

NINETEENTH CENTURY FOOD TRADE IN THE WESTERN INDIAN OCEAN

by

P. Godfrey OKOTH*

Introduction

This paper argues that the pre-occupation of the majority of non-Western economic historians has been with the expanding world market and the trade implemented between the 'center and periphery'. As such, little is left for food trade between the 'center and periphery'¹. Only the impact of the West has been the major concern among economic historians². Although we do not minimize the impact mentioned above, the paper contends that there was vigorous food trade in the region which was linked to nineteenth century capitalist penetration. In other words, there was a lot of commercial activity in the realm of indigenous foodstuffs that was maintained throughout the nineteenth century³. This is an area that has hardly been adequately tackled. By undertaking to write this paper, therefore, we endeavor to transcend issues that dominate the literature, namely, those to do with the destruction of

* Department of History, Makerere University, Kampala.

1. J.R. Hanson II, *Trade in Transition : Exports from the Third World, 1840-1900*, New-York, 1980, pp. 61-63 ; L. Blusse, H.L. Wesseling & E.D. Winius, eds, *History and Underdevelopment : Essays on Underdevelopment and European Expansion in Asia and Africa*, Leiden, 1980.
2. W. Rodney, *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa*, Dar es Salaam, London, 1972 ; C. Issawi, *An Economic History of the Middle East and North Africa*, New York, 1982, p. xii ; M.D. Morris, et al., *Indian Economy in the Nineteenth Century : A Symposium*, Delhi, 1969, p. 147.
3. B.M. Bhatia, *Famines in India : A Study in Some Aspects of the Economic History of India, 1860-1945*, New York, 1963, especially chapters 2 & 5 ; M.B. Mc Alpin, *Subject to Famine : Food Crises & Economic Change in Western India, 1860-1920*, Princeton, 1983 ; UNESCO, *Historical Relations Across the Indian Ocean, The General history of Africa : Studies and Documents 3*, Paris, 1980, p. 173. K.N. Chaudhuri, "Foreign Trade and Balance of Payments, 1757-1947", in D. Kumar & M. Desai, eds, *The Cambridge Economic History of India, 2*, Cambridge, 1983), especially p. 841 and p. 850.

indigenous manufactures and the increasing exports of colonial agricultural crops.

Issues, Sources and Definitions

There are several issues that can be raised in order to fully understand this paper. For instance, issues regarding the identity and provenance of the items of trade ; issues regarding the organization of production ; the direction in which the items were traded ; the means by which the items were transported ; the composition and dimensions of this trade ; capitalization of the trade ; the development of markets for foodstuffs that stimulated this traffic ; and the implications of this phenomenon for regional economic history. These issues cannot be discussed fully in a preliminary paper of this type. However, we are aiming at tackling the problem in a way that stresses the internal, regional importance of the Western Indian Ocean taking due consideration of the expanding capitalist world market.

In preparing this paper, we were aware of the vast amount of sources to be used. Indeed, as J. de V. Allen has observed, "The historian turning to the Indian Ocean area is faced with a far larger amount of documentary evidence than is often realized⁴. This means that we have barely scratched the surface.

There are certain basic definitions that have to be clarified before we proceed to the body of our text. In the first instance, we had to determine what items were to be included among the foodstuffs. These include foodgrains, fruits, oilseeds and oils, sugar, coffee and tea. As regards oilseeds, oils, sugar, coffee and tea, there were those meant for the world market and those destined for the regional market. This division is necessary because it demonstrates that foodgrains became an important item of export outside the region later in the century. In this regard, we do not distinguish between subsistence and cash crops. This is because once provisions entered the regional market, they were, by definition, commodities. Similarly, we have not distinguished between foodstuffs that were produced and consumed within the region on the basis of the organization of their production. In this way, peasant and plantation crops in both the indigenous and European spheres are included in this survey as long as they fall within this fundamental definition. In order to make the paper manageable, we have not included spices.

In this analysis, we define Western Indian Ocean to include the coast of eastern Africa as far south as Delagoa Bay, the Red Sea, Southern Arabia, the Persian Gulf, and the Western coast of the Indian sub-continent. Taking the

4. J. de V. Allen, "A Proposal for Indian Ocean Studies", in *Historical Relations*, p. 141.

entire littoral, their hinterlands are included to the extent in which they were directly linked to the production and exchange system. Also included are the islands of the Western Indian ocean. This is not an exclusive definition since there are interesting connections within the larger oceanic basin that make their presence felt.

