

## Islam in the Service of Colonialism ? Portuguese Strategy during the Armed Liberation Struggle in Mozambique

According to the Cardinal-Archbishop of Lourenço Marques, Teodósio de Gouveia, in the mid-1950s « four terrible enemies of the influence of the Western, Christian world loomed over Africa, and therefore also over Mozambique : Mohammedanism, Protestantism, communism, and indigenous nationalism. As you see », he told the journalist conducting the interview, « there are many "isms", but unhappily all are dangerous ». Islam had greeted Vasco da Gama upon his arrival at Mozambique Island in 1497 and soon revealed its « treacherous » nature, which has not changed ever since, he proclaimed. Echoing so many Christian observers of Islam in Africa, Dom Teodósio noted that Islam « had a theory of life almost equal to that of the black, who adapts to it readily », noting especially its permission of polygamy and divorce. The result was the creation of « a religious regime socially and politically different from ours » that could lead to the existence of a religious minority in Mozambique<sup>1</sup>.

Anyone familiar with the history of Portuguese expansion will not be surprised by the attitude towards Islam revealed by the good Archbishop<sup>2</sup>. Driven by a combination of crusading spirit and commercialism, the Portuguese saw Islam and Muslims as their enemies before they ever set sail around Africa. For them, the *Reconquista* of the Iberian peninsula continued to play itself out in the struggle for souls in eastern Africa from Ethiopia to Mozambique. When at the end of the nineteenth century the Portuguese found themselves finally having to exercise some meaningful control over the territories they had historically claimed for four hundred

1. Marques GASTÃO, *Duas Visitas a Moçambique (Crónicas e entrevistas)*, Lisbon, 1955 : 58-59. This paper was originally presented at Paper presented at the « Annual Meeting of the African Studies Association », Chicago, 29 October-1 November 1998. I am grateful to Muhammad Sani Umar for organizing our panel on « Islam and Colonialism : Challenges and responses », and for comments from the audience on that occasion, but in particular from Michel Cahen.
2. The following paragraphs draw upon my chapter on « East Central Africa » in N. LEVTZION & R.L. POWWELS (eds), *A History of Islam in Africa*, Athens, Ohio University Press, forthcoming 1999. For details of the new Portuguese colonialism, see M. NEWITT, *A History of Mozambique*, Bloomington and Indianapolis, Indiana University Press, 1995, chs. 14-16.

years in northern Mozambique, they began to realize that their assertion of authority coincided with a resurgence of Islam along the coast and the initial wave of serious Muslim penetration into the northern interior. The result produced a concomitant sense of crusade among the new generation of Portuguese soldiers and administrators who directed the conquest of northern Mozambique, as well as among the feeble representatives of the Catholic Church in the north.

How, then, can we explain the decision of the Portuguese to enlist the Muslim leadership of Mozambique against Frelimo during the liberation struggle for Mozambique during the 1960s and 1970s? To get at the answer, we need to know something about the twentieth-century history that led up to this historic decision.

### The Growth of Islam and Portuguese Policy<sup>3</sup>

As elsewhere in eastern Africa, the major vehicle for the expansion of Islam in the early twentieth century were the *turuq* (sufi orders, sing. *tariqa*). The Shadhiliyya established a foothold at Mozambique Island in 1896; by 1936 two dissident branches had hived off to create new orders on the island. The Qadiriyya founded a branch there, as well, in 1904; by 1963 four other branches had proliferated as a consequence of internal disputes. The first Shadhiliyya *tariqa* was founded by emissaries from the Comoro Islands and maintains a strong Comorian connection to this day. The original branch of the Qadiriyya was installed by a *shaykh* (religious leader) from Zanzibar and similarly still nurtures those links, albeit through the Comoros since the 1964 Zanzibar Revolution. Dissident branches looked to different centers of these two orders to establish their legitimacy, but all eight preserve their Mozambican headquarters on the Island. Over time both *turuq* established subordinate branches up and down the coast and deep into the interior along the railway and roads of the slowly evolving colonial state. A separate branch of the Qadiriyya also won adherents in Niassa province, entering Portuguese territory through southern Tanganyika and Nyasaland. By the 1930s, the African population of northern Mozambique was increasingly Muslim with a scattering of Catholic converts and a few Anglican outposts in Niassa.

The first evidence we have of a potential political problem from Dom Teodósio's primary «ism» is a district report for Nacala from 1937 that reports the circulation of flyers in several coastal settlements that refer to the defense of Ethiopia against Italian invasion and cite the momentous Abyssinian defeat of the Italians at Adwa in 1896 as inspiration. The source of this leaflet was described as a Mozambican descendant of Arabs, which at once triggered a characteristically paranoid Portuguese colonial diatribe lamenting the absence of Catholic presence in the north, thus «leaving the natives to be captivated by the ascendancy of the "cherifes" and by the

3. For a careful, complementary analysis of Portuguese policy towards religion, including Islam, in Mozambique during this period that is based upon documentation in Lisbon, rather than that which I consulted in Maputo, see Michel CAHEN, «L'État nouveau et la diversification religieuse au Mozambique, 1930-1974», Bordeaux, février-juin 1998 with minor revisions 12 novembre 1998, 50 p. typescript. I am grateful to Michel for sharing both versions of this important unpublished essay with me (forthcoming, *Cahiers d'études africaines*).

incessant multiplication of schools and mosques where an essentially anti-European religious creed is preached ». The Africans, frets the writer, are ours in body only, but not in spirit. « We cannot delude ourselves as to their fidelity... should a greater threat to the integrity of our dominion in this zone of the Empire appear » This tocsin prompted a confidential circular that debated the options available to Portuguese authorities. One possibility was to shut down mosques and Qur'an schools. Although these were not necessarily centers of dissemination for such anti-Portuguese propaganda as the « defense of Ethiopia » flyers, their religious literature undercut the loyalty of the Africans to the Portuguese. After all, there was legislation on the books requiring that all schools be licensed and most Muslim educational facilities did not possess licenses. In the end, however, this was seen as a self-defeating strategy that would only stir up passions against the Portuguese. « Authorized or not, the arabized mosques and schools represent necessary sustenance for the native mind - something that we can orient, but that it will be nonsense to suppress ». Failing a viable Catholic educational system in the north, Portuguese authorities in Mozambique District decided to leave well enough alone<sup>4</sup>. Those in the Cabo Delgado region of Porto Amélia did not, however ; here they closed schools and mosques in March 1937, seizing religious literature, a foolish decision that was rescinded by the new Governor of Niassa in October 1938<sup>5</sup>.

The same kinds of fears reveal themselves in a memorandum written by the local administrator of Memba, in Cabo Delgado, also in 1937, who allows that « I consider Islamism a doctrine as disruptive and prejudicial as bolshevism », thus neatly foreshadowing another of Dom Teodósio's « isms ». If bolshevism represented a threat to all nations, he worried that Islamism represented « a second cancer.... that patiently gnaws away and weakens their possessions », because it neither admits « racial inequalities or supremacies nor recognizes political frontiers »<sup>6</sup>. Such concerns about the internationalist aspects of Islam led the Portuguese to be especially suspicious of Muslim Indians, the so-called *monhês*, most of whom suffered the double handicap of being British subjects<sup>7</sup>. Further compounding the situation for the Portuguese was their understanding of the role played by Zanzibar in Muslim affairs in Mozambique. In at least one instance in the

