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A HISTORY OF THE ISMAELI COMMUNITY IN TANZANIA

A thesis submitted to the Graduate School of the
University of Wisconsin in partial fulfillment of
the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

BY

Shirin Remtulla Walji

Degree to be awarded: January 19 May 19 74 August 19

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The following is a study of the largest single Indian group in Tanzania,¹ the Khoja Ismailis. It covers roughly the period of the Imamat of the late Aga Khan III (1885-1957), beginning with Ismaili migration from India in the nineteenth century, and ending with the close of the Colonial Period in 1960. The purpose of the study is to set down in a systematic manner the hitherto unrecorded history of the establishment and development of the Ismaili community in Tanzania.

The study examines the community as part of two societies: a national one of political and geographical limits; and a religious one which is not limited by geography and politics. Given these two frames of reference, the study will deal with the Ismaili community as it develops internally within the geographically defined area of Tanzania. It will look at the contours of the community--at the inner structure which emerges, grows, and changes over time; at the stratification which exists within the society as well as the bases of such stratification; at the patterns of cleavage and the conflict underlying them; and at the mechanisms which the community has devised to hold itself together and perpetuate itself.

At the same time, the Ismaili community has been defined by its economic position within colonial and international economies. Further, it has been modified and/or supported by a religious ideology which has given the community a loyalty and a perspective transcending any national context. The study will also consider these formative influences on the community. However, Ismaili society cannot be understood as merely adapting to existing constraints and conditioning factors. It must also be seen as reacting to the environment which helped to create it initially. Thus, we will also look at the way in which the position of the Ismailis in the overall national economy becomes part of a new economic reality against which others react, particularly when they perceive the Ismaili community as closed and, in some sense, self-contained.

With the exception of Chapter IV, which deals with some of the basic institutions of Ismaili society as envisioned in the constitution and its several revisions, the material is arranged chronologically. Chapter II outlines the various factors which, as the Ismaili community understands them, provided impetus for migration to East Africa in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Chapter III discusses the Ismaili community in its first phase of settlement, that is, to the creation of the Constitution in 1905. It considers the development of the typical economic pattern in which the Ismaili trader became middleman between the African producer

and the world market; the interaction between temporal affairs and religious principle which brought the first great conflict; and the formation of the first Ismaili constitution. Chapters V, VI, and VII cover the periods of colonial government, first under German, and then British, rule. Chapters V and VI detail Ismaili efforts to regain the prosperity of pre-colonial times through the establishment of their own financial institutions and of a more complex form of government. Changes, however, did not represent a break with Ismaili tradition. Trade remained the basis of the economy and the reason for the creation of financial institutions; government became more complex but did not alter the services it performed. Chapter VII, dealing with the end of the Colonial Period, details Ismaili attempts to expand their tradition and to try the new--by moving toward Westernization, by abandoning the old mercantile tradition to attempt farming, and by emphasizing education as a means of revitalizing the Ismaili community.

Before conclusions regarding development and change within the Ismaili community can be properly understood, however, they must first be set against the religious orientation of these people. Having maintained the basic core of their belief, they have been united in the present through a shared historical development from the past.

The Ismaili Khojas of East Africa, who constitute the subject of this dissertation, are one group within the larger community of the Shia Imami Nizari Ismailis, estimated at

twenty million. The largest community of Ismailis is commonly known in the Western world as the followers of His Highness the Aga Khan IV, held by the Ismailis to be the direct descendant of the Prophet Mohammed and his successor, the first Imam, Hazrat Ali ibn 'Abi Talib.² Taking their name from the Imam Ismail, the Ismailis have thereby indicated the importance of religion to their basic way of life. For the presence of the Imam is the basis of their doctrine.

As opposed to other Moslem sects, the Ismailis believe that the Imam is always present in the world to give divine guidance.³ Because it was necessary that the Prophet's mission continue after his death, Mohammed provided that successors be appointed to serve and divinely guide his followers. These successors, known as A-Imma (Imams), began with the Imam Ali ibn 'Abi Talib. Today the Ismailis consider themselves the only Shia group to have such a spiritual guide in the person of His Highness the Aga Khan Shah Karim al-Husseini Hazar Imam, to whom they reverentially refer as their "ever-living guide."⁴

As a group, the Shias, including not only the Ismailis but also the Isna' Asharis, the Bohras, and the Memons, are to be distinguished from others who do not accept the doctrine that the Prophet appointed Ali as his successor. According to Shia doctrine, the Prophet Mohammed, on his way back from his last pilgrimage to Mecca, stopped at Gadir-khum and declared to his people that: "Ali is the master of those whose

leader. I am."⁵ Believing that Ali was entrusted to carry on the mission not completed in the Prophet's lifetime, the Shia distinguish themselves from the Sunnis, who do not accept Ali as the rightful successor (see Appendix I, following this chapter, for the divisions within Islam).

