

ORIGINS OF THE TUNGI SULTANATE (NORTHERN MOZAMBIQUE)
IN THE LIGHT OF LOCAL TRADITIONS ¹

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0. Introduction

Tungi is the historical name of the Swahili 'sultanate' which existed until 1877 on Cape Delgado and on the shores of the vast Tungi Bay in Northern Mozambique. Its main political center was located, at least during a certain time in 18-19th centuries, some five km away from the Cape Delgado extreme point, in the vicinity of today's Kiwiya (Quiuia) village. Only ruins of the sultan's palace and three graves of Tungi sultans hidden in a bushy place still mark the place. This abandoned settlement was probably called Tungi as well, but the name used to be applied, by extension, to a larger land which was under sultans control. The territory of Tungi as a political unit is still unknown², nor do we know when it emerges as such in the history of the Swahili coast. Legendary external tradition places origins of Tungi in a very remote epoch. In one of the Comoro chronicles Tungi is mentioned as the place of origin of the first people who came from the African continent to settle on Ngazija (Grand Comoro). This event took place, the tradition says, after the death of the prophet Solomon and before the great eruption of Kartala, the local volcano, still active today.³ The same Comorian tradition includes Tungi among the first Swahili towns founded by the legendary brothers coming from Shiraz.⁴ The name appears also in oral traditions connected with the first sultan of Kilwa (Sultan Ali) who waged war against Tungi.⁵ The first known attestation of the name Tungi in European sources is, according to Liesegang (1989:34), registered in a Portuguese document of 1744 reproduced by Boxer (1963:351).

Tungi became known to historians in the context of "the last episode of the Arab-Portuguese quarrel in the waters of the Western Indian Ocean" (Bennett 1987:18) - the border dispute between Portugal and Zanzibar in the 19th century. Both parties of

the conflict claimed their sovereignty rights over Tungi. Already in 1778 an armed Portuguese expedition was sent to this tiny but trouble causing sultanate. Since then, Tungi sultans played a policy of a balanced double loyalty. At least one of them, Hassani (Assane) used to receive regular payments from the Portuguese authorities in the 1820-30-ties (*Documentação ...*, 1964:639).

The Portuguese-Zanzibari dispute has involved Great Britain and Germany, as 'intermediaries' who had their own interest in the zone. It was ended by the Portuguese military annexation of the disputed land in 1877. A few years later, the colonial borderland between the Deutsche Ostafrika and Africa Oriental Portuguesa was drawn on maps along the Rovuma river, some 25 miles further north. Tungi became definitely incorporated into Portuguese colony.

Thanks to Bennett (*op.cit*), who came through the large archive documentation, the Tungi case is quite well studied in its international diplomatic dimension. But the local history of this land and the role of Tungi in the past of the Swahili coast has not been researched at all. Why is Tungi a potentially important place to be studied? Several facts speak for it.

- The region of Tungi is the only part of the Mozambican coast where Swahili language is spoken. In addition, the language situation there represents a rare type of a stabilized 'gender diglossia': Swahili (quite close to its standardized dialect) is spoken by men whereas women do speak Makwe - a swahilized variety of the Makonde language (or another variety called *ciiTungi* - this one being a dying out dialect). A similar situation is reported to exist on the Tanzanian side, further north up to Lindi.⁶ In case of Tungi, the use of the Swahili language seems to be a factor of maintaining the social status and cultural identity of a mwungwana ('civilized person') rather than a very recent linguistic acquisition. Sociolinguistic explanation of this phenomenon requires a historical background to be provided for. Tungi pattern of 'gender diglossia' may be also valid as a hypothetical model for analysing the process of Swahilization and deswahilization in such centers as Angoche or Mozambique island (Rzewuski, forthcoming).

- The geographical location and proximity of Tungi to such old coastal centers as Kilwa and Vamizi island made of Tungi quite a strategic place in the region. The ruins of the large palace of Tungi sultans already mentioned, provide a direct testimony that Tungi knew times of a better economic prosperity, probably connected with the 18th-19th century slave trade in the region. No archaeological material earlier to this period has been found yet in Tungi (Liesegang n.d.) but such a probability exists, given the fact that Tungi Bay was a comfortable natural anchorage place on the way to the old trading center in Vamizi mentioned by Ahmad bin Majid in the 15th century:

- Oral and written traditions indicate that Tungi was ruled by the Shirazi dynasty whose descendants still today claim to have their roots in the Comoro, Angoche and Kilwa. The revision of the concept and phenomenon of the Shirazi aristocracy and their role in the history of the Swahili coast has become one of the key questions in recent historical and anthropological studies (Chittick 1965, Sheperd 1984, Pouwels 1984, 1987, Nurse & Spear 1985, and others). Not much information on Shirazis in Mozambique is yet available. In this context, the data from Tungi can be a contribution to this discussion, as well as to the more general problem of how foundation myths and genealogies do function and are manipulated for legitimizing power and in regulating the social order.

