

Burgess, G.

Cosmopolitanism and its discontents

pp. 1-25

Burgess, G., (2009) *Race, revolution, and the struggle for human rights in Zanzibar: the memoirs of Ali Sultan Issa and Seif Sharif Hamad*, Athens: Ohio University Press

Staff and students of University of Warwick are reminded that copyright subsists in this extract and the work from which it was taken. This Digital Copy has been made under the terms of a CLA licence which allows you to:

- access and download a copy;
- print out a copy;

Please note that this material is for use ONLY by students registered on the course of study as stated in the section below. All other staff and students are only entitled to browse the material and should not download and/or print out a copy.

This Digital Copy and any digital or printed copy supplied to or made by you under the terms of this Licence are for use in connection with this Course of Study. You may retain such copies after the end of the course, but strictly for your own personal use.

All copies (including electronic copies) shall include this Copyright Notice and shall be destroyed and/or deleted if and when required by University of Warwick.

Except as provided for by copyright law, no further copying, storage or distribution (including by e-mail) is permitted without the consent of the copyright holder.

The author (which term includes artists and other visual creators) has moral rights in the work and neither staff nor students may cause, or permit, the distortion, mutilation or other modification of the work, or any other derogatory treatment of it, which would be prejudicial to the honour or reputation of the author.

Course of Study: HI277 - Africa and the Cold War

Title: *Race, revolution, and the struggle for human rights in Zanzibar: the memoirs of Ali Sultan Issa and Seif Sharif Hamad*

Name of Author: Burgess, G.

Name of Publisher: Ohio University Press

INTRODUCTION

Cosmopolitanism and Its Discontents

THE ZANZIBARI REVOLUTION OF January 1964 was the climax to years of growing racial, ethnic, and partisan tension in the islands and a violent rejection of Zanzibar's cosmopolitan heritage. Probably one-third of all Arabs on Unguja Island were either killed or forced into immediate exile; for those Arabs and other minorities who remained, the next years witnessed the confiscation of most of their lands and urban properties, as well as their mass exclusion from government employment. A new African nationalist regime espoused socialism and, for two decades, found means by which to transform privileged minorities into second-class citizens. The revolution ended 150 years of Arab and South Asian economic and cultural hegemony in Zanzibar.

Many hoped the revolution would heal or reduce communal tensions in island society, but any observer of Zanzibar's contemporary politics can see that it did not. Three elections since 1995 have served, among other things, as popular referenda on the legitimacy and legacies of the revolution. One legacy is the political union of Zanzibar and Tanganyika and the creation of the United Republic of Tanzania in April 1964, barely three months after the revolution. Initially, the island government retained nearly all aspects of its national sovereignty, including control over its finances and armed forces. Starting in the mid-1970s, however, the mainland began to assert increasing control over island affairs, so that today, although Zanzibar retains its own presidency, cabinet, and parliament, the archipelago is utterly dependent on the mainland for its security, finances, and even its electricity. Zanzibari presidents are now nominated and kept in power by a Tanzanian ruling party and army dominated by mainlanders. While Tanzania enjoys a reputation for political stability, such stability is purchased only through rigged elections in Zanzibar. Ruling-party elites justify such measures as necessary

to preserve the revolution and to ensure the islands remain part of Tanzania.

Thus, Zanzibar constitutes by far the most turbulent part of Tanzania today, a direct result of the revolution in the 1960s. Officials of Tanzania's ruling party recognize that, if they face a serious political challenge, they do so in Zanzibar. Since the 1990s, the ongoing political impasse in the islands has resulted in violent crackdowns on political demonstrations and the flight of thousands of Zanzibari refugees. The Zanzibari "crisis" has called into question Tanzania's respect for human rights: does *Chama Cha Mapinduzi* (CCM), meaning "Party of Revolution" in Swahili, actually intend to allow opposition parties to win elections, or are they permitted to exist merely to appease Western donors?

MEMORY COMMUNITIES

How Zanzibaris remember the revolution—as either the original sin or the triumph of the independence era—often determines whom they call their friends, with whom they share a cup of coffee, or whom they welcome to their homes as in-laws. Many Zanzibaris continue to trace their present fortunes to the revolution; it assumes center stage in discussions of how present conditions came to be. Defenders of the revolution claim it was good for Africans and describe the violence in 1964 and afterward as minimal and justified in order to right a century of wrongs. They often speak the language of African nationalism, whereas their opponents espouse the language of human rights and regard the violence as neither minimal nor justified. These latter remember the revolution as a long era of arrests, empty shops, and an ever-present atmosphere of isolation and fear. They claim the revolution reversed the social and economic development of the previous century and reduced what was once a proud and independent sultanate into a powerless appendage of the mainland.

Politics in the islands is not merely a contest common within contemporary Africa over such issues as government corruption and promises kept or broken; rather, it is about memory and identity. The revolution in the 1960s, in the name of African unity, largely repudiated Zanzibar's cosmopolitan past and ended the islands' independence. It promoted an African nationalist discourse of racial grievance, which, when wedded to socialist ideals, justified an assault on the wealth and exclusivity of minority communities and the punishment of Pemba as an island of "counterrevolutionaries." Opponents of the revolution, meanwhile, embrace Zanzibar's multicultural heritage and the idea that such a heritage

2 INTRODUCTION

makes islanders a unique people, possessing a set of interests that ought to be defended within the Tanzanian union. In their efforts to rally islanders of all backgrounds against the ruling party, they employ a language of human rights that has attained a global currency as widespread as that of socialism and of African nationalism in the 1960s. Thus, not only do Zanzibaris contest the legacy of the revolution in their lives, they also disagree on the language through which it is to be understood.

The two memoirs contained in this volume may be read as opposing arguments for and against the revolution; as such, they provide rare and contradictory insights into Tanzania's postcolonial history and current political stalemate. They demonstrate how conflicts within Zanzibar have become issues of national importance for Tanzania. The memoirs also demonstrate the differences between the language of socialism and that of human rights. Ali Sultan Issa supports the revolution on socialist principle as an event that liberated islanders from a colonial system of class exploitation. Seif Sharif Hamad, however, regards the revolution as a disaster in terms of human rights, an event to be regretted deeply. While each man served for years as a minister in the revolutionary regime, each was also imprisoned and forced out of the ruling party. Neither espouses African nationalism nor advocates the politics of race. Each, in fact, specifically deplores the habit of some Zanzibari politicians to manipulate racial or ethnic identities in order to achieve political ends. They both, furthermore, dispute official claims made for decades in the schools, in the media, and at public rallies that, since 1964, the islands have seen rapid social and economic development.

