ Kirk to Granville, 6 November 1873, FOCP 4207, p. 210. The growth of watoro settlements near Mombasa in the 1840's, when its slave population was expanding, and of those near Malindi in the 1870's, when it was developing, confirm the suggestion that recently arrived slaves were the most likely to form maroon settlements. See above, pp. 301, 305.

¹⁶⁰ Prideaux, Report on Zanzibar, 1873-74, FOCP 2915, p. 86.

¹⁶¹ Streeter to Wright, 10 August 1878, CMS CA5/027/11; Binns, "Report of a Visit Paid to Jilori," February, 1877, CMS CA5/03/17; Binns to Lang, 19 February 1890, CMS G3/A5/0/1890/49; Fitzgerald, Travels, pp. 119, 121, 124; MAL 17, 24, 30, 34, 35, 44, 45, 48.

(about 5000) and likely include offspring and people from neighboring tribes. Nevertheless, these villages were substantial enough to fight off a few attacks by the slaveowners of Malindi.¹⁶² The hinterland north of the Sabaki River even acquired the name--still remembered today--of Utoroni, the place of the runaway-slaves. The name of a leader of the watoro, Ali Tete, is also remembered by many informants.¹⁶³

The most famous such settlement was Fulladoyo, located inland between Malindi and Kilifi, and inhabited by slaves from Malindi, Takaungu, and Mombasa.¹⁶⁴ Although founded by a Giriama Christian in 1879, the number of watoro there grew to 17, then 44, then 350 out of a total population of 400.¹⁶⁵ Although scattered by a fierce attack by Arabs in 1883, the watoro stayed in the area. European authorities thought there were 1000 watoro in Fulladoyo in 1890, plus 3000 in the surrounding area. These exaggerated estimates at least suggest that the number of runaway slaves was large.¹⁶⁶ Other colonies of watoro flourished up the Tana and Juba rivers and acquired adherents from the mainland plantations of

¹⁶² MAL 24, 30, 35, 44, 45.

¹⁶³ Ali Tete was chief of the settlement at Chakama. A second watoro chief, Kamtande, leader of the village of Bura, is also remembered. MAL 24, 28, 30, 34, 35, 45, 65.

¹⁶⁴ Kirk to Granville, 9 November 1883, FOCP 4914, p. 217; G. Mackenzie to Euan-Smith, 12 February 1890, incl. Euan-Smith to Salisbury, 24 February 1890, FO 84/2059.

¹⁶⁵ Menzies to Wright, 15 July 1880 and Price to Miles, 7 March 1882, CMS G3/A5/0/1882/40.

¹⁶⁶ Kirk to Granville, 9 November 1882, FOCP 4914, p. 217; Mackenzie to Euan-Smith, 12 February 1890, incl. Euan-Smith to Salisbury 24 February 1890, FO 84/2059.

Lamu slaveowners.¹⁶⁷

In addition to founding their own settlements, many runaways joined Arab and Swahili chiefs who were seeking soldiers and followers. Mbarak bin Rashid Al-Mazrui and Ahmed Fumoluti, Sultan of Witu, were perennial thorns in the side of Zanzibari authority on the coast, and numbered many runaways among their supporters.¹⁶⁸ Watoro were pragmatic in their political alliances, joining Arab and Swahili leaders--although they were slaveholders--who could offer them protection. Whether in conjunction with these leaders or as free lance operations, watoro staged many raids on outlying mashamba in the Takaungu, Malindi, and Lamu hinterlands. Many slaves on outlying plantations were killed or kidnapped.¹⁶⁹ Some of the latter were sold to Somali in exchange for cattle or back to Arabs or Swahili.¹⁷⁰ Slaveowners had to build stockades for the protection of their slaves and plantations.¹⁷¹

Other watoro fled to the mission stations that were set up in the

¹⁶⁷ Map by J. R. W. Piggott, 3 July 1889, incl. McDermott to Mackinnon, 29 July 1889, Mackinnon Papers, Africa, IBEA no. 967, School of Oriental and African Studies, London.

¹⁶⁸ Haggard to Kirk, 25 August 1884, FOCP 5165, p. 229; Miles to Granville, 17 November 1881, FOCP 4626, pp. 372-73.

¹⁶⁹ Haggard to Kirk, 9 April 1884; Gissing to Kirk, 14 September 1884; Kirk to Granville, 23 September 1884, all in FOCP 5165, pp. 131, 210, 243; MAL 5, 44, 45. The harassment of plantations by runaway slaves was also noted in the case of the Southern United States by Blassingame, p. 119.

¹⁷⁰ Haggard to Kirk, 25 August 1884, FOCP 5165, p. 229. Watoro at Muasangombe, south of Mombasa, also sold some runaways back to their owners. New, Life, p. 49. An instance of kidnapping by watoro near Mombasa is mentioned by Fitzgerald, Travels, pp. 130-31.

¹⁷¹ Kirk to Granville, 6 November 1873, FOCP 4207, p. 210.

Mombasa hinterland and were able to join a community that offered them security, places to grow their food; and new ways of associating with people. Some became practicing Christians, but others only went along with the missionaries to obtain a place to stay.¹⁷² In any case, missions were a refuge for many runaways. A survey of the missions in 1888 found 907 runaways from the coast, including 548 from nearby Mombasa, 154 from Takaungu, and 163 from Malindi, roughly 80 miles away.¹⁷³

Escape from any plantation involves risks of recapture and hazards of the road, as well as disruption of social relationships, but in East Africa, the slaveowners posed fewer obstacles than in most cases in the Western Hemisphere. Police forces were even weaker than in Zanzibar: 30 soldiers in Malindi and 10 in Mambrui in 1874. Mombasa had 180, but most of them were there to hold Fort Jesus.¹⁷⁴ The pass laws and other instruments of social control found in the New World were lacking.¹⁷⁵ As Chapter VI will show, slaves had substantial freedom of mobility. Most important, directly behind the plantations, some 10 to 15 miles from the coast, was a range of small hills followed by a plain. The land is fertile--and now

¹⁷²MSA 2, 7, 8. For more on one of the mission settlements, from the point of view of the son of a man rescued from a slave dhow, see James Juma Mbotela, The Freeing of the Slaves in East Africa (London: Evans Brothers, 1956).

¹⁷³Mackenzie to Euan-Smith, 6 December 1888, FOCP 6009, p. 26.

¹⁷⁴Holmwood, Report, incl. Prideaux to Derby, 24 November 1874, FOCP 2915, p. 15.

¹⁷⁵A fine treatment of the connection between law and social control is Elsa V. Goveia, "The West Indian Slave Laws of the Eighteenth Century," in Foner and Genovese, pp. 113-37. Blassingame's comment on the importance of the development of roads and communications in subduing runaways is also revealing. Blassingame, p. 120.

supports a substantial population--but it is not as good as the coastal land and was therefore ignored by the slaveowners in choosing places to live. In parts of this area, Mijikenda lived, but the area behind Malindi was deserted until the 1890's. Near Mombasa, mission stations provided a refuge within easy walking distance of the city and its plantation land. Had the masters been more powerful, this proximity would have been a major drawback, but they lacked the military and political strength to challenge the watoro. The missions were threatened with attack on several occasions, but the threat of British intervention was a persuasive deterrent. A few attacks were made against the watoro settlements, but the runaways resisted or hid, and none was recaptured.¹⁷⁶ Force was not an adequate means of preventing or punishing escape.

The existence of watoro settlements--analogous to maroon societies in the New World--made escape a viable alternative to plantation life. Without protection, runaways--like any other isolated people--could easily have been killed or reenslaved. The settlements were a step towards a new order, but only one step. That slaves originating from many parts of Africa could form such societies suggests that their common experience of oppression and life together on plantations formed at least some basis of unity.¹⁷⁷ However, the social fabric of African societies is woven

¹⁷⁶ Oral and eye-witness accounts mention only two efforts to recapture the watoro behind Malindi, both of which were beaten off by the runaways. Fulladoyo was sacked in 1883, but not a single runaway was captured and no significant efforts were made to round up the watoro who had been scattered. Informants have made it clear to me that there was very little masters could do to prevent escape. Kirk to Granville, 9 November 1883, FOCP 4914, p. 214; Kirk to Granville, 6 November 1873, FOCP 4207, p. 210; Rev. J. R. Deimler, "The Mission Field," Church Missionary Intelligencer, N.S. XXIX (1904), pp. 125-26; MAL 24, 30, 34, 35, 44, 45.

with kinship ties, commonly accepted institutions, rituals, and shared traditions and culture. Maroon societies were attempts to cope with a new environment and build a new society, but it took time for a refuge to become a community.¹⁷⁸

The killing and kidnapping of slaves during raids on ex-masters' plantations indicates that the common experience of oppression was not enough to forge a deeper sense of class identity among slaves.¹⁷⁹ The watoro viewed society as divided vertically into communal groups rather than horizontally into classes, so an attack on the master's slaves was an attack on the master. Many runaway slaves were in the process of forming a community of their own, which they defined against the plantation community they had fled--masters and slaves alike. Others joined leaders who could offer them protection. In either case, the need for security underlay the need to be a member of a community. The raids which watoro conducted were a perverse indication of slaves' regard for paternalism, for by killing or selling other slaves they recognized that their masters had made the plantation into a social unit embracing all its members, masters and slaves alike.¹⁸⁰

¹⁷⁷ There is no evidence that common origins, as with the Zigua revolt in Zanzibar, formed the basis of runaway settlements.

¹⁷⁸ Richard Price has discussed the difficulties of building such communities in his introduction to Maroon Societies, and the contributions to this volume illustrate his points.

¹⁷⁹ This lack of class identity was not always the case. Price notes how plantation slaves and maroons interacted and assisted one another. However, in other instances, notably Jamaica, maroons negotiated with the government, obtaining recognition of their independence in return for a promise to return future runaways. Price, p. 13, and Orlando Patterson, "Slavery and Slave Revolts: A Sociohistorical Analysis of the First Maroon War, 1665-1740," in Price, p. 272.

The very slaves who had rejected their masters' versions of paternalism by leaving the plantation thus reflected its most important underlying social value--the primacy of ties between superior and inferior. They also unconsciously helped guard this paternalism against erosion by economic pressures by forcing the masters to take their Islamic norms seriously or risk the desertion of most of their slaves. They insured that for the masters, virtue and necessity would be mutually reinforcing. Paternalism was strengthened both on the level of daily interaction--the testing of limits and boundaries by masters and slaves--and on the level of ideology--the master's self-image as protector.

Most slaves did not flee. Even though risks of recapture were lower than in virtually any Western plantation society, and in spite of the existence of fledgling communities in the hinterland, the insecurities of life in the bush were great indeed. Partly because of the impact of the watoro, plantation paternalism offered the slaves security in ways that must have been very meaningful to them: a place to live with a modicum of security, plots on which to grow crops for personal consumption, and a community of slaves and a master to which one belonged.¹⁸¹ Despite the toil and degradation of plantation slavery, accommodation was a rational--although not necessary--response.¹⁸²

¹⁸⁰ As Genovese wrote, "Paternalism in general undermines solidarity among the oppressed because it links them as individuals, not as a class, to their oppressors." Roll. The attempt of one historian to see the Zanzibar Revolution of 1964 as the "culmination of the slave revolts of the nineteenth century" is ahistorical, for these episodes were by no means revolutionary. G. A. Akinola, "Slavery and Slave Revolts in the Sultanate of Zanzibar in the Nineteenth Century," Journal of the Historical Society of Nigeria, VI (1972), p. 228.

¹⁸¹ The social dimension of paternalism is the principal subject of Chapter VI.

Flight and rebellion, more than any other aspect of slavery, reveal the contradictions of paternalism. The tedium of labor and the severity of punishment varied with the economic and social conditions of particular areas, as well as from plantation to plantation. Yet everywhere slavery meant hard work and security, accommodation and resistance. The forces that impinged on the masters and the slaves, pushing them in different directions, caused some masters to be cruel and some to be gentle, some slaves to rebel and some to acquiesce. The same person could behave in radically different ways at different times. The unstable equilibrium that was paternalism is evident in a striking parallel between the Southern United States and the coast of Kenya in the closing years of slavery. At the end of the Civil War, as Federal troops moved into plantation areas, many slaves--including those of the kindest patriarchs--fled to Union lines or took over the farms of their defeated masters. They were often led by slaves who had been among the most faithful to their masters.¹⁸³ In Kenya, during the interval between the advent of colonial rule in 1895 and the abolition of slavery in 1907, a substantial portion of the slaves on coastal plantations deserted the masters whom they had long served and on whose land they had lived as dependents.¹⁸⁴ They left not just because

¹⁸² Since Malindi was only founded in 1860, and the build-up of Mombasa's slave population came after the 1840's, most slaves were first generation. They had experienced not only the gruelling ordeal of the slave trade, but a period of chronic instability and warfare in their homelands which led to their enslavement. For people who have endured such ordeals, security was no small virtue.

¹⁸³ A particularly good discussion of these events--and the bewilderment of the masters who believed in the loyalty of their slaves--may be found in Genovese, Roll.

¹⁸⁴ Hardinge, Report, PP 1898, LX, 199, p. 6; Hobley to Chief Secre-

their masters were no longer able to make reprisals, but because new opportunities for employment were offered. In both cases, it is unfair to say that the slaves who served loyally were docile or that their subsequent behavior was a naive response to freedom. Circumstances had changed, the balance of forces had altered. Slaves were doing what they always had: trying to make the best of their situation.

Old Roles in a Changing Society

Despite the continuing strength of paternalism, agricultural development tended to push slaves into a particular role in society, that of field hand. As was argued in Chapter I, the stress on dependence in Omani slavery was so great because of the importance of diffuse ties between leaders and followers and the absence of specific economic roles for slaves. So far, this chapter has dealt with the continuities and changes within the new agricultural sector. This section will take a look at the other tasks which slaves still performed in nineteenth century East Africa. Although a minority of slaves (numbers are unobtainable) were soldiers, domestics, artisans, all-purpose laborers, and concubines, these functions were particularly important to maintaining the slaveowners' conception of what a slave was, to avoiding the confusion of slave with menial worker.

Slaves performed a variety of duties in all slave societies. Recent scholarship has stressed the importance of slaves as artisans and industrial workers in the United States South. The institution of "hiring out"

tary, Nairobi, 10 August 1917, CP/1/39/625; A. H. Le Q. Clayton, "Labour in the East Africa Protectorate, 1895-1918," Ph.D. Dissertation, St. Andrews University, 1971, p. 73. Other slaves realizing their masters were powerless to punish them, simply took it easy. Murray to Sub-Commissioner, Mombasa, 9 January 1902, CP/1/71/25.

allowed slavery to adjust to changing economic requirements.¹⁸⁵ The ways in which slaves in East Africa worked as artisans, port laborers, and porters often resemble arrangements in cities in the Americas, although the freedom which slaves had in an urban setting created fewer anxieties in places like Zanzibar town than in Charleston, South Carolina. The sharpest contrast, however, occurs in the importance of slaves in two roles in East Africa: soldiers and concubines.

As in all slave societies, domestic servants not only did such household tasks as cooking, cleaning, and fetching water, but they were marks of social status. In Zanzibar, according to Hardinge, nearly every free household had slaves to cook and watch the house. In Mombasa as well, the many small-scale slaveowners employed their slaves in the household as well as in the fields. The wealthy could afford a special corps of household slaves, and these servants were one of few available means of conspicuous consumption. Christie wrote that the size of the domestic retinues of Zanzibari Arabs--selected from the owner's locally born slaves--was out of proportion with the work they did in the house.¹⁸⁶ Visitors to Zanzibar saw such sights as a veiled Arab princess going down the street on a donkey followed by a half-dozen slave attendants and "crowds of house-

¹⁸⁵ Fogel and Engerman, pp. 55-7. Richard C. Wade, Slavery in the Cities: The South 1820-1860 (New York: Oxford U.P., 1964), pp. 28-54; Starobin, pp. 135-37.

¹⁸⁶ See Hardinge to Kimberley, 26 February 1895, PP 1895, LXXI, 143, pp. 32-3; Christie, "Slavery," p. 36; Thomson, Central African, Vol. II, p. 75; Quass, p. 443, on Zanzibar, and Monson, "Report," p. 3; Beech, "Slavery," p. 148; and New, Life, p. 499, on Mombasa. A Swahili family's servants, including slaves who cooked, watched the children, and did other tasks, were described by BiKaje in an interview with Margaret Strobel, 25 April 1973.

hold slaves" in Arab homes.¹⁸⁷ The Sultan had a particularly large number of domestic slaves, who attended him in his palace and formed an enormous caravan whenever he went to one of his country estates.¹⁸⁸

Some slaves were given positions of trust in the management of household and business affairs. There was even a category of slaves known as watumwa wa shauri, advice giving slaves. The wealthiest Arabs preferred Nubian or Ethiopian slaves for this purpose, and these Caucasian-featured slaves commanded a higher price than field hands.¹⁸⁹

Since the importance of domestic slaves lay largely in their presence, they probably had a less strenuous existence than agricultural laborers. Even the wealthy lived relatively modestly. As a visitor remarked, "it would severely tax the modest brain of a town Arab to devise hard work for his household attendants, so simple is his mode of living."¹⁹⁰ As in the Southern United States, living in the master's house gave slaves more comfortable living quarters and better food than field hands, as well as more intimate personal relations with the master.¹⁹¹ Mombasa

¹⁸⁷ Speer to Seward, 26 November 1862, US Consul, 4; Christie, "Slavery," p. 36; Mrs. Wakefield, Memoirs of Mrs. Rebecca Wakefield, Wife of the Rev. T. Wakefield (London: Hamilton and Adams, 1879), diary entry for 9 December 1870, p. 143.

¹⁸⁸ Ruschenberger, p. 52; R. O. Hume, "Extracts from the Journal of Mr. Hume," Missionary Herald, 36 (1840), pp. 60-2; Emily Ruete, Memoirs of an Arabian Princess: An Autobiography (New York: Appleton, 1888), p. 87.

¹⁸⁹ Kirk to Derby, 1 May 1876, FO 84/1453; Burton, Zanzibar, Vol. I, pp. 467-68; Weidner, p. 33.

¹⁹⁰ Nolloth, p. 139; Quass, p. 443; Baumann, Sansibar, p. 22; Monson, "Report," p. 3.

¹⁹¹ Kirk to Derby, 1 May 1876, FO 84/1453; Burton, Lakes, Vol. II, pp. 369-71; Farler to Mathews, 26 January 1900, PP 1901, XLVIII, 173, p. 12; Burton, Zanzibar, Vol. I, pp. 111-12; Baumann, Sansibar, p. 22.

Arabs brought up in the declining years of slavery remember their families' house servants well, even though some admit that relations with field slaves were impersonal.¹⁹²

This intimacy could have a negative side to it, as Genovese has noted in the case of the Southern United States. It deprived domestic slaves of life in the slave quarters--their one chance to be out of the sight of whites and to behave in their own way.¹⁹³ In the absence of evidence from the domestic slaves themselves, it is impossible to tell if East African slaves felt this same ambivalence. Yet being part of a household had a different meaning in an Islamic or African society than in a Western one. A person's identity was defined less in terms of his individuality and more in terms of the social group to which he belonged. A household was not just a residence, but a social and political unit, and belonging to it carried meaningful rewards.

If domestic servants had the closest relations with their masters, town laborers had the most independence. The demand for laborers in a variety of guises was greatest in Zanzibar, for its growth as an entrepot in the late eighteenth century created a need for port workers and service

The Sultan once told Hardinge that even if domestic slaves were freed, he felt they would stay with their masters. He feared that agricultural slaves would leave. Unfortunately, it is impossible to tell from evidence on abolition whether his prediction was accurate. Hardinge to Salisbury, 30 January 1897, PP 1898, 559, pp. 1-2.

¹⁹² Many of these domestic slaves stayed on after abolition in 1907, so that some relatively young people were brought up among old ex-slaves. In one case, the daughter of a slave was still living in the family's house. MSA 11, 20, 25, 37; BiMomo, interview by Margaret Strobel, 27 November 1972.

¹⁹³ Genovese, Roll.

employees. Mombasa, a lesser port, had similar but more modest demands for such labor, while Malindi had minimal need of non-agricultural labor.¹⁹⁴ European and Indian firms, which had the greatest demand for workers to load and unload vessels, were legally barred from owning slaves, so that a regular business of hiring out slaves developed. Some free labor was available in the port as well, especially recently arrived Arabs from Hadramaut. However, the Hadramis invested their earnings in slaves, and by the 1870's a large portion of Hadrami port workers had become labor contractors.¹⁹⁵ They would hire out slaves on contracts with provisions like the following: the owner agreed to supply the hirer, an Indian, with twelve slaves for five and a half years for \$300. The owner had to replace slaves who ran away or died.¹⁹⁶

By the 1870's a clear distinction was made between two types of port workers--hamali (Pl. mahamali) and kibarua (Pl. vibarua). Mahamali were the top porters, who did the heaviest work in loading and unloading ships. The master was paid directly, but the actual supervision was done by the merchants' employees. In 1895 there were a few hundred mahamali. The ownership of these workers was concentrated in the hands of a few Hadrami Arabs. In the 1890's, two labor contractors, named Mohamed Hajj

¹⁹⁴Hardinge to Salisbury, 12 April 1896, PP 1896, LIX, 41, p. 91; MAL 18, 26.

¹⁹⁵Rigby to Anderson, 11 February 1860, Fort William Proceedings for May 1860, INA, Reel II, Christie, "Slavery," p. 40; Kirk to Derby, 9 January 1878, FOCP 3928, p. 307. Germain, p. 552. Hadramis did continue to arrive in Zanzibar from their homeland, so that some Hadramis continued to work in the port. Mackenzie, p. 90; Quass, pp. 427-29.

¹⁹⁶Sample contracts included in Kirk to Granville, 27 May 1871, FO 84/1344.

and Mohamed Barshoot, owned the bulk of these slaves.¹⁹⁷ The mahamali worked hard, but they were apparently better fed and provided for than other town slaves. Some lived in their own huts, others with their master. The latter might even eat with their master. If they performed work not required by their master or worked overtime, they were allowed to keep the proceeds. Mahamali, wrote Christie, "form a very distinct class, and look upon themselves as superior to the country slaves and ordinary day labourers..."¹⁹⁸

Vibarua worked on a daily basis, doing any of the various jobs that had to be done in the port or around town--cleaning copra, carrying loads, doing construction work, and the like. The vibarua usually appeared in the early morning at businesses that needed labor or at the Customs House. The slaves were paid directly by the employer in the evening, leaving them to make their own arrangements with their masters.¹⁹⁹ The demand for such workers was high. Christie in 1871 estimated their number at 10,000 to 15,000, which seems excessive, while Hardinge in 1895 said it was 1,000 to 2,000, which seems low.²⁰⁰ The hiring out of slaves was

¹⁹⁷ Christie, "Slavery," p. 40; Fraser to Egerton, 14 August 1867, PP 1867-68, LXIV, 657, p. 120; Mackenzie, p. 90; Hardinge to Kimberley, 13 March 1895, PP 1895, LXXI, 143, p. 38.

¹⁹⁸ Christie, "Slavery," pp. 39-41; Kirk to Derby, 9 January 1878, FOCP 3928, p. 306; Weidner, pp. 30-1; Christie, Cholera, pp. 329-30.

¹⁹⁹ Christie, "Slavery," p. 38. Burton claimed that shamba slaves were sent to do day labor during the slack season, but all other descriptions of plantation labor indicate that slaves remained on the land. In any case, only slaves living near Zanzibar town would be able to perform field and town labor. Burton, Zanzibar, Vol. I, pp. 466-67.

²⁰⁰ Christie, "Slavery," p. 37; Hardinge to Kimberley, 13 March 1895, PP 1895, LXXI, 143, p. 38. For other observations on vibarua, see Colomb, pp. 362-63; and J. Frederick Elton, Travels and Researches among the Lakes and Mountains of Eastern and Central Africa, ed., H. B. Cotterill (London: Murray, 1879), p. 46.

a way for even a relatively poor, landless person--even a slave--to make a profit. A slave, wrote Bartle Frere, was a "safe, easy, and profitable investment" for the lower classes of Zanzibar. It was possible to buy a slave or two and hire them out, leaving the slave part of the wages for his subsistence and taking the rest.²⁰¹ Successful slaveowners invested the profits in more slaves and stood a chance of improving their economic position. Workers could treat the income as a supplement to their own earnings.²⁰²

The vibarua received between eight pice per day for young children to fourteen to twenty for youths and adults. The master's share of this varied. Hardinge said that a slave who did not receive food or lodging from his master was entitled to half of his earnings. If out of work, the slave was maintained by his master. Christie wrote that a slave received at least one pice per day plus the evening meal and clothing, but more often children received two or three pice and adults gave their master eight pice and kept the surplus. He estimated that a slave could live on three pice per day, but that most lived with their masters and had

²⁰¹Frere to Granville, 29 May 1873, PP 1873, LXI, 767, p. 149. See also Kirk to Derby, 1 May 1876, FO 84/1453; Rigby, "Report," p. 334; Fraser, p. 15; letter from correspondent, 11 June 1889, Anti-Slavery Reporter, Ser. IV, 9 (1889), p. 124.

²⁰²Ludwig Krapf, Memoir on Slave Trade, 1853, CMS, CA5/016/179. On vibarua in Mombasa see Hardinge to Salisbury, 12 April 1896, PP 1896, LIX, 41, p. 91; and J. Salter Price, Journal entries for 16 March and 24 December 1875, CMS CA5/023/61,70. BiKaje described the hiring out of a slave owned by her relatives to Indians to work as a cook. Interview by Margaret Strobel, 17 April 1973. Another example of hiring slaves out to Indians is contained in a deed involving Zehra, slave of a Shirazi, who was hired to Jemaluddin Alhindi at the rate of Rs 4 per month for 15 months. In this case, the master was apparently paid directly by the employer. Reg., 104B of 1898, deed dated 1898.

low expenses. Rigby claimed that slaves receiving a wage of eight pice per day were allowed to keep three.²⁰³ Most of the time, masters could count on earning between \$1 and \$2 per month from a slave. A slave costing \$30 could work off his purchase price in about two years.²⁰⁴

As in cities in the Americas, this type of slavery could lapse into an arrangement that gave the slave almost complete independence on a day-to-day basis.²⁰⁵ In such cases, slaves paid their masters a fixed sum--often around \$2 per month--or else a percentage of their earnings. They lived on their own and sought work by themselves, but custom dictated that masters should care for these slaves when sick or aged.²⁰⁶

The most independent slaves in many societies were skilled artisans, for the kind of work they performed did not lend itself to close supervision and they were too valuable for masters to risk making excessive demands.²⁰⁷ Slaves performed all kinds of skilled labor--carpentry, masonry, sewing, metal work, door-carving, and boat-building. Masters

²⁰³Hardinge to Kimberley, 26 February and 13 March 1895, PP 1895, LXXI, 143, pp. 29, 39; Christie, "Slavery," pp. 37-9; Fraser, p. 15; Rigby, "Report," p. 334; Quass, p. 443; Burton, Zanzibar, Vol. I, pp. 466-67; Gaume, p. 258.