The aim of this paper is not so much to discuss all these aspects but rather to summarize the new information on Tungi provided by the local traditional historiography, before the final critical edition of the documents collected so far is ready. In the chapters which follow the reader will be given a description of the existing corpus of documents (1), the summary of their content (2), genealogies of Tungi rulers (3) and finally an annotated inventory of relevant toponyms appearing in the texts (4).

1. The corpus.

The corpus of oral and written texts which present the local traditions dealing with the history of Tungi includes two written manuscripts and one oral narrative collected in August 1988 on

occasion of the short field trip to Palma and Kiwiya.⁷ The discovery and the registering of these documents was carried out in circumstances where there was no time left for analysing on the site their detailed content neither for thorough interviewing people on that subject. The main work of transliteration and translation (with many lacunae left open) and preliminary analysis was done out of the field, in Maputo and Warsaw, in the hope that another opportunity for further field work will occur soon.

Manuscript documents:

I. Title (*incipiens*) in Arabic: "Māğāraya fī zamān qabīlati Šīrāziyi" ('Old events concerning the Shirazi tribe') n.d. (contemporary), reference code: TUNGI-1 (or T1). This is the local chronicle of Tungi sultans tracking back their genealogy to the remotest and legendary Shirazian origins. The chronicle is written in Arabic script in Swahili language. The manuscript is in the possession of the elders in Kiwiya.⁸ It has the form of a simple exercise-book (13 *folio*) and bears no date. At the beginning of the manuscript stands the name of Abdallah ibn Salim Mungoji, probably its original author, not identified. Supplementary oral information was given that the text of the original manuscript was reshaped by *shehe* Muhieddin Twaibu 'Lichee' who lives in Kionga and has the fame of being the greatest authority in the matters of local history and genealogies.

II) Title in Swahili: "Hati ya nasaba ya Matungi" ('Genealogical document of the Matungi people') 1970, reference code TUNGI-2 (or T2). The manuscript is in Swahili written in Arabic characters. It has a form of an exercise-book (16 *folio*). The manuscript is in the possession of *shehe* Muhammadi Thabiti of Palma⁹ whose name (as the author and the ultimate person concerned by this genealogy) is written at the end of the document. The final note indicates also the date of compilation of the text: 29 Dī-1-Qaada 1389 A.H. (corresponds to 07 February 1970 A.D.) and the copist name: Abdelfakiri.

Oral text:

Reference code TUNGI-3 (or T3). This is a historical narrative in Swahili by Muhammadi Thabiti (author of T2) recorded by the present author. Muhammadi Thabiti, when asked to read aloud the text of T2, felt necessary to give his long oral introduction (and many additional comments) which is regarded here as a separate source text. The recording is some 25 minutes long. The initial part of the recording was damaged and lost definitely.

In addition to these three texts the existence of another document originating from the same place should be mentioned. This is a short summary (2,5 pages) in Portuguese of local traditions on history of Kiwiya written by Simão Tomé Malochilla, by that time district officer of education and culture in Palma.¹⁰ Its title is: "Inquérito sobre a história de Quiuia", 1978, here referred as IHQ.

2. Content of the documents (T1, T2, T3):

TUNGI-1:

The text can be divided into three parts:

- I. The spread of the Shirazi rule over the East African coast, with special incidence on Pate and the Comoros.
- II. The founding of Tungi, Kiwiya and Mbwizi.
- III. The chronology of Tungi sultans and the beginning of the Portuguese rule.

Detailed episodes of the story are as follows: 1. One of the sons of the late sultan of Shiraz, after a dispute with his brothers over succession, leaves Shiraz with the stolen regalia and arrives at Pate where he becomes the ruler (nicknamed Bwana Mmanga).

2. His grandson Fazillahi bin Marzuku, born in Shiraz, is sent to Pate and from there he travels to Hinziwani (Anjouan) and rules there. Later he leaves the throne to his son Salim whereas his daughter Pendezeni is settled in Mwali (Mohéli), married to a nobleman from Pate.

3. Pendezeni gives birth to seven daughters. They are married to one single nobleman from Shiraz and each gives birth to one son

and one daughter. In order "to preserve the Shirazi blood" Pendezeni imposes upon them incestuous marriages between six brothers and six sisters. The remaining two: Hassani and his sister are sent to Shiraz.

4. Hassani's sister gives birth to four children: the son, who is given the name of his maternal uncle - Hassani (2), and three daughters (names not given in T1).

5. Hassani (2) claims his rights (of primogeniture = mimba kubwa) to rule over Hinziwani but this is contested by his brothers and cousins there. He leaves for the continent with his three sisters and the stolen regalia. He finally settles in Angoche (Ngoji) and rules there.¹¹ On this journey, the eldest of the three sisters is left in Mbwizi to give birth. In the next episodes (7-10) the sisters are the main protagonists.