Official claims that reflect African nationalist currents of thought should be understood in order to grasp the historical and intellectual context of the memoirs presented here. Salmin Amour, who served as president of Zanzibar (1990–2000), completed his doctoral dissertation at Karl Marx Party College in East Berlin in 1986. "Zanzibar in the earliest days," he writes, was "a totally classless society." Unfortunately, it was not "left to prosper smoothly over time."¹ Arabs came and introduced slavery, something Amour claims was until then completely unknown, ignoring considerable historical evidence to the contrary.² Arabs denied Africans the chance to evolve their own forms of socialism: had Africans "been left to follow their life styles smoothly," they would have developed "into a higher form of the African collective mode of living."³ Africans possessed no desires to exploit one another, and it was only the infiltration of foreigners that produced "evils" such as class divisions in the islands.⁴

Amour's portrayal of precolonial society in Zanzibar as protosocialist and egalitarian is familiar; it reflects the intellectual influence of Julius

Nyerere and his vision of African “familyhood” as the basis for socialism in Tanzania. It also serves very important functions in contests over memory more specific to Zanzibar. By asserting the fundamentally moral nature of precolonial African society, Amour inverts distinctions commonly drawn in coastal East Africa between “savagery” and “civilization.”⁵ Amour does not reject the language of civilization but merely recasts the assigned roles, with Africans now representing civilization and Arabs—through their role in the slave trade—the forces of savagery. Amour’s image of the precolonial past makes possible his claim that the revolution restored island society to its former moral equilibrium and reestablished a society of tolerance and mutual respect. Amour’s claims thus reflect what Liisa Malkki observed about oral histories in general: they represent “not only a description of the past, nor even merely an evaluation of the past, but a subversive recasting and reinterpretation of it in fundamentally moral terms.”⁶ On moral grounds, Amour and other African nationalists award Africans status as an advanced people, justify the revolution, and reject the worthiness of Zanzibar’s mixed cultural heritage.

The argument against cosmopolitanism is carried further in Omar Mapuri’s *The 1964 Revolution: Achievements and Prospects*, which is perhaps the most significant clue to understanding the extremist edge of racial politics in contemporary Zanzibar. Mapuri served Amour for years as his deputy chief minister in the 1990s and was an outspoken defender of the ruling party, the CCM.⁷ Published in the aftermath of Zanzibar’s 1995 elections, Mapuri’s book inflamed opinion in the islands. He called on the African majority to maintain racial unity in the face of what he regarded as Western intrigues and resurgent Arab influence.⁸ Such unity was as essential in the 1990s as just before the revolution, when, in a series of election campaigns, Africans confronted an imagined alliance between the British colonial government, the sultan, and Arab politicians. The British were not neutral referees; they wanted to leave behind “an Arab state” in Zanzibar⁹ and employed all kinds of “well designed political maneuvers, deceptions, intimidations and humiliations,” intended to divide Africans.¹⁰ Unfortunately, Mapuri offers few specifics, none of which is convincing, and relies overwhelmingly on a secondary school history text for his information.¹¹ Throughout, Mapuri’s intent is not so much to convey historical realities as to encourage unity among CCM supporters around a series of shared suspicions, including suspicions toward Zanzibaris of African ancestry who do not support CCM.

Mapuri also sets out to defend the ruling party’s record over the past decades. The party did not permit plunder and violence in 1964; although “following centuries of oppression . . . a climate of retribution and revenge

4 INTRODUCTION

would have been explicable," the new regime "nipped all attempts at retribution in the bud."¹² Such a conciliatory policy, along with alleged revolutionary success in education, health, and housing, were responsible for forty years of tranquility. Peace and progress did not entirely heal old divisions, however. Public dissent was, regrettably, allowed to resurface in a new and "dangerously premature" era of multipartyism. Mapuri records his deep distrust of democracy, a distrust that pervades the ruling party in Zanzibar today:

Karume [Zanzibar's first president] understood well that the legacy of centuries could not be swept away overnight and that a true Revolution needs time to take root in the hearts of people accustomed to tradition. Karume's foresight and wisdom in his declaration immediately after the Revolution that no election should be held in Zanzibar for fifty years was to prove prescient.¹³

Mapuri's readers cannot help but wonder, however, how old habits of thought have survived in the islands. He denies the reality of mass killings in 1964 and instead claims the existence of documents that reveal the genocidal intentions of the "Arab" government the revolution overthrew. He claims that, as retribution for the deaths of sixty-five Arabs in the June 1961 election riots, the government planned to kill sixty Africans for every one Arab fatality and to expel and confiscate the wealth of all Africans of non-Zanzibari origin. Those remaining would be enslaved and have Arab culture imposed on them. Zanzibar would be "proclaimed a land of Asians and Arabs." Furthermore, "all male African babies would be killed, and African girls would be forced to marry or submit to Arabs so that within a few years there would be no Africans to remember the vile treatment of their ancestors."¹⁴ Thus, according to Mapuri, the revolution in 1964 did not unleash anti-Arab and anti-Asian violence in Zanzibar; it was instead a relatively peaceful intervention that protected Africans from their own genocide and forced assimilation into Arab culture. Would-be sins of the past extend, in fact, to the imaginary sins of the present. In 1997, referring in a work titled "Zanzibar under Siege" to the CCM's main political rival, the Civic United Front (CUF), Mapuri claimed that "had CUF won the [1995] elections, they would have massacred people with impunity in revenge."¹⁵

It is hard to imagine claims more corrosive and inflammatory and hard to see how the CCM's language of protection is *not* actually a language of incitement. Mapuri invents his own massacres to justify the

revolution and any means necessary to preserve the political status quo in the islands. No clearer example can be conceived of how actors in Africa and elsewhere manipulate memory and identity to produce mass fear and suspicion, to be exploited by political elites for their own antidemocratic purposes. Mapuri and other CCM officials feel they represent the interests of the islands' allegedly embattled majority and regard the threat of Arabs' seeking retribution as very real, yet it is never clear who or where the Arabs in question are—are they a small minority of rural Pembans or Arabs living in exile far away in the Middle East? Regardless, readers cannot possibly miss Mapuri's conclusion: Africans must not "continue to be victims of their humility" or "continue to be harassed in their own land." They "must prepare themselves for bigger tests ahead [than the 1995 elections] so as to ensure that the Great 1964 Revolution remains for ever and that Zanzibar remains African."¹⁶ Tanzanian scholar Issa Shivji has recently noted that CCM claims that CUF intends to restore Arab power in Zanzibar "may sound somewhat fanciful to any scientific observer, yet [they continue] to be the substance of the ruling party's position in Zanzibar, supported even by some establishment scholars."¹⁷

CCM claims of African victimization can make sense only if slavery in the nineteenth century and colonial-era racial inequalities are projected onto the present; Mapuri's claims begin to persuade only if one is willing to ignore the revolution as an era of major historical transformation. However, in *The 1964 Revolution*, a book ostensibly about revolutionary achievements, Mapuri has very little to say about the period between 1964 and 1995 or how the revolution actually impacted the lives of Zanzibaris. He pauses briefly to cite a few numbers intended to suggest social and economic development, figures that do not impress: for example, that life expectancy increased from forty-three years in 1964 to forty-eight in 1988.¹⁸ Nor does he consider how effective the revolution actually was in forcing into exile tens of thousands of non-African minorities or in ending Asian and Arab domination of the island economy. Mapuri seeks to awaken his audience to colonial-era injustices, when many islanders of all races and ethnicities find their memories of the revolution more traumatic than memories of British or Arab domination. Mapuri is far more at home in the "racial war of nerves"¹⁹ of the late colonial period than he is in any time since. Careful readers can only assume that he—and others—value the revolution more for its negative than positive consequences. Unfortunately, Amour made Mapuri's book required reading in Zanzibar's secondary schools, a move apparently intended to impart to students a firm understanding of who their historical enemies are, or at least were conceived to be a half-century ago.

