PART ONE

THE WORLDS OF THE INDIAN OCEAN
INTRODUCTION: INTER-OCEANIC MIGRATIONS FROM AN INDIAN OCEAN PERSPECTIVE, 1830s TO 1930s

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How does the question of interoceanic migrations pose itself from a perspective which takes the Indian Ocean as its starting point? For one thing, it seems certain from the essays collected here that migration between the Indian Ocean and other regions must be studied together with the inner-oceanic moves.

Through the Red Sea and the Persian Gulf (as well as through caravan routes), the Indian Ocean was linked to the Mediterranean, in the East through the South China, Java, and Timor Seas to the Pacific Ocean and, via the route around Cape Horn, the Atlantic could be reached. At least in this region, furthermore, oceanic and international moves are not easily separated from land-based ones, whether internal or international. Translocal perspectives (for example David Feldman’s suggestion to link internal and external migrations) also seem particularly relevant for the Indian Ocean, where (trans)oceanic migrational streams and regulations could have repercussions in the regions of origins and transit, leading for example in one case to the relocation of grain production from the hinterland of Kilwa to the hinterland of the southern Benadir ports further north. Empires that stretched well beyond the Indian Ocean influenced the flow of migrations both within and out of the Indian Ocean basin. As a result, the independence of most states around the Indian Ocean, which came mainly after 1940, had significant consequences.

The circulation of peoples, goods, and ideas that took place within the Indian Ocean system (which itself has to be seen as a changing seascape in which different regions were connected through shifting

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