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Seeing life through the Eyes of Swahili Children of Lamu, Kenya: A Visual Anthropology Approach

Images & Captions

Images 1 – 3

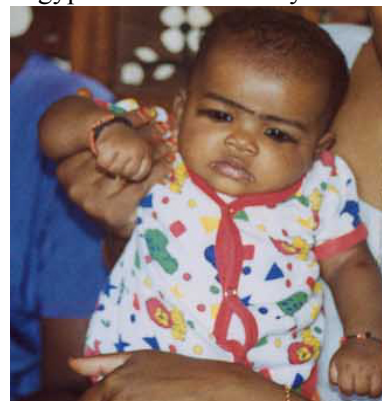


Amina with her map. Omari experimenting with the camera. Ali and Rebecca discussing Ali's images.

Images 4 – 6; 7 - 8



The most common anti-hex design is the one shown on the forehead of the child at left. Another popular marking is the Arabic word for God (*Allah*) (not shown). These symbols are made with kohl known locally as *wanda*, the natural black powder worn by ancient Egyptians around the eyes to ward off evil.



In combination, red and white (bracelets on child, left), and red and black (bracelets on child, right) are believed to offer protection against the evil eye. Until recently (fifty years ago), a child suffering from a long-lasting illness would wear a necklace strung with roasted coffee beans (black) and pieces of raw coconut (white) to ward off the evil that had caused the illness and to aid in the child's recovery.

Images 9 - 10



The seventh day of a Swahili baby's life is full of excitement. For a boy, this day marks his entry into the Islamic community by virtue of the purification ritual of circumcision (left) and for all babies their official welcome into the home in which they will grow up (right).

Images 11 – 12; 13 - 15



When not in school, Swahili boys spend much of their time outside running errands around town for their parents either on foot (left) or by donkey (right). Childhood for them is characterized by a great deal of mobility bringing them out into the world of Swahili men.



When not in school, girls spend much of their time indoors with their female relatives helping with food preparation and other household activities (left, middle). Family weddings are special times when girls dress up and enjoy a bit of the kind of attention that adult brides receive (right).

Image 16

STONETOWN ACADEMY MAHADHARA TIME – TABLE 2011

DAY	7.00 7.40	7.40 8.00	CLASS	8.00 8.35	8.35 9.10	9.10 9.45	9.45 10.20	10.20 10.45	10.45 11.15	11.15 11.45	11.45 12.15	12.15 2.00	2.00 2.30	2.30 3.00	3.00 3.30
M O N			1	Math	Quran	Eng	Fiqh	B	S/S	Kisw	Tawhed	L	Sci	R.E	Arabic
			2	Eng	Quran	Sci	Fiqh	R E	Math	PE	Tawhed	U N	S/S	R.E	Arabic
T U E			1	Eng	Hadith	Math	R.E	A	Quran	Kisw	Sci	C H	Arabic	Eng	Seyra
			2	Math	Hadith	Eng	R.E	K	Quran	Sci	Kisw		Arabic	S/S	Seyra
W E N			1	Sci	Fiqa	Math	Eng	B	Arabic	Kisw	S/S	L	Math	Quran	C/A
			2	Eng	Fiqh	Math	PE	R E	Arabic	S/S	Kisw	U N	Sci	Quran	C/A
T H U			1	Eng	Arabic	Math	S/S	A	Seyra	Kisw	Fiqh	C H	Sci	R.E	Quran
			2	Eng	Arabic	Math	Sci	K	Seyra	Kisw	Fiqh		S/S	R.E	Quran
F R I			1	Arabic	Math	Sci	Seyra	B	Eng	Kisw	S/S	L	Quran	Tawhed	C/A
			2	Arabic	Eng	Sci	Seyra	R E	Math	S/S	Kisw	U N	Quran	Tawhed	C/A
S A R Y			1	QUR	A N	Tawhed	Arabic	A	HAD	ITH	Akhlaq	C H			
			2	QUR	A N	Arabic	Tawhed	K	HAD	ITH	Akhlaq				

Weekly Class Schedule, Stone Town Academy

Images 17 – 18; 19 - 20



This girl leaves her house at 7:15 a.m. to walk to school during the week (left). These boys enjoy the mid-day break between Saturday *madrassa* classes by exploring the Lamu seafont (right).



Students at the Lamu Special School for the Mentally Handicapped (right). Handicapped with their teacher, Mariam Abdalla (left).



A student is tutored at home in the evening

Images 21 – 23; 24 - 25



Swahili girls set up their kitchens early and practice serving up the delectable dishes that will one day bring them respect (above). Like African women generally, motherhood is another way Swahili women are honored by their society, which explains why dolls are a favorite toy for Swahili girls (below).



Images 26 – 28; 29 – 30



In their free time, Swahili boys can be seen driving their hand-made cars (above) and sailing their personally-crafted ships (below) along the Lamu seafont.



Images 31 - 33



Halma and brother Hasani on her bed.

Grinding pilipili.

Mother and aunty making bajia.

Images 34 - 36



Halma's spot at Karim's store.

Halma in school uniform on rooftop.

Halma's young playmates.

Images 37 - 39



Omari's fourth grade Swahili class. Omari with his favorite teacher. Omari with Ama Babu, the food-seller.

Images 40 - 42



Boys dazzle with flips during break. The Lamu soccer fields. Baby cousin in hanging leso bed.

Images 43 - 45



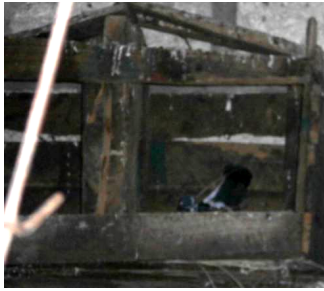
Four of Amina's charges snack on *muhogo*. Playing hopscotch. A neighbor with nephews and niece.

Images 46 - 48



The shop where Amina's sister works. Amina (far right) with friends. Amina at home watching movies.

Images 49 - 51



One of Ali's doves laying an egg.



The old maembe tree.



Ali on his way to madrasa.

Images 52 - 54



Ali proudly displaying his trophy.



The door Ali's father carved.



Rainbow over the Lamu channel.

Images 55 - 57



Esha (top) with younger siblings.



Esha keeps the little ones busy.



Plants growing near the Lamu Fort.

Images 58 - 60



Bougainvillea next to the market.



Nature in unexpected places.



Esha's favorite dog "Brown."

Images 61 - 63



Mohammad's father at his desk. Classmates working on an exam. Mohammad taking an exam at madrasa.

Images 64 - 66



"Green Mamba" faces off against an opposing team. Mohammad's coach. Working on a new move.

Image 67



The author being served pretend tea in a playhouse children constructed from sticks and a recycled maize sack during the school vacation in August, 2010.