6 INTRODUCTION

Students in Zanzibar need to look elsewhere for an understanding of their history, yet no text speaks with any authority to all islanders about their past. Where can they read an assessment of the revolution that allows them to analyze it on its own merits, rather than the perceived evil intentions of its critics? For decades, critical voices remained oral; they survived in an atmosphere of storytelling and private performances, in which the object was often as much to entertain and provoke as to instruct and in which a series of revolutionary incidents were continually recounted as outrageous abuses against God and humanity. Such voices have asserted fundamentally moral claims, arguing that the revolution empowered individuals to act according to their worst vices: cruelty, pride, and ignorance. For decades, the only dissenting voices to appear in print were those of Zanzibaris living in exile, of whom Abdulrazak Gurnah emerged as the most compelling. In *Admiring Silence*, Gurnah refers to “the incompetence of the [revolutionary] authorities, their mindless bullying, the endless fiascos, their irrational vengefulness.”²⁰ In *By the Sea*, a political prisoner is forced night after night to listen to government radio sermons “by one personage or another, haranguing and hectoring, rewriting history and offering homespun moralities that justified oppression and torture.”²¹ Speaking through his character Amin, Gurnah seeks in *Desertion* to convey how residents of Zanzibar Town responded in 1964 to a new revolutionary age:

We have to find a new way of speaking about how we live now. They don't like to hear people say certain things, or sing certain songs. . . . People have been killed. I cannot write these things. They have frightened us too much, and it would be stupid to be found scribbling what we are required not to know about. . . . They want us to forget everything that was here before, except the things that aroused their rage and made them act with such cruelty.²²

Gurnah is unique in the Zanzibari context for his capacity to suggest how any hegemonic language locates and catalogues the horrors of the past in order to legitimize present excesses. The memoirs contained in this volume are two separate and very different attempts to convey, through the idiom of personal experience, how Zanzibar's revolution either helped or harmed island society. They allow readers to begin to assess the revolution on its merits, rather than the alleged malevolence of its detractors.

ALI SULTAN ISSA

The first memoir is that of Ali Sultan Issa, an icon of Zanzibar's revolutionary past, whose life is thoroughly cosmopolitan, but not in the centuries-old sense of close ties between Zanzibar and the world of the western Indian Ocean. Issa's connections are more distant; his most influential experiences came in London, Moscow, and Beijing; and he even expresses open contempt for the "backwardness" of aspects of Arab, Indian, and African societies that do not measure up in his estimation to the enlightened ways of more "scientific" lands. His Arab ancestry and allegiance to scientific socialism meant that only through a remarkable chain of events did he come to wholeheartedly serve an African nationalist regime and to seek new ways to impose the revolution. His inclusion in the cabinet and even his physical survival were rather fortuitous, given the execution, at Karume's order, of four of the other original nine cabinet ministers serving him in the 1960s.

Issa's life story has value on a number of levels. It provides unity and coherence to the abrupt transitions of the last half-century of Zanzibari history. Issa's life, it can be said, has come full circle in many of the same ways as his island society. His life reveals how socialism enjoyed allure in a colonial society and came to influence a revolution of have-nots. His story illustrates how socialism was closely associated with the youthful years of a post-World War II generation from across the islands' racial spectrum, endowed with the unique privilege of imagining a new future. The worldview of Issa and his like-minded contemporaries was more expansive than that of their elders and more dismissive of the familiar than the exotic. It was nurtured by the stories and experiences of friends who seized opportunities to see the world, of which Issa may be regarded as exemplary. Setting out at the age of eighteen, he spent two years as a seaman and stowaway, spending months in Calcutta, Cape Town, and Vancouver. Arriving in London, he assimilated into the circles of East African workers and students in the city but ultimately gravitated toward the multiracial but predominantly white society of the British Communist Party. There he gained access to a world of secular intellectuals thousands of miles away from the colonial and qur'anic schools of his youth. He studied political economy and absorbed the vocabulary, class taxonomies, and views of world history espoused by his socialist mentors. He attended the Moscow Youth Festival of 1957 at his own expense and then returned to Zanzibar and took up full-time work for the Zanzibar Nationalist Party (ZNP).

As his party's representative overseas, Issa obtained and distributed hundreds of scholarships to Eastern Bloc colleges and universities, in-

tent on influencing a rising generation of nationalists. In doing so, he and a few others literally put Zanzibar on the socialist map of the world. In their time abroad, Zanzibaris reflected on island history and came to believe they understood its essential injustices, contradictions, and medievalisms. They learned to regard themselves as a cosmopolitan elite with access to a ready-made template to erase all the ills of island society. They adopted a general historical sense that socialism had and would continue to be adopted by the planet's most progressive nations. They began their analysis of island history not from the moment Arabs first civilized or enslaved Africans, but from an imaginary future when Zanzibar would fully realize its capacities for development. They sought to convince others that Zanzibar could become something completely different and better by radically departing from centuries of its own historical evolution. Issa and his comrades adopted an imported future that forced their secession from the ZNP and compelled their support for a revolution they sought and failed to control.

Issa's story, then, provides intellectual context to the revolution. Issa's stated intent is, in fact, to suggest that he and his comrades were a vanguard responsible for nearly all that was enlightened about the revolution and that had they been able to influence leaders like Karume to genuinely follow socialism, the revolution would have succeeded. In this respect, Issa echoes his life-long associate, A. M. Babu, who claimed the comrades intervened to broaden "the objectives of the uprising from a narrow, lumpen, anti-Arab, anti-privilege, anti-this and anti-that perspective into a serious social revolution with far-reaching political, social and economic objectives."²³ Given time and influence, the comrades could have fully developed the nation's productive forces. They were thwarted, however, by "novices" who ruled the islands "with the caution of a bull in a china shop" and who relegated Zanzibar to "permanent stagnation."²⁴ Zanzibar, once "a brilliant revolutionary star of Africa, was henceforth to be reduced to one of the worst bungling and tyrannical petty-bourgeois despotisms in Africa."²⁵

Issa endorses selected aspects of the revolution and exonerates himself from others. His narrative is at times a confession, a polemic, and a dispassionate account of revolutionary events. He distances himself from the racial politics espoused by the regime he served, yet he helped introduce socialist purge categories like "capitalists" that served as popular labels for Arabs and Asians. As a cabinet minister for eight years, Issa enforced a quota system that ended Asian and Arab domination of secondary education. He nationalized Arab and Asian properties in Zanzibar Town and established youth-labor camps in the countryside. Though one of

the most controversial personalities the revolution ever produced, Issa makes no apologies. He sees himself as the wise and incorruptible civil servant, trying to build the nation, yet continually undermined by the public's "unscientific" habits and worldviews.

