

**People's Perspective on Ocean: A Study on Indian Ocean
Maritime Culture
in Malabar, Arabia and Zanzibar**

*Dissertation submitted to Jawaharlal Nehru University
in partial fulfilment of the requirements
for award of the degree of*

MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY

Javad C



International Politics Division
Centre for International Politics, Organisation and Disarmament
School of International Studies
JAWAHARLAL NEHRU UNIVERSITY
New Delhi
2015



Date: 27/07/15

DECLARATION

I declare that the dissertation entitled "People's Perspective on Ocean: A Study on Indian Ocean Maritime Culture in Malabar, Arabia and Zanzibar" submitted by me in partial fulfilment for the award of the requirements for the award of the degree of **Master of Philosophy** of Jawaharlal Nehru University is my own work. The dissertation has not been previously submitted for any degree of this university or any other university.

JAVAD C

Javad C
27/07/15

CERTIFICATE

We recommend that this dissertation be placed before the examiner for evaluation.

Swaran Singh
27.7.15
Prof. Swaran Singh

Chairperson, CIPOD

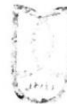


Chairperson
Centre for International Politics,
Organization and Disarmament
School of International Studies
Jawaharlal Nehru University
New Delhi-110067

Varun Sahni

Prof. Varun Sahni

Supervisor



Centre for International Politics,
Organization and Disarmament
School of International Studies
Jawaharlal Nehru University
New Delhi-110067

Acknowledgements

I am greatly thankful to my supervisor, Professor Varun Sahni, without whose guidance and supervision I could not have completed my dissertation. In the course of my research I have received moral, material and technical support from a number of people. I thank Shubham Bose, Arko Das Gupta and Tarun Baid who helped me in writing and editing my thesis. I also thank staff in the centre for International politics, Organization and Disarmament who helped me to complete my dissertation. The help of Jawaharlal Nehru University Central Library staff also made my thesis possible. I thank all of the people helped me along the way to reach here also.

Contents

Acknowledgements.....	i
Chapter 1 - Introduction.....	1
Chapter 2 - Cultural Community and Indian Ocean.....	10
Chapter 3 - Trade and Oceanic Culture.....	33
Chapter 4 – Islam: The Cultural Link in the Indian Ocean.....	58
Chapter 5 – Conclusion.....	76
Bibliography.....	79

List of Maps

2.1- Map of South India in 16 th century.....	22
2.2- Map of Hadramawt.....	30
3.1- Map of trade routes in the Indian Ocean.....	36
3.2- Map of seasonal cycle of the Indian Ocean.....	38
4.1- Map of Omani Empire.....	70

Chapter I

Introduction

Just as oceans are important in international politics, acquiring a cultural understanding of ocean communities is very important in the study of the new discipline of Indian Ocean Studies. Mainstream narratives about the Indian Ocean mostly come from the state perspective or colonial historiography. Material factors are the key variable in most of these studies, ignoring other factors like culture, value system and religion. There are differences between the perspectives of communities and mainstream narratives in understanding ocean culture, due to the historic experience of the community in engaging ocean and evolving individual understandings. The communities along the rim of the western Indian Ocean have been engaged in maritime travel for a long time. Studying this area gives us a glimpse into the causes of difference in understanding of oceanic culture among different ocean communities. This study analyses this lesser narrative in the three cases of Malabar, Zanzibar and Arabia.

The study of personal experience and cultural narratives helps the understanding of people's perspective about sea. Ocean is interesting and at the same time monotonous for the travellers. It is mesmerising for the spectators. People's perspective about the ocean is built by experience and storytelling. Edward Alpers refers to this sentimental and romantic value of the Indian Ocean through the two narrations of the personal experience the writers (Villiers, 1940; Holden, 2005). Alpers says, "their sentimental observation recapture a pattern of maritime trade that mark entire maritime history of Indian ocean" (Alpers, 2014: 2). How people view the ocean is a changing process and it is connected to the people's experience of activities as varied as sea trade and fishing.

Oceanic studies have expanded in the last decade and created curiosity among different disciplines from history to strategic studies. The Indian Ocean region is getting new attention from the strategic community because of the global war on terrorism, piracy, natural disasters like tsunamis, non-traditional security threats like human smuggling and oil spills, and traditional strategic concerns like the rise of

China. India itself feels threatened more than benefitted by the Indian Ocean because of piracy, terrorism and the new encirclement policy of China's 'string of pearls'. It is therefore an appropriate time to study how the Indian Ocean communities trace their own histories and how they view the sea, trade and strategy. This micro level understanding will help the larger narration of strategic discourses.

Ocean and Cultural Capital

Experience is the key factor in setting peoples' minds and it is true about cultural understanding of ocean. Shanti Moorthy views the discipline of Indian Ocean studies from a different perspective. She addresses the difference of understanding in oceanic culture in the Indian Ocean studies in a simple explanatory manner. There are differences between the Indian Ocean and the Atlantic Ocean in the case of political imaginary. The Atlantic Ocean places itself as a route to liberty or site of redress in the cultural consciousness of West which Indian Ocean does not serve (Moorthy 2010). This signifies the difference in long historic evolving imaginations about the sea among the Indian Ocean community. Western historic political imagination about ocean travel is highly connected to its local agrarian, religious and industrial history. There is a big paradigm difference in the cultural and religious history studies of Indian Ocean community. The current geostrategic and political movement in and out of the Indian Ocean by the US and other Western countries can be connected to that different social experience.

History is important to how people personally understand their ideas and material prosperity. Indian maritime history still impacts the day-to-day life-style of people in Indian Ocean coastal communities. India had a long history of maritime trade. In 3000 BCE, Indus valley people had trade relations with Mesopotamia. After the annexation of Egypt to the greater Roman Empire, there was considerable trade between Europe and India.

Indian naval history sheds light on the link between maritime superiority and political influence. Trade not only increases material capabilities but also builds cultural capital. As we see in the other side of the Indian subcontinent, south Indian empires like the Cholas had a big territorial influence in South East Asia and Sri Lanka. In the time of Rajadhiraja Chola and Rajendra Chola I, the Cholas kept a big navy which invaded the parts of current day Malaysia and Indonesia. Because of their enlarged territory from Maldives, Sri Lanka, and South India to South East Asia, the

Cholas kept a relatively large navy in the region. The political influence and cultural influence support each other as we see in the case of Cholas; and it is same in oceanic Muslim era. Acceptance of Muslim economic system in the ocean trade was significant from the Middle Ages to the eighteenth century when Muslims dictated the politics in the region. The study gives importance to Islam from the cultural and religious point of view because of its inherent transient nature.

Islam as a religion and culture played a big role in the middle age trade around the Indian Ocean region. The cultural reminders of this long term maritime practice are still visible from the Straits of Hormuz to the Straits of Malacca. Islam played a big part in shaping the Indian Ocean trade as well as the culture of the people in the coast. One of the key variables in the Indian Ocean trade development in pre-British era is the Hadrami tradition and Islamic connection between East Africa, Malabar and south Arabia. In jurisprudence terms Alawi-shafi'i tradition of Islam is the connecting part in the Indian Ocean Islamic tradition (Bang 2003). Ann K. Bang quotes from the *Zanzibar Gazette* about the empirical connection in this systemic chaos of trade culture, religion and politics: "The creek, now filling up with dhows blown down by the monsoon; dhows of all shapes and rigs; clumsy matsail mtepe's from Lamu, high-poooped bangalas from Bombay; betili from the Persian Gulf and swift bedeni's with upright prow from Arabia: some high and dry, some in repair; silent wanders of the sea all herding together with no order or system, patiently awaiting the southern breeze to blow them back to their home" (*Zanzibar Gazette*, 1907, Cited in Bang, 2003: 2). This highly subjective romanticised feeling about the travelling and home is a very important idea in analysing people's perspective about the Indian Ocean. But the industrial revolution changed the face of sea trade. Vasco Da Gama reached India in 1498. The Dutch and British followed him. This also caused a perspective change about the sea in the Indian Ocean community.

Malabar has been economically and culturally connected to Arabia for long time in the history of sea trade. The oil boom reignited the connection and the people connected to diaspora also belong to the transnational consciousness of Islam. Lakshmi Subramanian and Engseng Ho analyse the difference of approach in the Universalist ambition of Hadrami tradition and British rule especially in Malabar. British forged their loyalties through the institution of private properties, free trade, protest according to law and organised themselves in the form of empire, and

“Hadrami diaspora brought together separated people not in an empire but in a religion” (Subramanian 2010: 142). This difference in organising society had a big impact in cultural understanding of these two systems among the people.

Culture of a society is an important factor in determining how people imagine certain things, and respond to things they know or they are ignorant about. It does not mean that there is only one variable in understanding the oceanic behaviour. For Arabs, Islam played a big role in determining their maritime practices for centuries. In the Islamic understanding, material goods are means to a greater end. In the Islamic theological texts, life as a whole is seen as religious duty. There is no difference between private and public realm. There is no spatial understanding of Islam as state or nation. Southern Arabia, Malabar and Zanzibar have an evolving vibrant culture which ultimately connected to the Indian Ocean; and plays a big role in moulding their politics and society even now. The Indian Ocean has a big influence in shaping the mindset of the people in the Malabar Coast. History leaves traces in values, norms and behaviour of the people. Sometimes it is called civilizations, religion or value system.

Cultural analysis of Indian Ocean

The Mediterranean and its coasts are studied extensively about its cultural sensitivities and historic significance. Michel Mollet comments on cultural significance of the Indian Ocean by comparing it with the Mediterranean: “the Mediterranean sea- for the Indian ocean as such- have always been centre of civilization... a zone of encounters and contacts, crossed in all directions by the axes of circulation, centre for all types of exchanges and sensitivities to the most diverse and distant influences, the Indian ocean, more than many other oceans and seas, is a privileged cross roads of culture” (Mollet 1980: 2). Although there is a big interest because of changing geostrategic interest of world powers towards Indian Ocean, cultural in-depth study on the region is sparse.

Zanzibar was the centre of Indian Ocean trade because of its central location giving access to the Arabian Peninsula, Africa and India with the help of monsoon wind. Zanzibar is the melting pot of culture and peoples in the Indian Ocean. People from Gulf of Kutch, Arabs from Oman, a big Persian community and the black

African community make it a complex society. As historian Richard Hall put it, Zanzibar was not a common port in Indian Ocean. It was “the hub of a vast trading empire with its tentacles deep into Africa” (Hall 1996: 397). Studying Zanzibar coastal communities’ idea about the sea is important in understanding African maritime culture.

Modern Zanzibar, till Tanganyika and Zanzibar’s independence in 1968, was ruled by the British and Omani sultanate. Zanzibar was also notorious as one of the last places that carried out large scale slave trade in the Indian Ocean. Before the British, the Omani sultanate ruled the island for centuries with fewer interventions from colonial powers like the Portuguese and Dutch empires. As a trading port in Indian Ocean waters it retained significance in politics and naval affairs. After independence, the complexity of the social life caused violence in Zanzibar and it is still prevalent in the island’s politics. Robert Kaplan remembers that “Zanzibar is Africa yet different from Africa. It is Arabian and Persian yet different from Arabia and Persia; and Indian yet different from India” (Kaplan 2010: 215). So understanding Zanzibar and its perception about ocean would give us the most cosmopolitan idea in continental and maritime sense.

Making of new community: Trade and cultural exchange

Malabar was rich in spice trade and cultural exchange but it enhanced the significance as a crossing point between Arab and East Asian trade. Sebastian Prange analyses the cultural experience of Malabar from the Arab to colonial era from geographical and historic point of view when he compares Malabar with South East Asia (Prange 2009). In the article Prange does not address the cultural complexities in the trade but he only states the historical facts.

Malabar was connected to the international sea trade for long time from BCE era. Most of the new findings show that sea trade has a bigger impact in the culture of peoples and their thinking pattern about complex social issues in the region. One-fourth of the residents live outside the state as expatriate community, revealing the travel friendliness of the people. Malabar region has trade and cultural contact with Arabian and Mediterranean countries and East Asian countries for centuries. Chinese tools and utensils which were introduced thousands of years ago are still used in households. The finding of Indian teak logs in the temple of the moon at Mugheir and

in the palace of Nebuchadnezzar points to early contact with Mediterranean coasts (Panikkar 1997). The finding of large number of Roman coins in the coastal archaeological sites and the temple of Augustus at Muzuris in Malabar is an evidence of the larger Roman merchant settlements. Malabar- Red sea trade has been going on from at least 120 BCE. In the early days the vessels sailed between Al Mahrah coast and Indus delta (Hourani 1975). With the help of monsoon winds they could travel straight across the Arabian Sea to Malabar Coast.

Ships travelling from the Persian Gulf reached through two routes. The routes are important because these routes carried their own characteristics and culture which transcended all along the port towns. Port towns were melting pots for different cultures because of their cosmopolitan outlook. One of the routes the sailors took was via Sohar, Muscat from the coast of Oman straight to Quilon in southern Malabar. The other route was covering most of the big ports in eastern Arabian ocean on the way to India. They travelled from the coast of old Hormuz through the coasts of Sind to the Gulf of Kutch. Malabar teak was an important component in ship building and luxury house construction. In the medieval period Arabian travellers and traders dominated the sea trade of east. The relation of Arab traders with the Zamorin of Calicut was an important link in spreading their network all around the Indian Ocean. When the Arabs dominated the sea trade, pepper, cardamom and textiles were the main exported goods from Calicut (Pearson 1981). There are historical accounts about Zamorin inspiring Hindus to convert because of the religious restrictions upon higher caste Hindus to travel abroad, which was the key to prosperity.

There is a big connection between political and cultural imagination of people about themselves and their political and cultural influence outside their land premises. The Arabian and the Chola era of sea dominance started to decline at almost the same time but Arabs continued till the colonial era. The decline of Chola power created a vacuum in the overseas trade in the Indian Ocean; this helped the Arabs to reach the zenith of maritime commerce (Sridharan 1982). There is always a constant competition for maritime superiority all around the world. Maritime superiority attracts others to certain linguistic and economic practices; that helps that community to maintain its soft power.

The knowledge of compass point for Arabs is important because in the prayer time everyone should face towards Mecca from wherever they offer prayer. These calculation techniques assessing direction and time helped the travellers very well in taming the waves. Muslim traders fundamentally dominated the whole ocean trade in the middle age. They took spices from India and silk from East Asia and travelled through the Red Sea and sold their cargo in Europe. Andre Wink analyses this era: “The growth and development of a world economy in and around the Indian ocean- with India and the Middle East and China as its two dynamic poles- was effected by continued economic, social and cultural integration in to ever ...more complex patterns under the aegis of Islam.” (Wink 2002: 4) There is an active history of the Mesopotamian people trading with the Roman Empire through the Mediterranean and through land routes. Egypt kept a long trade relation with the Eastern Roman Empire and Western Roman Empire for a long time. Before Islam came into the picture in the seventh century CE, the mainland Arab community in the current GCC community were not the biggest players in the ocean trade. But things changed drastically after introduction of Islam and tribal unity in the Arabian Peninsula. Halford Mackinder refers to Arabs a century ago in the early twentieth century: “created a great empire by availing themselves of the two motilities permitted by their land- that of the horse and the camel on the one hand, and that of the ship on the other. At different times their fleets controlled both the Mediterranean as far as Spain, and the Indian ocean to the Malay Islands” (Mackinder 1904: 432).The Arab influence from Spain to the Malay islands enhanced their cultural and political understanding; as in every social system, the nuances of a system is created by understanding others ideas and cultures.

In Indian Ocean studies, maritime culture is less discussed from the point of view of how the people view the ocean, and how does that reflect in current maritime practice and naval strategy. This is a more subjective study about the values and behaviour of the people and their narratives about the ocean history. It is important to understand that the imagination of the people about the sea has an impact on their decision making related to ocean affairs.

Scope and area of the study

Arabia in this study means southern Arabia, including Yemen/Omani coasts. Taking whole Arabia for this research would stretch the variables like 'coastal culture'. The connecting tradition of Islam between Malabar, Arabia and Zanzibar in this study signifies Shafi'i Hadrami Alawi School of Islamic Jurisprudence and scholastic tradition. Coastal community culture in the study derived from historic narratives, folklores and legends.

The scope of the study is that there is not much cultural specific analysis of Indian Ocean community. Different cultures have their own maritime practices. As anthropologists see it, there is a good chance that human beings did undertake intercontinental journey through sea 13,000 years ago. But this does not mean that every coastal community views the ocean in the same way. The sea has been used as a mass transport medium only after industrial revolution. Even though they share relatively similar experiences, different countries in Europe viewed the sea differently. This reflects in their induction to the process of colonizing countries. Different perspective towards sea could come from diverse factors like belief system, economic necessities or political reasons. For Americans the Atlantic Ocean gives memories about the Pilgrim Fathers, religious and economic oppressions. That is why the Statue of Liberty is still important in cultural identity of America. Arabs view sea from the point of view of *Hajj, Da'wa* (*Da'wa* in Arabic means making an invitation, or inviting people to the faith) and trade. India and China remember modern era sea in the form of colonial memories. All these view points and ideas give us some reflection to the current maritime and sea trade policies and naval strategies of different countries in the Indian Ocean region. This study goes through three cases of Malabar, Zanzibar and Arabia to trace oceanic cultural experience and analyse how these three regions and its people view sea.

Poetries and literature is a big example of how much travellers and coastal communities are attached to the sea and their consciousness built around it; as in *Ulysses* Alfred Lord Tennyson puts: "I cannot rest from travel: I will drink / Life to the lees: All times I have enjoy'd / Greatly, have suffer'd greatly, both with those / That loved me, and alone, on shore." Travellers and people around them are attached to the sea and their lives are influenced by ideas around it. This shows us the potential

of the cultural analysis of coastal communities' ideas about the Indian Ocean, which were shaped by historic facts. In the southern Arabian coasts, Malabar and Zanzibar we see similarities and differences because of this. The study will shed some light to the current day debate about religion, culture and international politics around the Indian Ocean.

Research Methodology

The proposed study is a case study that uses case study methods for analysis and follows process tracing as a broader method. Process tracing is one of the important methods used in case studies. It is a method to examine cases through histories, archival documents, and other sources to see whether the causal process is there in the case while going through different intervening variables. The study is tracing historical process in these three regions through events, literature and other vocal narratives. Study depends on the secondary source of data to do M.Phil. research. This study employs bottom-up approach about the historic narrative and cultural analysis in Indian Ocean Studies. Culture as the main variable will be discussed in the initial chapters. The idea of 'coastal community culture' will be also analysed in the study.

Chapters Ahead

The Second Chapter will try to define what cultural communities along Indian Ocean coast are and how those communities have similarities and differences in perceiving the ocean. Does every coastal community perceive ocean differently because of cultural variations? The third chapter analyzes the variables that affect trade and how trade has affected the culture and social fabric of different communities in Indian Ocean coasts. This section asks if trade is the defining factor affecting people's perception about the Indian Ocean. Malabar, Zanzibar and Southern Arabia were connected to one another through trade and cultural exchange over the last millennium. This chapter looks at this phenomenon and analyzes how the trade and cultural exchanges changed over time. The fourth chapter studies how Islam as a cultural marker affect perspective building in Indian Ocean, and asks whether Islam is the overarching variable in the study of the cultural history of the Indian Ocean.

Chapter II

Cultural Community in the Indian Ocean

Defining the cultural community along the long Indian Ocean coastal region is difficult but not impossible. In the Indian Ocean coastal region, the cultural community comprises those who are directly affected by the ocean's dynamics. The difference in the geographical locations of Malabar, Zanzibar and Southern Arabia affect the many different factors that have a role to play in the cultural consciousness of the people in these different coastal regions. This is the conventional wisdom as far as research about the Indian Ocean region is concerned. Extensive travels through the centuries have aided comparative analysis as regards the changing cultural dynamics of the Indian Ocean region. There is an overlapping effect as the culture is affected by the Indian Ocean and perspectives about the ocean in the communities are moulded by the culture. This complexity is best described by Alpers who writes:

When historians attempt to define the Indian Ocean for modern readers, they need to realise that it is not simply a substitute for a continental land mass that possesses clearly identifiable boundaries. Nor is it likely to be dominated by the political states or nations that have come to occupy center stage in the writing of most modern histories. (Alpers 2003: 5)

This chapter traces Sunni Muslim trade, travels and settlements. In this chapter the main variable is culture. The social construction of the idea of the Indian Ocean has a correlation with the social organisation of the community. The following analysis sheds light on the correlation between the economic and cultural variables in the shaping of people's perspectives about the ocean. The difference in the understanding of the ocean by coastal communities and the state's perspective about the ocean is the makeup of this cultural understanding throughout history.