After the death of Ali in 41 A.H./661, his son Imam Hussein succeeded him. In the course of time the spiritual power of the Imam passed to Jafar al Sadiq, the fifth successor of Prophet Mohammed. (See the genealogy of the Imams of the Shias in Appendix II.) At Jafar al Sadiq's death, a conflict arose over who his true successor would be. Those who followed Imam Ismail eventually became known as Ismailis,⁶ while those who followed his brother Musa Kazim were known as Isna'Asharis (Twelvers) because their genealogical account names twelve Imams between Prophet Mohammed and Mahdi (the last Imam of the Isna'Asharis). There were complicated historical arguments over the "true" successor, though the basis of the argument lies in the disagreement over Jafar al Sadiq's naming of a successor. The future Ismailis claimed that Ismail was Jafar al Sadiq's successor, while the Isna'Asharis claimed that he did not name a successor before he died.⁷

At the time of the eighteenth Imam in 487/1094, a further split developed in the Ismaili community as a result of the question of succession; the Bohras separated from the Nizari Ismailis, the group under discussion here.⁸

The Nizari Ismailis are found today throughout much of the Middle East, Syria, Iraq, and Egypt. The Khoja Ismailis, the dominant group of East African Ismailis, were originally Hindus of North Western India, who were converted to Islam by Nizari missionaries. The first missionaries arrived in Sind sometime between the eleventh and thirteenth centuries.⁹

The most famous missionary, however, lived and worked in the fourteenth or fifteenth century.¹⁰ He was Pir Sadardin, who set out to convert the Hindus to Satpanth Darma, or the "true" religion. Pir Sadardin effectively adapted Islam so that it would become more understandable and more acceptable to the Hindu. He claimed that Imam Ali, Mohammed's successor, was the tenth incarnation of the Hindu God Vishnu. Pir Sadardin's explanation appears in his book Das Avatar which is translated as "ten incarnations," and which was, and still is, an important document of the faith. Due to Pir Sadardin's teaching, the younger generation of Tanzanian Ismailis, who have never been to India, maintain that the present Aga Khan is the tenth incarnation of Vishnu. As a result of the missionary efforts of Pir Sadardin and other Nizaris, hundreds of thousands of Hindus, primarily of the Lohana caste, became Muslims known as Khojas.¹¹ "Khojas," meaning "honorable or worshipful person and disciple," is the name by which the Ismailis in Tanzania are known and carries with it the sense of historical continuity which underlies the development of the Ismaili community there.¹²

In spite of the religious identity of different Ismaili communities, this study makes no attempt to compare the Ismailis of Tanzania with Ismailis in other parts of the world. Because of the diversities and complexities of each group's expectations and traditions, such a universal study could lead, at this point, to careless generalizations. Therefore, limits have been set in terms of an East African Ismaili settlement. Further, although communal organizations for all the East African territories are similar, local governmental policies have had a different effect on the development in each local community, especially in regard to social services--education, health, welfare, and financial institutions. Thus, only the Ismaili community of Tanzania is the focus of this study.

To study the Tanzanian Ismaili as a part of an "Asian" group would be equally difficult. Most studies of "Asians in East Africa" are too general.¹³ Because of the differences which separate each ethnic group, the term "Asian" presumes a cultural identity without recognizing the important fact of cultural diversity. Thus, there is now a need for a detailed study of each ethnic group in and of itself. Once this information has been collected and compiled, a genuine basis for a comparative study will exist.

As noted, however, the history of the Ismaili people cannot be studied in complete isolation from the other Indian communities in Tanzania. Colonial government policies for

Indians in general affected the Ismailis. Constitutional changes for East African Ismailis also affected the Ismailis in Tanzania. Thus, we will be examining some of these general phenomena but only in terms of their effect on the Ismaili community in Tanzania.

Of the sources consulted in this study, the most useful among the written documents were the community papers. These consisted of the minutes of formal organizations, including the Territorial Council for Tanzania with its headquarters in Dar es Salaam, and Provincial Councils in various major centers like Dar es Salaam, Dodoma, Mbeya, Moshi, Mwanza, Tabora, and Tanga. The collection of Rai A. M. Sadruddin of Nairobi, Kenya, was yet another source of information on communal affairs. His collection consisted of newspaper cuttings from various East African newspapers, documents relating to annual conferences of Territorial and Provincial Councils, and various papers presented by members of the Constitutional Committees of Tanzania, Kenya and Uganda. These committees were set up in 1961 to study both the local law of each of the three East African territories and the Muslim law in preparation for the formulation of the Constitution of 1962. These papers provided valuable information on the constitutional history of the Ismailis in East Africa.