The Development of a Regional Food Market

Five basic categories of demand for foodstuffs were at work in the nineteenth century. Whereas some of them were already in existence, others were entirely new. That is to say, some were supplied by their own inter-lands, while others had always depended at least, in past, on regional maritime supplies. Nevertheless, taken together, they stimulated an unprecedented regional supply network in the nineteenth century.

In the first place, the nineteenth century saw the growth of a new series of urban centers that required supplies. There were several commercial 'entrepôts' that arose during the period along the Eastern African coast which contributed to this demand. Perhaps the most notable of them were Aden, Masqat and Zanzibar Town. To this development must be added the continued food dependence and growth of urban centers such as Port-Louis, Mozambique Island, Jiddah, Makkah and Madinah, and several coastal villages and small towns that dotted the shores of the Western Indian Ocean. Why the growth of these urban centers? The reasons vary. However, most of them reflect a combination of commercial and political stimuli that were facilitated by the general growth of world trade during this period.

Second, the expansion of the plantation sector in non-subsistence crops at Zanzibar and Mauritius contributed to urban growth of Zanzibar Town and Port-Louis; it also made it impossible for the islands themselves to provide the provisions necessary for the urban population of those places.

Third, throughout the nineteenth century, the provisioning trade for all sorts of shipping increased. The contention, however, is that not all these provisions were consumed within the context of the regional economy.

The fourth critical factor was the steady demand of Muslim pilgrims, making the *hajj* during the nineteenth century⁵. For the major towns of the Hijaz, the same factor was also a stimulus to their own urban growth during the stipulated period.

5. B. Lewis, et al., *The Encyclopaedia of Islam*, Leiden & London, 1971, p. 34.

Finally, cultural and food preferences played a role in forming a regional food network⁶. Urbanization created a regional dispersal of people who required foodstuffs that could not be adequately supplied locally. The principal actors in this aspect of demand were African slaves within the region and Indian merchants who dominated nearly all of the regional trade.

The emphasis here is the vitality of the Indian Ocean as a highway of the communication and transportation. Indeed, without the maritime technology of the region's peoples, this food network could not have been sustained. An analysis of the food network is what follows below.

The Regional Food Network

As the result of the British conquest of Mauritius, it was no longer possible for that colony to be provisioned from Reunion. The increase in population that attended the importation of indentured Indian labor to work on the island's sugar plantations worsened what was already a serious problem. As has been observed by A. Toussaint, "From the outset, the question of provisions loomed large". Whereas Africans produced their own manioc locally, "the Indians ate rice, ghee, dhol and flour..., all articles that had to be imported". By 1870, Muslim merchants dominated the provision trade and were deeply involved in "the exportation of sugar to India and the importation of beef from Madagascar, a trade that developed in importance as the population increased, locally raised livestock being insufficient to meet requirements"⁷.

Suffice it to note that this latter aspect of provisioning Mauritius was not a new development, for in 1801, a French traveller observed that the island took "the greatest part of its beef from Madagascar"⁸. Actually, Madagascar was initially also the principal source of its rice supplies. Similarly, although Reunion continued to supply much of its own provisions, earlier in the century Madagascar was a significant source of supplementary supplies⁹. Damage by hurricane was also a persistent problem which frequently necessitated purchasing "rice from India or from Madagascar at a very elevated price". A French traveller has recorded that "It is from Madagascar that our colony takes a great part of the provisions of which it has need", notwithstanding that "the cattle are exhausted by a journey that is sometimes long and fatiguing ; the poultry is not worth more and are very costly ; finally the rice is of an inferior

6. *Ibid.*

7. A. Toussaint, "The Role of Trade in the Settlement of Mauritius", in UNESCO, *Historical Relations*, pp. 119-120.

8. R. Decary, *Les Voyages du chirurgien Avine à l'île de France et dans la mer des Indes au début du XIX^e siècle*, Paris, 1961, p. 19.