4. A.E. Pinto CORREIA, *Relatório da inspeção ordinária às Circunscrições do Distrito de Moçambique, 1936-1937*, Lourenço Marques, 6 September-29 October 1937, I: 273-274 (Circunscrição de Nacala) in Arquivo Histórico de Moçambique, Maputo (hereafter AHM), Fundo da Inspeção dos Serviços de Administração Civil e Negócios Indígenas (hereafter ISANI), Cx. 76. I am especially grateful to Assistant Director António Sopa for his assistance in accessing difficult to locate sources at the AHM.
5. C.H.J. da SILVEIRA, *Relatórios sumários e respectiva documentação, referentes à inspeção ordinária feita na Província do Niassa em 1945*, III, p. 245, copy of Francisco Carlos Roncon to Provincial Director of Civil Administrative Services of Niassa, Mecufi, 14 May 1937 in AHM, Fundo ISANI, Cx. 96 ; J. de FIGUEIREDO, *Governo da Província do Niassa, Relatório-1938*, I: 56-57 in AHM, Governo Geral (hereafter GG), Cx. 2450, n° 86 & 86a. The order is dated Nampula, 10 October 1938.
6. J. da SILVEIRA, *Relatórios sumários e respectiva documentação, referentes à inspeção ordinária feita na Província do Niassa em 1943*, I, doc. n° 9, copy of Aristides Alves de Faria to Provincial Director of Civil Administration of Niassa, Memba, 12 September 1937 in AHM, Fundo ISANI, Cx. 96.
7. See, e.g., *No Posto da Lunga. Um « Trust » de Mercadores Indo-Britânicos, Chefiado por um Capitão Português, para a Exploração Feudal de 1.300 Casais Indígenas*, p.162-176 in AHM, Fundo ISANI, Cx. 76. For the full history of this episode, in which Muslim Indians were by no means the only players, see Michel CAHEN, *Mossuril (1939) : La révolte ambiguë des « Naharras »*, Bordeaux, 22 February 1991, 37 p. typescript. My thanks to Yussuf Adam for providing me with a copy of this paper.

early 1930s, a religious dispute in Cabo Delgado was referred for adjudication « to the principal *sharif* of Zanzibar, who is consequently regarded as the chief prelate of the Mohammedans of this region »<sup>8</sup>. A few years later, Administrative Inspector Pinto Correia offered a particularly xenophobic reading of this situation in a paragraph on « foreign mission activity » :

Many continue to be devoted to the influence of the *sharifs* of Zanzibar, behind which misrepresentation is hidden an *Intelligence Service* [emphasis in original], solid proof of which exists in our dominions. Schools and mosques flourish on all sides, signifying a religious organization which among Muslims is synonymous with a political organization which is moved and oriented by foreigners originating from Tanganyika, Nyasaland and even Kenya, and the activity of which is building freely among the masses of natives over whom the surveillance of the administrative authorities is entirely absent<sup>9</sup>.

At about the same time on Mozambique Island he recorded his outrage at discovering a plaque on a building located between the « great mosque » and the African market that read, « The Mohamedan Madresa School – Mozambique – 1923 » in English and Arabic script, but without a word of Portuguese !<sup>10</sup>

By the end of the decade, Pinto Correia had developed his own strategy for addressing what he believed to be a serious challenge to the Portuguese presence in northern Mozambique on the basis of his appreciation of the powerful influence exercised by Qadiri leader Shaykh Abdul Majid from Mecufi throughout the administrative district of Lurio. He reasoned, « Given the impossibility of destroying the Muslim faith, and thus for the time being restraining its expansion, we should channel it, subordinating it to the interests of Portuguese sovereignty ». Thus, he argued for supporting repair of the mosque at Mecufi. More boldly, however, in a section entitled « Nationalization of Indigenous Islam », he proposed funding a *Caixa Portuguesa Maometana* (Portuguese Muslim Fund) from local taxes out of which such projects could be supported. Pinto Correia also saw this strategy as part and parcel of the continuing battle of Christianity against Islam, noting that the former was rapidly losing ground to the latter and deploring especially the apostasy of one older Christian on Ibo Island. He noted, in particular, the strategy pursued by Lyautey in Morocco and the Italians in North and Northeast Africa as a model for the Portuguese in Mozambique, pointing out that Lyautey was not only Catholic and a soldier, but the brother of a Jesuit ! « Nevertheless, Lyautey, upon composing his will », he concludes, « stipulated that the following inscription, more or less, be engraved upon his tomb : "Here lies F., inhabitant of France in Morocco, and

8. J. da SILVEIRA, *Relatórios sumários e respectiva documentação, referentes à inspecção ordinária feita na Província do Niassa em 1943*, I, doc. n.º 9a, Aristides Alves de Faria to Provincial Director of Civil Administration of Niassa, 4 August 1937 in AHM, Fundo ISANI, Cx. 96 ; AHM, DIRECÇÃO DOS SERVIÇOS DE ADMINISTRAÇÃO CIVIL, Cx. 9, Relatório e Diários de Serviço, 1929-1954, *Relatórios do Governador do Distrito de Cabo Delgado, 1932-1933*, Jones de Silveira to Director of Civil Administration Services, Porto Amélia, 25 May 1934 ; AHM, Secção Especial (hereafter SE), a V.P. 1, n.º 20, [José de Castro Branco] Ribeiro Torres to Governor of Cabo Delgado District, Quissanga, n.d. [1933] ; 20. A *sharif* is a descendant of the Prophet Muhammad, but this use suggests a position of religious leadership.

9. AHM, Fundo ISANI, Cx. 76, II, p. 174.

10. P. CORREIA, *Relatório e documentos referentes à inspecção ordinária feita na Província do Niassa, 1938-1940*, II, p. 127, Pinto Correia to Administrator of the Concelho of Mozambique Island, Mozambique, 28 September 1938, in AHM, Fundo ISANI, Cx. 93.

who never in his life forgot to respect Islam" »<sup>11</sup>. It will come as no surprise, I expect, that Pinto Correia's proposal was apparently stillborn ; certainly, no further mention of it occurs in the records I have been able to identify.

During the following decade it seems that the same worries continued to nag the Portuguese. From Niassa, where Islam was well established among the Yao, an official recognized that the Portuguese needed to learn more about the organization of Islam « for future purposes of great national interest and the social development of these people »<sup>12</sup>. On a different front, Pinto Correia's successor as district inspector in Cabo Delgado writes that one important chief « is a Muslim cleric and, according to general opinion, a possible representative of the Mohammedan Bishop [sic] of Tanganyika ». Later in his report he notes that the district is riddled with itinerant Muslim « *padres* (priests, *sic*) » who are trained in Tanganyika, such that he fears the « denationalization » of Islam. At the same time, he realized that « the closing of mosques, and supervision that approaches persecution on the part of the administrative authority makes no sense », and will only backfire. What is required are more Catholic missionaries<sup>13</sup>. Working the same district in the same period, another inspector also comments on the « direct dependency » of Muslims on Zanzibar. In Porto Amélia, he notes, there is an influential Muslim « Bishop » with whom the Portuguese differ. This Said N'tondo « has so much influence among the Muslims, that he receives correspondence directly from the Chief [sic] of Zanzibar and was chosen to go to Mecca, by airplane, a few years ago »<sup>14</sup>.

By the 1950s, that is, by the time of Archbishop Gouveia's wrought-up pronouncement with which I began this paper, the Portuguese had still learned nothing with respect to the growing Muslim community in the north. Moreover, African nationalism, the fourth of Gouveia's four « isms », was now beginning to make its presence felt from across the border in Tanganyika. An anonymous and undocumented source asserts that clandestine Islamic associations were created in the early years of the decade in all four districts of northern Mozambique. In addition, it claims that « militant elements of the Makuas also established a very strong underground Islamic political force, called the Brotherhood of Muslim Makuas », and that all these groups were put down brutally by the Portuguese in 1954-1955<sup>15</sup>. These claims remain to be substantiated. In 1960, no doubt worried by the circulation of anti-Portuguese ideas emanating from across its East

11. *Ibid.*, II, p. 254, same to Provincial Governor of Niassa, 1 September 1939, and 280-281, same to Administrator of Concelho of Ibo, Palma, 22 September 1939 ; *ibid.*, III, p. 555-561, same to Provincial Governor of Niassa, 7 October 1939, Palma, and 31 January 1940, Porto Amélia, quoted at 558. For Lyautey in Morocco, see D.R. RIVET, *Lyautey et l'institution du Protectorat français au Maroc, 1912-1925*, Paris, L'Harmattan, 1988, 3 vols ; for the precise portion of the inscription on his tomb, which notes that Lyautey, though Catholic, was « profondément respectueuse des traditions ancestrales et de la religion musulmane gardées et pratiquée par les habitants du Maghreb (deeply respectful of the ancestral traditions and of the Muslim religion guarded and practiced by the inhabitants of the Maghreb) », see A. Le REVEREND, *Lyautey*, Paris, Fayard, 1983, p. 455.
12. J. de SILVEIRA, *Relatório e documentos referentes à inspeção ordinária feita na Província de Niassa, 1943-1944, 2.a*, 1944, II, p. 42, Mozambique, 28 February 1945 in AHM, Fundo ISANI, Cx. 97.
13. M. METELLO, *Relatório da Inspeção Ordinária ao Distrito de Cabo Delgado, 1944-1951*, Porto Amélia, 31 March 1952, I : 19, 65 in AHM, Fundo ISANI, Cx. 94.
14. A. P. de Sousa SANTOS, *Relatório da Inspeção ordinária à Circunscrição de Montepuez e postos, posto de Ancuabo de Concelho de Porto Amélia e postos de Ocuca e Chiure da Circunscrição de Mecufi, realizada no ano de 1950/51*, Lourenço Marques, 25 June 1951 in AHM, Fundo ISANI, Cx. 89.
15. « Islam in Mozambique (East Africa) », *Islamic Literature* (Lahore), 15/9, 1969 : 45-53, quoted at 50.

