

Belonging, Exclusion and Islam in Mozambique

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This paper focuses on changing conceptions of nationalism, citizenship and belonging among Indian merchants in contemporary Mozambique. Since the end of socialism in 1989, Indian merchants have utilised Muslim religious and economic networks that span the western Indian Ocean to become a powerful economic force in post-socialist Mozambique. Although the ruling Frelimo party continues to champion a secular nationalist ideology, Indian merchants have become important economic allies, despite the fact that this alliance is subject to various forms of social tension. Unlike socialism, the current version of nationalism no longer stresses that all citizens are equally Mozambican. Therefore, how does this process affect Indian merchants' sense of identity as Mozambican and African, especially as they are increasingly being seen as the 'other'? In this context, I will analyse what forms of regional, political and religious identities come to the fore and how these identities place themselves in relation to Mozambique and the western Indian Ocean.

Keywords: Frelimo, Maputo, Indians, Nationalism, Islam, 'De-Territorialization'