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SHUNGWAYA, THE SEGEJU AND SOMALI HISTORY

My objective in this paper is threefold:

- to outline Shungwaya, which I believe to have been a state of sorts which controlled much of South Somalia and East Kenya from the 9th to the I3th or I4th centuries;
- to show that it implicated the ancestors of many people who now speak Cushitic languages as well as those of many who now speak Bantu ones;
- to suggest that our failure up to now to identify it in spite of the fact that it is reasonably clear in the traditions of many indigenous groups is largely due to the assumption commonly made by modern scholars that even in the distant past linguistic boundaries would generally have been coterminous with socio-political ones. This appears to have been incorrect for this area before the I7th century at the earliest, and to have prevented us from taking the traditions seriously.

This is an ambitious programme for a short paper and I apologize in advance if in the dual cause of brevity and clarity some of my hypotheses are presented as more definitive than the accompanying evidence seems to warrant. More evidence exists than can be included here,[I] but it is also true that much remains to be examined, especially in the traditions of peoples now speaking Cushitic languages. It is in the hope of provoking qualified scholars to undertake such research, whether because they accept or reject my ideas, that this paper is delivered. It is my belief, however, that research will ultimately confirm that what is preposed here is broadly correct.

Shungwaya

Shungwaya is a Bantu term and - for reasons to which we shall return - the historical Shungwaya is today remembered almost exclusively in the traditions of Bantu-speakers, although they often mention Cushitic-speakers as having been "in it" with them. The peoples who chiefly remember Shungwaya - the "Shungwaya peoples" as we shall call them - are the Tana River Pokomo, the Mijikenda,[2] the Segeju and the Swahili including the Bajuni. As it appears in their traditions, Shungwaya may mean any of three things (Allen I983: 466-474):

- it may mean the main state - let us for convenience call it "Great Shungwaya" - and/or any of a number of successor-states which flourished between the Shabelle and the Umba and lasted, in some cases, into the I9th century. These include, from the south, VUMBA KUU, c. I630 - I830; a I4th - I6th century state centred on MALINDI, which may have been part of and/or successor to the KINGDOM OF OZI based on the Lower Juba and Bur Gau Inlet which lasted into the I8th century; the AJURAN IMAMATE, c. I500 - I650, north to the Shabelle and beyond; and a number of statelets on the Benadir coast, some of which preceded Ajuran and which reemerged after its decline. The SWAHILI SULTANATE (often but incorrectly known as the Witu Sultanate) was in a sense a successor to Ozi rather than to Great Shungwaya; and we have no evidence that it (or, for that matter Vumba Kuu) were ever specifically called Shungwaya, though they were clearly modelled on it;
- "Shungwaya" also stands for the traditional belief-system which prevailed in Great Shungwaya before its court was converted to Islam and among non-Muslims in it and its successor-states thereafter. Statements in the traditions about "coming from Shungwaya" are often to be interpreted as meaning "sharing in the Shungwaya belief-system" rather than having lived in Great Shungwaya or one of its successors. (Likewise modern Mijikenda who have accepted Islam or Christianity often claim to have "come from" Mecca or Medina or Babel or some other biblical place before Shungwaya (Spear I982:7I,76,80,9I,96,I23));
- finally, "Shungwaya" stands for the main ritual centre or sacred settlement (usually the capital) of Great Shungwaya or one of its successors. A belief in the magical role of this centre or capital constituted a large part of the Shungwaya blief-system, and control of it was indispensable to the rulers of the respective states.

The role of the ritual centre or sacred capital in successor-societies was legitimised by a Shungwaya origin-legend and buttressed by a number of more or less historical traditions about Great Shungwaya itself. Where such a place ceased to have any significant function, the legend and the traditions also died. This accounts for the absence of Shungways traditions among many peoples whose ancestors must have been implicated in it. The four Shungwaya peoples continued to rely until very recently upon the notion of one or more sacred settlements to ensure their coherence as social units. This is most clearly examplified in the case of the Mijikenda and their kaya-settlements (Spear I978:44-79), but it is also true of the Swahili mji (pl. miji), the Pokomo ganda (now converted into a kyeti or clan-alliance) and the so-called "walled towns" of the Segeju (Allen, forthcoming). It is thus primarily among these peoples that specific traditions about Shungwaya survive. Relevant ones may survive elsewhere, however, which are not recognised as such because the name "Shungwaya" is not used. Thus the Meru of the eastern slopes of Mt. Kenya have traditions of origin in a place called Mbwa which from its geographical location must have been squarely within Shungwaya territory. They do not recognise the name "Shungwaya", but the Pokomo, who do, also

have a term Bua, which they use for the dispersal from Shungwaya. So we can assume that it was not the Shungwaya-capital which served to legitimise later Meru political institutions but the trek from it, Bua, which they have converted into Mbwa and treat as a locality in itself (Fadiman I973; Townsend I977:I36). I do not know of any Cushitic term for Shungwaya in either of its first two senses (though such terms may exist), but the Somali word hamar is an almost exact equivalent of "Shungwaya" in the sense of mji, sacred settlement; and it seems likely that a scrunity of all traditions mentioning a hamar (or its Bantuised derivative, hamarani or amrani, still used of townsmen of Barawa) would be revealing.

For the moment, then, most of our information comes from the traditions of the "Shungwaya peoples". A study of these indicates that at least five sites were called, at some period, Shungwaya. Of them the second in the list that follows may have been a temporary successor to the first, but all the others seem to have existed independently and to have been capitals, at various times, of Great Shungwaya or its successor-states. One was at a place called Kedi ("Keethi" or "Keyrthie") on the Lower Juba somewhere near Deshek Wama (Ravenstein I884:267; Elliott I925/I926:I48; Nurse I980:38); one was, and still is, on the Bur Gau inlet (Elliott I925/I926:35I-356; Grottanelli I955; Chittick I969:I24-I29); one somewhere on the mainland opposite Pate Island (Guillain I856:II,240-245; Burton I872:II,II8-II9); the fourth was on the Lower Tana[3] and the fifth on the Lower Sabaki near Jilore (Spear I978:III). The disposition of these five sites makes more sense once it is realised that the River Ewaso Nyiro, which rises on Mt. Kenya and the Nyandarua Range and flows across the Laikipia Plateau but now usually loses itself in the Lorian Swamp northeast of Mt. Kenya, used formerly to reach the coast in no fewer than three places. One course, which still flows it wet years, runs east from Lorian

to Afmadu (where it is known as Lak Dera) and thence south to join the Lower Juba somewhere near Deshek Wama. A second course used to reach the sea through the Bur Gau inlet.[4] And the main mouth was opposite Pate Island: indeed, in prehistoric times the whole Lamu Archipelago, with the possible exception of Lamu Island itself, was formed by coral islands growing up opposite the Ewaso Nyiro's sunken delta.[5] We do not know when each mouth ceased to flow, but the evidence strongly suggests that all three were at least seasonally operative in our period, the main mouth, which was probably the first to do so, drying up some time between the 9th and I4th centuries. The original capital of Vumba Kuu, though not known as "Shungwaya", was likewise slightly inland on an old mouth of the River Umba. They probably all originated as the lowest year-round crossing-points for stock on their respective rivers, and may occasionally have shifted as these crossing-points shifted. At such places, to judge from modern practice, pastoralists often had to rely on settled communities to get their herds across to dry season grazing grounds, creating favourable conditions for state-formation. But all five Shungwayas were either ports as well or had their own subsidiary points nearby.