²⁰⁴Figuring on the maximum wage of 20 pice/day, the employer would pay just over \$3 in the course of 20 working days. If the master was taking half, he would get \$1.50 per month.

²⁰⁵On cities in the Southern United States, see Wade, p. 48.

²⁰⁶Bishop Steere, Some Account of the Town of Zanzibar (London: Bell and Daldy, 1869), p. 10; Rodd to Rosebery, 31 December 1893, PP 1895, LXXI, 143, p. 17; Thomson, Vol. I, p. 17; Ernest Cambrier, Extracts from his journal of trip to Zanzibar with the Belgian expedition, 1877-78, reprinted in Becker, Vol. I, p. 404. On Mombasa, see Beech, "Slavery," p. 148, who refers to such payments as ijara.

²⁰⁷Mullin, p. 83; Fogel and Engerman, p. 56.

often insisted on having first claim to the services of their skilled slaves, but allowed them to work for others when not needed and keep a share of the proceeds. Besides having some choice in determining their working conditions, they earned higher wages than ordinary vibarua.²⁰⁸

Testimony in a court case in Mombasa provides a rare glimpse into the life of a skilled slave. Fundi Kheri was born near Lake Nyasa around 1865, and eventually was bought by a Mombasan for \$85, a high price. He worked as a silversmith, paying his master about \$2 per month regardless of what he earned. He continued to work and pay his master for over a year after the legal abolition of slavery in Kenya and then left to go to Pemba.²⁰⁹

Just as slavery was adapted to fit the needs of the urban labor market, it was flexible enough to supply the requirements of the caravan trade. Although much of the goods from the African interior were brought by African peoples like the Nyamwezi and Yao, coastal caravans also went inland, especially after mid-nineteenth century. Later in the century, European explorers, missionaries, and--in the 1890's--government officials required many porters.²¹⁰ There was a pool of porters in Zanzibar for

²⁰⁸ Christie, "Slavery," p. 41; Last to Mathews, 22 February 1900, PP 1901, XLVIII, 173, p. 6; Beech, p. 148; Thomas Wakefield, "East Africa," The Missionary Echo, I (1894), p. 156; "Pictures from East Africa," Church Missionary Gleaner, IV (1877), p. 64; Monson, "Report," p. 4; Hardinge to Salisbury, 12 April 1896, PP 1896, LIX, 41, p. 91.

²⁰⁹ Testimony of Abdulla bin Ritwani re Application of the Administrator General, administering the estate of Bakari bin Marwan, for compensation for his slave Fundi Kheri, case 211 of 1909, Town Magistrate's Court, Mombasa. The father of one informant was a door-maker in Malindi, and the father of another a halva-maker. The one's family was fed by the master, and he received none of his earnings, while the other subsisted from a plot which he and his wife farmed. MAL 24, MSA 37.

²¹⁰ At one time, the British Consul complained that 1900 porters had recently left on British caravans, not counting the larger Arab and

hire, who came to be known as "Zanzibaris." Many of them were slaves. The master generally received half of the slave's wage, part of which was paid in advance and the rest at the conclusion of the journey.²¹¹ Kirk estimated that a slaveowner could make a profit of \$30 per year from a slave hired out as a porter.²¹² Arabs also took their own slaves with them on trading expeditions. Slaves, usually wazalia (locally born slaves), who had served their master for a long time and acquired his trust were even put in charge of caravans carrying goods worth many times their own market value.²¹³ Similarly, slaves often served as sailors on Arab or

German expeditions. Officials feared that the island would be "rapidly denuded of adult male labor." Portal to Salisbury, 12 September 1891, PP 1892, LXXIV, 499, pp. 4-6; Euan-Smith to Salisbury, 1 November 1888, FOCP 5896, pp. 433-34.

²¹¹ Colomb, p. 387; Thomson, Vol. I, pp. 67-8; Mackenzie, p. 89; Euan-Smith to Salisbury, 1 November 1888, FOCP 5896, p. 434; Allen to Salisbury, 16 February 1892, PP 1892, LXXIV, 499, p. 6; Hardinge to Buxton, 26 November 1896, Anti-Slavery Papers, Rhodes House, Oxford University, G. 5; Lord Lugard, Rise of Our East African Empire (Edinburgh: Blackwood, 1893), p. 447. As with vibarua, not all of the famous "Zanzibaris" were slaves. Freed slaves and on the mainland local Africans served alongside slaves on the caravans. Cambrier, Vol. I, p. 413; Burton, Zanzibar, Vol. II, pp. 111-12; Steere to Robins, 27 July 1878, UMCA Archives, A1 (III), box 2, fl 479. Porters were also recruited in Mombasa. See Frederick Jackson, Early Days in East Africa (London: Arnold, 1930), pp. 137-38; Hardinge, "Report," pp. 52-3; Richard Thornton, Journal, Rhodes House, Oxford University, MSSAfr. s49, Vol. III, entry for 23 June 1861; BiKaje, 17 April 1973.

²¹² Kirk to Granville, 22 September 1871, FO 84/1344.

²¹³ Osgood, p. 55; Hines to Seward, 25 October 1864, US Consul, 5, NEMA, p. 532; Speke, p. xxvi; Christie, "Slavery," p. 35. The explorer William Chanler encountered a caravan in the interior of Kenya that consisted entirely of Zanzibaris who were the slaves of several Arabs. Each Arab furnished six to eight slaves and borrowed trade goods from Indians. The slaves banded together for protection, and the most experienced served as leader. Each group of slaves traded on their master's behalf. They were poorly paid, but could live well once out of sight of their masters. This caravan had 30 men, all armed with rifles, and had been gone five months. William Astor Chanler, Through Jungle and Desert (London: Macmillan, 1896), pp. 214-17.

Indian dhows, and the captain himself was sometimes a slave.²¹⁴

The use of slaves as servants and laborers in places like Zanzibar town and Mombasa illustrate the diverse ways in which slaveowners responded to economic and social incentives. Masters and domestic servants had close contact, while masters and slaves whom they hired out frequently did not. A master who sent his slave on an expedition to the interior was placing great faith in the bonds of loyalty between master and slave, while the master who hired out his slave as a porter was receiving money, but leaving the supervision of the slave to someone with no personal interest in him. Many porters and vibarua were living and working among freed slaves and some free laborers, such as Hadramis and Comorians.²¹⁵ Slaveowners in the Southern United States faced similar conflicts between the personal dimension of the master-slave relationship and the impersonal demands of the economy. The ways in which slaves were allocated to urban jobs, industry, and agricultural labor as economic conditions varied suggests that masters were very responsive to market forces.²¹⁶ Yet other evidence suggests that Southerners had severe misgivings about a process which "has weakened the close connection of master and servant." To allow slaves to live and work on their own was in fact illegal, although widely practiced. Such laws and many opinions expressed

²¹⁴ Speer to Seward, 26 November 1862, US Consul, 4; Captain Bedingfield, 1 December 1866, FOCP 4201, p. 70; Miles to Granville, 16 October 1882, FOCP 4777, p. 261; Kirk to Granville, 18 September 1880, FO 84/1575; Christie, "Slavery," p. 42; Colomb, p. 59; Ludwig Krapf, Travels, pp. 127-28.

²¹⁵ On freed slaves in cities, see Chapter VI, p. 403. Comorian and Hadrami laborers are mentioned by Burton, Zanzibar, Vol. I, p. 342; and Quass, pp. 427-31.

²¹⁶ Fogel and Engerman, pp. 55-7, 101-2.

in newspaper editorials and elsewhere suggest fears that social control would break down outside the context of the plantation.²¹⁷ For a slave to exercise "all the privileges of free persons" was dangerous.²¹⁸ In Zanzibar, practices were not very different, but there is no evidence of this fear of the masterless slave.²¹⁹ Perhaps masters had less fear of their slaves' independence in daily life because they had more confidence in the reality of social dependence. Dependence did not mean constant supervision, but personal loyalty. Because masters believed in the paternalistic bonds that tied master and slave, they did not have to exercise constant surveillance. The coexistence of dependence and independence is a subtle problem, which will be a major concern of Chapter VI.

What did this independence mean for the mahamali, vibarua, and artisans? Employers lacked a long-term interest in the slave's welfare, but slaves did have some choice of employers. According to Christie most employers of vibarua did not treat them harshly, precisely because they would refuse to work for a bad employer.²²⁰ Some officials believed that

²¹⁷Wade, pp. 45-54. The phrase quoted is from the New Orleans Daily Picayune in ibid., p. 51. Wade's argument that slavery in the cities was declining by 1850, largely because of these problems of social control, is effectively criticized by Fogel and Engerman, pp. 98-102, but his evidence of fears and misgivings is still persuasive.

²¹⁸South Carolina Committee on Colored People, Report, 1858, quoted by Wade, p. 52.

²¹⁹Christie, "Slavery," p. 43.

²²⁰Christie, "Slavery," p. 39. Elton, however, in travelling on the mainland, found that some slaves hired by Indians from Swahili slave-owners were worse off than slaves working for their own masters. Elton to Prideaux, 18 March 1874, FOCP 2499, p. 15.

slaves enjoyed the chance to manage their own affairs and preferred working in town to life in the clove fields.²²¹ On the other hand, the work was hard. Conditions were worst on caravans, for the slaves could not change employers in the middle and so had little influence on their treatment. Loads were heavy, the pace rapid, and the discipline of the caravan leaders severe. The treatment of caravan porters by Europeans in the early 1890's was bad enough to cause a scandal and force the government to issue regulations to protect porters.²²²

If the confidence of masters in the loyalty of slaves is evident in the independence under which many of them worked, it is even more striking in the willingness of the masters to allow their slaves to use arms. The use of slaves in military and official capacities had long been common in Oman and elsewhere in the Islamic world, and the continued importance of such service in the face of new economic pressures indicates the persistence of older notions of what slaves could be expected to do. In 1811, the garrison in the fort at Zanzibar included between 400 and 500 slave-soldiers. The governor of the island was himself a slave, an Abyssinian eunuch named Yakut. After a long period of service, Yakut was succeeded by another Abyssinian slave, Ambar bin Sultan. Only after Ambar did Seyyid Said begin appointing Arabs to this post, perhaps because the increasing Arab population of Zanzibar coveted this prestigious post. Not surprisingly,

²²¹Rodd to Rosebery, 31 December 1893, PP 1895, LXXI, 143, pp. 15-7; Smith, pp. 406-7.

²²²For exposés of the scandal see the Anti-Slavery Reporter, especially during 1894. The regulations are reprinted in ibid., Ser. IV, 14 (1894), pp. 276-80, and further regulations in ibid., 16 (1896), pp. 129-30. See also Mathews, "Memorandum on Zanzibar Porters," 15 May 1894, FOCP 6557, p. 18; and Allen to Gresham, 2 April 1894, US Consul, 9.

the Arab governors had significantly shorter reigns than the loyal Yakut.²²³

Slaves stopped serving as governors, but they continued to serve as soldiers. In 1844, the Sultan's personal guard consisted of fifty African slaves.²²⁴ Seyyid Bargash had 300 slaves in his army, whom he rewarded by a provision in his will promising each freedom and a gift of \$200 on his death.²²⁵ In addition to having a permanent guard of slaves, the Sultan could distribute guns to his slaves whenever a threat arose. Seyyid Majid did precisely that when a split between the heirs of his father brought a threat of invasion from his brother, who was ruling the dominions in Muscat. Majid also called on other Arabs to arm their slaves when danger threatened.²²⁶ The sailors of the Sultan's navy were largely slaves, although the officers were Arabs, some of whom owned the slaves manning their ships.²²⁷ As late as the 1890's, the Sultan still had a palace guard of armed slaves, and some of the regular soldiers in his army were slaves of the Sultan, who took one-half of the pay the soldiers were receiving from the recently installed British administration.²²⁸

²²³ Captain Smee, "Observations," 1811, reprinted in Burton, Zanzibar, Vol. II, p. 492; Letter from Captain Dallons, 1804, reprinted in G. S. P. Freeman-Grenville, The East African Coast: Select Documents (London: Oxford U.P., 1962), p. 198. See also John Gray, A History of Zanzibar (London: Oxford U.P., 1962), pp. 97, 126-27.

²²⁴ Krapf, "Additional Remarks," CMS CA5/016/25.

²²⁵ See Chapter VI, p. 403.

²²⁶ Rigby to Bombay, 4 April 1859, Enclosures to Bombay Secret Letters, Ind. Of., L/P+S/5/140; Germain, "Zanzibar," p. 535.

²²⁷ Germain, "Zanzibar," p. 538; Speer to Seward, 26 November 1862, US Consul, 4.

²²⁸ Portal to Rosebery, 22 August 1892, FOCP 6341, pp. 286-87; same to same, 3 April 1893, FOCP 6454, p. 84.

In addition to slaves, the Sultan relied on mercenaries from Baluchistan or the Hadramaut to serve in his army.²²⁹ The last group he could call upon was his own Omani subjects, for the notion of a central state to whom all subjects owed loyalty was poorly developed. People supported their own kinship groups in times of trouble, and the Sultan was regarded as an Al-Busaidi as well as a Sultan. He had a degree of legitimacy as a ruler, but it was still necessary for him to rely on followers who were attached to him personally.

As one would expect, the other Omani clans behaved in analogous fashion. Intertribal disputes were common, although much less so than in Oman, and tribes mobilized not only their kinsmen, but their dependents --clients and slaves--as well. The principal rivals of the Al-Busaidi, the Al-Harthi, relied heavily on the slaves for political and military support. In 1854, during a crisis in the ruling dynasty, the Al-Harthi brought a large band of slaves from their plantations into Zanzibar town to demonstrate their power. A crisis was averted only with the help of the British Consul and the Baluchi commander of the garrison, who ordered all plantation slaves out of town.²³⁰ Five years later, the Al-Harthi joined forces with Seyyid Bargash in an unsuccessful rebellion against Bargash's brother, Seyyid Majid, who had recently succeeded to their father's office. Again, both fighting parties mobilized their slaves, and many of them were killed in this conflict among Omanis.²³¹ Dying to advance

²²⁹The Sultan himself told the British Consul that he relied on mercenaries because he could not trust Omanis. Hamerton to Willoughby, 20 August 1841, FO 54/4.

²³⁰Gray, Zanzibar, p. 276.

their masters' political interests, they showed that slaves--even plantation slaves--could still be loyal followers.

On the mainland, central authority was even weaker, represented only by small mercenary garrisons in major towns, and Arab tribes depended on the military prowess and loyalty of their slaves whenever disputes arose. When Suleiman bin Abdalla Al-Mauli challenged Al-Busaidi authority in Malindi and made himself into a local potentate, he did so by arming his slaves. Likewise, Islam bin Ali Al-Kathiri went to Zanzibar to buy slaves who knew how to use guns as soon as he fell into conflict with the governor of Mambui.²³²

The political and military importance of slaves was greatest among the Mazrui living in Takaungu and Gazi. Never fully accepting their loss of control over Mombasa in 1837, they remained anxious to reassert their strength. They recruited a wide variety of followers--converts to Islam from the Mijikenda living nearby, freed slaves, escaped slaves from other places, and others. They also purchased slaves in large quantities. Many of them were settled in slave villages such as Mtondea and Roka, where they farmed under the supervision of Mazrui headmen. Other slaves, including many belonging to the Governor of Takaungu, were left

²³¹Rigby to Bombay, 4 April 1859, Enclosures to Bombay Secret Letters, Ind. Of., L/P+S/5/140; Ropes to State Department, 20 October 1859, US Consul, 4. Another incident of slaves fighting on behalf of their masters is described in the case of the fighting between the Maviti and the Arabs and Indians of Kilwa. Churchill to Secretary of the Government of Bombay, 4 March 1868, FOCP 4202, p. 138.

²³²MAL 18, 26, 40. For biographies of these individuals see Chapter III, pp. 189, 191-92. A British official also noted that a crowd of armed slaves assembled when an anti-slavery decree from the Sultan of Zanzibar was read in Malindi by an envoy. Euan-Smith to Salisbury, 2 September 1890, FO 84/2064.

on their own, contributing to their masters' wealth mainly when their accumulated fortunes went to him on their death. The Mazrui were known as fine farmers and produced much grain.²³³ But whenever trouble flared up or the Mazrui went on one of their periodic campaigns against their enemies in Mombasa, many of their slaves were given arms and fought side by side with their masters. The evidence suggests that they fought loyally, especially in the rebellion of the Mazrui against the British in 1895-96. After the Mazrui defeat, many slaves, who could easily have deserted their hapless masters, returned.²³⁴ Mazrui slaves, despite their work as grain-cultivators, were still regarded as followers.

The only remotely comparable phenomenon in the New World was the bravi of Brazil--slaves, free blacks, mulattoes, and Indians who occasionally fought in the inter-family conflicts that were endemic in the Brazilian aristocracy.²³⁵ In general, slaves were given arms only as a last resort. Part of the difference is that slaves were not needed in the role of soldiers. Feeble as colonial and settler governments in the Western Hemisphere were, they at least were recognized as a central authority

²³³ Ludwig Krapf, Journal, entry for 24 June 1845, CMS CA5/016/168; Gissing to Kirk, 14 September 1884, FOCP 5165, pp. 240, 247; Report of Frederic Holmwood, incl. Zanzibar Annual Report, 1873-74, FOCP 2915, p. 86; Rashid bin Salim to Hinde, 29 October 1908, CP/1/62/46.

²³⁴ On the role of slaves in the Mazrui rebellion see the following letters of Hardinge: to Kimberley, 1 May 1895; to Salisbury, 13 November 1895, 17 February, 12 April 1896, in PP 1896, LIX, 41, pp. 1-2, 48, 62, 92. Some slave-soldiers rose to high rank in the Mazrui forces, including Akida Songoro, a leading commander. Khamis bin Kombo El-Mutafi, a leader of one of the twelve tribes of Mombasa and an ally of the Mazrui similarly had 300 "armed slaves and retainers." Hardinge to Salisbury, 12 April 1896, ibid., p. 87; MacDougall to Piggott, 8 January 1896, CP/1/75/46.

²³⁵ Gilberto Freyre, The Masters and the Slaves: A Study in the Development of Brazilian Civilization, trans. Samuel Putnam, abridged from 2nd edition (New York: Knopf, 1964), p. 312.

and could be expected to provide a measure of security. The division of society on the coast of East Africa into groups based on ethnic affiliation and kinship meant that each group had to protect itself--the authority of the Sultanate was a veneer. But the use of slaves as soldiers in East Africa also shows an absence of fear of what they would do with their weapons that would strike the most paternalistic planter of the United States South as utter folly. This confidence--and the fact that it was not betrayed--is convincing evidence that paternalism in East Africa was a reality. Master and slaves did constitute a unit, held together by mutual dependence for protection and support. The group was hierarchical, based on the master-slave bond. Relations of slaves with each other were based on their connection to a common master. Ties of dependence had been the most salient dimension of Omani slavery, and they remained important even as slaves became more valuable as laborers.

From the slave's point of view, loyal service made good sense. If he could offer his master support, the master could offer him protection. Not only did he belong to his master's own set of retainers, but through the master, he belonged to the wider communal group. This slave of a Mazrui was himself a Mazrui and could benefit from the security offered by membership in a strong communal group. Deserting or rebelling against the masters would have required joining another similar group for protection. In fact, as noted earlier, many slaves who ran away did just that. Service was not only a realistic response to communal politics and conflict on the coast, but was consistent with the political experiences of slaves in their homelands. Most coastal slaves came from peoples like the Yao, Nyamwezi, and Shambaa that were undergoing conflict and political restructuring in the nineteenth century. Conflict was so intense that

membership in a kinship group did not provide sufficient security, and free people needed the protection of a powerful chief. These patrimonial chiefs extended their own kinship networks to include other free followers and slaves as well.²³⁶ This is not to say that the link between chief and free follower was the same as that between master and slave, but only that the slaves on the coast were familiar with the political necessity of having a protector in an insecure situation. Their own unhappy experiences made them all too aware of the consequences of failing to have a protector who was sufficiently powerful.

The use of slaves as soldiers is a notable difference between slavery in Christian and Islamic countries, but it cannot be attributed to the content of Islam. Rather, the political organization of society is the most relevant variable, and slaves frequently served as soldiers in non-Muslim African societies where chiefs and kinship groups had similar needs to recruit personally loyal followers. However, the attitudes towards slavery expressed in the Koran--notably the emphasis on slaves as brethren and the stress on social relationships--undoubtedly contributed towards a way of looking at slaves that made their use as soldiers possible.

The specific provisions of Islamic law are more directly relevant to a second area of difference between Christian and Muslim slave societies --the position of concubines and their children. Miscegenation was a part of all slave societies, the sexual dimension of the subordination of

²³⁶ Among the best studies of political conflict and the bases of political recruitment in the East African interior are Steven Feierman, The Shambaa Kingdom: A History (Madison: Wisconsin U.P., 1974); E. A. Alpers, "Trade, State and Society among the Yao in the Nineteenth Century," Journal of African History, X (1969), pp. 405-20; and Andrew Roberts, "The Nyamwezi," in A. Roberts, ed., Tanzania Before 1900 (Nairobi: East African Publishing House, 1968), pp. 117-50.

slaves to their master. However, the significance and consequences of sexual subordination varied. In Zanzibar and on the mainland coast, miscegenation had an important impact on the way society was divided.

Islam regulated sexual conduct with considerable precision. Fornication was forbidden under penalty of death. For the free woman, the only legal way of having sexual relations was marriage. The man, however, was allowed to marry four wives and keep concubines. A concubine had to be his own slave. Any female slave was legally at the sexual disposal of her master, although on the East African coast the consent of the woman was apparently required.²³⁷ Muslim law spelled out the regulations regarding concubinage in meticulous detail, in contrast to the neglect of rules governing work. The most important stipulation was that the child of the concubine by her master, provided that the master acknowledged his paternity, was free and equal in all regards before the law to the children of the master's free wives. A concubine who had borne a child was given a special status, um wallid, and could not be sold and would be freed upon her master's death.²³⁸ Concubinage was a way to regulate

²³⁷ Schacht, Islamic Law, p. 178; Hardinge to Salisbury, 23 April 1898, PP 1898, LX, 559, p. 77; MSA 21. The advantages of being a concubine--that the children would be free and that the woman herself would live in the harem and eventually be freed--were such that refusal would be unlikely. Moreover, the atmosphere of slavery was not conducive to believing that refusal was a wise alternative. Female slaves who were not concubines faced much the same drudgery as males--agricultural labor, menial labor, and domestic service. See Henry S. Newman, Banani: The Transition from Slavery to Freedom in Zanzibar and Pemba (London: Headley, 1898), pp. 35-6; Le Père Charmetant, D'Alger à Zanzibar (Paris: Société Bibliographique, 1882), p. 142; Cambrier, in Becker, p. 404; Mackenzie, pp. 81, 88; Smith, pp. 406-7.

²³⁸ Brunshvig, p. 28; Hamilton, Hedaya, Vol. I, p. 435; Weidner, pp. 4-5.

--without attempting to eliminate--the male's extra-marital sexual activity and to insure that the result of these liaisons would be the strengthening of the man's family.

An indication of how much concubines were valued is the price that the people of Zanzibar paid for them. In the 1840's adult men were selling for \$17-20, boys for \$15-30, and females for \$35-40.²³⁹ Burton, in 1857, found that females sold for a price one-third above that of males.²⁴⁰ In 1877 Kirk gave \$30-60 as the cost of laboring slaves, while concubines sold for anything from \$80 to \$700.²⁴¹ In 1866, a male slave could be bought for \$35, but an attractive female sold for \$70-100.²⁴² In the closing days of the slave trade, a shamba slave was worth £5-8, a hamali £6-10, a slave for supervisory jobs £8-12, a domestic servant £12-25, and a concubine £15-50.²⁴³ Slaves who were consumption items were worth more than slaves who were factors of production, and concubines were the most expensive of all.

²³⁹ Lieutenant A. B. Kemball, "Papers Relative to the Measures Adopted by the British Government between the years 1820 and 1844, for affecting the Suppression of the Slave Trade in the Persian Gulf," Bombay Records, New Ser. 24 (1856), p. 649. Another source says that the best of men were worth \$15-20, while concubines were worth \$25. Horace B. Putnam, Journal, entry for August 1849, NEMA, pp. 427-28. Before the days of cloves, Smee reported that a "prime slave" cost \$50, while a young girl sold for \$60. Smee, "Description of the Island of Zanzibar," Ind. Of., L/MAR/C/586, p. 104.

²⁴⁰ Burton, Lakes, Vol. II, p. 376.

²⁴¹ Kirk to Derby, 4 December 1877, FOCP 3928, p. 285. About the same time Elton reported that shamba slaves sold for \$11-14, recently landed girls for \$24-25, and concubines who had not given birth for \$30-45. Elton, p. 55.

²⁴² Sir J. Willoughby, East Africa and Its Big Game (London: Longmans, Green, 1889), p. 23.

²⁴³ General Mathews, Memorandum, 23 April 1891, FO 84/2153.

Among the ordinary Arabs of Zanzibar, African concubines were numerous; the children of concubines may well have outnumbered the offspring of free wives.²⁴⁴ According to a missionary, a concubine was usually chosen as a young girl and taken into the home. She was treated more or less as equal to the freeborn children until she reached puberty. She was then put into seclusion for a certain time and taken into the harem. If she had a child, she would be treated almost the same as a freeborn wife. If she did not, the master could marry her off to another slave or sell her.²⁴⁵ Children of these mixed unions were not regarded as half-castes, but as Arabs, and were the equals of their half-brothers and sisters by freeborn wives.²⁴⁶

On the mainland coast, African concubines were also common.²⁴⁷ Evidence from court cases and interviews indicates that concubines--especially if they had borne a child--were generally treated in the same

²⁴⁴ Hardinge to Salisbury, 23 March 1898, PP 1898, LX, 559, p. 65; Devereux, p. 98; Mansfield to Hay, 28 April 1900, US Consul, 10; R. P. Waters, Journal, 24 May 1837, cited by Philip Northway, "Salem and the Zanzibar-East African Trade," Essex Institute Historical Collections, XC (1954), p. 382; Burton, Zanzibar, Vol. I, p. 374; O'Sullivan, "Report," p. 41. Indians also cohabitated with African women and left them to a friend or sold them when they left Zanzibar. Hamerton to Bombay Secretary, 15 February 1850, FO 84/830.

²⁴⁵ Emily Hutchinson, "Report to Monthly Meeting, 7 April 1909," Minutes, II, Society of Friends Archives, London, PZ(F)/3.

²⁴⁶ Hardinge to Salisbury, 28 March 1898, PP 1898, LX, 559, p. 65; Hardinge to Kimberley, 26 February 1895, LXII, 143, p. 29; O'Sullivan, "Report," p. 41; Burton, Zanzibar, Vol. I, p. 464.

