

THE ASIAN COMMUNITY IN EAST AFRICA: ITS  
GEOGRAPHICAL DISTRIBUTION AND ECONOMIC  
AND SOCIAL CHARACTERISTICS

---

A Thesis  
Presented to  
the Faculty of the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences  
University of Denver

---

In Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements for the Degree  
Master of Arts

---

by  
Juliet H. Zaidi  
December 1967

THE GRADUATE SCHOOL OF ARTS AND SCIENCES

of

THE UNIVERSITY OF DENVER

Upon the recommendation of the chairman of the  
DEPARTMENT OF GEOGRAPHY this thesis is hereby  
accepted in partial fulfillment of the require-  
ments for the degree of

Master of Arts

*Thomas M. Griffiths*

Professor in charge of thesis

*Richard C. Miller*

Dean of the Graduate School  
of Arts and Sciences

*March 1968*

Date

#### ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The author wishes to acknowledge the guidance and help given by Mrs. Irene S. van Dongen who went beyond the duties of an advisor in helping to prepare this piece of research. Her advice and constructive criticism were extremely helpful.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER	PAGE
I. INTRODUCTION . . . . .	1
Dispersion of Asians (Indians) through the World, Outside of Asia . . . . .	1
Distribution of Significant Asian Population Outside of Asia . . . . .	2
II. ASIANS ON THE AFRICAN CONTINENT . . . . .	5
Asians in South Africa . . . . .	8
III. THE ASIAN MINORITIES IN EAST AFRICA . . . . .	11
History of Asian Migration . . . . .	11
Ancient Maritime Trade in Western Indian Ocean . .	11
Arab Slave Trade Period . . . . .	15
Post-1885 or Colonial Period . . . . .	17
Distributional Patterns of Asians in East Africa . .	22
Demographic, Cultural, Political, and Economic Characteristics of Asians in East Africa . . . . .	28
Demographic Characteristics . . . . .	28
Cultural Characteristics . . . . .	35
Civil and Political Rights . . . . .	45
Economic Patterns . . . . .	49
IV. THE PRESENT AND THE FUTURE OF THE ASIAN COMMUNITY IN EAST AFRICA . . . . .	59
BIBLIOGRAPHY . . . . .	63

LIST OF TABLES

TABLE	PAGE
I. World Distribution of Numerically Significant Asian (Indian) Groups in the Early 1960s . . . . .	3
II. Non-African Population in East Africa in Census Years .	30
III. Non-African Population for Uganda by Age . . . . .	33
IV. Distribution of East African Population by Sexes . . .	34
V. Employment in Kenya by Racial Groups, 1954 . . . . .	52
VI. Employment by Racial Group and Type in Uganda, 1959 . .	53
VII. Distribution of Income in Kenya . . . . .	57

## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

#### Dispersion of Asians (Indians) through the World, Outside of Asia

Throughout history mankind has been repeatedly on the move in search of better economic and social opportunities than those found in their native homeland.

Some of the immigrant groups have easily incorporated into the adoptive societies and soon have become indistinguishable from the general mass. Other groups have not been able to undergo so readily the process of acculturation, but rather have insisted upon preserving their own cultural characteristics. These groups form today distinct ethnic minorities in the countries they have adopted as their home.

Such is the case of peoples from the overcrowded Indian peninsula of the Asian continent, whose boundaries of dispersion have largely coincided with the confines of the former British Empire.

With the abolition of slavery by the British Parliament in 1833, a labor vacuum was created in a number of British tropical possessions because the former Negro slaves refused to continue work as paid apprentices on local sugar or other plantations. The pressing need for manpower led the British to recruit, under a system of indenture, Asian laborers from Colonial India to fill the void. They came as agricultural workers particularly to the

Caribbean America, the Fiji Islands, Mauritius Colony and the present Republic of South Africa. Others were brought in as members of railroad construction gangs, for example, to East Africa.

Prior to their arrival there had been already a sizable influx of Indian traders and merchants to the East African coast, dealing in local products including ivory and slaves and supplying in return certain goods from India.

Throughout the twentieth century further waves of Asian (Indian) migration contributed distinguished professional men and leaders from India to the already established Indian communities in foreign lands. Among these one may recall Mahatma Gandhi, who exercised the profession of law in South Africa from 1893 to 1914 and later blazed a trail in the spiritual enrichment of all men regardless of their nationality or race.

#### Distribution of Significant Asian Population Outside of Asia

Table I shows the present distribution throughout the world of numerically significant groups uprooted from the Peninsula of India. In their new countries they have been called by various names: Asians, Indians and East Indians. Since the independence of Colonial India from the British rule and its partition into the Republic of India and the Islamic state of Pakistan, the term Asians has generally been used to identify both the Indians and Pakistanis in Africa south of the Sahara. In this study the terms Asians or Indo-Pakistanis are mostly used interchangeably, unless otherwise specified.

TABLE I  
 WORLD DISTRIBUTION OF NUMERICALLY SIGNIFICANT  
 ASIAN (INDIAN) GROUPS IN THE EARLY 1960s\*

World Area and Country	Total Nat'l Population (in '000s)	Asian Community (in '000s)	Percent of Total
<u>Caribbean Area</u>			
Trinidad and Tobago	828.0	302.0	37.0
Guyana (British Guiana)	560.0	268.0	48.0
<u>Pacific Area</u>			
Fiji Islands	346.0	169.0	49.0
<u>Eastern and Southern Africa</u>			
South Africa	16,003.0	477.0	3.0
Mauritius	700.0	470.0	67.0
Kenya	8,847.0	180.0	2.0
Tanganyika	9,789.0	90.0	1.0
Uganda	7,367.0	82.0	1.0
Zanzibar	300.0	20.0	7.0
Mozambique	6,579.0	17.0	1.0
Malawi (Nyasaland)	3,580.0	11.0	1.0
Zambia (N. Rhodesia)	3,300.0	8.0	1.0
Rhodesia (S. Rhodesia)	4,210.0	8.0	1.0
Botswana (Bechuanaland)	321.0	3.0	1.0

\*Sources: Dharam P. Ghai (ed.), Portrait of a Minority: Asians in East Africa (Nairobi: Oxford University Press, 1963), p. 92; C. Legum (ed.), Africa: A Handbook to the Continent (New York: Praeger, 1966), pp. 137 and 140; Portugal, Provincia de Moçambique, Direcção Provincial dos Serviços de Estatística Geral, Anuário Estatístico (Lourenço Marques, 1964), p. 30; U.N., Demographic Yearbook 1963 (New York, N.Y.), pp. 301-312, and Monthly Bulletin of Statistics, February, 1967, pp. 1-4.

Data indicated actually differ in years but correspond to the period 1961-1964, with the exception of the Fiji Islands and Botswana, which are for the year 1956.



As can be seen from Table I, eastern and southern Africa have been the leading world areas of Asian immigration. South Africa has at present the largest Asian community, some 477,000 persons or roughly 50 per cent of all Indians and Pakistanis found on the African continent. Proportionately, however, they represent only 3 per cent of total South African population.

In the island of Mauritius (usually considered a part of the African world area), Asians account for as high as 76 per cent of total island population. A significant Asian (Indian and Pakistani) community, totalling about 352,000 people, also exists in former British East Africa, now made up of three independent countries of Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania.

A second world area of Asian concentration is in the Caribbean America, with Trinidad and Tobago leading with some 302,000 "East Indians," according to the 1960 census. Guyana (ex-British Guiana) has 268,000 Asians, representing over 50 per cent of its total population body.

## CHAPTER II

### ASIANS ON THE AFRICAN CONTINENT

Figure 1 shows the pattern of distribution of peoples from the Asian continent through Africa south of the Sahara, as it emerged at mid-twentieth century. It should be noted that Asian groups other than the Indo-Pakistanis are included in this figure and that the quantitative symbols correspond to earlier censuses than the ones used for Table I.<sup>1</sup>

In territories formerly a part of French West-African administrative complex, the Asians are Levantines, more akin culturally to the European minority than the southern Asian block of peoples. They are Syrians and Lebanese merchants and shopkeepers who have followed the French flag, like the Indo-Pakistanis did for the British, mainly during the period of French mandate 1920-31 over their countries.<sup>2</sup> A sprinkling of them also exists through former French Equatorial Africa. In Madagascar Island, also formerly French-ruled, many local Asians are Chinese.

The role of the middle man between the European and the African played by the Indo-Pakistanis in eastern and southern Africa was traditionally filled in the Belgian Congo colony by

---

<sup>1</sup>Earlier data had to be used because only in those years were distinctions made in some countries as to their Asian residents.

<sup>2</sup>Lord Hailey, An African Survey (London: O.U.P., 1957), p. 411.

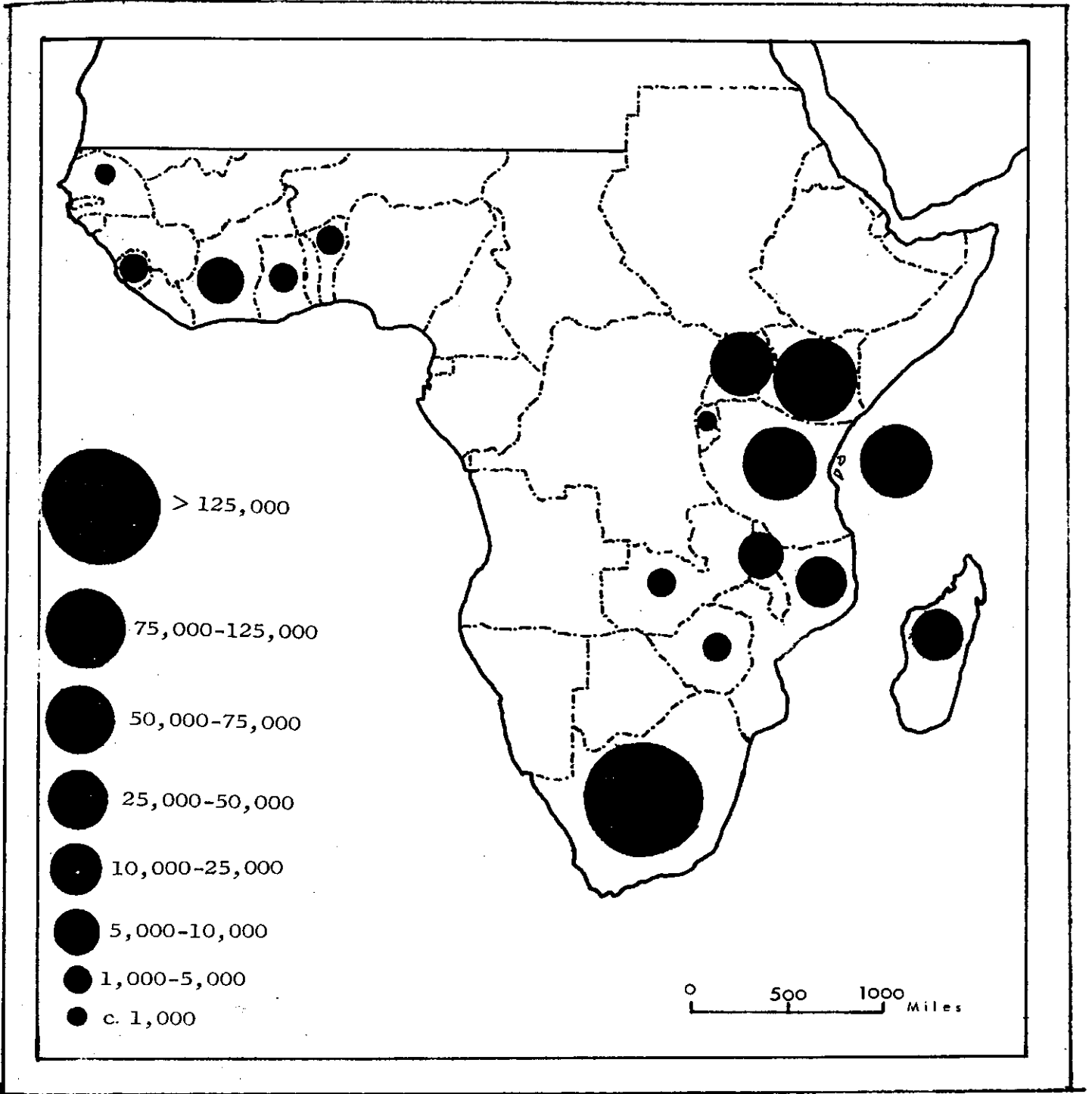


FIGURE 1

ASIAN POPULATION OF AFRICAN COUNTRIES SOUTH OF THE SAHARA IN THE 1950s (ADAPTED FROM TREWARTHA AND ZELINSKY) POPULATION BODIES BELOW 1,000 ARE NOT RECORDED

Greeks and Portuguese, so there has not been much opportunity for the growth of a strong Asian (Indian) community. Only in the ex-U.N. Trust Territory of Ruanda-Urundi was the Asian trader of some importance but he was more often from the Arabian rather than the Indian Peninsula.

In former British West Africa few Asians are to be found since local Africans showed from early times the necessary spirit of enterprise for a middle-class African stratum to emerge in the West African society. In the interior countries of ex-British Central Africa, the Rhodesias and Nyasaland, however, Asian population, largely of Indo-Pakistani origin, numbers in several thousands. Politically they enjoy equality with Europeans, but socially they have been little accepted by the white society and restrictions were soon placed here, as well as in Bechuanaland, on further Asian immigration.