6. In the meantime, disputes and a cyclone cause the dispersal of other Shirazi cousins who are left in Hinziwani and Mwali. Two of them, Abdallah and Shaha migrate to the region of Angoche. Abdallah rules in Sangaje, Shaha joins his elder brother (cousin?) in Angoche. The others settle in Ngazija and Pemba (island?).

7. In Angoche the second sister gives birth to a son. Later on Hassani orders his nephew to be murdered secretly (T3 explains that the reason was adultery which the nephew has committed with Hassani's woman). The two sisters decide to flee from Angoche and to join the third one in the North.

8. During the journey, the elder one is forced to stay in Msaru, close to Kiterajo (Quiterajo) where a certain Mwabuwi, local chief of the Makuwa people makes of her his wife. She is the ancestor mother of the Shirazi people in Msaru.

9. The younger sister arrives at Kiwiya, resists the attacks by the local Wampambe people and is rescued by a stranger, Chapapa ("Mbarikiwa", in T3 called Shababi) who resorts to magic (magic object buried in a mtungi pot made of copper > hence the origin of the name Tungi).

10. Chapapa becomes the husband of the Shirazian lady. They have two children: a son, who later became a king (Mfalme Madi) and a daughter, who gave birth to Sultan Hassani (3). When Chapapa's wife died, he tried to bring from outside another son of him to

rule in Tungi. The Chapapa is killed by Idighami - the son of the elder sister who by then still lived in Mbwizi (some two miles from Kiwiya).

11. The last paragraph contains the list of Tungi successive rulers:

1. Idighami; 2. Mfalme Madi; 3. Sultani Hassani³;
4. Sultani Muhammadi b. Sultani Yussufu; 5. Sultani Abnani (recorded version of the original T1 gives Abdurabi instead of Abnani). 6. Sultani Abrari.

2.2. TUNGI-2:

The text omits the whole Shirazian, Patean and Comorian saga of Tungi forefathers given in T1 and begins with the event of the departure by Ahmadi Hassani (the son of the Shirazi sultan of Angoche) - and his three sisters (*sic!*) from Angoche to Cape Delgado.

1. Sultan Ahmadi Hassani (=SAH) leaves Ngoji (Angoche) going to the North. He is accompanied by three sisters: Ntiti, Amina and Suwabu, by his wife Mama Nkulu, his relatives, his servants.

2. Direct descendants of SAH and his sisters are enumerated. This listing proves that Muhammad Thabiti, the presumable author of the document, is the most rightful descendant (great-great-grandson) of SAH and as such he is the headman of the Waulemelo clan.

3. Journey of SAH to the North during which he stops at various places on the coast (Mambi, Limba, Ruseti and Ntende) leaving everywhere one of his relatives and also takes with him some new followers.

4. SAH settles at Ntende (a place which corresponds to Forodhani i.e. 'customs', a part of today's town of Palma). Since then, the place is given the name Ngoji to commemorate their former homeland. The headman of the local Wampambe people, called Mboho Mwenye Kiwanga and who lives in neighbouring Kilindi, accepts the newcomers. Mboho's territory stretches northwards of the land occupied by SAH.¹²

5. Later on, SAH gives a part of his land to Mzee Nabaluu - a newcomer "from Nyassa". Soon he becomes his ally against the

incursions of the Wabuki slave traders.¹³ 6. SAH dies, probably in his home place Litumumbu (not identified) but is buried in Kiwiya by his relatives who came from there and took the corpse.

7. The succession is given to Selemani - the SAH's relative who is sent for to Kilwa and becomes the ruler in Kiwiya. The next sultans are the direct patrilinear descendants of Selemani but remain also connected to SAH in feminine line, since Selemani's son and successor (Yussufu bin Selemani) marries the daughter (?) of Suwabu, SAH's sister. Genealogy of the successive sultans of Tungi is given.

8. Popular etymology explanation is recalled for the name of the Palma town connecting it with mfal(u)me ('king') and not with the fact that this name was given by the Portuguese to commemorate the Portuguese conqueror of the sultanate - Josw Raimondo de Palma Velho.

9. The legend on the mtungi pot or jar, made of copper, is given to explain the name of Tungi.

10. Legendary etymology explains the name Kiwiya.

11. Genealogy of Tungi sultans is repeated in a narrative way.

1. Sultani Ahmadi Hassani; 2. Sultani Selemani; 3. Sultani Yussufu; 4. Sultani Muhammadi; 5. Sultani Abdurabi; 6. Sultani Aburari; 7. Abdelazizi (*capitão mor*).

12. Dispute on succession between Aburari and his paternal uncle Abdelazizi; Zanzibari and Portuguese interference; military annexation of Tungi by the Portuguese and instauration of *capitao-mor* governement - end of the sultanate.

13. Information on the document itself: nasaba of Muhammedi bun Thabiti, dated Saturday, 29 Di-1-Qaada 1389 A.H., scribe: Abdelfakiri.