9. H. Gerbeau, "The Part played by agriculture in the settlement of Reunion", in UNESCO, *Historical Relations*, p. 128.

quality"¹⁰. Having said that, it would be interesting to know how the local population reacted to the suspension, from 1845 to 1853 by Queen Ranavalona of the Madagascar coastal trade to both French and British shipping, "including the almost indispensable bullock traffic on which Mauritius and Bourbon depended"¹¹.

According to J.B.F. Osgood, some of the needs of Mauritius (in the early 1850s) that were once supplied by Madagascar were "now procured from the more distant African coast", while fifteen years later another traveller observed that a flourishing salted beef trade had opened up at St-Augustin's Bay to supply these markets¹². From the perspective of Imerina, the dependence of the French on Madagascar's supplies was not in doubt, for during the Franco-Malagasy war of 1883-1885, the Malagasy government shut off the rice and cattle trade to outsiders, an action that devastated French traders at both Majunga and Tamatave, and was resumed thereafter¹³.

We can observe that if Madagascar was a critical sources of provisions for the Mascarenes, it was no less an integral part of the supply network for Mozambique island. The trading center at Bombetoka Bay, in particular, features prominently. According to a British naval officer who visited there in 1802, it was "supplied with as fine beef as any in the world, at the moderate price of from one to two dollars each bullock". Salted beef and rice were also in plenty, and the port was frequented by Arabs from Masqat¹⁴. Two years later, a Frenchman at Mozambique noted that Arab traders sometimes carried slaves from Mozambique to Bombetoka and returned with cargoes of rice¹⁵. Almost all visitors to this port commented on one aspect or another of this trade in provisions, even if they did not always specify the direction of such trade¹⁶. Actually, the trade of Bombetoka Bay extended to direct traffic with European vessels, but primarily with those coming from Surat, Masqat, Zanzibar and Mozambique¹⁷. The Bishop of Mozambique in 1822 recorded that although the

10. C.P.T. Laplace, *Voyage autour du monde par les mers de l'Inde et de Chine... pendant les années 1830, 1831 et 1832*, Paris, 1833, pp. 102-103.

11. G.S. Graham, *Great Britain in the Indian Ocean*, Oxford, 1967, p. 88, p. 93.

12. J.B.F. Osgood, *Notes of Travel or Recollections of Majunga, Zanzibar, Muscat, Aden and Other Eastern Ports*, Salem, 1854, pp. 7-8 ; J.C. Wilson, "Notes on the West Coast of Madagascar", *Journal of the Royal Geographical Society* (hereafter J.R.G.S., vol. 36, 1866, p. 245.

13. P.M. Mutibwa, *The Malagasy and the Europeans*, London, 1974, p. 259.

14. W. Milburn, *Oriental Commerce*, London, 1813, p. 72.

15. E. Colin, "Notice sur Mozambique", in Malte Brun, *Annales des Voyages de la Géographie et de l'Histoire*, vol. 9, Paris, 1809, p. 315.

16. J. Prior, *Voyage along the Eastern Coast of Africa, to Mozambique, Johanna, and Quiloa... in the Nisus Frigate*, London, 1819, p. 37 ; W.F.W. Owen, *Narrative of Voyages to explore the shores of Africa, Arabia, and Madagascar, performed in H.M. Ships Leven and Barracouta*, London, 1833, vol. 2, pp. 100-102.

17. London, Admiralty 1/69, n° 63, Joseph Nourse to John William Croker, at sea in the Mozambique Channel, 15 December 1823, *Public Records Office*.

Malagasy at times traded directly to Mozambique, the overwhelming bulk of this trade was in the hands of Arabs¹⁸.

The typical cargo comprized some combination of cattle and rice, either in the husk or cleaned, although in one instance poultry were also declared¹⁹. Commenting a decade later on the export of trade in beef and rice from western Madagascar, C. Guillain specified that while fresh beef was shipped to Mozambique, only salted beef was sent elsewhere²⁰. By the early 1850s, one observer belied that, "About eighty or ninety tons of rice are exported annually, which is generally bought up by a Portuguese trader for the Mozambique market, who supplies it to the Government of that place at one dollar for one hundred pounds weight"²¹.

Muslim traders from north of Cape Delgado carried a "Prodigious quantity" of provisions to Mozambique without which its population could not survive. Coastal shipping from Arabia, Mombasa, Malindi, Kilwa, Mafia Island, the Comoros, and Madagascar traded sorghum, rice, coconut oil, some cattle, and salted meats all along the coast²².