In addition, I have used private papers. Fortunately, the late Kassamali Merali of Morogoro had collected many documents dealing with communal affairs and organizations as well

as with general information on Indian settlement in Tanzania. Mr. Mirza Bandali Merali, who inherited all the documents, very kindly allowed me access to them and also provided me with oral information on the history of his grandfather--the late Bandali Merali of Morogoro. Others who provided useful documents were the families of the late Rajabali Meghji Visram of Kilosa and Mussa Kassam of Morogoro. Though it is possible that more families in other parts of Tanzania may be in possession of such documents, I was not able to contact them.

Besides communal and family papers, the minutes of various Indian organizations were also useful: the Indian Association and the Indian Merchants' Chamber of Dar es Salaam; the Morogoro and Kilosa Farmers' Association; the Kilosa District Chamber of Commerce, Industry and Agriculture; and the Morogoro Settlers' Association--to mention just a few. Except for a few surviving files, the papers of the Indian Association at Dar es Salaam were completely destroyed. I am grateful to Mr. M. Raithatha and Mr. Nizamuddin for giving me access to the extant files. Mr. Yusufali Allidina, an Ismaili farmer in the Wumi area who was active in farmers' organizations, not only provided useful oral information on Ismaili farming in the Morogoro-Kilosa districts, but contributed invaluable files of the "Ismaili Agriculture Society." One of these details the complete history of the Ismaili agriculture scheme in the Wami-Magole area, and others describe Indian agriculture and marketing in general.

The documents in the Tanzania National Archives provided useful information on the government's policies concerning the trading communities, on the marketing and purchasing of local produce, and on war controls. They also deal with trading conditions in Tanganyika during the colonial period. This information helped me in an indirect way to understand the growth and effects of material prosperity on the Ismaili community.

Because of lack of time, the archival sources in London--the India Office Records and Foreign Office Records--have not been consulted. However, secondary sources based on these records have been used.

Besides these written documents, "verbal testimony" provided me with information on nonpolitical aspects of community development.¹⁴ Verification of this "verbal testimony" was made by interviewing several people who had either taken part in or who had heard about a single event. Information tested this way proved, in most cases, to be consistent; major discrepancies occurred only in the assignment of dates to event. This method made it possible to gather a great deal of information concerning migration and settlement. Business history was difficult to uncover, much less to verify, since business affairs have always been considered "family secrets." Information on business successes was available, while information on business practices was not.

Most of the interviews were conducted in Dar es Salaam, although a few upcountry centers like Bukoba, Mwanza, Morogoro, Kilosa, and Kimamba were visited to provide a broader perspective of the community's development. Informants were chosen for their availability and for the amount of information they would be likely to have. The majority of the informants were male. The conclusions drawn here, therefore, and the list of informants attached to this study, must be viewed as limited. The bibliography contains only the names of those informants who were most helpful.

As I am myself a member of the Ismaili community in Tanzania, I found that research was, in many cases, more effectively accomplished than would have been possible otherwise. For instance, because most of the interviews were carried out in the native language of the Tanzanian Ismailis, Cutchi (a dialect of Gujarati), I was able not only to attain and analyze the material, but could include in this study my personal reaction toward change and the development and shift of attitudes within the community. Nor was it necessary to spend valuable time searching for the "right" people to give the "right" information. It was possible to know immediately what kind of information would be available from a particular person. Although the perspective of one's own cultural tradition may make it difficult for one to look beyond that perspective, it enables one to analyze what a given society wants and asks for itself, what its goals are, and what it in fact accomplishes in terms of its goals.

Of course there are certain practical disadvantages to such a method of procedure. Informants were hesitant to reveal certain kinds of information, especially when questions concerning businesses were asked. This did not, however, lead to distortion, since the informant was well aware that his testimony could be checked against that of others. The problem was one of omission, not distortion. I remember one gentleman who was most cooperative in providing information until I asked him a question about his business. At this point he began to find excuses for not answering; he complained of growing old and being unable to remember. Finally, he explained he did not like to answer such questions.

Family business secrets aside, informants, along with written sources from the Ismaili community, have provided excellent material for this study. For it is based not only on a succession of dates and events, but also on the hopes, dreams, and frustrations of a people who established in Tanzania a self-sustaining, successful community.

FOOTNOTES

¹In 1964, the United Republic of Tanzania was proclaimed following the union of the republic of Tanganyika and the island republic of Zanzibar and Pemba. The republic of Tanganyika was known as "German East Africa" from 1885-1919, and as "Tanganyika Territory" from 1920 to 1960.