TUNGI-3:

The content of the accidentally erased part of the recording was connected with the explanation of Comorian origin of sultan Hassani and with his arrival at Angoche, via Mbwizi (Cape Delgado) where one of his sisters (Mwana Nkulu i.e. the elder one), being pregnant, was left there. The details can not be restaured without the help of the Muhammad Thabiti himself. The preserved part of T3

may be divided in three sections:

- I. The story of the three sisters of Hassani and their descendants
- II. Commentary to T2
- III. Additional commentaries on local toponyms.

Following is the sequence of events in section I:

1. Hassani, sultan of Ngoji (Angoche) orders to kill his nephew because of the adultery committed by him with one of his wives.
2. Two Hassani's sisters, Nunu¹⁴ Ntiti and Nunu Suwabu (the younger one), one of them being the mother of the murdered boy, bury the corpse abandoned in the bush and decide to flee from Ngoji by sea.
3. On the way, Ntiti, being pregnant is forced to stop in Ruseti, near Msaro, to be delivered of a child.
4. Suwabu and her companions continue the travel until they reach Ntende, a place in today's Palma, to which they give the name of Ngoji.
5. This land is ruled by Mbobo Mwenye Kiwanga of the Wampambe clan, who himself lives in Kilindi. Mbobo pretends to make the newcomers his subjects. They fight with Mbobo suffering also of starvation. The legend on the origin of Kiwiya is quoted (same as in T2 point 10, see chapter 4 -"Toponymy"). Finally Suwabu meets her elder sister who has been living in Mbwizi since the time of their common journey from Comoro.
6. Suwabu is saved by Shababi (Chapapa in T1), an Arab from Suli (unidentified) whose ship sank near Kiwiya. Shababi resorts to magic (T2 point 9). Legend on the mtungi and the popular etymology of the name Tungi) is given.
Victory over Mbobo's Wampambe. Shababi marries Suwabu. Later on he builds the palace in Kiwiya. He also introduces the religion (Islam) in Tungi.
7. Shababi and Suwabu have two children: the boy is given the name of his maternal uncle - Hassani (2). Later he becomes the sultan of Tungi. Before it happens, Tungi is ruled by a Shirazi man from Kilwa called Selemari who is succeeded by his son Yussufu, brought from Kilwa. Yussufu marries the daughter of Suwabu and Shababi. Yussufu is succeeded by his son Muhammadi, nicknamed Nchingama.
8. The two sisters - have their sons too. The son of Nunu Nkulu (in Mbwizi) is called Idighami and the son of Nunu Ntiti (in

Ruseti/Msaro) is named Hassani (3) as well.¹⁵ Each one of these cousins rules Tungi for some time. Idighami kills Shababi (the husband of his aunt - referred to as baba wa kambo) when he brings from Suli to Tungi another son and tries to impose him as a ruler. 9. In the meantime, the sultan Hassani dies in Angoche. His son Ahamadi bin Hassani is not accepted by the local Makhuwa so he decides to join his aunts in Tungi.

Here ends the main section of T3 after which the narrator switches to his written text of T2. Further comments by Muhammadi Thabiti, due to the limited space of this paper, can not be summarized here.

Names of the first Tungi rulers extracted from T3:

1. Shababi, 2. Selemani, 3. Yussufu, 4. Muhammadi.

Idighami, Hassani² and Hassani³ are said to have ruled too.

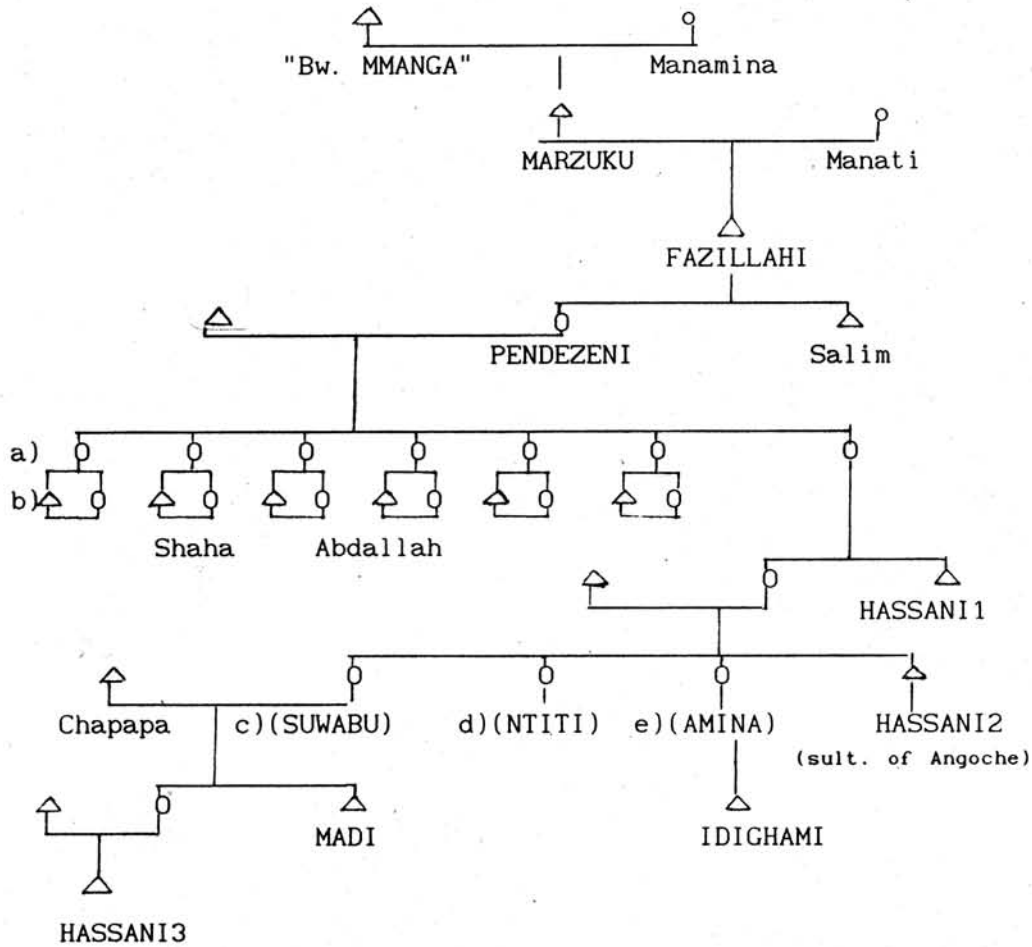
3. Genealogy of Tungi sultans:

