CONTACTS BETWEEN EAST AFRICA AND THE OUTSIDE WORLD UP TO THE 19TH C

The early contacts were initially at the coast but later spread inland. The early visitors included the Arabs, Greeks, Chinese, Persians, Portuguese, British, French and the Dutch.

The East African coast

The existing documentaries and archaeological evidence about the historical information on the east African coast include:

i. **The Graeco-Roman Documentary** which only makes indirect references to the east African coast.

ii. **The Swahili chronicles** written by the people of the coast. E.g the Kilwa chronicle gives account of achievements of coastal rulers before the arrival of the Portuguese

iii. **The writings of Pliny**, a Roman Geographer who wrote about the high cost of trade with India in his book, *The Natural History*.

iv. **Periplus of the Erythrean Sea**; by a Greek merchant in 1st C AD describes the people and places along the coast and the Indian Ocean Trade. (Erythrean Sea Trade).

v. **Geographia by Claudius Ptolemy** makes reference to east African coast and the trade along Somalia and Kenyan coasts.

vi. **Christian Topography of Cosmos Indico** of the 6TH C describes the trading activities on the coast of East Africa.

vii. Renowned travelers like Al-Mosudi, Al Idrisi and Ibn Battuta wrote firsthand accounts about the places they visited and the people they met at the coast in the 10th C AD.

viii. **The existing archaeological evidence** in east Africa include the remains of pottery, iron tools, beads and coins which prove the presence of international trade.

Early Visitors to the East African Coast Upto 1500

Due to the great accessibility of the east African coast, there was widespread interaction between it and the people from the outside world.

This was also aided by the monsoon winds that blew vessels / ships to the coast between November and April and took them away between May and October.

The earliest visitors were the Egyptians, Phoenicians and Indonesians. Others who came later on included the Greeks, Persians, Romans, Chinese, Arabs, Syrians, Indians and the Portuguese.

**The Greeks**
Their coming to east Africa is accounted for by the quarrels between the Seleucid rulers in Greece and the Ptolemaic Greeks in Egypt over control of the land route to the east through the Mediterranean lands.

The rising demand for ivory made the Ptolemaic Greeks venture into the Red Sea and finally into the east African coast. Evidence of Greek existence on the coast is the Ptolemaic Gold Coin found near Dar es Salam.

Romans

In AD 45, Hippalus, a Roman sailor using monsoon wind knowledge reached the Red Sea and entered the Indian Ocean.

The Romans were keen on breaking the Arab monopoly over trade. Evidence of trade between the Romans and the coast is in the writing of a Roman Historian Pliny (23-79AD) who points out the high cost of trade between India, Arabia and China. The fall of the Roman Empire in the 5th c AD affected international trading network in the Roman Empire.

Persians

They were mainly immigrants from Shirazi on the eastern shore of the Persian Gulf. Their adventure into the east African coast happened during the reign of the Sassanid Dynasty (224-636AD), which was determined to rebuild the Persian Empire that had been destroyed by the Macedonian Greeks, through wealth amassed from international trade.

By the 6th c, the Persians were trading in India and later China, controlling the Red Sea and parts of Egypt and Arabia.

They got involved in the east African trade and even established ruling dynasties, e.g., the Shirazi Dynasty at the coast. They intermarried with the locals and introduced Islamic religion. They were later overthrown by the Arabs. The succeeded in introducing bowls of glass, swords, beakers and pots to the coast.

Chinese

They visited the coast in the middle ages. This is evidenced in the work of the Chinese authors during the Sung Dynasty (960-1279 AD) and Ming Dynasty (1368-1644), who referred to the east African coast as Tseng-Pat or Pseng-Pother. There has also been evidence of Chinese coins dating to 700 AD at the coast.

The last Chinese fleet must have reached Mogadishu in 1430 AD. The Chinese brought Silk cloth, porcelain bowls and plates in exchange for Gold, leopard skin, Rhino Horns and tortoise shells. Porcelain remains have been found at the coast.

Arabs

The earliest Arab settlers to arrive were the Dayboy from Daybook in north western India. They arrived along the east African coast by AD 650 for trade.

The earliest Arab settlement was Qanbalu (Pemba). They later settled in Manda, Kilwa, Lamu and Mombasa. The Arabs referred to the Africans as the Zenj (Blacks).
Factors that facilitated the coming of Arabs to the East African Coast

i. The Indian ocean provided the highway through which the traders traveled

ii. The traders had the skills of harnessing the monsoon winds (trade winds) they knew what times of the year to come to the coast and what times to go back.

iii. The traders had marine technology e.g. they had ship-building technology and knew how to use the compass for navigation of the ocean

iv. They ensured the control of the red sea was in their hands to bar the enemy from attacking them

v. The ports of southern Arabia were good calling places on their journey between the east and the west.

vi. The deep harbors at the coast were ideal for their ships to anchor, refuel and get supplies.

Reasons for the coming of the Arabs

i. They wanted to trade and control the commercial activities along the east African coast.

ii. Some Arabs came as refugees, fleeing from religious and political persecutions in Arabia.

iii. They came to spread their religion, Islam.

iv. Some came as explorers to explore the east African coast.

v. Some came to establish settlements along the east African coast.

Trade between the East African coast and the outside world

There is sufficient evidence of the existence of regular trading contacts between east African coast and the countries in the Middle East and Far East.

Development and organization of the trade

The earliest foreign traders must have been the Romans who traded with the Indians in the Far East. They made stopovers at the east African coast for ivory whose demand had grown tremendously.

Muslim Arabs acted as intermediaries in the Indian Ocean trade between the Indians and the Romans. They also exported frankincense and myrrh among other things.

Traders from Persia, Arabia and Syria brought glass beakers and bowls, swords, pots, grains, sugar, cloth and beads in exchange for palm oil, tortoise shells, ivory and slaves.

The Greek, roman and Chinese traders brought porcelain bowls, daggers, swords, pottery, cowrie shells, glassware, beads and silk in exchange for ivory, rhinoceros horns, bee wax, tortoise shells, coconut oil and mangrove poles.

Cowrie shells were obtained from Maldives islands while spices came from Spice Island.
East Africa also exported leopard skins, gold, ostrich feathers, copal, copper and iron. Ivory was used in Asia to make bangles, bracelets, piano keys and for decorations.

The traders relied on the monsoon winds to blow their ships to and from the east African coast.

The Indian Ocean trade was conducted through the barter system but later coins were used as a medium of exchange.

During barter, the foreigners bartered their goods with gold, ivory and slaves. Seyyid said later introduced copper and silver coins.

The middlemen in the trade included the Arabs and Swahili who organized caravans to the interior to acquire local goods which they sold to traders at the coast.

As there was no common language spoken, trading was conducted silently, hence the name 'silent trade'.

Capital for the trade was provided by the Arabs. Later the Indian banyans started giving credit facilities to the traders which increased the volume of trade.

The sultan of Zanzibar provided security to the Arab traders, enabling them to penetrate the interior to acquire goods.

The trade stimulated development of towns along the coastline. E.g Rhapta (probably located between Pangani and Dar es Salam), Essina and Sarapion were the earliest towns to grow. Lamu Malindi Mombasa, pate and Brava also developed.

The merchants settled at various places on the coast and on the islands and interacted with the locals leading to development of the Swahili culture.

Factors, which promoted the Indian Ocean trade

a. Availability of items of trade from the east African coast and foreigner countries. For example, ivory, slaves, cotton and porcelain.

b. The high demand for trade items from the coast by consumers from the outside world was also a promoting factor. This was caused by the uneven distribution of resources. Foreign items were also on demand at the coast.

c. The existence of enterprising merchants in both the foreign lands and the east African coast led to promotion of trade links. The Akamba, Mijikenda, Nyamwezi and Swahili middlemen for example played a pivoted role in the trade.

d. The existence of local trade among Africans which acted as a base upon which the Indian Ocean trade was developed.

e. The accessibility of the east African coast by sea. This enabled the foreigner traders to reach the region across the Indian Ocean.

f. The existence of the monsoon winds facilitated the movement of the vessels which made it possible for the traders to travel to and from the coast.

g. The existence of peace and political stability at the east African coast created a conducive atmosphere for business transactions. Where there was need, the traders were given security by the sultan of Zanzibar.

h. The existence of natural harbours along the coast ensured safe docking of the trade vessels for fueling and off-loading.
i. The advancement in the ship building technology in Europe gave great advantage to the traders. This made water transport reliable and regular.

j. The existence of the Indian Banyans (money lenders) who gave credit facilities enabled many more people to join the trade.