All the evidence suggests that the site on the mainland opposite Pate (which has not yet been located) was the earliest and the capital of Great Shungwaya itself. (One modern scholar has even suggested that it may be the Rhapta of Ptolemy and the Periplus of the Erythraean Sea and if the textual references can be squared there is much to be said for this idea (Mark Horton, personal communication)). It was certainly "Tiung-lji" (Shungwaya) as described by a Chinese writer in c. II75 - I225, which was said to have borders some 2300 kilometers in length though the land itself was largely unpopulated (Wheatley I975:88-89; cp. Filesi I972:23-24). And both Burton and Krapf confirmed that it acquired the additional name of "Shirazi" (Krapf I858:I05-I06 and I860:

I82; Burton I859:5I). This is unlikely to have happened before c. IIOO, which is the earliest plausible date for the Islamisation of the northern Swahili coast, but it may already have taken place by IO7I, for in that year the ruler of "Zängistan" (which must have been Great Shungwaya) sent an embassy to the Chinese court styling himself Amir-i-amiran, a title used in the Caliphate exclusively by the Buwayhids, whose illustrious dynasty in Shiraz 932 - IO55 AD he may have been claiming to re-incarnate (Wheatley I975: IO4 and personal communication). In this case, the adoption of Islam itself followed the taking of a name with Islamic significance, for Tiung-lji is not specifically described as Islamic. (The description however, may date from some time earlier.) There is, in any case, no real problem, for Islamisation was clearly a gradual process and the belief-system which for a while emerged as a result of it, "Shirazi Islam", highly syncretic. Once the additional name was adopted, many Muslims who had previously claimed to "come from Shungways" began to speak of "coming from Shirazi" before or in place of Shungwaya (Burton I859:5I; Freeman-Grenville I966: 35-36), but this was no more than an Islamised version of the Shungwaya origin-legend and was used in much the same way.[6]

In reality most of the major coastal settlements between Mogadishu and the Kerimba Islands of northern Mozambique are likely to have been founded in the course of the 9th century, that is, by non-Muslims. The earliest dated Muslim inscriptions so far known confirm archaeological and documentary evidence on this point. They are one dated H498/ II04-II05 AD from Barawa and one of H5OO/II06-II07 AD from Kizimkazi in South Zanzibar. The Kizimkazi one commemorates the founding of a mosque by one Sheikh Abu Amran (Amrani?) Musa al-Hasan bin Mohamed, and according to the Swahili traditional history of Kilwa it was Musa bin Amrani "the

Bedouin" (Bajuni?) who helped Sultan Ali of Shirazi (alias Shungwaya) to found Kilwa (Freeman-Grenville / Martin I973: IO7, I2I; Freeman-Grenville I966:222; Pearce I92O:29). Kanbalu, the only place definitely recorded as having a Muslim section of the population earlier than the IIth century was beyond any reasonable doubt in the Comoros (Shepherd I982:I32-I36). It was occupied by refugees from the Caliphate - conceivably Said and Suleiman Julanda of Oman - in the first half of the 8th century, but in c. 9I5 was still only part-Muslim, and by that time the immigrants spoke an African language (Trimingham I975:I29-I3I; Miles I966:53).

We have dated the rise of Great Shungwaya to c. 8OO but it is difficult to explain its origins in detail until the site itself can be found and excavated. According to Chinese sources the Amir-i-amiran claimed to head a dynasty already five centuries old, which would put its origin back to c. 575 AD (Wheatley I975:IO4). All we can say is that to judge from excavations in three of its subsidiary port-towns, Manda, Pate Town and (especially) Shanga, the whole area appears to have been occupied by camel-eating pastoralists at the very end of the 8th century. (This, incidentially, seems likely to have been one of the dryest in the history of the region which may account for some population-movements (Webster I979:48)). The newcomers cleared a central area within each existing settlement and built a stone-lined well, ringing the enclosure with stone walls and using it, partly at least, to stable their herds. In Shanga, and probably elsewhere, no domestic structures were built within the stone enclosure before the I5th century, though some commercial or ritual ones seem to have existed which were replaced c. IIOO by a mosque and countless semi-monumental tombs whose design and decoration, but not their mode of construction nor their location, owe something to Siraf or

Shiraz models (Horton I980,I982). The material used for the first stone structures was porites coral chipped or sawn into blocks. Porites, being a live coral, exists only below the lowest tide level, but if sawn beneath the water or within a few hours of being removed is little harder than an ordinary hardwood. But pastoralists - even ex-pastoralists - are unlikely to have perfected this technique shortly after their arrival on the coast, so it is probably a skill which they (or some of them) brought with them. Porites scarcely exists in the Persian Gulf and is not known at Siraf, so the skill can not have come from there. The nearest known buildings of porites blocks dating from this period are in the Dahlak Archipelago (Horton, personal communication), and it is accordingly likely that at least some of the newcomers originated either on the southern shores of the Gulf of Aden near Zeyla and Berbera or even further north near Adulis, the port of Axum which collapsed in the 7th century. The very occasional use, in 9th century east coast structures, of bricks of burned clay also points to an Axumite connection (Chittick I967:54; Kirkman I966:I8 where he somewhat conservatively dates them to a later century). The "palace" at Tiung-lji is described as being "of brick and ashlar", which could well describe the brick and porites block walls found at Manda ringing what is no doubt the central enclosure. We shall also meet other evidence linking the newcomers with this region.

But not only with this region, for several traditions and some ceramic evidence also seem to link them with the south Ethiopian and central Kenyan highlands, notably Mt. Kenya and the Laikipia Plateau. How can two such distant provenances be compatible? What seems to have happened is that, from the beginning of the first millennium if not before, an important long-distance trade-route ran from somewhere near Berbera (the Malao of the Periplus) or Zeyla southwest along the brach of the Great Rift Valley which divides the

northern and southern Ethiopinan highlands as far as Lake Turkana, and then south into the Central Kenyan Rift and to places like Mt. Elgon on its west side and the Laikipia Plateau on its east. Evidence for the last part of this route is slim, but rests on traditions common to many Central Kenyan and some Northern Tanzanian peoples of having "come from Misri". Misri was, later at least, the Arabic and Swahili name for Egyptian cloth, and the Periplus emphasizes the great demand for this cloth, in different colours, shapes and qualities, at all the ports between Avalites (Zeyla) and Opone (Hafun), including Malao (Huntingford I980:2I-28). Several Central Kenyan and North Tanzanian languages also have words for cloth which can be shown by linguists to date from the first millennium; and, since there is no sign that it was locally manufactured, it seems most likely to have been Egyptian cloth brought in from the north. It would have been rare and expensive, however, and its distributors highly prestigious, so it would not be surprising if many later societies claimed descent from them: a claim converted, in time, to a supposed origin in Misri itself. (At least one Kenyan scholar has traced the Misri of the Luhyia of western Kenya to Lake Turkana, while a colonial one once deduced that it must be somewhere in southern Ethiopia, on the basis of traditions collected in Tanzania: Were I974:I87; Hollis I899). With the collapse of Adulis and trade in the Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden generally, and the simultaneous rise of commerce between the Persian Gulf and the East African coast consequent upon the growth of Islamic naval power, many groups of merchants - or at least of pastoralists in varying stages of sedentarisation who had previously been implicated in the Egyptian cloth trade - drifted down to the east coast from different points along this route. Some no doubt crossed the watershed of the Harar Highlands and followed the Shabelle or Juba River southward while others went first to Lake Turkana or Laikipia and others again came

down the Ewaso Nyiro and Tana directly from these places.