In the first century of Islamic expansion, Islam fundamentally spread as a continental religion and a political entity so there was a great degree of fear among traditional jurists working in the capitals of the political powers about the sea. They considered boats to be unreliable as there was a high mortality in sea travel, to the extent that seafaring was considered almost suicidal by early Muslim jurists. The North Africans, Southern Arabians and Andalusians countered this idea because of

the reality of their day-to-day existence where life was centred around sea travel and trade. The reluctance of Umar Ibn al Khattab and Khulafau Rashidin for oceanic expedition was because of the continuing continental imagination and fear of the unknown. There is no original text to support this view from either the Quran or the Hadiths. But it was the unpredictability of the available technology that was a big consideration for the rulers of the time. In prophetic tradition it is encouraged to participate in oceanic expedition as it is said that “a day at sea is equivalent to one month on the land, a martyr at sea is like two martyrs on land” (San’aani 1970; cited in Khalilieh 1998: 2).

This chapter focuses upon the key factors affecting the people’s perspective about the Indian Ocean region. It asks if there is a difference in perspective among the coastal communities in Malabar, Zanzibar and Arabia and if there is, why is that so? There is a big difference in continental historiography and ocean historiography. The geographical markers like mountains and rivers and historical remains and castles and pyramids have a big influence on the social psychology of a people. But the ocean is relatively unaffected by these markers. Modern ideas of the nation-state and political control are not effective in oceans. Nature and its currents and winds are the determining factors in ocean culture and historiography. Societies move around with these natural phenomena. The ocean’s resources and trade makes it possible for the coastal communities to cut off from the cultural realm of the mainland or make island nations of sorts. This is evident in the history of the British Isles and Japan. The study of Indian Ocean coastal communities should bear in mind that the Indian Ocean has changed over time. This would be kept in mind when we analyse the long historical period we are referring to in the present study. In another sense the idea and reality of the Indian Ocean has changed over time. Australia was not part of the bigger narrative of Indian Ocean until the nineteenth century. Steam and diesel engine vessels also opened new possibilities and powers in the larger narrative of the Indian Ocean region. The other big factor is the difference between travellers and the fishing community. Even if these two communities shared a lot of resources, there is a sizable difference in the cultural setting of these two communities. This also affects the coastal cultural community dynamics. The vulnerability of marines due to winds and bigger ships also plays a sizable difference in the political, economic and cultural experiences of travellers and the coastal community. The early travellers in the Indian

Ocean travelled keeping the coast in sight until the first millennium BCE. Intercontinental travel sailing through the ocean with the help of monsoon winds revolutionised the politics of the region.

The idea of a coastal community should be defined when we study ocean communities. The geographer refers to this classification of the coast and mainland in three categories. First is the *forland* which is the overseas community with which people interact; second, the *umland* which is the immediate mainland where the goods, social and cultural exchange happens; then the *hinterland* which is the mainland where the goods are grown or imported to (Alpers 2013). This threefold classification helps in the understanding of ocean behaviour and culture. The coastal community comprises the people of forland and umland. The product from the hinterland and the demand for that in different places helped the flow of people and ideas. The social interaction of the sailors and the coastal community caused the cosmopolitan communities to spring up all over the Indian Ocean rim. The recurring ebb and flow of this exchange moulded Indian Ocean history. Monsoon is the key factor which drives the ocean community and travellers. The name monsoon comes from the Arabic word *mausim* which means climate or weather. Monsoon is the Indian Ocean weather system which travels from North Africa up to Australia and the South China Sea. It not only helps travellers crossing oceans but carries rain up to the Himalayas and irrigates all the inner continents from Africa to Southeast Asia. Northwest and southeast winds help travellers go back and forth in the Indian Ocean.

Building of Cultural Consciousness and the rise of Islam

The rise of Islam from the early seventh century was connected to trade and religious duty. After the last Hajj of Muhammed and the last verses of the Quran, Muslims took inspiration and went to distant lands to spread the following message:

This day, I have perfected your religion for you, completed My Favour upon you, and have chosen for you Islam as your religion. But as for him who is forced by severe hunger, with no inclination to sin, then surely, Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful (Quran: Sura Al Maeda Ch: 5 verse: 3).

The conquest of the Arabian Peninsula was underway when Muhammed was in his deathbed. And this conquest naturally led them to the sea. Hijazi Muslims

gained knowledge of ocean travelling from the conquered communities. By the time of Muhammad's death in 632CE, Islam was the dominant faith in the Red Sea and Gulf regions. Under the Umayyad Caliphate Islam spread to the Indus valley and this helped the exploration from around East Africa to the western coast of India. The Abbasid Empire from 750 to 1258 created political stability all over the western Arabian Sea coasts and fuelled the demand for luxury goods in Baghdad. This sent merchants deep into the Indian Ocean trade routes. Arabic as the lingua franca and Islamic jurisprudence as a legal framework created a unified system of trade in the era. The military expansion and religious consolidation happened in the Arab world and the gradual expansion of Arab trade occurred in the Indian Ocean. The *Sura Luqman* says "See you nor that the ships sail through the sea by God's Grace? That He may show you His signs? Verily, in this are signs for every patient, grateful person" (Quran Sura Luqman verse:31). The scriptural inspiration in the culture of a people is perhaps influential in every community, but especially so in the Islamic community. Even though there the different theological traditions in Islam, the oceanic trade was not affected by the competition. The idea of a common community – *Umma* – is considered the reason for this cohesion. On the other hand, most of the places settled by Muslim traders along the Indian Ocean were ones where Muslims were not the rulers but a minority. More to that Islamic jurisprudence provided legal framework for the business transactions.

The Indian Ocean trade has long history in pre-Islamic era but Islam helped to consolidate extended maritime trade. As in the industrial revolution, newfound economic adventurism also helped the expansion of the trade empire in the Umayyad and Abbasid eras. The Muslim era of maritime trade in the Indian Ocean not only helped the Arabs but the vast array of people who lived in the rim of the political empire. The Eastern Christians and Persians also exploited the new prosperity and connectivity. The imperial capital Baghdad was better positioned than Damascus for ocean trade. Prosperity in the kingdom caused the import of precious goods and luxury materials from all around the world. The diversity in the Muslim community's religious and cultural traditions was also visible all around the Arabian ports. The Ubullah port was the major port which supplied Baghdad and which is strategically located between the Tigris and Euphrates rivers. The Persian ports of Hormuz and Siraf had Arabic speaking Persians and Sohar on the Omani coast was more Persian

than Arabian. Siraf was important for the Sassanid Dynasty. Siraf was also a deep port and dhow building in the area helped the ninth century boom in the Indian Ocean trade. As an *entrepôt*, Siraf accumulated a lot of business power and money in the Sassanid era. A devastating earthquake in the late tenth century destroyed the infrastructure in Siraf but it paved the road towards glorious days.

The Fatimid Kingdom ruled from modern day Cairo which helped it to control and expand the Red Sea maritime trade. Bab ul Mandeb, a big port, had excellent anchorage. Aden also played a big role in connecting the Gulf, East Africa, and larger South Asia. Aden was a crossing point for Indian, Persian, African and Arab ships. It was a miniature version of the larger Indian Ocean trade. Aden was under siege and attacked multiple times in this era. The place attracted a lot of political rivals all over the Indian Ocean. The Rasulid Dynasty from Yemen claimed Aden in the mid-thirteenth century which helped the commercial position of Aden because of the dynasty's access to different seas and lands. Under the Rasulid Dynasty, the Red Sea trade also flourished. The Rasulid navy escorted goods and ships all around the Red Sea and East Africa. In the best times of Red Sea, trade one third of the dynasties' income came from the sea levies. Indian Ocean as a Muslim Ocean also provided the rulers a lot of responsibilities. Fatimid ports had naval presence in the Red Sea and naval fleets protected large number of ships in the area. Piracy was rampant in the Indian Ocean in the Muslim era. Whole clans of people hereditarily followed piracy as an occupation. The men who carried this out were integral members of their communities. Most of the pirates in western Indian shores were fishermen who took piracy as the part of seasonal economy of the community. Piracy in a political sense should also be studied as most of the pirates considered themselves as the competing political entity against hegemony in the ocean.

Islam spread to East Africa in the late seventh and early eighth centuries. Arabs, especially from southern coastal Arabia, had trade relations in the pre-Islamic era. The new adventurers not only passed goods among themselves but also culture and religion. The ideas about religion and political leadership helped to seal long term familial and social connections. This was followed by the scholastic and intellectual pursuit of the emerging new academia in Islamic empire. Radical change by the emergence of Islam had a long lasting effect on the common population as well as the elites in the region. New elites were also created under the new regimes in the Indian

Ocean. The political tensions and reeling social conflict still resonates the complexity of the East African communities. The pioneers had a different set of goods to trade and the emergence of the Abbasid dynasty helped in the introduction of new luxury goods from Baghdad to continental India. The archaeological evidence of Indian and Chinese pottery in East African coasts is the physical evidence of the prolonged history of Indian Ocean trade and cultural exchanges. The Sassanid-era ceramic wares are found all around the eastern African coast up to Madagascar.

The particularity of the mosque architecture is one of the visible signs of Muslim presence in the Indian Ocean. Alpers describes the significance of the mosque in the community culture:

They built their own mosques, had their own *qadi*, or Islamic jurist, and governed themselves through Islamic institutions. Building of the Huaisheng Mosque, also known as the Lighthouse Mosque because it was used as a beacon by ships entering the port of Guangzhou, was attributed to an uncle of the Prophet Muhammad in the middle of the seventh century. Like many stranger Communities around the world before the modern era, they were essentially internally self-governing. (Alpers 2009: 41)

It is a key feature of any transient or settled small minority communities. The identity of the person is mostly connected to keeping the traditions alive in small communities. The question of multiple identities and the debate of prominent identity are relevant in this era of small nations and political organizations. The mosques along the coasts of the Indian Ocean were also a reflection of the political and cultural status of the Muslim community. We see that in the stories of East African Muslim history, as Muslims grew in power and political influence the local timber mosques became bigger mosques constructed from coral rag. Wherever the Muslim communities went, there were conversions on a large scale. In Malabar most of the current Muslim population are ethnic Dravidians. In Pemba and Unguja Ukku there are remains of mosques built as early as the eighth century.

The eastern coasts of Africa also hosted different dissident Muslim *Khavarijs* and Shias. The political oppression led them to the frontiers of the empire and with them their theological ideas about Islam also spread. Malabar region hosted Shia scholars and Sufis. At different political junctures of the Islamic Empire some of them

were dissidents and other were *Da'es*.¹ The Sunni Muslim community still keep the rituals in their Shia past in their day today life and prayers. There was famous legitimacy struggle between Kondotty Kai and Ponnai Kai which represented Sunni and Shia tradition in the Malabar Coast. Buyyid dynasty between 945 and 1055 had important role in the political power of Shia Islam from Persia to Malabar and Eastern Africa.

K.N. Chaudhuri makes a interesting analogy about the Islamic era in Indian ocean by saying “in 618 emperor Li Yuan succeeded to the celestial throne after the murder of the last of Sui, Yang Ti....on 16 July 622, in the far-distant and arid coastland of Arabia, prophet Muhammad abandoned his birthplace and fled to the Oasis of Medina” (Chaudhuri, 1985: 34). The analogy shows the coming of the Indian Ocean Empire of Muslims and the dominance of the known ocean for millennia. Muslim calendar starts on 16 July, 622 CE as the first Year in Hijra calendar which coincide with the prosperity of South China Sea where the Islamic empire was going to have significant impact for the coming centuries. In the east, China under Tang and Sung dynasties created sustained political situation for economic development which helped the import and export of consumer product and luxury goods. The emergence of Islam as a unifying political power created infrastructure and institutions to support big trade and political unity. The movement of people reflected all spheres of life, like culture and religious system and arts. With the demise of the Roman Empire, trade in the Indian Ocean also declined. Most of the goods travelled through the sea were precious and luxury goods because the cost of transportation. A thriving inland economy and political stability was needed for extensive maritime trade. In the larger scale Arabian community had two phases in the trade pattern and migration. The Mediterranean coasts in *Bilad Ul Sham* were the urban political space until the Islamic era started, and then it went eastwards and south to the African coasts. There are different causes for that. The demise of the Roman Empire created small warring states and tribes in Europe and the penetration of Islam in Europe was restricted because of that, apart from Roman Christian imperial nostalgia.

Michael Pearson writes that the Muslim community around the Indian Ocean shores was linked by religion and its travelling scholars (Pearson 2003). The story of

¹ -Da'es are evangelical Muslim groups.

Malik Ibn Dinar and his disciples coming to Malabar fundamentally for the teaching of Islam was the first wave of a scholastic cosmopolitanism and trade helped them to reach the faraway coasts. Eventually Islam helped to revitalise trade, connected the communities, and created new Muslims by conversion and hegemony. The social understanding about the ocean travel considered it as a morally corrupting venture. Ibn Khadun in the fourteenth century describes the moral positioning of sailors lower than continental businessmen and countrymen. Human interaction and travel corrupted people morally, seemingly. This kind of pessimistic view also can be found in puritanical Brahmanism. Early Islam also had the same view about sea travelling but this gave way to the possibilities of material and spiritual prosperity through sea travel. The Prophet first travelled by sea during his exile to modern day Ethiopia under the protection of the eastern Christian king from the Quraish.

The Red Sea had a big Jewish presence even after the emergence of Islam. The Jews largely traded with European ports in the Mediterranean. The Greeks and Persian Empires clashed constantly for the monopoly of trade in continental Arabia and the Arabian Sea. Persian naval expeditions sent by Khusro I in 570 conquered Yemen. This helped to control the Red Sea trade. Constantinople and the Arabs were worried about the new invasion by the Persians. Mohammed was also born the same year the Persians invaded Yemen. At the same time the power of Byzantium Empire was in decline and Shah Khusro II conquered the empire all the way to Bosphorus.

The East African coasts exported precious goods like ivory and gold. Kilwa and Sofala under Muslim control helped trade immensely. Europe and China bought the ivory but the largest customers were Indian royalty because the superior quality of African ivory assisted carving and ornament making. The Omani kingdoms thrived on the slave trade and supplied slaves to Arabia, India and China. The independent sheikdoms along the coasts of East Africa saw ebbs and flows in different juncture of modern history until the early twentieth century. This also caused the emergence of language Swahili which in Arabic means shore. It was written in Arabic script until the introduction of Roman script. Swahili is a mixture of native coastal African language, Arabic and some Persian. The dominance of Swahili language helped it spread to the hinterlands and is now spoken by around twenty million people to the sub-Saharan Africa.

Creation of Muslim Dominance in the Indian Ocean

The Abbasid era trade mostly centred around the Persian Gulf because they discouraged the Red Sea routes. This caused the ruining of the infrastructures as Red Sea Canal in Egypt and the population of the great city of Alexandria dropped from 600,000 to 100,000 in this era. Abbasids built canals connecting Tigris and Euphrates. In the high days of empire Arab traders became more influential than the Persians and any other community. But the Arabian community itself was diverse although connected by the language and religion. At the height of Muslim power, King Al-Mansur (754-775) boasted that every ship could come to Baghdad without facing any obstacles. Arabs also took over the South East Asian trade to the extent that Chinese goods exported to the India was on Arab ships. The long time presence and cultural give and take helped the conversion of much of the Malay peninsula and Indonesia by the end of fifteenth century.

Cultural goods produced during the Abbasid era were enormous. The tale of Sinbad refers to the stories of travellers who made the city glitter with luxury goods, books and high literature gathered around the Indian Ocean coasts. We can make lots of connections in the story of Sinbad and the real features in the Indian Ocean. The big birds they saw in the Indian Ocean would have been along the southern Indian coasts, the escape from cannibals points to New Guinea and the acquisition of ivory from the elephant graveyards would have happened in east Africa. The story of Sinbad was a full reflection and memories of travellers in Indian Ocean. Every year merchants in Siraf travelled with the wind to China, connecting Calicut or other South Indian ports. The short stop helped them to change their goods and sell some products in south Indian ports and reload with Indian goods and take them to South China Sea. The return journey came to Red Sea and Persian Gulf went overland to Mediterranean ports but the reality in this era was most of the goods were consumed by the Arab elites in Baghdad and Damascus. As the Arabian Peninsula prospered and consumer capacity increased, the imports from China, India and East Africa were consumed by the new Arabian elite itself. The Arab Muslim presence was spreading eastwards after the conquest of Jerusalem and in 710 the Arabs conquered Sind. This helped them to control Sind's ports along the shores. Using these ports, small boats traded along the coasts without crossing the ocean. The dominance of Muslims in Sind helped the Muslim traders immensely

The Muslim conquest of Alexandria occurred in 641 and the Byzantine resistance was too weak to protect the city. In 674 the Muslims marched to Constantinople. The sea defence saved Constantinople from Muslim occupation because the sea walls of the Byzantine force were impregnable. In the east, Muslim occupation of the Daybul helped to give Muslims greater access to the South Asian community. The greater migration and settlements in Zanzibar, Mogadishu and Kilwa would have only happened after the ninth century and it was mostly connected to the Hadrami and Persian Muslim traditions. The rise of Islam and revitalisation of Mediterranean trade had revolutionized not only the political life of Arabs and the Arabian empires but the neighbours and faraway lands like China. This overstretch of Islamic power also helped the non-Arab Muslims to gain the throne of the Islamic empire eventually. The pendulum of political power swung around Baghdad, Cairo and eventually to the Ottoman capital. Under the Umayyad rule the selection of Damascus as the capital helped the Persian Gulf maritime route when the old Hijaz caravan route was still open. The Red Sea trade was also open in this era.

Until the Ottoman Empire, political patronage in the Muslim world was fundamentally Arabian. The Tartars invasion and Turko-Mongol imperial expansion in Central Asia and South Asia changed the Arab influences in Islamic societies. The relative political stability under the Umayyad and Abbasid lasted for a long time in a historical sense, which helped to build the bases for the later expansion all over, from the south and central Asia to Andalusia. These regional political powers helped to mend the economic and political culture for a more cosmopolitan world. This can be seen in China also: as the maritime trade flourished people started moving from the north to coastal cities. The maritime travel needs extensive technical expertise from ship building to navigation. So the maritime culture itself is the reflection of a community's knowledge base and social status. The material conditions of a community should be also sound to maintain and upgrade the knowledge of seafaring. Trade helps in knowledge upgrading and vice versa. Knowledge is fluid and constantly updated, as we see in the Abbasid era translation movements. Knowledge from Greek, Sanskrit and Chinese was translated and updated, as happened in Islam when it came to South and South East Asia. As Muslims moved eastwards, the collective knowledge of Hindu India and Buddhist Asia was enlarged and spread. The cultural communities never were insulated nor were they overconfident about their perceived knowledge superiority.