**Impacts of the trade on the peoples of east Africa**

i. The trade led to intermarriage between Muslim traders with the local Bantu communities giving rise to the Swahili people with a distinct culture.

ii. There was emergence of Kiswahili as a new language of the coastal people. The language is a mixture of Bantu and Arabic languages.

iii. The trade led to the spread of the Islamic culture along the coastal region. Stone buildings were constructed, new dressing styles arose (women began to wear buibui while men wore kanzus), new eating habits also evolved.

iv. The Islamic law, sharia was also introduced.

v. Many Africans were converted to Islam. However the religion did not spread beyond the coastal region prior to the 19th c.

vi. New crops were introduced along the coast. For example, rice, wheat, millet, cloves, vegetables and fruits such as bananas and oranges. Cloth, cowrie shells and spices were also introduced.

vii. Profits derived from the trade were used to develop towns like Pemba, Mombasa, Lamu, Zanzibar and Kilwa.

viii. The trade led to the rise of a class of rich merchants exhibiting a high standard of living. African merchants who rose to prominence included chief Kivoi among the Akamba, Ngonyo of the Giriama, Mwakikonga of the Digo, Nyungu ya mawe, Mirambo and Msiri of the Nyamwezi.

ix. There was decline of the local industries like weaving and iron working which were affected by the influx of foreign goods like cloth from India and iron tools from Asia and Europe.

x. There was destruction of wildlife, especially elephant and rhinoceros due to the increased demand for ivory.

xi. The increased demand for slaves promoted warfare among the communities as many people were captured during slave raids. It also created fear while others lost their life during the warfare.

xii. Slave trade also disrupted African economies as able bodied men were captured leaving behind the aged, weak, and children who made little contribution. Many even died of starvation since they could not participate in food production.

xiii. African population in the hinterland greatly reduced as many were sold into slavery.

xiv. Money (currency) was introduced as a means of exchange to replace the barter system of trade.

xv. East African coast was exposed to the outside world through trade. This paved way for European imperialism later on.

xvi. Trade routes led to the establishment of trade caravan routes which later were upgraded to by the colonialists.

**The coming of the Portuguese**
Since the 10th century Arabian influence along the coast had been strong. Most of the port towns along the East African coast had been built by Arab Sultans, who brought the Muslim religion to the coastal people.

The Portuguese explorer and soldier, Vasco da Gama, was the first European to make contact with the people of the East African Coast. He had been paid by the King of Portugal to find a sea route to India.

The Portuguese at the East African coast 1500 – 1700 A.D

The Portuguese were the first Europeans to have contacts with the people of the East African Coast.

They invaded the east African coast in 1498 at a time when the Ottoman Empire occupied most of the Middle East thus blocking the overland route to India from Europe.

They were adventurous and in search for the sea route to India. This led them to the East African Coast where they stayed for 200 years.

Reasons for the coming of the Portuguese at the East African coast

i. The need to establish a commercial empire in order to get the products of East Africa e.g. ivory, gold, silks and spices that were mainly controlled by the Arabs merchants.
ii. They wanted to obtain control of the main trading towns, e.g. Kilwa, Mombasa etc.
iii. They wanted to defeat the Muslim traders and rulers who had monopolized the Indian Ocean trade.
iv. They wanted to prevent other European rivals from gaining access to the Indian Ocean Trade e.g. the French, Dutch, and British
v. Desire to get revenue for the development of their country.
vi. The Portuguese wished to share in the profits of the Indian Ocean Trade by imposing taxes and forcing wealthy coastal towns to pay tribute to the king of Portugal.
vii. The coast had natural harbors where ships could anchor on their way to and from the East for fresh food and water. The Portuguese therefore wanted to establish a calling station for resting, refresh, treating the sick, repairing wrecked ships etc.
viii. The coast was strategically located and this made it easy to control sea pirates and other rival powers.
ix. They wanted to revenge on the Muslim Arabs who had conquered Portugal in 711 AD by converting them to Christianity and stop the spread of Islam i.e. the Arabs had ever run the Iberian Peninsula and forced the Christians to accept Islam.
x. They hoped to get assistance of King Prester John thought to be in the interior of north -east Africa. They hoped the king would help them in their crusade against the Muslims.
xii. They had hope of stopping Egyptians and Turks from sending military aid to their fellow Moslems on the coast.
xii. They were interested in exploration and adventure; this was a period of Renaissance (means to be born again/change) in Europe. Hence hoped to search for the unknown, new knowledge and sailing across un mapped seas.

xiii. Desire to acquire revenue for the development of their country.

Portuguese conquest of the coast 1500-1510 (Stages of conquest) Steps taken by the Portuguese to occupy the East African coast

~ In 1497 King John 11 sent Padro da Covillha on a land journey to India to gather information about the Eastern trades and the sea routes.

~ In 1498 Bathromew Diaz sailed around the Cape of Good Hope, thus proving that there was a way round South Africa to the Indian Ocean.

~ Between 1497- 1499 Vasco da Gama at the command of King Emmanuel the fortunate of Portugal visited Mozambique, Mombasa and Malindi on his way to India. He arrived in Malindi in March 1498 to a warm welcome by the locals.

~ He returned to Portugal in 1499 and gave a report of the flourishing Sofala trade, the Deep Harbour in Mombasa and the existing disunity of coastal people.

~ In response to Vasco da Gama’s expeditions, the king of Portugal sent fleets of ships to conquer the important trading towns of the East African coast.

~ In 1500 Pedro Alvares Cabral attempted to capture Sofala with its Gold trade but he failed.

~ In 1502 Vasco da Gama came back with 19 ships aiming at capturing Kilwa because it was the most important and prosperous. He captured the palace, imprisoned the Sultan and only released him when he accepted to pay tribute to Portugal.

~ From Kilwa he invaded Mombasa, which tried to get assistance from Malindi but since they were great rivals Malindi refused to give assistance, this disunity made the work of conquest easy.

~ In 1503 Ruy Laurence Ravasco was sent with a number of ships and forced the islands of Mafia and Zanzibar and other towns to pay tribute to Portugal.

~ In 1504, Lopez destroyed gold trade at Kilwa. Attacks were too much on the harbour that trade came to a standstill. But again the Arabs failed to unite to fight the Portuguese.

~ In 1505 Francisco D’Almeida arrived at the coast on his way to Gao where he had been appointed the first Portuguese viceroy (governor) of the Eastern Empire. With 1500 men and 20 ships, he attacked Sofala which surrendered without struggle because she was tired of Kilwa’s rule and therefore preferred the Portuguese to fellow Arabs.

His forces continued northwards and attacked Kilwa. The Sultan and his followers took off to the bush while the Portuguese looted and burnt down the town before he departed to India. He also conquered Mombasa.

~ In 1506 – 1507 Tristao Da Cunha took on the Northern towns of Socotra, Oja, Brava and Lamu. Towns that submitted without struggles were only asked to pay tribute to
Portugal. Malindi was even excused from paying tribute due to her friendship with the Portuguese.

~ In 1509 Alba quiqui captured the remaining towns i.e. the work of conquest was completed with taking the islands of Pemba, Mafia, and Zanzibar. Mombasa was burnt down.

~ By 1515 the Portuguese had succeeded in conquering most of the coastal towns, bringing them under Portuguese rule. However, towns like Gedi, Kilifi, Pate, Manda, Mombasa, and Lamu continued with resistance. Mombasa was heavily attacked in 1528.

~ In 1585, a Turkish captain, Amir Ali Bey, arrived at the coast as an envoy of the sultan of Turkey to free the coastal towns from the Portuguese. Rebellion then broke out between 1585 and 1588 between Ali Bey, the Portuguese, and the people of Mombasa and Zimba warriors. The towns of Pate, Siyu, and Pemba were attacked and forced to pay heavy fines while Manda was completely destroyed.

~ Portugal finally brought all the coastal towns under her control establishing her headquarters in Mombasa that had been subdued in 1589 in 1593, the Portuguese built fort Jesus

Why the Portuguese build Fort Jesus

i. They used it as a watch tower
ii. To hide against attacks by the enemies
iii. As a military base
iv. To offer food security and protection.
v. To act as an armament.
vi. To act as a prison for the captives.

Portuguese control of the east African coast as greatly supported by the conquest of Hormuz, which made it easier for them to control sea traffic in the Persian Gulf, Gulf of Eden and Arabian Sea.

Why the Portuguese defeated the East African Coastal towns/Why the Portuguese were successful

i. They had superior weapons e.g. cannon guns which made terrible noise and threw people in panic as compared to the poor musket guns of the coastal Arabs.

ii. They had well trained soldiers with superior skills of fighting compared to the coastal people who had no permanent organized army e.g. Vasco da Gama, Francisco D’Almeida were ruthless army commanders which helped them to defeat the coastal dwellers.

iii. They had better and faster ships (carracks) well equipped for naval warfare. The Portuguese soldiers wore Armour on their bodies and helmets on their heads, which protected them from the weapons of the coastal people.

iv. The coastal towns were disunited which gave chance to the Portuguese to fight isolated enemies e.g. Malindi refused to unite with Mombasa due to local conflicts. Some cooperated with the invaders giving them food and bases e.g. Malindi and Sofala.
v. Some coastal towns like Kilwa were caught unaware. The Portuguese employed cruel methods of fighting like burning down towns and surprise attacks.

vi. The ships acted as stages against the hostile weapons of the coastal people.

vii. The coast had natural harbours and was not open to attacks.

viii. The constant attacks on the coastal towns by the Galla, Zimba and Turkish et.c had weakened their defence.

ix. The Portuguese were financially equipped and therefore supported their soldiers because they wanted to control the East African trade.

x. The coastal states had very weak economies that could not sustain prolonged fights especially against the economically strong Portuguese.