There is good evidence that one or more groups with well-digging and stone-building skills and a grasp of the principle of hydraulic engineering comparable to those of the people who appeared in the Lamu Archipelago c. 800 also occupied Laikipia either then or somewhat later, being finally expelled by the Maasai only in the late I6th or I7th centuries. One of these groups is linked in Maasai tradition with the Sonjo, who now live in northern Tanzania near the stone structures at Engaruka, and who were actually described by a Swahili caravan guide c. I870 as "wa-Segeju from Shungwaya" (Wakefield I870:3I2, Jacobs I972:80-85). If there was a Shungwaya-type state - perhaps going by another name - as early as 575 AD, it might thus have been in Laikipia, or perhaps in the vicinity of Berbera, which, as Malao, seems almost certain to have been described as a multi-ethnic society by Chinese writers from the mid-8th century onwards. (Here I am unable to agree with Wheatley, who believes this place to have been Meroe - I975:79-83). But only extensive excavasions can resolve this problem.

In any case, groups from Berbera, Zeyla and perhaps even beyond and others from Laikipia, the Lake Turkana region, and southeastern Ethiopia, all of whom seem likely to have had previous dealings with one another, converged on the Pate hinterland some time before c. 800 and either formed or reconstituted the state which became Great Shungwaya. They traded in two directions. They took over the north - south coastal trade route which probably already existed at the time of the Periplus (which mentions "sewn boats" which seem quite likely to have been the precursors of the later Swahili mtepe, whose home was the Lamu Archipelago); and they also brought goods out from the hinterlands in the interior and exchanged them with merchants coming from the Persian Gulf and, later, from other parts of the Muslim world. The immediate result of the takeover of the north - south trade was

the foundation of a string of Swahili or Swahili-to-be settlements between Great Shungwaya and the Comores. Al-Masudi, writing of the period c. 9I5, mentions Ahabīsh ("Ethiopians": the term has no linguistic implications) who had crossed a "tributary of the Nile" flowing into the Indian Ocean (perhaps the Awash, but more probably the Shabelle, Juba or any of the major rivers flowing towards the east coast) and founded settlements all the way south to Sofala in Mozambique (Trimingham I975:I2I-I22). They would have been able to create and dominate such settlements by their skill in building permanent wells, but probably took with them ironsmiths whom they found in the Great Shungwaya region and who spoke a form of "Sabaki" Bantu ancestral to both Swahili and Pokomo; and, as so often, it was the Bantu tongue that prevailed in the resulting polyglot communities and became in time the lingua franca of the whole coast. Shortly after al-Masudi's time his Ahabīsh also absorbed the Comoros (where they may already have been present as the "pagan Zenj" of whom he spoke), thereby completing what we may call the first Swahili diaspora. As indicated the settlement of the Benadir sites of Mogadishu (where "Shirazi founders are remembered - Chittick I982:49, 52-53), Merca, Barawa, Munghia and Gesira probably also occured in the 9th century, though so far it is only at the last-named that we have definite evidence of this (Wilson I982:2I6).

The trade with the central Kenyan and southern Ethiopian highlands was probably at first the more important, and remained, so long as it lasted, the life-blood of the Shungwaya states. It has become a commonplace that the east coast, and especially the Kenya section of it, had little contact with the interior before the I9th century. But this view must now be modified, for both at Manda and at Shanga fragments of rock crystal (quartz) have been found at 9th century levels, and this cannot have come from anywhere nearer than Mt. Kenya

and probably came from the Kerio Valley in the Central Kenya Rift beyond Laikipia. Rock crystal was extremely high valued in Sassanid Persia, in some Mesopotamian cities such as Basra in the early Caliphate period, and above all in Fatimid Egypt; and the Egyptians at least are believed to have acquired their raw crystal from eastern Africa (Chittick I967:54; Horton I982:I06; Pinder-Wilson I976:I22). Traces of iron-working using haematite ore also indicate links with the interior, for though magnetite and ilmenite sands, both of which contain iron, abound in the Lamu Archipelago, haematite must have been brought from some way inland (Horton I982: I06; Brown I980). And if quartz and iron-bearing sand or ore could be carried from the interior, so could some of the ivory and rhino horn which it has hitherto been cautiously assumed must have come from the coastal hinterland, and which we know was being exported at the time. We do not know what was taken inland in exchange but iron spear-blades were certainly sent up the Juba at a later date (Elliott I925/I926: 254), and cloth was probably also an important commodity. Such cloth was manufactured on the coast in the 9th century, for we have recovered spindle-whorls from that period (Horton I982:I06). It probably went to replace the Misri cloth where the latter had been popular in earlier centuries, and may well have been known, as cloth in this region usually is even today, by the modified version of the Arabic geographical name for the locality, i.e. as Sawahil-i, those who wore it or distributed it becoming known as wa-Swahili just as their predecessors had been known as wa-Misri. The cloth itself, of course, would have left no archaeological record, any more than its Misri precursor.

The long-distance trade seems to have been dominated by three distinct groups who lived separately and occupied different ecological niches but had long-established and close links with one another, probably expressed in the form of blood-

brotherhood which is still regarded as no less important than kinship among traditionally-oriented people in the region today (Freeman-Grenville I966:8; Herlehy I982). First were the coastal townsmen, occupants of the Shungwaya capitals and the coastal settlements, often but not all sedentarised pastoralists; second, a group living on or near the edge of the highlands who may have been pastoralists or may have lived as hunter-traders, rather like the Kamba in the I9th century (Lamphear I970); and third a lowland group, usually pastoral nomads who moved seasonally between the other two in search of grazing and no doubt often transported the goods on their cattle or by hand. There were also, in the Shungwaya states, considerable populations of cultivators living along the river banks and near the sea whose periodical grain surpluses (on the Juba, Tana and Umba, probably mostly rice) were taken off them in the form of tribute and also exported: Ibn Battuta, for instance, noted that I4th century Mombasa received its corn from "the Swahili country", that is, the Pate mainland and Lower Tana area (Freeman-Grenville I966: 3I).

