

## Interesting

It was really engaging to read about the Swahili Coast's people existing as sort of "middlemen" between the interior East Africa and the Red Sea traders like China, India, and Arabia. The mix between Arab settlers and Bantu of East Africa created a rich society different from the rest of Africa where Arabic and Islam became highly influential, even morphing the language. I was surprised reading about the stratification of class and how adopting Arab merchant traits led to being seen as higher class.

## Anger

As soon as I read about the Portuguese assisting East Africans to defend against the Arabs in the 1500s my heart sank – something like historical dramatic irony. There's a theory in one of the readings from my Afrofuturism class that suggests there is no amount of good that can mend the damage done to black people over the course of history, and that the only solution for Africans and African-Americans is to escape to outer space. I don't know if I'll ever be able to have a definitive stance on this, but reading about things like the Portuguese's destruction in the 1500s backs that claim up, as it suggests an inversely proportional relationship between colonial powers' success and native or indigenous populations' downfall. It seemed like bullying on an intercontinental scale – the Portuguese were scared of the Muslim powers, and they were indebted to India for spices, so they picked on the first group of people they could exploit and overpower.