Social Indulgence of Muslims in the Coasts

The Muslim sailors married local women in Malabar and East Africa in large numbers taking advantage of the religious right to polygamy. The Shia Muslim sailing community also entertained the *Mut'a*.² In a *Mut'a* marriage, a man lives in the woman's home with the consent of her family and by assuring them *Mahar*.³ The Malabar matriarchal family system among Nairs and other castes supported this system. The ships which would leave the Arabian shore in July or August and return in December and reach back after one or one half months. So they concluded alternative family as a necessity. In Malabar Hindu Nair families had matriarchal family structure which had historical significance in the caste system of Hinduism. Some kinds of matriarchal system are also prevalent among certain section of Muslims even now. This system helped the temporary marriages (Kareem, 1999). The Arab trading communities also had matriarchal family structure in their tribal code. The guardianship of the children was on women and their brothers in most of these societies. It is a pre-Islamic tribal tradition which was practiced in southern Arabian communities. The children of this relationships had relatively better of both by claiming relations to both communities especially in Malabar and Zanzibar. Temporary marriages were practiced until the 1960s on the Malabar Coast. Because of this in Malabar, Ceylon, and Zanzibar there were mixed-race children and families. The mixed-race children commanded relatively better social position in the community. In Sri Lanka this kind of marriage was called *Bina* marriage. According to Robertson Smith there are three important features in the temporary marriages: first, the choice of the woman to take the man; second, the woman could only receive the man in her house; and third, if she wanted to get rid of him she could (Smith, 2007). This fundamentally helped to sustain matriarchal structure. If the women move to the temporary husband's house the guardianship of the children would be shared among themselves. This system was called *Bal*. It is believed that the *Moppila* community fundamentally consists of the mixed-race children, although this is contested also. It is also factually accountable that long before Islam and Islamic invasions and influences in the Indian Ocean there were mixed communities thriving along the coasts of the Arabian Sea. These communities would be the first converts to

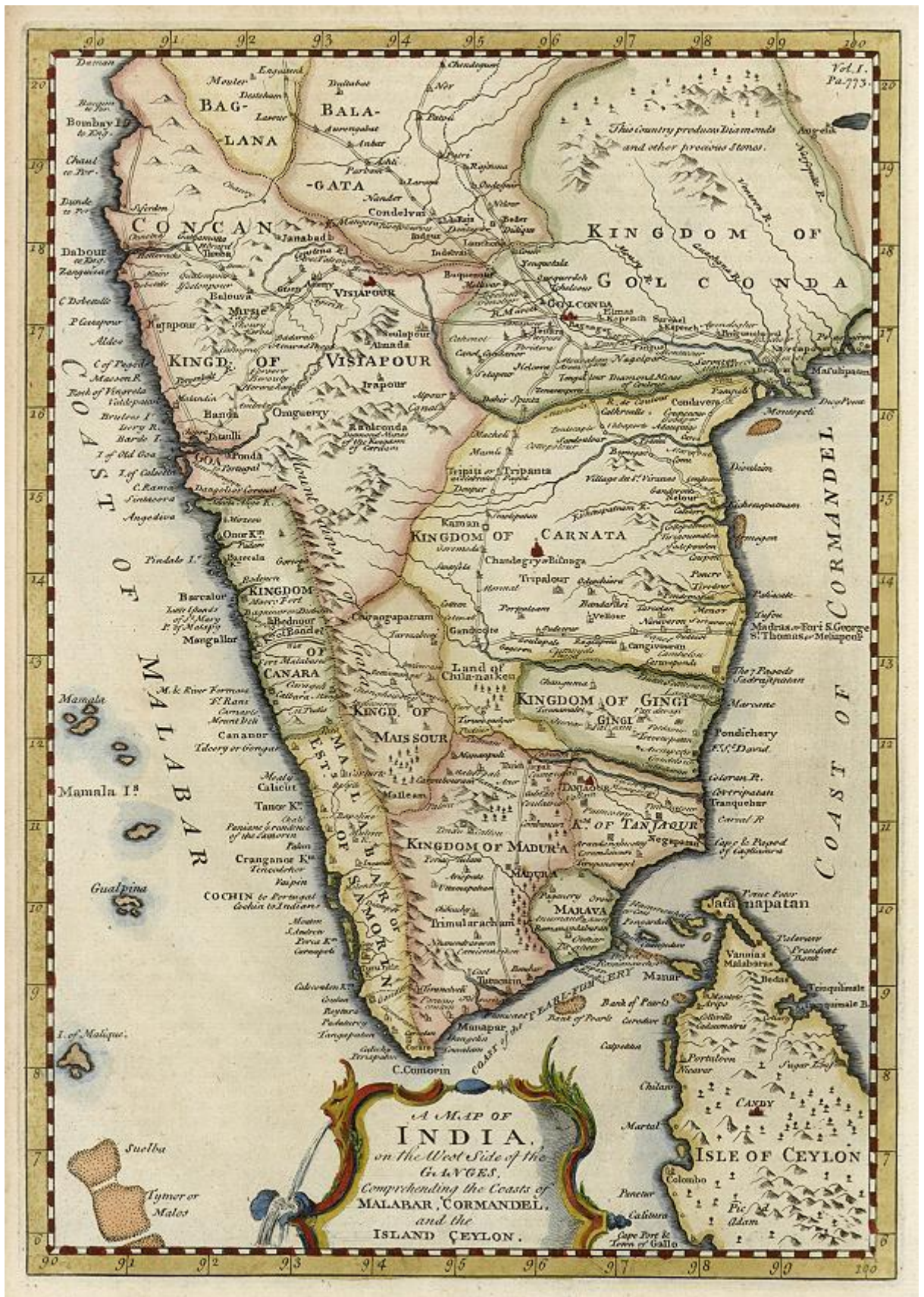
² -Annullable short term marriage which is allowed in some sects of Shia Islam.

³ - The money given by the groom to bride in the time of marriage in Muslim marriages.

Islam because of their familial and social relations. The history of Malabar itself is the history of Muslims because before the sixth century the historical is mostly epics and speculations. And there is not much written or archaeological evidence tells the full story. The Sangha era poetry and literature mostly describes to the eastern side of Western Ghats and draws imaginary pictures.

Malabar as *entrepôt* was more exposed to the outside influence than others. Monsoon winds dictated the coastal trade and hinterland and agriculture. The monsoon related seasonal trade created months of brisk business and months of idleness. The entry of the Portuguese in Malabar had different political implication and the most affected people were the Muslim traders. Indian Ocean Muslim power never reached Malabar as invasive power but as friendly trading partner. The industrial revolution and the gunpowder changed the political reality of the world and of Malabar. The exclusivity of the Portuguese from the native population was not expected by the rulers in Malabar. The Portuguese and Dutch writings about Malabar give us their impression of the coastal community. The works of Durate Barbosa and Tome Pires were more functional than an endeavour to understand the social or political reality in Malabar. The chronicle of Barbosa and Pires are also put in suspicion because of the prejudice against Muslim trading community and lack of understanding of customs and mistrust of Hinduism. Malabar was divided into different kingdoms and Zamorin of Calicut had greatest power among them. Other kingdoms were called *Kolathirnadu*, *Venad*, and *Perupadappunad*. Kolathirinadu was the northern end of the modern day Kerala from Nilesvaram to Tellichery River. The Zamorin's country was from Tellichery River to Cranganore. Venad was till the Vembanad lake. The royal family of Kollam ruled till the southern end of Tamil country.

Map of South India 16th Century



Spice export was the main income source of the Zamorin's kingdom. But more than that, Calicut worked as the calling port for the eastern Indian Ocean. With the north eastern monsoon dozens of ships travelled from Calicut to the Red Sea ports with spices and clothes. The traders in Kollam and Cannanore played an important role in supplying Calicut and Maldivian Islands. The Portuguese found the mercantile society in Malabar complex and dominated by Muslim traders. Gujaratis and Chetties for Tamil region had been influential in different aspects of trade. When the Portuguese arrived in the Malabar coast, ancient merchant communities were in decline. Jews did not command much trade relative to Muslims and others in the sixteenth century. The Portuguese came with Christianity but were not as inclusive in social aspects of the life as Muslims. The Portuguese did not intermarry in large scale with the native population nor did they accept the social customs prevalent in the community. The Portuguese showed great interest in Church related activities. In the sixteenth century the prominence of Muslims at sea was at its highest point.

Foreign merchants were treated with the highest regard in Calicut. On arrival the foreign merchant was assigned a Nair Guard, a Chetty to look after his goods and money and a broker to get acquainted with the market (Bouchon 1987). The Muslim sea merchants in the *Kolathirinadu* were powerful. In the first quarter of the sixteenth century the Ali Raja family, with its own army and the right to collect taxes, worked as a state within the state. Ali Raja had influence in Sri Lanka and he collected tribute from Maldivian islands. *Pathalayini kollam*, which had a history of trade to the ancient age, commanded prominence in the Indian Ocean Muslim era. It had fallen under the influence of Zamorin. It had ancient Muslim presence by the early Arabian sea trade. Ponnani was the scholastic and spiritual capital of Moppila community. It had big influence in the resistance against foreign powers from the Portuguese to the British. In *Thuhfathul Mujahiddin*, Zainuddin Makdum explained the intellectual justification against the foreign powers. This was a call for the resistance and it was written in Arabic to fundamentally engage the scholastic community in the Malabar Coast. The religious figures played throughout the history of the Moppila resistance against colonialism. The Hadrami scholastic community was politically vibrant and it had connections all over the Indian Ocean. The resistance against colonial power was shared goal from Hadramawt to Malabar. The legendary figure in the Moppila

resistance Saiyyid Fadl commanded the help of Ottoman kings and Omani rulers. Saiyyid Fadl inherited the social status and political influence from his father and the legacy of the political activism legitimized by his religious authority.

The social life in Malabar coastal community was complex. Even as the Muslim traders were in constant touch with the Nair dignitaries and attended royal court with them, the fellow workers of Muslims were low caste Mukkuvas. The conversion to Islam happened from the Mukkuva community because of the egalitarian social system among the Muslims. Converts commanded better social order in the hierarchy of caste. Muslims also intermarried into this community because it did not have any restriction regarding marrying foreigners and Muslims. The Muslims were not bound by the restrictions of the political control of the kings. This helped them move between different kingdoms. The kings owned the land and the seas were for merchants. This helped the diversity and competition in trade and everyone gained.

The coastal population did not have much idea about the importance of the arrival of Vasco Da Gama in 1498. It was considered as a curiosity trip to in the search of Christians and spices. But this expedition changed the destiny of the Indian Ocean. In 1500, the Portuguese came well equipped with artillery and attacked the Calicut port. Throughout the sixteenth century the rivalry between the Portuguese and the Zamorin Kingdom continued. With the help of Muslim admirals the Zamorin remained an independent for a century. But the Portuguese established good relation with both neighbours in south and north and thereby threatened the prominence of Calicut as the biggest port in the western Indian coast.

The traders and the coastal community's story is told and written by travellers in different languages from Arabic, Persian and Dutch. The collapse of the Roman Empire created a big vacuum in maritime power. Emergence of Islam coincided with the collapse of Roman hegemony. The complex maritime trade needed protection from pirates and competing powers and legal framework for finance and other transactions. So from the fourth century onwards Arabs were the prominent traders in the eastern world. Jews and other European tribes played a big role in Mediterranean trade in this era. The expansion of Islamic empire to *Bilad al Sham* helped them to open up the lid of western trade. According to prophetic tradition, extended trade with *sham* from Arabian heartland was very important for Mecca as a trading and holy city. And it is told of Muhammad that before marriage, as an employee of his wife to

be, Khadeeja sends him to *sham* as her confident with caravan. Material prosperity and spiritual revolution had changed the seventh century Arabia by its scale and diversity.

Arabian trade brought with it changed moral and ethical life to the Malabar coasts. Hindu rulers were happy to positively engage with the new religion and moral structure. There was constant competition for the traders among the different small states on the Malabar Coast. The trade helped the country's economy and the political system was sustained. Most of the early Mosques were built as donations by the king and elites in the Hindu community. The political community was small and mostly reliant on international trade. Ports along the south western coasts helped the travellers to continue their travel from South East Asia to Arabia and east Africa. The eventual monopoly of the Muslims made Jews weak in Cochin and Kollam ports. There were small scale conflict happened between them in different historical junctures. Until the sixteenth century this dominance was unchecked and had helped the Muslim community to relative peace and harmony. The lack of competition also helped community grow and create cohesive society in Malabar.

In East Africa, 'shirazi' as a patrilineal position was respected by the people. The descendents of this family relation also help them to gain political and economic power. It is also claimed that the Shirazi dynasty more or less ruled the coast of East Africa. As the Ibadi Muslims lost their political power in Oman, they were pushed by Umayyad dynasty in to the islands along the eastern coast of Africa. After that, Shias became dominant in the Indian Ocean which pushed them further to coast of Tanganyika and the islands of Zanzibar. Gold trade in Kilwa Kisiwani helped the Ibadi Muslims to set up a prosperous city state. Even though the gold trade happened in the island ports the gold came from mines in extreme hinterland, as interior as modern day Zimbabwe. The fight for the Mozambican port of Sofala was fundamentally for the gold and luxury goods trade.

The dark side of the African exploration consisted of the slave trade. As the ivory and gold went from the African coasts to different parts of the world, with them the slaves also went. The Abbasid era agriculture needed large amounts of human resource which fundamentally came from the Africa as the bonded labour. These slaves were used in southern Iraq's marshes to turn them into agricultural land. The slavery caused a lot of havoc in the Abbasid Dynasty at different points in time. This social exploitation ended in slave uprisings in 689, 694, 760 and 869 CE. The last

revolt shook the Abbasid Empire badly. The dominance of Gulf in the Indian Ocean trade was led by the Abbasids and their flourishing empire.

Muslim Engagements in Indian Ports

In the fourteenth century Islamic influence became relatively important in the western Indian Ocean. Malabar, Konkan and the coastal cities of Gujarat had large indigenous populations of Muslims. These communities had extended connections in East Africa and Arabia. Jains were the prominent merchants in Gujarat. Jains also occupied prominent position in administration of the Caulukya Kingdom. The continental trade was mostly controlled by small Jain communities. Although the Delhi Sultanate conquered Gujarat in 1303, the continental trading community did not get adversely affected. Khabhat remained the prominent port in the northwest Indian Ocean. The southwestern ports like Calicut, Kollam and Cochin eventually became entrepôts for the travellers in between the western and eastern Indian Ocean. There were a lot of small ports in the Konkan coast which helped the continental trade in southern and central India. The religious understanding and tolerance was part of the grand narrative of the western shores of India. The study about religion and secularism should go in to this era to understand what the keys to religious tolerance are and what the causes for communal tensions are. A mosque was built to commemorate the Arab merchant Ali's help to the Kadamba royal pilgrims in a shipwreck near Goa. His grandson was appointed as the administrator in the Goa region. This also can be seen in Malabar history of Zamorin and his Muslim admirals. Until the Portuguese landed in Calicut, Muslims had the monopoly and goodwill of the rulers in Malabar. Vasco Da Gama and his sailors questioned this monopoly by influencing Kochi kingdom. The Muslim and Nair army of Zamorin kept the political and social sphere of Calicut intact. From 1498 to 1598 this alliance was intact in resisting the Portuguese monopoly in the sea. But under Zamorin's arbitration, Kunjali IV surrendered but he was hanged by the Portuguese. This created a trust issue and hostility among Nair warriors and the Muslim community. This hostility spread as communal issues along the coasts and hinterland of Malabar for coming decades until the Moppila rebellion of 1921. That was one of the last nails in the coffin of Moppila resistance against the foreign powers for centuries. The resistance against colonialism had spread in different spheres of Muslim society from trade to academia. The fall of caliphate and the colonial expansion of European powers also

coincided with the Moppila resistance. There were direct and indirect political support for resistance from Ottoman Empire and Omani Sultanate.

Before Islam, Persian and Arab traders visited the Malabar Coast and Sri Lanka but after the Abbasid rule the Gulf lost its importance in ocean trade to the Red Sea. This caused more influence of Arabs in the ocean trade and travel. The Hadrami immigration to coasts of India gave different dimension to the Muslim community living on the Malabar coast. The Shia influence along the Malabar Coast was relatively high in this era but the Hadrami influence all over the Indian Ocean from the early thirteenth century changed the religious dynamics of the Malabar coasts. As with every trading community, the Hadramis also carried their faith with them wherever they went. This caused Shafii' Islam spread all over Indian Ocean. In Malabar Muslims were deeply engaged with the local population. They wore what others wore and socially engaged with other communities but kept their faith. The study of Muslim history in India could find different approaches of Islam's expansion in South Asian continent and its impacts in the social fabric of the regions. In coastal southern India difference of culture was accepted and people were less resistant to the new ideas and structures. The traders and local community cared about the idea of tolerance and the understanding from their experience at sea and of different lands helped them in maintaining it. Even though Islam commanded the political power in the coasts and sea, Muslims remained a minority in Malabar unlike Swahili coasts. The economic and political relation with native Hindu community was important from Gujarat to Malabar coast to sustain the trade and it was mutually beneficial.

Muslim Engagement in India Ocean: Hostility and Acceptance

In Zanzibar the new traders were treated with high respect and granted with personal hosts. This helped the new traders to delve into the bazaar with the protection of their host. Hindu Kings in Malabar hosted big merchants by themselves. Muslims were the harbour masters for centuries in Calicut. Because of the strict caste hierarchy the Brahminical Hinduism had relative rivalry against the Muslim which was present in western coasts of India. But that did not discourage the large scale trade and cultural relations. Brahminic idea of impurity in ocean travellers and segregation against them was a bigger issue in the Gujarat coast compared to the Malabar coast. This could have affected them badly in the coming century. Among the western Indian coasts Calicut surpassed the dominance of Khambhat in the

thirteenth century. In Ibn Battuta's travelogue he compliment Calicut as "one of the largest harbours in the world. It is visited by men from China, Sumatra, Ceylon, the Maldives, Yemen and Fárs, and in it gather merchants from all quarters." (Cited in Gibb 1983: 234) The shipwrecks were protected by law in Calicut. In most of the other states the shipwreck and goods were retained by the treasury. It was a natural progression for the Arab traders to push the boundaries and from the eighth century onwards they pushed beyond Cape Comorin to Sri Lanka. Sri Lanka was a pilgrimage site for Muslims because of Adam Peak where it is believed that Adam descended from heaven. The recurring ebb and flow of Chola Empire also helped the Muslims to engage in trade in Coromandel Coast. The Chola kings also did not discriminate against anyone in ocean trade, much like and the Zamorin of Calicut and the Caulukya of Gujarat.

The Muslim community along the coast of the Indian Ocean was mostly Shafii' Sunnis. But in different parts of India Muslims from the Hanafi school of law were prominent. Along the Coromandel Coast the Shafii' Muslims abstained from family relationships with native Tamilians and preferred to marry a certain community in Sri Lanka, unlike in Zanzibar and Malabar. The emergence of Arabic-Malayalam and Arabic-Tamil happened during this time. Access to studying and reading was restricted in low caste Hindu communities. But reading the Quran was important in Muslim communities' day to day life. Arabic- Malayalam is Malayalam written in Arabic script, which helped the native people to learn to read Quran even if they could not comprehend it fully.

Hadrami Networks and Cultural Engagement

Eseng Ho writes about the Hadrami immigrant community and their genealogical experience: "While globalization denies absence by rushing around to cover it up, diasporas do the opposite. They acknowledge absence and chronically explore its meanings and its markings." (Ho 2006: 4) The geography of Hadramawt is an important factor in the Indian Ocean history. Sandwiched between hot and barren desert and ocean stretches had destined the Hadramis to travel and networks. Small patches of land were insufficient to feed the population so it fed itself from the sea. Not only did it feed from the sea, Hadramut ruled the sea without a greater empire like Abbasids or Ottomans had. The big difference between empires and the Hadrami trade and economic influence is that it did not travel with big navy coast to coast to

trade with distant lands, which is what happened with most of the modern maritime powers in the Indian Ocean. The Hadramis engaged extensively with the local population, married and had children with the locals, talked native languages and obeyed the local customs. The powers came and went in the modern Indian Ocean such as the Portuguese, Dutch and English but the Hadramis remained and kept the sea alive. The Hadrami Diaspora consisted not just of traders who wanted to make some money. Eventually others followed them like poets, scholars and religious heads. So the written history of the community is diverse, with poetry, biography and novels. In a migrant society it is not important where you are born but where you die. Especially the tombstone signifies the culturally accumulated knowledge of ancestors and it is a sign mark to that. So the importance to tombstones eventually caused pilgrimage to these sites. Hadramis are special in the mobile communities as Chettiars or Gujaratis or Sindis because of their larger engagement in every aspect of migrant nationality and ocean life. The diaspora in a post-modern world has the opportunities of phones and video conversation and high speed air travel. But waiting for a year to see fathers or sons was a different social experience for the Hadrami community. The dead never came back so the tomb becomes the site of pilgrimage in the years to come.

Map of Hadramawt



Absence gave *Fado*⁴ the desperation to know and understand the people who are away. Absence is highly productive in the diasporic imagination. The family back home and the tribal unity also enhance because of the need for the protection of the clan. Death in absence creates more melancholia for family and enhances the cultural experience. The diaspora act more slowly than material globalization: because it extends to the future by cultural means it lives longer than material globalization. The retention of Hadrami familial relations along the Indian Ocean coasts even in the era of container ships and air travels are the result of this.

Oman had an important role in Indian Ocean trade since ancient times. There was no direct trade from the Mediterranean coasts to India until 100BC. So travel by keeping the shore in sight was the only way of navigation. The discovery of the wind system and navigational skills revolutionized the Indian Ocean trade. Oman and Malabar fostered better relations after the emergence of Islam and imperial expansion. The export of Arabian horses to south-eastern India was alive for centuries. Location was the greatest advantage for the Hadrami community. With the Persian Gulf to the

⁴ - Portuguese genre of songs about separation and travel.

north and the Red Sea trade to the west, proximity of the African coasts helped to build a connective port for Arabia.

The demand for agents in Malabar was the cause for the settlement in Malabar by the Hadrami traders. The settlements also helped them for seasonal travel along coasts in the Indian Ocean. Twelfth century onwards the interlinked trading networks were helping the traders for better business and finance in distant lands which could be accessed seasonally. The trading brought Islam to the Malabar coasts. The diaspora population of Malabar consisted of Hadramis, Omanis, Abyssinians and people from Hormuz. But the Hadramis and Omanis were the prominent traders and they had better networks than others. The southern Arabian diaspora carried different political, social and moral tradition.