Each state was held together by an elaborate system of overlapping blood-brotherhoods and blood-money compacts (diya-paying units, as historians of Somalia call them), all linked at the apex by a powerful court whose ruler, by virtue of his right not only to deflower every virgin bride in his realm but also to prescribe the bride-price and receive part or all of it (thus becoming, as Cassanelli wrote of the Ajuran imam, "'husband' and 'father' to all" - I973:33), was an automatic member of every blood-brotherhood and diya-paying unit in his kingdom. His right to fix and receive the bride-price also enabled him to keep a standing army of young male retainers, by the simple expedient of fixing it so high that would-be bridegrooms had to serve him for a period of time either collecting tribute, carrying out

hydraulic projects, or simply putting down dissent. The normal period of service, to judge from the Book of the Zenj, was seven years (Cerulli I957, I: 23I seq.). (Maillassoux has shown how in many African societies the elders' control of the dowry system enables them to exploit the labor of the younger generation but only in Shungwaya states, so far as I know, did this power devolve upon the ruler alone.) There was also some sort of descent-set system comparable to the gada/luba system of the Oromo which obliged every young man to produce before his ruler the genitals and perhaps also the right hand of a human victim before he could achieve full adulthood and be permitted to marry: at once an invaluable propaganda weapon for striking terror into the hearts of foes and an effective method of mobilising all able-bodied men for military purposes.

Finally it is clear that "magic" - a term here used quite without prejudice to cover all scientif and pseudo-scientific knowledge exploited for political purposes save only military expertise used on the battlefield - played a large part in the Shungwaya regimes. In early centuries we hear much of magic as a way of mediating between man and his environment: of the ability to control serpents or lions and other fierce animals both on land and in the water, of the power to prevent boats from sailing, and the like (Freeman-Grenville I966:20, 23; Filesi I972:23). The technique of constructing stone-lined wells, of building in stone, and of controlling the flow of streams or even rivers, may also have been presented as magic as defined. But most important were the "war-magic" or regalia items (Swahili kirumba) and the sacred settlements themselves. The regalia items comprised minimally a short, broad-bladed stabbing spear (Swahili fumo) and a side-blown horn (Swahili baragumu, later also mbiu, zumbe or jumbe, and siwa). These could either be carried into battle to give invulnerability or buried within an enclosed

space to render it inviolable (Baker I949:28). Buried (along with other charms, no doubt) within or at the entrance to a sacred settlement or Shungwaya capital, these things gave it its sacred character, making it a suitable base for those who controlled it to practise their divining, mediating, rain-making, healing, protecting, giving of sanctuary and many other magical or semi-magical activities. Armed with the kirumba and in control of the capital (which as we have seen was probably also an important crossing-place and a centre for exports and imports), Shungwaya rulers were well-placed to dominate the wide and sparsely-populated river networks over which they ruled. But their power does not seem to have been absolute. If we assume that the "Zenj" ruler in his "state centre" (Arabic dar mamlaka) of whom al-Masudi wrote was either the ruler of Great Shungwaya or the king of a southern successor-state or sub-state structured on similar lines, he had to behave "justly" on pain of death and the exclusion of his seed from the throne for ever. And there was a class of religious preachers in the pre-Islamic period (the forebears, though in different ways, of both Somali and Swahili poets) who seem to have had considerable authority (Trimingham I975:I2I; Freeman-Grenville I966:I6).

For various reasons - environmental change, the success of the north-south trade at the expense of the east-west one between the coast and the interior, the growth of Swahili urbanism and the advance of Islam, whose stricter adherents must have found much that was unacceptable in the Shungwaya system - Great Shungwaya collapsed some time between c. I200 and I400. Its place was taken by a number of much smaller states based on the same system and some of the same political principles, though by no means all identical. It looks as if there was a power-struggle over the former Great Shungwaya capital (alias Shirazi) in which Fumo Liongo, the Ozi king

who has become a legendary figure in Swahili literature, was defeated by the Muslims of Pate Town, who had no desire to see another pastoralist-dominated state grow up in their hinterland. They seem to have occupied both "Shirazi" and Liongo's capital, perhaps setting up a puppet in one place or the other before destroying both of them. (This is anyway the most satisfactory interpretation of the Liongo saga - see Allen I982a:23I - and certain relevant passages in the Pate Chronicle and De Barros' I6th century history: Freeman-Grenville I966:248, 253 and Kirkman I966:8-I3.) As so often, what was fundamentally an economic dispute was translated into a religious war, with a Wangwana Muslim party centred in Pate Town (and having important links with Ibādi circles in Oman) disowning "Shirazi Islam" and, indeed, a Shirazi origin-legend and the very name Shirazi, and substituting over time an Arab origin-legend instead. "Shirazi Islam" was finally eliminated from almost all settlements between Pate Town and Vumba Kuu by c. I630 (Allen I982b), most groups who converted to Islam after that date reverting to a Shungwaya origin-legend once more.

North of Pate the picture is less clear. The Pate Chronicle notes, in typical boasting vein, that Pate "conquered" all the settlements as far north as Mogadishu even before overthrowing Liongo (Freeman-Grenville I966:248); but is this to be interpreted as meaning any more than that its allies in a campaign against the more objectionable features of "Shirazi Islam" had prevailed in all the Benadir ports by that time? This is likely enough, for greater proximity to the Arab world and a higher rate of Arab immigration into places like Mogadishu and Merca would be likely to have achieved this result. The ruler of Mogadishu in Ibn Battuta's time called himself Sheikh rather than Sultan, which may have tacit acknowledgement of a loose allegiance to the Great Shungwaya ruler or his heirs further south, and ran

a typically Shirazi court with an elaborate hierarchy including amirs and wazirs, dress privileges etc.; but the visitor's eagle eye did not detect any overtly non-Islamic practices such as were still to be seen in the no less Shirazi court of Malindi in early Portuguese times (Freeman-Grenville I966:27-30, 54, 63). It is also possible that the Mogadishu court modelled itself less on the Shungways ones than on that of Zeyla, where a wholly Shirazi-style etiquette, complete with a side-blown regalia horn (which seems to prove beyond any doubt a link between Great Shungways and this area) was in existence at about the same time (Pankhurst I982:56-57). Whatever the position in Mogadishu, we have no reason to believe that Shungways-type states or statelets ceased to exist north of Pate, only that the form of Islam practised in them was somewhat more orthodox. The army 6000 strong said to have been paraded outside Barawa in I507 suggests that armed men could still be rapidly summoned from the hinterland in time of need (Strandes I96I:67), and indeed the Tunni confederacy sounds as if it was some sort of statelet in the Barawa hinterland right up to modern times (Lewis I955:II9-I2I).

It is not clear, however, that Shirazi Islam was similarly purified in the Benadir interior. Ajuran, as it evolved some time after c. I500, sounds not unlike Ozi, whose ruler is remembered by his Muslim Swahili subjects as a Shirazi prince of impeccable Islamic pedigree who ruled according to high Muslim principles, and by his (at that time) non-Muslim Pokomo ones as a brutal mSegeju who used every resource available to a traditional Shungwaya ruler - ius primae noctis, forced tribute, bands of fast-moving pastoralist warriors hungry for "trophies" - to oppress them, Shirazi-style titles (amir, wazir) are remembered for Ajuran, as well as colourful and opulent courts whose wealth may partly account for the emphasis on poverty in descriptions of some

of their more orthodox coastal counterparts (Cassanelli I973: 24-29; Hersi I977:I36-I38, I86-I93, 204). Ajuran differed from other successor-states in that its main capital seems to have been at Kallafo on the Middle Shabelle (where Paulitschke's map shows a Rer Hamar population along with Shabelle cultivators and various pastoralist groups as late as I893), but some of the other settlement sites were on or near the Lower Shabelle, and what was probably the northernmost one was at Meregh near the mouth of a seasonal stream in the vicinity of Hobbio north of Mogadishu. This site was later known as hamar jajab or "smashed hamar", as was an earlier site in Mogadishu itself (Benardelli I957; Chittick I982:48-49).