Within the belt of Asian strength, as it can be seen from Figure 1, two major regions of Asian occupation could be distinguished in the 1900s: (1) British East Africa (Kenya, Uganda and Tanganyika) to encompass also the offshore British Protectorate of Zanzibar; and (2) Union of South Africa consisting then administratively of the Cape Province, Transvaal, Orange Free State and Natal. In the first region a certain proportion of Asians have represented the remains of the historical Arab rule over the Western shores of the Indian Ocean. A greater number, however, are the outcome of late nineteenth and twentieth century migrations

from the Indian Peninsula, as we shall see further on. In the second region also the Asian incomers are largely Indo-Pakistanis and the result of nineteenth and twentieth century arrivals.

Prior to examining in detail the Asian community in East Africa, the object of this thesis, a short glance might be of interest at the South Africa's Asian minority, mainly to focus attention on regional differences in Asians' social and economic status in the two areas.

#### Asians in South Africa

In 1960, total Asian population of the Republic of South Africa numbered 477,414 persons.<sup>3</sup> Over 66 per cent of these people resided in the eight major metropolitan areas: Durban, Pretoria-Witwatersrand-Vereeniging region, Cape Town, Port Elizabeth, East London, Pietermaritzberg, Bloemfontein, and Kimberley. The largest Indian community was in Durban. In that leading port city lived 49 per cent of all South Africa's Indians representing 35 per cent of the total Durban population and easily outnumbering local whites.

Immigrants from India began to flow into South Africa in 1860 to work as unskilled indentured laborers in the sugar and tea plantations owned by the British in Natal. Many of them were Tamils from Southern India and the Madras area. After the

---

<sup>3</sup>T. J. D. Fair and N. M. Shaffer, "Population Patterns and Policies in South Africa, 1951-1960," Economic Geography, Vol. 40, No. 3, July 1964, p. 262.

customary five years of bonded service, they were offered a plot of land or their passage back to India. Many chose to remain and became small independent farmers, shopkeepers and domestics rather than continue on the plantations.

In 1911 free Asian immigration was rigidly prohibited but by that time there was in the eastern coastal belt of South Africa a relatively important Asian community engaged in market gardening and retail trade.

Indian entry into Orange Free State had been barred quite early and the Cape colony was too far away from traditional Asian migration routes. Some groups of Indians, however, penetrated into Transvaal where the majority of them are now Muslim traders from Surat of higher social and economic standing than the immigrants in Natal; others, operating retail trade business in the town of Pretoria, are frequently from Bombay.<sup>4</sup> Thus one may note in South Africa a sharp division of Asians (Indians) in two social groups: the lower class Hindu and the higher in status, the Muslim trader.

Indians in South Africa are a politically voteless community. ~~So~~cially, they are treated as inferiors by the powerful white element, on the same lines as the native African, without consideration for educational levels or individual degree of refinement. They are restrained in freedom of residence and

---

<sup>4</sup>Walter Fitzgerald, Africa (New York: E. P. Dutton, 1948), p. 200.

movement between the South African administrative subdivisions, and are allowed to trade or own land only in certain areas or hedged about with restrictions as to occupations.<sup>5</sup>

By comparison with South Africa, the Asian (Indian) community of some 350,000 in the lands of East Africa has been able to acquire more recognition and a higher social and political status. Immigration restrictions have been fewer and the tolerance climate much more favorable. The degree of acceptance has varied, though, from one East African country to another. Survival problems for them now loom significant with the recent end of British colonial rule and the mounting tide of competition on the part of the native African as he becomes better educated and more aggressive in his pursuit of improved living opportunities.

---

<sup>5</sup>A. Welsh (ed.), Africa, South of the Sahara: An Assessment of Human and Material Resources (London: Oxford University Press, 1951), p. 74.

## CHAPTER III

### THE ASIAN MINORITIES IN EAST AFRICA

#### I. HISTORY OF ASIAN MIGRATION

##### Ancient Maritime Trade in Western Indian Ocean

It is difficult to assign a date to the beginnings of Asian (Indian) contacts with East Africa. In one of the earliest historical accounts, The Periplus of the Erythrean Sea, written in Greek about A.D. 80 or 60, the presence of Indian as well as Arab traders along the eastern African shores is recorded.

The Periplus mentions that Indian ships came from the Gulf of Cambay and the lands of Cutch, Kathiawar and Gujarat and brought such products as wheat, rice, sesame oil, ghee (clarified butter), cotton, beads and cloth for trade in the market towns of East Africa. Other ships came from the northwest coast of India.<sup>1</sup> (See Figure 2.) Hollingsworth, a noted historian of the East African coast, describes the early trade thusly:

Long before the Christian era, a regular maritime intercourse between Western India, the Persian Gulf and Southern Arabia, and the east coast of Africa had developed. Like all early navigators, the first sailors in these regions hugged the coastline, but as they discovered the regularity of the seasonal trade winds of the Indian Ocean, they gradually ventured out to the shorter deep sea routes. From mid-December until the end of February they could rely on the

---

<sup>1</sup>W. H. Schoff, The Periplus of the Erythrean Sea (London, 1912), cited in L. W. Hollingsworth, The Asians in East Africa (London: Macmillan, 1960), p. 11.



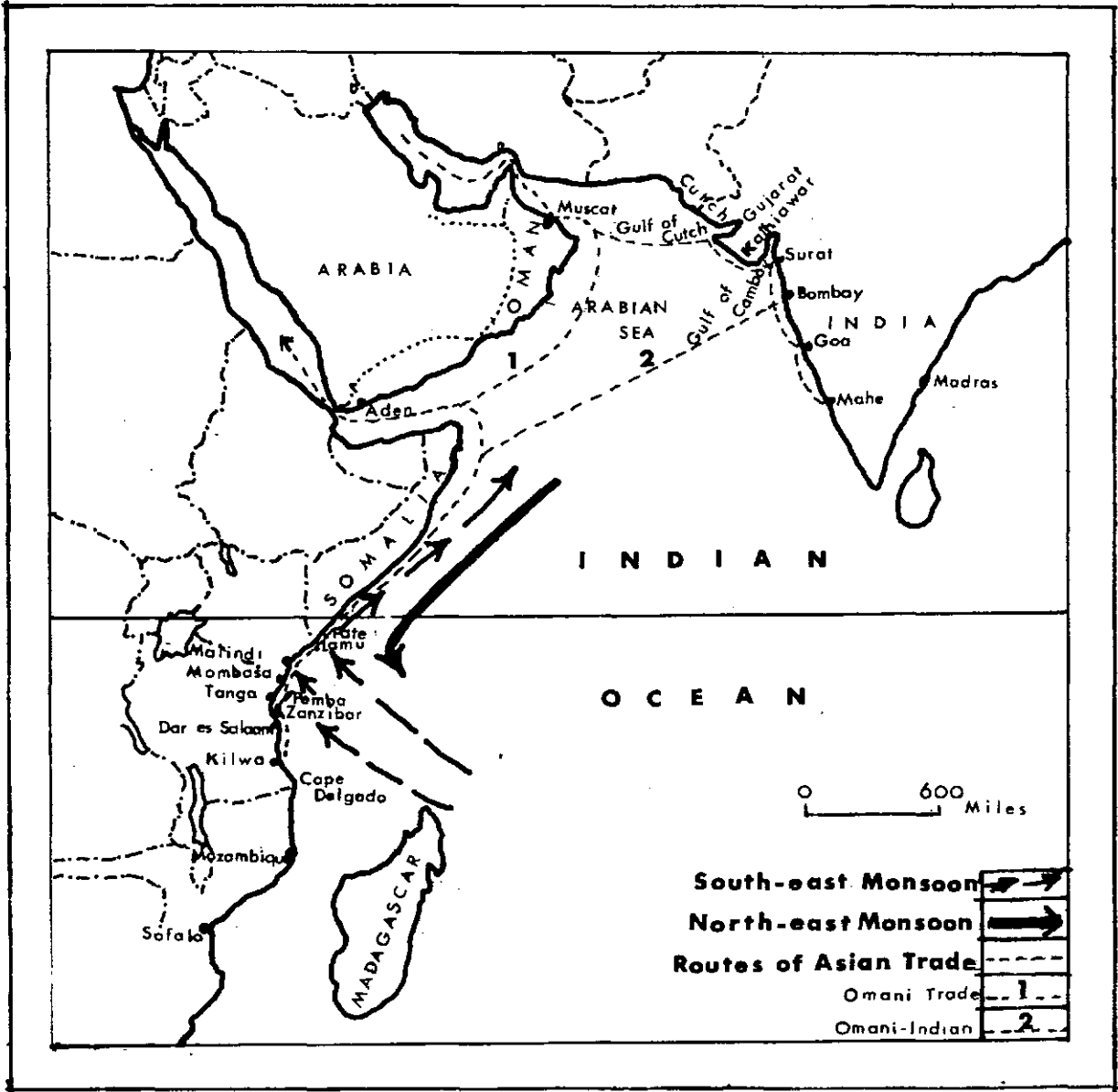


FIGURE 2

ANCIENT MONSOON TRADE IN THE WESTERN SECTOR OF THE INDIAN OCEAN

north-east monsoon to carry their dhows from north-west India, the Persian Gulf, and Southern Arabia to the coast of Africa, while between April and September they trusted to the south-west monsoon to help them on their return journey across the Indian Ocean.<sup>2</sup>

A Chinese geographic work dating back to the thirteenth century also mentions Gujarati settlement in the same area.<sup>3</sup>

Through these early trade times the Arab traders from Southern Arabia were the uncontested masters of all the shipping routes in the western sector of the Indian Ocean. All the exchanges within and nearby the Red Sea area were an Arab monopoly, but traders from India were tolerated down the East African seaboard.

As the Arab settlements grew on the eastern coast between the eighth and sixteenth century, such places as Pate, Lamu, Malindi, Mombasa, Kilwa and on the offshore island of Zanzibar, Indian traders seemed to follow in the wake. Due to the Arabs' little aptitude for finance, the Indian merchants rendered important services to the former as bankers and money lenders.

The strong ties then between India and Africa were evidenced by the presence of numerous African slaves at some princely courts of India; during 1486-1493 the throne of Bengal was even occupied

---

<sup>2</sup>Hollingsworth, Ibid., p. 9. The distances by sea between East Africa and Asia are about 1700 nautical miles from Zanzibar to Aden, from Zanzibar to Bombay about 2500 miles.

<sup>3</sup>G. Delf, Asians in East Africa (London: Oxford University Press, 1963), p. 1.

by a ruler of the Negro race.<sup>4</sup> Upon his arrival to the East African coast in 1498, Vasco da Gama, the Portuguese Admiral, was taken across the Indian Ocean by an Indian sailor.

Prosperity of the Arab coastal cities did not long survive the coming of the Portuguese. In less than ten years they monopolized the trade of the western Indian Ocean. The former Indian trading community on the East African seaboard was increased through arrivals of Portuguese protegés from the enclave of Goa, in India, coming to implement the Portuguese plans.

It took the Arabs two hundred years to expel the Portuguese from such East African strongholds as Fort Jesus of Mombasa and drive them southward below Cape Delgado, the present northern limit of the Portuguese East African seaboard. Earlier Asian influence (Arab and Indian) was thus restored on the eastern African coast, without the former security, however, as an increasing number of European pirates and naval vessels of many western nations preyed on the Asian-African sea trade or cruised along the seaboard for various purposes.

An English sea captain, Smee, visiting Zanzibar from Bombay in the early nineteenth century reported then upon the sizable Indian colony in that island, appearing to hold the regional trade in their hands.<sup>5</sup> Yet local Indians, particularly the Hindus,

---

<sup>4</sup>Sir W. Haig, The Cambridge History of India (Cambridge, 1928), cited in Hollingsworth, op. cit., p. 13.

<sup>5</sup>Hollingsworth, Ibid., p. 15.

suffered on many occasions from religious discrimination or extortionist practices of dominating Arabs; seizure of cargoes, impositions of arbitrary customs duties, etc., paying a high price for their economic and social prosperity.

#### Arab Slave Trade Period

The first half of the nineteenth century saw considerable political unrest in the sheikdom of Oman in southeastern Arabia, and finally a transfer of the Omani seat of power from Muscat to Zanzibar Island, in 1840 by Sultan Seyyid Said. The Sultan undertook to make Zanzibar the leading emporium of East Africa. In the process he came to realize the importance of the local Indian trader and made all out efforts to attract Indian mercantile knowledge and their capital to Zanzibar city and other coastal settlements. Whether Muslim or Hindu, they came to enjoy religious freedom and several high-trust government positions, e.g., the office of Customs Master under contract to His Highness, the Sultan.

Seyyid Said's successors continued to extend to Indians a benevolent protection despite the jealousy of some Arabs. First, the Indians were needed in the marketing of local copra and clove crops for which Zanzibar is still famous. Second, they became almost indispensable as financiers and outfitters of slave hunting expeditions into the East African interior. It was from Zanzibar

City that most expeditions set out for the mainland;<sup>6</sup> ivory obtained in the interior were largely brought out to the shipping points of Bagamoyo and Pangani only twenty miles across the sea channel from Zanzibar. As the Sultans of Zanzibar grew in wealth and power the proverb ran through the Indian Ocean area: "When the flute is played in Zanzibar, all East Africa dances," and their Indian agents conjointly prospered.