In each of the three texts the genealogical information is given partially in the narrative form and partially (this concerns the last rulers of Tungi) as chronological listing.

In several cases doubts arise when people are referred to not by names but by their kinship relations. Kinship terms used in texts differ in some respect from their usual meaning in Standard Swahili, e.g. ndugu means 'relatives of the same generation but of the opposite sex, e.g.: brother or sister in relation to each other', mjuku meaning 'nephew' and not 'grandson'. Three sisters, the key protagonists of the saga, are sometimes referred to as the elder or younger nunu ('sister'), bibi or mama 'lady'.

The following figures summarize the genealogical information which can be extracted from T1, T2 and T3:

Fig.1: Genealogy of sultans of Tungi as provided in T1

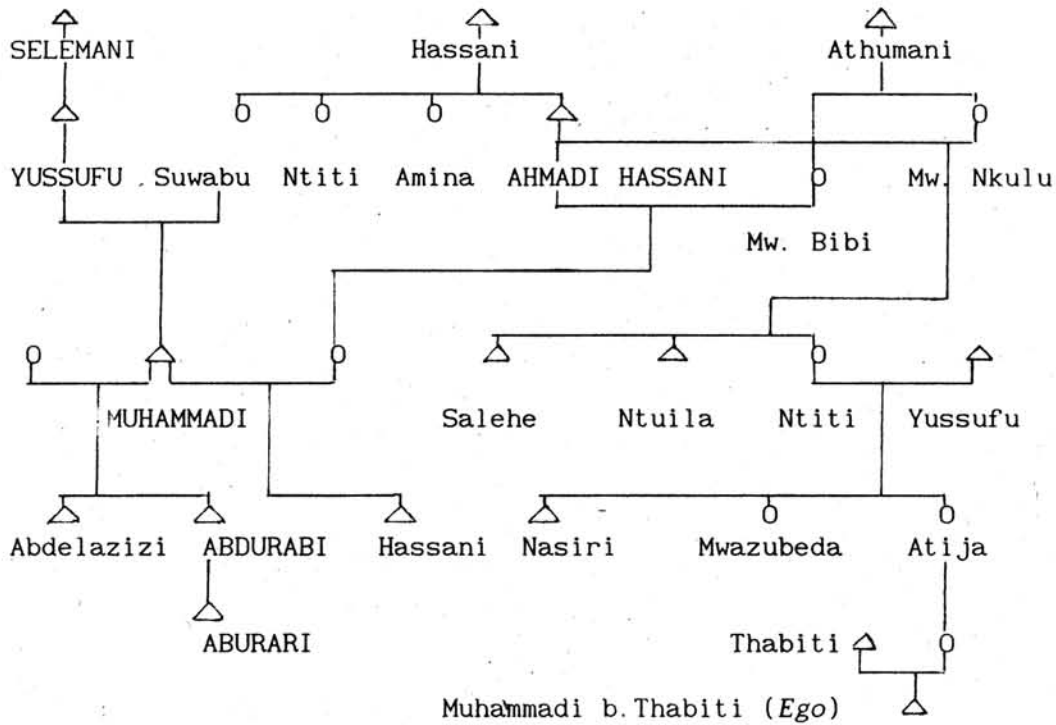


- a) seven daughters of Pendezeni married to one husband.
- b) six brothers and six sisters intermarrying in order "to preserve the Shirazi blood".
- c, d, e) names of the three sisters are taken from T3

Rulers of Tungi (T1):

1. Idighami; 2. Mfalme Madi; 3. Sultani Hassani3; 4. Sultani Muhammadi b. Sultani Yussufu; 5. Sultani Abnani (recorded version of the original T1 gives Abdurabi instead of Abnani).
6. Sultani Abrari.