The socio-political value of the community put the pressure on maritime cultural expansion. Material goods do not move until the producer and consumer come to some kind of cultural understanding. This understanding can also be artificially created, as is the demand for luxury goods in this era. After the fourteenth century South East Asia largely gave away the western pull towards trade and economics and joined the Chinese and Japanese political and economic system. Travel between the South China Sea and Red Sea was undertaken in one stretch at first, but later that changed as entrepôts were created along the southern coasts of India for distributing and exchanging goods. This was helpful for traders everywhere.

Conclusion

The perspective of coastal community about the sea is built on of their experiences and ambition. The understanding of the coastal community as a static and monolithic entity will not help the analysis. There is diversity in the coastal community and every group has its own interest in the ocean. Geography, social structure, political system and economy affect the people's perspective about the Ocean. In southern Arabia, geography of the land plays an important part in people's perception. Sandwiched between barren desert and an open Ocean of possibilities is an important factor that affects the enthusiasm of people in travelling and exploiting the ocean for resources. In Zanzibar the history of ocean travel is the most visible characteristic of the community. It had good experience of constant trade and thriving cosmopolitan community; bad experience of conquests of Arabs and social degradation of native Africans. The caste-based social structure of Malabar created a

different experience of different parts of coastal communities. Rulers had positive and prosperous history in Malabar even in small principalities. Muslims had good memories of acceptance by the native community and better social position. The low caste people had also better experience because of the cosmopolitan structure because it helped them to eventually gain better social recognition by the help of traders.

Chapter III

Trade and Oceanic Culture

Trade is connected to different variables in the social fabric of a community. Civilizational imagination plays a big role in creating demand and supply chains throughout history. Also, the political system determines what is to be traded and with whom it is to be traded. Malabar, Zanzibar and southern Arabia demonstrate this fact throughout their history of maritime trade and business. Aggressive shifts from trade relations to political invasion in the colonial era are a good example to this. Trade never happens in a vacuum. Taste of food, cloth and luxury in a civilization is constructed politically and historically (Bourdieu 1979). Aesthetic sense of society also determines how trade is conducted and what is available. Abbasid and British colonial era shows us how the hegemonic practices of transaction in goods and finance helped trade from an organizational point of view, even though both Abbasid and colonial mercantile practices had different political approaches. Abbasid era conducted it from religious hegemony, colonial power conducted it from the point of view of protest according to law (Subramanian 2010; Ho 2004).

Homo sapiens are fundamentally a terrestrial animal, which is a drawback in a planet whose surface is covered two thirds by water. Therefore, it was an essential for mankind to control the seas for development of civilization. The ocean helped as an effective barrier in a less organized human society from extreme competition and chaos. Oceans and other kinds of geographical barriers worked as boundaries in evolving civilizational units. When civilizations reached relative stability and prosperity they needed more resources to sustain their growth. Then, the very same ocean boundaries helped bring together people to facilitate commerce, cultural exchange and big wars (Sridharan 1965). We need to consider of coasts and how long they can be stretched. All these aspects influence human perception on oceans and sea trade. K.N. Chaudhuri remarks, “How far the Indian Ocean made its influence felt in the vast sweep of land in the north and the south west in the direction of Asia and Africa is a fascinating question” (Chaudhuri, 1985: 160). This overlapping human influence in thinking about ocean is very much connected to the history and experience of the people and their stories. M.N. Pearson also addresses this issue thus: “a certain fuzziness is in order; rather than try to lay down rigid borders where land

takes over and the sea disappears” (Pearson 2003: 28). He describes the heterogeneous data set in this study as dispersed all around the world by giving interesting examples. For instance, if someone wants to write about the horses of the Indian Army in the nineteenth century, he has to go to New South Wales. Likewise, if someone wants to write about where Indian railway sleepers came from they would have to go to Australia and the Baltic. The study about the Indian Ocean trade community is a very dispersed and complex exercise, which is dynamically connected with different forces of history of the Ocean.

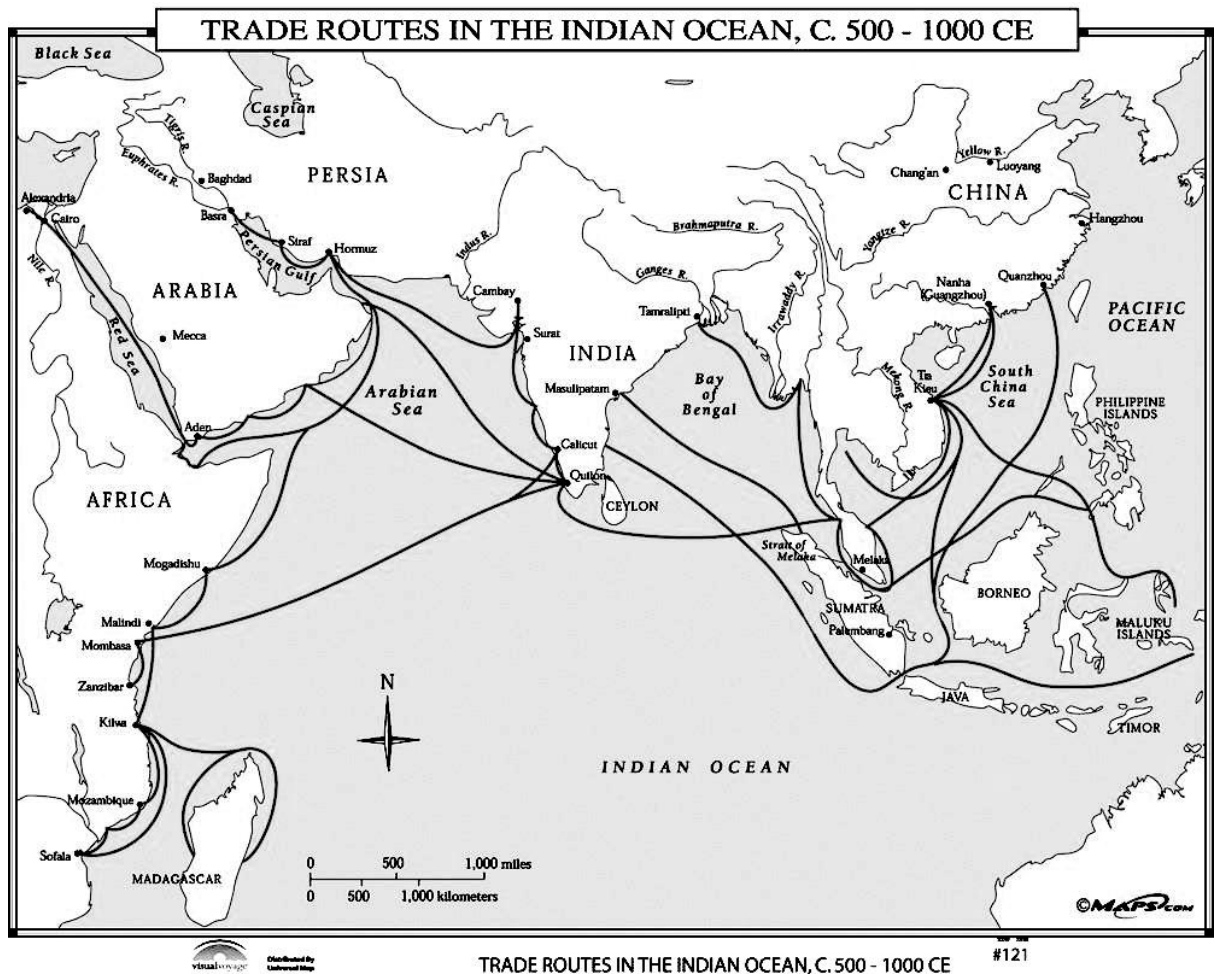
The quest to travel for material resources is understood as the fundamental cause for the population movement out of Africa. The economic refugees from the African continent could well be the forefathers of remaining human population. Continental travel is easy because of its relative predictability and it needs fewer resources than ocean travel. Fundamental problem in any ocean travel is the viability of building a ship, which can withstand long trip and big waves. When the civilization acquires resources, imagination and needs also evolve. There is a long history of goods movement by land from East Asia to Europe via Middle East and North Africa. But it has its own challenges like taxes all over the trade routes, accessibility to various countries and bandits along the way. Sea is relatively free from these problems and extremely cheap when compared with goods movement through land routes. This comparative advantage encouraged people to pursue sea trade. Throughout history, innumerable examples of ocean trade can be encountered.

Indian Ocean Trade History

Since trade through sea was costly to begin with, value added goods or precious materials were the initial traded items. Early movement was mostly of spices and precious stones. There were Indian merchant colonies throughout the Indian Ocean coasts. Those colonies were in Java, Sumatra, South China, Malaya, Arabia, Persia and Zanzibar. Buddhist Jatakas (500-400 BCE) mention trade links between Babylon and western Indian states taking place as early as the sixth and fifth centuries BCE. In the seventh century BCE, the scriptures mention, Buddhist India used monsoon wind to reach Persian Gulf for trade. Historical analysis of the trade and idea movements helps us understand the causes for travel and cultural exchanges. Also, it serves to identify the connecting features among trade and culture.

Ocean trade is not a modern phenomenon. We know that it stretches back to the BCE era. The logs of teak wood found in the ruins of the temple of moon Atur and the palace of Nebuchadnizzar (604-562 BCE), Mesopotamia, were grown on southern Indian coasts and were the only place where teak was found on coastal lines. East African contact with Malabar could be far older. It is mentioned in the Old Testament that when the Queen of Sheba went see King Solomon she carried camel loads of spices: “There never was such abundance of spices as those which the Queen of Sheba gave to King Solomon” (Chronicles 9: 9/ King 10: 10 King James Bible Cited in Bahauddin 1992). The spices like pepper and cinnamon could have come from Malabar. The Buddhist Jataka references and the Old Testament story about the Queen of Sheba indicate that the ancient community had knowledge that any ship leaving the Malabar coast at the beginning of north-east monsoon will reach Somali coast around fortieth day from its departure. Present Addis Ababa-Djibouti railway line is in the place of ancient trade route from coastal North Africa to inland. According to historians there were human settlements at regular intervals on this route.

The cost for a terrestrial being is the end of mobility but with the knowledge of monsoon winds and ship building techniques there is an unending possibility of movement and eventually trade. The knowledge about the monsoon system of winds gives an advantage to maritime activity in Indian Ocean. The regularity of the winds acts as an assurance in determining the direction for travel and trading activities. The north eastern monsoon build up in November allows the dhows from Arabia to reach the East African coast in forty days. In December, ships can reach East African coasts with the help of monsoon winds. In faster and better monsoon winds, time taken to return from the Indian coast is around twenty to twenty five days. After winter, when the winds get more aggressive and may cause occurrence of cyclones in the eastern coasts, ships avoid venturing in water. The extreme monsoon wind causes cyclones in the east and west Arabian Sea in which people rarely travelled. Monsoon dictated the trading season, the northern part of East Africa is favoured because it has long trading season and the southern coasts are relatively out of the monsoon system.



International trade system is dependent on surplus products exchange. Zanzibar maintained its trade from early Common Era by using food surplus, timber, ivory and gold. External demand was the cause for the value added goods and luxury items like ivory and gold. In the early Greek and Roman Empires the demand for ivory was large and the Red Sea traders were overwhelmingly involved in this. After the decline of the Roman Empire, ivory was consumed by Chinese and Indians. With the introduction of coins and financial systems in Asia the demand for gold also increased. Zimbabwe had gold mines which employed a large labour force to extract it and ship it through the East African ports.

Kishkenda Kandam draws our attention to ancient trade with China and the countries in the South China Sea. He mentions that by the eighth century Sumatra was a Hinduized kingdom. The trade and political interaction between South India and countries in the eastern Indian Ocean community was large compared to other ocean communities in India. The trade between Indians and Greeks flourished in the time

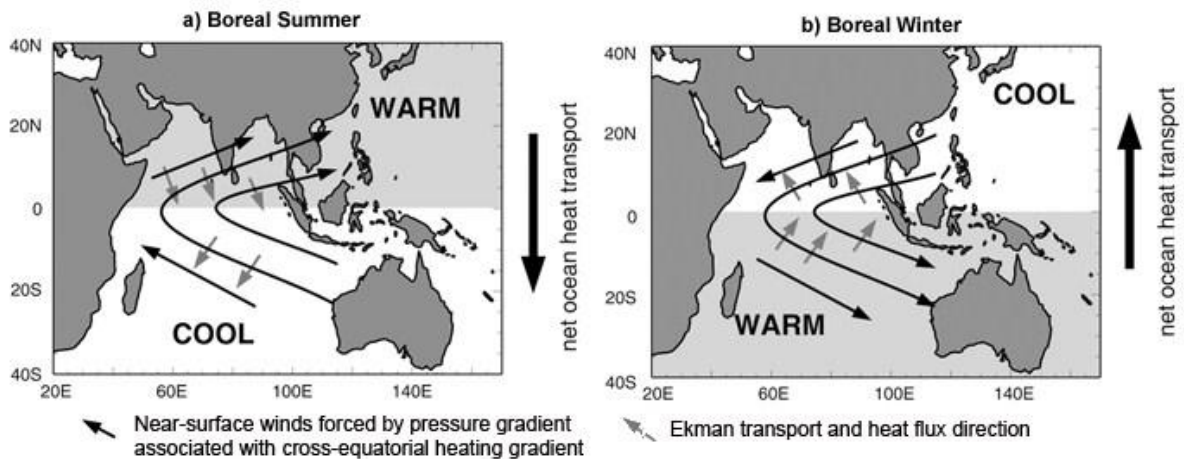
after annexation of Egypt by Alexander. Under Ptolemy, Alexandria became the transit hub between East and West. The Roman king was worried about the trade deficit because of import of high priced luxury goods. There were 840-1200 Romans at Muziris port in about 226 CE to guard their trade. Archaeological excavations have found a large number of Roman coins all over the port cities in Malabar and Coromandel.

Muziris had historical place in Indian Ocean trade because of its centrality in the vastness of the Indian Ocean. From the East, Chinese and Malays came with goods along with the Arabs, Persians, Ethiopians and Romans from the west for trade. In Alexandria, Venetians purchased the goods which were sold all around the Mediterranean coasts.

The Modern European understanding about the Indian Ocean comes from the colonial past. In the Middle Ages, Europe was under Christian rule and most of the cultural exchange with the world was shut. The crusade also caused the relative difficulty in trade through land routes which was ruled by Muslim kings. The Mamluks of Egypt and Ottomans never closed the land route between Arabian Sea and Mediterranean. However, trade along this route was dominated by Italians and Levantines and this was unacceptable to the new powers rising in the Atlantic Seaboard.

In a very strict sense, Africa, India and Arabia do not have a common cultural or geographic framework. Ethnically and geographically, Arabs have more connections with the Mediterranean than Africa or India. But nature played a big role in connecting these communities. Without the monsoon, any trade and interaction between these coastal societies would have been impossible. Monsoon helped cultural and trade exchanges between India, Persian Gulf and Africa for at least 2000 years. The trade and comparative advantage, as stated above, connected the hinterlands of these three communities. The North-Eastern Monsoon (Kaskazi in Swahili) and South Western Monsoon (Kusi) helped the ship masters to carry out their travel all across the Indian Ocean.

Simplified Regulation of the Seasonal Cycle of the Indian Ocean



The changing resource access is the important factor in trading community. The Somali port of Mogadishu was initially dominated by gold trade, but then the port shifted to southern ports to reduce the distance from mines. Then it shifted to Kilwa with the help of Yemeni tribes. When the Portuguese caravel arrived, the trade was well established and diverted to different ports like Sanjeja Kati and Zanzibar. The comparisons between coastal areas in North Africa and Southern Arabia give us a different perspective about the coastal societies. The coastal areas of Yemen and Oman were cut off from its interior, materially and culturally to some extent. The relative isolation of coastline and hinterland is due to the mountain ranges. This mountain system also gives different seasonal effect for this part of Arabia which in seasonal term resembles coastal western Indian Ocean. *Wadis* (valleys; dry riverbeds) work as the passage to hinterlands in Southern Arabia. These riverbeds worked as the passageway in spreading Alawi Islamic tradition from East Africa to South East Asia. As this part of desert community in southern Arabia was under constant attack from inland, it was not self-sufficient. The trade was inevitable to sustain the economy. According to *Periplus* and Ptolomy's *Geography*, the Arabian Sea trade was in place from second century C.E (Schoff 1912). Initial East African trade happened with Red Sea community because of easy accessibility. The capture of Yemen by Sassanian dynasty would be the cause for opening of Persian Gulf trade. Historically East Africa exported raw materials and forest goods in exchange of iron wares and glass products which were created in India and Persia. The other primary export of East Africa was gold, extracted from Sofala, Kilwa, Mombasa and Malindi. Finished goods like

Persian ceramics, Indian red ware, cotton and silk cloths were the imports. The unified political and economic system under Islam from the ninth century favoured the Indian Ocean trade. The artisan works of Persian Sassanian society produced glitzy kitchen wares and chandelier. Oman as a political maritime power played a big connecting job for the competing and trading partners in Arabian Sea. But after the emergence of Shiite Fatimids in Egypt, they circumvented the Abassids and started trading with the Byzantines.

The political influence in Zanzibar of the Oman Sultanate helped it to establish influence throughout East Africa. Even after the colonial invasions of East Africa, Zanzibar remained under Oman and Arab rule for a long time. The revival of Red Sea route positively influenced the economy of East African coasts. The mercantile community came to power in Oman because of this. This shift helped Yemen and Hadhramawt in attracting more traders to its coasts. The connected diaspora in East Africa also made financial gains from this shift in trade. Banu Majis and Muzzafar tribes helped this process immensely. When the merchants could not reach Aden before the closing of the season they stopped at Shihr, eventually transforming it into a big transit point to East Africa from Arabia.

As we have seen, the changing of trade from Persian Gulf to Red Sea had a positive effect on East African community. The later changes had dramatic effect on East African demography, culture and religion. In the late Middle Ages, usage of the direct route from East Africa through Maldives islands to India had changed the dynamics of the region. Under the southern coastal Kilwan hegemony, Zanzibar, Pemba, Sofala and Madagascar came to the forefront in Indian Ocean maritime trade. The route would have been in service from eleventh century but orientation towards Sind, Persian Gulf, and Red Sea had overshadowed the route.

Even though the direct route from East Africa was used overwhelmingly in the late Middle Ages, Hadhramawt influenced the region extensively for political and cultural reasons. Up to this time Alawi Shafi'i jurisprudent tradition and Alawi spiritual *tariqa* had gained relative influence in the region. The scholastic movement around Indian Ocean region had increased and had started to affect political dynamics in the region. After the downfall of Fatimid reign in Egypt, south Hadhramawt remained Sunni Shafi'i unlike North Yemen which was Zaidi. As the Shafi'i dynasty

in Hadhramawt expanded, it controlled Sana'a, Aden and Zufar. Aden was the important connecting point to East Africa resulting in shorter connections with the Gulf. The Rasulid Dynasty was in the line of good administrators and helped spreading Shafi'i scholastic network throughout East Africa. It also helped them politically because this religious influence eventually gave them scholastic community support in fighting colonial powers and their network grew bigger. Ahdali clan who settled in Mogadishu became influential in region and eventually became sultans in Mogadishu. There were small merchant princely states along the coasts in the thirteenth century. According to historians, the high regard for the Muslim traders during this period resulted in religious conversions. In the late fourteenth century in coastal East Africa, Muslim population was significant because of this factor. Historical religious establishments in Zanzibar, Mogadishu, and Mombasa are the remnants of this era. In some areas, the religious orthodoxy was part of administrative system in coastal towns.

Ibn Battuta provides evidence that Shafi'i version of Sharia' law was administered by the sultans in Mogadishu. The Swahili society linked with the Indian Ocean and the people lived on the coasts. The trade and cultural relation according to historical records have been going from the first millennium C.E. This also causes cultural and political tension especially in the nation state imagination era. The immigration and inclusiveness debate is very much alive in Zanzibar. There is still confusion in multicultural society building. The tension between Shirazi immigrants with African indigenous people and Shirazi versus Arab newcomers are the historic signposts of the historical conflict in the region.