In this sense, he represents a generation of officials whose ideas of revolution were deeply embedded in their ambivalent views toward island society. If Zanzibar wasn't exactly "the laziest place on earth,"²⁶ as one visiting Western journalist put it in 1962, it was a culture in need of reform according to socialist precepts. Specimens of what Frantz Fanon referred to as "underdeveloped humanity,"²⁷ Zanzibaris needed to renounce "the gentle life" for a heavy dose of revolutionary discipline. Like British colonials, the comrades wanted to instill the work habits of industrialized society, yet the "crooked timber" of humanity could not always be made to conform to the socialist ideal.

The discipline that Issa preached in public did not always extend to his private life, as his story abundantly reveals. He moved in a world of hotel lobbies, nightclubs, and international conferences. As a minister, he enjoyed a relatively lavish salary, land in the countryside, a seaside villa, servants, and mistresses. Rather scandalously, he married an English woman without revolutionary convictions, who gave him four children. While he survived and even benefited from the revolution, Issa became increasingly disillusioned with Karume's regime, which either failed in its nation-building imperative or was simply too cruel and capricious.

Eventually, the wrath of the regime came down on Issa's head. His arrest, torture, and death sentence following Karume's assassination in 1972 provoked considerable reflection on his part. While in prison, he read the Qur'an three times and reembraced Islamic beliefs; and upon his release, he devoted himself to reconstructing his life through trade and entrepreneurship, rather than politics. In the 1980s, he thoroughly accommodated himself to the realities of a new world order. Don Petterson, former U.S. ambassador to Tanzania, remarked in his memoirs that "in 1964, there was no more zealous Marxist in the whole of Zanzibar [than Issa]."²⁸ Yet at a reception held in 1987, Issa "showed up wearing a three-piece suit and presented me with his business card," his appearance suggestive of the new "entrepreneurial spirit" in the islands.²⁹ This spirit has ever since been dedicated to turning Zanzibar into a place for fun and relaxation more than for work: with Italian financing, Issa opened Zanzibar's first beach resort hotel.

Today, Issa exudes almost equal amounts of pride for his part in the development of tourism and for his role in constructing socialism in the 1960s. Instead of touring the island with Che Guevara, ticking off for his

visitor visual signs of Zanzibar's revolutionary development, the intent is now to obscure from the gaze of hotel guests anything that is industrial or not quaint. Yet he still retains more than a nostalgic belief in socialism; this may be witnessed, as I have seen, when he sings revolutionary songs in Spanish, Russian, and Chinese to his slightly disoriented Italian hotel staff. In 1996, he went on a pilgrimage to Mecca and then made another to Cuba, to attend a socialist youth festival. When interviewed by a Cuban television crew about his memories of Che, he wept uncontrollably, until the crew was forced to end the interview. Issa would probably say, quoting Mao, these are all "non-antagonistic contradictions;" and in a way, he is right. The historic appeal of socialism in Zanzibar, as in Ethiopia, may be attributed to the power of "a story of how a weak and backward collection of nationalities, located outside of Western Europe, attained unity, wealth, and international respect: the allegory of the Russian and, later, the Chinese, revolution."³⁰ Yet socialism also responded to universal desires for grandeur and destiny. An Argentine journalist writing about the Zanzibari Revolution in 1965 claimed it offered the latest evidence that revolution was changing humanity: "The armed struggle breaks up the old routine life of the countryside and villages, excites, exalts. . . . Life acquires a sense, a transcendence, an object."³¹ Issa's life and exploits should at least partially be understood through his pursuit of such transcendence on both a personal and a communal basis. If Issa can freely recollect episodes from his past, without regret or conscious irony, events that are scandalous by local standards, it is perhaps because the God he came to accept in midlife is the kind of nation-building god that is sympathetic or forgiving of such pursuits. If there is anything clear about his memoir, it is that the eye of Issa's memory is turned toward both the past and the prospect of a future judgment. Having escaped the worst punishments of man, he is preparing to meet a socialist-minded deity.

SEIF SHARIF HAMAD

If Issa's account is one of complexity and contradiction, reflective of the kaleidoscope of values embraced by residents of cosmopolitan Zanzibar Town, the life story of Seif Sharif Hamad suggests a more undeviating course, adopted by one who never found any ideology or belief system more compelling than the rural Islam of his youth. Hamad has not sought to transform the conservative countryside of his youth through values at least partially adopted from overseas; he has asserted himself as a defender of that society from what he considers a harmful revolution

instituted by outsiders. If Hamad has spent much of his adult life as a counterrevolutionary, he has been motivated to do so largely as a result of his satisfaction, so apparent in his memoir, with the Zanzibar of his youth.

From a family in the island of Pemba that in colonial times produced a series of landowners, schoolteachers, and civil servants, Hamad was a rural notable years before he entered politics. A product of a political culture in the islands that accommodated itself to British colonialism, Hamad sometimes comes across in his account as extraordinarily pragmatic, even devoid of ideology. And yet, as Abdellah Hammoudi reminds us, such an impression is only accurate if the concept of ideology "is restricted to systems of social and political ideas engendered by the European humanist revolution. . . . Let it not be forgotten that Islam provides the faithful with a theory of the ideal society and its economic and political structure" that is acted out in "Muslim daily life." Ideology "is thus not a coherent system of ideas and concepts, but rather a concrete set of comportments [prayer, almsgiving, fasting, etc.] which the faithful display as rallying signs."³²

Yet Hamad's pragmatism does have an analogue in European humanism. Hamad asserts an Islamic social vision that overlaps and associates with village notions of honorable behavior and global discourses of human rights, all of which he feels were promoted or protected by the colonial state more than by the governments that followed. Hamad's family prospered under British rule, and as a youth, he achieved distinction within the meritocratic culture of colonial boarding schools. In such favorable circumstances, Hamad looked forward to following his father into the civil service. His initial willingness in 1964 to allow the new regime to prove itself soon ended, however. Denied government permission to attend university overseas, he was posted as a teacher to a country boarding school in Pemba, where like most Pembans he became thoroughly disenchanted with the revolution. Hamad's account of conditions in Pemba in the 1960s may explain better than any other printed source the genesis of postcolonial discontent in Pemba, including the rationing, constant surveillance, and punitive punishments that broke his father's health and forced many of his close friends into exile.

