

Abstract:

This chapter attempts to re-evaluate the history of the East African coast and the Comores between the seventh and eleventh centuries. This is being done with a view to correcting the false picture painted by historians and/or archaeologists of the colonial school of thought, who presented rather a history of foreign traders and colonizers credited with the civilization of the coast. The role of outsiders in the early history of the East African coast cannot be denied, but it is one thing to be part of a process of change and completely another to claim responsibility for the process. Recent research, however, is slowly but surely making it very clear that the history of the East African coast is the history of indigenous African populations and their interaction with the environment