²⁴⁷ Emery to Cooley, 5 February 1834, Emery Papers, RGS, London; Newman, Banani, p. 132; MSA 3, ll. Court records and registers of deeds contain references to concubines or children of concubines. Marriage, as opposed to concubinage, with freed slaves also took place. Such couples are mentioned in 17 B 1895 and 136 B 1897.

manner as free wives. If they failed to bear children, however, their status might--but did not always--decline to that of domestic and they could be sold or married to someone else.²⁴⁸ Their children were legitimate, and many children of concubines in Mombasa and Malindi are universally regarded as Arabs and accorded the highest respect.²⁴⁹

The equality of the children of African concubines and Arab wives does not mean that slaveowners were oblivious to color. For the elite of Zanzibar, concubines were an expensive indulgence, and a light skin was considered an ideal of beauty worth high prices in the market place. The brown Ethiopians and above all the white Circassians and Georgians were worth vast sums of money. In the 1840's Ethiopians sold for \$40 to \$150. In the 1880's, they sometimes went for \$200 to \$500.²⁵⁰ Seyyid Said had 60 or 70 concubines, including Georgians, Circassians, and Ethiopians. The mother of his successor, Seyyid Majid, was a Circassian and that of Seyyid Bargash an Ethiopian.²⁵¹ Bargash supposedly had 44 women

²⁴⁸ Halima binti Juma vs. Salim wa Ba Kassim Mazrui, Civil Case 151 of 1903, Town Magistrate's Court, Mombasa; Chief Justice R. H. Hamilton to Combe, 5 September 1909, KNA, Judicial/1/201; Fatuma binti Shahaleck Baluchi vs. Aisha binti Vale and Nyanya binti Khamis, Civil Case 341 of 1902, Town Magistrate's Court, Mombasa. MSA 11. BiKaje, 17 April 1973.

²⁴⁹ MSA 3, 11; MAL 18, 28, 43, 61.

²⁵⁰ Captain Guillain, "Rapport Commercial," O.I., 2/10, Vol. I; Letter from a correspondent in Zanzibar, 11 June 1889, Anti-Slavery Reporter, Ser. IV, 9 (1889), p. 124; Burton, Zanzibar, Vol. I, pp. 467-68.

²⁵¹ Abdulla Saleh Farsy, Seyyid Said bin Sultan (Zanzibar: Mwongozi Printing Press, 1942), pp. 10-3; Seward to Bombay, 4 August 1866, FO 54/23. For a fascinating glimpse of relations among these women of diverse origins and races see the memoir by Seyyid Said's daughter. She claims that spite and jealousy characterized the interaction of these groups, but that the children made no distinction of color. Ruete, pp. 32, 34-5.

in his harem, and his will provided that at his death all concubines from foreign countries be offered free passage home, while those who wished to stay in Zanzibar would be provided for.²⁵² Seyyid Suleiman, the chief deputy of Seyyid Said, also had many concubines.²⁵³ The Sultans also purchased eunuchs to serve in the harem.²⁵⁴

Concubines were a source of sexual pleasure, a mark of status, and a part of family life. The high prices that Zanzibaris paid for them suggests the importance of the social dimension of slavery. In contrast, male slaves fetched higher prices than females in the United States South. Slave prices in the South followed quite closely the pattern of annual net earnings that could be expected from a slave of any given age and sex.²⁵⁵ The Zanzibari pattern confirms the importance of the masters' kinship group--to which concubines contributed their offspring--and of the size and composition of the household as a determinant of status. Material goods were a less valuable indicator of prestige than dependent people.

²⁵² Mgr. R. de Courmont, "Le sultanat de Zanguébar," Missions Catholiques, 18 (1886), p. 383; Euan-Smith to Salisbury, 31 May 1888, PP 1888, LXXIV, 255, p. 19.

²⁵³ Guillain, Documents, Vol. 2/1, p. 26. The ruling family's desire for concubines from northern areas caused much embarrassment to British officials, who were trying to stamp out the trade in slaves in the opposite direction. Bargash, on the way back from a trip to Europe, arranged for the purchase of some Circassians in Cairo and had them shipped to Zanzibar on a mail steamer of the India Company. He later had some Georgians and Circassians brought from Jeddah on his own steamer. The daughter of Seyyid Suleiman also imported some concubines for sale worth \$500 to \$1000 each. The British let them get away with these violations of the slave trade treaties. Kirk to Derby, 21 February 1876, FO 84/1452; Miles to Granville, 27 September 1882, FOCP 4777, p. 252; Kirk to Bombay, 4 October 1869, FO 84/1307.

²⁵⁴ Ruete, p. 12; Mackenzie, p. 91; Kirk to Granville, 7 April 1885, FO 84/1725.

²⁵⁵ Fogel and Engerman, p. 76.

The effects of concubinage with African slaves was of great significance. In the United States South, the children of the illicit liaisons between masters and slaves were legally and socially defined as Negroes --the same as purely black slaves or ex-slaves. Elsewhere in the Americas, such children were mulattoes or some other intermediary category, but they were still illegitimate and still slaves unless specifically freed by their master-father.²⁵⁶ In neither case, was the child of such a relationship considered a member of the father's family. However, under Islamic law, as actually practiced in East Africa, the children of concubines by their masters were legitimate and belonged to their father's communal group. This fact influenced the nature of race relations in East Africa. Color prejudice clearly existed; it was expressed crudely in the market place and in the preference for light-skinned slaves for sensitive tasks as well as for concubines. But that is not the same as saying that race defines the boundaries of social groups. What counted in the East African coast was what communal group one belonged to, not what color one was. As long as the children of black women and brown men took the ethnic affiliation of their fathers, color was a poor guide to determining a person's social group.²⁵⁷

What then was a slave? He or she could be a field hand working in a gang under the master's eye, or an urban laborer working on his own.

²⁵⁶ Winthrop D. Jordan, "American Chiaroscuro: The Status and Definition of Mulattoes in the British Colonies," in Foner and Genovese, pp. 189-201; and Carl N. Degler, Neither Black Nor White: Slavery and Race Relations in Brazil and the United States (New York: Macmillan, 1971).

²⁵⁷ The dark color of Arabs in Zanzibar was noted by Ruschenberger, p. 38; and Rigby, "Report," pp. 328, 331.

He could be a caravan leader, whom his master trusted to serve him in distant lands, or he could be a caravan porter on whom the master counted for money and little else. He or she could be a domestic servant, whose presence contributed to the prestige of the household, or he could be a retainer on whose loyalty the master relied whenever conflict arose. She could be the mother of her master's child. The common feature of all these roles is subordination. Agriculture was organized on the basis of a chain of command, but also on the membership of the slave in a hierarchical institution, the plantation. Urban laborers had much freedom in their daily lives, but only because masters could count on their loyalty. Both rural and urban sectors responded to the demands of the labor market --and the tightness of the master-slave bond adjusted to the situation. But always, the social dimension of subordination was present. Slaves responded to the need for followers--for dependents who could offer prestige and loyalty as well as labor.

Conclusions

The development of regularly defined, closely supervised labor in Zanzibar and of gang labor in Malindi reveals the extent to which the social organization of Omani and Swahili society was responding to the dictates of the market. The customary work week may not have been as long as in the Americas, but it was substantial, and the work, especially on big grain plantations, was hard and tedious. Punishment may have been used sparingly, but the threat was always present, and slaves had limited recourse against a master who abused the norms of his society. The rise of plantation agriculture was pushing slaves in the direction of a specific role, agricultural laborer. However, the dynamics of plantation

development themselves limited this process by making the plantation into a self-sustaining, close-knit social and economic unit. Most important, the varied needs which slaveowners had long had of slaves persisted into the nineteenth century: the desire to expand the family by the absorption of concubines' children and by the addition of household servants and retainers, the need for political and military supporters, and the desire for prestige, which derived as much from possessing people as from anything they did. Plantation owners in places like the Southern United States learned to appreciate some of these benefits of slavery too, but the fact that they had traditionally been a part of Omani slavery enhanced their importance. Slavery was being pushed and pulled in various directions. Slaveowners could organize their slaves into gangs or hire them out for profit, and the same individuals could enjoy the deference of their house servants and when the occasion arose give arms to their field hands. The different forces also varied from place to place. The extent of change was greatest in Malindi, where the heaviest labor requirements coincided with the least developed social life, and weakest in Mombasa, where the possibilities of agriculture were limited and the rewards of urban life comparatively great.

Islam reinforced the diffuse, vertical ties between masters and slaves, making social values into laws and religious norms. The actions of masters, stemming from a variety of reasons, were seen as obedience to the will of God. The numerous injunctions to masters to treat their slaves kindly may have meant something even if they went against economic and social practicalities, but they meant a lot more because religious ethics, the economic situation, and social relationships were mutually reinforcing.

With the exact balance of forces uncertain, conditions on plantations varied, and customary obligations and privileges had to be worked out. Slaves had considerable influence on this process because masters relied on their skill as well as their brawn, because masters had relatively high expectations of slaves' personal loyalty, and because it was relatively easy for slaves to run away. Some slaves undoubtedly ran away because their master violated what they perceived to be customary obligations, and others refused to accept even a paternalistic slavery. Accommodation, however, was not a mere submission to force, but a recognition of the need for physical protection and social participation in a communal group. Slavery was not a good way to obtain this security, but there was little choice. Masters would have been deceiving themselves if they believed their slaves were all happy and content, but in the social system of the East African coast there was every reason for them to take their role as patriarch seriously. The plantation was both a profit-making organization and a socio-political institution. The next chapter will examine the ramifications of the latter dimension.

CHAPTER VI: DEPENDENCE AND FREEDOM

Despite the demands of productivity, paternalism pervaded the organization of plantation and urban labor. When the slaves' work was done, the multi-dimensional ties that linked them to their masters continued to shape their activities. Paradoxically, in their personal and social lives, slaves had considerable independence within the framework of a social system that stressed the dependence of slaves on their masters. In fact, the masters' belief in the loyalty of their dependents allowed them to tolerate such independence, and the freedom that slaves received --not just force--helped make them willing to accommodate to the regime.

Acculturation and Dependence

Islam placed dependence in a religious and legal framework. The master was responsible for bringing the foreign slave into the Muslim community, teaching him Islam, finding him a mate with whom to start a family, and ensuring that he followed the rules of Islam. The master remained responsible at law for a slave's crimes against other individuals and for his economic transactions. Slaves' obligations were consequently reduced. Not only was their legal and economic capacity limited, but they had fewer religious obligations. The pilgrimage, for example, was not a duty of slaves as it was for free people. Certain violations of

the Shari'a were punishable by half the number of lashes as sustained by free people committing the same offense. Such rules underlined the slave's inferior status and dependence on his master, but did not deny his ultimate spiritual equality. He was accountable before God for his beliefs and conduct. In short, the manner in which a slave lived concerned God. The master and the slave himself shared responsibility for the slaves' conduct.

The first imperative was to teach the slave Islam. The Koran specified that only non-Muslims could be enslaved and that the master was obliged to convert them.¹ There is much evidence that this imperative was taken seriously by slaveowners in East Africa and that Islam became a central element in the lives of slaves and their descendants. Several visitors to Zanzibar observed that new slaves were circumcized, in line with Islamic practices, and taught the elements of the religion. On the islands and the coast, many slaves were sent to Koranic school. Others were taught by their own masters. Slaves also taught each other Islam.² This latter means of spreading Islam may help account for the fact that most slaves were Sunni Muslims, although many of the masters, especially

¹ Joseph Schacht, An Introduction to Islamic Law (London: Oxford U.P., 1964), p. 127; Muhammad Kasim Mazrui, Historia Ya Utumwa Katika Uislamu Na Dini Nyengine (Nairobi: Islamic Foundation, 1970), pp. 5-6.

² Loarer, "Ile de Zanguébar," O.I., 5/23, Cahier 5; Michael W. Shepard, log of Star, 1844, NEMA, p. 262; Ludwig Krapf, "Additional Remarks on Zanzibar," CMS CA5/016/25; John H. Speke, Journal of the Discovery of the Source of the Nile (London: Blackwood, 1863), p. xxvi; Hardinge to Kimberley, 26 February 1895, PP 1895, LXXI, 143, p. 29; Rashid bin Hassani, "The Story of Rashid bin Hassani of the Bisa Tribe, Northern Rhodesia," recorded by W. F. Baldock, in Margery Perham, ed., Ten Africans (London: Faber and Faber, 1963), p. 99; MAL 34, 35, 51. Two of my informants, one an mzalia, the other an Arab, went to Koranic school together. This must have occurred around 1900. MAL 18, 30.

in Zanzibar and Pemba, were Ibadi. Perhaps too, the slaves had contact with the older inhabitants of the coast, the Swahili people, who were Sunni.³ Some observers felt that although slaves adhered to the external manifestations of Islam, such as prayer and fasting, their knowledge of the doctrines was meager, and many pre-Islamic practices continued.⁴ Christie admitted that this might be true of new slaves, but he claimed that almost all second-generation slaves were strict Muslims.⁵ It certainly would not be surprising for many slaves to be only partially Islamized. African Islam was everywhere influenced by pre-Islamic religious and magical practices, and the free Swahili and even immigrant Arabs were no exception to that rule.⁶ The central point--on which all observers

³Hardinge to Kimberley, 26 February 1895, PP 1895, LXXI, 143, p. 29. The Ibadis of Oman were less interested in spreading their version of Islam, either to slaves or other Africans, than were Hadrami Arabs or Swahili. However, Sultans respected Sunni Islam and took pains to encourage Sunni scholarship in Zanzibar. See J. Spencer Trimingham, Islam in East Africa (Oxford: Clarendon, 1964), esp. p. 73. The influence of the religious practices of Swahili on slaves would have been greatest in Mombasa, where even Omanis became Sunni. In rural areas of Mombasa and Malindi, many slaveowners were Swahili, and slaves were in constant communication with one another. The influence of Swahili religion on slaves in Zanzibar cannot be so easily explained, but it is possible that Wahadimu-slave contacts were frequent, especially before the growth of the plantation economy.

⁴Adrien Germain, "Note sur Zanzibar et la côte orientale d'Afrique," Bulletin de la Société de Géographie (Paris), 5^e Série, XVI (1868), pp. 353-54; M. Morice, "New Reflections on Questions Concerning the East African Coast," n.d. [1770's], in G. S. P. Freeman-Grenville, The French at Kilwa Island (Oxford: Clarendon, 1965), pp. 116-17.

⁵James Christie, "Slavery in Zanzibar As It Is," in E. Steere, ed., The East African Slave Trade (London: Harrison, 1871), p. 42; Speke, p. xxviii.

⁶On syncretism in coastal Islam, see Peter Lienhardt, "Introduction," to The Medicine Man: Swifa ya Nguvumali (Oxford: Clarendon, 1968), pp. 1-80.

and informants agree--is that virtually all slaves thought of themselves as Muslims. Christian missionaries stood little chance of obtaining converts among the slaves, for, in the words of one of them, all slaves considered themselves "vastly superior to all heathen and infidels."⁷ Some slaves went well beyond nominal conversion. A few reportedly made the pilgrimage to Mecca, and an ex-slave from Lamu became a respected Islamic teacher (mwalimu) in the Malindi area.⁸

In this respect, East African practices did not differ absolutely from those of Christian countries in the Western Hemisphere. The Catholic Church regarded slaves as potential converts. In Protestant countries, practices varied greatly from master to master. In both sets of countries --but especially where masters showed little concern with their slaves' personal lives--distinct slave religions emerged, with varying degrees of Christian and African influences.⁹ East African Islam was not homogeneous, but the variations--such as the distinction between Sunni and Ibadi doctrines--did not follow the master-slave division. Religion was a unifying factor.

The same was true of language. Virtually all slaves learned Swahili. At times, groups of slaves from one place spoke their original

⁷Letter from Charles New in United Methodist Free Church Magazine, VIII (1865), p. 345. Mission stations included many freed slaves who were taken off captured dhows by the British before being exposed to the plantation environment.

⁸In addition to the sources cited above, see Fortené Albrand, "Extraits d'un memoire sur Zanzibar et sur Quiloa," Bulletin de la Société de Géographie, 2e série, X (1838), p. 73; Alexandre LeRoy, Au Kilimandjaro (Afrique Orientale) (Paris: Sanard and Derangeon, 1893), p. 24; Arthur Hardinge, "Report on East Africa," PP 1898, LX, 199, p. 6; MAL 50.

⁹Eugene D. Genovese, Roll, Jordan, Roll (forthcoming).

languages, but even they used Swahili to communicate with other slaves and the masters.¹⁰ At present, there is no observable difference between the Swahili spoken by ex-slaves in Malindi and that spoken by ex-masters. Nothing comparable to the creole languages of the descendants of slaves in the Caribbean emerged.¹¹ Swahili does vary from place to place along the coast, but not in accordance with social class.¹²

Religion and language were the two most important ways of defining who was a participant in coastal society. New slaves also became accustomed to the climate, food, local customs, and above all to local institutions. The family was a key institution of socialization. After twelve-year-old Rashid bin Hassani was purchased in the Zanzibar slave market by Bibi Zem Zem, the Sultan's sister, he was brought to her plantation terrified by the ordeal of capture, separation from his kinsmen, and the voyage to Zanzibar from near Lake Nyasa. The nokoa called all Bibi Zem Zem's slaves together and asked those who were childless if they wanted a child. Those who did were given one of the new arrivals. Rashid was adopted by a slave couple and remained with them as a son until he went off to work, marry, and move into his own home.¹³ Slaves who arrived as adults were given a wife, a house, and a plot of land to grow their crops. They were carefully watched by trusted slaves until they had adjusted

¹⁰Hardinge, "Report," PP 1898, LX, 199, p. 6; Kirk to Derby, 4 April 1877, FOCP 3686, p. 563; MAL 35; MSA 37.

¹¹For comparison, see Dell Hymes, ed., Pidginization and Creolization of Languages (Cambridge: Cambridge U.P., 1971).

¹²On the varieties of Swahili, see Wilfred Whitely, Swahili: The Rise of a National Language (London: Methuen, 1969), pp. 3-4.

¹³Rashid, p. 99.

and ceased to try to run away.¹⁴ As a child or as an adult, the new slave was given a material and emotional stake in plantation institutions, as well as a chance to learn how things were done.

In this way, slaves learned Swahili culture. They came to dress like other coastal people, to attend the festivals of the coast such as Siku Kuu, to follow Swahili marriage and funeral ceremonies, and to build Swahili-style houses for themselves.¹⁵ Coastal culture was itself a melange of diverse African and Asian elements, and the slaves made their own contribution, as shall be seen later. This does not mean there was cultural uniformity--Hadramis, Omanis, Twelve Tribes Swahili, Bajunis, and other communal groups often preferred different foods, carried out ceremonies in different ways, and displayed other cultural variations. Nor did all people participate in the same events in the same manner. Slaves and freemen might attend the same wedding, but everyone understood the status distinction.¹⁶ Nevertheless, Swahili culture was a wide net, and people of diverse origins, slaves included, were able to assimilate a life style which they shared in its essentials with other coastal people.

The importance of acculturation to Zanzibari society is clear in

¹⁴If he did escape, he would be punished. Loarer, O.I., 5/23, Cahier 5; Germain, "Zanzibar," pp. 546-47; Mervyn Beech, MS on Swahili Life, kept in the library of Fort Jesus, Mombasa.

¹⁵Mervyn W. H. Beech, "Slavery on the East Coast of Africa," Journal of the African Society, XV (1916), p. 145; J. Blais, "Les anciens esclaves à Zanzibar," Anthropos, X-XI (1915-16), pp. 105-7; Emily Ruete, Memoirs of an Arabian Princess: An Autobiography (New York: Appleton, 1888), p. 11; E. Quass, "Die Szuri's, die Kuli's und die Slaven, in Zanzibar," Zeitschrift für Allgemeine Erdkunde, Neue Folge, IX (1860), pp. 450-52.

¹⁶This important distinction is made by Margaret Strobel, "From Lelemama to Lobbying: Swahili Women's Associations in Mombasa," Historical Association of Kenya, Annual Conference, 1973, p. 6.

the terms used to describe slaves. A slave who was imported as an adult was called mtumwa mjinga, literally stupid slave. A slave who had been purchased as a child and who grew up on the islands or coast was known as mkulia, one who grew up here. Finally, a slave who was born on the islands or coast was an mzalia, one who was born here. In the nineteenth century, these terms implied increasing acceptance and trust, and today they connote increasing acceptance as a local person, although they have lost their association with slaves.¹⁷ Even an mzalia was not a mwungwana, or descendant of free people. The distinctions between slaves of all gradations and the free born (i.e. children without slave ancestry in the male line) was the fundamental status distinction on the coast.¹⁸

As well as being an institution of socialization, the family was the means by which plantation society perpetuated itself. If paternalism implies a concern with slaves as complete, if inferior, people and with society as an organic whole, one would expect masters to be concerned with continuity from generation to generation. The idea of importing a batch of slaves, making them work until they die, and then importing a new batch, is antithetical to paternalism.¹⁹ In a plantation context,

¹⁷Kirk to Derby, 1 May 1876, FO 84/1453; Richard Burton, The Lake Regions on Central Africa (London: Longman, Green, 1860), Vol. II, pp. 369-71; Oscar Baumann, Die Insel Sansibar (Leipzig: Duncker and Humblot, 1897), p. 20; Christie, "Slavery," p. 33; Ludwig Krapf, A Dictionary of the Swahili Language (London: Trubner, 1882), pp. 230, 271; Lyndon Harries, ed., Swahili Prose Texts: A Selection from the Material Collected by Carl Velten from 1893 to 1896 (London: Oxford U.P., 1965), p. 37. See also A Standard Swahili-English Dictionary (London: Oxford U.P., 1939), p. 536. A Swahili proverb reads, "'Born here' is the sensible slave," implying that an mzalia is more skillful than a new slave. W. E. Taylor, African Aphorisms or Saws from Swahili-Land (London: Leldon Press, 1891, repr. 1924), no. 350.

¹⁸This theme will be treated in the conclusions.

the nuclear family is a sensible unit for reproduction and child rearing, for it gives the parents a stake in the status quo as well as providing a means of caring for children without taxing the master.²⁰

At first glance, the evidence about Zanzibar and the mainland coast is negative. Most travelers reported that family stability was not existent, promiscuity rampant, and the birth-rate low.²¹ However, travelers made similar statements about the United States South--at least the first two parts--and recent research has shown them to be largely incorrect.²² Perhaps travelers in the mid-Victorian era automatically assumed that a good institution like the family was necessarily incompatible with a

¹⁹ The origins of these divergent views can be complex, a blend of social values and economic reality. It is important, for example, to compare the cost of importing slaves (price plus interest) and the amount of work they can do before dying with the cost of raising a child and the amount he will accomplish in his expected life span. Robert William Fogel and Stanley L. Engerman, Time on the Cross: The Economics of American Negro Slavery (Boston: Little, Brown, 1974), pp. 20-9, 155-56. See also the thoughtful essay of C. Vann Woodward, "Southern Slaves in the World of Thomas Malthus," in American Counterpoint: Slavery and Racism in the North-South Dialogue (Boston: Little, Brown, 1971), pp. 78-106.

²⁰ Fogel and Engerman, pp. 127-28.

²¹ Rigby to Anderson, 21 March 1860, FO 84/1130; Rigby, "Report," 1860, reprinted in Mrs. C. E. B. Russell, General Rigby, Zanzibar and the Slave Trade (London: Allen and Unwin, 1935), p. 334; Speer to Seward, 26 November 1862, US Consul, 4; Bishop Steere, Testimony to Select Committee on the Slave Trade, PP 1871, XII, 1, p. 76; Richard Burton, Zanzibar: City, Island, Coast (London: Tinsley, 1872), Vol. I, p. 464; Henry S. Newman, Banani: The Transition from Slavery to Freedom in Zanzibar and Pemba (London: Headley, 1898), p. 31; O'Sullivan-Beare, "Report on Pemba," 1899, in PP 1901, XLVIII, 173, p. 21. Less negative views were expressed by Captain Colomb, Slave Catching in the Indian Ocean (London: Longman, 1873), p. 377; and C. S. Smith to Kimberley, 26 May 1895, PP 1896, LIX, 395, pp. 8-9.

²² Fogel and Engerman, pp. 126-44; and John W. Blassingame, The Slave Community (New York: Oxford U.P., 1972), pp. 77-103.

bad one like slavery. A more accurate picture is hard to come by, since the demographic data which were instrumental in shattering older views on reproduction in the Old South are wholly lacking for East Africa. The problem can be approached indirectly by noting one manifestation of the tendency to regard slaves as a circulating pool of labor--a high ratio of males to females among newly imported slaves and in the slave population as a whole. In the long run, women largely determined the ability of a slave population to reproduce, but in the short run they were, or so planters believed, less efficient. In a self-reproducing slave population, sex ratios should be nearly equal. In the Caribbean, unequal sex ratios prevailed, and in extreme cases, such as Cuba in the nineteenth century sugar boom, males exceeded females on plantations by as much as two to one. In the paternalistic Southern United States, however, sex ratios in the population were nearly equal.²³

The slim evidence on sex ratios on the East African coast is closer to the pattern in the United States than in the Caribbean. Table 21 shows the sex ratios for slaves freed on Zanzibar island after the abolition of slavery in 1897.²⁴ These figures must be interpreted with caution both because of their late date and because the process of abolition, which required slaves to ask the British government for a certificate of freedom, involved much self-selection on the part of slaves. They do,

²³ Franklin W. Knight, Slave Society in Cuba During the Nineteenth Century (Madison: Wisconsin U.P., 1970), p. 79; Stanley J. Stein, Vassouras: A Brazilian Coffee County, 1850-1900 (Cambridge: Harvard U.P., 1957), pp. 76, 155-56; Fogel and Engerman, pp. 26-7, 156.

²⁴ On the island of Pemba, 70 men were freed to each 100 women, reflecting the same pattern as rural Zanzibar. J. P. Farler, Slavery Report, 1900 and 1901, PP 1901, XLVIII, 173, p. 31, and PP 1903, XLV, 955, p. 16.

TABLE 21: Sex Ratios of Slaves Freed on Zanzibar Island

<u>Category of Slaves</u>	<u>Males per 100 Females</u>	<u>Total Number</u>
Total, 1897-1907	106	5,145
Born on mainland*	108	1,175
Born on island*	81	540
<u>Shamba</u> workers*	87	548
Other workers*	104	1,167
Living in city*	105	1,101
Living in country*	89	614

*Based on slaves freed in 1900-1.

Sources: Last to Mathews, 10 January 1901, PP 1901, XLVIII, 173, pp. 29-30; Last to Raikes, 5 February 1902, PP 1903, XLV, 955, pp. 8-9; Last to Cave, 23 May 1908, FOCP 9401, p. 92.

however, create a strong presumption that slaveowners purchased males and females in relatively equal proportions and that this near-equality was preserved in the slave population.

The variations of sex ratios in the subcategories are more difficult to interpret. Most female urban slaves may have been concubines, who were excluded from the abolition act until 1909, or domestics, whose close ties with their masters made them less likely to seek freedom. Male urban slaves were largely vibarua, whose relationship with their master largely consisted of paying them a portion of their earnings. The low proportion of males among wazalia may result from higher manumission rates, a tendency for second-generation males to leave the island, perhaps as porters, or the greater opportunities for positions of trust that were open to locally born male slaves. The differing sex ratios may reflect higher mobility for males than for females, who remained on

plantations or became domestics unless they were chosen as concubines. Yet even these variations were not extreme and would pose no major obstacles to reproduction, even if--as was not the case--urban-rural connections were impossible.

