

that at a town called ZKRY he has a copper mine from which ingots are brought to BYTY. "There is nothing in my kingdom (he said) on which a duty is levied (*shay' mumakkas*) except this crude copper which is brought in. Duty is collected on this and on nothing else. We send it to the land of the pagan Sūdān and sell it for two-thirds of its weight in gold, so that we sell 100 mithqals of this copper for 66<sup>2</sup> mithqals of gold." He also stated that there are pagan nations (*umam*) in his kingdom from

whom he does not collect the tribute (*jizya*) but whom he simply employs in extracting the gold from its deposits. The gold is extracted by digging pits about a man's height in depth and the gold is found embedded in the sides of the pits or sometimes collected at the bottom of them.

The king of this country wages a permanently Holy War on the pagans of the Sūdān who are his neighbours. They are more numerous than could ever be counted.

### Questions

- (1) What light does Al' Umari's account shed on the Malian army? On the treatment of the corpses of the dead?
- (2) In what way was Musa's conduct found to be contrary to Muslim law, and how did the Emperor react upon being informed of this?
- (3) According to Musa, what happened to his predecessor, and under what circumstances did Musa himself come to the throne?
- (4) What economic and/or other effects did Musa's pilgrimage have in Egypt?

## 12-3

### The cities of the Zanj and the Indian Ocean trade.

*The Indian Ocean was, long before the Atlantic was opened by European navigators, one of the world's major maritime commercial arteries. The east coast of Africa was a prime component of this trade, and ships from Egypt, Arabia, India, and as far afield as China plied their way to the Swahili Cities of the Zanj (Africans). These cities, chief among them: Kilwa; Mogadishu; Mombasa; Tanga; Malindi; Sofala, and Zanzibar, developed the language from whose name they are collectively known (Swahili was originally conceived as a commercial language). The cities were known to travellers of varied backgrounds, as evidenced in the following selections.*

Source: G. S. P. Freeman-Grenville, *The East African Coast: Selected Documents from the 1st to the 19th Century* (London: Rex Collins, 1975), pp. 19-24.

#### AL-IDRISI: THE FIRST WESTERN NOTICE OF EAST AFRICA

The Zanj of the East African coast have no ships to voyage in, but use vessels from Oman and other countries which sail to the islands of Zanj which depend on the Indies. These foreigners sell their goods there, and buy the produce of the country. The people of the Djawaga islands go to Zanzibar in large and small ships, and use them for trading their goods, for they understand each others' language. Opposite the Zanj coasts are the Djawaga islands; they are numerous and vast; their inhabitants are very dark in colour, and everything that is cultivated there, fruit, sorghum, sugar-cane and camphor trees, is black in colour. Among the number of the islands is Sribuza, which is said to be 1,200 miles round; and pearl fisheries and various kinds of aromatic plants and perfumes are to be found there, which attract the merchants.

Among the islands of Djawaga included in the present section is Andjuba [Anjouan-Johanna], whose principal town is called Unguja in the language of Zanzibar, and whose people, although mixed, are actually mostly Muslims. The distance from it to Banas on the Zanj coast is 100 miles. The island is 400 miles round; bananas are the chief food. There are five kinds, as follows: the bananas called kundi; fill whose weight is sometimes twelve ounces; omani, muriani, sukari. It is a healthy, sweet, and pleasant food. The island is traversed by a mountain called Wabra. The vagabonds who are expelled from the town flee there, and form a brave and numerous company which frequently infests the surroundings of the town, and which lives at the top of the mountain in a state of defence against the ruler of the island. They are courageous, and feared for their arms and their number. The island is very populous; there are many villages and cattle. They grow rice. There is a great trade in it, and each year various prod-

ucts and goods are brought for exchange and consumption.

From Medouna [on the Somali coast] to Malindi, a town of the Zanj, one follows the coast for three days and three nights by sea. Malindi lies on the shore, at the mouth of a river of sweet water. It is a large town, whose people engage in hunting and fishing. On land they hunt the tiger [*sic*] and other wild beasts. They obtain various kinds of fish from the sea, which they cure and sell.