The role played by the Comoro Islands was also significant. Comoro Islands supplied Mozambique with rice, sorghum, finger millet, an unspecified food called *sambo*, which was consumed by slaves, some oats, beans, mung or green gram, coconuts, coconut oil, ghee, honey, goats and cattle²³. The same variety of provisions was furnished by the Muslim coasting trade from the nominally Portuguese - controlled Kerimba Islands and the Swahili coast beyond them to the north, although millets clearly predominated and wheat and sugar were also noted²⁴. Direct shipments of provisions to Mozambique were also recorded during the 1830s from Diu and Daman, in Gujarat, and there was some additional help to be found from trade in Muslim and Portuguese shipping that linked the Portuguese East African capital to its outlying posts at Quelimane, Inhambane, and Delagea Bay²⁵.

A study of the agricultural production and commercial movement undertaken in 1858 by the Portuguese Governor of the Cape Delgado district reveals the kind of interchange that typically occurred in an area which was both an importer and exporter of foodstuffs. Imports from India included sugar, tea,

18. *Ibid.*

19. *Ibid.*

20. C. Guillain, *Documents sur l'histoire, la géographie et le commerce de la partie occidentale de Madagascar*, Paris, 1845, pp. 196-197.

21. L. McLeod, *Madagascar and its People*, London, 1865, p. 246.

22. *Ibid.*

23. Prior, *Voyage*, p. 55.

24. *Ibid.*

25. *Ibid.*, p. 25.

ghee, and weat, while flour came from Mozambique and fresh peppers were taken from Zanzibar. Exports included cattle to Mozambique ; both raw and clean rice, sorghum and finger millet, and tobacco to Mozambique and Zanzibar ; and sesame to both of these places and Bombay²⁶.

The linkages between East Africa and the northern reaches of the Western Indian Ocean emerge more distinctly at Zanzibar. In 1819 exports of finger millet from the island in vessels from Masqat, Surat and Bombay which had come down from the north carrying sugar, coffee, and dates, among other items, were noted²⁷. In the early 1830s this inventory of foodstuffs was expanded to include coconut oil, rice, millet, and ghee from eastern Africa and wheat, dates, raisins, salt and dried fish from Masqat²⁸.

The rise of a plantation system dedicated to clove production on Zanzibar and the associated urban development of Zanzibar Town combined to transform that agriculturally rich island into a net importer of food. Rice, in particular, the provision of which was demanded by the new urban elite, was cited by both Osgood and Rigby as an example of a former export which by the 1850s had become the principal imported grain of that port²⁹. Vast quantities of rice, totalling some 18,640,000 lbs in 1859, were imported primarily from India and Western Madagascar, but also from the Comoros, Pemba and some of the coastal ports. By the end of the century, supplies from the Rufiji River flood plains had emerged as an important source for that area to acquire the nickname of "Little Calcutta". Sorghum and finger millet were imported for local mass consumption from the entire length of the African continent as well as a little *bajri* from India. Maize also came from the African ports, and small amounts of wheat came in from Masqat. In 1859 ghee worth 175,000 lbs was supplied from India, Mafia, Mombasa and Pemba, as well as the Benaadir coast. Goats and sheep came mainly from this last place and from Berbera, and occasionally from the Mrima coast opposite Zanzibar. Honey was funneled in from the entire coast, and some even came from Arabia. Dates, raisins, almonds, coffee, salt and salt-fish continued to be shipped to Zanzibar from Arabia and the Persian Gulf, while some salt-fish was also imported from the Benaadir - sugar and molasses also were supplied from India ; some vegetables

26. *Ibid.*

27. Milburn, *Oriental Commerce*, pp. 65-66.

28. N.R. Bennet & G.E. Brooks, Jr., *New England Merchants in Africa : A History through Documents, 1802 to 1865*, Boston, 1965, p. 157 ; C.E.B. Russell, *General Rigby, Zanzibar and the Slave Trade*, London, 1935, pp. 342-343.

29. Osgood, *Notes*, p. 23 ; Russell, *General Rigby*, p. 339.

were brought over from Pemba, but onions had to be shipped in from southern Arabia³⁰.