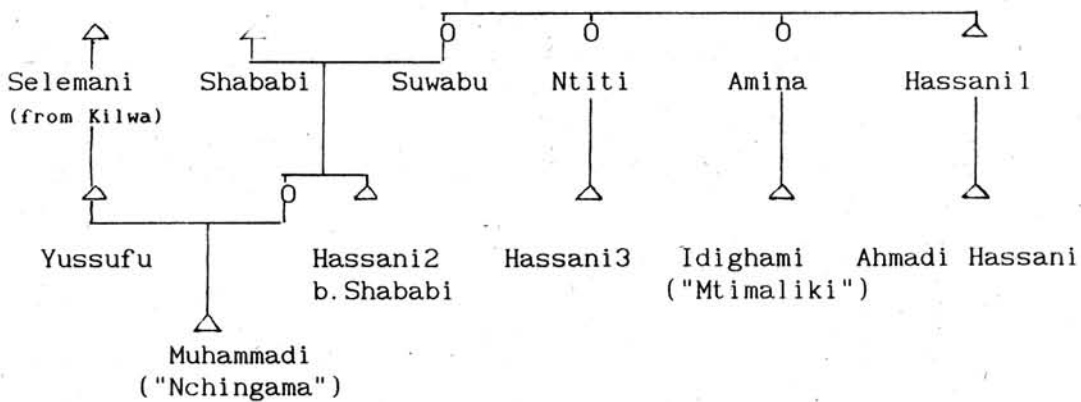
Fig.2 Genealogy of sultans of Tungi as provided in T2



Rulers of Tungi (T2):

1. Sultani Ahmad Hassani; 2. Sultani Selemani; 3. Sultani Yussufu; 4. Sultani Muhammmadi; 5. Sultani Abdurabi; 6. Sultani Aburari; 7. Abdelazizi (*capitao mor*).

Fig.3 Genealogy of sultans of Tungi as provided in T3



Rulers of Tungi (T3):

The text enumerates first rulers only:

1. Shababi, 2. Selemani, 3. Yussufu, 4. Muhammadi.

Idighami, Hassani2 and Hassani3 are said to have ruled too.

It seems that there were two dynasties ruling simultaneously, probably in different parts of Tungi/Kiwiya: the dynasty of sultans descending from Kilwa and the sons of three sisters succeeding each other.

Confronting the genealogies reconstructed from the texts we get the following contradictory lists:

T1	T2	T3
Idighami	Ahmadi Hassani	
Madi	Selemani	Selemani
Hassani3		Hassani3
Muhammadi	Yussufu	Yussufu
Yussufu	Muhammadi	Muhammadi
Abdurabi (or Abnani)	Abdurabi	
Abrari	Ab(u)rari	
	Abdelaziz (c.m.)	

The historicity can be attested in external written sources (Portuguese documents referred to by Bennett, *op.cit.*) so far only for:

- Hassani3 (of T3, Portuguese spelling: Assane Menhe Mosalo na Chirazi; years 1828-30)
- Muhammadi (lived 1837-60)
- Abdulaziz (imposed as *capitão mor* by Palma Velho, Portuguese administrator of the Cabo Delgado, 1877?).

Inscriptions on Muhammadi's and Abdurabi's graves in Kiwiya/Tungi, close to the ruins of the palace, show the following dates (as deciphered by Monteiro, 1966:56)¹⁶: Muhammad Yussuf Hamisi: 1275 A.H. (= 1858 A.D.), Abderabi 1289 A.H. (= 1872 A.D.). The third grave, the oldest one, is said to be of the sultan Hassani (or Ahmadi Hassani?), but inscriptions have not been registered.

4. Toponymy of Tungi and related to its past.

All the three texts provide a number of geographic proper names, not all of them identifiable. They are mostly names of human settlements located in the land of Tungi or connected with the legendary times of the Shirazi ancestors and their travelling between Shiraz, Pate, Comoro and Angoche. The names of the most important settlements in Tungi are subject to popular etymological interpretations which, despite their little linguistic or historical value deserve attention, as a cultural phenomenon.¹⁷ Muhammad Thabiti appeared to possess a particularly creative etymological spirit.

The name Tungi is a good example. Popular etymology derives it from the Swahili word mtungi 'water pot' (usually made of clay). Tradition says that the first Shirazi settlers managed to overcome and subdue the local Wampambe people, by resorting to magic. A magic object was buried in a mtungi made for this purpose of copper. The master of the magic was an Arab saved from a ship wrecked near Kiwiya. Whatever is the origin of the name, its derived forms are irregular. As ethnonym: Mwitungi cl.1 Wetungi, Wamatungi cl.2 or Matungi cl.6 ('Tungi people'), language: ciitungi. It is difficult to explain the presence of the /i/ vowel before the stem -tungi.