²M. J. Kassim Ali, Ever Living Guide (Karachi, 1955), p. ii.

³Husayn F. al-Hamdani, "A Compendium of Ismaili Esoterics," Islamic Culture, IX (April, 1937), p. 217; J. N. Hollister, The Shia of India (London, 1955), p. 321; Said Abd Allah al-Qummi, tr. by M. J. Mashkir as "An-Nawbahti: Les Sectes Siites," Revue de l'histoire des Religions, CLIII (1958), pp. 176 and 184; W. Ivanow, "An Ismailitic Work by Nasiru din Tusi," Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society (July, 1931), pp. 530-545; H. Laoust, Les Schismes dans l'Islam (Paris, 1965), pp. 417-419. Laoust notes some of the attributes of an Imam as postulated by the Shias.

⁴M. J. Kassim Ali, Ever Living Guide, pp. ii-iv; W. Ivanow, "Ismailis and Qarmatians," Journal of the Bombay Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society, XVI (1940), pp. 47 and 56; H. Laoust, Les Schismes, pp. 17-19; Said Abd Allah al-Ashari al-Qummi, "An-Nawbahti," p. 195.

⁵Badshah A. F. Husain, "Shia Islam," Moslem World, XXXI (April, 1941), p. 185; W. Ivanow, "The Sect of Imam Shah in Gujarat," Journal of the Bombay Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society, XII (September, 1936), p. 49; al-Qummi, "An-Nawbahti," p. 196.

⁶The Ismailis are also referred to as Sabiya or Seveners. Some authors erroneously conclude that all Ismailis are called Seveners because they believe in the first seven Imams. See M. T. Titus, Indian Islam (London, 1930), pp. 88-89; M. S. Guyard, Fragment's Relatifs a la Doctrine des Ismaelitis (Paris, 1874), p. 8; R. Levy, "The Account of the Ismaili Doctrines in the Jamial Tawarikh of Rashid al-Din Fadl Allah," Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland (July, 1930), p. 520; Hollister, Shia of India, p. 217. Others refer to them as Batiniya because of their esoteric belief, see al-Hamdani, "A Compendium," pp. 210-220.

⁷W. Ivanow, "Imam Ismail," Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal, XIX (1923), pp. 305-310. In this article Ivanow discusses the controversy that arose after the death of Imam Jafar al Sadiq. R. Levy, "The Account of the Ismaili Doctrines in the Jamial-Tawarikh of Rashid al-Din Fadl' Allah," Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland (July, 1930), p. 521; M. G. S. Hodgson, "How Did the Early Shia Become Sectarian?," Journal of the American Oriental Society, LXXV, I (1955), pp. 1-5. Hodgson analyzes the factions that arose after the death of Imam Jafar al Sadiq. See Appendix II for a genealogy of the Imams of the Ismailis and the Isna' Asharis.

⁸Hollister, Shia of India, pp. 242-245 (see Appendix II for the Bohra Imams). For further details on the differences within the Shias, see Satish C. Misra, Muslim Communities in Gujarat (Baroda, 1964), pp. 3-53.

⁹Hollister, Shia of India, p. 356; P. Damishky, "Moslem Communities in India," Moslem World, I (1966), pp. 117-129; W. Ivanow, "The Sect of Imam Shah," p. 21; Misra, Muslim Communities, pp. 54-65.

¹⁰Hollister, Shia of India, p. 356.

¹¹A. S. Picklay, History of the Ismailis (Bombay, 1940), p. 128; Misra, Muslim Communities, p. 61. As we might suspect, the Ismaili Khojas in Tanzania retain certain Hindu beliefs which, however, are gradually being replaced with Islamic tenets by the Aga Khan. The Nizaris in the Middle East, of course, have not had intense contact with the Hindu religion or culture.