Regional trade in all commodities had generally increased. This prompted the intensification of grain production in the coastal interlands of eastern Africa by both independent agriculturalists and slave labor on small and large plantations to such an extent that there emerged an important direct export trade in grains to southern Arabia and Oman. Cooper has reconstructed both the dimensions and social organization of this process for Malindi and Mombasa. Malindi was referred to by one commentator in the 1870s as "the granary of Eastern Africa". Ylvisaker has documented this development for the Lamu Archipelago, while Alpers has done the same for the Benaadir ports, which a visitor in the 1840s described as "the grain coast for the supply of Southern Arabia"³¹. Tanga is also known to have exported millet directly to Arabia³². Millet was nevertheless still being exported from Zanzibar throughout the nineteenth century. The traffic probably declined from the 1840s to the 1860s, but during the latter decade, cereals were still going off to Arabia and even in some years to Kutch and British India³³.

Sesame was also an important regional export from eastern Africa. The best supplies to Zanzibar were from the Kilwa coast in the south, and Guillain estimated in the 1840s that about 2,000 tons were annually sold on the Zanzibar market and re-exported to Mukha, Mukalla, Masqat and India. By the 1860s, however, most of the sesame was being exported to Europe although a small amount was still being taken by Arabia³⁴.

Perhaps the most intriguing evidence for the food interdependence of this part of the Western Indian Ocean like its counterpart from Mozambique, dates to a period of crisis. The great famine of India in the 1870s led to the shortage and consequent high cost of provisions³⁵. Two years later, the situation was complicated by drought in continental eastern Africa and the lingering impact of famine in India and China³⁶. This evidence suggests the emergence of a much wider regional market for grains than had previously

30. C.S. Nicholls, *The Swahili Coast*, London, 1971, pp. 349-350 ; F. Cooper, *Plantation Slavery on the East Coast of Africa*, New Haven & London, 1977, p. 64 ; H. Kjekshus, *Ecology Control and Economic Development in East African History*, London, 1977, p. 32.

31. Cooper, *Plantation Slavery*, pp. 84-85, p. 97, p.p. 100-101 ; M. Ylvisaker, *Lamu in the Nineteenth Century : Land, Trade and Politics*, Boston, 1979, p. 105, pp. 109-111 ; E.A. Alpers, "Muqdisho in the Nineteenth Century : A Regional Perspective", *Journal of African history*, vol. 24, 1983, p. 449.

32. J. Iliffe, *A Modern History of Tanganyika*, Cambridge, 1979, p. 71

33. Bennett & Brooks, *New England Merchants*, p. 533.

34. Guillain, "Côte", p. 536.

35. *Ibid.*

36. *Ibid.*

existed before the integration of the wider Indian Ocean into the world economy.

The Red Sea comprized a more enclosed sub-region within the Western Indian ocean before the opening of the Suez Canal in 1869 ; but it was not entirely distinct. Milburn indicates at the beginning of the century that Jiddah, Quseir and Massawa were the limits of Indian vessels coming from the south and that those departing from Suez stopped at Jiddah, which he calls "only a mart between Egypt and India", an observation echoed a few years later by Burckhardt. Milburn estimated that no less than 20,000 tons of grain were sent annually from Suez and Quseir to Arabia, but also noted that grain was imported in 1805 from Madras and Bombay. Under the rubric of grain, Burckhardt includes wheat, barley, beans, lentils, durrah (sorghum) and rice from Egypt, although he adds that

*"Most of the rice used at Djidda is bought as ballast by the ships from India. The best source comes from Guzerat and Cutch : it forms the chief article of food among the people of the Hedjaz who prefer it to the rice from Egypt... The India rice is rather cheaper, and is transported from Djidda to Mekka, Tayf, Medina, and thence as far as Nedjed"*³⁷.

In the late 1840s, cereals were also considered to be "a lucrative trade in which nearly 300 vessels of between 80 and 100 tons were engaged from massawa, although by the last decades of the century it was more notably an importer of rice"³⁸.

From India and the Somali and swahili coasts, the Hijaz imported coconuts. By the same token, almonds, coffee, even a little grain, raisins and shark fins were sent to India. Large baskets of date paste were exported to India as well as consumed locally although smaller baskets of pressed dates were also imported from Basrah because "this kind is preferred to every other"³⁹.