Slave trade was the notorious fact about Zanzibar and East Africa in the eighteenth century. British imperial navy tried to stop this practice but it was impossible when the United States, Portugal and Spain were part of this. In Zanzibar, slave trade grew exponentially in the late eighteenth century, which was unseen before. East Africa grew by trade and immigration throughout history. The *Periplus* and Ptolemy's *Geography* says the Arabs and Persian tried to connect with Africa in the first century C.E. itself. But there is a historical problem when we analyze this situation. There is a debate about whether Africans had taken any initiative for sea travelling in this era or earlier. The Arab documents provide evidence about the Arab ship building and seamen but there are no existing documents in East Africa which

mention the possibility of sea trade before the Arab era of sea dominance. Most other documents, like Portuguese, are not specific about the ship ownership and the traders who were trading in the Red Sea and East African coasts. The seamen and traders were more than migrants in most of these coastal communities throughout Malabar, Zanzibar and Southern Arabia. Though they were considered as different communities at first but intermarriage, settlements and marriage with the indigenous people eventually diminished the foreignness and they became indigenized. The people try to identify with tribes and clans but constant movement of settlements among the coastal community around the Indian Ocean coast because of famine and natural disasters made them interconnected with indigenous people and among other transit tribes. This indigenization was also caused by the colonial invasion which fundamentally deconstructed the system which was in place and forced the trading community to settle down and take up other professions.

People in coastal areas like Malabar, Zanzibar and Hadramawt cannot identify their genealogy to one tribe. The generic history is that Arabs and Persians came to Africa to civilize people and conduct trade. The lack of historical records about African trade practices and ocean travel history also support this narrative. But Africa did not change even after the cultural, political and economic exchanges. The hinterland kept the indigenous language and cultural heritage intact. Even after thousands of years of political and cultural influence, East African countries' mother tongue did not change. The lingua franca of coastal region was Kiswahili all through this period and even till today. Even the colonial expansion by European powers did not have an extreme influence on the language as such. Language and culture are the important factors which differentiate human being from other primates. From a cultural constructivist point of view, the situation of Malabar and Zanzibar in the Arab trade era strongly suggests that people adapt their language to the particular environment they are in. The potential change is corroborated with the social circumstances the coastal community encounters. Arabic-Malayalam and Arabic-Swahili, both written in Arabic script, are examples of this. The convenience overcomes the structural change in these situations. Changing a community's language has a far reaching effect on the invaded community or the host community as it would erase shared history of a population. The immigrants came to East African communities gradually so it did not affect the social fabric of the community. In

linguistic terms, an extended number of words are adapted from Persian, Hindi and Arabic. Language is fundamentally built by conjunctions and not words, so a language will not die by borrowing words. The idea about strangers in the coastal community in East Africa is unique. Strangers who came for trade were the symbol of prosperity and market for the indigenous goods. Intermarriage between strangers and the local population helped to build a kinship with the people which helped in greater economic prosperity. This mercantile expertise, scholastic and cultural tradition helped to build social capital in the community which was eventually reflected in the political realm.

Colonial Period Trade and Muslim Trade

Even after the Portuguese invasions and political dominance in East Africa, cultural and religious influence of Arabs did not change much. The Portuguese caused setback for certain economic activities of Indians, Arabs and Persians in real terms but the Arab influence grew till the nineteenth century. It is because the immigrant communities were socially indigenized and could not be replaced. The Portuguese were successful in capturing major ports and trade centres in the Arabian Sea and Indian Ocean but they could not enter the Red Sea and control southern Arabia for a long time. This situation remained until the decline of Portuguese dominance in the Arabian Sea. During this same time, scholars all over the Arabian Sea ports started emerging as political leaders under the loose state of Oman sultanate and Ottoman Khilafat (Bang 2003). Because of the Crusades and attack against Christian King in Ethiopia, there was common ground for immigrant communities, who were scattered around the Indian Ocean ports. East Africa kept the connection towards Red Sea community because of pilgrimage and common cause against European power. The Swahili community maintained this link all over sixteenth century. The European colonizing powers also understood that the law of Muhammed was holding together the Red Sea community, which is why it became a no go zone (Linschoten 2010). As in every resistance situation, Portuguese aggression caused spiritual renewal on the coast and cultural innovation also stopped because of this. There were confrontations all over the Indian Ocean region from India to the Persian Gulf and Red Sea. Portuguese power also permitted them to keep the current political structure because of the resistance. This did not change for two centuries. The economic and military aggression of the Portuguese eventually led to social and spiritual sphere. It also had

support by the Roman Catholic Church. Portuguese attacks were not confined to Muslims; the Eastern Churches were also persecuted. In Malabar, Syrian Christians were the primary economic partners with the Portuguese in Kochi. But when the Jesuit Christians started to stretch their power on to the spiritual matters, people revolted against them. In the Arab resistance, Hadramawt helped the immigrants by sending scholars and advisors for the resistance movements and it also hosted the refugees.

In the late Middle Ages, Europeans were fighting Muslims in Spain and Jerusalem for a long time. It caused historical hatred against Muslims and their culture. The seventh crusade was directed at Egypt but Louis IX failed and captured in the war. Many historians consider the fifteenth century expeditions of the Portuguese as the eighth crusade in which appalling atrocities were committed against Muslims in North Africa and the Indian coasts. Portugal defeated Spain in 1491 and got access to Arab maps and navigation charts. The Portuguese considered Muslims as their natural enemy for historical reasons. K.M. Panikkar refers to this in *Asia and Western Dominance*. The Portuguese used religious grievances of crusade as the justification for invasion and plundering natural resources from Asia. It also worked as diversion from the injustice committed at home by the elite in the European community.

It is a wrong perception that East Africa as a civilization started with the Arab contact. Swahili civilization was big in its cultural and linguistic terms. Arab contact gave them economic prosperity and cultural capital. The Arab immigrants immersed themselves in the Swahili culture. The Arabs, Persians and Indians also had strong influence on the Swahili culture. Because of the undocumented and unwritten nature of the culture it did not have a historical narrative to compare with other cultures. The geographic and historic context is important in analyzing every culture.

The decline of export in Zanzibar after the British action against slave trade had changed the Omani merchants into a landed aristocracy in Zanzibar. The sustainability of slave labour got affected and this led to decline of goods and works which eventually influenced trade in Zanzibar badly. In mid-eighteenth century the demand for the luxury goods like ivory has grown in the West because of the economic prosperity. There was no trade deficit because the luxury goods exported

and manufactured goods imported to Zanzibar were same in price by considering the high price for the luxury goods. In the Anglo-French naval tussle, Oman remained neutral which helped it to get trade with goods of both the parties. The British could not offer protection for the ships of Indian merchants who went to Muscat under their flag. This brought considerable amount of money to Oman from the trade in a short period. It was mentioned that they could ship the same amount of goods for one-third of the price of charged by the British. From 1804 to 1819 the revenue from the trade doubled in Zanzibar by providing ivory for the Indian market. This kind of sudden development in the trade also helped Swahili merchants, who did not conduct international trade but were the middle men who collected ivory and other goods from the interior of Africa. Eventually they reached the point of prosperity which enabled them to compete with their Arab counterparts. The Anglo-French war gave only less than ten years of prominence to the Omani trading ships. After that, the British hegemony in Indian Ocean was established and the treaties were signed with Dutch and French East India Companies. And in the meantime Britain also consolidated its power in the Indian subcontinent. Also, the Moresby Treaty in 1822 made slave trade relatively impossible in Indian Ocean which was disproportionately dominated by Omani traders. All these historical events had far reaching effect on Omani traders.

The Indian merchants started dominating ivory trade in the coming decades because the British hegemony and demand for African ivory in India. Around the early 1800s a large number of Indian vessels were trading in Zanzibar but they could not compete with the Arabs because the preferential treatment by the government to Omani merchants. The Surat cloth was 50 per cent of the import of Zanzibar in 1811 which was available half the price of Manchester made textiles. But as a British colony, India suffered a lot of structural problems in manufacturing sector in this era. The other problem was famine in which people died in large numbers, with a large effect on the merchant goods and imports in the region. The subordination of the Indian industries had long lasting effect on the Indian capitalist ventures in the colonial era. Britain had prohibitive tariffs on the goods entering its ports, which went as high as eighty per cent. In contrast, the British sold their goods in India with around three per cent import duty. Britain in the same time increased its factory productivity several folds to undercut Indian imports. These impoverished situations made a lot of Indian middle class and entrepreneurs to immigrate to different countries.

The Indian merchant class scattered all around the world. Enhanced immigration to East Africa also happened at the same time. Weakened opportunities in India also played a big part in indigenization of these Indians to East African community. Eventually, Indians were considered a part of African society and in 1828 they had to pay only five per cent import duty. In 1840 the last hurdle for acquiring land outside the city by Indians was also done away with. By the middle of the nineteenth century, Indians were the predominant mercantile class in Zanzibar . The American competition with the British and credit trading with the North Americans made Indian businessmen extremely rich in a short period.

Trade, Politics and Perspective Building

How seafaring is viewed in different communities is the main element in the analysis of trade and cultural debate. In the case of medieval India, all over the country sea travelling was considered as a lower class and caste activity. In the prevailing Brahmanical order the person who carried out sea travel was considered unworthy of entertainment at *Sraddha* (Manusmriti from Subramanian 1999). But this did not affect people from other castes to engage in sea trade and travel. Bengalis in the east, Gujarati merchants in the west and the Chola Kings in the south all were part of the seafaring community in the Indian Ocean, Arabian Sea and Bay of Bengal. From an insurance point of view, sea travel has never been a reassuring journey for the seamen or cargo. The non-mechanized small ships took months to reach their destinations and a lot of people and goods were lost to diseases and winds, tides and currents. Commercial traffic increased with the advent of Arabian shipping from the early Muslim era. Indo-Islamic seafarers gained their reputation because of their superior navigation skills and commercial contacts. Things changed relatively quickly because of their bold navigational experience throughout the Indian Ocean from the Persian Gulf, Northern Africa to South China Sea. The fishing community and the transcontinental sea traders were connected because of the traders' need for experienced seamen who could take care of boats and navigate through higher waters.

Piracy was also related to the seafaring community and needed superior understanding of sea and boats than trade. Piracy as an occupation has been well connected to the history of sea travelling and ocean politics. Stealth, speed and better understanding of the area are needed for piracy. In the Malabar coasts the temporary

displacement of the traders and dependents by the European trade and invasion made the large and experienced marine community take to piracy. The pirate communities were scattered all over the western Indian coastal communities like Marathas and Moplas.

Decoding the monsoon was a revolutionary change in Indian Ocean trade. There could not be self sustained Indian Ocean trade system before that. There was trade happening in small scale in Persian Gulf, Red Sea and islands in South East Asia before the “taming” of the monsoon by mariners. The term monsoon is derived from the word *mausim* which in Arabic means seasons and it refers to the wind system in the Indian Ocean. The South West Monsoon and North East Monsoon provide the opportunity to travel long distances with the help of the wind. In the heavy monsoon ships cannot travel and ports are kept closed in this time. So the monsoon gave a narrow window of opportunity to travel long distances in the Indian Ocean. The Indian west coast is geographically superior in getting more trade because of easy accessibility for the Arabian merchants and the region was rich and productive in cultivating silk, cotton, pepper and other spices. This coastal region broadly comprised of five regions. Sind and Makaran, Kutch and Kathiawad, Konkan, Kanara and Malabar. Barbosa describe the demography of traders and the goods that came through Cambay, “many ships take cargoes to Arabia, Persia, India, Malacca, Camatra, Melyde, Mogodoxo and Mombaca, also other colored clothes of divers kinds, silk muslins, carnelians, gingelly oil, southernwood, spikenard, tutenag, borax, opium, fine indigo in cakes and other coarser kind as well as many other drugs unknown to us” (Barbosa 1866: 50). The monsoon wind helped the Malabar coasts to thrive in spice trade. The hinterland in the area had good weather and soil to grow pepper, cardamom and cinnamon. There were several ports in the Malabar Coast which catered to the ocean trade. Calicut, Cannanore, Cochin and Quilon were important sea trade hubs in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. Arabs with the patronage of Zamorin, the King of Calicut, settled down and integrated into the society. Even as a small kingdom, the trade helped to make the country prosperous.

If we want to understand people’s perspective on ocean we have to understand the people who were carrying out the trade and fishing. Who were these people? How did they end up in the ocean trade? What are the key factors shaping the seafaring community? What are the political influences in the seafaring community? From the

start of high sea trade with help of monsoon, Muslim shipping companies dominated the sea trade from Gujarat to Bengal and in North Africa. The Islamic commercial expansion also helped the cause of conversion all along the coasts in the Indian Ocean. And so it remained until the emergence of Europeans in the Indian Ocean. The Europeans considered trade as a part of sustained national policy, unlike the Arabs. Cambay and Calicut saw big settlements of wealthy Muslim businessmen. Tome Pires refers to the Moplas as great merchants and good accountants. He analyzes the considerable political influence of Moplas and says if the Portuguese king's power did not extend to the region, the region would remain in the hands of moors. He was also surprised by the sheer volume of ships in the ports and of the different sizes (Pires 1990).

Ibn Battuta in his travelogue describes the organized system of Calicut ocean trade as enormous and the wealth accumulated by the traders in the process made them prosperous. Changing goods from big ships to smaller boats in big waves is a delicate operation and it is done professionally. The cosmopolitan nature of the city and prosperity of the people is also described in his travelogue. There were famous traders from Oman and Kuwait when he came to the city. Ibn Battuta also refers to the famous wealthy ship master named Misqal who is still part of legend in the city. When the Portuguese started dominating the trade in the early sixteenth century they classified all the traders who did not adhere to their system as pirates. The lost power of the Muslim merchants pushed them in defiance of the Portuguese system. There was small scale sustained resistance against Portuguese, which was conducted by these mariners with help of Hindu King Zamorin. The *Marakkaiyar* were the hereditary naval command known for this resistance. The difference in Coromandel Coast in trade structure was that the Hindu population traditionally had been part of ocean trade for centuries. In the medieval Indian trade there was a visible communal divide in jobs because of caste and religious divide. This also helped the European powers to easily divide the coastal society. There was no shared principle so caste rivalry overshadowed professionalism. Small winds can change the societal attribute about the issues even now in coastal communities.

Islam came to Malabar with the trade in the seventh century itself according to some historians. "The advance of Islam by sea, one might say was an automatic process. As soon as Muslims conquered southern Babylonia and principal towns in

Persian Gulf, they found themselves forced to carry out seafaring traditions of these lands.” (Martin Hortman, *Encyclopedia of Islam* quoted in Bahauddin 1992: 28). Some of the early accounts say Islam came to Malabar in the time of the Prophet himself. Malabar was in touch with Persia and Babylonia long before Islam. There was established trade system throughout the coast before Islam. Indian trader settlements were in the Arabian Peninsula, so it was natural that Islam travelled with the traders. With the advent of Islam, Basra replaced Alexandria as the centre of trade to coastal India from West Asia. Different archaeological suggest that the Muslim arrival to the coast of Malabar is far before north Indian raids by Muslim kings. According to Tharsapalli copperplates (849 CE) there are Muslim witnesses in the testimony of Kochi king (Miller, 1992). Whatever the difference of opinion about Muslim arrival in Malabar, Islam reached Indian coast in and around the time and spread through intermarriage and conversion. The Arab traders did not have political ambition; they enjoyed relative privilege and status in the local society and customs. There was not much effort from the Muslims to change the social fabric of the country dramatically. They incorporated the values and ritual of the local community and grew as a peaceful Muslim community in Malabar. Before the arrival of Portuguese, Muslims were integral part of the state and society. The rule of land was also applied to them. They respected the protection given to them. Muslims brought a better trade relation with the Persian Gulf as well as South East Asia, which the state economy enormously depended up on. The Hindu kingdom even paid the Qazis and attendants in the mosque for their service (Makhdoom 1995). Kings all over the coasts encouraged Muslims to settle down in their country.

Industrial Capitalism and Trade Practices in Indian Ocean

After the industrial revolution the capitalist market started seeing the merchant class as an unproductive component in the process of production. This made the mercantile community in Europe to monopolize every aspect of production from raw material to selling. This had overwhelming influence on the eastern market which worked in relative independence before that. Accumulation of capital in a small class of people happened because of this. The slave trade in the early industrial period is also an important factor in analyzing trade relation of Zanzibar with others. After the overthrow of the Portuguese from Zanzibar, the merchants from Oman re-established their prominence in the trade with the island. But the prime goods had changed in the

era because of the industrial revolution. Slave trade was becoming an important part of sea commerce in Zanzibar because of the need from the French colonies in Africa and agricultural lands in North America. The Anglo-French war had big implications in the changes to slave trade in the next century. After this, Arab Slave traders diverted to spices, agriculture sector and land ownership in East Africa. But Zanzibar remained as the island which carried out slave trade till the nineteenth century. The capitalist mode of production needed subordination of finance and labour under its structure. In Zanzibar history of trade and production can be seen in every historical point.

The cultural and political history of Zanzibar always has a dual parentage, the Swahili African which came from the interiors of African continent and an Indian Ocean one. According Abdul Sherief, the civilization in Zanzibar was mercantile, urban and cosmopolitan throughout its known history (Sheriff 1987). Zanzibar worked as a city-state which was controlled by Indian Ocean trade with maritime communication, common culture and language. The trade was utterly dependent on producers and raw materials. The control over the production was relatively little and “the rhythm of the Swahili coastal history was not internally generated but was synchronized with the wider rhythm of international trade in the Indian Ocean” (Sheriff 1987: 8). Geography plays a big part in Zanzibar’s trade history. As an archipelago it does not provide much place for intensive agricultural production and mountains and river valleys work as the corridor in to the interior Africa. So the influence of the interior is not prominent in the trade system but it is valid in a long term demographic system and goods movement. The shallow coastal line in the north does not allow too much concentration as cities also give Zanzibar importance in East African coastal trade.

Slaves were another important export from Africa. The name Zanzibar itself proclaims the influence of slave trade in the African history. Slaves were traded and used more in early Muslim era, causing social unrest in civilizational capitals like Baghdad, which faced the ‘Zanji rebellion’ in the ninth century. The slave trade resurfaced and increased in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries because of the need for labour in industrialized states and newly discovered lands in North America. The export of the East Africa throughout the history consisted of raw materials and luxury goods, which continued to the industrial capitalist era. East Africa imported

finished goods and products like metal utensil, cloths and glass wares. This made Africa mortally depended on others and eventually led to its decline in economic influence in the modern world. The decline of indigenous population in technological and social superiority from ship building, ownership and leadership position had a far reaching effect in East African history and current economic situation. The piracy situation in East Africa is a current political and security debate which has a long history back to its early capitalist era.

The economic development of Zanzibar and other ports gave birth to different middle men who collected goods from the interior Africa. A lot of small town sprung up in the coasts because of this. These towns were administered by small tribal chiefs. The trade would have changed the coast but the tribal influence was also in rise with that. In first century C.E. *Periplus* talks about the “Men of Greatest stature, who are pirates, inhabit the whole coast and at each place has set up chief” (Freeman 1962: 2). In the late Arab Imperial era also the tribal influence was very much alive in coastal East Africa. When Barbosa reached East African Coasts the same enthusiasm for trade and travel was still prevalent in the island and it was led by Omani Kings and Persian traders. He describes the island and people as “The kings of these isles live in great luxury; they are clad in very fine silk and cotton garments....The women of these Moors go bravely decked, they wear many jewels of fine Cofala gold” (Barbosa cited in Nurse and Spear 1985: 83). The civilizational dependence on the other in an economic and cultural sense was very much prevalent in island history. This can be seen from religion to architecture in Zanzibar. The Portuguese intervention had a big impact on East African trade because of the Portuguese dominance all over the Indian Ocean ports. This affected different ports in East Africa and Southern Arabia. From the late fifteenth century the Portuguese started dominating the ocean trade, which came through the destruction of the pre-existing system and total change in the coasts from feudalism to capitalism. Commerce and Christianity worked hand in hand in justifying the destruction of political and social fabric of the Indian Ocean coasts. The Italian and Muslim dominance over the Mediterranean trade was the biggest problem for other countries in entering the large scale commerce. Capturing Indian Ocean trade and domination over goods required blocking Hormuz and Aden. Capturing Goa and Malacca was for the Portuguese the ultimate victory over Indian Ocean trade. Within a short period of time Portugal dominated the Indian Ocean. But because of

the vastness and resource scarcity for the Portuguese it was not easy to control all aspects of ocean trade. Divide and rule was the strategic move by every European power used to compensate its resource scarcity.