The great slave market at Zanzibar City, with an annual traffic of some 15,000 slaves, may have been a fearsome place of destination to many a mainland Bantu, but within a few decades the original fishing settlement had grown to be a center of about 60,000 residents.<sup>7</sup> Only a few Indians on Zanzibar and Pemba employed large groups of slaves to work extensive island estates but domestic slaves were common in Indian households and fully allowed by usage and law.

Many of the Indians who settled then on the coast and in Zanzibar state were Hindus from Cutch, Kathiawar and Junagar, belonging to the Bhattia Sect, one of the oldest branches of the Vaishya trading caste. The Muslims were of the Bohra and Khoja sects and originated in Bombay, Cutch and Surat. Generally the Hindus came, leaving their families behind in India. They led a

---

<sup>6</sup>R. Coupland, East Africa and Its Invaders (New York: Russell and Russell, Inc., 1965), p. 359.

<sup>7</sup>G. W. Kingsnorth and Z. Marsh, An Introduction to the History of East Africa (Cambridge University Press, 1961), p. 22.

lonely life on many trading outposts, trusting to an eventual return home when they made enough money. The Muslims came as more permanent settlers, families included, and established homes at Kilwa and Mombasa on the mainland coast or in Zanzibar.

#### Post-1885 or Colonial Period

The growing influence of the British in the East African area finally succeeded in putting an end to local slave trade through 1840-1870, notwithstanding the many evasions of the Sultans of Zanzibar and the antagonism of Arab slave dealers.

Germany contended at the time with Great Britain for the possession of the East African seaboard and, when the European scramble for Africa reached its pitch, was awarded at the famous Conference of Berlin (1885-86) the mainland territory later known as Tanganyika. Great Britain assumed control of Kenya and Uganda. The Indian community of East Africa thus found itself under different administrations pursuing somewhat dissimilar social and economic policies in their African territories.

In the old Sultanate of Zanzibar, now a British protectorate but stripped of its former coastal mainland holdings,<sup>8</sup> life for the Indian community continued as in the past: the British administrator had but an advisory position before the Sultan. The

---

<sup>8</sup>Previously the Sultan formally owned the archipelago of Lamu and Pate, enclaved in the northern Kenya coast and a ten-mile-wide mainland coastal strip from Kipini down to Mtwara.

Uganda Protectorate fully governed by British had an avowed policy of favoring native African interests. The East African Protectorate (known after 1920 as Kenya Colony) embarked, after some initial undecisive years, upon a policy of encouraging white settlement in the central highland parts which were empty of native tribes; this decision was taken largely to enable the administration to operate economically a main rail line laid from the seaboard to Lake Victoria.

German East Africa (1885-1918) seems to have had no special concern with local Asian community. As it became, after Germany's collapse, a British mandate of the League of Nations and later a U.N. Trust Territory, Tanganyika had to adopt non-discriminatory policies toward all its residents.

The British imperial tie with India soon became apparent in Kenya and Uganda. Several hundred Punjabi troops were recruited in India, notably for service in the military force known as the East African Rifles with headquarters in Mombasa; their use was discontinued only after 1913. Regular Indian regiments were, moreover, occasionally detached for special service in British East Africa in punitive expeditions. Many British officers, who came to serve in Kenya and Uganda, had previously served in India. Indian coinage was made the official money and quite a few Indian laws were introduced. Of even greater significance was the import of Indian laborers (coolies) for the construction of the Kenya-Uganda Railway because native African labor proved short and not

reliable.

Import of indentured coolies, on a three-year work contract with a paid return passage back home, started with 350 Muslims from the Punjab in 1896. By 1900, when recruitment stopped, the total number imported was 19,742.<sup>9</sup> In all, nearly 32,000 Indians were employed in building the railroad. Among the more skilled were masons, craftsmen, and clerks.

Upon the completion of the rail route in 1902 the Kenya and Uganda Railways and Harbours administration retained some Indians to work as signalmen, drivers, stationmasters, maintenance men, and office clerks. Others claimed their repatriation rights. A good number chose to remain in East Africa as artisans, African labor supervisors and petty shopkeepers.<sup>10</sup>

Meanwhile the already existing strong Indian trading and merchant community had been advancing from the coast into the interior with the progress of the railway; prior to it few Indian traders cared to face the insecurity of the African bush.<sup>11</sup> Nairobi, initially a railroad construction camp on the plateau,

---

<sup>9</sup>Hollingsworth, op. cit., p. 47.

<sup>10</sup>The construction of the railroad was plagued by many difficulties for the labor gangs; man-eating lions, trying climate, tropical diseases (malaria, dysentery, skin ulcers) took their toll of Indian coolies. Many died or became invalids and were returned home in the early years.

<sup>11</sup>Exceptions were some leading merchants: Alidina Visram, who set some trading outposts in Uganda 20 years before the main rail line reached the Lake and Adamjee Alikhoy and M. G. Puri who had established posts at Machakos before the coming of the railway. Kingsnorth and Marsh, op. cit., p. 173.



was growing into a typical frontier town and soon an Indian bazaar quarter emerged, made of flimsy shops and stores combined with family living quarters. Painfully developing inland population centers were magnets for the moving in of the Indian-owned dukas. These shops sold to natives certain bulk and canned foods, candy, enamelware, cheap men's clothing, shoes and underwear, colorful women's kangas (printed loin cloths), cotton blankets and other household paraphernalia. With the arrival of European settlers in Kenya, stocks were enlarged to offer a range of merchandise desired by the white man. Additionally, the Indian merchant in the place often combined trading with money lending.

Like the former Sultans of Zanzibar, the British government in Kenya and Uganda viewed the Indian trader with favor. The tempting goods for the African in the Indian shop meant that the natives were more inclined to answer local calls for labor, in order to earn the needed cash outlay. Indian employees, in public service or private business were in general more capable and trustworthy than native Africans.

With their increasing wealth, taxation on Indian income and profits further contributed a valuable share of the territorial revenue, as in the case of Europeans. The native African taxation did not yield much for he paid yearly only a small fixed tax, whatever his income.

Altogether the immigrants from India provided a satisfactory "middle class" stratum in the colonial East African society,

particularly in the cushioning of sometime awkward racial contacts between the Britisher and the black African; furthermore, the Asian did not display toward the European the flashes of hostility of the native population.

As the years progressed many of the earlier Asian residents were joined by friends and relatives aware of the opportunities available to them in Kenya and Uganda, in trade and other middle-class occupations. Some large Indian-owned firms emerged and professional men, lawyers and doctors, came in from India to cater to the service needs of the consequential Asian community. Also Hindu and Muslim holy men crossed the ocean into East Africa, on a temporary or permanent basis, for spiritual ministry to religious believers.

In Tanganyika, when it was still known as German Africa, the Indian community was essentially engaged in trading occupations. The larger part of the colony's retail trade was concentrated in their hands. Similarly to the land occupation pattern observed in Kenya and Uganda the traders moved inland with the progress of the central Tanganyika rail line from Dar-es-Salaam to Kigoma, and of the northern rail line from Tanga to Arusha. However, they did not participate so actively in railroad construction or military occupation as in the British East African territory. When German plantation owners had to leave the colony after the First World War, many of their abandoned estates were bought out by Asians. Subsequently, the international status of Tanganyika

encouraged further Indian immigration.

## II. DISTRIBUTIONAL PATTERNS OF ASIANS IN EAST AFRICA

Figures 3, 4, and 5 show the patterns of distribution of the Asian population of Kenya, Uganda, and Tanganyika, according to administrative subdivisions. It can be seen that the highest numbers of Asians are to be found in Kenya around Nairobi, the capital city, and Mombasa, the great port city, and in the central Nyanza district where Kisumu, the headquarters of navigation on Lake Victoria presents noted opportunities for Asians in commercial and forwarding operations. Nakuru district, the marketing and processing region of the ex-white Highlands, has also an important Asian community. Other districts with at least 1,000 Asian residents are all located astride the main Kenya's rail line, its branches, or in a coastal location like the Kilifi district. In the latter, Arab and Indo-Pakistanis are active at the small shipping points.

In Uganda again, the numerical strength of Asians coincides with the most economically developed districts, namely the West Mengo and the Busoga. In the first district, Kampala, the present capital, and Entebbe, the former British administrative capital, have always attracted Asian enterprising spirit. In the second, Jinja, the industrial hub of Uganda, is a noted Asian node. Other numerically significant Asian areas reflect the trading activities based on coffee and cotton going on in urban centers

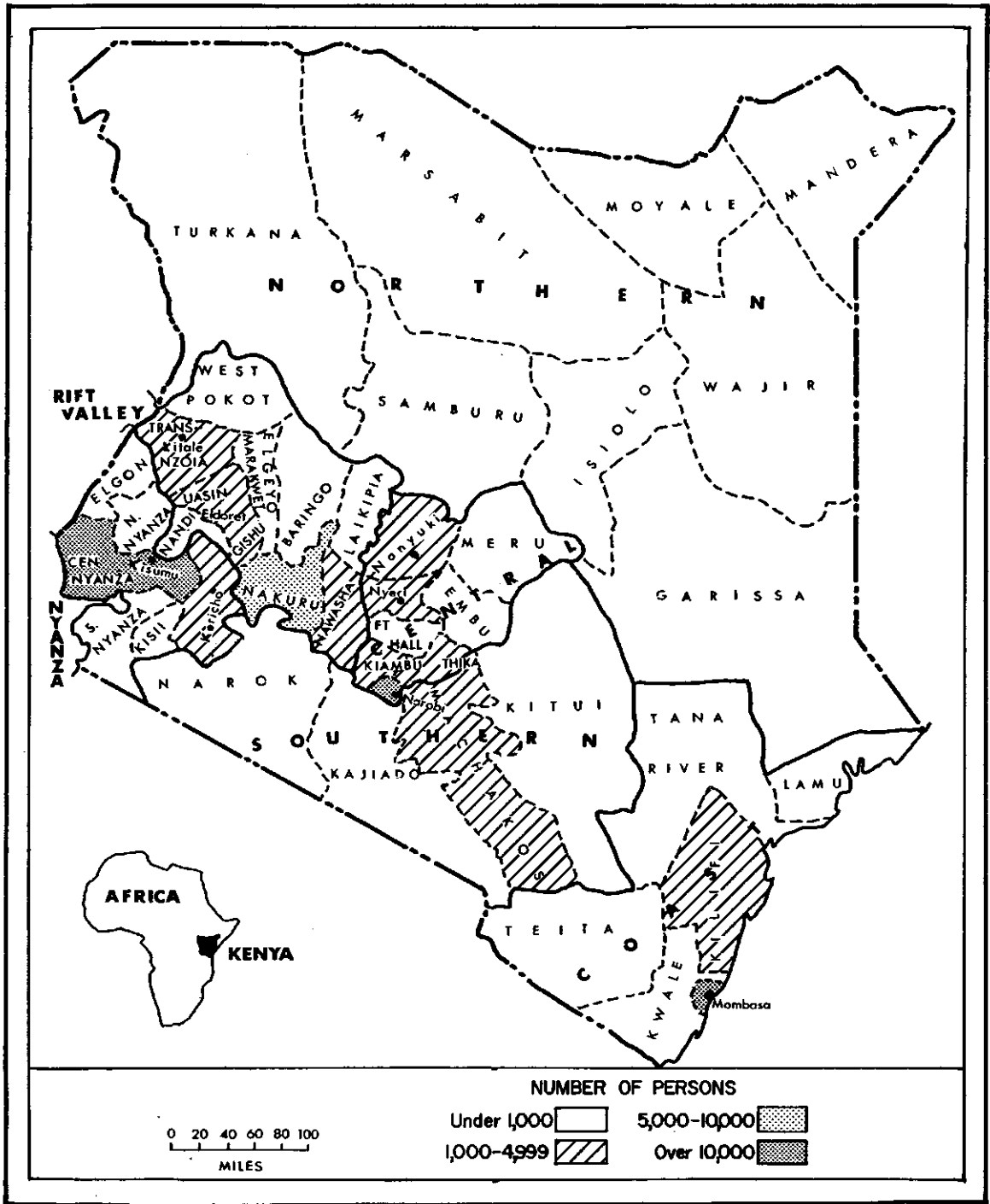


FIGURE 3

ASIAN POPULATION OF KENYA BY ADMINISTRATIVE SUBDIVISIONS, 1957  
(SUBDIVISION NAMES COINCIDING WITH HEADQUARTERS' NAMES HAVE BEEN OMITTED)