They own and exploit iron mines; for them iron is an article of trade and the source of their largest profits. They pretend to know how to bewitch the most poisonous snakes so as to make them harmless to everyone except those for whom they wish evil or on whom they wish to take vengeance. They also pretend that by means of these enchantments the tigers and lions cannot hurt them. These wizards are called *al-Musnafu* in the language of the people.

It is two days' journey along the coast to Mombasa. This is a small place and a dependency of the Zanj. Its inhabitants work in the iron mines and hunt tigers. They have red coloured dogs which fight every kind of wild beast and even lions. This town lies on the sea shore near a large gulf up which ships travel two days' journey; its banks are uninhabited because of the wild beasts that live in the forests where the Zanj go and hunt, as we have already said. In this town lives the King of Zanzibar. His guards go on foot because they have no mounts: horses cannot live there.

#### CHAO JU-KUA: ZANZIBAR AND SOMALIA IN THE THIRTEENTH CENTURY

##### Zanguabar (Ts'ong-Pa)

The Ts'ong-pa country is an island of the sea south of Hu-ch'a-la. To the west it reaches a great mountain. The inhabitants are of Ta-shi [Arab] stock and follow the Ta-shi religion. They wrap themselves in blue foreign cotton stuffs and wear red leather shoes. Their daily food consists of meal, baked cakes and mutton.

There are many villages, and a succession of wooded hills and terraced rocks. The climate is warm, and there is no cold season. The products of the country consist of elephants' tusks, native gold, amber-gris and yellow sandal-wood.

Every year Hu-ch'a-la and the Ta-shi localities along the sea-coast send ships to this country with white cotton cloth, porcelain, copper and red cotton to trade.

##### BERBERA COAST (PI-P'A-LO)

The country of Pi-p'a-lo contains four cities; the other places are all villages which are constantly at feud and fighting with each other. The inhabitants pray to

Heaven and not to the Buddha. The land produces many camels and sheep, and the people feed themselves with the flesh and milk of camels and with baked cakes.

The other products are ambergris, big elephants' tusks and big rhinoceros' horns. There are elephants' tusks which weigh over 100 carries and rhinoceros' horns of over ten cattie's weight. The land is also rich in putchuk, liquid storax gum, myrrh, and tortoise-shell of extraordinary thickness, for which there is great demand in other countries. The country also brings forth the so-called 'camel-crane' [ostrich], which measures from the ground to its crown from six to seven feet. It has wings and can fly, but not to any great height.

There is also in this country a wild animal called tsu-la [giraffe]; it resembles a camel in shape, an ox in size, and is of a yellow colour. Its fore legs are five feet long, its hind legs only three feet. Its head is high up and turned upwards. Its skin is an inch thick.

There is also in this country a kind of mule [zebra] with brown, white, and black stripes around its body. These animals wander about in mountain wilds; they are a variety of camel. The inhabitants of this country, who are great huntsman, hunt these animals with poisoned arrows.

#### ABU-AL-FIDA: MALINDI, MOMBASA, AND SOFALA

Malindi is a town of the land of the Zanj, 81½° long., 2° 50' lat. West of the town is a great gulf into which flows a river which comes down from the mountain of Komr. On the banks of this gulf are very large dwellings belonging to the Zanj; the houses of the people of Komr are on the south side. East of Malindi is al-Kerany, the name of a mountain very famous among travellers; this mountain runs out into the sea for a distance of about 100 miles in a north-east direction; at the same time it extends along the continent in a straight line north for a distance of about fifty miles. Among other things which we might say about this mountain are the iron mine which is on the continental side and the lodestone in the part which is in the sea, which attracts iron.

At Malindi is the tree of zendj (the ginger tree) (or at Malindi there are many Zanzian sorcerers). The King of the Zanj lives at Malindi. Between Mombasa and Malindi is about a degree. Mombasa is on the coast. On the west is a gulf along which buildings stand as far as 300 miles. Nearby to the east is the desert which separates the land of the Zanj from Sofala.