Other figures from earlier periods confirm that males and females were almost equally desirable in the slave market. Most information on slave prices indicate that adult laborers of either sex were worth the same, although females intended for concubines were much more expensive than any laborers.²⁵ Among adult slaves taken from confiscated slave dhows between 1874 and 1877 and sent to Protestant missions, females outnumbered males by 141 to 123, but among children, boys were in excess of girls by 178 to 91. The slaves sent to the Catholic mission, for whom there was no age breakdown, numbered 113 males and 106 females.²⁶ Slaves captured from dhows between 1886 and 1888 included 275 men, 263 women, 213 boys, and 180 girls.²⁷ The purchase of young children, who would not immediately be efficient workers, is itself an indication of a desire to bring in slaves who could be socialized with relative ease and who would be long-term members of the plantation community. Continuity in plantation life, and not just short-term efficiency of labor, influenced purchasing decisions in the slave market.

²⁵ The evidence is not perfectly clear since observers often failed to distinguish categories of slaves precisely. See Rigby, "Report," p. 333; Burton, Lakes, Vol. II, p. 376; and General Lloyd Mathews, Memorandum, 23 April 1891, FO 84/2153.

²⁶ Kirk to Derby, 14 September 1877, FOCP 3686, pp. 658-59.

²⁷ Adm. Richards to Admiralty, 19 October 1887, PP 1888, LXXIV, 1, pp. 4-5; Adm. Macgregor to FO, 3 April 1889, PP 1889, LXXII, 279, pp. 29-35.

Marriage and family formation were not simply ways of breeding slaves, but a way of placing personal relationships among slaves in the context of the master-slave tie. Under Islamic law, the master was the guardian of his slaves, and his permission was required for marriage, just as the parents' consent was needed for free persons to marry.²⁸

Christie noted that masters performed marriages themselves for their slaves, and that if a slave failed to find a mate on the plantation, he customarily purchased a slave from another plantation to whom the slave had become attached.²⁹ Rashid bin Hassani, whose childhood in a slave family had already been mentioned, describes his own marriage in accordance with Islamic rituals.³⁰ On the mainland, a male slave customarily paid his master a small fee (about \$2) on the occasion of his marriage as a recognition of the master's performance of his duties as guardian.³¹ So strong was the acceptance of guardianship, that well after the abolition of slavery in Kenya, ex-masters often expected their ex-slaves to pay them this fee, and qadis still regarded the payment as part of the marriage ritual.³²

²⁸R. Brunschvig, "'Abd," Encyclopedia of Islam (Leiden: Brill, 1960), vol. I, pp. 26-7; Schacht, Introduction, p. 127.

²⁹Christie, "Slavery," p. 33; Colomb, pp. 376-77; Captain H. A. Fraser, "Zanzibar and the Slave Trade," in Steere, ed., East African, p. 20. Even after abolition, ex-slaves continued to obtain their ex-masters' consent before marrying. W. R. McGeach and William Addis, "A Review of the System of Land Tenure in the Islands of Zanzibar and Pemba," Zanzibar, Government Printer, 1945, p. 20.

³⁰Rashid, p. 99.

³¹This fee was referred to as kilemba, meaning turban. Beech, "Slavery," p. 148; and W. W. A. Fitzgerald, Travels in the Coastlands of British East Africa and the Islands of Zanzibar and Pemba (London: Chapman and Hall, 1898), p. 28.

³²A former Arab official told me that this went on in the 1930's in Lamu. Slaves who had been freed by the government regarded the govern-

Informants on the coast state emphatically that slaves married and raised children in a family setting.³³ Their own life histories illustrate these points. Awade bin Maktub was the son of a father from near Lake Nyasa and a mother of Zulu origin born in Zanzibar.³⁴ The father was a slave of the Sultan in Zanzibar before the Sultan gave him to bi Salima binti Masudi when she went, at the Sultan's behest, to Malindi. The mother was a mtoto wa nyumbani of the Sultan, that is an mzalia who had been brought up in the household. She was nominally free, but remained a dependent of the Sultan, who sent her to bi Salima. In Malindi, she married Awade's father. He worked in the fields while she remained in the household. Young Awade became a mtoto wa nyumbani himself, lived in bi Salima's house, and was sent to Koranic school by her.³⁵ Awade's childhood not only illustrates the way in which slavery brought together people of diverse origins, but the way a slave family functioned with the patriarchal institutions of the plantation.

Awade speaks with affection both of his own mother and of bi Salima, who was also like a mother to him. He had an unusually close relationship with an unusual slaveowner, but other narratives also describe families

ment as their new master and came to this official to obtain his consent for marriage. MSA 14. These practices had earlier produced a controversy within the administration. Assistant District Commissioner, Lamu, to Judge Hamilton, 30 April 1908, Judicial/1/402, KNA; Memorandum by Provincial Commissioner F. W. Isaac, 21 February 1912, CP/1/2/84.

³³ MAL 34, 35, 38. Spouses are also mentioned in many documents. See for example 5A 1894, 993A 1911 (deed dated 1899), and 352A 1907.

³⁴ The mother may have been Ngoni, one of the peoples caught up in the dispersal of Southern African peoples after the rise of the Zulu leader Shaka in the 1820's.

³⁵ MAL 30.

within the framework of plantation paternalism. The relationship of the master to slave families is similar to a phenomenon of Europe and South America termed ritual co-parenthood by Sidney Mintz and Eric Wolf. A new-born child is baptised in the presence of his parents and another person, who serves as the ceremonial sponsor. The identity of the co-parent varies. Where the community is a single class, the bond between the child and its co-parent is horizontal, strengthening ties within the community. Where the family is part of a system of interacting classes, the bond is more likely to be vertical. When the child of a lower-class family is given an upper-class co-parent, the child acquires a special claim to the patronage of a superior person, while the patron sees the ties of dependence reaffirmed.³⁶ On East African plantations guardianship served an analogous function, confirming the paternalistic relationship of master to slave and putting the family unit in its place within the vertical ties of the plantation.

The desire of masters to encourage families and reproduction does not necessarily imply that a slave population will in fact be self-reproducing, for many of the determining factors are outside of the master's control. Most visitors to Zanzibar believed that the reproduction rate was low, but their opinions were not based on demographic data, for none exist.³⁷ A low reproduction rate, however, would not be surprising. Owing to the relatively short time between the large increase in plantation slavery and the advent of the British, a high proportion of slaves

³⁶ Sidney W. Mintz and Eric R. Wolf, "An Analysis of Ritual Co-Parenthood (Compadrazgo)," Southwestern Journal of Anthropology, VI (1950), pp. 341-68.

were mainland born--two-thirds in the 1900-1 figures. Given the prevalence of tropical diseases in Zanzibar, a low fertility rate and a high rate of infant mortality would be inevitable.³⁸ There is also some evidence to suggest that slave women did not always share their masters' desire for children. For the mother, childbearing and rearing were burdens to be added to the chores of subsistence and the five or more days of labor required by the master. At best, women were allowed to stop working for only a month before delivery and for a month thereafter.³⁹ The fact that the child of two slaves was also a slave may possibly have made raising children seem less desirable, although there is no evidence for this.⁴⁰ A few observers claimed that abortion and infanticide were occasionally practiced by slave women.⁴¹ Such actions run counter to the attitudes towards family life implicit in the recollections of informants, but the refusal of some women to bear the burden of their masters' self-interested notions of plantation continuity was another rejection of the masters' version of paternalism.

However close the ties between master and slaves, however similar

³⁷ See the sources cited in note 21 above.

³⁸ Fogel and Engerman, pp. 26-7.

³⁹ Christie, "Slavery," p. 47; O'Sullivan-Beare, "Report," PP 1901, XLVIII, 173, p. 21.

⁴⁰ Islamic law permits the separation of mother and child after the age of seven. Brunshvig, p. 26. Authorities differ on Zanzibari practices of separating families. Christie, "Slavery," p. 46; and Speer to Seward, 26 November 1862, US Consul, 4. The Sultan issued a proclamation in 1886 prohibiting all sales of slaves that separated husband and wife or parents and child--an indication that such sales were contrary to Zanzibari norms but took place nonetheless. Sultan of Zanzibar to Holmwood, 13 October 1886, PP 1888, XLIII, 283, p. 22.

their religious practices, language, and culture, their relationship was that of the superior to his inferiors. In daily life, the vertical distance was emphasized by social conventions. Deference was an essential aspect of a slave's behavior. Slaves greeted their masters by the expression, "Shikamuu," meaning literally, "I embrace your feet," an expression which has since become an expression of respect to elders. The master would reply, "Marahaba," welcome.⁴² Masters generally avoided the harsh words for slaves, watumwa in Swahili or abd in Arabic, and used watoto, children, or watu wangu, my people. Slaves referred to master and mistress as bwana and bibi, or else used the diminutives, kibwana and kibibi.⁴³ Such terminology does not mean that slaves were treated as family members, but it does imply that master-slave relationships were rationalized in terms of the patriarchal structure of the family.

Holidays were occasions for the masters to display generosity to their slaves and for the slaves to express deference in their acceptance of hospitality. On the important holidays, above all Siku kuu, the master staged a celebration for the benefit of his slaves. Animals were slaughtered and meat and other food distributed at the master's house.⁴⁴ In Zanzibar

⁴¹ Burton, Zanzibar, Vol. I, p. 464; Newman, Banani, p. 31; O'Sullivan-Beare, "Report on Pemba," 1899, in PP 1901, XLVIII, 173, p. 21.

⁴² Krapf, Suahili Dictionary, pp. 202, 331; Standard Dictionary, pp. 420-21; Beech, "Swahili Life."

⁴³ Fritz Weidner, Die Haussklaverei on Ostafrika (Jena: Fischer, 1915), p. 31. In the Southern United States, masters took such expressions of deference very seriously and their absence as a major breach. Genovese, Roll.

⁴⁴ Last to Mathews, 22 February 1900, PP 1901, XLVIII, 173, p. 5. MAL 24, 34, 45; MSA 12. Such feasts were also important to slaves in the United States South. Kenneth Stampf, The Peculiar Institution (New York: Vintage, 1956), p. 365.

town, however, slaves would "carouse and junket in their own quarter of town, each clan from the mainland keeping itself distinct."⁴⁵ These feasts were part of a general pattern of largess that was characteristic of Omanis, as well as Islamic beliefs that it was incumbent on the rich to give alms to the poor. This generosity was part of the sense of hierarchy.

The routine of greetings and festivals underscored other elements of dependence. The master was the slaves' guardian in questions of marriage, and in other legal matters as well.⁴⁶ Socially and politically, the master was the slaves' protector. Without belonging to a unified group, under the master, slaves would have stood alone in a society that consisted of groups, not individuals. The ties between masters and slaves were many-faceted and personal. They took place within the boundaries of common religion, common language, and common culture. The interdependence of masters and slave did not always imply that slaves accepted the arrangements. The threat of force lay behind the security of the slave system. Some rebelled and some sought as much personal independence as they could find within the system. It was the strength of the bonds of dependence that made it possible for such independence to exist without threatening to undermine the social or ideological basis of the regime.

An Independent Life

Slaves used whatever freedom they had within the slave system to enjoy life among themselves and to improve their own standard of living. Despite the strong tendencies of coastal slavery to assimilate slaves into

⁴⁵Burton, Zanzibar, Vol. I, p. 366.

⁴⁶For example, only the master could demand compensation if a slave suffered a legal wrong. Brunschvig, pp. 26-7.

Swahili culture, they used this living space to preserve elements of their own culture.

Slaves, even those engaged in gang labor, were left alone to a considerable extent after they had completed their assigned ngwe or other task. The regimented home life that sometimes existed on slave plantations in the Americas was unknown on the East African coast. Visitors to rural parts of Zanzibar saw slave huts scattered around the plantations, dispersed among the clove trees and the plots that were used by the slaves themselves. On the plantation of one of the largest landlords of Pemba --where the clove industry was the most intense--there was no one slave quarter, but only slave huts "dotted all over the place."⁴⁷ Similarly, slaves in Malindi lived scattered among the mashamba in clusters of two or three huts or else in small villages containing only slaves. Each family had its own house, which they generally built themselves.⁴⁸ By custom, masters had no right to enter a slave's hut unless in a "very extreme case, such as searching for a runaway."⁴⁹ In the Mombasa area, slaves often lived in villages containing slaves owned by various masters. They were governed by a slave headman elected by their own elders. He was expected to arrest any suspected criminals and send them to Mombasa for trial.⁵⁰

⁴⁷ Donald Mackenzie, "A Report on Slavery and the Slave-Trade in Zanzibar, Pemba, and the Maimland of the British Protectorates of East Africa," Anti-Slavery Reporter, Series IV, XV (1895), p. 75; Fitzgerald, Travels, p. 516.

⁴⁸ Fitzgerald, Travels, p. 32; MAL 24, 26, 28, 35, 38, 50.

⁴⁹ Fitzgerald, Travels, p. 32.

⁵⁰ Hardinge, Report, PP 1898, LX, 199, p. 6; Hardinge to Salisbury, 12 April 1896, PP 1896, LIX, 41, p. 91.

Urban slaves also had considerable autonomy. House servants lived with their masters, but vibarua, mahamali, and artisans often did not. As they became increasingly numerous in Zanzibar town, especially in the 1870's, a quarter of town took shape where slaves were concentrated.⁵¹ Some Hadramis, who worked in the port themselves or owned the port workers, also lived there, as did many slaves who had been freed by their masters and gravitated to the open environment of the town.⁵² The combination of a high concentration of slaves and freed slaves in one section of town would likely have deeply frightened the citizens of a city in the Old South.⁵³

Many slaves in Mombasa also lived on their own, and the collections of land deeds that are available provide insights into their living arrangements. Generally, they built their own houses on land rented or borrowed from Swahili or Arab landowners. The landlord was usually not the owner of the slave, and slaves of different masters often lived on the same plot, interspersed among Arabs, Swahili and freed slaves. Few slaves lived in Mji wa Kale, the old part of the city that included many of the rich Arabs among its residents. Mji Mpya (literally, New Town) was a common place for slaves to live, and as its name implies, it was developed

⁵¹ James Christie, Cholera Epidemics in East Africa (London: Macmillan, 1876), pp. 239-40, 360, 366.

⁵² Ibid. On the presence of freed slaves, see below, p. 403.

⁵³ On the fears of concentrations of slaves in cities see Richard C. Wade, Slavery in the Cities: The South 1820-1860 (New York: Oxford U.P., 1964). The combination of slaves and freed slaves was especially worrisome to Southern slaveowners. See Eugene D. Genovese, "The Slave States of North America," in David W. Cohen and Jack P. Greene, eds., Neither Slave Nor Free: The Freedman of African Descent in the Slave Societies of the New World (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins U.P., 1972), pp. 258-77.

as part of the expansion of the city.⁵⁴

Mombasa's most important landlord, Salim bin Khalfan Al-Busaidi, rented many plots to slaves, especially from his vast lands in Mji Mpya. A register of his leases for the year 1899 is still held in the Mombasa Land Office, and Table 22 indicates who rented his plots. The disproport-

TABLE 22: Lessees of Land, Mombasa, 1899

	<u>Women</u>	<u>Men</u>
Slaves	163	69
Freed slaves	139	53
<u>Waungwana</u>	91	154
	<u>393</u>	<u>276</u>

Source: Registers AS1 and AS2, Land Office, Mombasa.

tionate number of women slaves may indicate that many female slaves lived in town, probably because they were house servants.⁵⁵ Many of them had sufficient economic and social independence to rent their own plots for their houses. This was true of some men as well, but the smaller number probably indicates that a higher proportion of men stayed on the mashamba. On the other hand, waungwana men who did not own land could rent it, but waungwana women did so less often, probably because they lived more restrictive

⁵⁴ A typical deed of sale of a plot would mention that the house of "Maiki, slave of Kassim bin Rashid El-Mazrui" was on the property. Deeds that included descriptions of boundaries often mentioned that a slave was a neighbor. Such references are legion, but see for example, 47A, 55A, 59A, 147A 1892, 71A 1894, 661A and 662A 1897.

⁵⁵ This was true of cities in the United States South as well, but not of Zanzibar, because of the high demand for port labor in the town. See Wade, p. 23; and Table 21, above.

lives, in keeping with the Islamic concept of seclusion of women, than did their fellow women of slave origin. In any case, the leases on Salim bin Khalfan's land show that significant numbers of slaves were permitted by their masters, and were financially able, to rent land to build their own houses.

Both slave villages and the independent houses in the towns were different from slaves' housing in parts of the New World. On some plantations in the Southern United States, slaves lived in single-family houses at some distance from their master's eyes, but the slave quarters were often placed within sight of the overseer's cottage. Where slaves were being exploited with the greatest intensity of fear of escape or rebellion was great, as in Cuba during the sugar boom or southern Brazil in the coffee boom, slave quarters were closely supervised and even locked at night.⁵⁶ Some urban slaves lived on their own, but many others lived in barracks or in their master's enclosed compound.⁵⁷ In East Africa slaves could spend their leisure hours in a place that was their own.

Similarly, the restrictions on freedom of movement that were characteristic of Western plantation societies did not apply in East Africa. In the British West Indies, market day was virtually the only time slaves were free to leave the plantation, and most areas had pass laws and other means of controlling the movements of slaves.⁵⁸ Visitors to Zanzibar

⁵⁶ Quarters were sometimes locked in the United States as well and they were patrolled in certain situations. Blassingame, p. 43. See also Stamp, p. 292; Fogel and Engerman, pp. 115-16; Stein, pp. 134, 168; Knight, p. 68; and Elsa Goveia, Slave Society in the British Leeward Islands at the End of the Eighteenth Century (New Haven: Yale U.P., 1965), p. 184.

⁵⁷ Wade, pp. 55-79; Robert S. Starobin, Industrial Slavery in the Old South (New York: Oxford U.P., 1970), pp. 57-62.

were surprised by the extent of physical mobility of slaves. Especially on Thursdays and Fridays--the two free days granted plantation slaves--they came to Zanzibar town in large numbers, bringing many items they had grown or made in their free time--fruit, vegetables, tobacco, mats, and the like. An "immense" number of slaves filled the streets. The market was a social center for the slaves as well as a place to sell goods.⁵⁹

Burton was shocked at the extent to which slaves could roam around and behave as they wish: "The impudence and audacity of the wild slaves almost passed belief." He felt that they were a danger to public order, walking into open houses and carrying off goods or committing robberies at night. Another visitor to the town was surprised to see Negroes, presumably slaves, walking around with spears. In plantation areas, rival gangs of slaves sometimes fought each other with sticks, stones, and occasionally muskets. Pemba was also troubled by roaming bands of armed slaves.⁶⁰ Christie, however, found violent crime even more rare than in "civilized countries," and noted that petty theft was the only common crime. Even drunkenness was rare. But Kirk claimed drunkenness was common among slaves. If true, this would be a serious breach of Islamic

⁵⁸Goveia, p. 239; Orlando Patterson, The Sociology of Slavery (Rutherford, N.J.: Fairleigh Dickinson, U.P., 1967), pp. 224-30; Stamp, p. 149. Despite all these restrictions slaves still managed to visit friends and relatives on neighboring plantations.

⁵⁹Journal of Lieutenant Christopher, 1843, incl. Bombay to Secret Committee, no. 54, 18 July 1843, Ind. Of., L/P+S/5/60; Rigby, "Report," p. 334; Christie, Cholera, pp. 318-9. In the West Indies, some areas allowed slaves to participate in analogous markets, notably in Jamaica, but some restricted such activities. Patterson, pp. 244-30; Goveia, p. 159.

⁶⁰Burton, Zanzibar, Vol. I, pp. 465-66; W. S. W. Ruschenberger, A Voyage Round the World Including an Embassy to Muscat and Siam in 1835, 1836 and 1837 (Philadelphia: Carey, Lea and Blanchard, 1838), p. 38. Farler to Mathews, 26 January 1900, PP 1901, XLVIII, 173, p. 7.

norms and indicate the limited control masters had over their slaves.⁶¹ Perhaps Burton and Kirk, reacting to the lack of restriction on slaves, assumed that the lower orders of society would necessarily behave badly under such circumstances.

Likewise, slaves in Malindi were able to walk around and go to town as they wished. In some cases, slaves, living away from centers of population, were given guns to protect themselves against wild animals.⁶²

This freedom of movement and assembly, as well as the ability of slaves to obtain weapons, could get out of hand. In 1880, a larger number "of the better class of slaves" in Mombasa went off to some distant plantations for three days of "feasting and firing guns and consulting together."⁶³ Their masters feared a rebellion, but had no idea what to do about it. It came to nothing, but one can imagine that slaveowners in the Americas would have had a clear idea of what to do. In general, the slaves' independence caused little consternation. After all, if slaveowners could count on the loyalty of their slaves in fighting their political engagements for them, they should not have feared dire consequences of letting their slaves move around as they wished during their free time.

Freedom of movement and residence was of course greatest for those slaves not tied to the system of plantation labor common in Zanzibar and Malindi. Farm workers who paid ijara or a proportion of the crops would not have to see their masters very often. Day laborers, as indicated

⁶¹ Christie, "Slavery," pp. 42-3; Kirk to Granville, 13 December 1872, FOCP 4206, p. 109.

⁶² Newman, Banani, p. 133; MAL 34.

⁶³ Menzies to Wright, 18 June 1880; CMS CA5/M6.

earlier, often lived on their own and found work for themselves. In extreme cases, slavery could become meaningless. A porter working for a European on a safari told his employer that his master, a relative of the Sultan of Zanzibar, had not wanted him to go on the safari, but he had gone anyway. He was confident that he could evade his master's claim to half of his pay. He would be paid in Bagamoyo, rather than in his master's presence, so "who can prevent me from eating it all up?"⁶⁴ In 1878 a controversy developed in Zanzibar because so many slaves were serving in caravans that hamali labor on the island was in short supply. European merchants complained that slaves left without consulting their masters, and indeed some masters reportedly threatened to sell off their slaves unless measures were taken to prevent slaves from leaving on caravans. Nothing was done and the problem continued into the 1890's.⁶⁵ Rashid bin Hassani, the slave of Bibi Zem Zem, had his own house and kept the wages he had earned doing odd jobs. In his words, he was "merely under Bibi Zem Zem's protection."⁶⁶ These cases involving non-agricultural slaves are admittedly one end of the spectrum, but even slaves on the clove plantations had a considerable degree of personal freedom. In 1870 the Sultan of Zanzibar ordered all Indians to stay out of the plantation areas of Zanzibar, complaining that the Indians went around the plan-

⁶⁴ Paul Reichard, Deutsch-Ostafrika: Das Land und Seine Bewohner (Leipzig: Spamer, 1892), p. 478. A slave who was working on a dhow that had to be repaired hired himself out to another vessel, receiving the usual rate for a free sailor. He had already visited Arabia twice. Kirk considered this degree of freedom typical for slaves working as sailors. Kirk to Granville, 12 July 1873, FOCP 4207, p. 112.

⁶⁵ Memorial by nine European merchants to the Sultan, incl. Kirk to Derby, 9 January 1878, FOCP 3928, p. 307, Norman R. Bennett, Studies in East African History (Boston: Boston U.P., 1963), pp. 44-5.

⁶⁶ Rashid, p. 79.

tations and bought cloves directly from the slaves at prices below that which the master was charging.⁶⁷ On the mainland, a number of cases later came before the colonial courts involving slaves who had lived as free men without having been legally freed and which posed difficulties in the courts in deciding whether the person had in fact been freed.⁶⁸

The opportunities that slaves had to be alone and get together with their fellows gave them a chance to resist the powerful tendencies towards cultural assimilation that were part of the experience of slavery. One of the most important expressions of continuity with the traditions of their homeland was dance. Every Friday night, after a day of rest, the slaves of the Malindi area came into town from the plantations. They congregated with other slaves who came from the same parts of the interior of East Africa and danced the traditional dances of their home areas. Eventually, some of these dances became incorporated into Swahili culture, being danced by slaves and waungwana alike.⁶⁹ Dances were also part of

⁶⁷ Seyyid Bargash to Churchill, 31 October 1871, incl. Churchill to Wedderburn, 17 November 1870, Ind. Of., L/P S/9/49. Slaves in Jamaica also sold their masters' sugar, and this resulted in the passage of many ordinances restricting the market activities of slaves. Patterson, p. 224.

⁶⁸ Abdulla bin Mahomed vs. Juma bin Farajalla, Civil Appeal 28 of 1911, Kenya Law Reports, Vol. IV, pp. 68-71; A. M. Jeevanjee and Co., vs. The Crown, Civil Appeal 30 of 1915, ibid., Vol. VI, pp. 86-9, 183-7.

⁶⁹ MAL 24, 34, 35. One informant had played as a musician at dances of former slaves, playing both coastal and Nyasa music. MSA 37. The dances of slaves in Malindi are described at some length by a former District Officer there, R. Skene, "Arab and Swahili Dances and Ceremonies," Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute, XLVII (1917), pp. 418-20. Slave dances were also mentioned by Charles New, Life, Wanderings and Labours in Eastern Africa (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1873), p. 66. Dances and songs were features of every Western slave society as well. Sometimes, however, masters restricted assemblies and festivals among slaves, fearing that the slaves might engage in conspiracies and rebellions. Goveia, p. 184.

Zanzibari slave society, and slaves in Zanzibar had work songs as well, which they sang in unison as they worked in town.⁷⁰

Another contribution of slaves to Swahili culture was female initiation ceremonies. At present, many girls of various origins in Mombasa and other coastal towns are given instruction at the time of puberty by women known as makungwi (sing. kungwi) in matters relating to sex and morals. The makungwi lead them through an initiation ceremony at this time and then retain a special relationship with the girls, watching over the propriety of their conduct, serving as counselors, playing an important role at their weddings, and supporting them in case of marital troubles. Margaret Strobel notes that similar initiation practices are customary among most of the ethnic groups which supplied slaves to the coast and argues that the institution was brought to the coast by slaves. Only after slavery was abolished, did female initiation spread to waungwana as well as the descendants of slaves.⁷¹

Cultural interaction was not a one-directional process--slaves gave as well as received. Moreover, Arab masters were also becoming Swahili-ized as they settled on the coast. Swahili culture--because it has constantly been absorbing influences from diverse sources--tolerates and often adopts different practices, and it offered slaves a chance of becoming assimilated without giving up all that was uniquely theirs.

The extent to which descendants of slaves have preserved a sense of identity and pride in their origins surprised this researcher more than

⁷⁰ Godfrey Dale, The Peoples of Zanzibar (London: UMCA, 1920), p. 16; Le P. Charmetant, D'Alger à Zanzibar (Paris: Librairie de la Société Bibliographique, 1882), pp. 142-43.