The name Kiwiya is associated with the word mawiya '(three) cooking-stones'. The legendary explanation is that Suwabu and her people had nothing to eat when they first landed in Kiwiya. They survived by eating the powder made of petrified organic blocks taken out of a termitary and mixing it with water and honey. Such blocks are, reportedly, also used as cooking-stones.

The name of the town of Palma is humoristically associated with mfalme 'king' and not with his true patron José Raimondo de Palma Velho - administrator of the Cabo Delgado district who conquered Tungi in 1877. The legend concerns the episode when the Portuguese imposed Abdulazizi as *capitão mor* saying in kimwani (sic!): mfalume aveya 'the king is never tired' which sounds similar to Palma Velho. In fact there is a linguistic reason for such an etymologizing play of words since Makonde language (but not Mwani)

has no /f/ phoneme.

Etymological anecdotes and legendary interpretations put aside, we still find some interesting toponymical data in the texts.

The first settlement founded by sultan Ahamadi Hassani on shores of the Tungi Bay was Ntende. Today this is a part of Palma. The Shirazi, who came there from Angoche, have given it the name of their home country i.e. Ngoji. Another old name of what is today Palma appears in T2 and T3 and it sounds like Litumbu or Litumumbu. Mineng'ene (Minangani) is still another one. It is etymologically derived from Makwe & Makonde jineng'ene 'twigs'. On Bagara (or Bagala), a locality close to Palma, it is said that its name comes from the word baghala which denotes, as Prins defines it, 'the most beautiful of all the "dows"',¹⁸

Two settlements in close vicinity of Tungi-Kiwiya mentioned in the texts are: Mbwizi and Kirindi (Mebuisi, Querinde in Portuguese spelling). Mbwizi is connected by tradition with Amina - one of the three Shirazi sisters - who settled there. It does not exist at present. The village was evacuated by the order of the Portuguese army during the liberation war and the ruins of the palace referred to by Monteiro (1966) are reportedly swollen by the sea.

Toponyms related with places outside of the region of Tungi are: Shiraz (described by the narrator as an island in Arabia!), Pate, Hinziwani (Anjouan), Mwali (Mohéli), Chole (island close to Mafia) Ngoji (Angoche island), Parapatu (old name of the Angoche town on the continent), Shangaji (= Sangage, close to Angoche), Ruseti, not identified but apparently close to Msaro - in vicinity of the town of Quiteraço and the Messalo river in Cabo Delgado province. Several others, like Suli, are still to be identified.

5. Conclusion.

Shirazian genealogical documents from Tungi, as compared to the best known chronicles of other Swahili towns, are far from being rich in information of historical relevance. They are not written as records of glorious deeds of Tungi rulers. They testify only and mirror the situation that Tungi used to be ruled by the Shirazi clan and justify this situation by attributing a

prestigious ancestry to the ruling dynasty. In Palma and Kiwiya the Shirazi still today constitute the traditional elite¹⁹. Two authors of the texts under examination belong to this clan²⁰. Muhammed bin Thabiti is the most respected leader of the Muslim community (shehe) in Palma. He owes this position to his deep knowledge of theology and shari'a laws acquired in Zanzibar²¹ but also to his aristocratic pedigree written in a language and in a script which should not be used to tell stories of amusement.

One characteristic and distinctive element in the Shirazian traditions of Tungi is the prominency given to the female ancestors. In the genealogical chain, in several cases, names of women only are given, whereas their husbands' names are omitted (Pendezeni, Amina). The saga of the three sisters, founders of Tungi dynasty, seems to be a local cliché functionally corresponding to the Swahili legend on seven (or six) brothers from Shiraz. It may be an adaptation of the legend to the system of matrilinear descent still very strong in Tungi. In fact, Tungi genealogies reflect a bilateral system of descent emerging there.

We incline to accept the view presented by many anthropologists' (Pouwels, 1984:242-43) that traditions, including genealogical ones, are used as a kind of charter myth which provides an interpretation of how the present social order came into being. The texts which are under analysis here may be considered as the coded mirror image of the contemporary social universe of Tungi. Therefore they should be of some importance to historians interested in reconstructing of the process leading to the present situation. The texts provide also some information relevant to the ethnohistory of Tungi (Mbobo and his Wampambe people are said to be the first inhabitants and to have come from Nyassa) and to the history of Shirazi migrations along the Mozambican littoral. Genealogical dynastic ties between Tungi, Hinziwani, Angoche and Kilwa are important pieces of information too but they should be confirmed by other sources. What is legend and what is the historical truth in Tungi traditions remains to be investigated.

NOTES :

¹ This paper is much modified in relation to the original version presented at the 1989 Conference in Ojrzanów. Due to the limited space in this volume, the analysis of the linguistic evidence was cut off. Large part of the linguistic and sociolinguistic material has been transferred to another paper - see Rzewuski, forthcoming.