Zanzibar: Muslim Traders and politics

According to historians, before there was Silk Road there was an ancient maritime spice route. Zanzibar was the focal point of this route. For first millennium mariners Zanzibar was a safe international harbour which could be used to reach the Red Sea, Persian Gulf and Indian coasts with the help of monsoon winds. When western Europeans came to power they met a contradicting world which was working with ease in Zanzibar. It was the Exotic Island with dynamic trade and a complex set of people who were ethnically, religiously and socially cosmopolitan in the outlook. Zanzibar, consisting of several tropical islands, was part of coastal East Africa. The island had a mixed population of indigenous Africans, Arab and Indian descendents. Zanzibar's maritime heritage can be divided in to three periods: a Greco-Roman period (350 BCE-395 CE), second Iranian Sassanid Era (224-610 CE), and the Arab-Omani Era which extended into the nineteenth century. Oman had some kind of power over Zanzibar from before the Common Era to the twentieth century. The emergence of Islamic faith and empire had a transformative effect on East Africa. Umayyads, Abbasids and Fatimids helped the growth of cities and made the nomadic tribes settle. This process needed a lot of resources. The expedition to East Africa helped the process of getting more resources for the civilization process in Damascus, Baghdad, Alexandria and other cities under the empire. In the tenth century as an economic model, Arab dynasties had developed a financial system which could be used along the trade routes. This had a greater influence in the competing tribes in the Arabian Peninsula. People started to organize without the bondage of tribesmen in cities and the city landscape itself had a transformatory effect on the warring tribal culture. The security situation in the Arabian Peninsula exponentially altered because of the political stability of the Muslim empires in the Middle Ages. The financial system was the product of transaction between villages and cities primarily. International trade was not possible with the crude barter system so a stable financial system with security of political power was needed. These requirements were fulfilled by the Muslim empire in this era. Importance of Zanzibar in Indian Ocean trade comes from its proximity to both Africa and southern Arabia. In different times

diverse people came and settled in the island. Umayyad Syrian immigration was the first wave of this immigration in the Islamic era. Persians from Shiraz and Omanis from outside Muscat also started settling in this dynamic business society at that time. This multiethnic demography played a big role in the economic activities in island.

The Bantu influence on the island has never been weak and the base of the society always has been ethnic African. Agricultural trade with the mainland declined significantly in some historic juncture. The Arab and Persian competition for the trade superiority in the island has a history from Sassanid dynasty. Large number of Shi'a Muslims came to Zanzibar from Arabia to seek refuge in the Islamic imperial era. Arab-Persian rivalry in this trade continued as shared power by Afro-Arab Swahili and Afro-Iranian Shirazi in eastern African Coastal trade till the eleventh century. But from the eleventh century Oman established the first foreign governing system in Zanzibar. The sultanate installed a governor to keep the peace and security, solve the disputes and prevent the disruption of trade. When the Omani Sultanate was in control of Zanzibar, Swahili clans also enjoyed considerable political influence in the power structure relative to the past. From 1520 to 1650 the Portuguese had considerable power in Zanzibar but from the early seventeenth century Omani fleet with the help of Swahili clans mounted attacks on the Portuguese navy and in 1698 Oman made Portugal leave the island. In Europe other powers like the Dutch and the British were getting traction in maritime trade at the same time. This caused the decline of Portuguese dominance in Indian Ocean. But even after its defeat, the Portuguese navy aligning with the Persians started questioning Arab superiority in Zanzibar. This caused the Omani Sultan to even change his capital to Zanzibar. With the rise of the British East India Company, Britain signed an agreement with Sultan. This gave relative protection for the ruler until the British made Zanzibar in 1890 as their official colonial protectorate.

Understanding Oman sultanate rule in Zanzibar needs better understanding of Oman and its geography. Oman's hinterlands, unlike Swahili coasts, had dry river valleys irrigated by subterranean canals and there is only desert to its interior. The agriculture and its tax was main source of income and labour. The Muslim scholastic community had considerable political power over the monarch. He was elected by the elite and learned people in the society and confirmed by the common people. When the Portuguese dominance over Coastal East Africa started to diminish, the Oman

sultanate extended its rule to Zanzibar which had considerable Omani merchant settlements. In the series of wars by the Omani naval contingent, the Portuguese lost their fortified posts in Muscat and Zanzibar. The slave labour was for the date plantation, which was the Omani sultanate's agricultural export for the eighteenth and nineteenth century to Arabian peninsula. The Omani monarchs were called imams because of theocratic situation in the Ibadi political setup. "These imams who owed their politico-ideological role to the theocratic constitution began increasingly to be transformed into merchant princes, diverting part of their profit to the date production based on slave labor" (Sheriff 1987:19). This was also reflected in the social nobility in the kingdom. Merchants gained much political power in the system which could be seen in the day to day activities. This also led to the kingdom changing to patrilineal succession eventually. The internal transformation also reflected in foreign trade and relations. In 1698, after the Mombasa siege, Oman set up an Omani administration there. It was a different kind of approach in the Omani power as it had not intentionally raided any other foreign port before. But eventually Omanis went back to the peaceful trade in the mid-eighteenth century. Oman not only perfected its slave trade but the age old cargoes like dry fruit and dried fish was also the main items they traded. Then they entered the more important trade with western Indian Ocean coasts and Persian Gulf offering Indian cloths and British manufactured goods. Omani merchant class also dominated the trade between Gujarat and Persia which were big production and transit points in the western Indian Ocean. The Omani trade was not independent but it was overwhelmingly dependent on the British hegemony in the Indian Ocean in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The Anglo-French rivalry had a bad effect on Omani trade and politics. They were the trade supporters for Oman in this era, the French in slave trade and the British in manufactured goods. This rivalry had caused security instability for Omani Merchant class in their port which was strategically located for Red Sea and Persian Gulf trade.

Easy communication on land was needed in East African monsoon trade. The Mombasa siege was for this strategic position in conducting trade. The Mazuri governor was appointed by the previous Omani ruler and he protested to agree allegiance to new system in 1784. He indigenized his support base while a social revolution happened in the Omani dynasty. The Mazrui and Busaidi struggle for dominance under the British protectorate eventually led to the decline of their political

independence in the region. The Portuguese oppression had brought together Swahili and Omanis but it was not an equal partnership because the Swahili merchants were too dependent on international trade and did not have much to offer from their hinterland. The Omani political and cultural power started from the interior of their state which had relative sustainability in the agricultural and cultural spheres. But the shift of power from the political community to merchant class made the state more dependent on international trade. The shift coincided with the European introduction of change from the feudal system to industrial capitalism. When the trade flourished under Omani rule the political power got subordinated.

Ocean Trade and Hinterland

Zanzibar's commercial economy was always been dependent upon the transit trade more than its production and domestic consumption. The domestic trade and transit trade was relatively independent and dominated by different merchant groups. But industrial international capitalism did not allow the segregated trade and made its own hegemony over the system which existed before that. The American introduction to the East African trade pushed this phenomenon. This was also reflected in Zanzibar's internal land ownership. By the increasing mortgage to the merchants, Omani dominance over the land ownership decreased gradually. The clove plantations in the islands of Pemba and Unguja were the collateral for borrowed money from Indian merchants who are part of international trade. Over production also affected demand of clove in the market. The changing economic scenario did not benefit the Omani merchants positively. Indian and American traders started increasing market share in the Zanzibar trade in the late nineteenth century. The exceeding colonization in the hinterlands also affected Zanzibar because it did not have much to offer from a domestic point of view. The political changes in Oman in the mid-eighteen century caused the disintegration of the dynasty as Mazrui governors ruled Mombasa and Busaidis managed the trade in Zanzibar. As Zanzibar stands just in front of the richest part of hinterland in East Africa, the government received a sizable amount of revenue through taxation in different small ports because this strategic positioning. Mrima coast, which was connected very well to the hinterland production, commanded a superior position for whoever wanted to control the Eastern coasts. Control of the coastline had an indirect implication over the production in the ever-expanding hinterland. Giving Mrima coastal ports reserved status for the local traders was a

political move to enhance the control of Zanzibar on the port, which helped Zanzibar in long term. Excess trade helped to cut the taxation which made Zanzibar attractive for international merchants. The seasonal trade before steamships was dependent on the monsoon winds and it was the only link on the eastern coast of Africa. Mrima coastal ports had potential for independent trade with international market even though they used Zanzibar as *entrepôt*. Monopoly of Zanzibar by reservation of Mrima coast for the local population increased Zanzibar's political leverage in the region. This helped because Zanzibar geographically did not have much land compared to other regions in Africa. But there were other problems for Zanzibar in this era. The economic structure overwhelmed the bureaucratic system and the taxation was not done properly. The commercial empire had developed before the bureaucratic structure evolved in Zanzibar. This crippled governance to a certain extent. The economy was vibrant all the time but the structural problem remained in the commercial empire of Zanzibar.

Understanding Zanzibar's hinterland is another main variable in analyzing trade development in the island. How the surplus was created, or the demand created for the goods, and how the merchant class was created around the comparative advantage. There are different narratives about how this coastal economic system is created. Population pressure in interior Africa caused dispersal of community and that made them depend on the hunting economy in water scarce lands. Their constant expansion in mainland Africa brought them in contact with the coasts. The hunting trade with the increased demand for the ivory brought them in contact with the international merchants in the process. Other scholars argue that the increasing African merchant class development organically attracted the international traders to its shores. The dominance of ivory and slave trade on African economy was not the case before the international demand for these goods. Slaves were rarely exchanged as a commodity before the foreign trade got its hand on Africa and ivory had not much commercial value before outside demand. By the late nineteenth century, Zanzibar traders have overstretched the hinterland half the way down to African continent and they ended up in the western colonies like Congo controlled by the Belgians. But trade did not have any border especially for Zanzibar merchants at that time. There was no centralized system of trade in hinterland, but this fragmented system made the dhows running all around the world. The transportation system in interior Africa was

nonexistent so only the products with high value are carried out of the interior. The hinterland of Zanzibar could not also develop in isolation but the interconnecting trade made the system vibrant and progressive. Although the hinterland of Zanzibar was rich in resources, it was structurally weak in administration and organization of the trade. The inferior political setup did not threaten the system because of constant growth in trade. When the European powers entered these waters this system showed its vulnerability. The international trade also helped to absorb some areas of the trade and rerouted that to another sector. But the globalised trade also showed monopolistic tendencies in the trade setup as British did in the Indian Ocean, which decreased the flexibility in trade.

The commercial empire of Zanzibar continued to expand because of the international transit trade primarily. The ivory export dominated the island export for centuries although the customers changed in different times. The slave trade and slave labour was an important factor in the domestic economy. The agricultural goods came mostly from slave labour from the hinterland. The economic activity on specialized market made the economic dependence severe. Textile import and ivory export was around two-thirds of the trade in the late nineteenth century. Zanzibar imported textile goods from India and America and exported ivory to those countries. The extreme dependence on international markets also provided Zanzibar with alternative new markets in interior Africa and North America. As a trade dependent country, the American Civil War had far reaching repercussions in Zanzibar. Ninety per cent of the cotton goods were imported from America and India and the civil war caused the rise of cotton market. The war caused American cotton goods to decline permanently in the international market (Nurse and Spear 1985). The war also affected the luxury goods which were exported to America. The ivory and gum copal market declined in America which led to almost zero export of ivory and nominal export of gum copal to North America. Social infrastructure and physical infrastructure in Zanzibar was always considered as the part of international trade but it was not the case: “Urban development on a large scale and erection of substantial stone buildings occurred only with the transition to a plantation economy which took place after 1835” (Menon 1978 cited in 1987: 138). According to Menon the circulation of money does not mean any production *per se*. Infrastructural investment happens with the production not on perceived finance which underplays the organization of production that enable

the trade to take place. This material production percolates into social and cultural sphere. It is a reality that Zanzibar could not thrive and prosper without the support of mainland Africa. Merchants tended to expand their realm of business rather than invest in social infrastructure of a country. Indigenous production system is important for a country which wants to thrive in long-term competitive international trade. What happened in Zanzibar was different. The merchant class started indigenizing and they had to invest in the infrastructure around them to support the community.

Conclusion

Trade is an important factor which affects people's perception about sea. Trade will not happen in a vacuum. Culture, taste and relatability, constructed by political influence or automatically built in a long period of time by interaction, would also be the cause for trade itself. Religion, language, nationality and culture are other factors influencing people's perspective about sea. In the same geographic space, people with different locations on the social ladder will also see the ocean differently. A person who is commanding a ship and a fisherman who is living in a hut on the coastline possess extremely different experiences of the Ocean and their experience creates perspective. The idea about the sea among people is relatively less explored by academics. It is a fundamentally "not talked about" subject in the coastal community because it is totally connected to day to day life which is considered less novel and unworthy to be talked of. The people who are higher in the labour structure with greater social development have a better chance to delve in to this debate. This creates a difference perspective in different sections of society. The people with first contact to sea are fishermen, maritime traders, ship builders, rope and net makers. These communities build their ideas about the sea from the experience they undergone through their life living around the sea. The knowledge about the sea and winds are precious knowledge. The people with this kind of maritime expertise were rare to find. Even when fisherman and other people who lived off the sea enjoyed less privilege in social life, ship captains and seamen had better prospects in the social hierarchy. Ocean as geographical element constrained and helped the goods, human and idea movements. But in the oceanic study, human or society as a variable makes the situation much more fluid and complex because of population movement and integration and indigenization of people among coastal communities.

Chapter IV

Islam: The Cultural Link in the Indian Ocean

Islam as a religion has played an important role in the history of the Indian Ocean. This chapter inquires whether Islam has played an overarching role making it another variable in the cultural history of the Indian Ocean. There are two phases in the expansion of Islam in the Indian Ocean. First is the early success of *Kulafau Rashidin*⁵ and Arabian Empires of Umayyad and Abbasid. The second is the expansion of Islam carried out by transient southern Arabian scholars and traders along the rims of the Indian Ocean. Alawi Shafii Sunni Islam is an important factor in the trade and cultural history of Malabar, Zanzibar and Southern Arabia. Most of the Muslims who settled along the Indian Ocean coasts were a minority in their society. According to early Muslim scholars, it is better to live in Dar Ul Islam than Dar ul Harb.⁶ Muslims are better off in Dar Ul Islam for political reasons and according to some *Fuqha'* (Jurists) and it is recommended to migrate (*Hijra*) to Dar Ul Islam. This idea is still discussed and challenged in the modern day Muslim intellectual gatherings. Modern Muslims who live in Europe and other parts of the world still ask this question in middle class intellectual arbitrations. There is a new branch of Islamic Jurisprudence, whose members study the political and cultural effect of the minority living, which is flourishing among Muslim intelligentsia and it is called *Fiqh Ul Aqalliya*⁷ (Al-Fadl 1994). This becomes increasingly relevant in the era of cultural exclusivism in western world, rampant migration from Muslim lands to Europe and Islamic state in Iraq and Syria. But it can be said that the presence of minority Muslims was an important factor which influenced expansion of Islam as a religion and political entity in the early Islamic expansion.

Islam and Early Successes

The golden age of Islamic continental power materially and intellectually influenced the Indian Ocean culture. Mecca was the pivot in the Red Sea and Mediterranean trade because of cultural reasons even before Islam. *Ka'aba* which was

⁵ -Four righteous rulers of Islam after Muhammed

⁶ -Dar ul Islam is Muslim ruled land and Dar Ul Harb is Non Muslim ruled land where Muslims lives as minority

⁷ - Study of theories and philosophy of Muslim minority

believed to be built by Abraham was pilgrimage site in *Jahiliya*⁸ era. There were pagan idols for every tribe in the Arabian Peninsula which was situated in Ka'aba. Quraish tribe, in which Muhammad was born, were the caretakers of Ka'aba. The Quraish were wealthy as money was brought by the pilgrimage and trade to Mecca. Even though the tribe was rich Muhammed was born an orphan which made him and his family poor and dependent.

Muhammed was born in the year 570 CE. He grew up with the help of his uncle. As child he was called *Al Ameen* (the righteous person). This helped him to get acquainted with the middle aged businesswoman Khadija. Eventually she married Muhammed when he was in his early twenties. He had his first divine revelation at the age of forty. This new message spread by Muhammad was not welcomed well in his community, eventually leading him to migrate to Abyssinia first and eventually to Medina. The tribal war and disagreement in Arabia was so intense in the *Jahiliya* era that political unity was unthinkable. This political dysfunction also affected the economic and cultural development of the Arabian community. After 10 years of prophethood Muhammad's disciples also started growing but by the 622 CE Muhammed was forced to leave Mecca.

After two years Muhammed and his followers started a small raid against the Meccan Caravan, some of which were successful. Medina was strategically placed to disrupt the caravan from Mecca. It could break the Mediterranean trade of the Quraish. Between 624 and 626 Muhammed organized small parties of Muslims who captured the caravans of Quraish. In 626 Muslims disrupted the caravan of Meccans, which led to the war of Badr. The Muslims were successful in the war. The threat from Muhammad led the Meccans to lay siege to Medina in 627, although the siege was a failure. Thereafter Muhammed's army created respect and fear among neighbours and in 630 Muhammed besieged Mecca and won.

Within three years after the capture of Mecca Muslim forces were strong enough to challenge the Persian and Byzantine Empires. Before the death of Muhammed, Muslim powers conquered Yemen which was the strategic point to control Indian Ocean trade. As a relatively land bound tribal community, seafaring was not actively promoted by early Muslims but the prevailing circumstances forced

⁸ -Era before Islam in Arabia in Muslim literature is qualified as Jahilya (the era of ignorance)

them to take to the seas. The southern Arabian coasts and Persians were better prepared and engaged in ocean affairs far before the continental Arabs. The Hijazi Arabian community thrived on land based caravan rather than maritime trade. Their knowledge of the land routes and deserts and oases were the key factor helping Hijazi Muslims.

The Greater Successes and Engagements at Sea

The second Caliph Umar conquered Damascus in 632. It was the first big city to fall under Islamic rule. In 637 Jerusalem also surrendered under the Arabian power with marginal resistance. Most of these early successes enjoyed the goodwill of the native population in the invaded countries. For Jews, Islamic control of *Bilad Ul Sham* was considered better than the Christian rule because of the absence of forced conversion under Islam. Umar was tolerant to minority communities as Copts, Zoroastrians and Jews. Umar also conquered Persian Empire in the later days of his rule. All of these conquests happened less than fifty years after the death of Muhammed.

The access to the ports of Gulf and Red Sea made it easier for the Muslims to venture into the Indian Ocean. In 636 the governor of Bahrain raided Indian Ocean ports near the Gulf region and Persia. As a power which had three sides of sea had to venture into the Indian Ocean, Ethiopian kings were attacking the Red Sea coasts of Arabia around this time. In order to counter the Ethiopians, Umar had to send his Navy to Abyssinia. At the same time the capital of the Empire Medina, was a flourishing centre in the trade between Red Sea and Mediterranean.

Alexandria came under Muslim power as early as 641 but its weakness was obvious when the Byzantine Empire reclaimed it in 645. The conquest of Iraq, Persia, Bilad Ul Sham and Egypt introduced Muslims to ocean trade and nautical techniques. Muslim powers put together hundreds of ships in order to attack the Byzantine powers in 655, in the ensuing war the Byzantines lost. This was the first naval defeat for the Byzantine Empire. This defeat was followed by different raids along the coasts and in the high seas. In Morocco, with the help of natives, Arab powers ventured into Gibraltar and conquered Andalusia. Within a century after the death of Muhammed, Muslim power had conquered the lands all around the Arabian Peninsula. The

political power gained from the Arabian Sea to the Mediterranean made the Muslims more powerful and influential and prepared them to exploit the ocean resources.

During the Tang dynasty (618-907), China's prosperity helped the Chinese to trade with western Asia. Persians were the prominent sailors and were present at that time on Chinese coasts. The consolidation of Sung Dynasty created increased consumer demand for luxury goods. Arab success of creating an empire also coincided with this increase in demand for luxury goods. Therefore more and more Arab traders started coming to Chinese coasts. As any other diasporic community of the era they had their own cultural and social institutions. They created a mosque in Guangzhou province which was visible from the sea, called lighthouse mosque. Sind was conquered by Muslims in 710. Militarily Muslim power did not go beyond Sind in this era but Muslim presence in Sind help the trade in Malabar and southern Indian coasts.

Southern Arabia had long held trade relations with East African coasts. But it was only in the thirteenth century that an independent Omani sheikdom was established. The Umayyad caliphate changed the capital of the Islamic empire from Medina to Damascus. The city of Damascus was better positioned to rule the larger empire. The Abbasid and Umayyad caliphate increased the importance of Gulf trade. This development weakened the Red Sea trade in this Era extensively. Muscat in Oman worked as the *entrepôt* during this era too.