There was a major trade in ghee carried out between the Red Sea ports. That from sheep's milk was exported from Suakin, but the best and most went to Jiddah from Massawa and was called "Dahlak butter". Burckhardt has it that "whole ships" cargoes arrive from thence, the greater part of wich is again carried to Mekka". Ghee from buffaloes' milk was also imported at Jiddah from

37. Milburn, *Oriental Commerce*, pp. 86-89 ; J.L. Burckhardt, *Travels in Arabia*, London, 1829, pp. 32-33.

38. R. Pankhurst, *Economic History of Ethiopia 1800-1935*, Addis Ababa, 1968, p. 366, p. 378 ; R. Wellsted, "Observations on the Coast of Arabia between Ras Mohamed and Jiddah", *J.R.G.S.*, Vol. 6, 1836, pp. 90-91.

39. Milburn, *Oriental Commerce*, p. 106, p. 109 ; Burckhardt, *Travels*, p. 29-30.

Quseir. But throughout the century Massawa retained its primacy as the chief supplier of ghee to Jiddah, exports rising to more than 500,000 kg per year in the mid century and continuing to dominate the trade of that place into the Italian period⁴⁰.

The early decades of the century saw a similarly complex system of food exchanges which fed Muslim pilgrims who approached Madinah by way of Yanbu. Coasting vessels between there and the Gulf of Aqaba trade Egyptian provisions at Beduin camps for cattle, butter and honey which they then carried to Yanbu or Jiddah⁴¹.

An area which experienced perhaps the most intense development of the provisions trade in the nineteenth century as a consequence of the British occupation of Aden in 1839 was the Gulf of Aden. Although it was the chief seasonal port for the collection of gums from the Somali coast at the beginning of the century, Aden existed in the shadow of Mukha which was the center of both the world and regional market trade in coffee. In addition to supplying coffee from the Ethiopian highlands, the principal Somali entrepôts of Zeila and Berbera also dealt in livestock, ghee, sorghum and some wheat⁴². Even before the British seized Aden, however, the annual fair at Berbera attracted up to one hundred vessels from India to trade for goats, ghee, coffee and gums⁴³. Traders who touched along the Hadramawt coast mainly exchanged rice from Bombay, dates and dried fruits from Masqat, millets from Aden, coffee from Mukha, sheep and honey from Berbera Quseir and other African ports⁴⁴.

The total dependence of British Aden for its food supplies on overseas sources caused it to look to the Somali coast for livestock products, to India for grains and to the Persian Gulf for dates. There is plenty of evidence for these trades as well as for the role that Aden played in the re-export of food supplies both overseas and inland particularly during regional periods of famine which plagued the Hadramawt, eastern Africa and western India in the 1860s⁴⁵. The development of Aden as a steamer port from this decade further stimulated its food requirements and re-exports.

40. Burckhardt, *Travels*, p. 28 ; Pankhurst, *Economic History*, p. 365.

41. Burckhardt, *Travels*, p. 420-422 ; Burton, *Personal Narrative of a Pilgrimage to El Medinah and Meccah*, 2nd ed., London, 1857, p. 9.

42. H. Salt, *A Voyage to Abyssinia... in the Years 1809 and 1810...*, London, 1814, p. 106 ; C.J. Cruttenden, "Narrative of a Journey from Mokha to San'a, by the Tarikesh-Sham, or Northern Route, in July and August, 1836", *J.R.G.S.*, Vol. 8, 1838, p. 272.

43. A. Burnes, "On the Maritime Communications of India, as carried out by the Natives, particularly from Kutch, at the mouth of the Indus", *J.R.G.S.*, Vol. 6, 1836, p. 27.

44. J. Bird, "Observations on the Manners of the inhabitants who occupy the Southern Coast of Arabia and Shores of the Red Sea...", *J.R.G.S.*, Vol. 4, 1834, p. 199.

45. R.J. Gavin, *Aden under British Rule 1839-1967*, New York, 1975, pp. 56-57. Z.H. Kour, *The History of Aden, 1839-1872*, London, 1981, p. 76.