African borders, the Missiological Mission of the Portuguese Overseas Ministry commissioned a study of Islam in the north by Albano Mendes Pedro, a Catholic missionary who had worked in that part of the territory<sup>16</sup>. The author reports on the robust character of Islam throughout the region, noting that every community had its own mosque and *tariqa*. He comments on the extent and complexity of hierarchical organization within the Muslim community, which he attributes to three decades of going outside the territory to acquire further Islamic education, citing Tanganyika and Saudi Arabia as important destinations for training. What especially concerned him, however, was the wide availability of Islamic literature from Cairo, Bombay, and Lahore, phonograph records from Egypt, and broadcasts by Radio Islam from Cairo. All this activity was worrying because « The Islamism of the natives of Mozambique never accepted the domination of the Portuguese as definitive », while « The current African nationalist agitation makes the Muslim chiefs of Mozambique deliriously happy »<sup>17</sup>. It was his sense that all these factors made for the creation of a unified Islamic community « beyond the existing political frontiers »<sup>18</sup>. For example, Yao Muslims in Niassa « are subordinated to a grand mufti and depend on Bagdad, in Iraq, through Nairobi, in Kenya », while on the northern coast « subjection to Masqat, in Oman, in the Persian Gulf, is known ». Muslims had ties to many foreign centers of the faith. « Mozambican Islamism », he fretted, « owes most of its inspiration and orientation to Egypt, Arabia, Iraq and Pakistan »<sup>19</sup>. Pedro's fearful reading of the situation belies his missionary calling, I think, where he suggests Portugal might be facing « the phase of open war » with Islam, reminding his readers that « The Portuguese people carry in their soul, from the beginning, the spirit of the anti-Islamic Crusade »<sup>20</sup>. Not surprisingly, the remainder of his report consists of a series of Catholic-Islamic oppositions as a framework for his recommendations for invigorating the Catholic presence in Mozambique. Much of what he says concerns various forms of cultural and moral propaganda, from education to radio broadcasts, to combat Islam. Yet even this profoundly Catholic observer includes the caveat, « To avoid unnecessary friction with Islamism is imperative »<sup>21</sup>.

Portuguese intelligence did not depend solely upon itinerant undercover Catholic priests. Portuguese authorities were especially suspicious of Makua Muslims in Cabo Delgado district for the same reasons that vexed Pedro in Niassa. In 1953, the administrator of the Circumscription of the Macondes warned he had learned that « there exist in the hands of *amualimo* [Muslim teachers] and other such Mohammedans, all of them natives, clandestinely imported publications containing subversive propaganda of bolshevist coloration and relating to the doctrine of the Mau-Mau sect »<sup>22</sup>. According to confidential reports from Quionga, on the far northern coast of

16. A. Mendes PEDRO, *Influências Político-Sociais do Islamismo em Moçambique (Relatório Confidencial)*, 49 p. typescript, Lisbon, 31 May 1961. Pedro left Lisbon on 12 September 1960 and returned on 21 November 1960.

17. *Ibid.* : 9.

18. *Ibid.* : 12.

19. *Ibid.* : 14-15. The Yao reference suggests he is thinking of the Qadiriyya Bagdad.

20. *Ibid.* : 16.

21. *Ibid.* : 47.

22. Quoted in A.M. GENTILI, « A Subversão no Distrito de Cabo Delgado entre 1950 e 1960 Segundo as Fontes Administrativas Locais », *Arquivo - Boletim do Arquivo Histórico de Moçambique* (Maputo), 14, 1993 : 103-116, at 112.

Mozambique, the local chief had received three letters from his nephew, who had fled to Tanganyika in 1956. Writing from Zanzibar, Hemedi Alawi asks his uncle, Bakar Hemedi, to look after the condition of his fields, his cashew trees and his houses, because soon the whites will be gone. He notes tensions between Arabs and Africans at Zanzibar, and refers to Abeid Karume as President of Zanzibar and Julius Nyerere as President of Tanganyika. In a second letter he reports that in Zanzibar people want to be governed by the Africans. The official comment on this correspondence emphasizes the problem of infiltration of ideas that «we call "nhyererianas"» and how to combat them with loyal chiefs<sup>23</sup>. Yet all the evidence indicates that, despite several suggestions by officers on the ground to adopt a more flexible attitude towards indigenous Islam, on the eve of African independence in Tanganyika – soon to be followed by Zanzibar, the revolution, and union with the former as Tanzania – the Portuguese in Mozambique had not made any fundamental changes in their policy towards Muslim Mozambicans. The founding of Frelimo at Dar es Salaam in June 1962 and the beginning of armed struggle in September 1964 would change all that.

#### Islamic Policy during the Era of the Armed Liberation Struggle<sup>24</sup>

Common sense might suggest that, confronted by a unified liberation movement that combined dominating elements and personalities that reflected « indigenous nationalism », « Protestantism », and « communism » – at least from the perspective of the ruling elite of the Portuguese colonial state, the decision to try to enlist Islam as a counter force to Frelimo was a logical decision based on territorial conditions. Looking at the wider context, however, we must remember that by the time armed struggle began in Mozambique, the Portuguese state was already entangled in parallel wars of liberation in its other African colonies. Guiné-Bissau, in particular, where the Portuguese had enlisted conservative Muslim forces among the Fula elite against the liberation movement, provided a ready model for colonial intelligence services in Mozambique<sup>25</sup>. In fact, in the mid-1950s we can begin to see that Islam was being taken more seriously at the metropolitan level with the denunciation of Islamic nationalism by Adriano Moreira, who was Director of the influential *Instituto superior de ciências sociais e política*

23. AHM, FUNDO DA DIRECÇÃO DOS SERVIÇOS DOS NEGÓCIOS INDÍGENAS, A/11, 1958, Silvio Rosa dos Santos to Administration of Circumscription of Palma, Quionga, 19 August 1957. For a useful account of Mozambican diaspora networks linking the Maconde Plateau in Cabo Delgado to Tanganyika (and then Tanzania), see Y. ADAM, « Mueda, 1917-1990 : Resistência, Colonialismo, Libertação e Desenvolvimento », *Arquivo - Boletim do Arquivo Histórico de Moçambique* (Maputo), 14, 1993 : 9-101, at p. 24-32.

24. M. CAHEN, « L'État nouveau... », *op. cit.* : 37-42.

25. F. Amaro MONTEIRO, « Moçambique 1964-1974 : As Comunidades Islâmicas, o Poder e a Guerra », *Africana* (Porto), 5, 1989 : 83-124, at 110-113. See also A. CABRAL, *Revolution in Guinea - An African People's Struggle*, London, Stage 1, 1969 : 46-61, « Brief Analysis of the Social Structure in Guinea » (1964), for Cabral's understanding of this group's historic role in Portugal's colonial strategy in West Africa. It is noteworthy that the only parallel analysis for Mozambique makes no mention of religion: see Eduardo Mondlane, « Mozambican Tribes and Ethnic Groups : Their Significance in the Struggle for National Liberation », *Mozambique Revolution* (Dar es Salaam), 36, 1968 : 20-23, translated as « Tribos ou Grupos Étnicos Moçambicanos (Seu significado na Luta de Libertação Nacional) », in J. REIS & Armando Pedro MUIUANE, eds., *Datas e Documentos da História da Frelimo*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., Lourenço Marques, Imprensa Nacional, 1975 : 73-79.