Arabs learned navigational skills from Persians. The fall of Persian coasts to Muslim power pushed the Muslims to engage with the Indian Ocean right up to eastern Indian Ocean. Abbasid era Arab merchants reached China through the Straits of Malacca, which gave them access to silk and Chinese luxury goods. There was a high demand in Baghdad for finished luxury goods at the time. This necessitated travel to China, India and East Africa to keep the population happy and growing. In Canton big settlements of Muslims were present. They had their own social and religious power. The mosques and civil judges were set up by Muslims for their community functioning. Jews were the other mobile population in the era who had larger presence in the Indian Ocean and Mediterranean. They had trade networks that stretched from Venice to the South China Sea. Under Muslim hegemony, other small groups also worked around the Indian Ocean ports: Shirazis and Omanis had better

access to East Africa; Sindis and Chettiars had good networks around Indian coasts. The ascent of the Arab traders in the Indian Ocean was quick and their knowledge around the ocean travel also grew along with that. Ibn Khurdadbih wrote a book about the sea route from Persian Gulf to China in Abbasid era. Others were trying to build better boats and drawing maps to understand the land around the Indian Ocean.

Abbasids brought the boats in Tigris and Euphrates near up to Baghdad. The legendary figure in the Abbasid era Caliph Harun al Rashid brought Baghdad to the height of material prosperity and cultural experience. The literature, science and creative expression of the time changed the Arabian nights. The opulence of Abbasid era with luxury goods and innovation made others envious. This era not only saw material prosperity but also religious development. The religious schools helped develop several schools of thought in theology and legal systems. The story of *Thousand and one nights* reflects the wealth and creative expression of this time. The need for better administration and legal system made the Abbasids invest in language development and documentation. They adopted the systems and ideas from China to Greece. The Arabs learned about documentation from the Romans and adopted paper making from the Chinese. The translation movements helped them acquire knowledge of past civilizations which found its way to the library of Baghdad and improved its collection, making it very large. Every part of knowledge and learning flourished in this era. Medicine, chemistry and mathematics made big progress under Abbasid rule. Al-Khwarizmi introduced Arabic or Indian numerals which made algebra and arithmetic easy to understand. He also introduced the decimal system.

As the Hajj and maritime trade in the Red Sea grew, the importance of Mecca also grew. As the dominant seafaring people the Persians had influence in Jeddah port. In the Red Sea the seasonal winds and coral reefs were present but the Persian Gulf was largely controlled by the river boats which carried the goods from the ships. The larger ships travelling to China, India and other faraway lands had better access to Persian Gulf than Red Sea because of different factors ranging from polity to weather system.

At different points in history, Muslim powers tried to build bigger canals to let bigger ships navigate up the Tigris and Euphrates rivers. The port complexes in the Persian Gulf were impressive in the Abbasid era. The port in Ubulla was used by the

Sassanid Empire and Abbasids. The coasts of Hormuz and Siraf served the Persian communities for centuries even before Islam. The emergence of greater empire created internal demand for the goods. The expansion in cultural understanding by travelling to different coasts of the Indian Ocean brought varied styles in dressing and food habits. The main Chinese export in this era was silk and the prosperity of Abbasid Era made silk accessible to the larger population. The building taste in food, dressing and consumption has a collective cultural history in the Indian Ocean coasts. As the commercial empire of Muslims grew from the Middle East all the way to central Asia touching the Silk Road, the ocean route for trade was preferred by the traders. The port of Ubullah grew with the Arabs and Abbasid expansion. Basra also grew in cultural influence in the Abbasid era as much as Baghdad. The Abbasid commanded their power by the support of Khurasan. The Abbasid caliphate transferred the capital from Damascus to Baghdad but until the reign of Al Mansur the city was not built. The strategic importance of Baghdad helped its growth as al Mansur the Caliph observed that there was no obstacle between them and China and everything could travel up to them. As Baghdad grew, it received trade traffic from Ubullah to Khorasan, including Egypt and East Africa.

Waves of Islamic Expansion

There were three phases in global Islamic expansion. One started by the Arabs in the Arabian Peninsula was concluded by the Abbasid era rule. The second was the non-Arab imperial experience from Buyyid, Fatimid, Ottoman and Turko-Mongol Muslim expansion. The third major expansion was led by traders which included Hadrami and Omani trade networks and political expansion in the Indian Ocean. The expansion of Islam to India and South East Asia happened after the decline of powerful empires of the Umayyad and Abbasid era. There was no religious animosity against Muslims in east Africa, China or India. The Muslim expansions to these lands were gradual. In Indian coasts and South East Asian coasts the expansion was peaceful and without much political intervention. In East Africa, different Omani kingdoms ruled in different junctures of history. The expansion of Islam in the Arabian Peninsula was based on prosperity of agricultural lands in Iraq, Syria and Egypt. The agricultural products were transported to the cities of the empire. The Arabs could have considered themselves self reliant but the experience of the newly

inducted citizens from Byzantium and Persian empires helped the Arabs to conquer the Indian Ocean.

The different ethnic compositions of citizens and ocean travellers were helpful and simultaneously threatening to the Empire which was trying to consolidate the Muslim Arab identity. The overstretching of the empire to distant lands and ethnically complex coasts demanded vast resources and administration to sustain political development in the Empire. Like every other overstretched empire, Muslim empires had also fallen due to this complexity. In the Abbasid dynasty it was challenging to expand and consolidate political power and patronage. Abbasids made the monetary system more robust by introducing new gold coins credit systems. The Arab expansion helped reinvigorate the ancient trade between the Arabian Sea and the Mediterranean. Political control over the vast land of Arabian Peninsula and Bilad Ul Sham made the trade easy. The choice of capital in a political structure is mostly connected to the access to people and resources. Chaudhuri commented on changing capitals and ports in Islamic empires by saying “it is also clear that the choice of passage either through Red Sea or through the Persian Gulf, and the associated volume of trade, were very much a matter of the relative importance of certain political and cultural capitals in the Islamic world.” (Chaudhuri 1985: 45) The change of capital by Muawiya from Medina to Damascus helped the empire to grow and access the abundance of resources. This change of capital and policies also influenced the expansion of trade in the Indian Ocean ports. The Abbasids changed the capital from Damascus to Baghdad. The Persian Gulf trade thrived more than the Red Sea because of proximity, access and policy of the empire. Abbasids actively discouraged the Red Sea trade and this caused the trade to collapse and infrastructure to crumble.

Moving the population and power to the Fertile Crescent did not stop the trade in Hijaz because of the holy cities. Hajj played a big role in the trade and transient community history. As a cultural experience Hajj played an important role in connecting people. This pilgrimage had larger political and economic consequences in the Arab world and outside for the coming centuries. Every Muslim has to perform Hajj once in his or her lifetime; this unified the cultural imagery of the community which was getting increasing diverse ethnically, linguistically and politically. A lot of Muslims who were living far from the empire as minority communities on coasts of

Indian Ocean all came for Hajj. The Hajj also enabled people to travel to Hijaz and this travel made them network and share the cultural experience in the Indian Ocean.

Family clashes for the throne eventually ended the Abbasid power and created small kingdoms along the coasts. Buyyid Dynasty asserted power from Shiraz to Persia during 945-1055 CE. Persian power made travel and trade for the Ocean community and traders easy. At the same time, there were Muslim powers in North Africa and Spain ruling independently. The Idrisid dynasty did not feel the need to bend before the caliphate and they ruled Tunisia and Morocco. Fatimid, the Shia North African Empire, came to power in 909 CE. The Fatimid helped increase trade in the Red Sea and the Indian Ocean. Caliph Al-Moizz sent his forces as far as Palestine. He helped the flourishing trade by suppressing the large scale piracy in the Southern Arabian and Red Sea coasts. Under his patronage sailors travelled from Aden to China. The Mediterranean coasts were also revitalized because the strategic positioning of the imperial capital Cairo. This helped different European merchants and Jews to travel around the Indian Ocean and build settlements. The Shia nature of the empire gave non-Arab communities like Ismaili and other sects in Shia community and other citizens of the empire more independence in Indian Ocean trade. Under the Fatimids, industrial expansion of Alexandria in making glassware and ceramics also took place. As a Mediterranean port city, industrial development supported imports and exports. The control of Aden and the Mediterranean coast helped build a prosperous city in Cairo. The material prosperity helped the Fatamids to build universities and schools. Al-Azhar, one of the earliest functioning universities, was founded under the Fatimid dynasty. The east African community was eventually attracted to Islam and in Somalia and Ethiopia Islam spread. Zanzibar and Tanganyika were to come under Islamic influence eventually by the Omani traders and rulers. The lack of strong leadership made the Fatimid dynasty weak in later decades.

Southern Arabia and the Transient Muslim communities

The geographical reality of Hadramawt took its community everywhere in the known world from the early ages of sea travel. The Indian Ocean as a seasonal trading destination needed a network to finance and market Hadrami trade. They started by setting up small communities along the coasts of the Indian Ocean. As a diasporic

community the networking became important in the community. In a diaspora people tend to assimilate but the assimilation is also directed by different forces. Southern Arabians assimilated to coastal communities mostly through marriage. But full assimilation of southern Arabian community happened neither in Malabar nor Zanzibar, but their cultural and political power helped them to win over the native population. The large scale religious conversion in Zanzibar and Malabar help them to better their position where ever they went. The communication in the Indian Ocean was very well developed when the European powers reached the coasts of the Indian Ocean. They called it *Arab lake* in analogy to the Mediterranean Sea as the Roman Lake. The earliest Dutch ships went coast to coast with the introduction of Arab sultans. They obtained letter of recommendation to sultan of Aceh. And from Aceh they obtained letter of recommendation for Mughal emperor Akbar to go to Cambay.

After the fall of Han dynasty and political decay of Byzantium Empire the Indian Ocean was relatively calm. The Persian coastal trade and small scale Hadrami trade continued in the western Indian Ocean. This did not change until the emergence of Islam. These small independent trading communities positioned themselves better in trade. The exponential growth of Islam helped these communities immensely because of the increased prosperity and power of their allies. By the ninth century trade settlements and expatriate community spread all over the western Indian Ocean. The trade and sailors brought Islam to faraway lands as Malabar and Zanzibar. The faith based networks of scholars and Sufis came with traders to southern India and East Africa. Ibn Batuta was the first to mention the Omani settlements in Malabar. At arrival he saw different Arab communities thriving on the Malabar coast. Arab settlements in Ezhimala essentially consisted of people from Yemen and Oman. From the writings of Ibn Batuta it is clear that the *Qadi* (judge) and *khatib* (preacher) in many of the coastal towns were from southern Arabia. Batuta also felt that this overseas community had better social positioning in coastal towns of Malabar. This overseas community was also affluent and wealthy to command better social standing than the native population.

The Arab traders brought with them the religion and their customs where ever they went. In different lands the social mobility offered by the Muslim merchant community attracted people from different walks of life. The fundamental converts were the socially immobile low caste and low class people like *mukkavas* in Malabar.

The small scale globalization happening in the Indian Ocean from the seventh to the seventeenth century had Islam as its unifying force.

As a transient community tomb pilgrimage was very prevalent. As the elders died on different coasts the death in absence creates more sadness and cultural experience. This can be seen in Malabar and Zanzibar Muslim communities even now. The death in absence creates mourning as more cultural experience. The idea of mourning and melancholia (Butler 2006) plays a big part in the cultural imagination and existence of Hadrami community. Scholars attribute mobility as a part of modernity: the more you are free and mobile, the better your positioning in material and cultural history. The understanding of Islam in a monolithic notion will not help in research about the transient Muslim population in Indian Ocean.

The primary competition for power after the death of Muhammed created two large political factions in Islam. The Hadrami tradition is Sunni yet it leans towards the *Barakha*⁹ of the Prophet's family. In Africa, India and the Malay Archipelago the descendents of the Prophet were regarded highly. The *imarah* of *Ahl Baith*¹⁰ is considered as prophetic tradition by a large array of Muslim community. The example of *Sayyid Fadl Moppila* is evidence of this. Sayyid Fadl (1823- 1901) was born to a Hadrami father who came to Malabar in 1767. They belonged to the Alawi family of Tarim. Fadl's teaching was important in the Muslim community of Malabar. His effort against colonial British power was respected among the community. The religious legitimacy for the political power was widely accepted as he was the Imam in Mambram big mosque. He remained as the intellectual stimulation for the different Moppila outbreaks against British power in the nineteenth century.

The Hadrami religious community networks helped Sayyid Fadl to escape from the British and go back to his ancestral land in Oman. The *Mambram Thangal Family* (the Sayyid family which he was part of) was a Sunni family with an inclination to Shafii School of Fiqh. It was puritanical, in the sense of exclusivity of religious rituals and avoiding local customs. The Sayyid family held a higher social position than the native Muslim population. They started to convert the people from Sufi Islam to more puritanical form of Islam. Malabar coasts saw every kind of

⁹ - Special religious power to bless people

¹⁰ - Imarah lil Ahli Baith means the leadership for the prophet family.

Muslim influences including Shia, Sunni and Ibadi. After the death of his father Fadl went to Mecca for Hajj. When he came back he wrote a pamphlet against the British. And he issued a *fatwa* about the anti-Islamic nature and activities of British. The British made him and his family leave for Oman in 1852 after linking him to Moppila uprisings. His forced exile caused unrest in Malabar, eventually leading to the assassination of H.V. Conolly, the District Collector of British Malabar. After the death of the collector, the British monitored every movement of Sayyid. At first Fadl went to Mecca. With the 1858 riot in Jeddah, in which a large number of European officers were killed, the reputation of Fadl with the British worsened. When the British pressure grew he had to go to Istanbul and eventually return to Dofar as the Ottoman governor.

The mobility and network of Fadl shows how influential Islam and Hadrami Muslims became in the Indian Ocean up to the nineteenth century, with little political power but significant religious patronage. As Fadl came back to Dofar he engaged in rejuvenating the Hadrami network. But his governorship in Dofar was not accepted well by the British, who put pressure on the Ottoman government to expel him. Eventually, Fadl had to leave for Jeddah again. Even after that he actively engaged in Ottoman politics and went to Istanbul and was accepted as a minister in the Ottoman court. The strategic positioning of Malabar and Southern Arabia helped the trade and travel and expansion of Islam. Sayyid Fadl and his story is a perfect example of how Islam spread, networked and influenced the Muslim communities along the Indian Ocean region.

Oman and the East African coasts

The understanding of Oman is important to understand why Muslims ruled the East African coasts. As a small sandwiched community between desert and ocean in Southern Arabia, the dominant professions in Oman were agriculture and fishing. The growing population could not be supported solely by this. Thus trade was an important part of survival in this region. Oman was a tribal land more than a unified political entity. The economic base of Oman could not support a large state. The political system consisted of a tribal confederacy presided over by an Imam. This structure could not produce large scale political development. The religious authority legitimized the political authority in this system even though he was nominated and

confirmed by the commons. The weakened Portuguese power in East Africa led to a larger role and political involvement of Omanis in the Indian Ocean. This helped them to engage in every aspect of trade and cultural relations. In 1650 the Portuguese were expelled from Muscat. Sultan bin Saif did not adhere to the theocratic structure of political system. So the Sayyid Imams began engaging in trade and agriculture. These merchant princes imported slaves for large scale date plantations. The emergence of this semi-mercantile and land owning class changed the political economy of Oman. The Ibadhi principle of *Imamath* started waning and the state grew more secular in orientation. The fierce civil war in Oman led to the downfall of Ya'rubi dynasty. In 1749, the Busaidi dynasty gained political power in Oman. They were lenient to trade and more business activities. This led the Omanis to more naval activities and they expanded their trade relations. This era saw the character of Omani power changing from commercial power to expansionist polity. They laid siege on Mombasa from 1696 to 1698. The Omani power eventually helped them to monopolize the trade between Gujarat and Iran. Foreign trade not only made Oman prosperous in this era but gave it political power at sea. Even after British hegemony Oman kept its power and trade relations in East Africa.

East African coasts were city states controlling their own hinterlands. Oman ascended on this fragmented political power conquered strategic ports and cities. Mombasa was the first sheikdom as such in the coast. The difference and rivalry between *Busaidi* and *Mazrui* powers was the result of this for years to come. The Mazruis tried to indigenize their power to hold on to Mombasa. The resistance in Mombasa led the Busaidis to Zanzibar. Zanzibar remained friendly with them even during the Mombasa revolt. In 1699 Zanzibar came fully under the control of Omani Sultanate. In 1823 the Omanis captured Pemba island and 1825 they conquered Mrima port. After this, although the Basaidis wanted to attack Mombasa they did not have strategic allies to do so.

Map of Omani Empire



Alawi Scholars and Traders in Indian Ocean

The creation of small communities helped the Hadrami scholars and religious figures to get access to the polity of coastal lands. In the thirteenth century they created transcontinental communication and networks. The changing of the trade pivot from the Persian Gulf to the Red Sea brought Hadramis in contact with India, Hijaz and Egypt. This created a globalized outlook for the Southern Arabia population as most of their men were involved in trade with India, China and East Africa and established family relations wherever they went. Their religion also went with them. But this expansion of Islam did not have large political support as it did in the Abbasid and Umayyad eras. The Islamic tradition they spread in Indian Ocean was also different.

Engseng Ho analyzes this as follows:

... the creation of a transoceanic “new world” for Islam, symbolized by a common allegiance to the Shāfiī school of Islamic law. I use the term

new world because this expansion was over water (sea), whereas elsewhere, Islam had expanded territorially, like the preceding empires of the Romans and others. Ultimately stretching from Cape Town on the southern tip of Africa to Timor at the limit of the Malay Archipelago, this new world of an enlarged Islamic ecumene became a transcultural space that numerous Muslims, among them Hadramis from Arabia, traversed and settled in with relative ease and great profit, participating in the creation of new ports, polities, and even peoples. (Ho, 2006: 100).

This Hadrami expansion also brought new cities to prominence in the Indian Ocean like Cambay and Calicut. The difference between ancient and late Hadrami trade is that in the late Hadrami trade period the impact of Hadramis in the socio-cultural sphere was immense and long lasting in the Indian Ocean coasts. The inclusive nature of the Hadramis in engaging the coastal community had a long lasting impact which is visible even today. This era was also not a great power era in which the Hadramis had greater coercive power in the Indian Ocean. That made the trading community independent, diverse and complex. In the shores of Calicut there were traders from Gujarat, China, Oman and East Africa in abundance. These communities not only traded but engaged politically and indigenized their support. Hadrami soldiers fought for the Nizam in Hyderabad and the Muslim Omani marines supported the Zamorin's army. Engagements of this kind made the community more indigenized. The important factor in this era is that Hadramis did not have direct political support of the large Muslim empires of the era like Ottomans in Arabia, Safavids in Persia or Mughals in India. But they had the goodwill of every political institution because of their expertise and networks to carry out large scale trade.

When the Portuguese tried to dominate the trade routes in the sixteenth century, Muslim empires helped each other to curtail Portuguese influence. Ottomans sent help to support the navy of Calicut and Diu. Muslim Bijapur and Golconda send their armies to check the Portuguese in Goa. The resistance of Muslim scholarly community against the colonial powers was also visible. Zainuddin Makhdoom's *Tuhfat al-Mujahidin fi ba'd Akhbar al-Burtughaliyin*¹¹ is an example of the scholarly

¹¹ - Which literally means 'Masterpiece Mujahideen in some news'

resistance against colonial powers. The political engagement of Sayyid Fadl against the British is another example.

Islam spread in coastal India peacefully and political establishments of native people were not challenged by the Muslims. The story of Cheraman Perumal, the ancestor of Zamorin, converted to Islam by the Muslims who were going pilgrimage to Adam peak. He was believed to have visited Mohammed on his way back home, he died in Hadramawt. Graphic violence conducted by Portuguese invigorated the traders and native population. The major difference between colonial powers and Muslim traders and travellers was that the Muslims did not consider themselves ideologically superior and engaged with the local population. On the other hand, the colonial power created a racialized hierarchy of political powers and exploited the wealth of the indigenous population without engaging the population culturally and socially.

The long route trade from the South China Sea to the Persian Gulf ended in the sixteenth century. It was conducted in three parts. The first stretch was from the Red Sea to Malabar and then from Malabar to Malacca and to the South China Sea. The conflict in Canton meant the Chinese had monopoly in the South China Sea. Gujarat was the major trading power other than Calicut in western Indian coast. According to Barbosa, Arabian horses and frankincense were imported from Al-Shihr to western Indian coasts and it had great demand (Barbosa 1918). When Vasco Da Gama came to India his pilot was also Hadrami called Ibn Majidi.