Almost the whole region had some share in supplying Aden. Most rice came from Calcutta although some also arrived from Madras and Bombay ; sorghum mainly from Persia but also from Zanzibar, the ports of Yemen, Kutch and Bombay ; wheat came from Bombay, but also from Kutch and Persia ; pulses came from a number of ports in the Red sea, Persian Gulf and Arabian Sea ; potatoes and onions were shipped from Bombay and Egypt. Although most supplies of fruit were local, "from Zanzibar large quantities of oranges and pine-apples are received ; and from Bombay, mangoes, pumaloes, and oranges". The demand for sheep and cattle greatly increased to the extent that in 1875-1876, some 63,262 sheep and goats and 1,104 cattle were imported from Africa⁴⁶. This pattern remained unaltered in the subsequent years with large imports of grain, dates and sugar from India and the Persian Gulf continuing on the one hand, and livestock products from the Somali ports holding their own, on the other hand. For instance, in 1883, Berbera yielded 15,605 sheep and goats, 1,239 cattle and 12,090 kg of ghee. A decade later, a visitor to Aden remarked that sheep and goats were weekly shipped in large quantities from Berbera, Bulhar and Zeilah⁴⁷.

The exchange of provisions on the Somali coast was complementary as exports of livestock and ghee were weighed against imports of grain and dates from India⁴⁸. The smaller ports that were farther east along the Gulf of Aden drew upon direct exchanges with their counterparts in the Hadramawt. In the early 1870s, exports of livestock and ghee had been interrupted by the effects of the 1868 famine. However, by the 1880s, they had reached levels of perhaps 5,000 to 6,000 sheep and cattle. *Mulji*, the fruit of the Doum palm was carried over to southern Arabia while sorghum and dates were imported from there as was maize from the Swahili coast. Shark fins were another item of export along this coast⁴⁹. By the 1880s, the volume of food imports at Berbera and Zeilah had apparently increased considerably with grain, dates and sugar leading the way⁵⁰.

The centrality of Masqat to the luxury trade of the Persian Gulf in the nineteenth century is well known. Not surprisingly, provisions were also a vital category of commodities, especially exports of dates and salt fish as well as almonds, raisins, honey, sheep and cattle. Whereas some of these came from the interior of Oman or from the immediate coastal waters, others reached Masqat through the maritime trade of the Persian Gulf. Omani ports such as

46. F.M. Hunter, *An Account of the British Settlement of Aden in Arabia*, London, 1968, 1st edition, 1877, pp. 63-69.

47. Gavin, Aden, pp. 186-187 ; Pankhurst, *Economic History*, p. 426 ; W.B. Hazrriis, *A Journey through the Yemen and some General Remarks upon that Country*, Edinburgh, 1893, p. 138.

48. Barker, "On Eastern Africa", *J.R.G.S.*, Vol. 18, 1848, pp. 133-134.

49. Miles, "On the Neighbourhood of Bunder Marayah", *J.R.G.S.*, vol. 42, 1872, pp. 61-63.

50. Pankhurst, *Economic History*, p. 418, p. 421, p. 426.

Matrah and Barka, as well as Omani - controlled Persian ports such as Bandar Abbas and Lingeh directed provisions to Masqat either for internal consumption or for re-export⁵¹. In the 1840s halwa manufactured in the interior at Nazwa and at Masqat was exported to both India and Persia⁵². In the later decades of the century, although the luxury trade of Masqat declined, that in basic necessities including foodstuffs, persisted. Dates, in particular, dominated exports, earning more than Maria Theresa \$ 750,000 annually⁵³. Together with the Red Sea and the Hadramawt coast, the Persian Gulf also remained a center of the trade in sharks'fins, tails and maws which when dried in the sun, were shipped to Bombay for eventual export to China⁵⁴.

As regards the food trade of the Indian sub-continent during the nineteenth century, a lot of evidence is available. Its particular significance in rice trade in the region is well documented and need not detain us here.

Conclusion

This paper has demonstrated the existence of a flourishing regional food network in the nineteenth century. However, there was an apparent collapse of this regional maritime trade in provisions during the early 1900s. In other words, this system was overwhelmed during the course of the twentieth century⁵⁵. For a major explanation, we contend that we must look to eastern Africa and Madagascar. It must be noted that a decade of natural and imperial violence that began in the 1890s completely disrupted indigenous systems of production, whether free or slave ; these were then replaced by colonial economic systems that reassigned labor in a multitude of ways that undermined the structure of indigenous subsistence production. Eastern Africa including Madagascar, appears to have moved during this period from being a net exporter of food within the world economy. Historian must investigate further the implications of the foregoing hypothesis.