² Bennett (1987) refers to Loarer, a French commercial investigator who reported in 1848 that the zone of influence of the sultan Muhammad bin Sultan of Tungi reached by that time some 120 miles deep into the continent. Bennett himself describes the location of Tungi as stretching "north of the Minangani river" which is not much precise. He does not mention the existence of the ruins of the palace.

³ Rotter 1976:24.

⁴ Rotter 1976:25-27. This legend is the core motive in the traditional Swahili historiography, but usually Tungi is not listed in this context. Rotter also quotes Fontoynt & Raomandahy (1937 'La Grande Comore' *Memoires de l'Academie Malgache*, 13, 1937:12) who enumerate the following Shirazi towns founded by the 'seven Shirazi brothers': 1. Ngazidja, 2. Somali land, 3. Zanzibar, 4. Kilwa, 5. Ilangoudji, 6. Nzwani, 7. Boueni (Malagasy).

In the same context Tungi is mentioned in the Chronicle of Mayotte, as referred by Gevrey, quoted after Harries (1977:79):

1. the Suaheli land, 2. Zanzibar. 3. Tonguy, 4. Gonoué 5. Gazizad (=Ngazidja). 6. Anjouan, 7. Bouéni (Malagasy). As concerns Ngoji ("Ilangouji" being probably the same) this is the local (in Swahili and Koti languages) name for Angoche which Rotter was not able to identify properly.

⁵ Traditions collected by C. Velten, *Prosa und Poesie der Suaheli*, Berlin 1907, reproduced partially in Freeman-Grenville 1962:221-6. I owe to prof. G.S.P. Freeman-Grenville the information that in the same Velten's collection there is a text on the history of Tungi but it is still unavailable to me.

⁶ Legère (1986:152-53) explains it in the context of migrant labour from the hinterland to coastal plantations. There, workers speaking Maraba (very close to Makwe) after having earned some money and learned Swahili as a *lingua franca* bring their wives from their home villages.

⁷ Research team of the Departamento de Arqueologia e Antropologia of the Eduardo Mondlane University was composed by the following colleagues: Ana Loforte (Head, anthropologist), Irãe Baptista Lundin (anthropologist), Gerard Liesegang (historian, archeologist), Ryszard Czajkowski (camera man and photographer) and the present author, whose main task was to study aspects of the language situation. The research was realized under the project "Urban Origins in Mozambique" (1988) sponsored by the Swedish SAREC. The documents referred to in the present paper are the property of the Eduardo Mondlane University.

⁸ The handwritten copy of the original manuscript was provided by the local copist and collected. For the sake of guarantee that the copy would not differ substantially from the original, the text of the original was registered also on the taperecorder as dictated by the copist himself.

⁹ The manuscript was photographically registered on the site and later reproduced, its content was also taperecorded as TUNGI-3.

¹⁰ The document was written on request of the present author and follows the draft questionnaire prepared for that purpose

¹¹ The name of the founder of the Shirazi dynasty of Angoche (Ngoji) coincides with Angoche local tradition as quoted by Newitt (1972:398) after Lupi: Hassani, the former king of Quelimane ruled Angoche after the death of its sultan and his brother Musa.

¹² Mbobobo is presented as a man who came from Nyasa (was he a Yao or Nyanja?). The tradition identifies Wampambe as 'local people' (wenye nchi). Were they close to the Makonde-Mavia ethno-linguistic group?

¹³ The text identifies them as Arabs from Arabia, but the term usually refers to people from Madagascar, probably the Sakalava invaders.

¹⁴ Nunu is the address kinship term: brother addressing his sister.

¹⁵ Acc. to T3 Hassani³ lived in Msaru (close to Quiterajo, on Messalo river, some 150 km south of Tungi) and only temporarily ruled Tungi. He was probably the true historical personage (the same as quoted by Bennett in the spelling of a Portuguese document: Assane Menhe Mosalo na Chirazi) who in 1828-30 exchanged letters with the Portuguese governor.

Eternalizing Hassani's name by giving it to his several direct or indirect descendants, makes understanding the story difficult, since the name of the given Hassani's father is usually not indicated.

¹⁶ Quoted after Liesegang, n.d.:27

¹⁷ See Schadeberg's paper in this volume.

¹⁸ Prins A.H.J. *A Swahili nautical dictionary*, Dar es Salaam 1970.

¹⁹ In Kiwiya the Shirazi compose the majority clan (kabila) - 23.3%, the second in rank being Nausi (13.6%), who also claim their oriental origin; and, according to IHQ, were the first immigrants to settle in Tungi (numerical data taken from Lundin & Loforte, 1988:12).

²⁰ Abdallah ibn Salim Mungoji, the author of T1, though not identified, must be associated with the descendants of the royal family from Angoche (Ngoji), as his nisba Mungoji indicates.

²¹ He belongs to the Qadiriya brotherhood and is also in possession of a manuscript copy of one of 'Abd al-Qādr al-Ġilāni scripts - another symbol of status.

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