Among the towns of the country of Sofala is Batyna (or Banyna). It is situated at the end of a great gulf, away from the equinoctial line, under 2½° lat., 87° long. According to Ibn Said, on the West of Batyna

is Adjued, the name of a mountain which projects into the sea towards the north-east for a distance of 100 miles. The waves of the sea make a great noise here. The people of Sofala live to the east of this mountain: their capital is Seruna, under 99° long., 2½ lat. [south]. The town is built on a large estuary where a river, which rises in the mountain of Komr, flows out. There the King of Sofala resides.

Then one arrives at the town of Leirana. Ibn Fathuma, who visited the town, said that it was a seaport where ships put in and whence they set out. The inhabitants profess Islam. Leirana is on long. 102°, lat. 0° 30' [south]. It is on a great gulf.

The town of Daghuta is the last one of the country of Sofala and the furthest of the inhabited part of the continent towards the south. It is on long. 109°, lat. 12°, south of the equator.

*Sofala.* According to the Canon it is on 50° 3' long., 2° lat., south of the equator. Sofala is in the land of the Zanj. According to the author of the Canon, the inhabitants are Muslims. Ibn Said says that their chief means of existence are mining gold and iron, and that they dress in leopard skins. According to Masudi, horses do not reproduce in the land of the Zanj, so that the warriors go on foot or fight from the backs of oxen.

### Questions

- (1) Do the three accounts agree on any one (or more) points? Explain.
- (2) How do the three accounts shed light on the religious life of the Eastern Africans?
- (3) What are the chief products for trade and consumption?

## 12-4

### The Mongol Khan's ultimatum to the nations of Europe.

*Contact between the Mongol Empire of Genghis Khan and his successors and Western Europeans was slight, although detachments of the Mongol forces had stationed themselves in Russia at the doorstep of Eastern European states and had gone so far as to raid and devastate parts of Poland and Hungary. These Tartars (as the Mongols were often called) would maintain a lengthy presence in Russia under the designation of "The Golden Horde." From time to time popes would dispatch emissaries with letters to the Khan. That the Khan was not particularly impressed is made clear in his imperious reply.*

Source: Christopher Dawson, ed., *Mission to Asia* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, for the Medieval Academy of America, 1980), pp. 83-84. (First published by Sheed & Ward, London, 1955, as *The Mongol Mission*; reprinted by Harper & Row 1966).

#### The Strength of God, the Emperor of all men, to the Great Pope, Authentic and True Letters

Having taken counsel for making peace with us, You Pope and all Christians have sent an envoy to us, as we have heard from him and as your letters declare. Wherefore, if you wish to have peace with us, You Pope and all kings and potentates, in no way delay to come to me to make terms of peace and then you shall hear alike our answer and our will. The contents of your letters stated that we ought to be baptized and become Christians. To this we answer briefly that we do not understand in what way we ought to do this. To the rest of the contents of your letters, viz: that you wonder at so great a slaughter of men, especially of Christians and in particular Poles, Moravians and Hungarians, we reply likewise that this also we do not understand. However, lest we may seem to pass it over in silence altogether, we give you this for our answer.

Because they did not obey the word of God and

the command of Chingis Chan and the Chan, but took council to slay our envoys, therefore God ordered us to destroy them and gave them up into our hands. For otherwise if God had not done this, what could man do to man? But you men of the West believe that you alone are Christians and despise others. But how can you know to whom God deigns to confer His grace? But we worshipping God have destroyed the whole earth from the East to the West in the power of God. And if this were not the power of God, what could men have done? Therefore if you accept peace and are willing to surrender your fortresses to us, You Pope and Christian princes, in no way delay coming to me to conclude peace and then we shall know that you wish to have peace with us. But if you should not believe our letters and the command of God nor hearken to our counsel then we shall know for certain that you wish to have war. After that we do not know what will happen, God alone knows.

Chingis Chan, first Emperor, second Ochoday Chan, third Cuiuch Chan.