The Ajuran regime may have preserved much of the old-style "Shirazi" flavour of Islam, but at least it sounds fairly Muslim in most contexts. This was not necessarily true of the Juba state with its capital at Kedi. From the many traditions about "Punun the Kilio" (or "Kisisi the Punun", who must be the same person) and his overthrow of Borali bin Mwenye Mwii and subsequent defeat at the hands of the backwoods Garre (or "Galla") called in by Borali's Swahili allies, it sounds as if Kedi was only marginally if at all Islamic, and as if many traditional Shungwaya customs survived there right up to its fall. If, as seems reasonably certain, the mKilio (singular form) who fought the wa-Katwa in the reign of Bwana Tamu Mtoto of Pate according to the Pate Chronicle was this same Punun / Kisisi, this fall did not occur till about I725 (Prins I955; Elliott I925/I926:354-356; Freeman-Grenville I966:26I). Kedi, then, remained a more or less traditional Shungwaya capital right into the I8th century; and it is no wonder that the author of the Book of the Zenj concluded that it was the "real" Shungwaya from which the ancestral Mijikenda must have sprung, though I have tried to show elsewhere that this was true only in a very limited

sense (Allen I983; Cerulli I957,I: 232 seq.). From Ravenstein's description of it, Kedi sounds remarkably like the hamar jajab at Meregh, and it is regrettable that no more recent descriptions of it have been published (Ravenstein I884:267; Benardelli I957).

The Segeju

It will not have escaped notice that, in the above summary, I have mentioned languages relatively seldom, though I did suggest that it was Bantu-speaking smiths who carried the ancestral Swahili tongue up and down the coast and not al-Masudi's Ahabīsh. Elsewhere I have preferred to speak of nomadic or sedentarised pastoralists, cultivators, hunter-gatherers and so on. The reason for this is very simple: so long as we translate most of the proper names of peoples mentioned in the traditions by basically economic terms like these, the traditions themselves, of which there are an enormous number, are all perfectly consistent and make good sense. It is only when we begin - as most modern scholars immediately do - to attach linguistic labels to these names, and to assume that (for example) all wa-Gala are Oromo-speakers who burst from the headwaters of the Juba in the Bale Highlands c. I600, or that all people referred to as Boon or wa-Boni spoke an Eastern Cushitic "Sam" language and all those called Waat or Waata an Eastern Cushitic Oromo one, that we find inconstistencies in the traditions and have to ignore the vast majority of them, with the result that Great Shungwaya and at least some of its successor-states disintegrate before our eyes. It is now reasonably well-established that most Somali-speakers call many hunter-gatherers Boon regardless of their language, while Oromo-speakers call the same sort of (and often the same) people Waat or Waata, northern Swahilis call them wa-Sanye or wa-Sanya, and so on (Stiles I982:I65-I67). I suggest that

this is also true of most traditional labels: that wa-Galla, for example, is better translated as "fierce nomads" or something of the sort. This solves many problems and enables us to make use of the Shungwaya traditions in a way we should not otherwise be able to do. It is also more logical, since historical peoples are unlikely to have been able to distinguish between alien languages unless one of them happened to be very closely related to their own, or to have changed their names for nearby groups every time the latter underwent a language-shift. It is much more plausible that they used the same name for peoples who shared a few prominent cultural traits even if they spoke wholly unrelated languages. It is clear, moreover, that within the Shungwaya states the linguistic map was not unlike that of much of southern Somalia and the Lamu hinterland today. There, as a result of continual fusion and fission (Lewis I955:II8-I2I), small groups of people speaking a single language were often divided between several many-language socio-political units in different places (Lewis' "mixed villages"), and occasionally even following different economic modes, so that attempts such as have recently made to trace the pre-I600 history, economy and movements of a modern tribe on purely linguistic evidence are less useful than they might appear (Nurse I982; I983).

"Tribes" as we usually visualise them emerged in this region, I suggest, only after c. I700 as a result of the final break-up of the Shungswaya system in the period of what are often called "Galla invasions" (but which I prefer to see as a series of civil wars between pastoralist groups), and by no means everywhere then. However we define "tribe" we almost invariably include linguistic unity in the definition, yet many ex-Shungwaya tribes - notably those of the "Shungwaya peoples" - fall short of linguistic uniformity even today. While it is generally conceded that the Swahilis are

not a tribe, yet it is presumably because they tend to be conceptualised as one that chi-Mwini (spoken by the townspeople of Barawa) and ki-Ngazija (spoken in the Comoros) are usually presented as Swahili dialects. In reality, common sense indicates, they are separate languages, albeit spoken by people who are correctly perceived as Swahilis. The Mijikenda, by contrast, are referred to as "nine tribes" in defernce to the fact that ki-Digo, for instance, is really very different from the Giriama tongue: yet in many other respects, and not least in their own perception of themselves, the Mijikenda are really a single people. The same has happened with Tana River Pokomo. Any traditionally-minded Pokomo, Malakote or Korokoro elder will tell you even today that the wa-Pokomo comprise four groups: (from the Tana mouth) the Lower Pokomo, Upper Pokomo, Malakote also known as Elwana or Welwan; and the Korokoro or Munyo Yaya. (There used to be a fifth called the wa-Pokomo wa Mgine living on the mainland opposite Pate Island and near Pokomoni Creek, but these were the smiths who are nearly though perhaps not quite absorbed by the Swahilis.) The Lower and Upper Pokomo speak different dialects of the "Sabaki" sub-family of Coastal Bantu (though the Upper Pokomo already have some Oromo clan-names or alternative clan-names - Prins I952:2I); but the Malakote/Elwana are more or less bilingual in a third Pokomo dialect and Oromo, while the Korokoro speak mostly Oromo ("Munyo Yaya" is said to mean "northern Pokomo" in Oromo). This has led some modern scholars to suggest that the Korokoro at least "must be" a different tribe from the rest; but that is not how modern Pokomo themselves see it (Prins I952:I-3; Bunger I979:I-7; Nurse I982). Nor do traditions about wa-Pokomo make nearly such good sense if applied only to the Upper and Lower Pokomo. How are we to deal with this sort of anomaly? The only practical way (which must also be the correct one) is to work,

in the pre-I600 period and if necessary later, with "clans", a term defined to mean not the sociologists' clan which can be tested in terms of its internal structure, but the largest one-language, one-culture unit (presumably but not necessarily larger than a lineage) which existed among such groups as the Tunni when their "confederacy" was in its early stages. A cluster of clans might share those few prominent cultural traits which were necessary to make them appear to outsiders (and in certain contexts to themselves) as a single people, but not, or not yet, have achieved • linguistic uniformity. The Pokomo, to put the same thing another way, are an "incipient tribe" but have not yet learned to speak a single language as most tribes around them have (though it is recorded that Bantu languages are spreading even among the Korokoro at the expense of the Oromo one - Heine / Möhlig I980:I5). The original bonds which linked them - blood-brotherhood of some sort, no doubt, since they live along a trade route to the interior; also, adherence to some sort of a Shungwaya belief-system in which their ganda-settlements were important - have decayed, and more typical centripetal forces are now beginning to take their place but have not yet done so completely. The same is arguably true of the Mijikenda, though the fact that the colonial regime gazetted them officially as "nine tribes" has had its effect. The Swahilis, being urban and not officially classified as a tribe, have developed rather differently.