⁷¹ Margaret Strobel, personal communication.

any other aspect of field work. I had expected that slaves would have internalized the values of a Muslim slave society and that their descendants would have continued to believe, after slavery had been abolished, that slave status implied social inferiority. I thought ex-slaves would be reluctant to admit their slave ancestry and would hide behind the broad cover of being "Waswahili." Instead, my informants of slave origin spoke freely and with pride of their origins. They referred to themselves as "Wanyasa" (sing. Mnyasa), from the home area of most of the slaves, a designation which has been accepted by descendants of slaves from other areas.⁷² They learned from their parents about the traditions of their homeland, danced traditional dances, and sometimes spoke their home language in addition to Swahili. Most of my informants were only second-generation coastal people, a fact which contributed to the strength of Wanyasa consciousness. One informant told me he had wanted to visit his parents' home in what is now Malawi, but had been deterred by the cost.⁷³ There are actually records of a number of attempts by ex-slaves to return to the Nyasa area, but the attempts were unsuccessful. Amina binti Muhandu, from the Mchewi tribe of the then Nyasaland colony had been carried away during childhood and become a slave in Mombasa. In 1911, four years after abolition, she and her husband went to Nyasaland with some soldiers of the King's African Rifles who were returning home from duty on the coast. She looked for her relatives but failed to find any. After two years,

⁷² One informant, although of Mzigua origin, still used the expression, "sisi Wanyasa," we Wanyasa. MAL 61.

⁷³ Some of the wazalia who discussed their origins with me are MAL 30, 34, 35, 38, 51, 61. The mzalia who discussed returning to his homeland was MSA 37, who lives in Mombasa, but whose parents were slaves in Malindi.

she tried to return to Mombasa, where her children had remained, but she was trapped by floods, in which her husband died. Neither she nor her children could afford to pay for her passage back, and while the bureaucracies of two British colonies, Nyasaland and British East Africa, were corresponding about her case, Amina died.⁷⁴ The slave trade had opened up an enormous and tragic gulf between people like Amina and their roots, regardless of the extent to which they had preserved a sense of ethnic identity. The changes that both the coast and the interior had undergone, the passage of time, the dislocation of people, the large distances involved, and the stakes that slaves had developed in coastal culture and coastal life made return impossible.

Socially, the position of slaves was ambiguous. Their Muslim masters, believing seriously in their religion and way of life, forcibly socialized them into a new society, but they were allowed sufficient freedom of association and cultural expression to preserve a consciousness of their origins.

Economically, the position of slaves was also ambiguous. As property, they were the object of transactions. A number of deeds have been preserved that show slaves being sold, used as collateral in mortgages, being given as gifts, and forming part of an inherited estate.⁷⁵ Some

⁷⁴ Resident, Port Herald, to Superintendent of Native Affairs, Zomba, 6 October 1914; District Commissioner, Mombasa, to Provincial Commissioner, Coast, 5 December 1914; Superintendent of Native Affairs, Zomba, to Chief Secretary, Zomba, 29 October 1914, CP/1/12/270. Another attempt to return home, with no information about what happened, is mentioned in Hardinge to Piggott, 13 August 1894, CP/1/Addms 2.

⁷⁵ Bi Salima binti Masudi of Malindi mortgaged 64 slaves, along with farms, land, and houses to Abdulla Hussein, the wealthy landlord from Shella, for \$7000 in 1886. Apparently she did not repay, and as indicated in the original mortgage, the transaction was converted into

masters even gave them names like "Abrobaini" or "Hamsini" (Forty or Fifty) after the price that was paid for them in the Zanzibar slave market.⁷⁶

Islamic legal doctrines dealing with business generally treated slaves as the objects, not the initiators, of transactions. A master could take possession of any property of the slave at will. The slave could, however, engage in legally binding transactions in his master's name.⁷⁷

In actual practice, slaves in East Africa had more freedom to engage in economic activities and acquire modest amounts of money than they had in law. The theoretical right of the master to seize his slave's property at any time was exercised mainly at the time of the slave's death. As a result, some slaves were able to do business for themselves, but none founded family fortunes. In Zanzibar, masters rarely deprived slaves of their property. Christie felt that some slaves were wealthy.⁷⁸ Even in the clove areas of Pemba, slaves could earn and keep a few pice by cutting

a sale after one year. Reg., 1A and 4A 1894. The coast's leading financier, Salim bin Khalfan, accepted four slaves, plus a house in Mombasa, as security on a mortgage of \$450 in 1890. 234A 1893. An Mswahili borrowed \$1400 plus 280 pounds of ivory from another leading money lender, Rashid bin Ali bin Mona Al-Darani, in 1886, and turned over four slaves for the creditor's use until the money was repaid. 165B 1897. Other mortgages with slaves as collateral are 217B 1897, 94B and 48B 1898, and 166A 1893. A gift of a slave dating from 1849 is recorded in 10GA 1898 and another gift from 1889 appears in 29B 1911. Inheritance of slaves comes up in 95A 1894 and a/c 227N of 1916, as well as the will of Mbarak bin Rashid from 1904 (copy lent by William McKay). Slaves could also be made over to a mosque for its benefit. See Registers of Property, Wakf Commission, Mombasa, no. 5 and no. 8.

⁷⁶ Cyril Frewer, "The Natives of Zanzibar and Pemba," Central Africa, XXV (1907), p. 48.

⁷⁷ Brunshvig, pp. 28-9.

⁷⁸ Christie, "Slavery," pp. 33, 47; Hardinge to Kimberley, 26 February 1895, PP 1895, LXXI, 143, pp. 28-9; Quass, p. 443.

firewood and selling it in the nearby village or by weaving mats for use in the drying of cloves.⁷⁹ Not only did they grow their own food in their spare time, but they could earn a little money by selling produce in the market. Most likely, urban slaves, who kept a portion of their earnings, had the best chance to accumulate money. Like other Zanzibaris, slaves who had acquired some wealth often invested in slaves.⁸⁰ Slaves could also own immovable property.⁸¹

As in Pemba, the slaves of Malindi could earn a little money from the surplus food they produced on their own small plots. Kirk said that a slave could earn \$10-12 per year from a plot, while a couple could get \$30.⁸²

The registers of transactions kept at the Mombasa Land Office contain a rich record of the economic activities of slaves. Slaves bought and sold houses, town land, and farm land. Most of these purchases and sales were modest, but some were substantial by contemporary standards.⁸³

⁷⁹O'Sullivan, "Report on Pemba," 1896, PP 1809, LIX, 395, p. 42.

⁸⁰Christie, "Slavery," p. 47; Colomb, pp. 369-70; Speer to Seward, 26 November 1862, US Consul, 4; Rigby, "Report," p. 334; Rodd to Rosebery, 31 December 1893, PP 1895, LXXI, 143, p. 17; Quass, p. 443; W. Cope Devereux, A Cruise in the "Gorgon" (London: Dawson, 1869, repr. 1968), p. 107.

⁸¹See the deed of sale of a house by a slave to Bishop Tozer, dated 1865, in Gray Papers, Cambridge University Library, Box 28.

⁸²Kirk to Granville, 6 November 1873, FOCP 4207, p. 210.

⁸³Bokeit bin Khais sold land worth \$330 in Mombasa in 1898. 365A 1898, Reg. In Malindi, one Yusuf bin Kombo claimed that he inherited a 150 acre plot from his father, who was the slave of a Bajun. The government allowed the claim but Malindi scuttlebut says that Yusuf had claimed his master's land after abolition. a/c 126D of 1914. A loan of \$1078 to Faraji, slave of Komboro bin Mwenye Uvi, a Swahili of Mombasa, was the eighth largest transaction in a series of 566 deeds. 4B 1893.

Such property was often obtained by purchase from the slave's own savings, but occasionally, especially in the case of concubines, the plots were gifts of the master.⁸⁴ At least in theory, slaves could only sell land with the permission of their masters, but sometimes they even got away with selling their masters' land.⁸⁵

Slaves could also borrow money from Indian, Arab, or Swahili money-lenders, often mortgaging property as security. There are cases on record of a slave lending money to free men.⁸⁶ Most of these loans were small, but some deeds indicated that the slaves were conducting businesses of their own. Juma bin Nasib, slave of Salim bin Khamis Al-Mazrui borrowed \$504 from the Imperial British East Africa Company in 1892, repayable in one year, and mortgaged his shamba, three cows, and his dhow.⁸⁷ Not only was the amount of money much larger than most transactions made by free people, but the deed reveals that Juma owned a dhow and was undoubtedly involved in commerce. Another slave of the same master, Sihaba, borrowed \$30 plus 140 pounds of ivory, and later \$92 from two separate Indians.⁸⁸ Mbarak, a slave of Mbarak bin Said Bakshuwein and a dhow captain, borrowed

⁸⁴ a/c 88,89M of 1913 (Malindi); a/c 22 of 1922 (Mambrui); and 101A 1898, 54A 1906, Reg. (Mombasa).

⁸⁵ Opinion of the Qadi of Kenya, Sheikh Suliman bin Ali, filed with a/c 20N of 1915 (Mombasa).

⁸⁶ Hassan bin Ismail, from Kilwa, borrowed about \$10 from Abd Salam bin Athman, slave of Zaharan bin Sheikh, due in three months, and mortgaged his house in Mombasa. 97A 1904, Reg. See also 19B 1893 and 5B 1896.

⁸⁷ The deed is dated 1889, 151A 1892. Juma, slave of binti Ali binti Khamis Al-Mandhry, also owned a dhow. 122B 1899.

⁸⁸ 58A 1893; 56A 1893.

140 pounds of ivory and 70 pounds of giraffe horn from Salim bin Khalfan Al-Busaidi, mortgaging a house in Mombasa and a shamba outside of the city.⁸⁹ Juma bin Hamisi, slave of Sheikh Abdalla bin Sheikh Ahmed of Zanzibar, was appointed to be his master's agent and supervisor of his master's slaves at Mambrui. Meanwhile, he traded on his own account and accumulated much property.⁹⁰ Another slave appointed a free Swahili as his agent to collect fifteen pieces of ivory that were due him.⁹¹ The records also mention a partnership among a free person, a slave, and a freed slave. I have seen records of 13 transactions by this trio, together or individually. They borrowed money four times, in amounts varying from \$51 to \$375, mortgaging various mashamba, houses, daggers, and personal effects as collateral, and obtained financing for ivory deals on nine occasions, for quantities of ivory between one-half and ten frasilas (350 pounds). They obtained these loans from an assortment of Indians, Arabs, and Swahili.⁹²

The activities of these slave-entrepreneurs indicate the possibilities open to slaves, not a large-scale participation in business.

⁸⁹398A 1892. Johari, "servant" of an Arab, borrowed over 800 pounds of ivory. 200B 1897.

⁹⁰The master's son seized much of the property and was sued by Juma. The case was pending at the time the letter describing it was written, and the outcome is unknown. Weaver to Craufurd, 13 January 1899, CP/1/74/43.

⁹¹54B 1894. See also 152B 1899.

⁹²The three were named Rubea bin Juma, slave of the Kilifi tribe of the Mombasa Swahili, Fundi Khamis, freed slave of Ali bin Salim Al-Timami, and Masai bin Mtwana, a man from the coast of Tanzania, whose name suggests he might have been of slave origin himself. 2, 17, 141, 180, 207, 233, 234 B 1894; 5, 6, 9 B 1898; 11B 1899; 8, 238A 1894.

Table 23 shows the number of transactions that were executed by slaves, as compared with the total number of transactions recorded in the deed

TABLE 23: Transactions by Slaves, Mombasa, 1891-99

<u>Type of Transaction</u>	<u>Number Executed by Slaves</u>	<u>Total</u>
Buy urban property*	7	229
Buy <u>shamba</u> *	0	96
Sell urban property*	7	229
Sell <u>shamba</u> *	1	96
Borrow against property*	7	159
Borrow money--no collateral	12	323
Borrow ivory	17**	166

*Based on 20% sample of the A-series. Others based on the B-series, 100% sample.

**Includes all the ivory transactions of the trio mentioned in the text.

files from Mombasa. Overall, slaves were the sellers or debtors in 3.5% of the deeds filed in the A-series (involving land) and in 4.1% of the B-series deeds. They were buyers or creditors in 1.5% and 0.5% of the A- and B-series deeds respectively. The deed registers, however, probably underestimate the participation of slaves, for filing was haphazard during most of the 1890's, and slaves--whose transactions were generally small and who were far removed from the ways of the new colonial bureaucracy--were less likely to file than Arabs. Moreover, many transactions were probably between slaves and their own masters and would be handled informally. Nevertheless, the evidence that slaves could engage in economic activities on their own account and that some did so successfully should

not conceal an important fact: most slaves were poor.

The freedom to carry out transactions could not lead to capital accumulation by slave families since the property of a deceased slave passed to his master, not his own children or other relatives. A number of deeds and applications for land titles indicate that property was inherited this way in many specific instances.⁹³ So deeply engrained were these rules of inheritance, that over twenty years after the abolition of slave status ex-masters were still successfully claiming to be their former slaves' heirs.⁹⁴

These rules of inheritance could influence the ways masters thought best to profit from their slaves. Rashid bin Salim Al-Mazrui told government officials that he actually preferred to allow slaves to accumulate wealth by themselves without even paying a monthly or yearly ijara, and to collect their property only at their death. "We always encourage our slaves to go away and work for themselves in order that each may acquire estates; because according to the Sheria the property is ours."⁹⁵ Undoubtedly knowledge that they could not pass wealth on to their children would limit incentives for slaves to accumulate, but this way of exploiting slaves--when sufficient numbers were also growing produce under more closely controlled arrangements--appealed to the Mazrui. Their particularly

⁹³ Me'Twana bi Muombwa vs. Me'Mtwana bi Muombwa, Civil Case 430 of 1902, Town Magistrate's Court, Mombasa; Talib bin Mwenye Jaha wasi of Sud bin Muslim El-Kilindini vs. Mishi wa Abdulla, Civil Case 662 of 1911, Town Magistrate's Court, Mombasa; a/c 24 of 1923, 82D of 1914, 132M, 140M of 1913 (Malindi); a/c 42N of 1916 (Mombasa); and Reg., 42B 1896, 61B 1898, 83B 1899, 228A 1894.

⁹⁴ MSA 14.

⁹⁵ Rashid bin Salim to Hinde, 29 October 1908, CP/1/62/46; and notes on an interview with Rashid bin Salim, 1908, ibid.

strong desire to have a large dependent following on which to call for political and military support was consistent with this loose system of obtaining profits from a portion of their slaves.

Despite their legal disabilities and their poverty, slaves were able to buy and sell their own homes and farms as well as to engage in commerce. Their independence was sometimes sufficient that courts had difficulty, after abolition, in determining what property had legally been theirs and what had been their masters.⁹⁶

This section has presented evidence for both the persistence of slavery as an institution of dependence and the existence of substantial social and economic independence for slaves. The two elements appear contradictory, and in many slave systems they were. Jamaican slaves were able to live on their own and farm their own plots when their long hours of toil were over, but this largely reflected the indifference of the planters to any dimensions of their slaves' lives except the amount of work they did.⁹⁷ In the Southern United States, many of the aspects of dependence described on the East African coast--concern for material welfare, family formation, and patterns of deference--were present. Perhaps intentionally, this emphasis on dependence undermined slaves' chances to take care of themselves.⁹⁸ However, in East Africa dependence did not

⁹⁶ a/c 17, 19, 20, 24, 25, 41, 48 N of 1915 (Mombasa); Mohamed bin Mansur vs. Administer General of East Africa, Civil Cause 154 of 1917, Resident Magistrate's Court, Mombasa; Talib bin Mwenye Jaha, wasi of Sud bin Muslim vs. Mishi wa Abdulla Civil Cause 662 of 1911, Town Magistrate's Court, Mombasa. See also the cases cited in note 68 above.

⁹⁷ Patterson, p. 93. The irrelevance of paternalism to Jamaican society is also emphasized by Richard S. Dunn, Sugar and Slaves: The Rise of the Planter Class in the English West Indies, 1624-1713 (Chapel Hill: North Carolina U.P., 1972), p. 249.

imply total control over slaves' lives and independence did not imply indifference.

The differences between the essentially paternalistic slave regimes of the East African coast and the United States South have much to do with the fact that the two societies approached paternalism from different directions. As Genovese has repeatedly emphasized, the slaveowners of the Old South came from the most bourgeois society that then existed and paternalism developed on the plantation itself. In Arabia and East Africa, however, slavery had long existed in a society divided into kinship groups. Kinship was extended by the recruitment of clients and the purchase of slaves, so that the groups which were the focus of personal loyalty and political action were united by vertical ties. The masters' need for dependence arise more from the continued strength of these social and political values than from the need for social control which so deeply influenced the development of Southern paternalism.

Not only did Southern slaveowners lack this deeply rooted familiarity--strengthened by Islamic prescriptions--with the idea of slaves as dependent followers, but the forces of the market had a greater impact on them. Southern paternalism required particularly tight control because the incentives to make slaves work harder were greater and the repressive aspects of the system correspondingly stronger.⁹⁹ Dependence, as well as

⁹⁸ Eugene D. Genovese, "The Treatment of Slaves in Different Countries: Problems in the Applications of the Comparative Method," in Laura Foner and Eugene D. Genovese, eds., Slavery in the New World (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1969), p. 204.

⁹⁹ Genovese sees the origins of the particular form of paternalism found in the South during the nineteenth century in the simultaneous impingement on a patriarchal regime of an increasingly commercial orientation and the need to maintain the slave population after the closing of the slave trade. Eugene D. Genovese, The World the Slaveholders Made

coercion, were ways of controlling a population viewed as potentially dangerous. Because of its own agricultural development, East Africa--especially Pemba and Malindi--was moving in the same direction, but the levels of force and fear were both lower. To be sure, slaves had to be controlled, as the rate of escape indicates, but a relatively loose structure of social rewards and punishment was consistent with the degree of economic development. The older significance of dependence still applied. Dependence meant periodic demonstrations of respect and deference, displays of generosity to slaves, integration of slaves' families within the plantation system, and above all the presence, preferably on the master's property, of people whom the master could consider watu wangu, my people. The slaves would then provide the master with social rewards and be available for political and military support. This did not require the slaves' constant attention. There was no reason why slaves should not have had considerable opportunities to live among themselves, to enjoy their leisure as they chose, and to make the best of economic opportunities that did not interfere with the slave system.

Dependence had to be reconciled with the changing economic system, even if the limitations of Indian Ocean markets meant that its impact was less than it was in the Western world. At times, such a reconciliation was not complete. In Malindi, where the greatest demands for labor coincided with the weakest social system, and the readiest means of escape, many slaves refused to acquiesce to their life of hard labor and social inferiority. Their actions, however, forced the slaveowners to balance

(New York: Pantheon, 1969), pp. 98-9. The importance of dependence as social control did not eclipse the desire of slaves to develop their own forms of cultural expression. This theme is emphasized by Blassingame, Slave Community.

paternalism and the grain market, even if that meant that the fertile lands of Malindi would never realize their full potential to their owners. In Mombasa and Zanzibar, the congruence of social and economic objectives was more easily established. Much closer to subsistence farming than Western plantation societies, with returns from exports relatively modest, and with demands on slaves low for much of the year, it made economic sense for masters to keep dependents on their land who could care for themselves most of the year and be there when they were needed. In allowing their dependents a measure of personal liberty, East African slave-owners had a less substantial threat to fear and fewer profits to lose than their counterparts in the Southern United States.

Nevertheless, slavery in the newly developed plantation economy of East Africa was beset by contradictions and tensions. Important as the master-slave relationship was to social and political life, the demands on slaves as laborers were substantial, and the master's authority great. Some masters drove their slaves harder than others, and some slaves refused to accept their masters' version of paternalism while others tried to make the most out of the chances they had to live their own lives and preserve their sense of identity.

Manumission

Islam, like Christianity, was not entirely at ease with slavery.¹⁰⁰ The Koran restricted the circumstances under which slaves could be taken, and it encouraged masters to free their slaves. A heavenly reward was promised the master who freed his slaves. Manumission of slaves was

¹⁰⁰ Franz Rosenthal, The Muslim Concept of Freedom (Leiden: Brill, 1960), p. 29.

particularly encouraged as expiation of such offences as homicide, perjury, and some types of sexual misconduct. It was also a sign of gratitude, for recovery from an illness or other reasons.¹⁰¹ Manumission, however, was an especially pious act precisely because it was not required. Because slavery was basically accepted, the man who freed a slave was a man of exceptional piety.¹⁰² It was also desirable for masters to reach agreements with their slaves allowing them to earn their own freedom over a period of time.¹⁰³

The freed slave enjoyed the legal rights of the free born, although the former master remained his patron or guardian. Besides implying a continuation of the paternal relationships of slavery, guardianship meant that the ex-master was legally responsible to oversee the ex-slave's marriage arrangements.¹⁰⁴ Ex-slaves could keep and bequeath all the property

¹⁰¹ Charles Hamilton, The Hedaya, or Guide (London: Binsley, 1791), Vol. I, p. 420; Mazrui, p. 7; W. Arafat, "The Attitude of Islam to Slavery," The Islamic Quarterly, X (1966), p. 14.

¹⁰² As a result of this attitude towards manumission, coastal people had difficulty understanding the liberation of slaves by the colonial government. Since their masters had not freed them in accordance with Islamic law, the status of such slaves had changed only in terms of the foreign law. As the government paid masters compensation, most people understood what had happened as a purchase and referred to slaves who had been freed in this manner as "Slaves of the government" or "slaves of the Consul." See Hardinge to Kimberley, 20 February 1895, PP 1895, LXXI, 143, p. 30; and many deeds in the Mombasa registers referring to individuals in this way.

¹⁰³ Schacht, pp. 42-3.

¹⁰⁴ Guardianship, like the ownership of slaves, passed to the ex-master's heirs after his death. It was an even stronger relationship than clientage under Islamic law, for it could not be broken even if the ex-master so desired, whereas a patron could terminate a relationship with a client. Paul G. Forand, "The Relation of the Slave and the Client to the Master or Patron in Medieval Islam," International Journal of Middle East Studies, 2 (1971), pp. 64-6.

they acquired after they were freed, but the master was the legal heir in the absence of children or certain other categories of heirs.¹⁰⁵

In actual practice, a master had to consider several factors before freeing some of his slaves. The conflicting wishes are illustrated by the case of Zanzibar's largest slaveowner, the Sultan himself. Seyyid Said's will specified that at his death, all his slaves, male and female, should be freed, "excepting those who are at his plantations, for the sake of almighty God and in hope of His mercy." God's mercy was very much desired, but cloves could not be neglected. Each freed slave was allowed to keep whatever property he or she possessed, and in addition all concubines were given \$100 each, while other Ethiopian slaves of either sex received \$50 apiece. Certain Georgian and Ethiopian slaves were bequeathed the produce of one of the Sultan's plantations.¹⁰⁶ Seyyid Bargash freed a few slaves each year, and he too provided that at his death all his slaves--except those used in agriculture--be freed. They were allowed to keep their homes and personal possessions. In addition each of his town slaves, estimated to number 3000, was bequeathed \$10, and the 300 slaves in the army plus the 50 or 60 concubines got \$200 each. Six houses and seven mashamba were set aside to provide for the maintenance of the concubines.¹⁰⁷ These will contained many other provisions for aiding the

¹⁰⁵ As a result there were sometimes disputes over whether certain property had been acquired before or after the slave had been freed. Brunschvig, p. 30; Schacht, p. 133; Mazrui, p. 8. An example of such a dispute is Mohamed bin Mansur vs. Administrator General of East Africa, Civil Case 154 of 1917, Resident Magistrate's Court, Mombasa.

¹⁰⁶ Translation of the will of Seyyid Said in William M. Coghlan, "Proceedings connected with the Commission appointed by Government to investigate and report on the Disputes between the Rulers of Muscat and Zanzibar" (Bombay, 1861), Ind. Of., L/P+S/5/145, pp. 35-6. Emphasis added.

poor and providing for prayer and pilgrimages in the name of the deceased --manumission of slaves was part of a larger pattern of charity, but it stopped short of freeing the slaves who picked the cloves.

Like the Sultan, other masters freed slaves on certain occasions. There is no quantitative evidence on this subject, but most foreign observers insist that manumission was common. The English physician Christie and the German explorer Baumann said there was a large population of freed slaves in Zanzibar. A French visitor reported that first generation slaves were usually freed, and that it was rare for locally born slaves to die in servitude. Consul Pelly believed that 50% of the slaves landed in Zanzibar were eventually freed.¹⁰⁸ During a five month period in 1893, 700 voluntary manumissions were registered with the government. Even after slavery was abolished by the British and masters became eligible for compensation for slaves freed under government auspices, many masters in Zanzibar chose instead to free their slaves in the old manner and seek compensation in Heaven in lieu of compensation in rupees.¹⁰⁹ The most

¹⁰⁷ These figures are far from exact. Reichard, p. 475; Kirk to Derby, 27 April 1875, FOCP 2915, p. 152; Will of Seyyid Bargash, reported by Euan-Smith, 7 April 1888, Gray Papers, Cambridge University Library, Box 26; Euan-Smith to Salisbury, 31 May 1888, PP 1888, LXXIV, 255, p. 19. On the implementation of the will see Portal to Salisbury, 17 June 1889, FOCP 6010, p. 27.

¹⁰⁸ Christie, "Slavery," pp. 50-1; Baumann, Sansibar, p. 21; Germain, "Zanzibar," p. 547; Pelly to Forbes, 12 February 1862, Pelly Papers, FO 800/234.

¹⁰⁹ Rodd to Rosebery, 31 December 1893, PP 1895, LXXI, 143, p. 17. On Zanzibar island, 5,141 slaves were freed by the government between 1897 and 1907, while the government registered 5,468 slaves who had been freed by their masters. However, in Pemba 5,930 slaves were freed by the government and only 754 by their masters. The discrepancy may be accounted for by irregularities in registration, but it still suggests that the masters of Pemba, with their greater reliance on clove growing and plantation life, hung on more tenaciously to their slaves than their more cosmopolitan counterparts in Zanzibar. PP 1909, LVI, 581, p. 50.

important contrary view was that of Hamerton, writing at the time of the great expansion of the clove economy in the 1840's. Manumission, he wrote, was "of uncommon occurrence."¹¹⁰

The most frequent occasion for manumission was as a provision of the master's will. It was also commonly done as atonement for a false oath or other infraction, or else in gratitude for recovery from an illness. A trusted slave might be freed as a reward for his service. Concubines who had born a child were legally entitled to freedom on their master's death.¹¹¹ Freed slaves received a certificate from the qadi which they often wore in a small silver case around the neck.¹¹² Slaves sometimes made an agreement with their masters, binding on the master once he agreed to it, that the slave would be freed when a certain sum of money was paid to the master, although this was not a particularly common form of manumission.¹¹³

Freedom did not necessarily mean the end of dependence. The ex-master remained the ex-slave's guardian, and beyond that many slaves retained close personal ties with the former master. Trusted slaves who had been freed often remained in the service of the ex-master, and their

¹¹⁰Hamerton to Aberdeen, 2 January 1844, FO 54/6.

¹¹¹Christie, "Slavery," p. 46; Rigby, "Report," p. 334; Colomb, p. 373; Missionnaires d'Alger, A l'assaut des pays nègres (Paris: écoles d'orient, 1884), p. 55; Hardinge to Kimberley, 26 February 1895, PP 1895, LXXI, 143, p. 30.