Portuguese Administration at the coast

By 1510, the conquest of the East African coast was over and administration fell into the hands of the Portuguese. For easy administration, the coast was divided into two zones;

a. The area North of Cape Delgado was ruled by the Captain at Malindi
b. The area South of Cape Delgado was ruled by Captain at Mozambique

Both captains were answerable to the Portuguese viceroy at Goa on Indian coast at the General headquarters. Cape Delgado was made the midpoint of the East Africa possession.

Sofala was made the regional headquarters but still under the charge of the captain who took his orders from the viceroy at Goa. Later, the Captain in the North was stationed at Mombasa after the construction of Fort Jesus in 1593 because they were rebellious. Other forts and garrisons were established at Sofala and Kilwa.

The Portuguese captains were responsible for the collections of tributes from coastal rulers.

They imposed the customs dues on all imports and exports. They were also responsible for the suppression of rebellions on the coast.

The Portuguese had problems with administration because they could not provide enough troops to all garrisons their strongholds. The Portuguese were more interested in gold trade in Sofala. Unfortunately, they failed to develop this trade because of the following;

~ There were wars in the mining areas between the Portuguese and Coastal people.

~ As a result the Portuguese were so cruel that any sign of disobedience was punished with maximum brutality to serve as a warning to others who might choose to rebel. This partly explains the unpopularity of the Portuguese on the coast.

The Portuguese also applied the policy of divide and rule by setting one town against the other.

For example Malindi against Mombasa. The relationship with the subjects was not good. They lived in isolation of each other by race and religion. The Portuguese established their own settlements, built their own churches and had their own priest.
This could be the reason why their religion was rejected and hatred increased. In addition, the few Portuguese officials were corrupt, plundered and ordered destruction on the coastal town.

All this earned them hatred and opposition from the people and it was not a surprise that they were nicknamed "AFRITI" meaning Devil.

The Portuguese did not mix freely with Africans because they considered themselves to be a special race. During the Portuguese reign, the glory of the coastal states was no more.

The high standards of living the coastal people had enjoyed were no more. The trade that had made them rich was declining. Many buildings were in ruins and there was widespread poverty and misery.

Reasons that led to the decline of the Portuguese at the East African Coast (Problems/challenges they faced)

i. Portugal was a small country that could not provide enough administrators and officials for such a large coastline that extended from Sofala in the south to Mogadishu in the north. The territory was too big and long for effective control and administration.

ii. It had few soldiers and could not keep fortified garrison along the coast.

iii. Authority was left in hands of incompetent and corrupt officials who were after enriching themselves.

iv. The Africans hated the Portuguese due to differences in religion, that is to say, Muslims against Christians (Portuguese).

v. The Portuguese were cruel, harsh and brutal, they always punished the coastal people whenever they attempted to rebel and made them to be hated.

vi. The Portuguese also used divide and rule policy for example, they allied with Malindi against Mombasa.

vii. There was decline of trade due high taxes on imports and other restrictions hence smuggling of goods, which affected the Portuguese economy. Due to decline in trade, the people became poor and dissatisfied and they continuously rebelled.

viii. The Portuguese failed to support their own allies at the coast, some even betrayed them.

ix. Portugal had been forced into a union with Spain between1580–1640 which weakened her control of the trading colonies as she was no longer interested in the overseas empire.

x. Portugal was challenged by other European powers, which began competing with the Portuguese in the Indian Ocean Trade e.g. Dutch, English, French, Turks and others.

xi. The coastal people found useful allies against the Portuguese due to their bad rule e.g. Turks, Oman, and Arabs

xii. They were faced with constant rebellions along the coast. This greatly disrupted life at the coast e.g. Pate, Mombasa

xiii. Tropical diseases which claimed their life like smallpox, malaria making it difficult for them to administer the coast effectively.

xiv. The Portuguese were greatly weakened by a group of cannibals the Zimba, who attacked the East African coast.
xv. The unhealthy climate made the area unattractive for them to work for instance, some places where too humid and hot while others were too cold.

xvi. The distance between Portugal and the East African coast was too far hence reinforcement delayed.

xvii. There was a problem of communication barrier, the Portuguese refused to learn the African languages and these made their administration difficult.

xviii. The income obtained from the gold trade was not enough to pay for administration i.e. soldiers and officials.

xix. The Capture of Fort Jesus their stronghold in 1698 by the Omani greatly contributed to their decline.

The collapse of Portuguese rule

In 1585, a Turkish captain, Amir Ali Bey, arrived at the coast as an envoy of the sultan of turkey to free the coastal towns from the Portuguese. Rebellion then broke out between 1585 and 1588 between Ali Bey, the Portuguese, and the people of Mombasa and Zimba warriors. The towns of pate, Siyu and Pemba were attacked and forced to pay heavy fines while manda was completely destroyed

As a result of their ruthlessness, the coastal people became hostile to the Portuguese.

Mombasa for example resisted the humiliation they got from the Portuguese appointed sultan

The sultan’s heir Yusuf was treated as a servant who resented the people of Mombasa

On 15th August 1631, during the Christian feast of Assumption in Mombasa, Sultan Yusuf stabbed the captain with a knife, killing him instantly. This sparked off a rebellion where many Portuguese were killed.

Yusuf posed a threat to the Portuguese rule until his death in 1637.

The people of pate also revolted in 1666. However, their ruler was arrested and exiled to Goa where he was executed

In 1622, the Persians drove the Portuguese from Hormuz. In 1650, the Portuguese were expelled from their bases in Muscat by the Omani Arabs under sultan Saif

Britain, France and Holland also began to compete the Portuguese in trade.

The final blow to Portuguese rule was attack by the Omani Arabs and the seizure of fort Jesus. The coastal Arab towns had appealed to their brothers in Oman for assistance against the Portuguese brutality.

In 1652, an Oman fleet sailed to pate and Zanzibar are, overpowered and killed the Portuguese.

In 1696, Imam Saif Ibn Sultan of Oman sailed to Mombasa with a large fleet and army.

The Portuguese took refuge in Fort Jesus as battle raged on (about 2500 Portuguese men, women and children) the Portuguese were unfortunate as they could not get supplies to sustain the war with 3000 plus Arab soldiers with full packing of the coastal people.
In 1697, the Omani forces got access to the Fort and found most Portuguese afflicted with disease. By December 1698, the Omanis penetrated the Fort only to find all except twelve Portuguese dead. This marked the end of Portuguese rule though they made a temporary seizure of the fort in 1728 but were overpowered.

For the coastal people, it was however a mere change of guard from the Portuguese to the Arabs.

**Results of Portuguese stay at the coast of East Africa**

**Positive:**

i. The Portuguese built Fort Jesus at the coast in Mombasa in 1592/3 which became a fortress and later a tourist attraction for centuries.

ii. They enriched the Swahili language with an addition of 60 words e.g. emeza meaning table and pesa meaning money.

iii. They introduced new crops from South Africa of which many have become staple diet for many East Africans e.g. cassava, pawpaws, maize, oranges, sweet potatoes, guavas, pineapples and mangoes.

iv. They made an improvement in ship building. During their stay on the coast, many architects came in from India and Europe.

v. There was establishment of closer trading links between the coast and India.

vi. They introduced new farming methods for example they encouraged the use of cow dung as manure.

vii. They led to the coming of more European and Asian traders and craftsmen especially those who helped in the building of Fort Jesus.

viii. They broke the Muslim- Arab monopoly of the Indian Ocean Trade.

**Negative:**

i. Trade declined due to the constant wars and rebellions and heavy taxes imposed.

ii. There was decline of the coastal towns because many were burnt down and left in ruins for example Kilwa and Mombasa.

iii. There was widespread poverty and misery among the coastal people due to decline in trade.

iv. There was heavy loss of lives during the attacks. There was depopulation due to the many wars in the areas.

v. There was destruction of property like buildings and crops, which led to famine and starvation.

vi. The coastal people suffered oppression and brutality under harsh rule of the Portuguese.

vii. Their religion, Christianity, made no impact at the coast because they lived far from their subjects and stagnation of the Islamic faith because discouraged preaching.

viii. Smuggling developed because the Portuguese had failed to establish proper trading links with the Interior.

ix. Some towns were prevented from trading with their initial partners which led to their decay e.g. Gedi.
x. They led to the European interest at the coast hence leading to the colonization in the 19th Century.

**THE ESTABLISHMENT AND IMPACT OF OMANI RULE AT THE EAST AFRICAN COAST**

The Omani Arabs (Imams of Omani) replaced the Portuguese as the rulers of the East African coast after the capture of fort Jesus in 1698. The new rulers initially administered the region through some Arab families:

- The Mazrui (Mazaria) family which ruled Mombasa
- The Nabahan Family which ruled Lamu.

The civil wars back home made it hard for the Omani Arabs to control the coast immediately.

There were also threats of Persian invasion. Constant rebellion from coastal towns against Omani governors posed a serious challenge to Omani rule. Pate for example refused to pay tax and even murdered the imam’s messengers.

Towns they were loyal to Oman were attacked.

