

## The Swahili States

Lieutenant Colonel J. H. Patterson, British engineer engaged in building a railroad from Mombasa to interior of East Africa, from his account, *Maneaters of Tsvao and Other East African Adventures*, 1907

The Swahili live principally along the coast of East Africa and at Zanzibar. They are a mixed race, being the descendants of Arab fathers and negro mothers. Their name is derived from the Arabic word suahil, coast; but it has also been said, by some who have found them scarcely so guileless as might have been expected, to be really a corruption of the words sawa hili, that is, "those who cheat all alike." However that may be, the men are as a rule of splendid physique and well qualified for the calling that the majority of them follow, that of caravan porters. They are a careless, light-hearted, improvident people, and are very fond of all the good things of this world, enjoying them thoroughly whenever they get the chance. Their life is spent in journeying to and from the interior, carrying heavy loads of provisions and trade-goods on the one journey, and returning with similar loads of ivory or other products of the country. They are away for many months at a time on these expeditions, and consequently -- as they cannot spend money on the march -- they have a goodly number of rupees to draw on their return to Mombasa. These generally disappear with wonderful rapidity, and when no more fun can be bought, they join another caravan and begin a new safari to the Great Lakes, or even beyond. Many a time have I watched them trudging along the old caravan road which crossed the Tsavo at a ford about half a mile from the railway station: here a halt was always called, so that they might wash and bathe in the cool waters of the river. The Swahili men wear a long white cotton garment, like a night-shirt, called a kanzu; the women -- who are too liberally endowed to be entirely graceful -- go about with bare arms and shoulders, and wear a long brightly-colored cloth which they wind tightly round their bosoms and then allow to fall to the feet. All are followers of the Prophet, and their social customs are consequently much the same as those of any other Muslim race, though with a good admixture of savagedom. They have a happy knack of giving a nickname to every European with whom they have to do, such nickname generally making reference to something peculiar or striking in his habits, temper, or appearance. On the whole, they are a kindly, generous folk, whom one cannot help liking.

Source this document by writing a **SENTENCE OF SOURCING** and a **SENTENCE OF ANALYSIS** explaining the relevance of one of the following:

**H**istorical Situation—**I**ntended **A**udience—**P**oint of View—**P**urpose—**wh**Y the sourcing affects your use of the document.