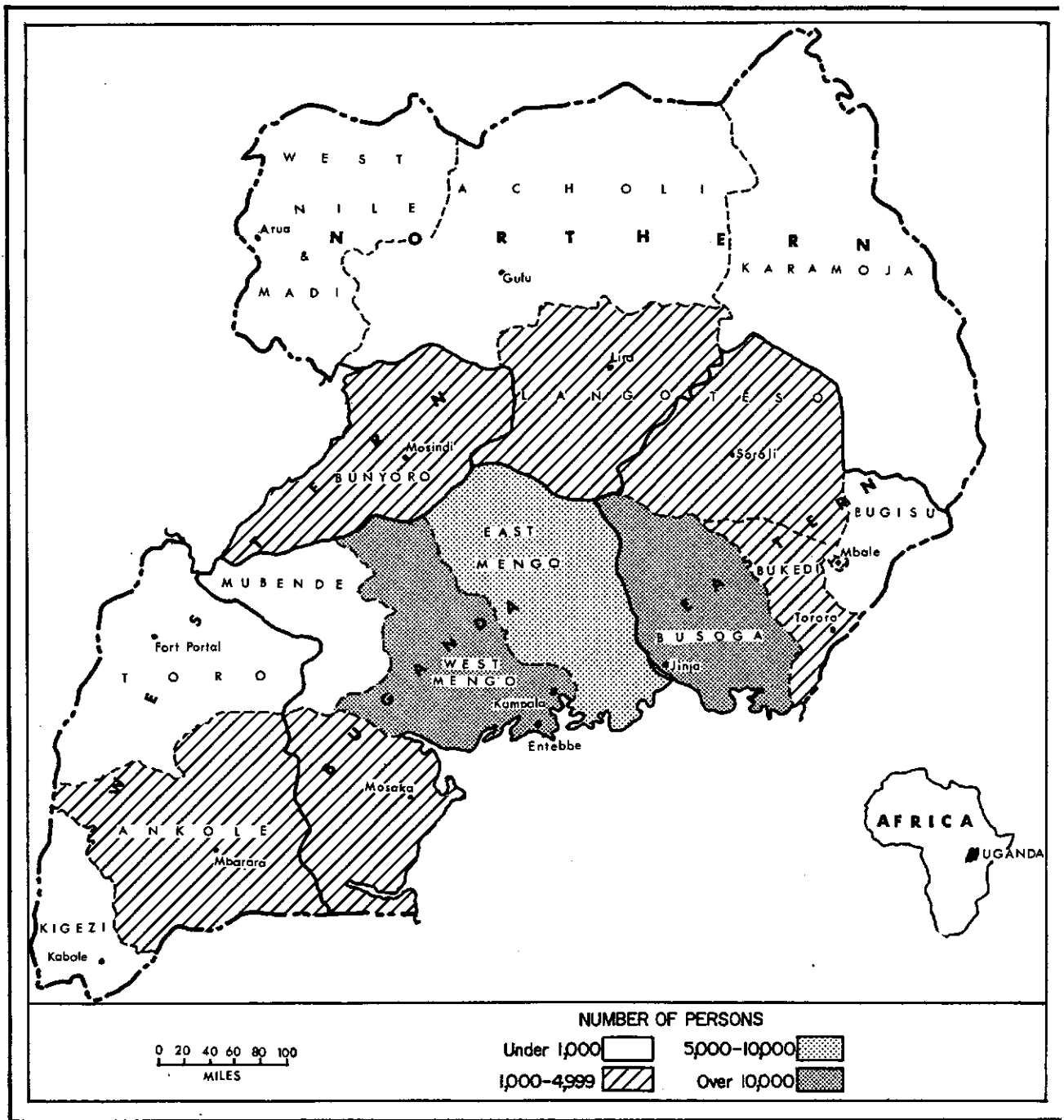


FIGURE 4

ASIAN POPULATION OF UGANDA BY ADMINISTRATIVE SUBDIVISIONS, 1957  
 (SUBDIVISION NAMES COINCIDING WITH HEADQUARTERS' NAMES HAVE BEEN OMITTED)

like Mbale, Soroti, Lira, Masindi; Masaka, in Mbarara, and the main rail or road communication routes throughout the country.

Tanganyika offers a slightly different pattern. The Asians there focus overwhelmingly on the capital city of Dar es Salaam. A secondary area of concentration is the Tanga district with the port city of Tanga and a number of Asian-owned sisal plantations in its hinterland. Other Asian communities with at least 1,000 to 5,000 persons are all located in those districts where economic activities are the most developed and most of the local Asians usually concentrate in and around their main urban centers.<sup>12</sup>

Figure 6 projects further light on the relationship of Asian numbers with urban centers. Plainly indicated are the four strongholds of Asian minority in East Africa: Nairobi, Mombasa, Dar es Salaam, and Kampala. Second-order urban magnets have 4,000 to 20,000 Asian residents. A host of smaller settlements may harbor a handful of dukas or other enterprises run by Asians.

Neither the character of East African landforms nor climatic differentiations, unless they generally affect economic activities like in the arid Northern Province of Kenya, seem to have great effect on Asian population distribution. Essentially the presence of the Asian in East Africa has an urban and trading connotation.

---

<sup>12</sup>Due to a lack of distinction in Zanzibar statistics between the Arab and the Indo-Pakistani residents in the two islands, discussion of Asians there was omitted from this study.

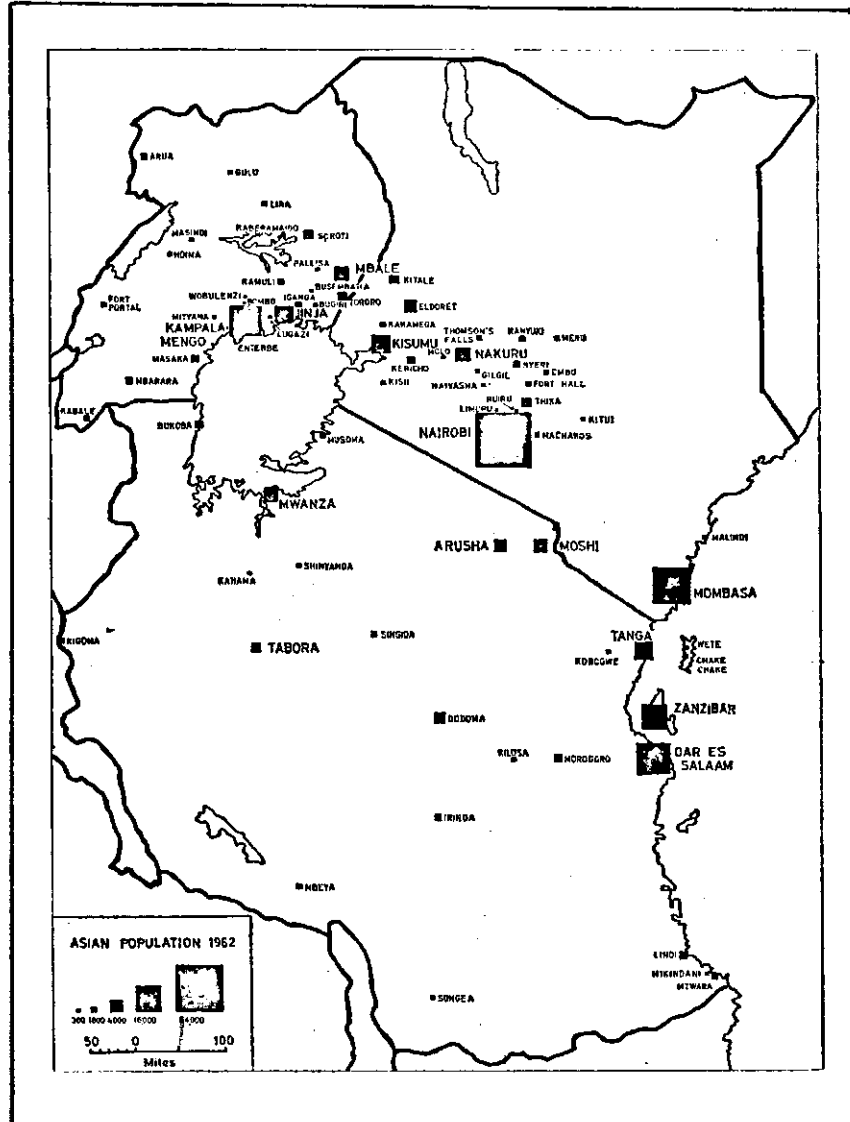


FIGURE 6

ASIAN POPULATION OF EAST AFRICAN TOWNS, 1962 (AFTER O'CONNOR)

III. DEMOGRAPHIC, CULTURAL, POLITICAL, AND  
ECONOMIC CHARACTERISTICS OF ASIANS  
IN EAST AFRICA

What are the composition and other social characteristics of the Asian community in Kenya, Uganda, and Tanzania, and how does the total Asian minority compare with other significant non-native groups, the Europeans or the indigenous African mass?

Demographic Characteristics

Numbers and composition. Following the period of European occupation of East Africa, the Asian population as a whole has been increasing relatively fast.

Prior to 1900, the Asian population in East Africa numbered no more than 5,000-6,000 persons. By 1913, it had risen to 25,000, a five-fold increase in little more than a decade. In 1948, the reported number was 168,000, or six and one-half times the number thirty-five years earlier.<sup>13</sup> From 1948 to 1963 over a period of fifteen years, the Asian population reached 352,300 persons, an increase of over 90 per cent.

As a result, the Asians of East Africa accounted in 1963

---

<sup>13</sup>C. J. Martin, "A Demographic Study of an Immigrant Community: the Indian Population of East Africa," Population Studies (March, 1953), cited in East Africa Royal Commission, 1953-1955 Report (London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office, June 1955), p. 38.



for 1.3 per cent of total population in that area,<sup>14</sup> forming the largest non-native body and outnumbering the Europeans three to one.

In contrast, the European population grew at a much slower rate than the Asians. In 1913 it numbered about 9,000 and, by 1948, the Europeans had increased to just over 43,000.<sup>15</sup> The actual ratio of Asians to Europeans has varied in East Africa from country to country.

The relative numerical strength of various non-native groups, for the years prior to 1963 when population censuses were taken in the three territories, is shown in Table II.

As can be seen from the table, the Indo-Pakistani community formed in the late fifties has the largest share of all non-native minorities in Uganda, or around 80 per cent. In Kenya and Tanganyika, where a sizable number of Arab residents witnessed to the historical Arab domination of those seaboards, the Indo-Pakistani group was about 58 per cent of all non-natives during 1948 in Kenya and during 1957 in Tanganyika. On the other hand, Arabs frankly dominated the Indo-Pakistani group in Zanzibar Protectorate at the census of 1948, with 44,560 Arabs against 15,211 Indo-Pakistanis.<sup>16</sup>

---

<sup>14</sup>D. Ghai, Portrait of a Minority (Nairobi: Oxford University Press, 1963), pp. 91-92.

<sup>15</sup>East Africa Royal Commission, 1953-1955 Report, p. 39.

<sup>16</sup>Hailey, op. cit., p. 410.

TABLE II

## NON-AFRICAN POPULATION IN EAST AFRICA IN CENSUS YEARS

RACE	1911		1921		KENYA 1926		1931		1948	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
European	3,175	13.1	9,651	21.1	12,529	23.3	16,812	22.7	29,660	19.2
Indo-Pakistani	10,651	44.1	22,822	50.0	26,759	49.9	39,644	53.6	90,528	58.5
Goan	1,136	4.7	2,431	5.3	2,565	4.8	3,979	5.4	7,159	4.6
Arab	9,100	37.7	10,102	22.1	10,557	19.7	12,166	16.5	24,174	15.6
Other	99	0.4	627	1.5	1,259	2.3	1,346	1.8	3,325	2.1
Total	24,161	100.0	45,633	100.0	53,669	100.0	73,947	100.0	154,846	100.0
TANGANYIKA										
	1913		1921		1931		1948		1952	
European	5,336	25.7	2,447	14.0	8,228	20.1	10,648	15.2	17,885	18.7
Indo-Pakistani	8,784	42.3	9,411	54.0	23,422	57.1	44,248	63.1	56,499	59.2
Goan	656	3.2	798	4.6	1,722	4.2	2,006	2.8	3,240	3.4
Arab	4,101	19.7	4,041	23.2	7,059	17.2	11,074	15.8	13,025	13.6
Other	1,900	9.1	741	4.2	589	1.4	2,184	3.1	4,845	5.1
Total	20,777	100.0	17,438	100.0	41,020	100.0	70,160	100.0	95,494	100.0
UGANDA										
	1921		1931		1948		1952		1959	
European	1,269	18.5	2,001	11.6	3,448	8.4	10,866	12.5	69,103	79.4
Indo-Pakistani	5,604	81.5	13,026	75.4	1,448	3.5	2,830	3.2	1,946	2.2
Goan			1,124	6.5	1,475	3.6	1,946	2.2	2,313	2.7
Arab			515	3.0	827	2.0	2,313	2.7	87,058	100.0
Other			601	3.5	40,965	100.0	87,058	100.0		
Total	6,873	100.0	17,267	100.0	40,965	100.0	87,058	100.0		

Source: East Africa High Commission: East African Statistical Dept., Quarterly Economic and Statistical Bulletin, No. 47 (March 1960), p. 2. Note: Tanganyika figures for 1957 have been omitted due to lack of space.

There is no accurate statistical information differentiating between various Asian population groups in East Africa insofar as demographic data. For convenience sake we shall assume (as it appears to be supported by existing studies) that the demographic data referring to Asians mean essentially the peoples from the Indian peninsula.

The high numerical increases of the Asian community in East Africa have been due to two factors: (1) above the average rates of natural growth and (2) a sustained fairly high rate of immigration.

Throughout the fifties the natural Asian increase rate in the three East African countries varied from 2.5 to 3 per cent per annum, while the indigenous population showed much lower increase rates. For example, in Tanganyika in 1957 the rate of increase for Africans was 1.6 per cent as against 2.5 for Asians.<sup>17</sup>

Asian immigration into the East African area has continued unabated since the turn of the twentieth century. According to Ghai,<sup>18</sup> 35-40 per cent of local Asians in 1965 were Indian and Pakistani born; the others were born in East Africa.

Immigration still has a considerable effect on the total numbers of the Indian population, but the influence exercised by

---

<sup>17</sup>Tanganyika Economic Survey Mission, The Economic Development of Tanganyika (Baltimore: John Hopkins, 1961), p. 12.