But the most interesting case of all for our purposes is that of the Segeju, because wa-Segeju occur so frequently in the traditions and almost always in connection with Shungwaya. (It will be recalled that even the Sonjo were said to be "wa-Segeju from Shungwaya".) Nurse has recently established that modern Segeju living on the Kenya-Tanzania border as far south as Tanga and also up the Umba speak

three languages: Swahili, Segeju-Digo (which cannot easily be distinguished from the Digo language but is perceived as different by the Segeju and Digo themselves) and a third language called Daisu, a term which is cognate with Thagicu and ultimately with the name Segeju itself. The first two tongues are "Sabaki" Coastal Bantu but Daisu belongs to the Central Kenya Highland group of Bantu languages which includes Kikuyu, Kamba, Meru and Sonjo among others (Nurse I982; Sutton I973:82). Western scholars since Dammann have usually assumed that Daisu was the "real" Segeju language, and that those who spoke other ones were either on their way into or out of the tribal community. But, once again, it is simply impossible to make sense of all the traditions about the wa-Segeju (and the Portuguese Mosseguejos)unless we assume that they "always" spoke several languages. As regards the present Segeju, it is not hard to identify them as a clan cluster living along the Umba as the Tana River Pokomo live along the Tana, whose former links are decaying and who may or may not be in the process of acquiring linguistic unity to replace them. (In point of fact, like all Tanzanians those who do not speak Swahili already are acquiring proficiency in it as a second language.) What originally held them and a number of additional clans together was, indeed, the Vumba Kuu successor-state.

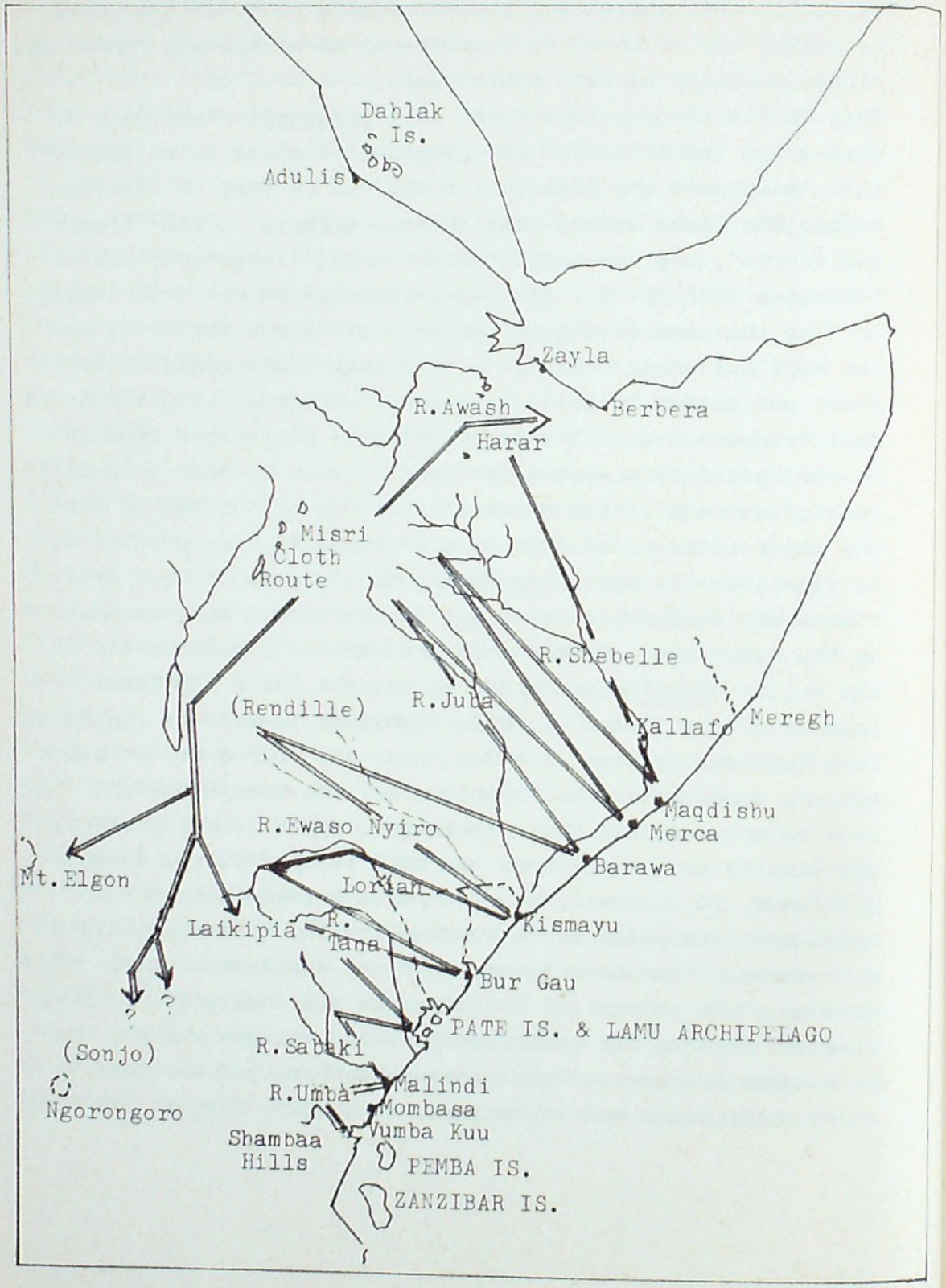
But the Segeju case is not so simple, for the way wa-Segeju is used in the traditions (and Mosseguejos in Portuguese documents) makes it clear that the name refers not just to the ancestors of the Umba groups (Swahili speaking townsmen, Daisu speakers living on the edge of the highlands, and Digo speakers moving between them) but also to a whole lot of others who, at different times, controlled the tripartite trade on all the major rivers as far north as the Juba if not the Shabelle. Many of these others, moreover, would have been speakers of Cushitic tongues: "Sam" certainly,