*Ultramarina* (Higher Institute of Social Sciences and Overseas Politics) from the late 1950s to the early 1970s and served briefly as Overseas Minister (1961-1962)<sup>26</sup>. The late 1950s also witnessed increased interest by the Portuguese military in the influence of Islam, as we know from a recently published 1959 lecture at the Instituto de Altos Estudos Militares, which emphasized the significance of « the Islamic movement » in Guiné and Mozambique, although Mozambique was mentioned only in passing<sup>27</sup>. Greater public awareness came with the publication in 1958 of José Gonçalves, *O Mundo Árabo-Islâmico e o Ultramar Português* (The Arab-Islamic World and Overseas Portugal) in 1958 by the official Junta de Investigações do Ultramar and his related study on Islam in Guiné-Bissau a few years later<sup>28</sup>. In his general study, Gonçalves includes a substantial section on Islam in Mozambique, warning his readers of the need « to neutralize that *de-Europeanizing Islamicization* » that was spreading rapidly throughout northern Mozambique. The solution, he suggested, was « to intensify our *politics of integration* », that is, the purely theoretical notion upon which Portugal based its claim to empire. He specifically recommends initially focusing Catholic missionary activities on the Maconde, « most of whom have avoided Islam », and then extending this policy to other animists as opportunity arose to extend effective Portuguese rule. At the very end of his presentation, he urges that at the very least there be formed, « a *study group of the Muslim-Arab influence on Overseas Portugal*, designed to follow closely the penetration of Islam, to determine the degree of its political virulence and propose appropriate measures to safeguard national sovereignty, where this is seen to be threatened by the march of Islam ». Such a group was in fact established in 1960 at the *Sociedade de Geografia de Lisboa* (Geographical Society of Lisbon)<sup>29</sup>. By 1965, then, the wider context of Portuguese colonial policy had changed sufficiently to bring about a new policy towards Islam in Mozambique.

In that year, the Portuguese intelligence branch known as the *Serviços de Centralização e Coordenação de Informações* (Services for Centralization and Coordination of Information, hereafter the SCCIM, for Mozambique) distributed a study entitled *Winning the Adherence of the Populations*, a form of bureaucratic babble characteristic of the Portuguese and many other international intelligence services, as well. Essentially, this document reflects a kind of psycho-sociological prescription for winning the hearts and minds of various sectors of the Mozambican population against the onslaught of revolutionary African nationalism represented by Frelimo. To take only one example of this line of thinking, the author comments that

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26. See, e.g. A. MOREIRA, *Política Ultramarina*, Lisbon, Ministério do Ultramar, Junta de Investigações do Ultramar, Estudos de ciências políticas e sociais n° 1, 1956 : 256-260, and « As *Élites* das Províncias Portuguesas de Indigenato (Guiné, Angola, Moçambique) », [1956] in his *Ensaio*, Lisbon, Junta de Investigações do Ultramar, Estudos de ciências políticas e sociais n° 34, 1963 : 33-59, at 58-59. For a thumbnail sketch of Moreira's politics and career, see G.J. BENDER, *Angola under the Portuguese : The Myth and the Reality*, Berkeley & Los Angeles, University of California Press, 1978 : 209, n° 18.
27. J. da Silva CUNHA, « África Ocidental. Antecedentes da Subversão na Guiné e em Angola », *Africana* (Porto), 17, 1997 : 7-16.
28. J.J. GONÇALVES, *O Mundo Árabo-Islâmico e o Ultramar Português*. 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., Lisbon, Junta de Investigações do Ultramar, Estudos de ciências políticas e sociais n° 10, 1962, 354 p., ill, facs., and *O Islamismo na Guiné Portuguesa (Ensaio Sociomissionológico)*, Lisbon, [Agencia Geral do Ultramar], 1961, 222 p., ill.
29. J.J. GONÇALVES, *O Mundo Árabo-Islâmico...*, p.287, 349, emphases in the original text. Cf. M. CAHEN, « L'État nouveau... », *op. cit.* : 26-27, for this important policy change.



Africans are susceptible to persuasion by prophets because their mentality is characterized by mythologizing. To combat this tendency, he urges that the Portuguese woo the religious leadership :

A more comprehensive attitude on the part of the Administration seems possible for gaining their collaboration as an indispensable requirement in the struggle against subversive action carried on by religious elements. It is believed to be an efficient weapon to combat religious movements that assume inconvenient attitudes to the national interests.

And in the absence of or when the existing forces don't collaborate, it does not seem difficult to "invent them" and thrust them into the heart of "the MASSES"<sup>30</sup>.

Although the body of this report contains no real analysis of the situation in Mozambique, its style of discourse anticipates the attitude that the Portuguese colonial administration soon came to adopt towards the Muslim population of northern Mozambique.

The next step for the Portuguese was to acquire substantive information upon which they might determine a course of action acceptable to both civil and military intelligence services. Accordingly, in 1965 the SCCIM prepared a confidential questionnaire on Islam<sup>31</sup>. Instructions to the questionnaire indicate that it was to be administered to all Muslim leaders with any claims to prestige or knowledge of their religious communities. Administrators were specifically admonished not to adopt any unfavorable attitudes towards their informants, « with an eye to gathering results as objective as possible ». The questionnaire is composed of four sections with a total of twenty-eight questions, most of them with a number of follow-up inquiries. The wording of the questionnaire indicates that the individuals who drafted it were familiar with the various formal differences within Islam, and asks for details on each respondent's place within the Islamic hierarchy and their specific affiliations. On the other hand, some of the theological questions, such as how Jesus and Mary are regarded by Muslims, belie what can only be regarded as Catholic wishful thinking. The basic document, however, was designed to provide a framework for understanding the nature of the Islamic communities of Mozambique, from what takes place in mosques and what languages are used to whose leadership was recognized. And this it achieves. In particular, there are questions that probe the relationship of Mozambican Muslims to external religious and political authorities, such as the Sultan of Zanzibar. The final set of questions leaves no doubt that what the Portuguese hoped to find was a way to create a centralized territorial Islamic hierarchy that could be co-opted by the colonial administration.

It is not clear from the existing documentation whether or not the execution of this project was undertaken as a separate exercise. According to

30. R.I. Ferraz de FREITAS, *Conquista da Adesão das Populações*, Lourenço Marques, Serviços de Centralização e Coordenação de Informações (hereafter SCCIM), 10 May 1965, exemplar n° 372 : 166, in Biblioteca do AHM, n° 22, Cota SEA. III p. 6.

31. When I searched for this document in the AHM in July 1997 we could not find a copy of it, although it is referred to in Melo Branquinho's report (for which see below) and cited by Francisco Amaro Monteiro, who has written extensively about this subject (see references below). On 27 May 1998 I wrote to Dr. Monteiro inquiring as to the whereabouts of the questionnaire. On 2 July 1998 he replied, « The SCCIM 1965 questionnaire on Islam was confidential. As many other documents under security classification, it was destroyed, 1974, June or July. However, I kept a copy », which he has subsequently shared with me. I am greatly indebted to Dr. Monteiro for his generosity ; for my part, I have sent a copy of this valuable document to Maputo for deposit in the AHM. The six page confidential document is undated and has no title except « *Questionario* ».

José Alberto Gomes de Melo Branquinho, a study of the Islamic hierarchy was carried out in 1965 for Cabo Delgado and Mozambique districts, although I have not thus far succeeded in locating a copy of this document. There seems also to have been an extensive survey of more than seven hundred Muslim leaders across the colony that was concluded in 1967, but again I have not yet discovered a copy of it for public consultation<sup>32</sup>. Whatever the disposition of these reports, some of the questions of the 1965 questionnaire were incorporated into a series of district studies that the government commissioned government to study traditional leadership in the colony. The first of these was carried out by Melo Branquinho for Manica e Sofala Province and in November 1965 led to the decision to commission similar studies for other districts. What we possess for the time being, then, is Melo Branquinho's lengthy, detailed study of traditional authorities in Mozambique district, nearly ninety pages of which is devoted exclusively to Islam. This study was ordered in September 1966, begun in 1967, and completed in 1969<sup>33</sup>. There are two aspects of Melo Branquinho's report that deserve special mention. The first is his careful analysis of the Islamic leadership network, which among other things provides a unique map – both organizational and geographical – of the eight *turuq* branches in Mozambique district. To my mind it provides an extraordinary framework for more detailed research into the history of the *turuq* in this part of eastern Africa. The second is his political analysis of the threat posed by Islam to Portuguese rule in the area of his study and his consequent policy recommendations. In this paper I only address the former insofar as they relate to the latter.