The Mazrui established themselves as independent rulers of Mombasa and ordered towns like pate, Pemba and Malindi to pay allegiance to them. Their greatest allies were the Mijikenda who promised them support in case of Omani attack. The struggle between the Mazrui and the Imams of Oman (1741-1840)

The coastal towns led by Mombasa resisted Oman’s conquest due to the following reasons:

i. The Omani wanted the revenue from the taxes levied on trade.
ii. The towns also wished to maintain their independence as they were during the Portuguese rule.
iii. The towns were also encouraged by the prevailing weaknesses in Oman due to civil wars and the Persian threat.
iv. The harsh and ruthless rule and manner in which the Oman rulers collected taxes.
v. Mombasa had fought against the Portuguese and did not wish to be under control of another foreign power.

**The struggle**

The appointment of Mohammed Ibn Azthman al Mazrui as the new governor of Mombasa coincided with the death of the Oman Imam Saif Ibn- Sultan of the Yorubi and his replacement with Ahmed Bin Said al-Busaidi.

The new Mombasa governor refused to recognize the new imam and declared the independence of Mombasa from Oman.

The sultan had him murdered and fort Jesus seized. A year later, the brother of the murdered governor recaptured the town and the fort. This became the century long struggle between the al-Busaidi and al-Mazrui families.
Taking advantage of the problems in Oman, Mombasa expanded her power and control over the coastal towns (she took over pate in 1807 and attacked Lamu in 1810). Lamu appealed to Oman for assistance.

Seyyid Said and the struggle

Further political changes happened in Oman. Seyyid said rose to power as the imam (Seyyid) of Oman. His father, the ruler of Oman had died in a sea battle in 1804 when he was only 13 years.

His cousin Badr Ibn Saif took over. In 1806, Said stabbed Badr to death fearing domination. With the assistance of the British he had entrenched his position as the Seyyid of Oman at the age of 15 years. The British even promised him support in claiming the east African coast.

He then sent a governor to build a fortress in Mombasa and to order all towns to recognize the power of Oman. Mombasa’s new governor Abdullah Ibn Ahmed defied the order and even continued to attack Brava.

By 1817, Seyyid said had succeeded in freeing Pate from Mazrui rule. In 1822, with the help of Zanzibar, an Oman ally, he liberated Pemba and Brava from Mombasa. In 1823, he gained control of the Bajun Islands. He ordered that no town should trade with Mombasa.

In 1824, the sultan of Mombasa offered Mombasa to become a British protectorate to protect him from the Oman rule. The new powerful position of Mombasa was however, short-lived up to 1826 due to the terms of the Moresby anti-slavery treaty between Seyyid said and the British.

The animosity between Mombasa and Oman continued. In 1837, there was a dispute in Mombasa over the succession to the vacant office of the Liwali. This became an opportune chance for Seyyid said to lure the members of the Mazrui family into fort Jesus where he killed them.

Seyyid Said; Sultan of Zanzibar 1(1840-1856)

After that Seyyid said consolidated his power and control over the coast as well as the interior of east Africa. He then transferred his capital from Muscat to Oman.

The transfer of the capital to Zanzibar from Muscat was due to the following reasons:

i. Seyyid said desired to effectively control the coastal towns through the centrally located Zanzibar.
ii. Zanzibar had a pleasant climate compared to Muscat which was hot and dry. It also had fresh water, adequate rainfall and fertile soils that favoured clove growing.
iii. Zanzibar was easily defensible as an island. It was easy to see the enemy from far and launch an attack from the island.
iv. The good deep harbours of Zanzibar which ships could anchor were attractive.
v. Zanzibar’s central position also favoured development of long distance trade.
vi. The town had a long history of loyalty to Oman throughout the Mazrui-busaidi struggles. Seyyid said appointed Liwalis to rule important towns. They were give the responsibility of collecting custom dues levied at each port.

The Arabs in the local towns were allowed to rule themselves. Seyyid said was keener on the commercial empire than political leadership. He stated “I am nothing but just a merchant”.

Seyyid said developed an economic programme based on agriculture and international trade.

**The development of plantation Agriculture**

Seyyid said encouraged settlers from Oman and Zanzibar to take advantage of the fertile soils and good climate at the coast to settle in Mombasa.

Malindi, Lamu and Pemba venture into agriculture. Plantation agriculture largely depended on slave labour.

The people of Mombasa extended plantation agriculture into the mainland, acquiring land from the Mijikenda in exchange for gifts. They planted rice, maize, millet, beans, sesame and sorghum.

Along the island, large plantations of coconut mango trees, cashew nuts and citrus fruits were developed. Grain plantations were developed around Malindi and Takaungu whose land was largely unoccupied and the orma were no longer a threat.

By 1870, about 1400 to 1500 slaves worked on plantation farms in Malindi which had become the granary of Africa producing all kinds of grains, mangoes, coconut, mangoes and oranges.

Seyyid said also established a clove plantation in Zanzibar. He also encouraged people to grow coconut trees by putting in place a policy that for every coconut tree cut, three were to be planted. Plantation agriculture intensified slave trade.

**The Slave Trade in East Africa**

**Slave trade**: The buying and selling of human beings

**Slavery**: The state of being enslaved: It’s a system where by some people are owned by others and are forced to work for others without being paid for the work they have done.

It involves capturing, transporting of human beings who become the ‘property’ of the buyer. The slave trade was one of the worst crimes against humanity. The trade was started by Arabs who wanted labour for domestic use and for their plantations. However, they were later joined by Europeans.

**Reasons for the rise of slave trade**

i. During the second half of the 18th century, France opened up larger sugar plantations on the islands of Reunion, Mauritius and in the Indian Ocean. African slaves were thus recruited from East Africa to go and work in those plantations.
ii. Africans were considered physically fit to work in harsh climatic conditions compared to the native red Indians and Europeans. This greatly increased the demand for the indigenous people (slaves).

iii. The increased demand for sugar and cotton in Europe led to their increase in price and therefore more labour (slaves) was needed in the British colonies of West Indies and America.

iv. Strong desire for European goods by African chiefs like Mirambo and Nyungu ya Mawe forced them to acquire slaves in exchange for manufactured goods such as brass, metal ware, cotton cloth, beads, spirits such as whisky, guns and gun powder.

v. The existence and recognition of slavery in East Africa societies. Domestic and child slavery already existed therefore Africans were willing to exchange slaves for European goods.

vi. The huge profits enjoyed by middlemen like Arab Swahili traders encouraged the traders to get deeply involved in the trade.

vii. The suitable winds and currents (monsoon winds) which eased transportation for slave traders greatly contributed to the rise of slave trade.

viii. The Legalization of slave trade in 1802 by Napoleon 1 of France increased the demand for slaves in all French Colonies.

ix. The increased number of criminals, war captives, destitute forced African chiefs to sell them off as slaves.

x. The Oman Arabs contributed to the rise in the demand for slaves. This is because they acted as middlemen between the African Swahili people, the Portuguese and French traders. They therefore worked very hard to get slaves in order to obtain revenue from them.

xi. The invention of Spanish mines in West indices increased slave demands to work in the mines.

xii. The exodus of slaves from East Africa to Northeast Africa, Arabia and Persia contributed to the increase in the demand for slaves. It led to an enormous number of slaves obtained from East Africa being transported to other countries.

xiii. The movement of Seyyid Said’s capital to Zanzibar led to an increase in slave trade. This is because when Seyyid said settled in Zanzibar in 1840, he embarked on strong plans to open up slave trade routes to the interior of East Africa. This boosted slave trade, whereby the number of slaves being sold at the slave market in Zanzibar annually by that time, reached between 40000 and 45000 thousand slaves.

xiv. The outbreak of diseases like Nagana led to an increase in slave trade. This is because the beasts of burden (i.e. camels, donkeys, etc.) could not be taken on many of the caravan routes. It therefore necessitated people themselves to be involved in the transportation of the trade goods and ivory. Such people included porters who were regarded as slaves, or free Africans who could sell their services in return for cloth and other trade goods.

xv. Development of long distance trade that needed slaves to transport goods from the interior of East Africa.

xvi. Plantation farming increased in some areas, especially the clove plantations were slaves worked.

Organization of slave trade in E. Africa
The middlemen involved were:

i. Arab Swahili traders
ii. African chiefs.

Ways of obtaining slaves

i. Selling of domestic slaves in exchange for goods like beads, guns, glass etc.
ii. Selling of criminals, debtors and social misfits in society by the local chiefs to the Arab slave traders.
iii. Prisoners of war could be sold off.
iv. Porters were sometimes kidnapped, transported and sold off to the Arab traders.
v. Raiding villages, this would begin at night with gun shots and people would scatter consequently leading to their capture.
vi. Through inter-tribal wars many Africans become destitute and these would be captured by the slave traders.
vii. Tax offenders were sold off by the African chiefs.
viii. They were also captured through ambushes during hunting, travelling and gardening.
ix. Slaves would be acquired from the main slave trade market in Zanzibar.
x. Other Africans are also said to have gone voluntarily in anticipation of great wonders and benefits from the Arab Swahili traders. Slave journey: Slaves’ journey was a difficult one. They moved long distances on foot.
xi. Chained, whipped and sometimes killed on the way.
xii. Had little food and water and experienced extreme suffering.