Hamad's account also illuminates the thaw experienced in Zanzibari society after Karume's death in 1972. A less suspicious president, Aboud Jumbe, adopted a more inclusive attitude toward Pembans and educated people in general and gradually dismantled much of the islands' coercive security apparatus. Jumbe allowed Hamad to attend the University of Dar es Salaam, where the young man was unimpressed by the socialist views

espoused by his lecturers, both Tanzanian and expatriate, including the famous Walter Rodney. Hamad read widely, excelled academically, and continued to embrace pragmatism and reform. In 1977, Jumbe appointed him minister of education, despite his Pemban origins and heterodox views. Hamad was a leading light of a new educated elite—cultivated by Jumbe—responsible for “introducing a modicum of rationality in the government.”³³ In a complicated and controversial series of events, Hamad soon emerged as the ringleader of a circle of reformers who outmaneuvered the revolutionary old guard in the CCM and forced Jumbe’s resignation in 1984. The new president, Ali Hassan Mwinyi, appointed Hamad chief minister, and the two pushed a reformist agenda: liberalizing trade, initiating a new, more liberal constitution, and abolishing Karume’s system of People’s Courts.

Despite the popularity of these measures, the pendulum then swung against the reformers: in 1988, CCM’s old guard managed to oust Hamad as chief minister, and the next year he was arrested for sedition. Hamad’s political exile provided the latent popular opposition in the islands with its most potent leader. By 1992, he was out of prison and, in a new era of multipartyism, serving as the spiritual leader and organizational genius of the Civic United Front. Since then, Hamad has campaigned for the Zanzibari presidency three times—in 1995, 2000, and 2005—and served as CUF’s secretary general for over a decade. The issues and personal conflicts that now separate CUF and CCM in Zanzibar stem from the disputes of the 1980s between reformist and old-guard politicians. The rhetoric has become more heated, however, as the stakes have risen and as the opposition has aired a generation’s worth of grievances.

One contest is over memory. Hamad has disputed the ruling party’s version of the past, asserting that Africans participated in the slave trade and that the British did not oppress Africans. Most important, according to Hamad, the revolution was the beginning of Zanzibar’s current problems. He claims it did not sweep away a regime of privilege and servitude so much as it did late-colonial institutions that imposed checks on the accumulation of despotic power. He asserts that mainlander politicians have over the decades sought to make the island chain a dependent appendage of the mainland. If, in the 1970s, many Zanzibaris welcomed mainland influence in Zanzibar as a force for moderation, by the 1990s the union had become in their eyes the chief obstacle to Zanzibari desires for democratization and better governance. The use in recent election cycles of Tanzanian security forces to maintain minority CCM governments in power has further encouraged such sentiments.

The solution, according to Hamad, is not secession but rather reform of the Tanzanian union. Yet Hamad also insists, contrary to considerable archival evidence, that the revolution was actually a cleverly disguised invasion from Tanganyika, encouraging islanders to blame their post-colonial problems on Nyerere and the mainland. CCM officials fear that a CUF electoral victory will mean the union's dissolution, since many in CUF support Zanzibari independence. "Losing" Zanzibar to CUF will, in CCM eyes, allow the islands to receive large infusions of aid from the Middle East, which will set Zanzibar adrift from its ties to the African continent. Such fears have provoked national CCM leaders to rig elections repeatedly and intervene militarily in island affairs. In 2001, a violent crackdown resulted in dozens of civilian deaths, an unknown number of rapes and attacks on personal property, and thousands of refugees.³⁴

Hamad's account also reveals how Tanzanians continue to be divided over issues of identity. His calls for unity in the islands under the banner of Islam have, in an age of global terrorism, opened his party up to CCM allegations of dangerous sectarianism. Hamad also provokes controversy when he expresses unambiguous pride in Zanzibar's cosmopolitan heritage and in his own Shirazi ethnic identity. He locates Zanzibar as much in the western Indian Ocean world as in Africa. While CCM officials like Mapuri equate nation with race, Hamad's nationalism is based in part on a *celebration* of cosmopolitanism in the islands. Zanzibari nationalism is also generally grounded, for better or worse, on local pride in the regional influence that the islands exercised in the nineteenth century, on cultural chauvinism, and on a shared sense of victimization within the Tanzanian union, a victimization often conceived in sectarian terms.

Hamad's memoir, thus, illustrates some of the most profound tensions in contemporary Tanzania and gives the only account anywhere of how a political party in Tanzania gets off the ground and survives government opposition and internal factionalism to emerge as the nation's largest challenger to CCM rule. It reveals how CCM functions on its highest levels as neither a true despotism nor an open democracy, how it values consensus and moderation yet is capable of authoritarianism when it feels its interests are threatened. Hamad's memoir is a rare window, therefore, into one of the many versions of "African democracy" that have emerged since the 1990s.

Hamad's account, finally, is a fitting counterpart to those of both Issa and Mapuri. For Hamad, Zanzibari history is not so much the story of the struggle of any particular class or race as the story of human virtues and vices in perpetual opposition. It is not so much the story of how social groups employ various strategies by which to protect their interests

and assert or maintain their dominance as about how and why individuals, as autonomous moral agents, exercise power to either promote or violate human rights. Hamad's version of human rights is anything but contingent; though informed by the village norms of his youth, it is not parochial. It resists subordination to either the power of a revolutionary agenda or claims for justice by a community that has historically been excluded and enslaved. His version of human rights is guided instead by the view that Islam teaches a set of ethical standards that apply to politics: in his account, Hamad repeatedly refers to the alleged deceit, folly, and foul play of his rivals—and their theft of elections—as violations of a community's trust and as offensive to God.

One of Hamad's arguments against the revolution is that it provided a language and view of history through which men could and did set aside Islamic ethical standards, not to mention codes of human rights; when African nationalists view politics as a "racial war of nerves," they obscure any ethical component of elite decision making. For Hamad, the only way for islanders to move forward from their traumatic memories of the past and to end the divisive politics of race is to remember and commonly embrace Islamic sensibilities that speak to the worthiness of an individual—and a community—more than do labels of race, ethnicity, or class. In this way, Hamad employs a language of virtues and vices, confident of its explanatory power. He remembers his life story as a mission to convince leaders to apply Islamic notions of decency and civility to political institutions derived largely from Western experience. Hamad's memoir, thus, illustrates how democracy and human rights can be strengthened rather than weakened by appeals to Islam and how Islam can be employed to realize the European humanist revolution better than some of its ideological descendants.

COSMOPOLITANISM

A guidebook published by Zanzibar's colonial government in 1931 noted, "The population of the Protectorate (235,428) is one of the most cosmopolitan in the world and there are few races of which representatives may not be found in the two islands."³⁵ For over a millennium prior to the 1930s, Zanzibar figured as a small part of a vast Indian Ocean world of trade, monsoons, and Islam that had fostered a nearly uninterrupted flow of goods and people across the sea and at least three continents. This world was multicultural and multilingual; it produced a number of diasporas and a patchwork of ethnic enclaves in islands and port cities along its ocean rim. Along the coast of East Africa, Arab and Persian

merchants and settlers gradually assimilated into local Swahili-speaking society, which, though predominantly African in ancestry, was unique from societies of the interior due to its reception of peoples, ideas, and commodities from overseas. Michael Pearson expressed well the current scholarly consensus: “inland people” “moved to the coast, and there were subject to more foreign influences” than those “who remained inland.”³⁶ If anything was distinct about Swahili coastal towns, it was their cosmopolitanism.