"Oromoid" probably, and Southern Cushitic conceivably. Moreover, their cultures spanned the whole spectrum from nomadic herders who drank blood and emasculated their foes to urbane Swahili townsmen. This at any rate is the only reasonable interpretation of numerous traditions to the effect that the wa-Segeju were "the same people" or "of the same origin" (Swahili mlango, literally "door" or "gateway") as many other groups including the Garre (in Bantu traditions wa-Katwa), Rendille, Aweer, Pokomo, Digo, most Mijikenda and several Swahili lineages; also, of traditions which describe as wa-Segeju (or Portuguese documents which describe as Mosseguejos) peoples as diverse as the nomadic warriors living behind Malindi in the I580s and I590s and Fumo Liongo, King of Ozi in the later I6th century or Ivoo, Diwani of Vumba Kuu in the early I7th century (Allen I980; cp. Freeman-Grenville I966: I4I, I50; Werner I9I5:333; Robinson I939:93). We certainly cannot accept that all Rendille, Aweer, Pokomo, Digo and Mijikenda are descended from wa-Segeju in this sense, any more than we can accept it of all Swahilis. Indeed, other traditions and sources exist which indicate that many, usually the majority, were not. But if we think of wa-Segeju as clans or lineages which either derived from these peoples or moved in among them ("sharing their doorways", perhaps) and, in time, acquired their language and culture, or part of their culture, but who nevertheless preserved separate links with one another for trading purposes - as, in short, a sort of politico-commercial freemasonry based on blood-brotherhood and other sorts of special bonds which tanscended language, culture, and perhaps even kinship ties - then all these traditions can be very plausibly interpreted, and a good deal more besides (e.g. Allen I983). Given, moreover, that the Shungwaya system required that at least the nomadic and non-Muslim groups should emasculate

their foes and seek to ensure that their ruler exercised ius primae noctis over virgin brides, these wa-Segeju would certainly have shared sufficient notable cultural tratitsto be spoken of, at least in retrospect, as a separate community, albeit overlapping with other ones.

This is not to deny that there must originally have been a core-group who initiated the network. It seems quite likely that these were the "Zamzam" of the 8th century Chinese account, who lived at Mua-lien (Malao, Berbera), were "black and fierce", and are described as having "incestuous habits" (Wheatley I975:95-96). (It may be no coincidence that Zamzam is also the name of the sacred well at Mecca, for as we saw the earliest stone-builders on the east coast based their power on control of wells in magical enclosures.) But what is depicted cannot conceivably be a tribal migration. It must be the spread of a system designed to open up and dominate lucrative trade routes which steadily moved southwards from one major river to another. The accompanying map permits us to visualise the system spreading in a series of vast zigzags which diminish as they get further south and terminate on the River Umba. To the west are various places mostly on the ancient Misri cloth trade route: the Harar Highlands (source of the Shabelle), Bale Highlands (source of the Juba), Lake Turkana, Laikipia Plateau (near the source of the Ewaso Nyiro), Upper Tana (the "Kiluluma" of the traditions and home of the original Daisu speakers), Upper Sabaki perhaps, and finally the point where the Umba falls from the Shambaa Highlands. To the east, all the ports between Meregh and Tanga but especially those surrounding the five Shungwayas, with those of the Lamu Archipelago the earliest of all. Between these points all trade routes are dominated, as they rise and decline one after another, by lineages who may not be kinsmen but are certainly blood-brothers yet who live among other clans and share their languages. Only in the

Map I. Rough Sketch Map showing Putative Misri and Shungwaya Trade Routes



extreme south in the last century or two (by which time Zamzam blood, if any, will be extremely dilute) do these people come to form a clan cluster or, if you prefer, "incipient tribe".

Almost incredibly, this seems to be precisely confirmed in a few specific traditions. We have already cited the I9th century Segeju tradition that they originated in Misri (strictly, Mishiri) in southern Ethiopia. This goes on to identify the Segeju with the Garre or wa-Katwa, an identification also made elsewhere (Hollis I900; Baker I949). Garre traditions collected near Mandera in the I920s or I930s actually specify their place of origin as "the Red Sea coast near Harar", and add an account of how they moved down the Juba (or possibly the Ewaso Nyiro and/or some intermediate tributaries) to the coast and then returned, leaving some of their number behind who spread further south: a fair oversimplification of the establishment of one or more trade routes between the highlands and the Indian Ocean (Pease, n. d.). But by far the most impressive set of Segeju traditions (some of which may be based on unpublished documents) comes from the family known as el-Buhury (Ba-Urii, al-Bauri), whose members reportedly included Fumo Liongo as well as the author of the Book of the Zenj. This was published in summary in I949 by Baker. Briefly, it describes the original ancestors (not known as wa-Segeju) as coming from Misri via Jinebi, which can probably be interpreted to mean they were Egyptian cloth merchants, Jinebi apparently being the name of a special type of this cloth though I have been unable to confirm this. Next (but perhaps simultaneously) they lived in two cities: in "Rikhami", where their fellow-citizens were or became wa-Somali, wa-Nuba, wa-Gala and wa-Barabara (the last, perhaps, townsmen of Berbera), and where they themselves were known as wa-Singa (which Prins has tentatively linked with Shingani, the northern quarter of old Moga-

dishu - I955:276); and in "Niran", sited "on the slopes of a volcano ... near the Galla country or, as some say, near Karimojong in Uganda". Here their fellow-citizens were wa-Mbali (perhaps a reference to the modern town of Mbale on the extinct volcano of Mt. Elgon south of Karamojong country), wa-Rusambo, wa-Songo (wa-Sonjo?), and, somewhat unexpectedly, Muware Daruwesh. No need to spend too long on the identification of these "cities" (whose names may anyway reflect a confusion of different traditions) or peoples: it is enough for our purposes to note that they represent two clusters of peoples (clans?) at opposite ends of a long-distance trade route leading from the Zeyla / Berbera region to the Central Kenya Rift. "Niran" may be Laikipia as well as, or instead of, Mt. Elgon. Curiously, when they moved it was not in company with those they lived among, but in unison with one another and "in search of fresh grazing", which only emphasises their reliance upon the nomadic herders who actually transported the goods. They went next to Shungwaya, or rather "Kirau", which is probably Lake Kurawa, a dry-season grazing ground near the mouth of the Tana and associated with the Tana Shungwaya capital. From here their course becomes confused but includes "Kiluluma" and several other places which can plausibly be understood as focal points of the inland trade. Only after "Kiluluma" do they regard themselves as having acquired the name wa-Segeju, which suggests at least some awareness of a lack of genetic continuity (Baker I949:I7 seq.). This seems to be confirmed as regards Daisu speakers (but not, of course, Swahili and ki-Digo speakers) by Nurse's linguistic evidence (I982).