This is illustrated by a Quotation from Dr. David Livingstone's Last Journal. London 1878: “We passed a woman tied by the neck to a tree and dead ...we saw others tied up in a similar manner, and one lying in the path shot or stabbed for she was in a pool of blood.

The explanation we got invariably was that the Arab who owned these victims was enraged at losing the money by the slaves becoming unable to march.”

The main slave market where slaves were auctioned was at Zanzibar.

The journey across the India Ocean was horrible.

Crowded in ships with hardly any space to breath. Ships carried anything from 250 to 600 slaves. They were very overcrowded and packed like spoons with no room even to turn.

Whenever they saw anti-slave trade people, slaves would be thrown in the ocean

As a result many died in the process.

Effects/Impact of slave trade on people of E. Africa

Positive effects

i. New foods were introduced through trade routes like maize, pawpaws, rice, groundnuts both at the coast and in the interior.
ii. Plantation farming increased in some areas, especially the clove plantations were slaves worked.

iii. The interior was opened to the outside world this later encouraged the coming of European missionaries. Many European Christian missionaries came to East Africa to preach against slave trade and to campaign for its abolition.

iv. The trade routes became permanent routes and inland roads which led to growth of communication networks.

v. Swahili was introduced in land and is now being widely spoken in Tanzania, Kenya, Uganda and Eastern Congo.

vi. Islam as a religion was introduced by Arabs and it spread, especially in Yao land and in Buganda land.

vii. A new race called Swahili was formed through intermarriages between Arabs and some Africans.

viii. There was growth of Arab towns such as Tabora and Ujiji inland.

ix. There was emergence of dynamic leaders such as Mirambo and Nyungu ya Mawe in the latter half of the nineteenth century.

x. Slave trade strengthened the large and powerful states, which could easily get access to guns at the expense of small ones.

xi. Slave trade led to a situation whereby power became centralized and no longer with the small, local authority (sedimentary societies) mainly to enable African chiefs directly control slave trade.

xii. Slave trade encouraged large-scale trade whereby contact was established between the trade masters and indigenous/local population.

xiii. Africans were dispersed to other parts of the world E.g Arabia, America and West Indies. In Africa, Sierra-Leone and Liberia were founded to accommodate former slaves from Europe and America.

Negative effects

i. African population was reduced; people who would have been great leaders and empire builders were killed. It is estimated that over 15 to 30 million people were sold in to slavery while other millions died in the process being transported.

ii. Slave trade brought misery, suffering and lowered the quality of people in East Africa this is because they were reduced to 'commodities' which could be bought and sold on land.

iii. Villages and families were destroyed and broken up by slave raiders and never to be reunited this later resulted in to loss of identity.

iv. Diseases broke out among the overcrowded slaves for example the Spaniards introduced Syphilis and soon it spread to other traders.

v. Slave trade led to displacement of people and many became homeless and destitute many and stayed in Europe with no identity.

vi. Economic activities such as farming were disrupted. This is because the young and able craftsmen, traders and farmers were carried off, causing economic stagnation as the economic workforce depleted.

vii. Progress slowed down, which resulted in famine, poverty and destitution and helplessness.

viii. There was a decline in production of traditional goods such as coffee, beans, bark cloth and iron which greatly hindered the cash economy.
ix. There was a decline in African industries which also faced a lot of competition from imported manufactured goods for example the Bark cloth and iron working industries.

x. Guns were introduced into the interior which caused a lot of insecurity and increased incidences of wars for territorial expansion.

xi. Clans and tribal units, languages were broken and inter-tribal peace was disturbed for example Swahili language replaced the traditional languages in the interior.

Abolition of slave trade

Reasons why it was difficult to stop slave trade

i. Slavery existed before in Africa societies that is to say, domestic slavery and internal slave trade, which provided a Favourable situation for continuation of the lucrative slave trade.

ii. The Abolition movement which had begun in Britain and her overseas territory first took effect in West Africa. The decline in West African trade encouraged the expansion of trade in East Africa especially with America and West Indies.

iii. Slave trade was difficult to stop because of division of African tribes against each other. This meant that African tribes would find it difficult to unite together and resist the slave traders, who raided their societies using organized bands of men.

iv. Disregard of human life, many African rulers tended to put less value for the lives of their subjects whom they ruled for example quite often, a ruler of a tribe would easily order his warriors to attack the villages of his subjects and seize their property, kill some of them.

v. Active participation and willing cooperation of African chiefs and coastal traders who were making a lot of profits made the slave trade last for so long.

vi. Many European countries depended on the products of slave labour in West Indies and America for example, British industries depended on raw sugar, raw cotton and unprocessed minerals from America which she was not willing to lose.

vii. European slave merchants and Africans involved in the trade were blinded by the huge profits made from the trade.

ix. There was smuggling of slaves outside the forbidden areas. Slave traders would pretend to sail northwards when sighted by British patrol ships but would change course after British navy ships had disappeared.

x. Other European countries refused to co-operate with Britain to end slave trade because they had not yet become industrialized, and therefore they still benefited from it for example Portugal and Spain.

xi. The only economic alternative of slave trade was Agriculture which was not reliable compared to the booming slave trade.

xii. The anti-slavery campaign was too expensive for Britain alone to compensate slave owners.

xiii. Stopping slave trade in the interior was difficult because Arabs were in control of large areas.

xiv. The East African coastline was long which delayed the anti-slavery group penetration in the interior.
Due to the tropical climate, most British personnel were affected by malaria which hindered the stopping of Slave trade.

Seyyid Said and Barghash were always unwilling to end slave trade at once due to fear of losing revenue and risk of rebellion by Arabs who found it profitable.

The anti-slavery group was small compared to the East African Coast.

European powers continued with slave trade, they shipped the slave cargos in to ships bearing American Flags.

**Factors that led to the abolition of slave trade**

It was the British government that began the abolition of the slave trade during the years, 1822 - 1826. This was because of the pressure by various groups based on different factors:

i. Rise of humanitarians in Europe such as Christians and scholars condemned it on moral grounds. The missionaries wanted it to be stopped because they wanted good conditions for the spread of Christianity. The formation of the humanitarian movements in England aimed at stopping all kinds of cruelty including slave trade, flogging of soldiers and child labour.

ii. Industrialization in Britain was one of the main forces behind the abolition. E.g. Britain industrialists urged its abolition because they wanted Africans to be left in Africa so that Africa can be a source of raw materials for their industries, market for European manufactured goods and a place for new investment of surplus capital.

iii. Formation of Anti-slavery movement and the abolitionist movement in 1787. Its chairman was Granville Sharp and others like Thomas Clarkson, William Wilberforce who gathered facts and stories about the brutality of slave trade and slavery to arouse public opinion in Britain.

iv. Religious revival in Europe, Anglicans preached and condemned slave trade as being opposed to laws of God and humanity. Catholic popes also protested against the trade and prohibited it. In 1774, many religious leaders served as examples when they liberated their slaves in England.

v. The French revolution of 1789 and the American revolution of 1776 emphasized liberty, equality and fraternity (brotherhood) of all human beings. As a result, people began to question whether anyone had a right to deprive fellow man of his liberty when he had done wrong.

vi. The British desire to protect their national interests, British planters wanted slave trade stopped to avoid competition with other European planters. This is because other planters were producing cheaper sugar, British sugar accumulated hence the need to stop over production.

vii. The rise of men with new ideas e.g. Prof. Adam Smith challenged the economic arguments which were the basis of slave trade when he argued convincingly that hired labour is cheaper and more productive than slave labour, Rousseau spread the idea of personal liberty and equality of all men.

viii. Slaves had become less profitable and yet had led to over population in Europe.

ix. Influential abolitionists like William Wilberforce (a British member of parliament) urged the British government to legislate against the slave trade in her colonies.

x. The ship owners stopped transporting slaves from Africa and began transporting raw materials directly from Africa and America to Europe, which led to a decline in slave trade.
Effects of abolition of slave trade

i. The suppression of slave trade led to loss of independence that is to say, it confirmed among the Arabs and Swahilis that the Sultan had lost independence over the East African coast, and that he was now a British puppet.

ii. The suppression of slave trade led to development and growth of legitimate trade which provided equally profitable business to both Europeans and African traders.

iii. Many ship owners diverted their ships from transporting slaves to transporting raw cotton and raw sugar from Brazil and America.

iv. It accelerated the coming of European missionaries to East Africa who emphasized peace and obedience thus the later European colonization of East Africa.

v. Disintegration of the sultan Empire. This is because it loosened the economic and political control which the sultan had over the East African nations. His empire in E.A. therefore began to crumble. This gave opportunity to other ambitious leaders like Tippu-Tip to create an independent state in Maniema, where he began selling his ivory and slaves to the Belgians in Zaire.

vi. The abolition of slave trade was a catalyst to the partition of East Africa where by Britain took over Kenya, Zanzibar and Uganda and Germany took over Tanganyika.

vii. Slave trade markets were also closed for example Zanzibar in 1873 following the frère treaty signed between Sultan Barghash and Bangle Frere.

viii. Islam became unpopular as many converted to Christianity.

ix. African societies regained their respect and strength as they were no longer sold off as commodities.