<sup>18</sup>Ghai, op. cit., p. 92.

this factor appears to have been a declining one,<sup>19</sup> after the mid-fifties when immigration was as high as 10,000 persons per year.<sup>20</sup> The progress of African nationalism has led to many uncertainties for the future of the Asian community. For example, from 1959 to 1961 there was a strong boycott on Indian shops and Indian traders in Uganda, with little violence but much threat.

In the mid-sixties, permanent Indo-Pakistani immigration to East Africa was more than offset by permanent emigration in the face of strenuous African competition for jobs previously held by Asians and the entry of Africans into retail trade.

Natural increase rates, or the difference between crude birth rates and crude death rates of a population, are conditioned in East Africa as elsewhere by factors such as the age structure of a population, the balance of sexes, infant mortality, etc. The data which follow throw some light on forces in operation among East African Asians, as far as it is possible to obtain them from scattered sources.

Age structure. Complete latest population censuses are not available here for the whole of East Africa but, according to Ghai,<sup>21</sup> some 42 per cent of East Africa's Asian population in the

---

<sup>19</sup>East Africa Royal Commission, 1953-1955 Report, p. 39.

<sup>20</sup>Ghai, op. cit., p. 92.

<sup>21</sup>Ibid.

mid-sixties consisted of persons in the 0-14 years age group, 54 per cent were in the 15-59 years age group, and slightly over 3 per cent in the 60-and-over age group.

For Uganda alone, data on the age structure of various population groups are available for the year 1961. They are shown in Table III. Very likely these data could be taken as representative of the whole of East African area.

TABLE III  
NON-AFRICAN POPULATION FOR UGANDA BY AGE\*

Age Group	Europeans		Asians	
	Males	Females	Males	Females
0-14	1,389	1,413	16,636	15,750
15-59	4,081	3,552	18,956	15,902
60 & Over	242	199	1,030	549
All Ages	5,712	5,164	36,622	32,201

\*Adapted from The East African Statistical Department, Quarterly Economic and Statistical Bulletin, No. 47 (March 1960), p.5.

The striking factor in this table is the youthfulness of the Asian population as a whole, with over 45 per cent of Asians being under fifteen years of age. This youthfulness of the Asian population, while it promises much for future natural increase of that minority also typically places a burden on the working age groups of the community insofar as expenditure associated with food and education. Although the proportion of children among the

Indian population as a whole is almost the same as among the Africans, the burden of dependency on the head of the family of the Indian population is actually greater. This is so, mainly because Asian women do not usually engage to the same extent as African women in food-growing for the family or cash producing activities.

Balance of sexes. Table IV shows the detail of Tanganyika, Kenya and Uganda total populations by sexes.

TABLE IV  
DISTRIBUTION OF EAST AFRICAN POPULATION BY SEXES\*

Year	Country	Total Population	Males	Females
1962	<u>Kenya</u>			
	African	8,365,942	4,134,634	4,231,308
	Asian	176,613	92,385	84,228
	European	55,759	22,947	25,812
1959	<u>Uganda</u>			
	African	6,450,000	3,237,000	3,213,000
	Asian	69,103	36,696	32,407
	European	10,866	5,702	5,164
1957	<u>Tanganyika</u>			
	African	8,665,336	4,166,746	4,498,590
	Asian	71,760	37,776	33,984
	European	20,598	11,151	9,447

\* Sources: Great Britain Colonial Office, Uganda 1961 (London: H.M.S.O., 1963), p. 19; U.N. Demographic Yearbook 1963 (New York: 1964), pp. 304-310.

It can be seen that the sex imbalance in favor of males is strong both among the Asian and the European groups (except for the

latter in Kenya) while among Africans females outnumber males according to present world patterns.

Many Asian men continue (as we noted in the history of Asian migration) to come to East Africa without wives. Some plan to send for existing spouses at a later date or bring in a girl from their homeland when financial means permit. Others consider their sejour in East Africa as temporary, just enough to accumulate some money and return to India.

Birth and death rates. Only for Uganda is information available on birth and death rates by racial groups. Thus, among Asians living in Uganda crude birth rates have been given as 35 to 45 per thousand, the infant mortality rate as 75 per thousand live births, and the crude death rate as 8 to 9 per thousand. Among the African population of Uganda, on the other hand, the crude birth rate was estimated as 42 per thousand (a rate not excessively high in a world context), the infant mortality rate as about 160 per thousand live births, and the crude death rate as 20 per thousand.<sup>22</sup>

#### Cultural Characteristics

The majority of Asians in East Africa continue to live within the stream of Old Oriental traditions. Despite an outstanding participation in the regional economic life, they have kept

---

<sup>22</sup>Great Britain Colonial Office, Uganda: Report for the Year 1961 (London: H.M.S.O., 1963), p. 19.

themselves essentially apart, in social life, either from local Africans or Europeans. Little personal concern was evidenced, for example, by most of them until quite recently in the cause of African advancement. Seldom has civic duty on the national scale meant much to them. It is rather the sub-groups, existing within the Asian minority, that have commanded their loyalty. Another hub of their life has been the family, immediate and extended.

Within the shell of the family Asian women, particularly the older ones, have been largely segregated, often speaking neither English nor Kiswahili, the lingua franca of East Africa. Only a limited number of younger Asian women have sought work outside.

It is only the last generation that has undergone purely western-style formal education; the elders who are still in charge of the majority of Asian households have had hardly any formal education and if they did, it was of the Indian parochial type, thoroughly suffused with Hindu or Muslim religious values, which were thought to be universally and beneficial for the growing-up generations at the time of settlement.<sup>23</sup>

Religious and social patterns. Religious, caste and linguistic lines are drawn across the Asian (Indo-Pakistani) minority in East Africa. By and large the greatest cleavages are between the Muslims and non-Muslims and between the Gujarati and the Punjabi-speaking Asian sub-groups.

---

<sup>23</sup>Ghai, op. cit., p. 59.



Muslims. The Muslims represent only about one-third of all Indo-Pakistanis in Kenya and Uganda, but outnumber the Hindu group in Tanganyika and Zanzibar. Existing divisions among the followers of Mohammed stem basically from disagreements after his death as to his rightful successors and the manner in which they should be chosen. Three principal sects of Muslims are to be noted in East Africa: the Sunni, the Shia, and the Khawarif.

The orthodox Sunni, acknowledging as the Prophet's legitimate successor or caliph his friend Abu-Bakr, have few followers among the Indo-Pakistanis of East Africa, though most Arabs in Zanzibar are Sunnis. An exception is a small Indian Muslim subgroup spread through the East African countries, the Ahmadiya. Most of them are in the government services or clerks in private firms. Though orthodox in religion, they socialize freely enough with other Asians of different faiths provided those are Punjabi-speaking.

The Khawarif, noted for their puritanical principles and beliefs in free elections of the substitute for the Prophet, are also to be found chiefly among local Arabs, their foremost representatives in East Africa having been the Sultan of Zanzibar and his family.<sup>24</sup>

Most Asian (Indo-Pakistani) Muslims in East Africa are

---

<sup>24</sup>F. D. Ommanney, Isle of Cloves: A View of Zanzibar (New York: Lippincott, 1956), p. 151.

Shia, who broke in the seventh century from the main body of Islam and founded a dynasty of famous caliphs in Baghdad, Persia. The Shias hold that the office of Mohammed's successor is God-given and cannot be conferred by human agency. The three existing sects, the Ismaili Khoja, the Bohra, and the Ithna'ashri, are split, however, on the question of the rightful caliph or imam.

The Ismaili Khoja descend from Hindus of the trading class formerly living in the Upper Sind region of northern India, who embraced Islam some 500 years ago. They are today the most powerful Muslim sub-group in East Africa. Of the total membership of over 50,000, more than half are in Tanzania. Some 18,000 are in Kenya, and the remainder in Uganda.<sup>25</sup> Their immigration in search of trading opportunities dates to the nineteenth century when, coming chiefly from Cutch or Kathiawar, they settled in Zanzibar Island and on the mainland as substantial merchants and shopkeepers. Even now they make up some of the leading businessmen of East Africa.

The Ismaili Khoja still retain some of their Hindu customs, notably as to inheritance rights, and some of them speak Gujarati in common with other non-Muslim immigrants from that region of western India. On the other hand, they look up to a quite worldly and sophisticated religious leader, His Highness the Aga Khan, who normally resides in western Europe. Following his example, they

---

<sup>25</sup>Delf, op. cit., p. 6.

are the most progressive and successful Asian citizens in East Africa. The younger generation, exposed to the western impact since childhood has strongly tended to assimilate some of the individual's freedoms, taken for granted by the Occidental society. This closely-knit group believes in education, often wears modern clothing, and contributes heavily to their own chain of schools, hospitals, and other social welfare organizations in whatever country happens to be their home. Despite their social concern extending even to outsiders, the factor itself of their solidarity tends to alienate them from the rest of Asian sub-groups.

The Ithna'ashri are second in Muslim numbers in East Africa. The mullahs or teachers of this sub-group are frequently from northern India or Punjabi by birth. They believe in the doctrine of the "Hidden Imam" who will return one day as the Mahdi to bring justice to the world, and they celebrate a period of mourning to commemorate the martyrdom of Hosein, the grandson of the Prophet.

The third important Muslim sub-group or sect are the Gujarati-speaking Bohra. Originally of Hindu (Brahmin) background, the Bohra converts embraced Islam at different dates in the past. Upon their arrival to East Africa some settled in the islands of Pemba and Zanzibar, others at Mombasa and smaller mainland ports on the north coast of Kenya.<sup>26</sup> A large number of them are skilled craftsmen; ironmongers, tinsmiths, watchmakers, or dealers in

---

<sup>26</sup>Hollingsworth, op. cit., p. 148.

marine stores. The Bohra, similar to the Khoja, are a rather close-knit sub-group with their own mosques, burial grounds, etc. An important Bohra family in East Africa are the Karimjee Jivanjees who have donated large funds toward social charity purposes.

The denial of caste or sect discrimination among the Muslim sub-groups in East Africa is rather theoretical. Few inter-marriages ever occur. The Khoja Ismaili in particular seem to look more favorably upon possible marriages of their adherents with local whites or Europeans met abroad than with other Asian sects in East Africa.

Hindus. About 70 per cent of East African Asian (Indo-Pakistani) community are Gujarati-speaking Hindus.<sup>27</sup> Expressions of local Hinduism may be almost as complex and rigid as in Mother-India. The four-fold division of Hindu society are into the main castes of (1) the Brahmin or priests, (2) the Kshatriya or the noble rulers and warriors, (3) the Vaishya or the merchants and householders, and (4) the Sudra or the servile class, essentially of rural background. Beyond the four castes are the untouchables. Intermarriage and other forms of social intercourse between the castes were long frowned upon; now they may occur but only occasionally.

Following the patterns set by local Europeans, Hindu

---

<sup>27</sup>Ghai, op. cit., p. 17.

professional and business men may meet together for drinks or to interdine, at least among sub-groups which are meat eaters and alcohol drinkers. The British club tradition has been persuasive enough to be adopted in several important urban centers within the Indian community.

In sharp contrast, other Hindus strictly adhere to separate practices, traditional vegetarianism (with diets consisting of pulses, grain, leafy vegetables, milk, etc.). European kitchen and table utensils may dominate every day, but ritualistic Indian food plates, e.g., the thali are brought out for important meetings. Their houses are largely built on the models of sister-groups in India and furnished accordingly. Little of the ancient Indian art treasures can be found, however, even among the wealthy. Most of the Gujarati Hindus are more intent upon saving money and investing except for some indulgence in western gadgets--television, radio, cameras. A loud speaker blaring Hindu music throughout most of the day is a common feature in Hindu city quarters.

Representing a more modern aspect of Hindu life are the less known Arya Samaj, a reformist branch which originated in India during the nineteenth century. Their founder's desire to emancipate socially Indian womenfolk has led to an acceptance of women's ritualistic equality, but hardly more advances.

Other sects. The Sikh, very close to the Hindus in social customs, number about 20,000. They come from the Punjab in India and are mainly located in Kenya. They have reputations of being

outstanding local artisans in the capacity of masons, carpenters, shoemakers or tailors.<sup>28</sup> About one tenth of them are jat or members of a Punjabi agricultural and small land-owners caste; the majority would belong in India to the lowest rungs of the Punjabi caste system.

The Jain Shah are reportedly an atheistic sub-group who deny the authority of Hindu scripture, such as the Vedas, the Upanishads and the Bhagavadgita. Nevertheless, they still follow many rituals of the Hindus. Originally farmers in India, they came as tradesmen to East Africa. Numbering about 12,000 in Kenya,<sup>29</sup> they are today a wealthy and influential group with quite efficient educational establishments second only to the schools of the Aga Khan.

The Christian faith among Asians in East Africa is chiefly represented by Goans who come from the former Portuguese enclaves of Goa, Diu and Damao in Western India. They are Roman Catholics and resent being classified as Indians because of their commitment to western customs and different religious background. In East Africa they number about 10,000<sup>30</sup> and are prominent in public services in administrative positions and in the professions.

---

<sup>28</sup> Delf, op. cit., p. 9.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid.

Education. The Asians of East Africa are urbanized people. Whatever their original background and even the present place of residence, they stand out sharply among the rural African folks. The value of good education has always been apparent to them.