The islands of Zanzibar were, until the beginning of the nineteenth century, a relatively insignificant portion of this Swahili-speaking chain of settlements. In the next few decades, however, the islands were transformed when an Arab dynasty of merchant princes from Oman decided to make Zanzibar Town, which until then was little more than a fishing village, the capital of a sultanate that exercised political hegemony over the Swahili towns of the coast, as well as commercial dominance over much of the East African interior extending to the Great Lakes. Through trade in slaves, spices, and ivory, Zanzibar Town became the largest and most powerful metropolis of the region. The enormous influx of African, Arab, and Asian migrants, whether voluntary or involuntary, swamped Zanzibar’s indigenous population, some of whom lost their lands during the Arab conquest. Zanzibar Town became East Africa’s leading trading emporium, and the islands led the world in the production of cloves, a tree crop grown for the most part on Arab-owned plantations sustained by African slave labor and South Asian credit.³⁷ The new wealth of the era supported the consumption of the products and adoption of the cultural fashions of the Indian Ocean world.

British colonialism brought the abolition of slavery starting in the 1890s but not the eradication of inequalities. Africans commonly remained as squatters on Arab-owned plantations or moved to villages on the margins of plantation society where they engaged in fishing and subsistence farming. Many Zanzibaris experienced, on a very personal level, the close correspondence between identity and access to wealth, status, and opportunity in the islands. The British accepted a social hierarchy in which the different economic roles performed by Zanzibar’s various communities were perceived to be natural and even complementary since, colonial officials maintained, each existed in various stages of enlightenment and civilization.

It is easy, however, to overstate such divisions within colonial Zanzibari society. Allegiance to Islam was overwhelming, creating something of a spiritual brotherhood. There were large numbers of poor Arabs and South Asians, as well as Africans who owned considerable numbers of clove

trees. Each of the communities also experienced its own sharp divisions; South Asians, for example, were Hindu, Sikh, Parsee, or members of semiexclusive Muslim sects such as the Ismaili and Bohora communities. Africans were divided by ethnic identity. Former slaves in both Unguja and Pemba sought inclusion in island society by acquiring land and by adopting the dress and manners of wealthier islanders. They sometimes adopted ethnic markers, such as Swahili, Hadimu, and Shirazi, which obscured their slave origins and identified them as free and established members of coastal society; such markers also distinguished them from more recent African migrant workers from the mainland.³⁸ Zanzibar's two principal islands, Unguja and Pemba, were also remarkably dissimilar: communal relations were more harmonious in Pemba than in Unguja. In Pemba, longstanding cultural and economic ties, along with high levels of intermarriage, tended to diminish the importance of racial or ethnic differences, whereas, on Unguja, African grievances toward Arabs over land and labor were especially acute. As a result, Africans in Unguja were more willing than those in Pemba to transcend their ethnic differences in order to oppose Arab political objectives.

Times, furthermore, were changing. The long-term trend in both islands was for Africans to improve their position gradually in the agricultural sector relative to Arabs, who commonly mortgaged their plantations to South Asian creditors, lived in continual debt, and were increasingly "peasantised."³⁹ The gains made by African small landholders were not matched, however, by sizable gains in either education or employment in the colonial administration. By the 1950s, Arabs and South Asians, aside from a few hundred British expatriates, dominated the civil service; and in the increasingly important sphere of Western education, Africans were dramatically underrepresented. If colonial schools were the means by which many Africans sought to access the knowledge, skills, and positions of more urbanized and cosmopolitan communities, progress was slow and a matter of frustration.

Empires by their nature encourage cosmopolitanism, and the islands continued to receive migrants throughout the colonial era from around the Indian Ocean rim: mainlander Africans, Arabs, Goans, and Comorians. Outside of Zanzibar Town, the British didn't undertake any revolutionary schemes, satisfied for the most part to collect taxes, enforce the law, invest in public works, and manage the clove industry. Rural life was often slow and isolated. Life for town residents, however, was often a cosmopolitan feast of the senses: cafes offered African, Arabic, Indian, and Chinese dishes, and cinemas packed in audiences nightly to see everything from American Westerns to Egyptian dramas and Indian

musicals. Congolese music competed with calypso, jazz, Latin bands, *taarab*, Bing Crosby, and rock and roll. Shops displayed imported and locally made items, enticing not only to islanders but to the increasing number of day tourists deposited on the streets by passing cruise liners. Over a dozen newspapers appeared in Swahili, Arabic, English, and Gujarati, and they reported on the development of nationalist movements in India and other imperial outposts. Under local pressure and in order not to fall behind the pace set by other territories, administrators in Zanzibar initiated a series of constitutional reforms that, within a few short years, extended the franchise and the principle of "one person, one vote" throughout adult island society. In doing so, the British committed themselves to a course of democratic development that challenged the privileges of Zanzibar's minority communities.

NATIONALISM

In the nationalist era, the British role was overwhelmingly one of referee in an increasingly antagonistic dispute over the colonial inheritance. Although nationalists of all varieties have criticized, both then and now, the British for engaging in "divide-and-rule" tactics, it was always in British perceived interest to reduce and not exacerbate communal tensions.⁴⁰ The British wanted to avoid a costly and embarrassing outbreak of violence within the islands. They wished to hand power over to a party that represented a voting majority, espoused "moderate" politics, and rejected communism. If the British ever manipulated their own rules to suit their own interests, it was not to undermine either of the nationalist parties per se but to eliminate what they regarded as the communist virus in the islands.⁴¹ They did not play favorites to such an extent as to affect the outcome of any of the elections preceding independence, despite allegations from all sides to the contrary.

The British did, however, sanction a very public and acrimonious debate about the nature of Zanzibari society and its cosmopolitan heritage, which revived old wounds, fears, and hatreds. Zanzibaris disputed a series of interrelated questions: Are the islands outposts of the mainland, extensions of East Africa, and is Zanzibar largely an African cultural space? Or are the islands to be regarded as part of a multi-cultural Indian Ocean world, with allegiance to Islam being one of its primary distinguishing features? Who should and should not be considered a true Zanzibari? Who are natives, and who are alien intruders? In reviewing the past, could islanders claim the creation of a culture of peace, tolerance, and civilized living or instead a long history of cruelty,

slavery, and exploitation? Would an independent Zanzibar see further inequality and an inevitable clash of communities, or could islanders work together toward an end, like development, considered by all to be good?