¹¹²Rigby, "Report," pp. 330, 334; Devereux, pp. 107-8.

¹¹³Such a slave was called mukaltib. Colomb, p. 370; Hardinge to Kimberley, 26 February 1895, PP 1895, LXXI, 143, p. 30. Seyyid Said apparently issued a decree saying that all able bodied slaves could free themselves by paying their owner \$100, but this decree was ignored. Euan-Smith to Salisbury, 20 June 1890, FO 84/2062.

relationship remained one of clientage. Christie described this relationship as similar to that of an Arab of inferior family to one of high standing.¹¹⁴ By custom, landowners were expected to give their freed slaves an allotment of land to cultivate for their own benefit. Hardinge said that this was usually freehold, but other sources indicate that a portion of each estate was made into a wakf (an irrevocable, inalienable gift) for freed slaves to use. Such slaves were expected to perform an annual service for the ex-master, more as a token of dependence than as a source of labor.¹¹⁵

Such manumitted slaves remained attached, in a social sense, to their master's family. A special term was used for them--huru (pl. mahuru) or hadimu (pl. mahadimu).¹¹⁶ They were referred to by such names as "Rajab, freed slave of Bashir bin Salim El-Harhi," and were considered members of the tribe (El-Harhi in this case) of the master.¹¹⁷ The relationships implied continued deference on the part of the freed slave. He was expected to pay homage to the master or his next of kin at ceremonial occasions such as marriages and funerals. The ex-master retained the obligations

¹¹⁴Colomb, p. 373; Christie, "Slavery," p. 35.

¹¹⁵Hardinge to Salisbury, 24 March 1890, PP 1899, LXIII, 303, p. 28; "Report by Mr. Last respecting the working of the Decree in 1903," 23 May 1904, PP 1905, LVI, 551, p. 3; Fitzgerald, Travels, p. 525; Weidner, p. 27.

¹¹⁶Weidner, p. 26; Last, p. 3; Krapf, Suahili Dictionary, pp. 92, 104; Standard Dictionary, pp. 122, 138. A master might also refer to his slaves as his "watoto," children.

¹¹⁷This example is taken from a deed dated 1861, in which the widow of the above slave and another relative sold a house in lieu of debt. Translation in Gray Papers, Cambridge University Library, Box 28. See also, "Slavery Report for 1902 by Mr. Farler," FOCP 8177, pp. 106-7; Newman, Banani, pp. 32-3.

of guardian. He was supposed to arrange or approve a marriage for his ex-slave, help him if he became sick or indigent, obtain compensation in case of legal action, arrange for a funeral, and be his heir should none other be available.¹¹⁸ At times, ex-slaves continued to live in the household.¹¹⁹ In short, under Islamic law and Zanzibari customs, the freed slave was to remain a dependent--although freed from the burden of work --and the ex-master a protector.¹²⁰

Not all freed slaves remained so dependent, just as not all slaves had close personal relations with their masters. Many ex-slaves, either former residents of the town or people who migrated there, joined the pool of labor that worked in the port, went on caravans, and did odd jobs. They apparently lived in much the same manner as vibarua slaves, but would not have to turn over a large portion of their earnings to their masters. The more successful could accumulate enough capital to buy slaves themselves or go into trade.¹²¹

There is no quantitative evidence regarding the rate of manumission on the mainland any more than there is for the islands. However, a large number of deeds of freedom, wills mentioning slaves, and records of transactions involving freed slaves are in the registers in the Mombasa Land Office. These indicate that manumission was not a mere ideal but was

¹¹⁸Weidner, p. 26.

¹¹⁹Rodd to Rosebery, 31 December 1893, PP 1895, LXXI, 143, p. 17; Germain, "Zanzibar," p. 547.

¹²⁰Quass, p. 445.

¹²¹Speke, p. xxvii; Christie, Cholera, p. 308; Kirk to Salisbury, 8 January 1886, FOCP 5459, p. 293; Missionaires d'Alger, p. 55; Seward to Stanley, 15 March 1867, PP 1867-8, LXIV, 657, p. 107; Baumann, Sansibar, p. 21.

commonly put into effect on the coast. Some deeds of freedom read like this:

Rashid bin Ali bin Rashid ElManthirji declares that he has made free his slave named Athman of the Mnyassa tribe...in consideration to seek from the Most High God an Excellent reward in conformity with the saying of the Prophet... "whosoever frees a slave who is a believer, God has freed such a one from every calamity--the calamity of hellfire--to happiness and comfort"[No-one shall have power over Athman] except as guardian. (1903)

Hidaya binti Hoonzi Elchangamwe declares that she has freed her slaves Kijate and her daughter Mjakazi, irrevocably freed slaves at the date and time this document was drawn; the Liberator accepts from God that she will be placed in Paradise and no-one should interfere with them, and she has given them her shamba at Changamwe in the district of Mombasa. (1898)¹²²

These formulas, based on the saying of the Prophet, were repeated many times in deeds drawn up by Arabs, Swahili, and even freed slaves.¹²³

The files also contain several wills specifying that the master's slaves be freed on his death.¹²⁴ Perhaps the most revealing deed is that of the famous Mazrui leader, Mbaruk bin Rashid bin Salim, dated 1904. He ordered that three concubines be freed. Each was to be given a slave as a gift

¹²²57B 1903; 163A 1907, Reg.

¹²³One Arab woman in Mombasa freed fifteen slaves by one deed and four more in separate deeds. Some deeds mention that the freed slave was a concubine. 18-21B 1911; 25B and 17B 1911; 62B, 6B, 37B 1903; 5B, 14B, 20B, 49B, 86B 1904; 1B, 35B, 36B, 47B 1905; 15B, 30B, 37B, 49B 1907. (The deeds were filed on the above dates, but were generally written many years before.) The earliest deed that I have seen dates from 1871 and is filed with the case of Juma bin Farjalla vs. Abdalla bin Mohamed, Civil Cause 348 of 1911, Town Court, Mombasa. Slaves were freed by deed even after the legal abolition of the status of slavery in Kenya in 1907. See for example, 15B, 16B, 856A 1911 and 611A 1908.

¹²⁴29A 1893; 29B 1893; 56B 1899; 8B 1901.

from her departed master, while other heirs were to be given up to ten slaves each.¹²⁵ As a dependent person, a slave could be worthy of her master's generosity, but as property the slave could be the object of the master's generosity towards another person.

It was also possible for a slave to purchase his freedom. I have seen four deeds, dating from the first few years of the twentieth century, by which slaves purchased their freedom for between \$21 and \$41. In two other deeds, the slaves purchased their freedom and their personal property--which would otherwise be retained by the master--for \$75 and \$89.¹²⁶

The evidence of informants on manumission is not particularly revealing. Slaves could be freed on such occasions as a pilgrimage or a marriage. They were sometimes freed after having served their master well over a long time. It was also possible for slaves to ransom themselves, but some informants said this did not happen often.¹²⁷ Several of the ex-slaves in Malindi, however, stated emphatically that manumission was rare.¹²⁸ It is tempting to argue that Malindi, with its intensive agriculture, had a lower rate of manumission than Mombasa, where masters were less reliant on slave labor and more part of an established social order. In fact, the deeds of freedom cited above all come from Mombasa. As the records are much better in Mombasa than Malindi, this is far from conclusive.¹²⁹

¹²⁵ A copy of the will was shown to me by William McKay.

¹²⁶ 61B 1903; 58B 1906; 14B and 38B 1907; 582A 1906; and Mohamed bin Ali vs. Mboni binti Maftaha, High Court, Mombasa, 1914.

¹²⁷ MAL 5, 12, 18, 30, 40, 44; MSA 3, 14, 26, 28. See also Beech, "Slavery," p. 148.

¹²⁸ MAL 24, 34, 35. Another said that some masters freed their slaves and some did not. MAL 38.

As in Zanzibar, it was common for mainland masters to give their freed slaves some property or a present with which to start a new life. An Arab in Malindi referred to this custom as "uhuru na kitu," freedom with something.¹³⁰ Such gifts were specified in the freedom deed or will; Kashi binti Mwijaa Al-Changamwe, for example, gave her freed slave a shamba with 75 coconut trees worth \$69. Mohammed bin Isa Al-Imami gave his slave Ramathan his freedom, a boat, and three head of cattle. Ahmed bin Saleh Bathiris wrote in his will that his slaves Hidaya and Malka should be freed and given \$7 each on his death. In Malindi, the concubine of Salim Manini was freed and given a shamba of 5.14 acres.¹³¹ Sometimes, the deed specified that the freed slave would be given use of the property during his or her lifetime, but that it would revert to the master's family after the slave's death.¹³² Some masters devoted wakf land to their slaves. One of Salim bin Khalfan's largest plantations in Malindi was reserved for that purpose, and his will also specified that all his domestic slaves be freed and given \$10 "by way of reward at their freedom."¹³³

¹²⁹The Malindi land records from 1912-15 indicate that many freed slaves owned land, but it is not clear how many of them were freed by their masters rather than by the government.

¹³⁰MAL 18.

¹³¹1004A 1907; 15B 1911; 56B 1899; Reg., and a/c 195M of 1913 (Malindi).

¹³²20B 1904, Reg., a/c 5N of 1916 and 181N of 1915 (Mombasa); MSA 14.

¹³³Will dated 1891 filed with Probate and Administration Case 114 of 1920, now kept in High Court, Nairobi. On the shamba see MAL 5, 12, 32, 34. Juma Kengewa, MAL 34, whose parents were slaves of Salim bin Khalfan, was interviewed at his house on the shamba, which is occupied by a few descendants of slaves and many Giriama squatters. Said bin Hemed, Governor of Mambrui and Malindi, also provided a shamba for his ex-slaves. Translation of Arabic copy of the wakf deed dated 1904 in DC/MAL/4/1 in KNA. Gifts of houses and farms to freed slaves have also been recorded. 80A 1906 and 437A 1908, Reg.

Such generosity was not always the case--other deeds are on file by freed slaves renounced claims to certain property owned by their masters.¹³⁴

As in Zanzibar, many slaves remained in a dependent relationship on their former master after being freed. They were known as mahuru or as the maskini of their former master. Although the latter term literally meant poor people, it referred to their having been pitied and having received benefits from God.¹³⁵ Contemporary documents referred to ex-slaves as, for example, "Uledi, freed slave of Ali bin Mbarak" or "Uledi wa Ali bin Mbarak," implying (wa means of) that they remained part of their master's "people." Ex-slaves often returned to their former masters' houses for festivals or in times of trouble.¹³⁶ A few deeds record that ex-slaves went to their ex-masters for loans.¹³⁷ One gave his former master a power of attorney to act on his behalf, while another was given a power of attorney by his mistress to act for her.¹³⁸ The Mazrui were particularly interested in incorporating freed slaves into the large group of followers they had collected known as their jamaa or family. Both freed slaves

¹³⁴ 771A, 801A, 1076A, and 1211A 1911. The late date of these deeds may indicate a breakdown of dependency relations in the face of the government's abolition of slavery. Masters may have started to take their property right more literally.

¹³⁵ Beech, "Slavery," p. 149; New, Life, p. 56; MAL 18. The term is used in testimony in a/c 132N of 1913 (Mombasa).

¹³⁶ MAL 18; MSA 12.

¹³⁷ Ramathan, freed slave of Rashid bin Sood Shikeli borrowed \$118 from Rashid and mortgaged a shamba. 107A 1906, Reg. Amina, freed slave of Rashid bin Ali bin Mona El-Darani, borrowed \$22 from her ex-master and mortgaged a house. 353A 1899.

¹³⁸ Ironically, the latter ex-slave's task was to obtain compensation for his ex-mistress for her slaves who had been freed by the government. 180B 1898; 756A 1909.

of Mazrui and freed slaves from other places could be adopted into the jamaa. They, like other people in the area who were followers of the Mazrui, were given land for their own use and for the use of their heirs, subject only to the proviso that it could not be sold to someone outside the jamaa. They paid no rent, but would be expected to be loyal to the Mazrui.¹³⁹

Such ex-slaves would enjoy the continued protection of their ex-master. Especially in unsettled areas, such as the region north of Mombasa where the Mazrui and their followers periodically became embroiled in conflicts with the people of Mombasa and Mijikenda, the lack of a protector could have dire consequences. An African missionary of the Church Missionary Society near Mombasa reported that freed slaves who moved about in the area were sometimes re-enslaved by "strong ones."¹⁴⁰

Other slaves acquired more independence, particularly in the relatively safe areas near urban centers. Some purchased or rented town plots on which to live, and a number purchased mashamba with which to support themselves.¹⁴¹ The plots which they bought--like those which many were given by their ex-masters--were generally small, but some freed slaves managed to acquire substantial land. Akida, freed slave of a Swahili of Mombasa, bought a shamba with 87 coconut trees plus other fruit trees for \$240. Another sold a plantation for \$720, and a third bought two

¹³⁹ See the testimony inclosed in District Commissioner, Kwale to Provincial Commissioner, Coast, 27 June 1935, Land Office, Nairobi, file 30646.

¹⁴⁰ George David to Wright, 10 October 1878, CMS CA5/M5.

¹⁴¹ Seven transactions involving urban houses or house-plots are listed in the sample from the A-series register in Mombasa. Rentals were far more frequent. See Table 22.

mashamba, one with 70 coconut and 4 mango trees for \$141 and the other with 30 coconut and 3 mango trees for \$46.¹⁴² An enterprising slave bought a shamba for \$46 from his former master and sold it to an Indian a few months later for over \$240.¹⁴³

Other ex-slaves in the Mombasa area obtained access to land by receiving permission to cultivate land owned or controlled by others. The Nine Tribes of the Mombasa Swahili, who as noted in Chapter III had somewhat ill-defined rights to much land north of Mombasa, frequently gave outsiders permission to cultivate portions of it, and freed slaves could benefit from such arrangements.¹⁴⁴ Still other freed slaves went to work for traders. Kombo bin Karai, freed slave of Khamis bin Saad Al-Mandhry, was entrusted with \$464 worth of trade goods by a leading trader and money-lender named Rashid bin Ali bin Mona Al-Darani.¹⁴⁵ Jumaa, freed slave of a Swahili, seems to have traded on his own, for he mortgaged his house against a loan of 45 pounds of ivory worth \$115.¹⁴⁶ Freed slaves also owned slaves of their own.¹⁴⁷ However, independence did not mean an easy life. Analysis of the deed collections from Mombasa shows that share of freed slaves in land buying and sale, ivory deals, and obtaining

¹⁴² 607A 1908; 329A 1899; 1122A and 1123A 1907, Reg.

¹⁴³ 1187A 1907 and 397A 1908.

¹⁴⁴ Instances of this are described in a/c 28, 29, 30N of 1915 (Mombasa)

¹⁴⁵ 93B 1894, Reg. See also Krapf, "Memoir," CMS CA5/016/179, p. 50.

¹⁴⁶ 302A 1899.

¹⁴⁷ Freed slaves freed their slaves in deeds 37B 1903, 49B 1904, and 216A 1905. Another freed slave mortgaged two of his slaves plus a shamba for \$85 in 1890. 466A 1897.

loans was about the same as that of slaves--under 5% of all transactions registered.¹⁴⁸

The development of Malindi offered opportunities to ambitious freed slaves as well as to others. Many subsisted by farming or fishing; others came from distant parts of the coast to seek their fortunes in the readily available land of the Malindi area.¹⁴⁹ Mzee Juma Mja, freed slave of a Bajun of Lamu, came as a poor man to Mambrui and became a large-scale slaveowner and one of the wealthiest men of the town. He had mosques in Mambrui and Malindi constructed in his name--a sign of wealth and respectability in an Islamic society. People still tell stories, with several variations, about his conflict with Said bin Hemed Al-Busaidi, governor of Mambrui. Jealous of a man of lowly birth acquiring such riches, Said forbade Mzee Juma from allowing his slaves to hold the customary dances and celebrations after the clearing of new bush each year. Mzee Juma sent several dhows loaded with the produce of his fields to the Sultan of Zanzibar, along with a request for justice. The Sultan responded by giving him a letter insisting that the Governor give him equal treatment.¹⁵⁰ Similarly, Feruzi, an Ethiopian slave of the Sultan of Zanzibar, came to Malindi after being freed and became a wealthy slaveowner. He too built a mosque and is well remembered today.¹⁵¹ From questioning people today

¹⁴⁸ Freed slaves were the seller or debtor in 2.7% of the deeds in the A-series and 3.2% in the B-series. They were buyers or creditors only 0.2% and 0.4% of the time respectively. The breakdown of the types of transactions is virtually identical to that for slaves given in Table 23.

¹⁴⁹ MAL 50.

¹⁵⁰ MAL 12, 24, 36, 37, 38, 40, 44, 45, 46. Three plots, totalling 128 acres, were registered in the name of his daughter, a/c, Mambrui.

¹⁵¹ MAL 35 (son of a slave of Feruzi) and MAL 18, 30, 34. The mosque

about individuals like Mzee Juma and Feruzi, it is clear that they are among the more notable figures of Malindi's past. Yet while they are respected, especially for having built mosques, their servile origin has not been forgotten. An ex-slave, even a wealthy one, was not the same as a mwungwana.¹⁵²

It is certainly not difficult to find numerous examples of manumitted slaves in the Southern United States and other parts of the Western Hemisphere. It is also possible to find the opposite tendency--measures restraining masters from freeing their slaves even if they wanted to and restricting the legal, social and economic freedom of blacks who had supposedly been freed. Such measures were especially characteristic of the U.S. South in the nineteenth century, reflecting both increased fear of conspiracies between slaves and freedmen and inability to cope with the anomalous position of blacks who were outside their logical place in the social order.¹⁵³

In East Africa, despite the need to rely on impressionistic data, it would appear that manumission was a socially rewarded and common act. Some evidence--notably the Sultan's exclusion of agricultural slaves from his manumission of his own slaves--suggests that the commercial value

of Feruzi is mentioned in District Officer, Malindi, to Secretary of the Wakf Commission, 8 January 1934, MAL/2/1/ADM7/1, KNA. His property is also mentioned in a/c 3 of 1957, Malindi.

¹⁵² MAL 44, 45, 50.

¹⁵³ Ira Berlin, "Slaves Who Were Free: The Free Negro in the Upper South, 1776-1861," Ph.D. Dissertation, University of Wisconsin, 1970, pp. 192-205; Stamp, pp. 215-16. The situation regarding manumission was different in other parts of the hemisphere. See the classic study of Frank Tannenbaum, Slave and Citizen: The Negro in the Americas (New York: Knopf, 1946); and Cohen and Greene.

of slave-produced commodities undercut these social values. Still, manumission continued until the end of slavery, and even after the government freed the slaves, masters went on freeing them on their own.

The fact that relationships between ex-masters and their manumitted slaves often continued after freedom was a central reason for the prevalence of manumission. By freeing a slave the master lost his labor, but he did not lose the psychological, social, and political benefits of having dependent followers. Ex-slaves could still be considered "watu wangu," my people. By freeing people on his own free will, the master performed an act that was highly valued in Islamic ethics, besides making a public display of having sufficient wealth to afford to part with slaves and sufficient generosity to want to do so. Manumission was an integral part of slavery on the East African coast.

CONCLUSIONS: SLAVERY, CLASS, AND RACE ON THE EAST AFRICAN COAST

In all slave societies, slaves were simultaneously property that the master owned and people with whom he had personal relations. The emphasis on the two polarities varied from place to place. On the East African coast slaves were more important as economic objects than in most societies in Africa and more important as people than in the sugar islands of the Caribbean.¹ The East African coast was a paternalistic society, in which relationships were personal and where customs and laws defined the obligations that slaveowners and slaves had towards one another. It shared much with other paternalistic slave societies such as the United States South. That comparison is worth pursuing, for the extent of the similarities helps clarify the nature of the differences. In both cases, slaveowners expected more from their slaves than work and gave them more than the material necessities for survival. Paternalism was a mixed blessing, for the personal attention of the master required a personal response from the slaves. To benefit from the master's sense of obligation, slaves had to offer him subservience and deference as well as labor. Yet if paternalism defined slaves as socially inferior human beings, at

¹On a continuum with societies in which slaves were incorporated as kinsmen on one extreme and societies where slaves were regarded simply as laborers on the other, the East African coast was in the middle. See the Conclusions to Part I, p. 266.

least it defined them as human beings. Slaves came to grasp both their rights and their obligations and in the give and take of daily life had some chance to establish what they were.²

The paternalism of the East African coast resembled that of the Old South in several specific ways. In both cases, it existed within a plantation economy which created its own imperatives--hard work and efficient organization. In much of the Old South and in parts of East Africa, notably Malindi, the result was rigidly organized, closely-supervised labor. Personal bonds had to confront the depersonalizing tendency of a differentiated labor force. Paternalism was a compromise. Part of the compromise consisted of customary limits on the amount of work that slaves were obligated to do. Here an important quantitative difference emerges, even though it is not a difference in kind. Slaves on the East African coast, especially on clove and coconut plantations, did not have as hard or as continuous a work schedule as slaves in the cotton fields of the South, let alone sugar plantations elsewhere in the Americas. This was partly the result of the smaller labor requirements of East African plantation crops and partly the result of a less dynamic international market in the Indian Ocean.

In both the East African coast and the Old South, many aspects of life were governed by customary obligations. Laws and customs required the master to look after the material welfare of the slaves. That masters could violate these norms with legal impunity does not mean that they were insensitive to community standards. Again, a shade of difference

²As Eugene D. Genovese wrote, "By accepting dependency within a wider system of reciprocal obligations, the slaves learned to define their rights and responsibilities and to glimpse their worth as men and women." Roll, Jordan, Roll (forthcoming).

appears: Southern masters met their material obligations by providing food and housing directly to their slaves. Of course slaves supplied the necessary labor, but they did so under plantation discipline. In East Africa, masters provided individual slaves or families with the means to look after themselves. The master provided land and above all security, thereby creating a strong tie of dependence but one which allowed the slave a measure of self-reliance.

In the two societies, masters were aware of the importance of teaching their slaves the practices and values of their own society. However, on the East African coast acculturation was more complete. Distinct slave versions of Islam and the Swahili language did not emerge to the extent that distinct versions of Christianity and forms of speech did among American slaves. In both societies, acculturation was rewarded, and in East Africa distinct terms were used for the more acculturated slaves to emphasize their acceptance within coastal society. The closeness of the cultural bonds could have made East African paternalism even more destructive of the slaves' own cultures than was Southern paternalism but for the openness of Swahili culture to new inputs and the fact that many of the masters, themselves recent immigrants from Arabia, were being acculturated along with their slaves.

Both sets of slaveowners were concerned with the social life of slaves and with the propriety of their conduct. Despite many opinions to the contrary, the weight of the evidence suggests that masters encouraged family life and that the slaves themselves valued the experience of the nuclear family. Slaveowners took part in rituals that incorporated the slave family into the pattern of vertical bonds on the plantation, and they showed an interest in the long-term viability of the plantation

population; not just the short-term productivity of the work force.

Finally, slaveowners valued the symbolic element of the master-slave relationship. The obligations of the master towards his slaves were emphasized in feasts and other ceremonies which he provided. Slaves were obliged to show deference in the way they addressed their masters, and the masters, especially on the coast of East Africa, responded by referring to their slaves as "my people," or "my children."

These relationships were encouraged both by the intimate, semi-isolated nature of plantation society and by community standards. Not all masters responded to these norms. Masters were affected by diverse influences, from feelings of affection or anger to the desire to increase profits. The social importance of the master-slave relationship meant that the community as a whole was reluctant to intervene in care of violations of paternalistic norms.³ The master's belief in the reciprocal obligations of masters and slaves meant that refusal to work, running away, and rudeness were not just the natural reactions of a coerced labor force, but personal affronts. Masters often failed to understand that slaves did not look at paternalism in the same way they did. The kindest masters--in their own framework--in both societies could punish runaways or other malfactors in a harsh and vindictive manner. Confrontation between differing views of paternalism, between differing interpretations of mutual obligations, was inevitable, and "violence born of a sense of betrayal would become inseparable from paternalism itself."⁴

³ In East Africa, the community as a whole was unable to intervene because communal groups took care of their own affairs.

⁴ Genovese, Roll.

Recent interpretations of the behavior of slaves, in a justifiable reaction to earlier portrayals of slave docility, have emphasized that slaves achieved a sense of personal worth in the face of the dehumanizing and infantilizing tendencies of slavery by resisting or rebelling against their tormentors.⁵ Slaves in East Africa, as well as in the Southern United States, also resisted slavery. Some runaways--and flight was the most frequent form of resistance--probably fled masters who were violating their paternalistic obligations, while others found themselves unwilling to live under paternalism at all.⁶ The emphasis on resisters slights those who were able to eke out some of the satisfactions of life as well as a sense of personal accomplishment within the plantation system. As Genovese has observed, the accommodation of slaves to plantation life "represented a commitment, shared by most people, however oppressed, that a harsh and unjust social order is preferable to the insecurities of no order at all."⁷ Once slaves had been torn away from their kinsmen and homelands, their need for participation in a social order--even as inferiors--was great, for they needed protectors as well as companions. Slaves on the East African coast tried to use paternalism as a means to obtain the security they needed to live their own lives. They continually had to compromise with their masters' desire for labor and deference, but they were able to salvage a domain for themselves. On plantations, they

⁵ See for example Kenneth Stamp, The Peculiar Institution (New York: Vintage, 1956).

⁶ Many of the fugitives that fled to British ships near Pemba showed signs of severe beatings, but even in Mombasa, where slaves were loosely controlled, flight was frequent.

⁷ Genovese, Roll.

had their families, their own homes, their own land, and the chance to associate with other slaves. Many sought whatever opportunities were offered, such as a job in the cities, that would get them away from the confines of close and denigrating bonds. Most sought to establish a social life among their fellow slaves that was to an extent a rejection of the master's way of life. They enjoyed each other's company--the company of equals--and tried to preserve, create, or reinterpret cultural expressions that were distinctly their own. The term which East African slaves chose to call themselves is revealing: "Wanyasa." They did not define themselves by class (watumwa) or by race (watu weusi), but by origin. It was a new way of identifying themselves, for they came from diverse communal groups, but it showed that slaves still cared about where they came from, not just where they were. Such patterns of identification were antithetical to paternalism, for they forged bonds among slaves rather than between slaves and their master. East African slaveowners were more tolerant of this limited degree of independence than masters in the Old South, feeling less need for tight social control and having less ability to put it into effect. But even in the Southern United States, slaves were remarkably successful in turning the slave quarters into a domain of their own and finding their own modes of expression.⁸

The degree of independence--cultural, physical, and economic--was a major area of difference between slavery in the Southern United States and on the East African coast. On the coast, virtually all slaves, field hands as well as urban slaves, lived in unsupervised houses and could move about as they pleased, provided they did the required work. Slaves

⁸ See ibid., and John Blassingame, The Slave Community (New York: Oxford, 1972).

from different plantations could congregate together, and in Mombasa they sometimes lived in the same villages while their master stayed in town. They were able to make some money on their own, and a few became successful entrepreneurs. Such opportunities were not altogether lacking in the United States, but slaves who took advantage of them provoked much anxiety, and most Southern states passed laws that denied slaves the right to live on their own or move about except when on their master's business.