In Kenya, the first separate school for Indians was started in Nairobi by the Railway Administration. For Uganda the first Asian school (inclusive of Arab and Swahili children) was opened in Kampala, in 1902, by the Protestant Church Missionary Society. Zanzibar had its first Indian school as early as 1891; it was non-denominational and supported by contributions from local Indian community. The early German administration in Tanganyika made available schooling facilities for Africans but no separate provisions were made for young Asians. Consequently, the Indians had to open their own small schools, supported by public subscription together with modest schooling fees charged to the pupils' parents. The same system was followed throughout East Africa as Indian shopkeepers and their families penetrated the interior of the three territories. Most of these schools were run on a sectarian basis, owing to religious differences.

It was not until after the First World War that the three mainland East African governments became aware of Asian educational needs. During the interwar period Asian schooling continued to be carried by Asians but with grant-in-aid from the administration. Expenditure on Asian schools was further increased in subsequent years and, after the end of the Second World War, an

extensive school building program for Asians was pushed forth. In 1950, about 47,000 Asian children in East Africa were attending government-subsidized and private non-subsidized schools; this number encompassed nearly all the Asian boys of school age and a good share of the girls.<sup>31</sup>

Asian schools are still rather poorly staffed and equipped when compared with African and European schools. As a result Asians have had a much lower percentage of students obtaining the High School Certificate than the other racial groups. This was brought out in the Harper-Woodhead Report on Secondary Education in 1958 and is further confirmed by the figures available for 1961. In that year 73.7 per cent of African entrants in Kenya passed the High School Certificate tests, and 82.3 per cent of European entrants against only 42.1 per cent of Asian youths.<sup>32</sup> That low figure should not be viewed, however, as representative of lesser intelligence level of the Asian pupil, but rather as an outcome of better European preparation through the primary school and competition to the average Asian by the cream of local African pupils, the only ones who manage to reach the high school grades.

After the Second World War, with increasing financial aid from the government, many Asians have been going abroad for higher education. In 1945, 19 Kenya students were studying abroad, 11 of

---

<sup>31</sup>Hollingsworth, op. cit., p. 155.

<sup>32</sup>Guy Hunter, Education for a Developing Region: A Study in East Africa (London: Allen and Urwin, 1963), p. 19.



whom were Asians, and by 1960 nearly half of the 2500 Kenya students studying abroad were Asians.<sup>33</sup>

With the establishment of East African universities, many more Asians now have access to higher education in their own countries but according to Ghai, "It is expected that the majority of those seeking higher education will continue to make the United Kingdom, India and Pakistan their academic destination as can be evidenced from the following figures for Kenya and Tanganyika."<sup>34</sup> In 1960-1961 from Kenya 847 students went to the United Kingdom, 520 to India and Pakistan, 31 to Makerere, and 92 to Nairobi, while for 1961-1962, 905 went to United Kingdom, 800 to India and Pakistan, 37 to Makerere and 87 to Nairobi. From Tanganyika for the same years 394 went to United Kingdom, 4 to India and Pakistan, 16 to Makerere and 22 to Nairobi. For the following year 477 went to United Kingdom, 6 to India and Pakistan, 20 to Makerere and 28 to Nairobi.

#### Civil and Political Rights

In contrast with the voteless and civil rights deprived Asian minority in South Africa, Asians in the East African area have enjoyed a measure of political rights, although the principle of segregation did operate to some extent in Kenya. Segregation

---

<sup>33</sup>Ghai, op. cit., p. 116.

<sup>34</sup>Ibid., p. 123.

there took the forms of: (1) reserving for the European settlers desirable lands in the central sector of the Colony, subsequently known as the "White Highlands"; (2) a proposal to confine the Asians to urban areas; (3) limitations on Asian representation in the Legislature.<sup>35</sup> In 1923, for example, Asians (Indo-Pakistanis) in Kenya were allowed to elect only five members to the Legislative Council and the Arabs one, against eleven members elected by Europeans.<sup>36</sup> But there was no restriction until the Second World War on the entry of emigrants from India.

Indo-Pakistani demand for political representation in Kenya arose first around 1907 when Indians became aware that the smaller European population was represented on the Council while their larger community was neglected. After much effort and two years later the Indian community was allowed one nominated member on the Council. After the First World War the East African Indian National Congress was founded and appeals were made against European-only franchise to Great Britain and the government of India.

Several Asian leaders were also responsible for the organization of labor trade unions in East Africa (inclusive of African workers) and the presentation before the Legislature of some African organizations' grievances before Africans won the right to

---

<sup>35</sup>Hailey, op. cit., p. 406.

<sup>36</sup>A. Welsh (ed.), Africa, South of the Sahara: An Assessment of Human and Material Resources (London: Oxford University Press, 1951), p. 74.

elect their own representatives.<sup>37</sup>

The bid for power, however, concerned but a few political personalities and was only lukewarmly supported by the rest of the Asian community. Various explanations have been given for this political disinterest. The most valid seems to be a tacit acknowledgement on the part of Asians of their numerical weakness in the East African territories when compared to such Asian strongholds in Africa as Mauritius Island (see Table I) and the recognition of the impossibility of ever seizing power from the British colonial government.<sup>38</sup> Moreover, Asian potential claims were handicapped in advance by the existence of multifarious partitions through the Asian society.

Kenya set the pace in determining the general political mood of the Asians in the three territories, partly because there was always so much more happening in Kenya than in Tanganyika or Uganda and partly because Nairobi was so much more Asian than Kampala or Dar es Salaam. After 1958, however, the roles were reversed because of the faster political development in Tanganyika and Uganda. Kenya lagged behind, giving an opportunity to the Asians of Kenya to learn from the experiences of their brothers in Tanganyika and Uganda.<sup>39</sup>

In Uganda the relations between local Asian community and the small European group residing in the Protectorate were marked by friendlier feelings than in Kenya at the time of the British rule. Some discrimination existed in regard to land leasing to

---

<sup>37</sup>Chanan Singh, in Ghai (ed.), op. cit., pp. 6-9.

<sup>38</sup>Yash Tandon, in Ghai (ed.), Ibid., pp. 65-70.

<sup>39</sup>Ibid., p. 73.

defend African rather than European interests and also in regard to place of residence. By contrast, Asians were quite adequately represented in the Legislative Council and there was no Asian agitation in the Protectorate for further rights, the only significant vehicle of Asian political expression being the Central Council of Indian Associations.

Tanganyika, under the terms of the League of Nations Mandate and of the U.N. Trusteeship, had little or no political discrimination against local Asians. Communal or social divisions operated, but within the loose framework of local Asian association. The emergence of T.A.N.U. (Tanzania African National Union), under the leadership of Julius Nyerere, impelled Tanganyika Asians to identify themselves politically with the Africans at the 1958-59 elections when the idea of equal racial representation still prevailed. Subsequently Nyerere's switch to the left deprived Asians of their security feelings. Recent events in Tanzania such as the nationalization of many private enterprises, quite a few of these Asian-owned, and street disorders in Dar es Salaam with the looting of Asian stores, have created a very tense situation for local Asians. In Zanzibar and Pemba Island the former occasional uneasiness of Indo-Pakistanis in the face of the stronger Arab community has, after the Zanzibar coup d'etat which placed the power into African hands, given by now a grave concern both for their property and life to all remaining Asians.

### Economic Patterns

Historically the most important contribution of Asians to East African economies has been the extension of the monetary economy into the subsistence area.<sup>40</sup> First, they made available imported consumer goods to rural African population; second, they frequently acted as the main channels for the flow of indigenous produce to local or overseas markets. It would be a mistake, however, to assume that the present range of Asian occupations in East Africa has not gone beyond the ownership of stores and shops or wage employment in commercial transactions. Actually, the economic situation varies from one East African country to another.

Kenya. No economic discriminative practices against Asians were evidenced in the early days of the East African Protectorate. From 1903 on, however, the small but steady influx of white settlers had as an outcome the closing of the "White Highlands" to potential Asian agricultural settlement. Natural conditions in the rest of Kenya being rather adverse to successful crop-growing, except for the Eastern shores of Lake Victoria and the coastal belt, this field of economic endeavor was thus closed to Asians. In addition to entering trade, many of them sought, therefore, employment in public services as clerks or in various middle-level positions, especially for the East African Railways and Harbours

---

<sup>40</sup>Ghai, op. cit., p. 101.

administration, despite a discriminatory racial salary structure.

After the Second World War, Asians took an active part in the growing industrialization of Kenya, centered on Nairobi, Mombasa, Nakuru, Thika, and Kisumu.<sup>41</sup> Many small factories were set up by local Asian businessmen. Later the profits from these were used to finance larger industrial concerns. In Mombasa particularly, a traditional Asian center and a point of break of bulk for products entering and leaving Kenya and Uganda, the industrial and commercial establishment has been almost entirely Asian-owned and operated. (See Figure 7.).

A breakdown of employment by racial groups and types of occupations in Kenya is available for 1954 and is shown in Table V. It can be seen that Asians employed in public service, commerce and manufacturing in Kenya form a total of 78 per cent of all Asian labor forces. Asian manpower contributions to the building trades and the private transport and communication sector<sup>42</sup> should also be noted and compared to their insignificant participation in agriculture as against the African or the European group.

---

<sup>41</sup>See Figure 13, "East Africa: Employment in Manufacturing 1963," in A. M. O'Connor, An Economic Geography of East Africa (New York: Praeger, 1966), p. 161.

<sup>42</sup>Not only do Asians continue to serve in manifold capacities for the East African Railways and Harbours (which accounts for the large numbers in the public sector), but they also operate most of the road trucking services in Kenya.

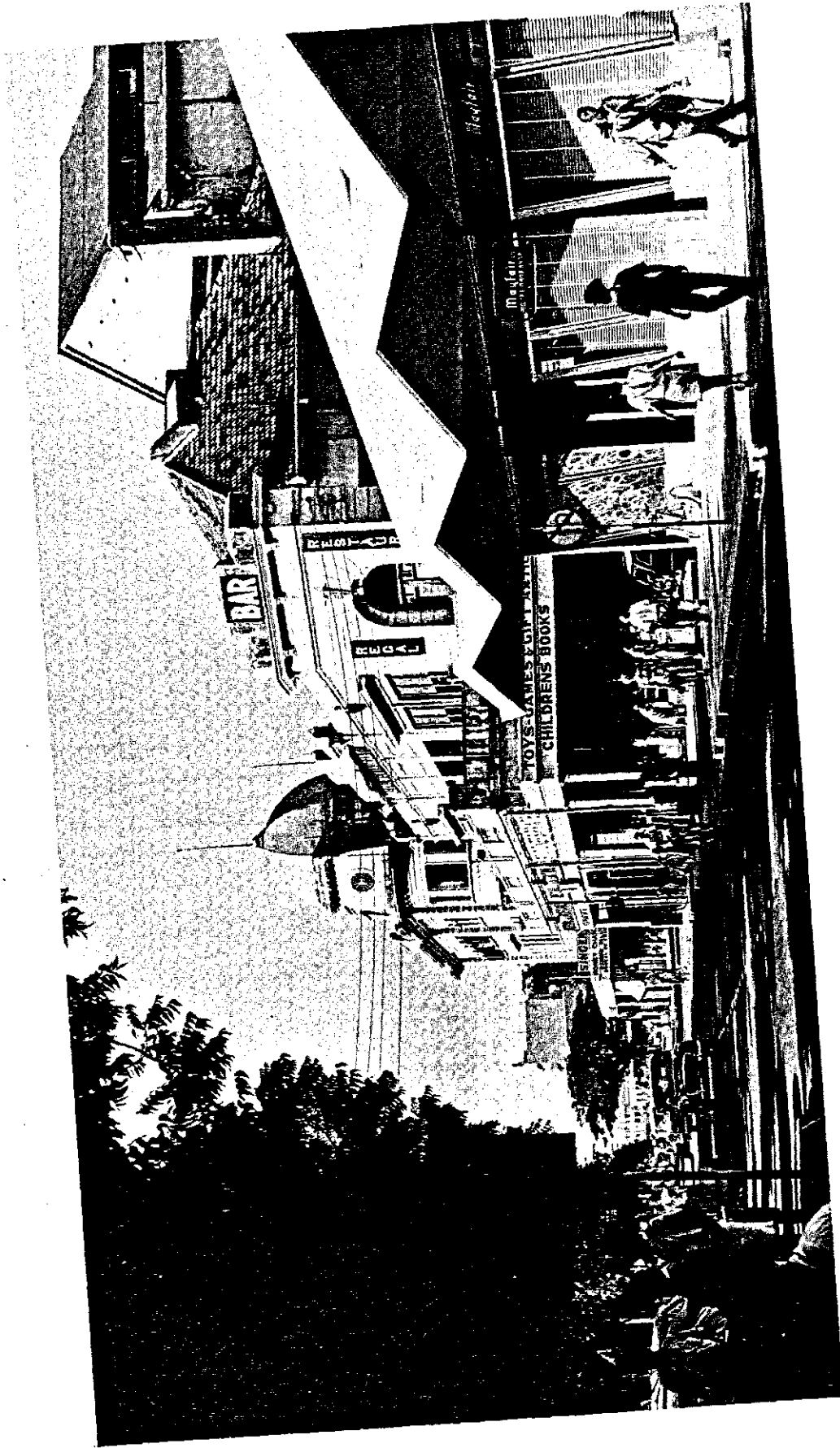


FIGURE 7

A MAIN COMMERCIAL ARTERY OF MOMBASA CITY. PRACTICALLY ALL BUSINESSES ON THIS BUSY THOROUGHFARE ARE ASIAN-OWNED (FROM EAST AFRICAN RAILWAYS AND HARBOURS, NAIROBI, KENYA)

# GEOGRAPHY DEPARTMENT

## UNIVERSITY OF DENVER

52

TABLE V  
EMPLOYMENT IN KENYA BY RACIAL GROUPS, 1954\*  
(In Percentages)

	Agriculture Forestry Fishery	Mining and Quarrying	Manufacturing	Building and Construction	Commerce	Transportation & Communication	Public Service
Africans	44.8	1.1	8.3	4.0	4.3	1.5	26.5
Asians	1.9	0.5	19.9	7.7	27.6	4.4	30.7
Europeans	8.4	0.4	12.4	3.7	17.0	3.8	42.1

\*Source: H. Pollock, "Industrial Development in East Africa," Economic Geography, Vol. 36, No. 4 (October 1960), p. 347.