Founded in 1955, the Zanzibar Nationalist Party (ZNP) attracted the support of nearly all members of minority communities in the islands, as well as a substantial number of Shirazi, who identify themselves as Zanzibar's indigenous population. Shirazi identity, however, was and remains highly controversial since its widespread usage began only in the 1930s and because the percentage of islanders who identified themselves as Shirazi by the 1960s dwarfed the actual indigenous population. Many Africans claimed Shirazi identity to obscure their slave ancestry, to mark their status as landowners, or to gain access to World War II rations distributed by the colonial state along ethnic lines.⁴² To complicate matters further, the Shirazi usually regard themselves as primarily of Persian ancestry. If it is not always clear what the label represents in a positive sense, its negative claims are more consistent: Shirazi are neither Arabs nor "mainlanders"—recent labor migrants from the African mainland. As indigenous Zanzibaris, Shirazi claim exemption from the stigma of slave ancestry; those who claim Persian ancestry do not, furthermore, claim racial kinship with Africans and regard their unique ethnicity as being more significant than their African birth.⁴³ The circumstances of Shirazi identity render it extremely difficult for scholars to even say if the term represents *racial* or *ethnic* tensions in island society.

The ambiguous nature of Shirazi identity lay at the very center of Zanzibari politics prior to the revolution, since, according to the 1948 census, 56 percent of islanders identified themselves as Shirazi; 21 percent, mainlander; 19 percent, Arab; and 4 percent, South Asian.⁴⁴ Shirazi did not vote as a bloc; they split over which community—Arabs or mainlanders—presented a more natural ally. The ZNP sought to attract Shirazi voters through an appeal to Zanzibari nationalism that promoted the islands' cosmopolitan and largely Muslim heritage as a positive good and differentiated "native" Zanzibaris from allegedly less civilized mainlanders. The party preached multiracialism, while paradoxically denigrating mainlanders as uncouth newcomers intent on burying Zanzibar in a federation with much larger East African nations, none of which possessed a Muslim majority. Through an alliance with the smaller Zanzibar and Pemba People's Party (ZPPP), based among Pemba Shirazi, the ZNP emerged by 1961 as a serious contender.⁴⁵

The Afro-Shirazi Party (ASP), as the name suggests, was established as an alliance of mainlander and Shirazi voters who found common cause

in a struggle against the ZNP, which they painted as more of a threat to their interests than the colonial power. The ASP regarded the ZNP as a vehicle for Arabs to defend their privileges and subjugate the African majority. Convinced their constituents would never receive fair treatment, ASP leaders wished to impose their own settlement that would protect their supporters from future exploitation. The politics of race the ASP espoused was based on the premise that cosmopolitanism had not produced wealth and harmony but a deceptive facade for cultural chauvinism and racial injustice. In a fictionalized account of the revolution, Gurnah's protagonist recalls:

We liked to think of ourselves as a moderate and mild people. Arab African Indian Comorian: we lived alongside each other, quarreled and sometimes intermarried. . . . In reality, we were nowhere near *we*, but us in our separate yards, locked in our historical ghettos, self-forgiving and seething with intolerances, with racisms, and with resentments. And politics brought all that into the open. . . . So when the time came to begin thinking of ourselves in the future, we persuaded ourselves that the objects of this abuse [Africans] had not noticed what had happened to them, or had forgiven and would now like to embrace a new rhetoric of unity and nationalism. To enter into a mature compromise in everyone's interest. But they didn't: They wanted to glory in grievance, in promises of vengeance, in their past oppression, in their present poverty and in the nobility of their darker skins.⁴⁶

The ASP won little support among minority communities but received huge voting majorities in rural Unguja, as well as in Zanzibar Town's largely African neighborhoods. By rejecting much of the islands' cosmopolitan heritage as a disaster for African interests, the party lost access to the skills and international ties of the most educated elements of Zanzibari society, the reality of which African nationalists were keenly aware. Front and center in the ASP campaign against the "Arab" ZNP was Abeid Karume, formerly a professional seaman of limited education, who knew how to move a crowd. Salmin Amour noted that Karume was chosen as president of the ASP because, through his travels as a seaman, "he was more conversant with the overseas world" and so "could give better guidance to the masses of Zanzibar."⁴⁷ Through his travels, he could see "the hard lives of so many innocent masses, in a number of countries."⁴⁸

REVOLUTION

After election riots in June 1961 claimed more than sixty lives, nearly all Arabs, the British imposed a state of emergency. Michael Lofchie, who conducted doctoral research in Zanzibar from 1962 to 1963, described the manner in which politics came to pervade nearly every aspect of island life. All social relations, he noted,

became a battleground in which every individual act was invested with highly symbolic significance as a demonstration of party membership and solidarity. Performance of the most routine daily tasks—marketing, working and commuting, for example—was viewed as an integral facet of the national political struggle. . . . By early 1958 no dimension of social behavior remained politically neutral. Even private quarrels and disputes which had long preceded the formation of modern political parties were absorbed into the pattern of partisan conflict.⁴⁹

In the last elections before independence in 1963, the ASP captured more than 54 percent of the total popular vote, yet lost eighteen of the thirty-one seats contested in the Legislative Council, often by narrow margins. ASP supporters could not help but feel cheated. The only significant setback for the ZNP-ZPPP was the defection of A. M. Babu, for years the ZNP's secretary general and most talented grassroots organizer. Babu and a number of his supporters, such as Ali Sultan Issa, seceded from the ZNP in 1963 to form their own Umma Party, which espoused socialism as its official creed. Instead of looking to Gamel Abdul Nasser for aid and inspiration as had the ZNP or as the ASP to African nationalists like Julius Nyerere, Umma claimed that Mao and Stalin possessed the answers to Zanzibar's underdevelopment and inequality. As the party cut its ties with the "petit-bourgeois" leaders of the ZNP, Umma allied itself with the ASP, whose leaders it had formerly ridiculed as members of the unprogressive "lumpen-proletariat." Umma represented a small but influential and well-trained cosmopolitan cohort, composed overwhelmingly of young men from Zanzibar Town, many of whom had visited or undertaken studies in Britain, eastern Europe, China, Egypt, and Cuba.⁵⁰

Only one month after Zanzibar celebrated its independence from the British in December 1963 and colonial army units withdrew, an insurrectionary force organized by the ASP Youth League launched an attack on the night of January 11–12, 1964, on two police arsenals located

on the outskirts of Zanzibar Town. The rebels took the police by surprise, even though Karume, on the day prior, had lost his nerve, warned the ZNP government of imminent violence that night, and then fled to the mainland.⁵¹ The rebels quickly gained control of nearly all the government's weapons supply; from the morning of January 12, Umma members were active in the revolution. Within a couple of days, the sultan fled on his yacht, and the prime minister and his cabinet surrendered. Within a couple of weeks, the rebels exported the revolution to Pemba. What might have initially been a fairly bloodless seizure of power soon became a fairly systematic campaign to round up, detain, and punish supporters of the ZNP-ZPPP regime, in which Arabs and South Asians, regardless of class, were singled out for the harshest forms of vengeance: plunder, rape, execution, ritual humiliation, and exile. Zanzibari historian Abdul Sheriff describes the net effect of weeks of violence in 1964 as "genocidal in proportions."⁵²

While the revolutionaries had overthrown an elected government, they were in no way united as to how to proceed next. Few members of the hastily erected Revolutionary Council possessed, like Babu, both political skill and radical nation-building ideas; most commanded deference, however, as a result of their leading roles in the uprising and supported Karume as chief, since he still commanded mass popularity. Babu urgently advised Karume to adopt socialist policies and lean on advisors from East Germany, China, and the USSR; he gave the impression to some he wanted to supplant the older man. If so, Babu was outmaneuvered; in a few short months, Karume removed from the islands a series of individuals whom he regarded as untrustworthy, including Babu and a number of his Umma colleagues.⁵³ The union agreement between Tanganyika and Zanzibar in April 1964 meant, for Karume, little actual interference from the mainland and a strengthened position from which to assert his primacy and purge his political rivals.