By the time Melo Branquinho began his research in 1967, the armed struggle had been under way for three years and Frelimo presence was well established in both Cabo Delgado and Niassa. As we have already seen, Islam in Cabo Delgado was considered one of several threats to Portuguese suzerainty and because of Frelimo's success there Muslim opposition, both real and imagined, was dealt with harshly. In the section of his report entitled « Islamism and Subversion », Melo Branquinho documents a significant number of anti-Portuguese incidents dating back to 1959 that connected Muslim leaders in Cabo Delgado to their counterparts in Tanganyika. These included regular communication and travel across the porous border, dissemination of anti-colonial propaganda, and even a team of touring *shaykhs* from Tanganyika who were said to be deliberately stirring up sentiment against the Portuguese. In mid-1964, before the opening of armed struggle in Cabo Delgado on 25 September of that year, a friendly

32. F. Amaro MONTEIRO, « As comunidades islâmicas em Moçambique: mecanismos de comunicação », *Africana* (Porto), 4, 1989 : 63-89, at 77-78, 85.

33. J.A. Gomes de Melo BRANQUINHO, *Relatório da Prospeção ao Distrito de Moçambique (Um estudo das estruturas das hierarquias tradicionais e religiosas, e da situação político-social)*, Nampula, 22 April 1969, AHM, SE n° 20, Cota SE 2 III p 6, Portugal, Província de Moçambique, SÇCIM, *Prospeção das Forças Tradicionais - Distrito de Moçambique*, Secret, submitted by Director of the Services Fernando da Costa Freire, Lourenço Marques, 30 December 1969, enclosing (hereafter M. BRANQUINHO, *Relatório*). Melo Branquinho indicates that he interviewed 394 traditional and religious authorities for his study ; see i-vi for the history of the report and 406 for the reference to the 1965 report on Cabo Delgado and Mozambique districts. He also refers to a smaller, complementary study in Cabo Delgado and Niassa districts that he carried out in February 1969, which I have also not found. *Ibid.* : 9. According to Monteiro in letter to author, Carcavelos, 30 December 1998, Melo Branquinho's study of Islamic leaders was destroyed according to established intelligence procedures.

*mwalimo* (Muslim teacher) informed Melo Branquinho that at Montepuez, an important trading center in the interior of Cabo Delgado district, a certain *shaykh* Sabite told a meeting of Muslim leaders : « This land must be ours ; within a short while we will see people from Tanganyika come to throw out the Portuguese whites. In the mosques you must announce this news to the faithful so that all unite with those people in the hope of gaining victory ». The same *shaykh* told them that these were the orders of Abdul Kamal-Megama, the influential Qadiri leader of Mecufi, on the southern coast of Cabo Delgado district, who had great influence throughout the district. Little wonder, then, that Megama, who in 1963 had gone on pilgrimage to Mecca, was suspected by PIDE of having ties to the anti-colonial movement. Subsequently, in 1965 he was imprisoned in the notoriously brutal prison at Ibo and murdered in early 1966<sup>34</sup>. Nor was he the only notable Muslim to die in the Ibo prison. According to Muarabu Shauri, testifying in August 1970 before a special United Nations Ad Hoc Working Group of Experts on human rights in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, « a sheikh of the Muslim religion named Fazeira Yusuf » was shot to death by pistol there in January or February 1965<sup>35</sup>. Elsewhere Melo Branquinho notes the arrest by PIDE, the Portuguese secret police, of a *shaykh* Chibuane Namanga, who resided in Tanganyika, and his imprisonment in the hospital in Nampula, the district headquarters of Mozambique district ; in October 1965 the imprisonment in the area of Muite, in Mecubúri, of « a great number of Islamic dignataries, among them the *shaykhs* Buanamire or Panamiore Gicone, considered the most important local chief, Pilale Selege, Selemane Gicone, Mussa Male and Navara Mulima, for suspicion of politically subversive activities ; » the imprisonment in March 1966 of a *shaykh* Niquisse Mussa Mirasse « Mucomane » and his confession of links to a Yao fish trader from Vila Cabral (Lichinga) who was known to have held meetings around Lalaua « to talk about politically subversive subjects ; » and, finally, the imprisonment in the same area of « a great number of Islamic dignataries, about thirty, among them the great *shaykh* Pedro Limua Mustafá and Assoliane Avuleque, for suspicion of politically subversive activities »<sup>36</sup>. At Lalaua, in particular, official retribution was particularly brutal and extended to the entire Muslim community, so that « all the mosques were burned or destroyed, religious books seized, although it was suspected that many had been buried, and the few dignitaries not implicated and the Islamized population were compelled, chiefdom by chiefdom, to come to the post headquarters, to submit to a trial by eating pork »<sup>37</sup>. As the dates of these anti-Islamic sweeps indicate, things had picked up « since the first terrorist events », to use Melo Branquinho's term for Frelimo's military activities<sup>38</sup>. Whatever the substance of these charges, it is clear that the Portuguese took severe measures against any member of the Muslim elite in Cabo Delgado about whom there might be even a whisper of suspicion that he might be an « apologist for the independence of Mozambique » or

34. M. BRANQUINHO, *Relatório* : 396 ; see also p. 234, 241, 244, 280. For Megama, see B. Brito JOÃO, « Abdul Kamal-Megama (1892-1966) : Pouvoir et religion dans un district du Nord-Mozambique », *Islam et Sociétés au sud du Sahara* (Paris), 4, 1990 : 137-141.

35. *Mozambique Revolution* (Dar es Salaam), 45, 1970 : 8, 11.

36. M. BRANQUINHO, *Relatório* : 399-401.

37. *Ibid.* : 388.

38. *Ibid.* : 395.

engaged in « a work of anti-nationalist [i.e. anti-Portuguese] mentalization »<sup>39</sup>.

For Melo Branquinho, the most important conclusion of this review was that almost none of the cases he reported involved Muslim leaders from Mozambique district and that of those that did few had connections with Cabo Delgado owing to the fact that the leadership structure and organization of the *turuq*, as he demonstrates in the first part of this section of his report, was highly decentralized. He suggests that « the Islamic environment » of the district had not reached that of Cabo Delgado, especially as it existed around Montepuez, where it was potentially disastrous for Portuguese sovereignty. Moreover, he urged that « we cannot consider that possibilities for the improvement [*aproveitamento*, but also with the implication of « exploitation »] of the responsible authorities for the religious and political conduct of the masses of Islamicized Macuas are lost »<sup>40</sup>. Melo Branquinho warned against taking a heavy-handed approach in Mozambique district and urged that district officials « find a solution to the situation created by the then administrative authorities of Lalaua and of Muite, which only brings inconveniences to the political order » and blames entire communities for the acts of individuals. « We gain nothing », he contended, « with all this »<sup>41</sup>. « What is imperative is to reorient the mentality of the future Islamic chiefs or the locally responsible Muslims so that they should not come to regard us unfavorably ; it is a moral force that the Administration must exercise »<sup>42</sup>. The object must be, he argued, « their integration, as Muslims, into the pluriracial and plurireligious Portuguese Nation ». The way to do this was through the leadership of the *turuq*, all eight of which were based at Mozambique Island, and through the *ziyara* that were regularly organized by them, but especially by the Qadiriyya Sadate<sup>43</sup>.

Melo Branquinho also learned from his research that not only was there no centralized Islamic chain of command in Mozambique district, but also that because of the autonomy of each *tariqa* that Muslims recognized no external religious authority. The Portuguese had always feared the influence of the Sultan of Zanzibar, not realizing that the importance of Zanzibar as an East African center of Islamic learning had no theological connection to the Ibadi Busaidi ruler. Thus, the overthrow of the last Sultan of Zanzibar in the 1964 Revolution considerably alleviated Portuguese fears. And when in September 1967 a report was published that the Sultan might visit Mozambique Island, they were clearly encouraged by the response of local Muslim authorities, who organized a commission of local *turuq* (*Comissão das Confrarias Maometanas Nativas*) (Commission of Native Muslim Brotherhoods) that « rejected the spiritual authority of the Sultan of Zanzibar, whose spiritual ties are with the founders of the *turuq* who were

39. *Ibid.* : 396-397.

40. *Ibid.* : 402, reiterating text at 390.

41. *Ibid.* : 389.

42. *Ibid.* : 390, reiterated at p. 412.