Uganda. For Uganda no statistical data on occupational distribution, comparable to Table V, are on hand. The only breakdown available is presented in Table VI, which evidences the heavier concentration of Asian manpower in private employment (81 per cent) by comparison to Kenya (52.0 per cent).

Although the number of Asians employed in agriculture in Uganda is still not high (according to Ghai, only nine per cent), the overall Asian involvement in Uganda's agricultural activities is quite significant. Cotton and coffee growing have in the last four decades been the chief source of livelihood for the people of



Uganda. Both cotton ginning, and coffee curing prior to export, have been long dominated by Asians. In addition, practically all Uganda's sugar production is derived from two large Asian-owned estates on the northern shores of Lake Victoria at Lugazi and Kakira with a combined acreage of 37,700 in 1960 and a production of some 91,000 tons.<sup>43</sup> Asians own several tea plantations. Timber logging and sawmilling are also pretty much concentrated in Asian hands.

TABLE VI  
EMPLOYMENT BY RACIAL GROUP AND TYPE IN UGANDA, 1959\*  
(In Percentages)

	Private Industry and Commerce	Manufacturing and Public Service	All Employees
European	52.0	48.0	100
Asian	81.0	19.0	100
African	56.0	44.0	100

\*Based on East Africa Commission, East African Statistical Department, Quarterly Economic and Statistical Bulletin, No. 47 (March 1960), p. 43.

Quite a few small, Asian-owned consumer-oriented industrial plants operate in Kampala and some larger ones at Jinja nearby the

---

<sup>43</sup>International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, The Economic Development of Uganda (Baltimore: John Hopkins, 1962), p. 176.

hydropower plant at Owen Falls. Yet the majority of Asians in Uganda, probably 45-50 per cent of all gainfully employed do derive their livelihood from commerce, this term to include wholesale and retail trade, banking and insurance. Outside of important firms the trade is mainly carried on by the Asian shopkeeper himself, assisted by his relatives. As said before, the Asian duka (or petty trade shop) is an indispensable feature of small urban centers in Uganda and Tanganyika. (See Figure 8.) So is the Asian artisan doing household repairs on his own, sewing clothes or providing other forms of services to the community. Self-employed Asians thus form a substantial segment of the Asian minority, some 55 per cent of the economically active Asian population, whereas in Kenya wage and salary earners dominate to the extent of 70 per cent.<sup>44</sup>

Tanganyika. At the end of the First World War some government schemes were considered for the introduction of Indian farmers into Tanganyika but were soon abandoned, supposedly because of shortages in vacant land suitable for easy exploitation without much capital investment. But many Asians seized, on their own initiative, the opportunity of buying out ex-German estates sold by public auction. They penetrated thus the great sisal growing industry of Tanganyika, in the vicinity of Tanga, Dar es Salaam

---

<sup>44</sup>Ghai, op. cit., p. 94.

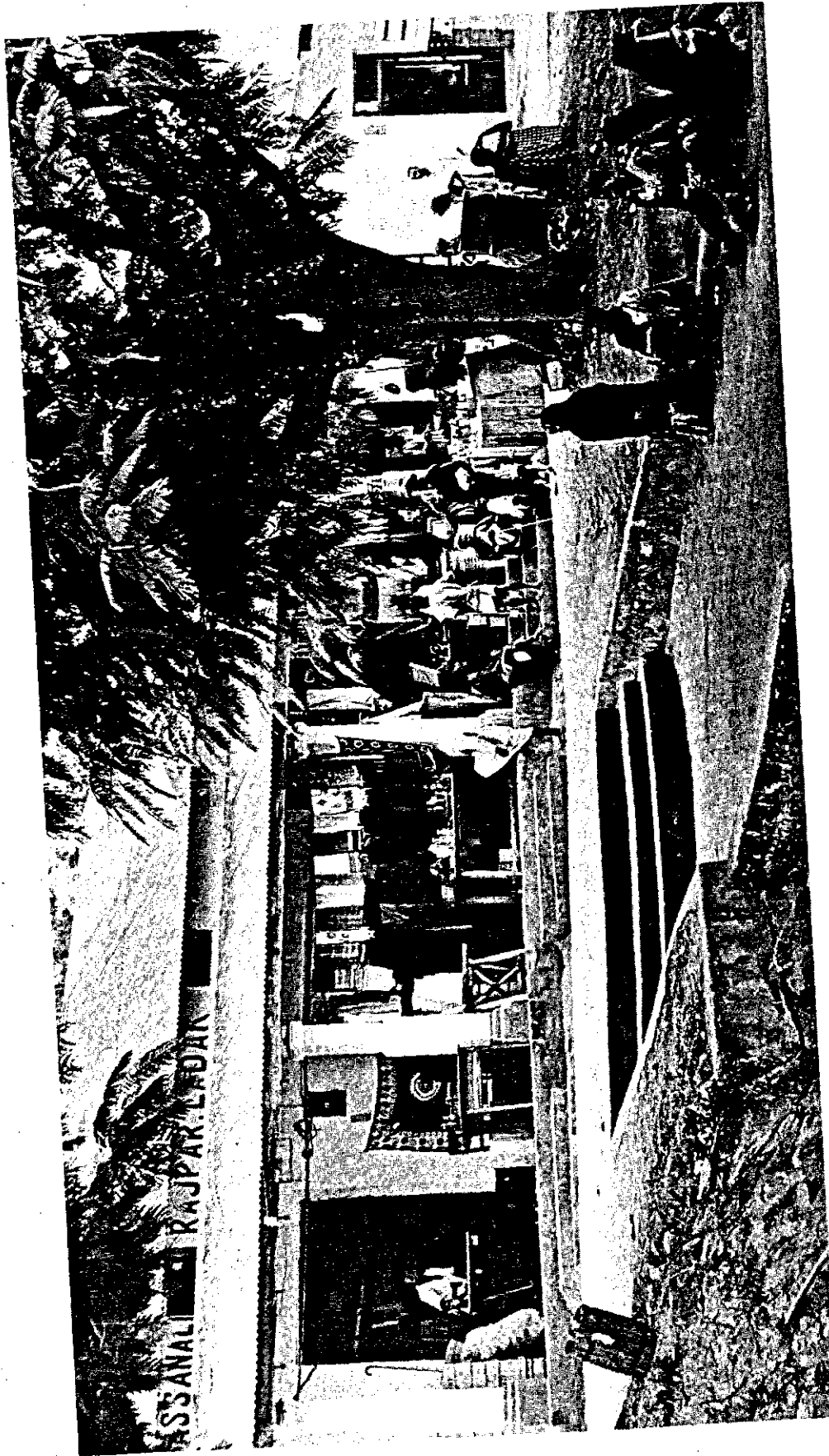


FIGURE 8  
A TYPICAL INDIAN-OWNED DUKA IN A SMALL TOWNSHIP OF TANANYIKA. NOTE THE ARRAY OF ARTICLES KEPT FOR AFRICAN CONSUMPTION (FROM EAST AFRICAN RAILWAYS AND HARBOURS, NAIROBI, KENYA)

and along the southern seaboard. By 1930 the number of agricultural holdings in Asian hands amounted to 358 whereas the British owned 520 holdings; one of the Asian landowners had as much as 80,000 acres in several estates.<sup>45</sup> Some German planters returned in the mid-thirties and bought back their land from Asians only to see them re-confiscated and re-sold at the end of the Second World War. By the end of the fifties, much of Tanganyika's sisal and tea plantations were firmly entrenched in Asian hands, often with a European estate manager. Asians' urban land ownership was also conspicuous in such cities as Dar es Salaam where most hotels and stores were Asian property. In respect to employment in the public services, Tanganyika occupied an intermediary position between Kenya and Uganda, with 25 per cent of all Asian working population.<sup>46</sup> About one-half of this population were employees and the rest employers and self-employed. In respect to Asian hold on Tanganyika's commerce, it was estimated at least for 1952 that 50 per cent of all import trade and 60 per cent of exports passed through Asian hands.<sup>47</sup>

Status and income groups. In the early sixties, females constituted about 10 per cent of all Asian labor forces in East

---

<sup>45</sup>Hollingsworth, op. cit., pp. 65-66.

<sup>46</sup>Ghai, op. cit., p. 94.

<sup>47</sup>Hailey, op. cit., p. 401.

Africa. Most were employed as secretaries, teachers and nurses. Among the Asian males, it was estimated that 15 per cent were professional men and technicians, 35 per cent were employed in an administrative or executive capacity, 20 per cent did clerical or secretarial jobs and 25 per cent were sales staff and skilled manual workers.<sup>48</sup>

Table VII gives an indication of Asian levels of income for the year 1962 as compared to other racial groups on the basis of personal tax returns in Kenya. It shows that despite frequent African recriminations against Asian "exploiters" roughly one out of every three Asian workers earned less than \$1,120 per year and not less than 11 per cent received less than \$336.

TABLE VII  
DISTRIBUTION OF INCOME IN KENYA\*

(In Percentages)

(£ = U.S. \$2.80)

Income Group	African	Asian	European
Under £120	91.4	11.0	1.5
£120 - 159	4.7	4.3	3.2
£160 - 199	1.7	3.3	0.6
£200 - 399	1.7	13.0	2.5
£400 and over	0.5	68.4	92.2

\*Adapted from Ghai, p. 97.

<sup>48</sup>Ghai, op. cit., pp. 95-97.

No figures of Asian income per capita are available for Tanganyika or Uganda, but it is believed that average incomes there should be higher since these countries have a greater proportion of employers and self-employed.

In Ghai's opinion,

The great majority of Asians in East Africa fall in what might be described as middle income group with incomes ranging from £300 to £900 p.a. This group consists of most wage and salary earners, a sizable number of professionals and a great majority of retail traders dotted all over East Africa. The standard of living in this group varies considerably; at one extreme are those in the upper reaches of this income bracket, who lead a reasonably comfortable life and may enjoy the luxury of a motor car and other consumer durables. But perhaps a majority of persons in this group make do with a minimum of such comforts and may have to confine their recreation to listening to radios and transistors, or to an occasional visit to cinemas. For the most part, persons in this group would live in two or three roomed flats, in contrast to the spacious and well-laid-out houses of their more affluent brethren.

To complete this economic picture of the Asian minority in East Africa, one might add that because of low female participation in the labor market and large families with many young children, the Asian family head often bears a great financial responsibility, moreso than a European or an African. Census reports show that gainfully employed Asian population is equivalent only to about 25 per cent of all Asian population. The African can almost always fall back on the produce of his shamba or small plots of land; the European has normally less children and his wife often brings in some extra cash.

## CHAPTER IV

### THE PRESENT AND THE FUTURE OF THE ASIAN COMMUNITY IN EAST AFRICA

What are the prospects for the future of the Asian community in East Africa?

As can be clearly seen from the preceding chapters the Asians in East Africa have made a vital contribution to the economic development in East Africa.

In trying to solve the problems that face the Asians in East Africa it is wise to remember their social, economic and educational status, because it is in these areas that their strengths and weaknesses lie.

Since the granting of independence by the British to Kenya, Uganda and Tanganyika, there have been numerous outbursts against Asians. These show a feeling of frustration and grievance on the part of the Africans. The Africans have now won political power in their respective countries but economic power eludes them and is still in the hands of foreigners, chiefly Asians. The Asian community numbers some 350,000 living and trading among 25 million Africans, yet they control probably four-fifths of the regional commerce from wholesale firms to the humblest dukas. Also the Asians still hold the majority of the skilled or semi-skilled artisan jobs. This dominance has caused the Asians to be exposed

to much criticism and charges of exploiting the African. Sometimes they have been accused of retarding African progress, participation of Africans in local economy, or discriminating against Africans in hiring employees. The fact is that many Asian firms are quite small and chiefly family operated. To use an African in a more or less responsible position would mean the loss of job for some family member, something which is against the social grain of Asians.

Throughout their stay in East Africa Asians have continued to maintain strong ties with their homeland, the Indian peninsula. Vacations have been often taken there and capital exported.

To the African ties like these, outside the country, are greatly disliked--the divided loyalty, the foot in the door between two worlds, to have the best of both and the obligations of neither.<sup>1</sup>

Asians have also been criticized for their lack of assimilation insofar as social structure. Their organizations are usually closed to outsiders; their social contribution has been very limited. Developments in the educational field have tended to isolate them from the other races.