A second important difference was the willingness of Arab and Swahili slaveowners to arm their slaves. Some slaves were soldiers, and even field hands could be given arms in case of conflict. The difference reflected both the absence of fear that slaves would turn their arms against their masters and the greater need which slaveowners had for armed retainers. The United States South, with a central government, local governments, armies, and white militias, did not need the military services of slaves, and they were called on only in extreme desperation. Slaveowners kept prepared to fight their slaves, not each other. The reverse was true in East Africa. Central authorities were weak and conflict among communal groups--although diminished from the chronic feuds of eighteenth century Oman--was frequent enough so that each group had to be organized collectively for political, and possibly military, action.

Finally, the two areas differed in the way they regarded sexual relations between masters and their female slaves. Concubinage in East Africa was legal and the offspring legitimate. Southern masters did fornicate with their slaves--although not so often as Northern critics of slavery claimed--but such liaisons were taboo and the children that resulted were still slaves.⁹ These differences cannot be attributed to greater

sexual permissiveness in Islam as compared with Christianity, for the Koran made fornication punishable by death. The divergence came in the concepts of kinship that were written into Islamic law and still relevant to nineteenth century East Africa.¹⁰ Children added to the strength of the family and the communal group. This was not a calculation that a son would serve his father, for that required a long delay, but it stemmed from a belief that the family as a collectivity would be strengthened by expanding the range of members included within the system of patrilineal descent. Such a view was not relevant to the narrower concepts of kinship of Western societies.

In part, these differences originated in the plantation system itself, especially in the degree to which the plantation was affected by the imperatives of labor-intensive production for a capitalistic world market. As argued in Chapter VI, more effective social control was needed in the United States South because slaveowners were extracting more labor from their slaves. Fear of a reaction on the part of the repressed was far from paranoid. Social control did not just consist of force, but in structuring the daily lives of slaves around the master-slave relationship and the plantation order.

The differences also stem from the experiences and preconceptions of the slaveowners. In the United States South, slavery arose out of a

⁹ A recent study has shown that the extent of miscegenation on Southern plantations was less than had been believed. Robert William Fogel and Stanley L. Engerman, Time on the Cross: The Economics of American Negro Slavery (Boston: Little, Brown, 1974), pp. 131-34.

¹⁰ The Koranic provisions were more relevant to some Islamic societies than to others. Some discouraged having children by concubines by looking down on such children, despite their legal equality. See Ignaz Goldziher, Muslim Studies, trans. by C. R. Barber and S. M. Stern (Chicago: Aldine, 1967), pp. 120-21.

quest for agricultural labor, and this process created a strong association between the category of slave and menial labor performed under close supervision. Even when the complexity of the economy required slaves to be placed in positions where they had to act independently, such roles were thought of as exceptions. On the other hand plantation slavery in East Africa developed not out of a need for a new labor system but out of older forms of slavery. Slaves had long served as skilled artisans, political retainers, and concubines as well as laborers. Slaves who were in positions of trust, who engaged in business transactions on their own behalf, or who managed their own social lives did not contradict preconceptions about the slaves' role in society or their natural abilities. For the Southern slaveholder to admit that a slave was capable of being a businessman or a responsible head of a family was to admit that his view of society did not conform to reality.

The divergent paths which the two societies followed to plantation slavery left them with very different ideologies as well as role expectations. In the Southern United States, slaveowners came from the world's most advanced capitalist society. They came from a world in which corporate, organic social structures had broken down, which was ruled by a central government, and which had become largely secular and individualistic.¹¹ Southerners--in the context of the plantation itself--developed ideas of hierarchy and organic society that were distinctly non-bourgeois, but they had to overcome not only elements of their own heritage, but the bourgeois world in which they lived: the demands of a competitive market

¹¹The seigneurial nature of European society at an earlier date provided some models for dealing with a dependent labor force, but seigneurialism was far weaker in England than in Iberian societies at the time of plantation development.

and the contradictions of an aristocratic ideology in a democratic political system.

Genovese makes it clear that Southerners were not all guilt-stricken people who knew, in the recesses of their souls, that slavery was wrong. On the contrary, they developed an ideology that asserted the superiority of their patriarchal system to the crass materialism and competitive individualism of the North.¹² However, it was difficult for Southerners to conceptualize the place of the slave in terms of a social hierarchy. To argue that society was organized on hierarchical principles, in which each social class had its place, made sense in terms of relationships on the plantation and even in the relations of large-scale planters to the poor whites of the neighborhood. But it did not make sense politically. The liberal political ideals of the United States were not wholly absent in its Southern states, and in the nineteenth century the participation of poor whites in politics was expanding. If the economically and socially dominant planters were also to be dominant politically, they needed the support of the lower echelons of the hierarchy. Poor whites were not likely to be attracted to a political philosophy that told them that they were inferiors. Coming at a time when the cotton boom made slaves more essential than ever and when, after the 1830's, abolitionists were challenging slaveholders on political and moral grounds, the need to reconcile bourgeois political concepts with a pre-bourgeois plantation system was acute. This was not the only factor shaping Southern racism, but it encouraged the development of an ideology of domination based on race rather

¹² See in particular, Genovese's discussion of Fitzhugh in The World the Slaveholders Made (New York: Pantheon, 1969).

than hierarchy.¹³ In short, the complications of viewing slaves as social inferiors helped push their masters to regard them as racial inferiors.

In contrast, bourgeois conceptions of man as an individual with no fixed place in a social order were foreign to Omani and Swahili political ideas. Politics was based on a combination of kinship and patrimonialism, on the solidarity of kinsmen extended by the recruitment of personal followers. Loyalty to the communal group was the most important political value, and the structure of the group was patriarchal. The master-slave relationship was part of a wider hierarchy. Islam reinforced the belief that slaves had a definite place in the social order, with rights as well as obligations. The master's responsibility to his slaves was not solely a matter of interdependence within a communal group, but of obedience to the will of God. Islam went beyond communalism, reinforcing dependent relationships by reference to the standards of the wider Muslim community.

The congruence of ideology and long-standing social practices meant that the notion of slaves as socially inferior dependents was deeply ingrained. This ideology equipped masters to understand why their slaves would acquiesce to a system that defined them as inferiors, without having to postulate that slaves were different sorts of individuals from their masters. The world was hierarchical, and the fact that particular individuals were on the bottom and others on the top was God's will. It was

¹³ George M. Fredrickson, The Black Image in the White Mind: The Debate on Afro-American Character and Destiny, 1817-1914 (New York: Harper, 1972), esp. Chapter II. See also Winthrop D. Jordan, White Over Black: American Attitudes towards the Negro, 1550-1812 (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1968).

not just a matter of Islamic fatalism but an accurate understanding of social and political reality. In a world divided into communal groups, the only way for a slave to participate in society--to survive even--was to have a protector. The self-image of the master as protector was not just a rationale for exploitation; it was--from the slave's point of view--all too true. Masters did not need to believe that slaves really felt like a member of the family, only that--in the absence of their own kinship groups--slaves needed a place in the social order on the only terms available. Masters did not neglect the need for certain types of social control--from giving slaves an economic stake in the plantation to using punishment--but their perception of the social and political order made it possible to allow their slaves a substantial degree of freedom, trusting that their need for dependence would keep them loyal. Furthermore, the confidence that the slave knew his place was derived from social considerations, not a belief that slaves were inherently stupid, lazy, or irresponsible. To allow them to act independently did not contradict any concepts of slaves' natural ability.

In the Old South, slaveowners did not have as clear a view of the slave as a social dependent, for dependence was not as fundamental a part of the political ideology. The need to find satisfactory rationales for slavery reinforced the tendency to see slaves only in the role of menial laborer. Two contradictory stereotypes became important to slaveowners' views of their slaves. One was the slave as a "Sambo," naturally docile and childlike. Southerners needed this stereotype because the alternative was too threatening--the slave as a rebel, a potential Nat Turner kept in check only by plantation discipline.¹⁴ The first stereotype

¹⁴On these stereotypes, see Blassingame, pp. 139-41.

implied that slaves could not function without the structure of the plantation, and the second that such a structure was a vital necessity. The extreme reaction of Southerners to the incidents of rebellion that did occur reflected not only the higher levels of physical repression in the society, but also the difficulty in understanding why slaves did not rebel.

The most important influence of Islam on East African paternalism was the way it reinforced the social and political structure. However, Islam was a religion of the book, as local people call it, and therefore brought fixed positions on certain matters to a changing society. Moreover, Islamic societies did not separate religion and law, which added to the impact of Islamic norms. The laws and traditions of Islam had much more to tell masters about how they should treat their slaves than did Christianity. To be sure, the seigneurial traditions of Europe provided some guidance on the treatment of inferiors, but slave codes were mainly written by planters themselves and very largely in response to the need for social control.¹⁵ Islamic law was not written by planters, and it was developed at a time when slavery was even more an institution of dependence than in nineteenth century East Africa. Law derived from the Koran, not the will of a legislature, and although laws could be extended and interpreted, its basic substance could not be altered to suit a changing economy. Islamic law had the most to say about the social position of slaves--rules relating to concubinage, marriage, and inheritance.

¹⁵ Genovese, Roll; and Elsa Goveia, "The West Indian Slave Laws of the Eighteenth Century," in Laura Foner and Eugene D. Genovese, eds., Slavery in the New World: A Reader in Comparative History (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1969), pp. 113-37. The Iberian situation was intermediate, owing to the long experience of Spanish and Portuguese with slavery and the role of the Crown in formulating slave codes.

These provisions served as a defense--although certainly not an absolute one--against the eroding force of profits.

At the same time that the Koran tried to guarantee the rights of slaves, it clearly stated that slavery as an institution was morally acceptable. Some twentieth-century Muslim apologists have argued that Islam was a step towards the abolition of slavery, as practiced in pre-Islamic times, since it restricted the conditions under which slaves could be taken, provided ways in which they could be freed, and protected their welfare.¹⁶ While the provisions of Islamic law were in fact designed to impose community standards on the treatment of slaves, the voluminous provisions of the law made slavery an entrenched institution. The apologists, in their eagerness to associate Islam with trends in European history, reversed what might have been their strongest argument--that the security of slaveholders, their confidence in the rectitude of the slave system, allowed them to take steps to improve the conditions of their slaves. Less secure slaveholders might have regarded amelioration as a threat to the entire system. Societies that generated political movements which questioned the fundamentals of the institution of slavery also went the furthest to restrict the rights of slaves. Islamic societies developed no abolition movements, and the absence of attacks on the basic assumptions of the slaveowners may have contributed to the development of strong legal provisions guaranteeing the rights of slaves and to the willingness of slaveholders to allow their slaves a significant amount

¹⁶ One such apology was written in Swahili by a descendant of a leading slaveowning family from the coast of Kenya, and a distinguished legal scholar. Muhammad Kasim Mazrui, Historia ya Utumwa Katika Uislamu Na Dini Nyengine (Nairobi: Islamic Foundation, 1970).

of personal living space.

Differing versions of paternalism were shaped not only by the economic, social, political, and ethical factors which determined the masters' demands on slaves and their perception of slaves' roles, but also by the balance of forces between slaves and masters. In East Africa, the forces of repression were weak in comparison with those of Western societies. Police forces were lacking, armies weak, and bureaucracy nonexistent. In the United States, planters controlled legislatures, police forces, militias, and law courts, and could count on the support of non-slaveholding whites against black runaways or rebels. Planters, as a class, were equipped to take forceful measures to control slaves, as a class, and could count on the help of whites, as a race, to maintain order among blacks, as a race. This was not true on the East African coast. Even in an Arab Sultanate, the institutions of the Arabs were so weak and the divisions among them so deep that they could hardly mobilize as a collectivity even if they had occasion to do so. Control was based on the patriarchal structure of communal groups rather than on class or racial domination. The government could be of some help--for example in temporarily imprisoning slaves--but was not even capable of making a serious attempt to recapture watoro. The weakness of the forces of repression gave slaves some scope to insist that masters live up to their patriarchal ideals. If discipline depended on patriarchy and if the patriarch depended politically, at least in part, on his slave-retainers, it was difficult to apply coercion to slaves as a group, although perfectly possible to punish individuals. It would be hard, for example, for a master to change the customary work week, but not especially difficult for him to punish an individual who was shirking his duties. Slaves did not take advantage

of the collective weakness of their masters to overthrow them because it was far easier to escape if things came to that, and more fundamentally, because of their own failure to develop class ties, a point which will be discussed below. The sanction of escape gave them some ability to defend their conception of the reciprocal obligations of master and slave, to insist on opportunities to exercise personal independence, and to protect customs against the encroachment of an expanding economy. The relative weakness of the instruments of repression forced masters to pay close attention to such bonds with their slaves as land and security, offsetting the depersonalizing tendencies of the market. It is essential to remember that the slaves' desire for some personal independence was not inconsistent with the masters' needs and that the masters were able to look upon whatever concessions they made to their slaves as the generous actions of a Muslim patriarch. The importance of escape in restraining the masters was particularly great in Malindi, where the abundance of land, crops that required year-round labor, and buoyant prices made the intensity of slave labor the key determinant of profits. The balance of forces did not always work out neatly, but slaves had some control in defining the limits of their masters' control over them.

The variations in paternalism between the East African coast and the United States South arose from the process of plantation development, from the way in which the tendencies and counter-tendencies generated by markets, previous experiences of the slaveholders, social structure, political organization, religion, ideology, and the plantation environment itself reinforced and undercut each other.

Not only did the wider context affect the way slavery developed, but slavery in turn influenced the nature of society. Americans are

familiar with the implications of slavery to the creation of racial and class divisions in society. Complex as this process was and varied as the interpretations are, plantation slavery in the Western Hemisphere had a profound influence on the way society was divided into groups. Race and class, except, at times, along the boundaries, reinforced one another. White slaveowners were on top, white non-slaveowners beneath them, and slaves and their descendants on the bottom. Some societies recognized status distinctions (e.g. between blacks and mulattoes) within the last category, while others did not. The personal relationship between masters and slaves crossed these lines, but in virtually all societies in the Western Hemisphere, slaveowners had a strong feeling of class consciousness. They sensed the uniqueness of their way of life and were capable of collective action against threats from outside or below.

These tendencies were not altogether absent from East Africa. As agriculture expanded, most slaves became agricultural workers, and slave status came to be associated with menial labor, despite the numerous exceptions to this rule. Most of the slaves were black, so blackness came to coincide, approximately, with slave status, even though brownness was not incompatible with elite status. Distinctions were made between free and slave, between light and dark. These distinctions were blurred, but more important than that was the fact that they did not coincide with the social and political divisions of society, with the ways people associated with one another for companionship and political action.

In Part I, I argued that Omanis, although they became planters, did not constitute a planter class. The importance of the plantation economy to the material basis of the elite and of plantation society to defining status was not sufficient for them to be described in that precise

category. The central status division of society was not in terms of any one type of productive unit but in terms of the master-slave relationship in general. In the conceptual framework of the people themselves, society was divided into the free born, waungwana, and slaves and their descendants, whether watumwa, wakulia, wazalia, or mahuru.¹⁷ This distinction existed in law, for slave was a legal category, and in the way people described society.¹⁸ It was firmly rooted in access to the means of production, for the number of slaves one owned was a main determinant of wealth.¹⁹ It was fundamental to social life. Even after a person's legal status changed from slave to freed slave, he remained a dependent. Although the master-slave relationship was part of a wider network of relationships of superior to subordinate, the slave was set apart in the most clearly defined way and with the least chance for mobility. He could not become a mwungwana, nor could his descendants.²⁰ The importance of this distinc-

¹⁷ A mwungwana was someone free of slave descent in the male line. On these terms, see Chapter VI, p. 366.

¹⁸ The importance of this distinction in the nineteenth century is emphasized by Charles New, Life, Wanderings and Labour in Eastern Africa (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1873), p. 56; and Jerome Becker, La Vie En Afrique ou Trois Ans Dans l'Afrique Centrale (Paris: Lebègue, 1887), Vol. I, p. 23. On the use of these terms in Swahili literature, see Jan Knappert, "Social and Moral Concepts in Swahili Islamic Literature," Africa, 40 (1970), pp. 128-9.

¹⁹ The distinction was not absolute, for slaves could own slaves. Not many slaves or freed slaves became wealthy. For more on wealth and status, see Chapters II and III.

²⁰ For waugwana, many factors determined status, including age, family, length of time one had been a "coastal person," and so on. Many of these factors could be overcome with time. Even clients of relatively low origin, could be absorbed into a family over one or more generations. Slaves and their descendants--in the patrilineal line--could not become waungwana.

tion to social relations can be seen in regards to marriage, the testing grounds of social status in many Islamic societies. A woman, under the doctrine of kafa'a, could only marry a man of equal or higher status. A mwungwana woman could only marry a mwungwana man. A mwungwana man could marry a mwungwana woman, of equal or lower status, or else marry a freed slave, or take slave concubines. The first was preferred, but the others were legal and common.²¹ So strong was this rule that anthropologists studying coastal villages some 40 years after the abolition of slavery in Kenya found few exceptions to it.²²

Freeman and slave were social categories, but they did not define social and political associations. The master-slave relationship involved close day-to-day contact and affiliation in a corporate communal group that thought of itself as a unit and acted as one. Waungwana, especially in an urban setting where visiting and hospitality were highly valued, developed close contacts among one another, but in a rural setting with poor transportation contact was difficult. As in the Southern United States, the growth of plantations increased the intimacy of inter-class contact in comparison with intra-class ties. More important still were the political divisions of society. Masters and slaves depended on each other for support and protection. When conflict erupted, it was generally along communal lines. Slaves participated along with their masters, their

²¹As a result, slave women had more chance for mobility than slave men. Under certain circumstances their children could be waungwana, while the children of slave men could not be.

²²G. E. T. Wijeyewardene, "Some Aspects of Village Solidarity in Ki-Swahili Speaking Communities of Kenya and Tanganyika," Ph.D. Dissertation, Cambridge University, 1961, pp. 192-94; and Janet Bujra, "An Anthropological Study of Political Action in a Bajuni Village, Kenya," Ph.D. Dissertation, University of London, 1968, p. 111.

masters' kinsmen, and clients. The phrase "watu wangu," "my people," was not used to refer to members of one's own status group, but to one's dependents.²³ The closest bonds, personal and political, were not between peers, for they were potential rivals, but between superiors and inferiors.

Despite the evidence that slaves often rejected many aspects of these paternalistic relationships, they generally regarded themselves as members of their masters' communal groups. Most obviously, they fought for them. More subtly, they internalized their masters' historical traditions. Children of slaves who were questioned about the history of Malindi invariably gave the version of their parents' masters. Finally, the slaves who rejected plantation paternalism by running away convincingly demonstrated the importance of communalism. They either joined the entourage of a powerful protector or tried to form their own communities. The raids and kidnapping in which they engaged demonstrated that they regarded the entire plantation community, including their fellow slaves, as enemies. The bonds of communal groups were more powerful than the bonds of class. This is not to deny that slaves felt a sense of solidarity among themselves, for they clearly did. I only wish to stress the functional importance of communal groups. They were the boundaries of personal associations and political action.

If the corporate groups that were the principal foci of political relationships, a sense of identity, and networks of personal contacts did not divide along lines of status, they did not divide along lines of race either. A communal group, such as the Mazrui, included Arabs, black slaves, black freed slaves, and clients--who were mostly Muslim

²³The term jamaa (loosely meaning extended family) also included slaves and freed slaves.

converts from neighboring African peoples. Secondly, even though most slaves--except for the concubines and special servants of the very rich--were black, waungwana were not all Arabs and not necessarily light-skinned. Swahili, whether Bajuni, Washella, members of the Twelve Tribes, Wapemba, or Wahadimu, were waungwana, but they were a distinct ethnic group from Arabs and ranged in color from brown to black.²⁴ Finally, even Arabs could have dark skins and negroid features, since the children of Arabs by black concubines were full-fledged Arabs. Being a mwungwana member of a particular communal group was not a matter of skin color but of patrilineal descent. Physical features correlated poorly with either status--freeborn or slave descent--or communal group.

The fact that color did not coincide with group boundaries does not mean that the slaveowners of East Africa were lacking in prejudice against blacks. There is very concrete evidence to the contrary: the lighter a slave's skin, the higher his or her price on the Zanzibar slave market. One can also find suggestions in Swahili proverbs that slaves were looked upon as inherently inferior, even though this violated the spirit of the Koran.²⁵ The combination of blacks' physical distinctiveness

²⁴Beyond the specific communal groups were broader affiliations, for example Omanis as a whole, or Swahili as a whole. These groupings were looser. For example, the Swahili of Mombasa did unite to form confederations, but their unity was often shallow. Omanis in Mombasa looked to the Governor as their leader, but the Mazrui rejected the Al-Busaidi representatives. See Chapter III. The British distorted the pattern of identification by dealing with groups on the basis of race, distinguishing between Africans ("natives") and Arabs ("non-natives"). Placing the Swahili in such a scheme was arbitrary.

²⁵One proverb read, "The Cat is never satisfied with rice; her quest is rats," implying that slaves--the intended reference--were naturally base creatures who could not appreciate the finer things of life. W. E. Taylor, African Aphorisms or Saws from Swahili-Land (London: Sheldon, 1891, repr. 1924), No. 449. Today, many Arabs make disparaging remarks

with the tendency, indecisive as it was, for blacks to be placed in menial roles, helped create such attitudes.²⁶ There is, however, a fundamental difference between color prejudice--negative reactions to people's physical difference--and racism, an ideology of domination based on the belief that such differences render the subordinate group inferior. Prejudice was never formalized into a doctrine largely because concepts of social organization and power were centered around patriarchal communal groups, and because the correlation of color with other types of divisions --such as status or occupation--was so unclear.²⁷ The religious and cultural affinities of all coastal people, regardless of origins, status, or color also helped prevent the crystalization of differences along racial lines, while the economic system did not push people into differentiated roles to the same extent as did the economies of the New World. The incorporation of slaves--with strict inequality--into communal groups strengthened these groups instead of giving rise to new ones defined by race or class.²⁸

about "Waafrika," but it is important to note that such views are based largely on origins, culture, and religion, not just color. See also J. Bujra, pp. 101, 112.

²⁶ On attitudes towards color in the Islamic world generally, see Bernard Lewis, Race and Color in Islam (New York: Harper, 1971). Lewis's book is to a large extent a tu quoque argument, showing that Islamic, not just Christian, societies, could be prejudiced, but failing to show the significance of prejudice to social structure.

²⁷ In the Near East, religious and ethnic affiliations were also the most important divisions of society, even where color distinctions were recognized. Albert Hourani, "Race and Related Ideas in the Near East," in Melvin M. Tumin, ed., Comparative Perspectives on Race Relations (Boston: Little, Brown, 1969), pp. 162-63.

²⁸ Class and racial divisions became salient in the twentieth century on the East African coast, particularly in Zanzibar. Communal-

The origins, nature, and impact of paternalism on the East African coast differed substantially from that of the Southern United States. It is well to remember, however, that in the blend of personal and impersonal dimensions of slavery in both regions, inequality was the fundamental premise. Whether a master called his slave "son" or "boy," he was not a son. He or his ancestors had been wrenched away from his family, from people whom he considered his own, and offered the consolation of life as an inferior and as a dependent. However much the master valued his slaves as people and as followers, he was also a plantation owner whose profits derived from the labor of his slaves. Behind the security, personal ties, and social rewards of plantation life lay the sanction of force. The East African coast shared with all other paternalistic slave societies the single most important feature of paternalism--domination.

solidarity remained important, but as the older political structure was replaced by a central state and as Africans and Arabs began to compete for control of this structure, new tensions emerged. The legacy of the nineteenth century was important, especially the presence of a landowning Arab elite in Zanzibar, but the political and social changes of the twentieth century largely shaped the nature of the conflicts. See Michael Lofchie, Zanzibar: Background to Revolution (Princeton: Princeton U.P., 1965).

APPENDIXES AND
BIBLIOGRAPHY

APPENDIX A: DRAMATIS PERSONAE

Sultans of Muscat and Zanzibar

Said bin Sultan, ruled 1806-56

In 1856, the Sultanate was divided between Muscat and Zanzibar. Said bin Sultan was followed by four of his sons in Zanzibar:

Majid, 1856-70
Bargash, 1870-88
Khalifa, 1888-90
Ali, 1890-93

Political Agents and Consuls-General of the British Government in Zanzibar

Lieutenant-Colonel Atikins Hamerton, 1841-57
Lieutenant-Colonel C. P. Rigby, 1858-61
Sir Lewis Pelly, 1862 (acting)
Colonel R. L. Playfair, 1863-65
Mr. H. A. Churchill, 1866-70
Sir John Kirk, 1870-86
Sir Claude McDonald, 1887-88
Sir Charles Euan-Smith, 1889-91
Sir Gerald Portal, 1891-92
Sir Rennell Rodd, 1893
Sir Arthur Hardinge, 1894-1900

Information for both lists is taken from Sir Reginald Coupland, The Exploitation of East Africa 1856-1890: The Slave Trade and the Scramble (London: Faber and Faber, 1939); and F. B. Pearce, Zanzibar: The Island Metropolis of Eastern Africa (London: Unwin, 1920), p. 276.

APPENDIX B: NOTES ON SOURCES

I. European Sources

A glance at the bibliography of a monograph on slavery in the Americas is enough to turn the Africanist green with envy. The plantation records, slave narratives, census materials, probate files, and numerous other sources that provide insight into the minds of slaves and slaveowners, as well as the organization and operations of plantations, are not available in East Africa. One must build up a convincing analysis from widely disparate pieces of evidence, each of which has weaknesses, or else give up.

The only written records of the ideas and attitudes of slaveowners and slaves come from statements made to Europeans or accounts written under European auspices.¹ To obtain local perspectives, one has to use oral sources, which pose problems that are discussed in Section III. The only quantitative evidence, besides the deed files described in Section II, are offhand estimates of European visitors and figures derived from customs records. The former, such as estimates of the number of

¹The one useful narrative by a Zanzibari slave is "The Story of Rashid bin Hassani of the Bisa Tribe, Northern Rhodesia," recorded by W. F. Baldock and published in Margery Perham, ed., Ten Africans (London: Faber and Faber, 1963), pp. 81-119. Other similar material comes from people who were taken off slave dhows before they reached the plantations. The best of these is James Juma Mbotela, The Freeing of the Slaves in East Africa (London: Evans Brothers, 1956).

slaves in the illicit slave trade or population figures, are simply guesses, and the numbers are little more precise than frankly impressionistic words like "few" or "many." The latter statistics are more reliable, for the customs masters in Zanzibar and other ports did keep records. However, the customs master paid an agreed-upon rental to the Sultan in exchange for the right to keep the duties he collected, and an underestimate would serve him well in negotiating a new contract. Smuggling was also rampant. Foreign consuls often tried to check these figures against the records of European firms before reporting to their governments, so estimates derived from customs figures often vary. Trading statistics, for reasons cited above, are generally low, and they also simply ignore a great deal of petty trading. The figures for slave imports, clove exports, and overall volume of trade should be taken as only a rough indication of the magnitude and direction of commerce.