43. *Ibid.* : viii, 297. For the classic propaganda statement of this official Portuguese policy, see A. A. Banha de ANDRADE, *O tradicional anti-racismo da acção civilizadora dos portugueses*, Lisbon, Livraria Bertrand, 1953, 44 p., facs. This broadside was subsequently published in English as *Many Races, One Nation : The Traditional Anti-Racism of Portugal's Civilizing Methods*, Lisbon, Agencia Geral do Ultramar, 1956, 58 p., facs., and later as *Many Races, One Nation : racial non-discrimination always the cornerstone of Portugal's overseas policy*, Lisbon, 1961, 48 p., 30 plates, ill.

natives of the Comoro Islands and Madagascar, so that today they are completely independent, even of Mecca »<sup>44</sup>.

Melo Branquinho concludes his extensive report by commenting that « the weakness of Islam in Mozambique District resides in the lack of homogeneity and in its internal divisions, and the fragility of its organization », observing further that Islam there « is, therefore, more a current than a force ». Nevertheless, he cautions, « it is certain that it is not very easy to promote the integration of the Islamized people of Mozambique into the Portuguese Nation, above all those of Arab or Indian origin », whom he may have regarded as more susceptible to reform currents present in southern Africa that emanated from Pakistan<sup>45</sup>. With respect to the *turuq*, he advocates that the way to pursue the national interests is to encourage « the traditional tendency of Islam » by devising a highly disciplined and urgent plan for religious activity that would offer « not only a more practical alternative than Christianity..., but also a way to achieve social evolution »<sup>46</sup>. More practically, he recommends the establishment of a unified Qur'an school at Mozambique Island as being « an ancient yearning of the influential Muslim chiefs ». Finally, he further suggests that wider diffusion of the Portuguese language might be achieved by translating the Qur'an into Portuguese<sup>47</sup>.

By the time Melo Branquinho submitted his report to the SCCIM, initial steps had already been taken to implement a new policy towards the Muslims of Mozambique. On 17 December 1968, corresponding to 26 Ramadan 1388, the Governor-General of Mozambique, Baltazar Rebello de Souza, broadcast greetings to the Muslims of the entire « Province », marking « the first time in the History of Overseas Portugal that a governor thus addressed, formally and specifically, the Muslim communities ». The timing of this radio broadcast was not left to chance, being carefully selected for the propitious *Laylat al-Qadr*, the 27<sup>th</sup> night of Ramadan, which marks the revelation of the Qur'an and when angels are believed to speak directly to those on Earth. The Governor-General began his broadcast with the first *sura* (chapter) (*al-Fatiha*) (« The Opening ») of the Qur'an. The body of his message emphasized the ecumenical character of the Catholic Church, citing the common elements of the Qur'an and the Bible, while also mentioning the importance of al-Bukhari's *Hadith* (the most respected collection of reports of the Prophet's conduct, doings or sayings) in his discourse about Mary and Jesus. He also noted the significance for Portuguese Catholics of the shrine to Mary at Fátima, « the name of the beloved daughter of the Prophet », concluding his homily by emphasizing their common brotherhood under God, family values, and « devotion to the progress of the Portuguese land of Mozambique »<sup>48</sup>. Clearly, the Portuguese battle to win the hearts and minds of Muslim Mozambicans had begun.

44. M. BRANQUINHO, *Relatório* : 366, 407.

45. See *ibid.* : 422-423, for reference to a February 1966 meeting of several thousand Muslims at Zomba, Malawi, that was presided over by the *Mufti* (chief Islamic judge) of Karachi. For Islamic revival in Malawi at this time, see ALPERS, « East Central Africa », *op. cit.*

46. M. BRANQUINHO, *Relatório* : 423, 425, 427.

47. *Ibid.* : 412-414.

48. F. Amaro MONTEIRO, « Moçambique 1964-1974... », *op. cit.* : 8 and n. 11. The full text of this remarkable document is included in *ibid.* as Anexo 1, p.117-119. M. BRANQUINHO, *Relatório* : 405, mentions the favorable reception that this broadcast received from Muslims with whom he spoke at the time at Monapo and Mozambique Island.

What was Frelimo policy towards Islam ? In a word, there was no such policy. The earliest reference I have found to Islam in an official Frelimo document dates to a statement denouncing the celebration at Lourenço Marques on 7 May 1965 of the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Missionary Agreement that entrusted all official education in the Portuguese colonies to the Roman Catholic Church. The statement quotes the « Ten Principles » directed to seminary students by the Auxiliary Bishop of Lourenço Marques, Don Custódio Alvim Pereira, as evidence of the pro-colonialist position of the Church in Mozambique. The 10<sup>th</sup> and last of these states : « The slogan "Africa for Africans" is a philosophical lie and is in defiance of Christian Civilisation, because actual events tell us that it is Communism and Islam which want to impose their civilisation on the Africans ». To this Frelimo replied : « We have nothing against the Catholic religion. One of the basic principles which inspires the policy of FRELIMO is respect for all religious beliefs. Among our militants, there are many Christians and Muslims »<sup>49</sup>.

A year later, on the 2<sup>nd</sup> anniversary of the opening of the armed struggle for liberation, Frelimo President Eduardo Chivambo Mondlane noted the necessity for Mozambicans to unite together, despite any differences among themselves, to defeat Portuguese colonialism. On this occasion he specifically, and uniquely, recognized that « We derive from the spiritual contributions of our various religious traditions - Mohammedan, Christian, animist, etc., the necessary moral courage to sustain the sufferings for which we are destined in the next years of the national liberation struggle »<sup>50</sup>. Less than a year later the absence of any reference to religion in a call for tribal unity within Frelimo is noticeable, just as is a second denunciation of the role of the Church in sustaining Portuguese colonialism, which ends with the statement that « Many of our militants have announced their decision to abandon catholicism »<sup>51</sup>. By the time of the great leadership divisions that racked Frelimo in 1968, led ultimately to the assassination of Mondlane on 3 February 1969, and were not resolved until Samora Machel was elected President in May 1970, there was little room for attention to matters of religion, as ethnic politics and the definition of a more rigorous socialist ideology dominated most of the movement's internal discourse. But by the 5<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the armed struggle, the party leadership was already alert to the fact that « The Portuguese have made no secret of their intention to employ various tactics to "win over" the local population ». Psychological warfare was counted among these by Frelimo<sup>52</sup>. In the early 1970s, Frelimo communications regularly pointed out the dangers posed for the struggle by Portuguese psycho-social services, noting that these were becoming increasingly sophisticated as the colonial authorities worked to divide Mozambicans in order to maintain their rule, especially by co-opting traditional leaders to their cause<sup>53</sup>. But religious leaders are not specifically mentioned.

49. *Mozambique Revolution* (Dar es Salaam), 18, 1965 : 2-4, quoted at 4. The same quote from Bishop Pereira is repeated in an article about the Pope Paul VI's visit to Africa two years later : see *ibid.*, 39, 1969 : 11-14 at 14.

50. *A Voz da Revolução* [Dar es Salaam], 25 September 1966 : 2.

51. *Mozambique Revolution* (Dar es Salaam), 28, 1967 : 7-8, 9-10. See also Mondlane's analysis of ethnic groups cited in n. 23 above.

52. *Mozambique Revolution* (Dar es Salaam), 40, 1969 : 25-26.

53. See, e.g., *ibid.* : 45, 1970 : 20 ; 48, 1971 : 11-13 ; and 57, 1973 : 4.

Although Governor-General Souza successfully repeated his Ramadhan message the following year at the reopening of the Gulamo Mosque at Lumbo, on the mainland opposite Mozambique Island, and was emulated by his successor, Eduardo Arantes e Oliveira, in December 1970, it appears that the Portuguese did not systematically follow up on the path-breaking radio broadcast by Souza and that an inexplicable lapse of fifteen months occurred before they played their next card<sup>54</sup>. According to Monteiro, during this interim period Portuguese military intelligence advocated for « opportunistic psychological actions » as part of a larger strategy to enlist Mozambique's Muslims to their cause. The components of this strategy were to be demonstrating respect for Islam, recognizing Mozambican Islam as an important socio-religious force and creating permanent consultative structures, and preserving Muslim culture while concurrently supporting programs that would support greater use of the Portuguese language by making available « fundamental Islamic texts »<sup>55</sup>. It would seem, then, that Melo Branquinho's efforts had not been in vain. Although efforts to constitute a « Council of Notables » appear not to have coalesced, Portuguese authorities did, in fact, eventually pursue an active program designed to capture the support of influential Muslim leaders throughout Mozambique. The key Portuguese strategist was Fernando Amaro Monteiro, who has written extensively about both this episode in the struggle for Mozambique and his experiences as its moving force<sup>56</sup>. By the beginning of 1971, Monteiro, who was then a researcher at the University of Lourenço Marques, convinced his superiors that they should assemble a trained team to lead this effort. Accordingly, he offered a course on Islam that was commissioned by the Governor-General on the recommendation of the Director of the SCCIM. From the individuals who attended these lectures, Monteiro selected a team of four men who joined him in what became the Working Group on Islamic Subjects (*Grupo de Trabalho sobre Assuntos Islâmicos*), which reported to the Provincial Cabinet for Psychological Action. Although it only existed as a separate entity from April through August 1972, Monteiro continued to serve as a consultant to the colonial government for the duration of the war, that is, until the Portuguese revolution of 25 April 1974<sup>57</sup>.