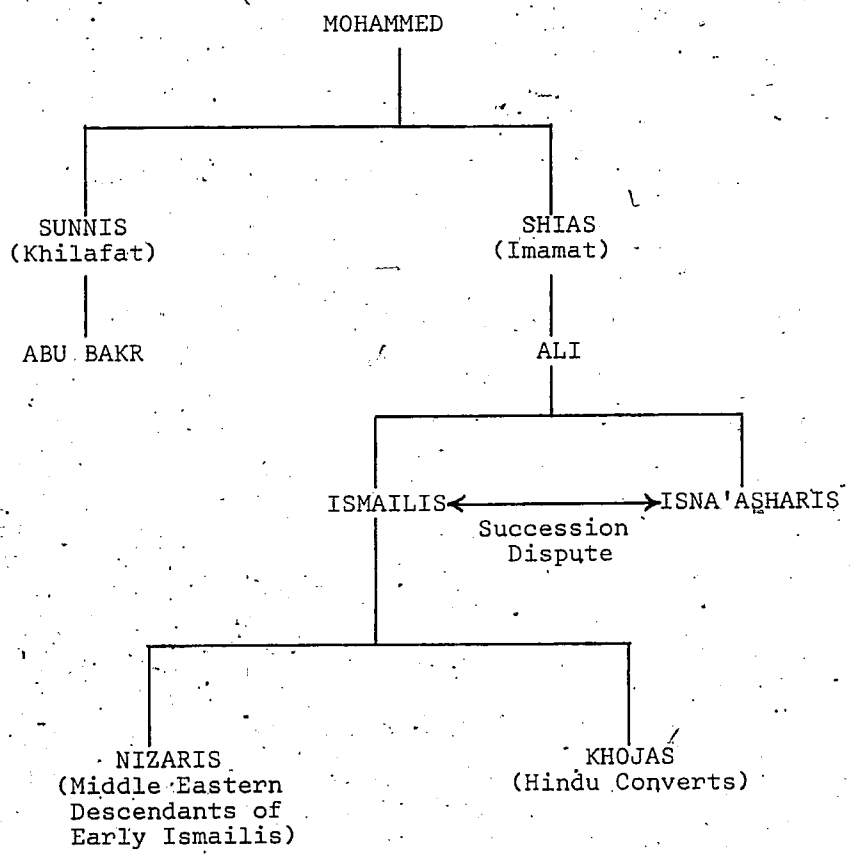
¹²Picklay, History of the Ismailis, p. 64; Hollister, Shia of India, pp. 356-57; Misra, Muslim Communities, pp. 57-58; Ivanow, "The Sect of Imam Shah," p. 29.

¹³J. S. Mangat, A History of the Asians in East Africa: 1886-1945 (Oxford, 1969); George Delf, Asians in East Africa (London, 1963); D. Ghai (ed.), Portrait of a Minority: Asians in East Africa (Nairobi, 1965); L. W. Hollingsworth, Asians of East Africa (London, 1960).

¹⁴J. Vansina, Oral Tradition: A Study in Historical Methodology, tr. by H. M. Wright (Chicago, 1965), pp. 22-26.

APPENDIX I

CHART SHOWING THE DIVISIONS WITHIN ISLAM



APPENDIX II

GENEALOGY OF THE SHIA IMAMS

(Isna'Asharis, Bohras, and Ismailis)*

- Prophet Mohammed - A.D. 571-632
- 1 Ali (first Imam m. Fatima, the Prophet's daughter) - A.D. 656-661
 - 2 Husein - A.D. 661-680
 - 3 Zainul Abedin - A.D. 680-713
 - 4 Mahomed Baqir - A.D. 713-732
 - 5 Jafar Sadiq - A.D. 732-765

After the death of Imam Jafar Sadiq in A.D. 765, a schism occurred in the Shia group. Those who accepted Imam Ismail came to be known as Ismailis, and those who followed his brother Musa were called Isna'Asharis.

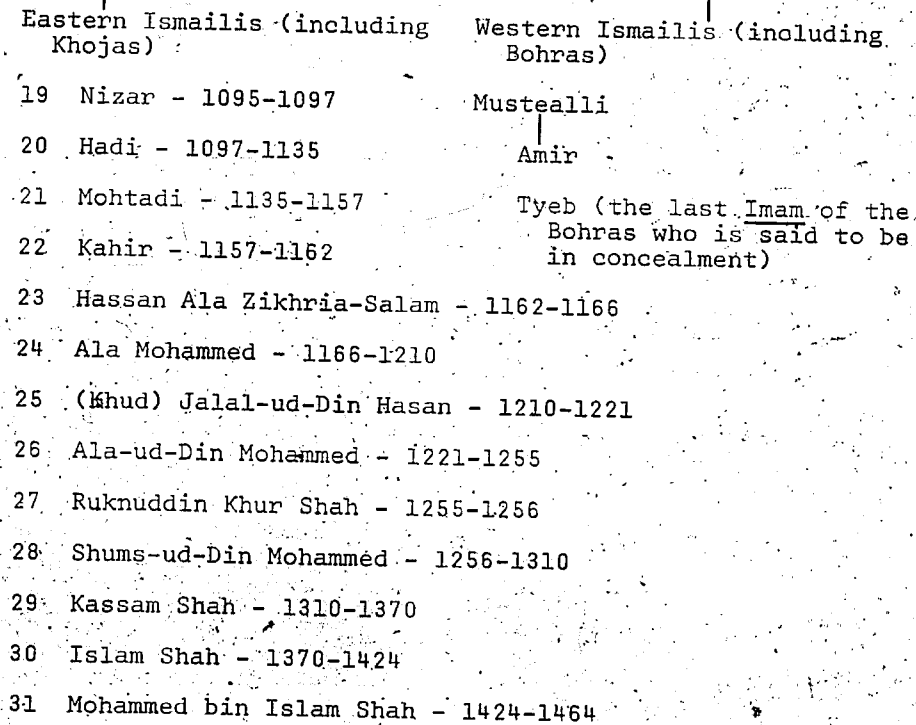
<u>Ismaili Imams</u>	<u>Isna'Ashari Imams</u>
<u>A.D.:</u>	<u>A.D.:</u>
6 Ismail - 765-775	Musa Kazim - 765-796/797
7 Mohamed - 775-813	Ali Raza - 797-818/819
8 Vafi Ahmed - 813-828	Mohamed Taqui - 819-835
9 Taki Mohamed - 828-840	Ali Naqui - 835-868
10 Razi Abdulla - 840-876	Hasan Askari - 868-873
11 Mohamed Mehdi - 876-934	Mohamed Mehdi (who is said to have gone into concealment)
12 Kayem - 934-945	A.D. 873 or 878
13 Mansur - 945-952	