The failure by the government in early days to make any adequate provision for Asian education forced each sectarian group to rely on its own resources in providing for the primary education of its children. So by setting up sectarian instead of non-denominational schools, the cultural differences between the various sects have been maintained and

---

<sup>1</sup>L. Fellows, "The Duka-Wallas are Outcasts in Africa," New York Times Magazine, Sec. 6 (June 25, 1967), p. 24.



even strengthened.<sup>2</sup>

To avoid widespread hostility, Asians must make the necessary changes and become fully integrated into the new society. They must convert their attitudes and ways of thinking dating from Colonial East African times to active interest in independent East Africa. The main concern of the new African governments is naturally the welfare of Africans and not especially that of the Asians.

The change is imperative. For those who are unwilling to do so, departure is the only alternative. Many have already chosen this solution or are intending to do so. Seeing but a bleak future for themselves in Africa, they have been trying to acquire superior skills which are internationally accepted.

If there are no positions for them in East Africa, there will surely be room for doctors, lawyers, scientists, nurses, teachers, etc., in other affluent societies of the world whose public health services may already contain many Asians and West Indians.<sup>3</sup>

For those who prefer to remain, the only hope is better assimilation into African society. A rapid expansion of the East African economies<sup>4</sup> could actually provide an outlet both for the skills of local Asians and the mounting African tide of employment

---

<sup>2</sup>L. W. Hollingsworth, The Asians of East Africa (London: Macmillan and Co., Ltd., 1960), p. 170.

<sup>3</sup>Guy Hunter, Education for a Developing Region: A Study in East Africa (London: Allen and Urwin, 1963), p. 21.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid.

seekers.

Whether the Asians will be willing to take the necessary steps and make the needed sacrifices, only time can tell.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

### A. BOOKS

- Aaronvitch, S. and K. Crisis in Kenya. London: Lawrence and Wishart Company, 1947.
- Agnew, S., and N. C. Pollock. An Historical Geography of South Africa. London: Longmans, Green and Co., Ltd., 1963.
- Bellingham, Beatrix (comp.). Mombasa: A Guide to Mombasa and Surroundings. Mombasa Times Limited.
- Carter, G. M. (ed.). Five African States: Responses to Diversity. New York: Cornell University Press, 1963.
- Coupland, R. East Africa and its Invaders from the Earliest Times to the Death of Seyyid Said in 1856. New York: Russell and Russell, Inc., 1965.
- Cowan, L. G., James O'Connell, and David Scranton (eds.). Education and Nation Building in Africa. New York: Frederick A. Praeger, 1965.
- Dey, George. Asians in East Africa. London: Oxford University Press, 1963.
- Dickins, W.H.G., and G. M. Hickman. The Lands and Peoples of East Africa. London: Longmans, Green and Co., Ltd., 1960.
- Dow-Smith, G. T. British East Africa: Economic and Commercial Conditions in British East Africa from The Overseas Economic Surveys of Great Britain Export Promotion Department. London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1953.
- Fage, J. D. An Atlas of African History. London: Edward Arnold Ltd., 1963.
- \_\_\_\_\_, and Roland Oliver. A Short History of Africa. Baltimore: Penguin Books, 1962.
- Fitzgerald, Walter. Africa. New York: E. P. Dutton and Co., Inc., 1948.
- Ford, V.C.R. The Trade of Lake Victoria: A Geographical Study. East African Studies, No. 3. Kampala, 1955.

- Forrester, M. W. Kenya Today: Social Pre-requisites for Economic Development. Netherlands: Mouton and Co., 1962.
- Freeman, G.S.P., and Granville. The Medieval History of the Coast of Tanganyika. London: Oxford University Press, 1962.
- Gervase, Mathew, and Roland Oliver (ed.). History of East Africa, Vol. I. London: Oxford University Press, 1963.
- Ghai, Dharam (ed.). Portrait of a Minority: Asians in East Africa. Nairobi: Oxford University Press, 1965.
- Gibbs, H. Twilight in South Africa. New York: Philosophical Library, 1950.
- Gould, P. R. Africa: Continent of Change. California: Wadsworth Publishers Co., Inc., 1961.
- Hailey, Lord. An African Survey: A Study of Problems Arising in Africa, South of the Sahara. London: Oxford University Press, 1957.
- Hance, William A. The Geography of Modern Africa. New York: Columbia University Press, 1964.
- Hellman, Ellen (ed.). Handbook on Race Relations in South Africa. London: Oxford University Press, 1949.
- Hill, J.F.R., and J. P. Moffett. Tanganyika: A Review of its Resources and Their Development. Tanganyika government, 1955.
- Hollingsworth, L. W. The Asians of East Africa. London: Macmillan and Co., Ltd., 1960.
- Horrabin, J. F. An Atlas of Africa. London: Victor Gollancz Ltd., 1960.
- Hunter, Guy. Education for a Developing Region: A Study in East Africa. London: Allen and Urwin, 1963.
- International Bank for Reconstruction and Development. The Economic Development of Kenya. Baltimore: John Hopkins Press, 1963.
- \_\_\_\_\_. The Economic Development of Uganda. Baltimore: John Hopkins Press, 1962.
- Ingrams, Harold. Uganda: A Crisis of Nationhood. London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1960.

- Kimble, George. Tropical Africa: Land and Livelihood. Vol. I. United States: Lord Baltimore Press, Inc., 1960.
- Kingsnorth, G. W., and Zoe Marsh. An Introduction to the History of East Africa. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1961.
- Legum, C. Africa: A Handbook to the Continent. New York: Frederick A. Praeger, 1962.
- Leys, Norman. A Last Chance in Kenya. London: Hogarth Press, 1931.
- Lofchie, M. F. Zanzibar: Background to Revolution. New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1965.
- O'Connor, A. M. An Economic Geography of East Africa. New York: Praeger, 1966.
- Ommanney, F. D. Isle of Cloves: A View of Zanzibar. New York: Lippincott Company, 1956.
- Pritchard, J.M.A. Geography of East Africa. London: J. M. Dent and Sons, Ltd., 1966.
- Saben. Commercial Directory: Handbook of Uganda. Kampala: The Uganda Company, Ltd., 1960-1961.
- Shepard, George W. They Wait in Darkness. New York: John Day Company, 1955.
- Stanley, H. M. In Darkest Africa. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1890.
- Taylor, J. Clagett. The Political Development of Tanganyika. Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1963.
- Walker, E. A. A History of Southern Africa. London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1957.
- Welsh, Anne. Africa, South of the Sahara: An Assessment of Human and Material Resources. London and New York: Oxford University Press, 1951.
- Wood, Susan. Kenya: The Tensions of Progress. London and New York, Nairobi: Oxford University Press, 1962.

B. PUBLICATIONS OF THE GOVERNMENT, LEARNED  
SOCIETIES AND OTHER ORGANIZATIONS

- Anderson, J.N.D. "The Isma'ili Khojas of East Africa: A New Constitution and Personal Law for the Community," Middle Eastern Studies, Vol. I., No. 1 (October 1964), pp. 21-39.
- Baker, S.J.K. "The Distribution of Native Population Over East Africa," Africa, Vol. 10 (1937), pp. 37-54.
- East Africa High Commission, The East African Statistical Department. Quarterly Economic and Statistical Bulletin, No. 47 (March 1960).
- East African Statistical Department (Kenya Unit). Kenya European and Asian Agricultural Census 1958: An Economic Analysis. Colony and Protectorate of Kenya, 1960.
- Etherington, D. M. "Projected Changes in Urban and Rural Population in Kenya and the Implications for Development Policy," The East African Economic Review, Vol. I, New Series No. 2 (June 1965), pp. 65-83.
- Fair, T.J.D., and N. M. Shaffer. "Population Patterns and Policies in South Africa 1951-1960," Economic Geography, Vol. 40, No. 3 (July 1964), pp. 261-274.
- Fellows, Laurence. "The Duka-Wallas are Outcasts in Africa," New York Times Magazine, Section 6 (June 25, 1967), pp. 20-29.
- Ghai, Y. P. "The Asian Dilemma in East Africa," East African Journal (March 1965), pp. 6-21.
- Great Britain Colonial Office. Annual Report: Uganda. London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office, June 1955.
- Great Britain Export Promotion Department. British East Africa: Overseas Economic Survey. London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1953.
- Heyer, S. S. "The Asian in Kenya," Africa South in Exile, Vol. 5, No. 2 (January-March 1961), pp. 77-84.
- Hoyle, B. S. "The Economic Expansion of Jinja, Uganda," reprinted from The Geographical Review, Vol. LIII, No. 3 (1963), pp. 377-388.

- Ingutia, A. K. "Caste in India and Africa," Transition: 23, Vol. 5, 6-1965, pp. 15-18.
- Meer, Fatima. "African and Indian in Durban," Africa South in Exile, Vol. 4, No. 4 (July-September 1960), pp. 30-41.
- Mphahlele, Ezekiel. "Alignment of Education Goal in Kenya," East African Journal, Vol. II, No. 9 (February 1965), pp. 27-30.
- Munger, Edwin. "Economic and Political Development in Uganda," American University Field Staff, East African Series, Vol. III, No. 3. Uganda: March 7, 1955. pp. 1-11.
- Ndegwa, P. "Preferential Trade Arrangements Among Developing Countries," The East African Economic Review, Vol. I, New Series No. 3 (December 1965), pp. 1-22.
- Odingo, R. S. "Geopolitical Problems of East Africa," East African Journal, Vol. II, No. 9 (February 1966), pp. 17-24.
- Pollock, N. "Industrial Development in East Africa," Economic Geography, Vol. 36, No. 4 (October 1960), pp. 344-354.
- Portugal, Provincia de Mocambique, Direccao Provincial do Servicos de Estatistica Geral, Anuario Estatistico. Lourenco Marques, 1964.
- Rado, Emil, and J. Richard. "Education in Uganda--Reflections of the Report of the Uganda Education Commission," The East African Economic Review, Vol. I, New Series (1964), pp. 69-79.
- Tanganyika Economic Survey Mission. The Economic Development of Tanganyika. Baltimore: John Hopkins Press, 1961.
- Thrower, Norman J (Map Supplement ed.). "Map Supplement No. 6: East Africa Population Distribution," Annals of the Association of American Geographers, Vol. 56, No. 1 (March 1966).
- Trewartha, G., and W. Zelinsky. "Population Patterns in Tropical Africa," Annals of the Association of American Geographers, Vol. XLIV, No. 2 (June 1954), pp. 135-162.
- United Nations. "Demographic Factors Related to Social and Economic Development in Africa," Economic Bulletin for Africa. Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, Vol. II, No. 2 (June 1962), Chapter V, pp. 59-81.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Trade of East Africa," Economic Bulletin for Africa, Vol. II, No. 1 (January 1962), pp. B-23-B-56.



\_\_\_\_\_. Demographic Yearbook 1963. New York, 1964.

United Nations Department of Social Affairs Population Division.  
The Population of Tanganyika, Reports on the Population of  
Trust Territories, No. 2. New York: September 1949.

U.N. Monthly Bulletin of Statistics. New York: February 1967.

Wazareth, J. M. "Minority Rights in Kenya," Africa South, Vol. 4,  
No. 2 (January-March 1960), pp. 87-91.

Webb, Maurice. "The Natal Menace," Africa South, Vol. I, No. 3  
(April-June 1957), pp. 34-39.

**THE ASIAN COMMUNITY IN EAST AFRICA: ITS  
GEOGRAPHICAL DISTRIBUTION AND ECONOMIC  
AND SOCIAL CHARACTERISTICS**

---

**An Abstract of a Thesis**

**Presented to**

**the Faculty of the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences**

**University of Denver**

---

**In Partial Fulfillment**

**of the Requirements for the Degree**

**Master of Arts**

---

**by**

**Juliet H. Zaidi**

**December 1967**

## ABSTRACT

Man has been on the move since early times. There are many and various reasons motivating people to leave their homeland and seek other opportunities in strange and foreign lands. People from the Indian sub-continent have been found to leave their native land to settle in strange lands both far and near. Indians can be found in all the former British possessions. They are distributed all over the African continent south of the Sahara with special concentration in the former British holdings of East and South Africa. There have been various migrations from Asia to the African continent. Asians have settled in East Africa since early times. Due to the proximity of the East African seaboard to India and the ideal maritime conditions Indians are to be found in large numbers even to this present time.

A look at their present geographical distribution would show that the Asian population of Kenya, Uganda and Tanganyika tend to concentrate around the great capitals and port cities in each of these countries. In Kenya they are to be found around Nairobi, the capital and Mombasa, the great port city. In Uganda the numerical strength of Asians coincides with the most economically developed districts of West Mengo and Busoga. In Tanganyika the Asians focus overwhelmingly on the capital city of Dar es Salaam. The Asians of East Africa have played the role of the middle man between the European and the African both economically and socially. In Kenya the Asians tend to dominate industrial and

commercial establishments while there is insignificant participation in agriculture when compared with the African or European group. In Uganda, however, the Asians have gone into commerce with more active part in agriculture with cotton ginning, coffee curing and sugar production. In Tanganyika many Asians are to be found in the import and export trade of that country.

For years the Asians have formed this middle layer of the society holding jobs that the native Africans would like to acquire. Since the independence in the countries of East Africa the Africans have won political power but economic power still eludes them and is mainly in the hands of the Asians. The 350,000 Asians living in these three countries of East Africa control four fifths of the regional commerce from large wholesale firms to simple dukas. They hold the majority of skilled and semi-skilled jobs.

Due to the rise in African nationalism caused by the independence and the dominance of the trade by Asians, the Asians have found themselves in a difficult situation and exposed to widespread criticism. To avoid this hostility the Asians have one of the two alternatives--either to depart from East Africa or make the necessary change to integrate themselves with the new society.