The first sign of this concerted strategy can be seen in *Moçambique em Imagens* (Mozambique in Pictures), a propaganda broadsheet of carefully selected photographs and captions that first appeared in 1971<sup>58</sup>. The February 1972 number of this publication includes a single photograph of the Governor-General of Mozambique at his official residence greeting four « Muslim dignitaries » who had just returned from pilgrimage to Mecca<sup>59</sup>. The following month, however, a special number featured a visit of the Governor-General, accompanied by General Kaúlza de Arriaga, the military commander leading Portuguese armed forces against Frelimo,

54. F. Amaro MONTEIRO, « Moçambique, 1964-1974... », *op. cit.* : 119-120.

55. *Ibid.* : 86-87.

56. In addition to various articles in *Africana*, see his major work, « O Islão, o poder e a guerra (Moçambique 1964-1974) », Porto, Universidade Portucalense, 1993, 440 p., ill., maps.

57. F. Amaro MONTEIRO, « Moçambique, 1964-1974... », *op. cit.* : 89, n. 15. Monteiro includes a number of letters that he directed to the Governor-General in his publications.

58. I was able to consult the almost complete collection of this publication in the poster section of the AHM.

59. *Moçambique em Imagens* (Lourenço Marques), February 1972, n° 2. Three of these men appear to be Africans, the fourth of South Asian background.

to Mozambique Island on the occasion of the 474<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Vasco da Gama's first celebration of the Mass on Mozambican soil. In fact, of the six photographs included in this poster, only one shows the Governor-General attending Mass in the chapel of the Palácio de S. Paulo, one shows him walking with other Portuguese dignitaries inside the Fortaleza de S. Sebastião, and the remaining four feature the Muslims of the Island. One photograph shows the Governor-General greeting a line of ordinary Muslims, several of whom are playing tambourines (*taris*), beneath which appears an excerpt from his message to the Muslims of the Province: « In the entire world no people manages to live in greater and more natural affection than we, the Portuguese, in the variety of our colors and beliefs ». Another shows him walking side by side with *Shaykh* Momade Said Mujabo as they enter Gulamo Mosque. The other photographs show people gathering outside the mosque and the Governor-General addressing the faithful inside and receiving their greetings, with a caption quoting *Shaykh* Haji Abdul Razaque as saying, « Spokesman for my brothers in faith and in this sacred place, we affirm our unconditional support to the Government and offer our prestige for the good of Portugal, one and indivisible ». A final quote from the *Shaykh* states, « This occasion clearly demonstrates the coexistence among the Portuguese of the two religions in Mozambique, Christian and Muslim - the understanding, growing and genuinely sincere respect, and ecumenism »<sup>60</sup>.

The culmination of this psychological action campaign occurred later that year with the publication of a Portuguese translation of a selection from al-Bukhari's *Hadith*. Prior to publication, the colonial authorities assembled a significant group of Muslim leaders at Mozambique Island for them to consider giving their approval to this popular edition. These dignitaries included representatives of all eight *turuq* at Mozambique Island, plus *Shaykh* Momade Said Mujabo and twelve others drawn from the entire colony, excepting Cabo Delgado, including Lourenço Marques, Inhambane, Beira, Vila Pery (now Chimoió), Quelimane, Bajone (in Zambézia), Novo Freixo (Cuamba), Marrupa, and Vila Cabral (Lichinga). According to Monteiro, ten were Africans, nine were mixed Afro-Asian or Afro-Arab, and two were Asian. All were Sunni Muslims. The final version of the *Hadith* includes the formal endorsement and recommendation to the faithful to read it by all twenty-one leaders, dated Mozambique Island, 5 Rajab 1392 and 15 August 1972<sup>61</sup>. Before the end of that year, the Portuguese issued yet another special number of *Moçambique em Imagens* devoted entirely to this momentous propaganda success. It features a photograph of the publication, one of the faithful at prayer, another of the assembled Muslim dignitaries in the Town Hall prior to the signing, named individual photographs of six in the act of signing the declaration of endorsement, *Shaykh* Momade Issufo of Lourenço Marques reading the statement, three other leaders seated in repose, a drawing of the Gulamo Mosque at Lumbo,

60. *Ibid.*, March 1972, special issue, « O Governador-Geral na Ilha de Moçambique ».

61. F. Amaro MONTEIRO, « As comunidades islâmicas em Moçambique... », *op. cit.*: 83; El-Bokhari, *Seleção de Hadiths-Tradições Muçulmanas, versão Portuguesa resumida*, Lourenço Marques, Edição Popular promovida pelo Governador-Geral de Moçambique, 1972, unpaginated preface. The Portuguese rendering is based on the French translation of G.H. Bousquet and the endorsement cited in the text is preceded by a message « to the best known Muslim religious leaders of the Portuguese State of Mozambique » from Monteiro, Lourenço Marques, 20 April 1972.



and finally a photograph of *Shaykh* Momade Said Mujabo with the following caption attributed to a letter from him to Sayyid Omar b. Ahmed b. Abu Bakr b. Sumait al-Alawi of the Comoro Islands : « The Muslim people of this land are gladdened by the esteem and interest of their Government in their religion, especially of late, having created a sense of joy and satisfaction among us »<sup>62</sup>.

During this same period, Monteiro's group had been busily at work preparing a report on Islamic radical reform that clearly influenced the Portuguese decision to throw their support to the *turuq*<sup>63</sup>. The stimulus for this report appears to have been tensions that surfaced at Lourenço Marques at the end of 1971 between « the bulk of Afro-Muslims, sociologically the majority, and the action of a *Licenciado* [an advanced degree holder] in Theology from the University of Medina named Abubacar Ismael, known as 'Mangirá », who was born in Inhambane but lived in the capital city. The object of his criticism was a *fatwa* (authoritative legal opinion) that had been issued at Mozambique Island by *Shaykh* Momade Said Mujabo in August 1968, in which he resolved a long-standing dispute among the *turuq* at António Enes (Angoche) over the proper manner to conduct funerals by recommending a compromise between the *twaliki*, who celebrated by shouting, and the *sukuti*, who advocated silence<sup>64</sup>. *Maulana* (an honorific title) Abubacar Ismael had received some support from two apparently disgruntled members of the local Muslim community, including the former *Imam* (leader of the spiritual community) of the mosque of the *Associação Afro-Mahometana* (Afro-Mohamedan Association) in Lourenço Marques, Momade Issufo, who was a native of Mozambique Island, where he was regarded with suspicion for his doctrinaire beliefs. He also attacked the local practice organized by the *Associação Muçulmana da Beira* (Muslim Association of Beira) of making pilgrimage to a local saint's sanctuary<sup>65</sup>. Furthermore, the *Maulana* had received reformist literature from Pakistan via South Africa criticizing excessive celebration of *Maulid*, the celebrations of the Prophet's birthday, thus raising fears that anti-Portuguese Islamism might strike « a harsh blow at the center of Mozambican Islam ». All of this was deeply worrying to local officials of the security police, the *Direcção Geral de Segurança* (General Security Directorate), as the hated PIDE had been renamed<sup>66</sup>. Accordingly, in July 1972 the Working Group on Islamic Subjects produced a short report on Muslim thought with a final section on the challenge of Wahhabism in Mozambique that was widely distributed to all the key administrative and intelligence representatives throughout the

62. *Moçambique em Imagens* (Lourenço Marques), november 1972, special issue ; this gathering was first recognized in a single photograph in *ibid.*, August 1972, n° 8.