The bulk of the written evidence consists of letters, reports, and books by consuls, missionaries, and other European residents of Zanzibar and the mainland coast, as well as accounts by explorers, traders, naval officers, and others who were there for shorter periods. A few caveats should be made about such evidence. What a person sees depends on his values and expectations as well as what is before his eyes. The word slavery by itself creates images of methodical exploitation and wanton cruelty. When observers failed to see whips and chains in constant use, they may have overreacted and decided that slavery was surprisingly mild. On the other hand, most of the visitors to East Africa were Christians and many were strongly anti-Muslim. They had little sympathy for the slaveowners and were aware of the propaganda value of stories of severe mistreatment. Some sources, like Charles New, were true to form, but

others gave more cautious accounts and differentiated, for example, between the treatment of slaves in different parts of East Africa. Then again, the specific question of slavery in East Africa was viewed, especially in England, in the context of a long-standing controversy over slavery. Most of the evidence comes from the period between the 1840's and the 1890's. If British anti-slavery sentiment, especially after the 1860's, was strong, there was also a reaction against it and considerable hostility to the evangelicals who had done much to popularize the cause of anti-slavery. More simply, not all visitors to East Africa understood Swahili and most had a dim idea of how to analyze a strange culture. Moreover, visitors usually stayed in towns and visited plantations only occasionally, most likely as a guest of the owner.²

In general, the best sources are those which provide not overall impressions but accounts of specific incidents and observations. The social historian is nevertheless dependent on the ability of eyewitnesses as social observers. The most trustworthy are usually people who do not perform according to expectations or do not fit neatly in any mold. For example, the best accounts of the 1840's, when agriculture and the role of slave labor was being transformed, come from two French naval officers, Captains Guillain and Loarer, who were sent to the coast to assess its commercial possibilities. Lacking the British concern with the slave trade, seeking to understand the economy, these two dispassionate and probing observers provide a wealth of information on economic and social change at a crucial time. In the 1870's, the best source on Zanzibar

²I am indebted to David Brion Davis, C. Duncan Rice, John Blassingame, and Emilia Viotti da Costa for pointing out to me some of the hazards of using travel accounts for research on slavery in the Americas.

was a British physician working there between 1865 and 1874, James Christie. His Cholera Epidemics in East Africa is a remarkable work of medical sociology. Seeking to trace the course of epidemics, he realized the importance of sanitation and living arrangements, which led him to make a thorough scientific investigation of Zanzibari society. His work is sensitive and subtle. In the same mold is W. W. A. Fitzgerald, who conducted a survey of agriculture on both the mainland and the islands in 1891. His attention was focused on plantation organization and on the details of crops, farming techniques, plantation layout, and labor usage. Although not trained like a modern anthropologist, he must be considered a scientific investigator.

If these observers are notable for their relatively detached approach, others are notable for the extent and depth of their experience. Atkins Hamerton and John Kirk served the British government in Zanzibar from 1841 to 1857 and 1866 to 1886 respectively. They represented British interests, dealt constantly with the Sultan and other leading Arabs, and so saw things from a particular point of view. Both men wanted to maintain a state of order that would be conducive to British trading interests, which made them reluctant to question deeply the status quo. However, Kirk, for political as well as humanitarian reasons, worked to check the slave trade. His feelings, combined with the need to provide evidence to justify British intervention against slave traders, sharpened his criticism, but he kept it within bounds. Both Hamerton and Kirk are most valuable for the details they provide about economic trends, the ups and downs of the slave trade, and many aspects of slave life. Their prejudices are often beneath the surface, and their more general statements must be treated cautiously. The Consul who presided over the abolition

of slavery, Sir Arthur Hardinge, who served from 1894 to 1900, was also a biased, but perceptive man. Having served in the Middle East, he acquired an admiration for Arabs, particularly ruling class Arabs, and wanted to use them in the Zanzibār Administration. Anxious to preserve Arabs' privileged place in society, he tended to minimize the uglier side of slavery. Nevertheless, he made it his business to understand the people he was ruling and was acutely sensitive to the variations in social structure in different places in East Africa and the impact of these variations on the treatment of slaves. His description of the differences between slavery in Mombasa and Malindi cannot be attributed to his preconceived notions.

Missionaries, despite their ethnocentrism, are good sources because they worked among ordinary people, learned the language well, and travelled in rural areas. Most were Islamophobes, and when they find redeeming features in Islamic institutions, their opinions carry some weight. Ludwig Krapf, because of his decade of experience in the hinterland of Mombasa, as well as his wide travels and deep study of the Swahili language, is the most important source of all. Bishop Steere of the Universities' Mission to Central Africa and Alexandre Le Roy, a French Catholic, also left valuable accounts.

The explorer Richard Burton illustrates well the problems of bias and perspicacity. A blatant racist, with low opinions of Arabs and Africans alike, he had remarkable insight into the cultures he despised. When Burton writes that "the Arab thinks such an such," he cannot be trusted, but when he describes nuances of language, details of people's dress, and intricacies of trading relationships, his information, whenever verifiable, turns out to be reliable.

Useful information can be derived not just from the few observers of unusual ability, but from the way evidence from observers of different outlooks and experiences overlaps. Not all questions can be answered--it is particularly difficult to penetrate the minds of slaveowners and slaves--but descriptions of economic activities and customs can be obtained, and there are enough accounts of specific events to confirm visitors' descriptions of certain patterns in the relationships among people and groups.

Indirectly, the richness of the American sources assists the Africanist in using his meager ones. The greater chances to verify American sources against each other alerts the scholar to the possibility of common misunderstandings about slavery, while a relatively complete understanding of some slave systems suggests how the pieces of another puzzle might fit together.

II. Local Documents

Despite attempts to locate Swahili or Arabic documents in public or private collections, I found few local records. Undoubtedly, businessmen kept accounts, but the idea of preserving the books, let alone personal papers, for the benefit of future historians was lacking in this most unegocentric culture. History was the image of social structure--people were interested in genealogies and chronicles of the activities of particular communal groups.³

³ A few local chronicles that were written down are reprinted in G. S. P. Freeman-Grenville, The East African Coast: Select Documents (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1962), pp. 213-304. A look at these chronicles will reveal how thin they are from the point of view of a social historian. Their most valuable contribution is to indicate what groups were

Fortunately, there is an extraordinary source of material on the economy of Mombasa in the 1890's in the records of the Kenya Land Office in Mombasa. This includes two sets of documents. The first is a register of deeds, maintained by Arab subordinates of the colonial government. Legally binding documents executed in Mombasa were supposed to be copied into this register.⁴ One set of volumes, the A-series, beginning in 1891 (when the Imperial British East Africa Company was still the overlord of the coast), held documents dealing with land: sales, mortgages, rental agreements, and so on. The other, the B-series, starting in 1893, was for other documents, including loans (that did not involve land as collateral), trading agreements, manumission papers for slaves, and a variety of other documents. Often a party in a transaction was a slave. Occasionally, slaves were security for loans. Freedom papers, specifying that a certain slave had been freed by his master or had bought his freedom for such and such a price, can also be found. These documents show that practices which were encouraged by Islam actually did take place.

These deeds are used in another fashion, as a source of quantitative data on the economy of Mombasa from the 1890's onward. This analysis is part of a long-term project that will analyze information from the registers through the 1920's. Data for this project have been gathered by Karim Janmohamed and John Zarwan as well as myself. At present, I have coded and processed by computer data up to the end of 1899. This is the least reliable portion of the material, for deeds were filed irregularly

fighting each other, allowing the historian to obtain an idea of group boundaries and patterns of conflict. There are also some documents left by Islamic scholars. See Joseph Schacht, "Bibliothèques et manuscrits abadites," Revue Africaine, C (1956), pp. 375-98.

⁴Similar files on Malindi begin in 1903.

at first. The deed collections are biased towards transactions involving people who were most willing to deal with the colonial bureaucracy, although registration was compulsory. A total of 566 transactions from the B-series (all documents such as powers of attorney, which did not involve a transfer of some sort were deleted from the sample), was analyzed. The A-series is much larger, so a 20% random sample, amounting to 547 cases, was used. Despite its weaknesses, the data shed considerable light on the economy of Mombasa towards the end of the slavery era. They indicate, for example, which ethnic groups, Indians, Hadramis, Omanis, or Swahili, were involved in financing urban property and farmland. They show that slaves could buy and sell land and take out loans, but did so to a limited extent. The data also allow individuals who were particularly active as financiers, ivory traders, or land speculators to be identified, and they constitute an essential way of verifying statements made by informants about economic activities in the past.

The second set of records are transcripts of hearings held between 1912 and 1924 for the purpose of assigning titles to individual plots of land. In accordance with the Land Titles Act of 1908, the government conducted a survey of all farmland in the coastal strip of Kenya (up to about 10 miles inland) and awarded titles to people who could prove their claim to a piece of land. Since few landowners had deeds of purchase, claimants were usually required to point out their boundaries to an investigator and to bring witnesses if their claim were disputed. The claim procedures were biased in favor of people who could manipulate the colonial officials and their Arab subordinates. The claims procedure undoubtedly resulted in the redistribution of land from poor to rich, but some standards of proof were required, and many small-holders received titles.

The transcripts provide information on the way land was obtained and the use of slave labor on it. Each case includes the acreage of the plot and the name (and usually the ethnic identification) of the claimant, which makes it possible to estimate the distribution of large and small plots by communal group. The information comes from 1912-24, but is still a rough guide to patterns earlier. Preliminary analysis of the A-series deeds suggests that while there was some redistribution of land among different communal groups, the ones that gained most substantially at the expense of others were Indians and Europeans. In preparing tables of plot size by communal group, only Arab and Swahili groups were included. If used cautiously, these tables provide a valuable check on other information on land usage.

III. Interviews

If quantitative evidence is not as "hard" as the exactitude of numbers makes it seem, oral evidence is not as "soft" as it first appears. The sections of this dissertation dealing with the mainland coast rely heavily on the approximately 100 interviews which I conducted in Mombasa and Malindi in 1972-73. There is no one methodology for oral research in Africa. The East African Coast has no oral traditions in the formal sense of the word--historical accounts that are transmitted more or less intact from generation to generation. There are no court historians, such as the griots of West Africa, who specialize in remembering the past.

However, a number of men, some very old, some middle-aged, have a lively interest in the past and recall much information related by their own parents or other elders.⁵ Information was transmitted informally.

The wazee (sing. mzee, elder) can supply family histories and information about life in the "old days." Most informants can give their own genealogy and brief biographies of their ancestors, as well as information about the more illustrious members of their communal groups. One can learn, for example, how many generations ago an Arab family immigrated to Kenya and what type of business they conducted. One also learns about customs--how many days per week a slave was expected to work, for example. When informants of different origins--sons of slaves as well as masters--give consistent answers, this is a good indication that the custom was generally accepted. Some informants have also explained the intricacies of farming techniques, local variations in soil and planting times, and patterns of land usage. It is more difficult to get an idea of attitudes--one cannot separate out the influence of the recent past from the more distant past. Analyses of social relationships must be connected in a firm way to the past, by linking them to specific events or to institutions which ceased to exist. Talking directly about slavery does avoid some of this confusion, for it was abolished in 1907.

Finding informants is largely a matter of recommendations and luck. Most people I spoke with were eager to tell what they knew: the interviewer's questions are a recognition of their status as wazee. There is no set technique of interviewing and no point, given the small number of informants and the diverse types of information which they possess, in using a standard questionnaire. One must find the best way of obtaining an informant's confidence and interest. Some informants opened up

⁵It would be socially difficult for a male researcher to interview Swahili women. I am therefore grateful to Margaret Strobel for showing me transcripts of some of her interviews with Swahili women from Mombasa.

on a second or third interview, and in a few cases interviews were really conversations between two historians of different backgrounds. Since my subject was a delicate one and the types of questions I discussed with any individual varied, I tried to keep my approach as informal as possible. I rarely used an interpreter and only used a tape recorder when I was having trouble following the informant's Swahili or was collecting unusually precise information.

The reliability of oral data must be evaluated by the same criteria that historians use to assess any document. One must judge a testimony by its plausibility, its relation to other information, and the reliability and prejudices of the source. Unlike most written documents, oral information can be distorted in the transmission process, but in both cases the original source can have varying degrees of accuracy.

In my own case, the source of information was usually one-generation removed, sometimes two. My informants' parents were alive during the late nineteenth century, and in a few cases, the informants themselves were children during the declining years of slavery. My oldest informant was near 100, and some relatively young men proved to have learned much from their parents or grandparents.

My best interviews were conducted in Malindi, a small town whose oldest inhabitants have been little affected by the winds of change. Most old people know each other, and it is easy to locate informants. Mombasa was a more difficult place to work, because it is so big and so dynamic. I was unable to locate informants of slave descent there--except one who turned out to be from Malindi--largely because there were enough opportunities for ex-slaves to find work and become lost in a mobile population. No field work was possible in Zanzibar for political reasons,

but I spoke to some people who came from that island and others whose families owned land in both Mombasa and Pemba.

Informants of slave descent gave very different interpretations of slavery from those whose parents were waungwana. When they agreed on a particular item, this was convincing evidence. When they disagreed, they pointed to sensitive areas.

Following is a list of informants and brief notes to identify them. In the text they are cited by numbers and the place of interview, Malindi (and vicinity, including Mambrui) and Mombasa (and vicinity). MSA stands for Mombasa, MAL for Malindi. Informant number 4 from Malindi will be referred to as MAL 4. I regret the impersonal nature of the citations, for these people are very live to me. However, the names would mean little to most readers. All interviews were written up immediately afterwards, and the notes are in my possession.

Malindi Informants (MAL)

1. Mohamed Maawia. An Mshella. Works for the Land Office and knows the intricacies of land tenure well, in addition to the history of the Washella people. (interviewed in Mombasa)
2. Gulamhussein Tayabji. Very old Indian of the Bohora community. Son of the first Indian to settle in Mambrui.
3. Said Khalid Abdalla. Of mixed Shella-Omani origin.
4. Nasser Said Nasser Al-Busaidi. From a minor branch of the dominant Omani communal group.
5. Swaleh Mohamed Gagi. A Baluchi descended from one of the original Baluchi soldiers sent to Malindi by the Sultan. Very good on Baluchi role in Malindi, the founding of Malindi, and Malindi social history generally. He provides a perspective slightly outside of the four principal communal groups of Malindi.
6. Mohamed Hemed. Baluchi. Former dhow captain.
7. Erastus Tsuma. Giriama. Chief of Malindi. A young man, but well acquainted with Giriama elders.

(MAL)

8. Tayabali Rajabali Mulla Bhaiji. Bohora. His father was a trader in Malindi in the 1880's. Knows a lot about the Bohora community, trade, and agriculture.
9. Ali Salim Salim. Mshella farmer.
10. Jivanji Gulamhussein Jivanji. Bohora. Grandson of the most important Indian import-export merchant and financier, Jivanji Mamuji.
11. Abdulla Athman Al-Amudy. Knows about Hadrami role in Malindi society.
12. Mohamed Lali. Bajuni. Gave an elaborate history of the founding of Malindi that shows signs of a fine imagination. Helpful in providing information about important figures of the nineteenth century and about customs.
13. Salim Alyan Nahwy. Son of MAL 18.
14. Rev. Kalume. Provided good leads for Giriama informants.
15. Abdalla Omar Nabahani. A young man, but able to provide information about a group from the Lamu area that came to Malindi.
16. Bakari Rarua. A Giriama Muslim and an elder. Very good on relations of Giriama to Arabs and to ex-slaves.
17. Abdalla Seif. One of the oldest living Washella, in his 80's. An excellent informant on Washella history and on Malindi society generally.
18. Alyan Hemed Al-Nahwy. The oldest Omani, in his 80's. Able to identify most of the important people of Malindi in the old days and expert on local customs, agriculture, and social organization.
19. Omar Dahman Al-Amudy. A leader of the Hadrami community.
20. Omar Ali. A very old Mshella.
21. bin Omari. Knew a lot about the history of Malindi's mosques but was too ill for a long interview.
22. Mohamed Said Nassor Al-Busaidi. Very good on history of Omanis in Malindi. Older brother of MAL 4.
23. Abbas Abdulhussein Adamji Saigar. Bohora trader.
24. Omar Wa Fundi. An mzalia, son of a door-maker owned by a leading Mshella. Superb source on the life of slaves.
25. Said Abdalla Mohamed Saiban. Hadrami trader.

(MAL)

26. Khalifa wa Lali Hadaa. Descendant of early Bajuni settlers. About 80. One of the best informants about slavery and society in the nineteenth century.
27. Mohamed Abubakar Abbas. An old Mshella, well versed in history of his community, knows leading members of other groups, and much about society in the old days.
28. Yahya Said Hemed Al-Busaidi. Son and grandson of the first two governors of Mambrui. Knows the story of his important family and other Omanis. Age 75.
29. Omar Ahmed Barium. Hadrami. Provided valuable information on relations between Hadramis and Omanis.
30. Awade bin Maktub. One of the best informants. In his 80's, mtoto wa nyumbani of a leading Omani slaveholder, bi Salima. Provided a vivid account of slave life, social relations between masters and slaves, watoro, and other questions.
31. Suede Nasibu. Mzalia. Father was a slave of a Bajuni.
32. Mselem Khalfan Jaafari. Omani. Grandfather was an overseer for Salim bin Khalfan.
33. Salim Sabiki. Bajuni sailor and fisherman.
34. Juma Kengewa. Son of slaves on plantation of Salim bin Khalfan. Very good on life of slaves.
35. Jabu Masoya. Son of a slave who became an overseer on a shamba owned by an ex-slave. Gave a moving, bitter account of life under slavery.
36. Sheriff Mohamed Said Al-Beith. Islamic teacher in Mambrui. Young man who knows history of the village well.
37. Omar Salim Batheiff. Hadrami. Descendant of old settlers in Mambrui.
38. Juma Mbaraka. His parents were slaves of an Omani.
39. Ahmed Salim Bawazir. Hadrami trader and landowner.
40. Salim Mohamed Islam Al-Kathri. Grandson of Islam bin Ali, an early Hadrami settler in Mambrui who got into dispute with the Governor. Besides coming from an unusually interesting family, he knows much about Mambrui society and slavery.
41. Ali Athman. Bajuni of Mambrui.
42. Mussbhai Tayabji Walliji. Son of first Bohora in Malindi (brother of MAL 2). Very good on trading organization in Mambrui.

(MAL)

43. Mahfudh Mohamed Ali Basharahil. Grandson of leading Hadrami farmer and trader in Mambrui.
44. Dewel Said Badwill. Hadrami. Oldest man in Mambrui, near 100. Has seen much with his own eyes and heard lots more. A fine informant about almost all topics.
45. Joint interview: Athman Mohamed Nabhani, Maalim Abud Abdalla (Bajuni) and Mohamed Abubakar Yusuf (from Lamu). A wide ranging conversation about early history of Mambrui, social life in the town, various important people, problems with watoro, etc. The three informants added to each others' comments and confirmed the information.
46. Kassim Umar. Bajuni. Told about role of Bajunis in Mambrui and about the outlying area behind the town, where he lives.
47. Ahmed Mbarak Handwan. From the richest Hadrami family in Malindi in the late nineteenth century.
48. Rev. Timothy Ngoma. Pastor of the church at Jilore, the first mission station near Malindi. Knows the history of the mission well, including the interaction of mission people with watoro.
49. Alfred Yongo. Giriama mzee.
50. Dola Bakari. Bajuni of Mambrui.
51. Mzee Jabu. Son of slaves in Mambrui.
52. Omari Bwana Mkuu. Bajuni. Good on origins of Mambrui and vicinity, Bajuni history, and situation of small-scale slaveowners.
53. Maalim Mohamed. Bajuni. On dhow trade.
54. Gari Kai. Giriama Mzee.
55. Nzeze Kwicha. Giriama Mzee.
56. Suleiman Amur Al-Daremki. From a leading Omani family discussed in text.
57. Rev. Ishmael Toya. Very old Mgiriama who went to school at the Jilore mission.
58. Hassan Said Al-Homar. Hadrami, with interesting information on relations between Mambrui and its hinterland.
59. Isa Said Al-Hasibi. Omani, near Mambrui. Relative of bi Salima binti Masudi, who is discussed in text.

(MAL)

60. Suleiman Ali Mselem Al-Khalasi. Grandson of bi Salima's husband and son of the qadi of Malindi.
61. Mohamed Khamis Muhando. An mzalia of Mzigua origin. Had much to say about early history of Malindi and slavery.
62. Kazungu wa Kigande. Mhiriama mzee.
63. Mohamed Omari Toya. Mhiriama Muslim.
64. Mohamedi wa Mweni. Mhiriama Muslim.
65. Bisiria Toya. Mhiriama mzee. Good on Giriama-Arab relations and slave trade in Malindi hinterland.
66. Mohamed Omar Al-Amudy. Interviewed in Shella, Lamu. Provided a perspective on the Shella people of Malindi from their point of origin.
67. Abdulla Kadara. Interviewed in Lamu about founding of Malindi.

Mombasa Informants (MSA)

1. Lance Jones Bengo. Grandson of William Jones, who was taken off a slave dhow and became a missionary. Good on life at mission stations near Mombasa.
2. James Juma Mbotela. Son of a slave taken off a dhow and brought up at a mission. Age 84. A fine informant about mission life, as well as the northern mainland of Mombasa, where Freretown, the mission was located.
3. Mohamed Rashid Al-Mazrui. About 60, and the leading Mazrui historian in Mombasa. Also knows much about agriculture and slavery.
4. Ahmed Abdalla Al-Mazrui. A young, well-educated relative of MSA 3, who has learned much from his elders and has great insight into coastal society.
5. William George Kombo. Son of slaves of Giriama, brought up at mission station.
6. Gibson Kiboko. Mrabai. Married daughter of slaves at Rabai mission station.
7. Newland Gibson Ngome. Good informant on life at Rabai mission.
8. Mzee Benjamin Chimwenga son of Ndoro. Mribe, one of the Mijikenda tribes. Excellent on the interaction of Arabs, Mijikenda, and watoro in the hinterland of the coast. Describes conflict and slave raiding in the late nineteenth century.

(MSA)

9. Shiabuddin Shiraghdin. Part Punjabi, part Twelve Tribes. An expert on Swahili customs and traditions. One interview was conducted jointly with Hyder Mohamed Kindy, a Swahili spokesman.
10. Samuel Levi. Mission resident. Talked about relation of mission people to local Arabs.
11. Mohamed Ali Mirza. Baluchi. Grandson of Abdulrehman Mirza, one of the most important upcountry traders and money-lenders in late nineteenth century Mombasa. Gave a full account of the position of Baluchis in Mombasa as well as much information about slavery-- Baluchis owned slaves too--and trade in Mombasa.
12. Salim Mohamed Muhashamy. Former chief Arab official of the coast of Kenya under the colonial government and member of a leading Omani family.
13. Shariff Abdalla Salim. Leading member of the Hadrami community.
14. Al-Amin Said Al-Mandhry. Only 56 years old but one of my best informants, with whom I spoke many times. A former Arab official, he is familiar with the details of Islamic law and coastal practices. Provided much information on agriculture, slavery, Omani-Swahili relations, trade, and the history of the Mandhry family.
15. Said Mohamed Ali Al-Mandhry. Expert in Mandhry history. Provided a detailed Mandhry genealogy.
16. Shariff Mohamed Abdalla Shatry. Member of one of the most important nineteenth century Hadrami families of Mombasa. Active in trade in agricultural and other produce.
17. Shariff Abdulrehman Abdalla Shatry. Brother of the above.
18. Mohamedali Bhaijee. Bohora trader. Dealt in copra.
19. Ali Jemedar Amir. Of mixed Baluchi-Swahili descent. A relatively young man, but well versed on many aspects of Mombasa history.
20. Famy Mbarak Hinawi. Son of Mbarak bin Ali Hinawy, former Liwali. Young, but he knows basic history of his important family and provided interesting comments about an Arab family, including the role of ex-slaves in the household.
21. Abdalla Saleh Al-Farsy. The leading Islamic scholar of the coast. From Zanzibar, but now chief Qadi of Kenya. Told me about many aspects of Islamic law, as practiced in East Africa, as well as much about the history of Zanzibar.
22. Yahya Ali Omar. Swahili scholar. Knowledgeable on traditional Swahili agriculture and customs.

(MSA)

23. Mohamed Hemed Timami. From a Suri family with long ties to Mombasa.
24. Said Karama. Swahili poet.
25. Mohamed Khammal Khan. Baluchi. A teacher with a sound knowledge of Swahili customs and local history.
26. Mohamed Kassim Al-Mazrui. Former chief Qadi of Kenya. A leading Islamic scholar who has written a book on Islamic slavery and was able to add useful information on actual practices on the Kenya coast.
27. Mohamed Ahmed Ali Al-Mandhry. Grandson of a leading Arab landowner and trader, Ali bin Salim bin Ali Al-Mandhry.
28. Muhiddin Mohamed Al-Changamwe. He knew about the lives of two of the wealthiest Swahili of nineteenth century Mombasa, Mwijabu bin Isa and Juma bin Muhunzi. An expert on Changamwe history in general, and knowledgeable about agriculture and slavery.
29. Wazee of Majengo. Joint interview with 4 wazee from this district of Mombasa, arranged by the Chief of Majengo. General agreement on customary requirements of slaves in the past.
30. Mohamed Said Al-Busaidi. Administrator of a remaining portion of the estate of Salim bin Khalfan. Well informed on his property, as well as able to provide interesting details of the social composition of neighborhoods where Salim bin Khalfan owned land.
31. Ibrahim Shaib. Old Bajuni living near Mombasa. Told of relations of Arabs, Swahili, Mijikenda, and slaves on mainland north of Mombasa.
32. Mchangamwe Umar. Of Digo origin, but born in Kisauni, and well informed on agriculture and relations of different peoples in that area.
33. Wazee of Kisauni, Joint interview arranged by Chief of Kisauni. Eight wazee of various communal groups agree that Kisauni was originally a Mijikenda area and that Arabs encroached on the land.
34. Said Salim Ruwehi. From a leading Omani family of Zanzibar, which combined a reputation for scholarship with extensive plantations. Interviewed in Mombasa.
35. Said Mohamed Baghozi. Told me about place of Hadramis in Mombasa society, and interaction between Hadramis, Omanis, and slaves.
36. Ahmed Said Riemi. From an important Zanzibari family. Interviewed in Mombasa.

(MSA)

37. Juma Rubai. An mzalia living in Mombasa whose father was a slave in Malindi. Age 73. Able to make interesting comparison between slavery in Mombasa and Malindi and provide details of life of people of slave origin in Mombasa shortly after abolition.
38. Maalim Mzagu and Mzee Juma. Two long-time dock workers.

In addition, Margaret Strobel generously showed me transcripts of her interviews with Shamsa binti Mohamed Muhashamy, Bi Momo, and Bi Kaje.

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