Development and organization of long distance trade

Local trade refers to the exchange of goods among members of a community.

Regional trade involves exchange of goods between a community and her neighbouring communities.

Long distance trade was the exchange of trade goods between communities over long distance, for example between the east African interior and the east African coast.

The organization of long distance trade

~ The communities that participated in the long distance trade were the Akamba, Swahili, Arabs, Yao, Nyamwezi, Mijikenda and Baganda.

~ The trade developed because of the demand for ivory in Europe and the United States of America, slaves for plantation agriculture at the coast and in Mauritius and reunion sugar plantations.

~ Ivory and slaves from the interior were exchanged for cloth, utensils, ironware, zinc and beads at the coast. The system of trade were barter.

~ The middlemen included the Mijikenda and the Akamba who obtained slaves and ivory from the interior. The Akamba adopted the long distance trade after the outbreak of famine in 1836 and due to the central location of their country.

~ The Akamba organized caravans that left for the coast on weekly basis to sell ivory, gum copra, honey, bees wax, rhinoceros horns and skins. They had prosperous traders like chief Kivoi who is remembered for organizing the trade.
~ They set up markets and routes in the interior.

~ The source of slaves and ivory extended as far as Mt. Kenya region, Baringo and the shores of Lake Victoria.

~ The trade led to the development of Mombasa and Lamu as important market points.

~ The Waswahili and Mijikenda traders were also used in the trading caravans to the interior.

~ By 1860s, Arabs and Swahili traders started penetrating to the interior of Kenya as far as Uganda.

~ In Kenya, the main trading centres were Taveta, Mbooni hills, elureko in Wanga and Miazini near Ngong and along Lake Baringo.

~ By 1870, the Akamba dominance in the trade declined as a result of competition from the Arab and Waswahili traders who began penetrating into the interior to get goods from the source.

~ Movement between the interior and the coast was carried out in caravans along well defined routes.

~ The trade routes became insecure due to the Oromo and Maasai raids.

~ The abolition of slave trade also affected the long distance trade.

~ In Tanganyika, the Yao, Nyamwezi, Arabs and Waswahili were great traders. The Yao exchanged tobacco, hoes, and animal skins at Kilwa with imported goods like cloth and beads. They were also the principal suppliers of ivory and slaves to Kilwa. The Yao were the most active long distance traders in east Africa.

~ The Arabs and Waswahili traders organized caravans into the interior and set up markets and trade routes. They were given security by Seyyid said who signed treaties with Chief Fundikira of the Nyamwezi to allow the Arab traders to pass through his territory.

~ They established interior Arab settlements at Tabora which became the centre of Arab culture.

~ The Nyamwezi organized trading expeditions under their chiefs upto the coast with ivory, copper, slaves, wax hoes, salt and copra. They returned with cloths, beads and mirrors.

They established trade routes such as the route from Ujiji via Tabora to Bagamoyo. They travelled to Katanga in DRC for iron, salt and copper. By 1850 Nyamwezi merchants such as Msiri, and leaders like Nyungu ya Mawe and Mirambo played a key role in the trade development.

~ When the Arab and Waswahili traders arrived in Buganda, the Kabaka welcomed them because he needed their goods such as beads, cloths, guns etc. He also wanted assistance in aiding his neighbours. E.g the invasion of Busoga in 1848 was assisted by the Arab traders.
From the raids to Bunyoro, Toro, and ankole and Buvuma and Ukerewe islands, the Baganda acquired cattle, ivory, slaves and grains which the sold to the Arabs.

~ The Khartoumers also practiced long distance trade. They raided the northern part of Uganda for ivory and slaves.

~ Arab and Waswahili traders ventured into the Bunyoro kingdom by 1877 for ivory.

~ There were three main trade routes that linked east African coast and the interior;

i. From Mombasa through the Mijikenda area onto Taita-Taveta then branching into two. One leading to Kilimanjaro onto the Lake Victoria region the diversion was to evade the hostile Maasai. The other branch proceeded northwards from Taveta across Galan River into Ukambani then to MT Kenya region and further west. Taveta became an important point on these routes.

ii. The route from Kilwa to Yao then branching southwards to Cewa in Zimbabwe.

iii. From Bagamoyo to Tabora where it branched northwards to Buganda and another branch to Ujiji then to Zaire.

MAP OF EAST AFRICA SHOWING TRADE ROUTES

Effects of the Long distance trade on the people of East Africa

i. The trade led to Development of towns e.g. Mombasa, Lamu, Kilwa, Pemba and Zanzibar.

ii. It increased the volume of local and regional trade as varieties of new goods were introduced.

iii. There was the Emergence of a class of wealthy Africans along the coast and the interior as Arab, African and Waswahili merchants acquired a lot of wealth. E.g. Kivoi of Ukambani, Ngonyo of Mijikenda, Tippu tip, Msiri, Nyungu ya mawe of Nyamwezi, Mwakikonga of the Digo etc.

iv. There was Introduction of foreign goods such as beads, cloth and plates to the peoples of East Africa.

v. The trade led to Introduction of new crops to the coast e.g. bananas, rice sugarcane and mangoes.

vi. Arab and Waswahili traders introduced Islam to the East African Coast. They also introduced Islamic culture along the coast.

vii. Development of plantation agriculture in Malindi and Mombasa due increased slave trade.

viii. It led to the development of trade routes and market centres in the region. Such routes later became important highways during the colonial rule and upto today.

ix. Traders gave reports about the coast, its strategic and commercial stability leading to the colonization of East Africa.

x. It led to the development of a money economy that replaced barter trade

xi. The trade facilitated the colonization of east Africa as the interior was exposed to the outside world.

Development and organization of international trade
The east African coast also participated in international trade during the 19th century with traders from different countries such as USA, Britain and France.

Factors that facilitated the development of international trade

i. The existing earlier trade links between east Africa and the Far East before this period.

ii. The existence of regional trade which became a means through which goods such as ivory were acquired from the interior to be used in the international trade.

iii. The role played by Seyyid said through encouraging the foreign traders to come to the coast. He even signed treaties with them. He also gave letters of introduction to the Arab caravans leading into the interior.

iv. The improvement of the monetary system by Seyyid said facilitated the trade. He introduced the small copper coins from India to supplement the silver currency (Maria Theresa dollars and the Spanish Crown). He also employed the services of the Indian Banyans or Baluchis (Money Lenders) who organized credit facilities for the caravans going into the interior.

v. There was a high demand for goods from the coast and the international community. Trade goods on demand were also readily available. E.g Gold ivory slaves cloths, beads, and guns.

vi. The existence of deep natural harbours and the attractive beaches lured many foreigners to the region.

vii. The existence of a class of wealthy merchants facilitated the trade.

viii. The establishment of specific trade routes and markets such as Zanzibar, Kilwa and Mombasa facilitated the movement and exchange of goods.

ix. The sultan’s identification of Britain as the sole trading agents in the interior overcame any rivalries which could have led to competition and decline of regional trade which would have in turn affected the international trade.

x. The development of a sound trading policy by Seyyid said to ensure international market for his grains, coconuts and ivory. He developed trade links with Europe and America by signing treaties with USA in 1833 that opened a consulate in Zanzibar in 1837. He signed a similar treaty with Britain in 1839 that opened a consulate in Zanzibar in 1941. With France in 1844 and Germany in 1871. The arrival of IBEACo with William McKinnon further strengthened international trade links and increased the volume trade.

Consequences of international trade

i. Through the trade, the east African coast was exposed to the outside world.

ii. Some of the European traders later spread their faith thus leading to the spread of Christianity in east Africa.

iii. The international trade fostered good relations between the east African coast and European nations and USA.

iv. The contacts between the coast and European powers later contributed to the colonization of east Africa by Britain and Germany.

v. New trade goods and crops were introduced to the coast.

vi. Participants in the trade grew richer and exhibited high standards of living.

vii. The slave trade led to sufferings, killings and increased warfare.
CHRISTIAN MISSIONARIES IN EAST AFRICA

Introduction

Christian missions were organized efforts to spread the Christian faith for the purpose of extending religious teaching at home or abroad.

Their coming of Christian missionaries to East Africa and Africa in general was based on a number of motives which were humanitarian, economic, political and social in nature.