63. M. CAHEN, « L'État nouveau... », *op. cit.*, p. 44-45.

64. For details, see ALPERS, « East Central Africa », *op. cit.* The text of the *fatwa* is included in Monteiro, « Sobre a actuação da corente "Wahhabita" no Islão Moçambicana : algumas notas relativas ao período 1964-1974 », *Africana* (Porto), 12, 1993 : 85-111, anexo n° 3, at 101-103.

65. The *Associação Afro-Mahometana* was registered by the government in 1934 : see AHM, PP 2315, Cota (b) C562K, *Estatutos da Associação Afro-Mahometana de Lourenço Marques* (Lourenço Marques, 1934). For a sketch of the saint's shrine, which dates at least to the late 16<sup>th</sup> century, see ALPERS, « East Central Africa », *op. cit.* For Momade Issufo, who was also one of the four Muslim dignitaries featured in *Moçambique em Imagens* and for whom the Governor-General had paid the fares enabling them to make the *hajj* (pilgrimage to Mecca), see MONTEIRO, « Sobre a actuação da corente "Wahhabita" no Islão Moçambicana », *op. cit.* : 92, n. 20.

66. *Ibid.* : 91-93.

territory<sup>67</sup>. So when *Sharif Seyyid* (another leadership title) Said Mohammed Habib Bakr, who exercised authority over dozens of Qadiriyya branches throughout northern Mozambique, threatened the following month at the great show of support for the publication of the *Hadith* to hold a series of violent meetings unless the Portuguese did something to relieve these pressures, it was clear that decisive action had to be taken.

Building upon the developing aura of good will that had emerged from the August meeting at Mozambique Island and, it would seem, the specific relationship between *Shaykh* Momade Said Mujabo and *Sayyid* Omar b. Ahmed b. Abu Bakr b. Sumait al-Alawi, during the following month the Portuguese called upon the *Mufti* of the Comoros, the very same *Sayyid* Omar b. Ahmed, to resolve the differences regarding *bid'a* (innovation) between the eight *туруq* of Mozambique Island and their reformist critics. When the Mufti decided in favor of the *туруq* and against their zealous opponents, the Portuguese realized that they had further enhanced their reputation among the Muslim leadership of the north<sup>68</sup>. The result was the inclusion of the endorsement of the translation of the *Hadith* selections in the final publication of this text. No wonder that this « political instrument to promote the diffusion of Portuguese among the Islamized strata of the Province » was so enthusiastically received in Lisbon<sup>69</sup>.

In the end, although *Maulana* Abubacar Ismael continued to cause the Portuguese some problems with his reformist views on Islam, he did not prove to be an impossible thorn in their side<sup>70</sup>. For their part, the Portuguese continued to show support for Mozambique's leading Muslims by featuring their photographs in *Moçambique em imagens*. In January 1973, the Governor-General is shown as guest of honor at the communal celebration of *'Id al-Adha*, the sacrificial festival of the *hajj* season. The following month's edition includes a photograph showing him being thanked by recently returned pilgrims from Mecca and Medina, « where they were transported at the invitation of the Government ». On this occasion, the caption continues, the Governor-General affirmed: « I consider them as brothers and I have appreciated the manner as in all parts of the Province by which I have been warmly received, and, also, the loyalty, the vehemence, the warmth that all place in the building of a better Mozambique for which we are fighting »<sup>71</sup>. Later that year, there occurs a photograph of the celebration of Ramadhan in Cabo Delgado, featuring a crowd carrying a Portuguese flag near the Town Hall of Porto Amélia (Pemba), « where they presented their compliments to the Mayor ». The final number for the year includes the by now familiar photograph of the Governor-General shaking hands with a group of pilgrims about to leave on *hajj* under the heading, « On the Road to Mecca »<sup>72</sup>. A month later these same pilgrims are featured at the top of the poster, all wearing Saudi *kefiyyeh* and elaborately embroidered robes, as

67. GRUPO DE TRABALHO SOBRE ASSUNTOS ISLÂMICOS, *Breve esquemática do pensamento muçulmano, com vista à inserção e caracterização do movimento Wahhabita*, Secret, Lourenço Marques, 1 July 1972, in AHM, Governo Geral, SCCIM, Cota 2320 (conveyed by Fernando Amaro Monteiro, o presidente do Grupo).

68. F. Amaro MONTEIRO, « As comunidades islâmicas... », *op. cit.* : 83.

69. *Ibid.* : 84.

70. *Ibid.* : 93-95.

71. *Moçambique em Imagens* (Lourenço Marques), January 1973, n° 1, and February 1973, n° 2.

72. *Ibid.*, November 1973, n° 11, and December 1973, n° 12.

they express their gratitude to the Governor-General «for the facilities granted »<sup>73</sup>.

However effective this pro-Muslim strategy may have seemed to the Portuguese at the time, not to mention its perception by the Muslim leadership of Mozambique, and especially those of the *turuq*, time was running out. Three months later the military coup in Portugal took place that set Mozambique on the road to independence on 25 June 1975 under a Transitional Government led by Frelimo. In fact, the very last number of *Moçambique em Imagens* is dated 25 April 1974 and includes photographs of the Revolution of the Carnations and the freeing of political prisoners from the notorious Machava Prison in Lourenço Marques. Considering the legacy of collaboration with the Portuguese that marked the final few years of colonialism in Mozambique, it is not surprising that at independence Frelimo did not embrace the Muslim leadership of Mozambique and its organizations as comrades in arms<sup>74</sup>.

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In this paper I have sought to generate wider scholarly interest in the history of Islam in northern Mozambique by offering a preliminary analysis of the ambiguous relationship between the Portuguese colonial state and the indigenous Islamic communities during the period of the armed struggle for independence. Based on a close reading of Portuguese administrative and intelligence reports in the *Arquivo Histórico de Moçambique* in Maputo, which necessarily draws the historian's attention to questions of colonial policy, my ultimate goal is to bring to shed light on the history of Mozambican Muslims themselves, rather than that of Portuguese colonial and metropolitan policy makers and administrators. While there still remains much to do by way of locating and exploiting the written Portuguese sources for such a study, this history can never be complete without considering the Islamic evidence, both written and, above all else, oral. With respect to the Portuguese sources, Michel Cahen has recently begun to exploit the archives of the PIDE and related intelligence services, among which may be included the SCCIM, which are located in the *Arquivos Nacionais da Torre do Tombo* in Lisbon. There may also be other Portuguese sources that bear upon both this particular aspect of the Muslim experience in Mozambique and the larger project that diligent research in the various archival repositories and libraries of Mozambique and Portugal will reveal, such as those utilized by Anna Maria Gentili in her work on Cabo Delgado<sup>75</sup>. As for oral sources, these will need to be collected throughout northern Mozambique, but especially at the most important historical centers of Islamic learning and dissemination, such as Mozambique Island, Angoche, and Nampula, among other towns. A further aspect of this project must also involve research in Moroni, Ngazidja, which was the principal point of Islamic contact between

73. *Ibid.*, January 1974, n° 1.

74. For a summary of the years since independence, see ALPERS, « East Central Africa », *op. cit.* See also the unpublished paper being presented at the 1998 *Annual Meeting of the African Studies Association* at Chicago by E. MORIER-GENOUD on « Religious Competition in Contemporary Mozambique : The 1996 "Muslim Holiday" Affair ».

75. GENTILI, « A Subversão no Distrito de Cabo Delgado », *op. cit.* : 116, Nota.

the Comoro Islands and Mozambique, as well as in Zanzibar and southern Tanzania, where both the Qadiriyya and the Shadhiliyya Yashrutiyya had important connections with northern Mozambique<sup>76</sup>. Above all else, it is my hope that a younger generation of scholars, both Mozambican and foreign, will recognize the significance of Islam in this part of Africa and take up the challenge, which is far too important both historically and for the future of Mozambique to ignore any longer<sup>77</sup>.

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76. I have recently discussed some of these issues with respect to the former, in « A Complex Relationship : Mozambique and the Comoro Islands in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries », paper presented at the *Colloque marquant le XX<sup>e</sup> anniversaire de la création du CNDRS* (Janvier 1979-Janvier 1999), 26-28 January 1999, Moroni, République fédérale islamiques des Comores, 15 p. typescript.

77. I only know of one young scholar, Liazzat Bonate, a Mozambican by marriage, who is preparing to do precisely this kind of research.