51. Osgood, *Notes*, pp. 75-76 ; W.G. Palgrave, *Narrative of a Year's Journey through Central and Eastern Arabia, 1862-1863*, London, 1866, p. 296.

52. R.G. Landen, *Oman Since 1856 : Disruptive Modernization in an Traditional Arab Society*, Princeton, 1967, p. 145.

53. *Ibid.*, p. 142.

54. Osgood, *Notes*, p. 76.

55. A Villiers, *Sons of Sinbad*, New York, 1940, pp. 419-428.

FAMINTINANA

Ny tian'ity asa ity havoitra dia ny hoe : ny ankamaroan'ireo mpanoratra tsy tandrefana ny tantara ara-toekarena dia diso nifantoka loatra tamin'ny fivelaran'ny tsena iraisam-pirenena sy ny varotra nisy teo amin'ny "aforovany sy ny sisiny". Noho izany dia zara raha voakasika ny momba ny varotra sakafo teo amin'ny "afovoany sy ny sisiny". Ny fiantraikan'ny nataon'ny Tandrefana ihany no tena notrandrahin'ny mpanoratra ny tantara ara-toekarena. Na dia tsy hanamaivana izany fiantraika voalaza izany aza anefa ity asa ity, dia hampiseho kosa fa tena nisy varotra sakafo niroborobo teo anivon'ity faritra ity, ary nifandray tamin'ny fidiran'ny kapitalisma tamin'ny taonjato faha-19 izany. Midika izany fa tena nisy asam-barotra mikasika ny sakafon'ny tompon-tany nandritra ny taonjato faha-19 manontolo. Mbola tsy voatrandraka araka ny tokony ho izy io sehatra iray io. Raha hanoratra ity asa ity izany ny mpanoratra dia hiezaka hanao jery kina ny fanontaniana manjaka ao amin'ny asa soratra rehetra, dia ny fandravana ny orinasan'ny tompontany izany, sy ny fitomboan'ny fanondranana ny fambolena nentin'ny fanjanahan-tany.

Ny atao hoe : Faritra andrefan'ny ranomasimbe Indiana dia ny morontsiraka atsinanan'i Afrika, ary ny atsimon'ny helodrano Delagoa, ny Ranomasina Mena, ny Atsimon'i Arabia, ny Helodrano Persika ary ny morontsiraka andrefan'ny zana-Kontinenta indiana. Sady hahakasika ny morontsiraka ity asa ity no hisahana ihany koa ny anivontaniny raha toa ka nifandray mivantana amin'ny Faritra andrefan'ny Ranomasimbe indiana. Tsy misahana famaritana hafa velively akory ity satria nisy fifandraisana nanana ny lanjany koa teo anivon'ny ranomasimbe midadasika kokoa.

RESUME

La préoccupation de la majorité des historiens économistes non-occidentaux concernait l'expansion du marché mondial et le commerce effectué au sein de la périphérie". Dans ce sens, il n'en reste que très peu pour le commerce de denrées alimentaires entre "le centre et la périphérie". Pour les historiens économistes, seul l'impact de l'Occident constituait un souci majeur. Bien que nous ne négligions point l'impact mentionné ci-dessus, cette communication soutiendra qu'il y avait un important commerce de denrées alimentaires dans la région, lequel était lié à la pénétration capitaliste du XIXe siècle. En d'autres termes, il existait une énorme activité commerciale dans le domaine des denrées locales qui s'est maintenue durant le XIXe siècle. C'est un domaine qui a été à peine étudié. Nous nous efforcerons de transcender les questions qui dominaient la documentation, notamment celles qui

concernent la destruction des manufactures locales et le progrès des exportations des cultures de rente coloniales.

Dans cette communication, nous définissons l'océan Indien occidental pour comprendre la côte orientale de l'Afrique jusqu'à la Baie de Delagoa, la Mer Rouge, le Sud de l'Arabie, le Golfe Persique et la côte Ouest du sous-continent indien. Prenant le littoral entier, nous incluons leurs arrière-pays dans les limites de leur lien direct avec la production et le système d'échange. Il faut aussi inclure les îles de l'océan Indien occidental. Il ne s'agira pas d'une définition exclusive puisqu'il existe d'intéressantes connexions qui font sentir leur présence au sein du bassin océanique élargi.