The Portuguese were the first to introduce Christianity to the east African coast in the 15th century. This attempt however had little success. By the 19th century, a number of missionary groups worked in East Africa and these included:

i. The Church Missionary Society
ii. The Holy Ghost Fathers
iii. The University Missionary Society to Central Africa
iv. The White Fathers
v. The Methodist Fathers
vi. The Mill Hill Fathers
vii. The London Missionary Society

Reasons for the coming of Christian missionaries in East Africa

i. The missionaries had the ambition to spread Christianity to the people of East Africa. This would be through preaching and teaching the holy gospel so that many would get converted to Christianity.

ii. They wanted to fight against slave trade in East Africa. Earlier travelers like John Speke and James Grant, H.M. Stanley, Dr. David Livingstone and others had reported about the evils of slave trade in East Africa.

iii. They wanted to check on the spread of Islam in East Africa from the coast with intentions of converting many to Christianity.

iv. Some missionaries came because they had been invited by certain African chiefs. For example, Mutesa I of Buganda wrote a letter through H.M Stanley inviting missionaries to Buganda.

v. They came to establish legitimate trade in East Africa. They, for instance wanted to trade in items like glass, cloths, etc. as Dr. Livingstone told Cambridge University students, “I go back to Africa to make an open pass for commerce and Christianity.....” Similarly, his speech in 1857 emphasized the unity between Christianity and Commerce.

vi. The missionaries also loved to adventure and explore the interior of East Africa. For example Dr. John Ludwig Kraft of CMS is said to have been the first European to see Mt. Kenya while Johann Redman was the first to see Mt. Kilimanjaro.

vii. They had a mission to clear the way for the colonization of East Africa. The missionaries were tasked by their home governments to preach ideas of love, respect, brotherhood, forgiveness, tolerance and nonviolence so that when the colonialists come, they would meet less resistance from the East Africans.

viii. It’s also argued that missionaries wanted to “civilize” East Africans. They argued that they came to stop some of the barbaric acts and customs e.g. Female Genital
Mutilation among the Kikuyu in Kenya, human sacrifices and the practice of killing twins.

ix. The information they gave about important places like the source of the Nile, fertile soils, river falls and the climate all attracted the missionaries into East Africa. Early contacts by travelers like Stanley, Speke and Grant, among others encouraged missionaries to come.

x. The expulsion of some of the missionaries from other parts of Africa led them into East Africa. For example, Johann Ludwig Kraft and Johann Redman are said to have been expelled from Ethiopia around 1842 before they chose to relocate to East Africa.

Missionary Activities in East Africa

The pioneer missionaries in East Africa were the Church Missionary Society led by the Germans John Krapt and Johann Rebmann who arrived in East Africa around 1844 and 1846 respectively. Krapt arrived and established a mission station at Rabai.

When they realized they were not making any great impact at the coast, the two moved into the interior visiting the Akamba and Taita. The CMS set up stations in Taita and Taveta.

They were the first Europeans to see Mount Kilimanjaro in 1847. Krapt discovered the source of River Tana and was the first European to see Mount Kenya in 1849.

In 1949, Jacob Erhardt, a Germany explorer joined them and became the first European to draw a crude map of east Africa from stories he heard from traders.

In 1862, the united Methodist Church led by Thomas Wakefield arrived from Britain and settled at the coast. They established a station at Rabai. They also set up mission stations at Jomvu and Lamu. They were able to convert some people among the Mijikenda.

In 1863, the University Mission Society to Central Africa moved to Zanzibar where a mission was started from Re-union and later to Bagamoyo. Cardinal Lavigerie’s formation of the White Fathers Mission in Algeria (1863) extended to other parts of Africa.

In 1875, Freetown Mission a centre for freed slaves was established. By 1889, about 1400 slaves had settled in Freetown.

In 1877, the Church Missionary Society mission arrived in Buganda while the white fathers arrived in 1879. In 1891, the Presbyterian Church of Scotland arrived in Kenya and began their work at Kibwezi in Machakos.

In 1898, the Church of Scotland Mission arrived at Kikuyu and set up a mission station at Thogoto. Members of the African Inland Church from the United States of America established their station at Nzaui in Machakos. They then spread to Kijabe, Nandi, Kabarnet and Nyakach in Nyanza.

The catholic missionary societies, like the Holy Ghost Fathers and the Consolata Fathers arrived in Zanzibar but later moved to Mombasa in 1890.
They advanced interior and founded stations among the Akamba and among the Agikuyu towards the end of the Century. The Holy Ghost fathers established a station at St Austin’s near Nairobi in 1899 while the Consolata fathers from Italy opened a station in Nyeri in 1907. The Mill Hill Fathers reached Kenya from Uganda. In 1902, the Friends Missions arrived at Kaimosi.

By 1914 there were many missionary societies working in western Kenya. For example, the Seventh Day Adventists, the Quakers (Friends Mission) and the Church of God Mission. The roles of these missionaries varied enormously depending on the colonial context and their relations with the colonial authorities.

**Missionaries in Tanganyika**

The missionaries here enjoyed the support of the sultan of Zanzibar, Seyyid Said.

At Zanzibar, the Roman Catholic missionaries began to follow the lead of CMS in taking interest in East Africa.

The CMS began a freed slave centre at Freetown in 1875 where the freed slaves were taught Christianity and formal education. The slave villages later became Christian outposts.

The CMS finally reached Uganda in 1879 where they were later joined by the White Fathers from Tabora and Ujiji. In 1863, a group of missionaries from the Holy Ghost Fathers arrived from Reunion where they had been working among freed slaves and began their work in Zanzibar. They also began a freed slave settlement at Bagamoyo.

By 1885, they had set up five villages that were to act as Christian outposts.

Missionary work in Tanganyika was motivated by the reports given by Dr. David Livingstone on the horrors of slave trade. In 1863, the University Mission Society to Central Africa under Bishop Tozer moved to Zanzibar where a mission was started from Re-union and later to Bagamoyo.

Dr. Livingstone of UMCA also worked in Ujiji in 1871 where he met with Henry Morton Stanley, a journalist who had been sent to look for him.

In 1875, the London Missionary Society set up a mission post around Lake Tanganyika.

**Missionaries in Uganda**

The pioneer missionaries were the members of the CMS based in Tabora, Tanganyika.

The first protestant missionaries were sent from England in 1876 after a letter that was sent by Henry Morton Stanley confirming Kabaka Mutesa I’s invitation. They came in through Tabora and Usukuma and reached Rubaga, Mutesa’s capital in 1877 where they set up a church.

In 1879, the Roman Catholic Missionaries and White Fathers followed also from Tabora and Kibanga. The Protestants and Catholics were supported by Kabaka Mwanga though he did not want them to work outside the capital and beyond the royal family.

This arrangement did not favour missionary work in Uganda. Soon there ensued rivalry between the Catholics and protestants. The Kabaka had also embraced Muslims and
African traditionalists to the level of generating the infamous religious and political conflicts that rocked the kingdom eventually leading to its colonization.

Missionary work expanded up to lake Nyasa. For example the Scottish Mission of the Livingstone Mission and the church of Scotland Mission set up stations around lake Nyasa in 1876.

**Activities of Christian missionaries in East Africa**

The following were the activities carried out by the Christian missionaries in East Africa.

i. Missionaries carried out evangelization. They tried to convert and baptize many people into Christianity from their paganism and Islam.

ii. Christian missionaries carried out linguistic research and came up with new developments in language. Dr Kraft for example translated the Bible into Swahili and wrote a Swahili dictionary and grammar hence making it easy for people to understand the Bible more.

iii. The Christian missionaries built many churches in East Africa many of which are still in existence. They for example set up a church at Zanzibar, Rubaga and Rabai missionary station near Mombasa. This enhanced evangelization into the local population.

iv. They carried out exploration work into the discovery of various East African physical features. For example, Kraft was the first European to see Mt. Kenya in 1849 while Rebmann was the first to European see Kilimanjaro in 1848.

v. Christian missionaries set up stations for free rehabilitation services for example in 1868 the Holy Ghost Fathers set up a home for the free slaves at Zanzibar.

vi. Christian missionaries participated in skill development in East Africa. They for example participated in modernizing Agriculture and carpentry by setting up agricultural institutions and carpentry workshops for training.

vii. Christian missionaries were also influential in establishing educational institutions and training efficient class of African clergy (catechists) who were close and more understandable to the local communities. This helped and enhanced the propagation of faith.

viii. Christian missionaries were at times involved in political processes that were beyond spiritual jurisdiction. They for example participated in the overthrow of Kabaka Mwanga of Buganda. They also acted as front runners in the colonization process.

**Reasons for the success of missionary work in East Africa**

a. The missionaries faced no strong opposition from any religion. Islam was only greatly dominant at the coast.

b. The evils of slave trade made East Africans welcome missionaries as liberators. Their campaign against slave trade won them much support from different tribes in East Africa.

c. The support they got from some of the local chiefs and kings led to their success. For instance, the sultan of Zanzibar gave them immense support. Mutesa I of Buganda and Mirambo of Nyamwezi all gave them protection as well as rights to do their work in their territories.
d. The earlier explores helped to map out potential areas of East Africa for smooth missionary work. For instance, H.M Stanley had identified Buganda as a hospitable community for the missionaries and they were later welcomed by the Kabaka of Buganda in 1877.

e. The support missionaries got from their home governments led them to success. This was in form of finance and physical manpower for instance colonial governments gave protection to the missionaries whenever they were challenged by local chiefs or other threats. For instance Captain Lugard supported the Protestants in the religious wars in Buganda.

f. Some missionary groups sought for alliances with African chiefs. Such treaties of friendship made their work easy since the chiefs would call on their subjects to take on the missionary teachings.

g. The missionaries’ efforts to translate the bible into several local languages helped them succeed for example Kraft translated the New Testament of the Bible into Swahili and wrote a Swahili dictionary and a Grammar book.

h. The missionaries also received the support of African converts in spreading the Gospel.

i. Converts could now teach in their mother tongue and therefore overcame the language barrier.