*Isna'Asharis believe in Imam Hassan, the son of Ali as their second Imam and Husein as the third.

- 14 Moizz - 952-975
- 15 Aziz - 975-996
- 16 Hakim - 996-1020
- 17 Zahir - 1020-1035
- 18 Mustansir Billah I - 1035-1095

Another split occurred after the death of Imam Mustansir Billah I in A.D. 1095. The followers of Imam Nizar popularly came to be known as Eastern Ismailis, of which the Ismaili Khojas in Tanzania and India are a part. Those who followed Mustealli, the son of Imam Mustansir Billah I, came to be known as Western Ismailis, of which the Bohras in India are a part.

18 Imam Mustansir Billah I - A.D. 1035-1095



- 32 Mustansir Billah II - 1464-1476
- 33 Abdus-Salaam Shah - 1476-1494
- 34 Garib Mirza - 1494-1497
- 35 Abduzar-Ali - 1497-1509
- 36 Murad Mirza - 1509-1514
- 37 Zulfiqar Ali - 1514-1516
- 38 Nur Din Ali - 1516-1560
- 39 Khalil-ullah Ali - 1550-1585
- 40 Nizar II - 1585-1629
- 41 Sayyid Ali - 1629-1661
- 42 Hassan Ali - 1661-1695
- 43 Kassam Ali - 1695-1730
- 44 Abul Hassan Ali - 1730-1780
- 45 Khalil-ullah Ali II - 1780-1817
- 46 Hasan Ali Shah, Aga Khan I - 1817-1881
- 47 Aga Ali Shah, Aga Khan II - 1881-1885
- 48 Rt. Honourable H. H. Sir Sultan Mohammed Shah,
Aga Khan III - 1885-1957
- 49 His Highness Shah Karim al-Husseini, Aga Khan IV - 1957--

*The dates are taken from Willi Frischauer, The Aga Khans (London, 1970), pp. 273-274; Hatim M. Amiji, "Some Notes on Religious Dissent in Nineteenth-Century East Africa," African Historical Studies, IV, 3 (1971), pp. 615-616. Also see A. S. Picklay, History of the Ismailis (Bombay, 1940), pp. 171-175.

CHAPTER II

CONDITIONS OF MIGRATION

Ismaili settlement in Tanzania began in the early nineteenth century and ended in the 1940s, with the majority of migrants arriving in Tanzania between 1900 and 1940. Advised by the Aga Khan to go to East Africa, Ismaili migrants left their Indian homeland, and what they considered the insecurity of farming, to become part of a new community based on a more successful trade economy. Throughout the period, the movement of people took place gradually and on an individual basis, with kinship ties playing a large part in bringing new members into the Tanzania community.

The study of the history of Ismaili migration deals largely with a series of unknowns, especially in the case of the first migrants. With neither adequate public documents nor extensive family papers, it is difficult to isolate the specific factors that made these early migrants leave their native land and go to a foreign country. We have to establish merely likely conclusions based on more-or-less hypothetical reasons.

About later migrants we are somewhat better informed. Even in their case, however, we are led to examine memories, attitudes, hopes, and expectations, rather than what might be

considered more factual accounts. But, from our point of view, such a procedure is not at all inadequate: the desires, dreams, and frustrations of a people are in a sense the "facts" of migration. For motivation is based on what is thought to be true, as much as on given factual circumstances. And so, as we combine the little information we do have with the thoughts of the people, we come, I believe, to a more comprehensive understanding of the Ismaili migration than would be possible with a more purely factual account.