Yet Umma's influence continued, at least indirectly; an influx of socialist foreign advisors made Zanzibar into something of a regional showcase for revolution. The CIA reported in September 1964 that "Babu and his colleagues have brought Zanzibar further under Communist influence, or at least for the time being, than has been the case in any other African country."⁵⁴ British administrators, who had for decades introduced ideas and ruling practices from other imperial territories as far away as Guyana and Malaya, were replaced by hundreds of East German, Chinese, and Soviet teachers, doctors, and technicians. Karume saw in their various proposals the means by which to fulfill African nationalist desires for racial development. Such development would be achieved through

the establishment of multistoried apartment complexes, factories, and youth labor camps, paid for through the imposition of socialist austerity measures, such as forced labor and food rations. Socialist nations continued for two decades as sources of foreign aid and as patient tutors in the techniques of authoritarian rule. Socialist vocabulary expressed old ideas in new words; new terms gave old antagonisms—and the revolution itself—a new legitimacy by including them in a global conflict against imperialism and injustice.

For most Zanzibaris, regardless of ethnicity, the initial violence in 1964 affected them less than the series of policies that followed. They experienced the revolution less as a sudden outbreak of violence than as more than a decade of confiscations, shortages, surveillance, and fear. Ali Mazrui observed in 1972 that the revolution caused “a devastation of the polity, a dislocation of the economy of the country, a general sense of insecurity in the population, a lack of sense of direction in national policies, and a rapid erosion of human values.”⁵⁵ The revolution swept away much of the substance of the legal, bureaucratic order of the colonial state and inverted a social pyramid present in the islands since the Omani colonization. Karume’s regime was dedicated to redistribution and the idea of “the first shall be last, and the last shall be first.” Most minorities left who could possibly afford to do so and who had survived the initial bloodletting. As, in Nyerere’s eyes, the “new sultan”⁵⁶ of Zanzibar, Karume sat atop an extensive, East German-trained security apparatus and was able to rule by personal decree.

For supporters of the revolution, however, these were years, despite the hardships, when the regime extended access to Africans in education, health care, land, and housing. For nearly all Zanzibaris, and for better or worse, these were years of discipline; in contrast to the routine corruption of more recent times, civil servants were afraid to steal. In an era of “Cultural Revolution,” the ubiquitous security apparatus routinely punished displays of “decadence” or “idleness,” such as wearing miniskirts or bell-bottom pants or avoiding political meetings or forced-labor assignments. Cultural forms like *ngoma* dances were designated as indigenous and promoted, while others such as *taarab*, Western music, and cinema were repressed. Tens of thousands of Zanzibaris went to labor camps and learned to march, drill, and handle guns like good soldiers. While Zanzibaris experienced social and commercial isolation, the islands for a brief moment captured the imagination of a generation of Cold War warriors. While largely cut off from its connections within the Indian Ocean world, the archipelago achieved international recognition as a link in a global chain of socialist revolutions and received a series of esteemed

guests such as Malcolm X, Che Guevara, and Chou En Lai. With the merger of the ASP and the Tanganyika African National Union (TANU) to form the CCM in 1977, islanders ceded control over the selection of their presidents to the mainland.

Living conditions bottomed out in the early 1970s and again in the 1980s due to serious agricultural decline and government neglect and mismanagement. Clove harvests of the early 1980s were on average less than half the size of those of the early 1960s.⁵⁷ The islands produced less wealth than they did under the British and, in the 1980s, were increasingly dependent on Western aid and remittances from Zanzibaris living abroad, most of them exiles from the revolution. In 1994, per capita income was reportedly a mere \$125, less than a quarter the continental average.⁵⁸ When and if the ruling party looked for solutions to years of stagnation and deteriorating infrastructure, it did so through rolling back its former policies and obtaining aid from overseas. The boom in clove prices had come to an end, there was little left to nationalize, and the state's efforts to promote industrialization had failed. Increasing corruption, years of food rations, and constant shortages desensitized citizens to calls to sacrifice to build the nation.

Reformist policies of the 1980s—many of them instituted during Hamad's time as chief minister—slowed the outward flow of talented individuals. The state relinquished control of commerce and imports, ending shortages and stimulating economic activity, at least in Zanzibar Town and areas most affected by the growth in tourism. If conditions have improved since then, they have as a result of the state's new willingness to accommodate foreign and private investment. The state now accepts the accumulation of personal wealth—beyond a few politically embedded extended families—as a legitimate motivation. More capital and more commodities are in circulation now that Zanzibar is no longer a place where it is nearly impossible to do business. Infrastructure has improved, yet the islands have not kept pace with the mainland's relatively rapid economic growth since the mid-1990s. Pemba in particular continues to languish.

Under Western pressure, Zanzibar adopted multiparty politics in the 1990s. Some, especially in the CCM, assert that current political rivalries are identical to those of the days before the revolution, yet the correspondence between wealth and race is no longer nearly so obvious. Zanzibar's minority communities in no sense exercise their former dominance over the islands' resources and commercial life. If African nationalists in the islands once earned credibility for their advocacy of the cause of the downtrodden, it is more difficult for them to do so now.

Poverty in the islands, where it is most severe in rural areas of Pemba, for example, does not exist due to racial exclusion but rather as a result of decades of misrule and the appropriation of that island's clove revenues for investment elsewhere. Pembans claim they are poor because the ruling party continues to punish them for their support of the political opposition. Their marginalization has encouraged the emergence of separate ethnicities for Pemba and Unguja islands; indeed, Zanzibar may be taken as an example of the narrative construction of identity, where allegiance to shared memories of the past and stories of the present promote in each island a sense of collective uniqueness and destiny. For Mapuri and others, the frame of reference continues to be the indignities and inequalities of Arab and British colonialism. It continues to be racial nationalism. Writing after the CCM victory in the 2005 elections, CCM minister Muhammed Seif Khatib exulted that "lovers of peace and stability were overjoyed . . . because we are now assured that the respect and dignity of the black man in Zanzibar will be defended, respected and honoured. *Waswabili* [Africans] will continue to receive equal treatment without being turned into slaves and labour-migrants."⁵⁹ And yet for those who support the opposition in Zanzibar, stories of post-colonial injustices have more power than do CCM allegations of Arab guilt and Western guile.