j. The industrial revolution had provided such technology like the printing press which made printing of bibles and other academic work easy.

k. Their efforts in life saving services like medical care (Quinine) won them great admiration among the people of East Africa that few were ready to oppose them. The discovery of quinine also facilitated their work as it cured tropical diseases.

l. The missionaries’ practical skills enabled them to survive even when their supplies from home delayed. They for instance adopted agriculture as soon as they settled anywhere. This ensured steady supply of food.

m. The building of the Kenya Uganda railway greatly encouraged missionary work in the interior. The missionaries could now travel between the coast and the interior.

n. Political stability in East Africa favoured missionary work because missionaries could settle.

o. The emergence of the African independent church movement boosted the spread of Christianity. African initiatives to Africanize Christianity encouraged its growth in East Africa.

q. The death of Dr. David Livingstone in 1873 and other earlier missionaries increased the determination by many groups to see missionary work succeed in Africa, and East Africa in particular. E.g. the London newspaper wrote after his death, “the work for Africa must hence forth begin in earnest where Livingstone left it off.”

r. Establishment of resettlement centers for freed slaves e.g. at Bagamoyo and Frere town near Mombasa where skills like carpentry, and agriculture were taught. Such communities thus looked at missionary work as “a life-saving mission”

**Problems faced by missionaries in East Africa**

Christian missionaries in East Africa were faced with various problems which clipped their activities at times. These include:
a) They faced the problem of language barrier. This was because East Africa had a multiplicity of languages hence rendering communication between the missionaries and the local people very difficult.

b) There was a problem of the influence of Islam. Arabs being the first group of people to arrive at the coast and interior had deep rooted Islam into the people thus making it difficult for the people to easily adopt Christianity. For example, by the time Sir Edward Frere arrived in East Africa (1873) Rebmann had only 6 converts.

c) Existence of tropical diseases was yet another problem faced by the Christian missionaries. Tropical diseases like malaria, small pox, claimed many missionary lives thus making progress in their activities very difficult since they could be left very few in numbers.

d) Another hardship was caused by geographical barriers. These included hilly areas, rivers, lakes and forests. These hindered their free movement to various places thus a threat to their activities.

e) Divisions and quarrels between various missionary groups for example Catholics versus Protestants was a hindrance to their activities. This could create divisions and biases among the believers thus weakening their capacity to convert more converts.

f) Poor transport was a hindrance to the missionary activities in East Africa. This was due to undeveloped roads at the time to help in the movement of missionaries from one place to another.

g) Presence of hostile tribes in East Africa was also a problem that faced Christian missionaries. The Nandi and Maasai who believed that strangers were not supposed to pass via their land could attack and kill many missionaries thereby reducing their numbers compared to the increasing number of converts.

h) The presence of wild animals was also a threat to the missionary activities in East Africa. Man enters in Tsavo National Park consumed and threatened many whites. This clipped their activities at times.

i) The missionaries faced the problem of lack of supplies. They for example lacked enough money, accommodation and drugs. This was because they originated from very far (Europe) thus making it difficult for them to have full time and constant supplies. Such put their lives at risk and could sometimes lead to death.

j) The Christian missionaries faced the problem of stiff contradiction and rivals between European missionaries and traditional Africans. Customs like polygamy, satanic worship, etc. were deep rooted into African communities which proved a threat for the missionaries to successfully uproot them.

k) The missionaries made their work difficult by involving in politics and judicial systems which were beyond spiritual jurisdiction. Local leaders could misinterpret them as political rivals and organize their masses for resistance against missionary activities.

**Effects of missionaries in East Africa**

i. They spread Christianity and baptized many converts. Catechists were also trained who helped in the spread of Christianity for example, in Kenya by 1911 many people had been converted and many cathedrals and churches were built like the Kikuyu churches (Charismatic Arathi or spirit churches.)
ii. African religious beliefs, culture and traditions were despised and demoralized for example the birth and murder of twins, human sacrifice.

iii. They established hospitals and clinics which offered modern medicine plus research in tropical diseases like malaria, small pox, yellow fever and sleeping sickness which had claimed many lives. For example, the Mission Hospitals at Rabai, Thogoto, Kaimosi etc. Dr Albert Cook built Mengo hospital.

iv. They introduced the European system of management and styles of dress and architecture which have been adopted by many people in East Africa today.

v. They put an end the inter-tribal or inter-village wars and established a stable and peaceful society under one faithful leader (centralization).

vi. They studied African languages and translated the Bible into various languages. For example Kraft translated the New Testament of the Bible into Swahili, Bishop Edward Steere based in Zanzibar learnt and studied Swahili and translated books from English to Swahili, published the New Testament and the entire Bible in 1891.

vii. They established printing presses like Marianum press and published newspapers.

viii. They opened up primary and secondary schools as well as training colleges for teachers and trade schools for craftsmen e.g. Alliance High School, Kisubi Vocational School. In the technical schools, carpentry and brick laying skills were obtained.

ix. A new class of elite emerged. Africans educated mainly in English and French emerged, these later served as doctors, lawyers, clerks, teachers, catechists, agriculturalists and priests who played a great role of spreading Christianity. For example, in 1890, Africans were ordained as priests of the University Mission to Central Africa in Tanganyika.

x. They paved way for the improvement of agriculture through establishing experimental farms and plantations where new crops, better methods of farming and equipment were introduced for example cotton was introduced by Kenneth Boroup in 1903 and Africans were taught how to use a plough and how to grow coffee.

a. Missionaries improved communication and transport which in turn led to the opening up of the hinterland of Africa. The building of strong boats and ships gave Europeans courage to travel far from home.

b. Missionaries destroyed local industries like craft industry e.g. blacksmiths, pottery work were all destroyed and replaced with European products e.g. manufactured items like cups, saucepans, etc.

c. They contributed to the rise of nationalism. This was made possible through education where the African elite emerged and started demanding for independence e.g. Tom Mboya, Obote, Nyerere, and Kenyatta.

d. They fought slave trade which was later abolished and equality and liberty for all was encouraged in East Africa.

e. Mission stations were developed in towns like Rabai missionary station near Mombasa.

Role of Christian missionaries in the colonization of East Africa

i. Missionaries signed treaties which were later used by colonialists to take over colonies e.g. Tucker, a British Missionary interpreted the 1900 Buganda Agreement to the regents of Kabaka Daudi Chwa II. This led to loss of political, economic and...
social powers to the British protectorate government. Sir Harry John stone who signed on behalf of the British government confessed that;

ii. Missionaries supplied information to the colonialists which they utilized to plan how to effectively impose their colonial rule on how to crash the African resistance. In the religious wars in Buganda, the British fought behind the Protestants.

iii. In fact there was a reciprocal relationship between missionaries and the colonialists that is why missionaries laid the ground work before the practitioners offered missionaries protection for the success of their evangelization mission.

iv. The Church missionary society managed to raise enough funds for Imperial British East African Company for its staying in Uganda for at least 2 or more years. The church missionary society and Captain Lugard viewed that the company’s withdraw would live the British and the protestant party in a dangerous position versus Moslems.

v. Missionaries enhanced the growth of tropical raw materials like coffee, cotton to satisfy the British industrialists urge but disguising everything in Christianity. Bishop K. Boroup for example introduced cotton in Uganda.

vi. They appealed to their home governments for protection in case of attack. It is in this light that Britain came to Uganda during the religious wars of 1884-1892 and later occupied Uganda.

vii. They created a collaborating class by luring it religiously and materially. This class helped colonialists to fight resistors despite the fact that they were all Africans.

viii. In their evangelization role, they brain washed Africans with biblical teachings as “love your neighbor as you love yourself”, “blessed are the humble for the kingdom of God is theirs”, etc. With these preaching’s they made potential resistance important.

ix. Religion was a mechanism of divide and rule. The converts and the non-converts hated each other which caused division to the advantage of the Europeans.

x. Collaboration with chattered companies, European Christian missionaries and their converts worked hand in hand with the Imperial British East African Company to defeat Kabalega’s resistance.

xi. Missionary stations served as military bases from where the European colonial forces launched attacks on the resisting Africans. African Lugard used old Kampala hill as a military base against Kabalega. Mission stations served as colonial government headquarters. The established mission infrastructure was used to help in the establishment and sustenance of European colonial rule.

xii. Colonialists lacked skilled manpower, so the missionaries by design or accident were very faithful servants of the colonial government i.e. they were Colonial government servants.

xiii. They created a peaceful atmosphere for the germination of colonialism in areas of hostility. This is because they emphasized the centralized leadership where peace and obedience were expected.

xiv. Missionaries also trained manpower through introduction of education which was used by colonialists. This was done through teaching those academic subjects and manual skills like use of a plough and how to grow coffee.

xv. They acted as interpreters e.g. Tucker in the 1900 Buganda agreement.

xvi. Through conversion of the Buganda chiefs and pages before Buganda commoners it meant that each party i.e. the Church Missionary Society and France had gained
converts. This was a political security of sympathy to the Christian missionaries as against the Kabaka in Buganda's leadership. This indirectly undermined the Kabaka's authority and respect i.e. his traditional power base was being eroded.

Commentary

Christianity has been more of a curse than a blessing to Africans.