Concerning the Ismailis on mainland Tanzania, we can deduce from verbal testimony that the factors leading to the drive for migration were the same for both early and late groups. In the case of the earlier groups, however, there was this difference: a spirit of adventure seemed to have informed their journeys in such a way that the word "pioneer" became appropriate not only as it referred to those who came first, but also because of its suggestion of willing enthusiasm both to go forth and to accept hardship. The later migrants, more practical perhaps, and certainly with more of an impulse toward establishing a social order, were hardy enough, to be sure. But this later group came, and its members stayed and founded a community. Out of a desire for permanence and the permanent communities they worked to establish, they seem more the social beings than the early pioneers who, in their desire for adventure, had made ready the way for what they were not interested in, the Ismaili social community in

Tanzania. But given the difference in time and in informing spirit, the early and later migrants were otherwise similarly conditioned.

As a socially conditioned phenomenon, Ismaili migration must be seen as the result of what have been called "push" and "pull" factors, both of which worked simultaneously in the Ismaili motivation to relocate. Push factors, operating to direct a people out of their native country, include such things as population pressure, famine, unemployment, religious persecution, military conquest, political instability, and perhaps most important of all--a people's conviction that such factors are present whether or not they are in reality. Pull factors, operating to draw a people into one place rather than another, include such factors as the presence of relatives in the new country, better economic prospects, and cheaper transportation.¹

One of the more important factors encouraging emigration was the Ismaili understanding of economic conditions prevailing in the regions of Kutch and Kathiawar. In both regions, the majority of Ismailis--about 80 per cent--were subsistence farmers or farm laborers, the rest being engaged in either business or construction work and transportation. According to Ismaili informants, the majority who were farmers had not found the prospects of a satisfactory life. Income and the living standard were, of course, related to yields obtained from the land, of which it was believed the average

farmer had only a small portion. The typical yield was remembered as having been inadequate.²

Moreover, conditions became worse when the rains failed--a common occurrence in these parts of India where rainfall is unreliable. During such times the farmer had to draw upon supplies stored away during the infrequent years of good harvest. He had to store his surplus, as one informant had explained, in the ground. By digging a hole and lining it with cement and wrapping his surplus in cloth and then covering it with earth, the farmer could sustain himself through one bad season. But often the farmer did not have surplus for storage. In this situation, he had to borrow money from relatives--usually those who had shops or several parcels of land and, as a result, were better off. But this, we imagine, was no real solution; for the hope of repayment would have been, in conditions such as these, no more than a hope.³

After having been unable to save themselves by tilling their small plots, some farmers tried to maintain themselves by going to the city to find gainful employment. After the famine of 1876-77 in Gujarat and Brooch, many in fact tried to obtain work in the mills or on the railroads. But the more adventurous of these, along with others in India, sailed across the Indian ocean and came to what is now Tanzania.⁴

The factors contributing to Ismaili migration to mainland Tanzania are not fully documented, but economics no doubt played a dominant role here, too. As Rupani had emphatically

pointed out, by the nineteenth century people in India thought of Africa as a land of economic opportunity. Witness, for example, the slogan "Bas Chalo Afrika"--"Let us go to Africa." A call to the adventurous spirit of the pioneer, the slogan was also an invitation to better living conditions.⁵

There is no doubt that the Ismailis would have come to Africa on this basis. But it becomes more difficult to establish reasons for their coming specifically to Tanzania. Nevertheless, the great trading activity and the number of trade connections which had already been established between western India and Tanzania seem to suggest that successful trade acted as a pull factor in drawing the Ismaili migrants to this East African region.

We find, for example, evidence of trading between the west coast of India (comprising Kutch, Surat, Gujarat, Damao, Diu, and Porbander) and the east coast of Africa in the fourteenth century. This trade was continued; and in the early part of the sixteenth century when the Portuguese first came to East Africa, it was still in a flourishing condition with connections established in Surat, Diu, Damao, and Gujarat. Duarte Barbosa, during his visit to Mombasa, Malindi, and Mogadishu in 1512, found many ships from the "great kingdom of Cambay," an important seaport of Gujarat. We also have evidence that these merchants of Cambay had established a flourishing trade based on silk, cotton cloth, and foodstuffs bartered in exchange for ivory, wax, and gold.⁶ There is,

then, the possibility that some Ismaili Khoja, especially those around the Gulf of Cambay, might have engaged in trade with the island of Zanzibar and the east coast of Africa.