Islam, Globalization and Hadramwt

From ancient times Hadramwt was part of larger trading system in the Indian Ocean. Hadramawt consists of different river valleys flowing towards the sea. It was a population centre conquered by different powers. As a part of the larger Arabian Peninsula, it claimed knowledge and technical skills for ocean travel. The land structure influenced the social and political formation of a community; in southern Arabian history this is evident. The driest western end of the *wadi* supports small farms and more egalitarian social system and large landholdings and bigger families in central *wadi* has a more hierarchical society.

The diaspora of southern Arabian community not only consisted of Sayyids and elite. It was diverse and included *Sada* and non-*Sada* populations. The Hadrami migration can thus be understood as a globalization process which was fundamentally

led by the socio-political situation around Indian Ocean in this era. Hadrami travel across the Indian Ocean is marked by mosques, religious schools and graves of ancestors. This kind of transient and Imam-based Islamic order in Sufi language is called *tariqa* (pathway). In Sufi language it is path to God taught by the Sheikh. This culture of religious texts and communal reading and prayers is slightly different from Sufi *tariqa*. Study of Alawi *tariqa* would give information about Muslim access to the Indian Ocean community and their history.

The sayyids of Hadramawt were descended from a common ancestor called Ahmed Bin Isa. He is believed to have left Basara in Iraq in order to come to Hijaz and eventually ended up in Hadramawt. He settled in the town al-Husaya near Tarim. The mixing of Sufi and Alawi happened when the Moroccan Sufi teacher Abu al-Rahman al-Maqad sent his disciples to Hadramawt. With induction of jurists in to the Abu Madyan *tariqa* the Hadrami *tariqa* began to flourish. The famous Sufi scholar Ibn al-Arabi who died in 1240 also influenced the Sufi tradition of Hadramawt. The terms and teachings set by Abu Madyan and Ibn al-Arabi on the meaning of Sufism inform Hadrami understanding. Abu Madyan's idea about Sufism includes *ilm wa-amal* (knowledge and action) and *din wa-duniya* (people should engage with material world and spiritual world) which inform the Hadrami population about Sufi *tariqa*. In the Sufi *Majlis* they used flutes and tambourines in the *tariqa* which was started by Abd al-Rahman al-saqqaf. The use of musical instruments and *hymen* (hymn) eventually spread to different coasts of the Indian Ocean.

The sayyids were not active participants in local tribal issues but they were considered as arbitrators in conflicts. They did not carry arms to protect themselves but defended themselves by their social status and the appreciation of the local population. These traits can be seen in the trade expansion of Hadramis along the Indian Ocean coasts. The mixing of jurist, teacher and honourable person as the descendent of the Prophet created this mix of scholastic position in Hadrami tradition. The Hadrami school of Sufism was distinct from other forms of Sufism because of these traits. The Alawi *tariqa* was also constructed and changed with the dynamic changes in the Red Sea, Persian Gulf and Indian Ocean trade.

The Rasulid era (1235-1457) was important in the history of southern Arabia, as it had material abundance and cultural development. This era coincided with the

fall of greater Muslim empire in Baghdad by the Mongol raid. This had an important effect on actors and cultural exchange in the Indian Ocean. In the Abbasid era the goods coming from China and India went to ports of the Persian Gulf and went all the way to the Levant and Mediterranean Sea through land routes. The fall of Baghdad changed the Indian Ocean trade as Mongols relocated their capital to Tabriz. Change of maritime route from east through Red sea and using Alexandria as the Mediterranean port unlike Levantine ports changed the trade and the community around trade. This change of route is identified in the Indian Ocean with Muslim influence as the fourteenth century rulers in Cambay, Aceh, Melaka and Gresik were Muslims. The intensity of this trade happened to diminish around 1350 (Abu-Lughod 1989) but the different kinds of social and cultural engagement of traders started to increase in the coming centuries. In essence, the Alawi *tariqa* is also the product of the socio-cultural expansion of the Hadrami community in the Indian Ocean.

The Hadrami ascent to social prominence in the Indian Ocean world also plays a religious hierarchical role in the tradition of Islamic understanding. Alawi *tariqa* can be assumed as the second wave of Islam affecting the political and cultural spheres in the Indian Ocean. Hadramawt had close relations with the Rasulid dynasty and they supported scholars generously. Hadrami families had also achieved better positions in trading centres such as Surat in Gujarat and Bijapur on the Konkan coast. The Alawi *tariqa* had different subgroups as it developed. Tarim as the origin of the Alawi *tariqa* commanded a lot of respect from the community, eventually becoming a pilgrimage site. As the cultural significance grew, the Hadrami sayyid discourse of mobility and religious experience also grew. Wherever Hadramis went they built mosques. Mosques were the symbol of Muslim presence in the town and their prosperity. As the community grew mosques also grew. Within the larger study of Hadrami Muslim influence the discourse of mobility and religious order plays an important role. The claim of prophetic lineage connected them with the religious authority.

Conclusion

The ancient trade between the land of East Africa, Southern Arabia and Malabar was reinvigorated by the emergence of Islam. Islam played an overarching role in the Indian Ocean cultural narrative of the people in the coastal community. There are two waves of Islamic expansion in Indian Ocean, one led by the *Futuhath*

(political invasion) and the other led by the Alawi, Hardarmi and Shafii trade and scholastic network. The first wave took place from the seventh century to the thirteenth century and the second wave took place from the thirteenth to the nineteenth century. Both these Islamic expansions had their own characteristics, as a result the variants of Islam spread in those two eras were different from each other in greater details. The cultural capital as religion does not exist in vacuum. It influences the material world and vice versa. Travel between these lands and trade settlements created a positive cultural experience in the coastal lands of the Indian Ocean. Cultural experience, results of travel and trade also varied from coast to coast. The experience of Islam in Malabar is not the experience of Islam in Zanzibar or Southern Arabia even though they share similarities in conception and growth. It is because Islam played out differently in every community which is connected to the social, economic and political reality of the coasts.

Chapter V

Conclusion

Every coastal community has perceived the ocean differently. This difference is built on sociopolitical and cultural elements in the coastal communities. The same material factors engage different communities differently. The perspective of a coastal community about the ocean is fundamentally built on the individual experience or the immediate community's experience of the ocean. Along the Indian Ocean coasts the experience of people about the ocean is very diverse, as is their imagery. The cultural capital created in the Indian Ocean community affects the larger imagination about the ocean and it would be different in every social and economic hierarchy of the community.

Ocean is a common resource for the world and it does not have boundaries. This enabled people to travel and exploit the ocean resources. The cultural effect of this is long lasting. The perspective about ocean changes as time moves on. The Indian Ocean does not play a direct and important part in the life of coastal communities as other modes of transportation introduced for transcontinental travel and trade. As the time went by, trade also became very organized and containerized. The large container ships, employing less than twenty people, can move thousands of containers all over the world. This also changed the social structure of trading communities.

The imagination of a slave descent from Zanzibar would try to practice selective amnesia about the cultural and material production that happened in the Indian Ocean for the last millennium because it is too painful to remember. The *Mukkuva* community which still faces social discrimination would not have the best memories about the cultural goods produced by the Indian Ocean. But as a fishing community they remember ocean as the primary provider rather than as a sophisticated cultural entity which revolutionized their life. Conversion to Islam helped them to break the barrier of caste to an extent. The egalitarian social system Islam presented largely helped them to get out of the social discrimination but it did not made the society fully inclusive to the *Mukkuva* community. Economic dynamics created by the trade in Malabar presented social mobility as cities sprung up along the

coasts. As in the case of urban dalit poor population, the urbanization and rapid economic growth created better social mobility than an agrarian caste-based society because the lack of time and interest of people to enquire about caste and to discriminate, simply because it is not visible. Urban dynamics could not fully challenge the social discrimination based on caste because of its prominence in family structure and in political space. The cosmopolitan experience brought by the traders and travelers also helped the lower caste communities to challenge the structure of social discrimination. In Malabar, the ruling class had better experience from the ocean and its resources. Trade in the Indian Ocean helped to sustain their political organizations in small patches of land which did not have much to offer in large scale farming activity.

There are differences in the experiences of the traders who settled around the Indian Ocean. The social experience of *Hadrami Sadaath* in the Indian Ocean was prosperous and culturally positive. The non-*sadaath* from the community had a different experience among traders, settlers and native population around the Indian Ocean rim. Taking the cultural community as a monolithic entity in an Indian Ocean coastal city would not help the study of cultural communities. There are differences in every community from fisher folk, sailors, traders, coastal businessmen and learned religious people. Every one of these communities had their own different interest and experience of the ocean. There are different causes leading the coastal community to engage with the ocean. Geography, socio-political structure and economy have played an important role in defining people's perspective about ocean. In southern Arabia geography played a big part in pushing Hadramis and Omanis to maritime trade; but the cultural goods produced by trade helped sustain the trade network in the Indian Ocean. Indian Ocean cultural experience is a visible part of the social structure in Zanzibar. Ethnic diversity and cosmopolitan experience created by the Indian Ocean define Zanzibar. But the native African people did not have a positive experience in Zanzibar. This divide is still visible in the polity of Zanzibar and Tanzania. In the same geographic location people occupying different statuses on the social ladder would experience the ocean very differently.

The perspective and cultural capital of the person who travels in a big container ship and the person who is fishing in a small fishing boat are very different. The small fishermen do not have access to the debate of perspective building around

ocean. Knowledge about the wind, season and ocean is shared among the ship captain and small boatmen and there is a part of shared experience in this realm. But it does not define them and they have different perspective on ocean.

Islam plays an overarching role in cultural history of Indian Ocean. Islam cannot be taken as a monolithic entity when we analyze Islam in the Indian Ocean. There were two major waves of Islamic expansion in the Indian Ocean. The first one was organized by the prosperous empires of Umayyad and Abbasid, the second by Hadrami traders and scholarly networks. The cultural effect of Islam in the Indian Ocean rim is long lasting. As we can see, the Indian Ocean rim which had an extended trade history has a sizable Muslim population. This Muslim population consists of mixed descents of traders and natives. Islam in the Indian Ocean rims of India and South East Asia grew slowly and peacefully. Hadrammi Alawi shafii Islam is the visible connection in the coastal communities of Indian Ocean even today. Even after the fast air travel came into the picture, we see the effect of *Umma* attracting the Muslims for greater engagement. If we take Islam as the cultural product it does not exist in vacuum. Different forces play in making and breaking it. Experience of Islam also differs from coast to coast, although Islam can be identified as the overarching cultural link in the India Ocean.

Bibliography

- Abu-Lughod, J. (1989), *Before European Hegemony: The World System A.D. 1250-1350*, New York: Oxford University Press.
- Al-Fadl, K. (1994), Islamic Law and Muslim Minorities: The Juristic Discourse on Muslim Minorities from the Second/Eighth to the Eleventh/Seventeenth Centuries. *Islamic Law and Society* 1(2): 141-187 .
- Allen, C. (1987), Oman : A Seperate Place, *Wilson Quarterly* , 11 (1): 49- 63.
- Alpers, E. A. (2009), *East Africa and the Indian Ocean*, Princeton: Markus Wiener Publishers.
- Alpers, E. A. (2000), Recollecting Africa: Diasporic Memory in the Indian Ocean World, *African Studies Review* , 43 (1): 83-99.
- Alpers, E. (2014), *The Indian Ocean in world history*, New York: Oxford University Press.
- Bang, A. K. (2003), *Sufis and scholars of the sea : family networks in East Africa, 1860-1925* , New York: RoutledgeCurzon.
- Bahauddin, K. (1992), *Kerala Muslims The Long Struggle*, Kottayam: Sahithya Pravarthaka Society.
- Battúta, I. (1983), *Travels in Asia and Africa, 1325–1354* , translated by H. Gibb, London: Darf Publishers.
- Bennett, N and G. Brooks (1965), *New England Merchants in Africa: A History Through Documents 1802- 1865*, Boston University Press: Brookline Massachusetts.
- Bose, S. (2006), *A Hundred Horizons : The Indian ocean in the age of global empire*, Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- Bouchon, G. (1987), “Sixteenth Century Malabar and Indian Ocean”, In A. Dasgupta (eds.) *India and the Indian Ocean 1500-1800*, Calcutta: Oxford University press.
- Burgess, G. T. (2009), *Cosmopolitanism and its Discontents in Race, Revolution and the Struggle for Human Rights in Zanzibar*, Athens: Ohio University Press.

- Butler, J. (2006), *Precarious Life: The Powers of Mourning and Violence*, verso books: New York City
- Chaudhuri, K. N. (1985), *Trade and civilisation in the Indian Ocean : an economic history from the rise of Islam to 1750*, New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Cohen, S. P. (2001). *India: Emerging Power*, Washington DC: Brookings.
- Curtin, P. (1984), *Cross Cultural Trade in World History*, New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Dalrymple, W. (1998), *The Age of Kali: Indian Travels and Encounters*, London: Harper Collins.
- Engineer, A. A. (1995), *Kerala Muslims a Historical Perspective*, New Delhi: Ajanta Publishers.
- Fawaz, L. (2012), *Modernity and Culture from the Mediterranean to the Indian Ocean, 1890-1920*, New York: Columbia University Press.
- Freeman, G. (1962), *The East African coast: select documents from the first to the earlier nineteenth century*, Clarendon Press: Oxford.
- Ghosh, A. (1994), *In An Antique Land*, New York : Vintage Books,
- Gupta, A. D. (2004), *India and the Indian Ocean world : trade and politics*, New Delh: Oxford University Press.
- Gupta, C. (2012), *Contested Coastlines: Fisherfolk, Nations and Borders in South Asia*, New Delhi: Routledge.
- Gurnah, A. (1996), *Admiring Silence*, New York: The New Press.
- Gus, W. (1960), Pre-Islamic South Arabian Shipping in the Indian Ocean-A Surrejoinder. *Journal of the American Oriental Society* , 80 (2): 136-139.
- Hall, R. (1996), *Empires of the Monsoon: A History the indian Ocean and its Invaders*, London: Harper Collins.
- Hashim, N. O. (2009), *Language and collective Mobalization: The Story of Zanzibar*, United Kingdom: Lexington Books.

- Hight, J. (2006), *Frankincense: Oman's Gift to the World*, New York: Prestel.
- Ho, E.(2004), "Empire Through Diasporic Eyes: A View from the Other Boat", *Comparative Studies in Society and History*", 46: 210–246.
- Ho, E. (2006), *The Graves of Tarim: Geneology and mobility across Indian Ocean*, Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Hourani, G. F. (1951). *Arab Seafaring in the Indian Ocean in Ancient and Early Medieval Times*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Ilias, M. H. (2007), Mappila Muslims and the Cultural Content of Trading Arab Diaspora on the Malabar Coast, *Asian Journal of Social Science* , 35 (4): 434-456.
- Ilias, M. H. "Narrating the History of Malabar's Omani Connection with Special Reference to the Life Histories of Cheraman Perumal and Saiyyid Fadl Moplah", [Online: web] Accessed 15 Sept. 2014 URL: http://web.squ.edu.om/omanindia/doc/full/full_9.pdf.
- Kaplan, R. D. (2010), *Monsoon : the Indian Ocean and the future of American power*, New York: Random House.
- Kareem, C. (1999), *Pracheena kerala muslim Avirbhavam*, Calicut: Islamic Sahitya Academy.
- Keay, J. (1991), *The Honourable Company: A history of the East India Company*, London: Harper collins.
- Khalilieh, H. S. (1998), *Islamic Maritime Law: An introduction* , Prinston: Brill Academic Pub.
- Kresse, K. (2007), *Philosophising in Mombasa knowledge, Islam and intellectual practice on the Swahili coast*, Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.
- Linschoten,J.(2010), *The Voyage of John Huyghen Van Linschoten to the East Indies*, Ashgate: Surrey.
- Luce, E. (2007), *In Spite of the Gods: The Strange Rise of Modern India*, New York: Doubleday.
- Mailaparambil, B. J. (2012), *Lords of the sea: The Ali Rajas of Cannanore and the political economy of Malabar (1663-1723)*, Leiden: Boston: Brili.

- Makhdoom, Z. (1995), *Tuhfat al-Mujahidin fi ba'd Akhbar al-Burtughaliyin*, Calicut: Al Huda Publishers.
- Malekandathil, P. (2010), *Maritime India: Trade, Religion and Politics in the Indian Ocean*, Delhi, India: Primus Books.
- Malekandathil, P. (2007), Winds of change and links of continuity: A study on the merchant groups of Kerala and the channels of their trade 1000-1800, *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient*, 50 (2): 259-286.
- Miller, R. E. (1992), *Mappila Muslims of Kerala: a study in islamic trends*, Michigan: Orient Longman.
- Mishra, S. (2011), *Pilgrimage, politics, and pestilence: the Haj from the Indian subcontinent, 1860-1920*, New Delhi: Oxford University Press.
- Mohan, C. R. (2003), *Crossing the Rubicon: the Shaping of India's New Foreign Polic*, New York: Penguin.
- Nicolini, B. (1997), Little known aspects of the history of Muscat and Zanzibar during the first half of the nineteenth century, *Seminar for Arabian Studies*, 27: 193-198. London.
- Nicolini, B. (2004), *Makran, Oman, and Zanzibar: three-terminal cultural corridor in the western Indian Ocean, 1799-1856*, Leiden: Boston: Brill.
- Nurse, D and T. Spear (1985), *The Swahili: Reconstructing the History and Language of an African Society, 800- 1500*, University of Pennsylvania Press: Philadelphia.
- Parkin, D. J. (2000), *Islamic prayer across the Indian Ocean : inside and outside the mosque*, Richmond: Curzon.
- Pearson, M. (1981), *Coastal Western India: Studies form the Portuguese Records*, New Delhi: Cocept Publishing Company.
- Pearson, M. (2003), *The Indian Ocean*, New York: Routledge.
- Pires, T. (1990), *The Suma Oriental of Tome Pires, 1512-1515*, Ottawa: Laurier Books.

- Pires, T. (1990), *The Suma Oriental of Tome Pires, 1512-1515*, Ottawa: Laurier Books.
- Prange, S. R. (2011), A Trade of No Dishonor: Piracy, Commerce, and Community in the Western Indian Ocean Twelfth to Sixteenth Century, *American Historical Review*, 116 (5): 1269-1293.
- Risso, P. (2001), Cross-Cultural Perceptions of Piracy: Maritime Violence in the Western Indian Ocean and Persian Gulf Region during a Long Eighteenth Century, *Journal of World History*, 12 (2): 293-319.
- Risso, P. (1995), *Merchant & Faith: Muslim Commerce and Culture in the Indian ocean*, Boulder & Co: Westview.
- Sathar, K. K. (2012), *Mappila Leader in Exile: a Political Biography of Syed Fazl Pookoya Tangal*, Calicut: Other Books.
- Schoff, W. (1912), *Periplus of the Erythraean Sea, Travel and Trade in the Indian Ocean by a Merchant of the First Century*, Longmans Green and Co: New York.
- Sheriff, A. (1987), *Slaves, Spices & Ivory in Zanzibar: Integration of an East African Commercial Empire Into the World Economy, 1770-1873*. Ohio: Ohio University Press.
- Sheriff, A. (2014), *The Indian Ocean: oceanic connections and the creation of new societies*, London: Hurst & Company.
- Shokoohy, M. (2013), *Muslim Architecture of South India : the Sultanate of Ma'bar and the Traditions of Maritime Settlers on the Malabar and Coromandel Coasts (Tamil Nadu, Kerala and Goa)*, Hoboken: Taylor & Francis.
- Simpson, E. (2008), *Struggling with history: Islam and cosmopolitanism in the Western Indian Ocean*, New York: Columbia University Press.
- Sridharan, K. (1965), *A Maritime History of India*, Delhi: Ministry of Information and Broadcasting.
- Subramanian, L. (1999), *Medieval Seafarers*, New Delhi: Roli Books.
- Subramanian, L. (2010), "Commerce, Circulation, and Consumption: Indian Ocean Communities in Historical Perspective", in Shanti Moorthy and Ashraf Jamal (eds),

Indian Ocean studies : cultural, social, and political perspectives, Routledge: New York.

Subranayam, S. (1981), *The Career and Legend of Vasco Da Gama*, New Delhi: Cambridge University Press.

Subrahmanyam, S. (1996), *Merchant networks in the early modern world*, Aldershot: Variorum.

Villier, A. (1952), *Monsoon Seas : The Story of the Indian Ocean*, New York: McGraw- Hill.

Wink, A. (2002), *Al-Hind : The Making of the Indo- Islamic World*, Leiden: The Netherlands: Brill.

wood, R. (1992), *The Portuguese Empire 1415-1808 : A World on the Move*, Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press.