Somali History

It should be possible to rewrite a good deal of the early history of Somalia in the light of the above: especially if, as I suspect, Somali traditions use the term Ajuran in much

the same flexible way that coastal Bantu ones use wa-Segeju. We cannot do more here than indicate some lines which might usefully be followed. But first, a word about Somali historical traditions in general. Just as many tribes in east Kenya and northeast Tanzania now have at least one set of traditions indicating that their ancestors had a single origin and spoke a single language (though this cannot have been the case much before the I7th century as is confirmed by various clan, sub-clan or lineage traditions which indicate otherwise), so there now exists a set of Somali traditions which suggests that all those now perceived as Somalis have "always" been Somali speakers and came either from the northeast or the northwest of modern Somalia, seen as the "real Somali homeland". Traditions of this sort, which we shall call Pan-Somali traditions, are usually expressed in the metaphor of a genealogy showing eponymous ancestors, historical or putative, of all major groups and their relationship to the original "founder of the race", Somali or Samale. They have been widely though not uncritically accepted by I. M. Lewis and other historians and most modern Somalis also accept them in broad terms though not always in detail. Once again, however, there also exist rival traditions, not so much, this time, at sub-clan or lineage level as among surrounding peoples - Bajuni, Aweer and Oromo speaking groups. Such traditions also seem to have been more widespread in southern Somalia itself in the early decades of this century. At first sight, they are quite incompatible with Pan-Somali ones. On investigation, however, they can be reconciled with them to some extent by supposing that a number of Somali tribes (or clans as they are now more usually known) were, like the Umba River Segeju and the Tana River Pokomo - and, indeed, the Tunni and various others - in origin clan clusters (in our special sense of the term) or confederations of people from widely

separated areas speaking quite different languages but linked by common commercial and political interests. Such clan clusters, however, did not (or not only) exist along a single trade route from the coast to the interior. They often included people living along and at the ends of one or more of the great zigzags we described above. Thus people living somewhere near the Harar Highlands (Northern Somali speakers) might link up not only with groups on the Benadir coast (Aweer speakers) but also with others from the Bale Highlands or central and northern Kenya (Oromo speakers, conceivably sometimes even speakers of Central Kenya Bantu tongues[7]) to create a single unit whose members would, at first, speak different languages.

Let us take some examples. Lewis wrote that the Dir were "generally regarded as the oldest Somali stock", and traces them and the Bimaal, a sub-section of them, back to the northwest. Cassanelli accepts this, and notes the Bimaal tradition that they had reached no further south than Merca by c. I690 (Lewis I955:25; Cassanelli I973:39). Cassanelli also argues that the Ajuran were a branch of the Hawiye who moved down the Shabelle in the second half of the I4th century, which would mean that they had little or no first hand experience of Great Shungwaya (I973:2I). The Oromo speaking Borana of north Kenya, by contrast, perceive the Ajuran as Borana who were "lost" and became Somalised (Baxter I954), while Elliott (I925/I926:339) reported a Bajuni tradition that they were a branch of the Garre or wa-Katwa. That the Ajuran in fact comprise groups associated with all three areas seems clear from a description of them by a British administrator in the I950s. He described them as divided into Somali speaking camel herders and Oromo speaking cattle herders, but said that, though the former were usually regarded as superior, the traditional chief was not derived from them and seemed more at home in Swahili than in either

Somali or Boran (Chevenix-Trench I964:82, 86). That some Ajuran, and also some Garre, speak Oromo is confirmed by more recent research, though it is suggested that the other Garre have "reverted" to Somali while those Ajuran who speak it are doing so for the first time (Heine / Möhlig I980:57, 58). That the Garre may have once spoken not just two but three languages - Oromo, Somali and Aweer - is hinted by Ehret (I983) in an even more recent paper. Probably the Ajuran did so too. Some Hawiye may also have spoken a form of Aweer as well as (Northern) Somali. Certainly they were described as already living in Merca in the mid-I2th century, while a mid-I3th century Arab source speaks of them having their "capital" nearby (Trimingham I975:I39, I42). These Benadir Hawiye are now classified by historians of Somalia as "Pre-Hawiye", but this is a self-evidently artificial category arising out of efforts to exclude them from, or anyway make them more marginal within, the overall Somali genealogy (Lewis I955:26-27). But they were not regarded even as Somalis by a British administrator in Jubaland who wrote of them and the (Benadir) Dir that "though called Somali (they) are really the aborigines of the Benadir coast, and are in no way co-tribal with the Somali, with whom they seldom intermarry" (F. Elliott I9I3:560); and a visitor to the Lorian Swamp at about the same period met there two self-styled Hawiye whose lifestyle was typical of Aweer speaking hunter-gatherers, though he does not actually state that they spoke Aweer, and describes them as of the same original stock of the Somalis (Dracopoli I9I3:240-243). It would have been the Benadir Bimaal, living well south of Merca before c. I690, to whom the Segeju refer in traditions to the effect that, when they were known as Kilio Muhammad, they "shared a territory" with the Garra Muhammad (Garre) and Bimali Muhammad (Bimaal). Some of them no doubt became members of the Katwa Bajuni clan known as A-Bimali, though it may be

significant that the alternative name for this group is Abugado, a typically Oromo name (Nurse I980:39). Another Katwa Bajuni clan is known as A-Kilio, an Aweer speaking group living near Bur Gau calls itself Aweerkilii, and some of their neighbours still call the modern Segeju wa-Kilio. Another Katwa clan name is A-Dail, A-Dilli or Andille, which appears to link them to the Rendille of northern Kenya who, according to Hassenstein's I863 map, were known as "Andile or Anduleni" and had close trade links with Barawa and the coast (Stahl I964:36). Rendille were identified on the coast opposite Lamu and also near the mouth of the Juba in the present century (Turton I975:530-53I).

Similar evidence abounds and need not all be recapitulated here. Its gist is that there are three sets of traditions about various groups who are now usually perceived by historians of Somalia as of "pure" Somali origin - the Dir (including the Bimaal), the Hawiye (including the Ajuran), and arguably the Herti and Darod as well. Similar traditions surround the Garre past. One set traces them back to northern Somalia, another traces them to the west among Rendille and Oromo speakers, and a third asserts that they were aboriginal to the Benadir or have anyway lived there since the first millennium (in which case they would have been central to Great Shungwaya). We can either accept one set and dismiss the other two as fictitious, or we can accept some such explanation as the one outlined above which seems to be supported by linguistic evidence and the Segeju and Garre traditions. There is no real choice.

FOOTNOTES

1 The writer is at present engaged on a book in which Shungwaya will be discussed in much more detail.

2 A collective name for the Digo, Duruma, Rabai, Ribe, Chonyi, Jibana, Kambe, Kauma and Giriama.

3 I know of no published reference to the Tana River Shungwaya, but it appears on some old Kenya maps, and I have myself visited it.

4 This course of the Ewaso Nyiro is for some reason shown on maps of eastern Africa in the I9th and 20th centuries in Curtin / Feierman / Thompson / Vansina I978: I29, 399, though it certainly has not flowed regularly for three or four centuries and possibly much longer.

5 For evidence for these statements, see the relevant "Landsat" satellite photographs. I am indebted to Dr. M. D. Gwynne for some assistance with their interpretation.

6 This represents a contradiction of the view I expressed in Allen I982a:2I that Shirazi was not the same as Shungwaya. Further scrutiny of the Shungwaya traditions leaves me in no doubt that the two were really one.

7 The best evidence of Bantu speakers in this context is the presence on a number of late I6th and early I7th century Portuguese and other maps of demonstrably Bantu names, Macaia or Macaja (ma-kaya) and Marica (ma-rika) in the immediate hinterland of Mogadishu and Merca (Spear I978: 40, note 24; cp. Cortesao / Teixeira da Moto I960,III: plates 384-386 and IV: plate 46I,498,503-504,5I3). These would, in my view, have been encampments of Bantu speaking pastoralists who were in the neighbourhood at that time, driven there, perhaps, by the droughts of the later I6th century.

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