Though there is no direct evidence to confirm such a conclusion, circumstances seemed right for trade to have exerted such an influence. Indeed, the great majority of Ismaili migrants during the nineteenth century came from Kutch and Kathiawar, regions around the Gulf of Cambay, which, as we have seen, was an important trading center having well-established connections with Zanzibar and Africa's east coast. Furthermore, most Ismaili migrants set off from the very ports--Mandavee, Surat, Porbander, and Bombay--where trading with Zanzibar and the African mainland was carried on. Thus, it seems likely that trading connections provided a very real possibility in answering the question of "why East Africa?".

Other possible connections between Ismailis in western India and East Africa can be postulated in view of information gathered concerning religious duties, though once again we have no corroborative evidence. From the earliest times, the Ismailis had been accustomed to sending voluntary offerings to the Imam of the age. When Aga Khan I (1817-1881) resided in Persia, Ismailis in Sind, Kutch, and Kathiawar sent their contributions to him there. First sending them in the form of coin or treasure, they later relied on increased banking facilities and used bills of exchange, which were found to have been cashed at Muscat. This would have necessitated

some familiarity with Africa, as there were trading connections with Muscat and Zanzibar. Moreover, it was customary for the Ismailis to make pilgrimage to Durkhana, the principal residence of the Imam at that time; this involved a journey and possible connections with the Sultan of Oman, who would have benefited from encouraging Ismaili trading activity in Zanzibar. The Sultan of Oman controlled Bandar Abbas, en route to Kerman where the contemporary Aga Khan resided. The ship's journey over the gulf would have provided contact with this region, then, and at least opened up the way for settlement.⁷

In addition, we have indications that Indian settlement was encouraged by the Sultan of Oman. After 1800, it is clear that much of the trade at Muscat was handled by Banyans, Indians from Gujarat. In 1825, further, when Captain Owen visited Muscat, he found the town "inhabited by every caste of Indian merchants."⁸ Now the Sultan of Oman, Seyyid Said, recognized that the prosperity of Muscat depended on foreign trade, much of which was controlled by Indian merchants, and he actively encouraged their presence there. It is altogether possible, therefore, that his encouragement led by 1866 to the presence of 400 Ismaili families in the region.⁹ Furthermore, Oman had very old trading connections with the east coast of Africa, which would perhaps partially explain why Ismailis were later found in Zanzibar as part of the Sultan's trading empire. And again, the union of Oman and Zanzibar in the early nineteenth century under the rule of Seyyid Said may

constitute a further reason for the presence of Ismailis; for they could then move quite easily from Oman to Zanzibar in pursuit of their trade. It is also reasonable to assume that Ismailis accompanied the Sultan when, in 1840, he moved his court from Muscat to Zanzibar.¹⁰

But all this is speculative, though likely, as any future investigation will have to be when trying to isolate those factors which drew the very early migrants from their native country to new lands. In dealing with the later migrants, however, we have somewhat more exact information and, so, can be more certain.

As with the early pioneers, the factors encouraging later emigrants was their interpretation of poor economic conditions made worse by famine. Today, people in Kathiawar not only remember the famine of 1900-1901, but vividly recall that it was the worst they ever experienced. But these people managed to survive; others did not. Nor, informants maintain, did conditions ease. Famines continued to affect Kathiawar in subsequent years: in 1912-1913, 1916-1917, 1919-1920, 1924-1925, and in 1937-1938. During these times the surpluses were quickly consumed. Farmers had nothing to rely on for milk except their cows and goats, if indeed they had any. In times such as these it was also difficult to find employment, for possible employers were in the same predicament. To make matters worse, the government continued to collect taxes, thus making it even harder to survive.¹¹

Moreover, people in Kutch and Kathiawar suffered other hardships when plague epidemics (bringing attacks of cholera and dysentery) broke out. In Kathiawar especially, the attacks were severe, recurring in 1912, 1918, and then with no time for recovery, in 1919. These years, coinciding with the years of famine, made migration a distinct possibility, if not something almost to be looked forward to.¹² Of course, the information presented concerning conditions in India in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries was as the informants remembered it and in terms of their perceptions of only the East African Ismaili community. The actual situation was much more complex and diverse than Ismaili perception would seem to indicate. Nevertheless, the frustrations of people are, as we have noted, part of the "facts" of their history and the source of their motivations. Later migrants could also look forward to going to a new land where they could renew ties of kinship, and having an "Ismaili" land to move into. For one of the important pull factors in the later migrations was the concerted effort made by the early migrants to bring others to the new land. Once they were settled and saw better prospects in store for the future, these pioneers began to call their relatives in India to Tanzania. Some even went back to their native land to announce the better prospects and thus provided for those Ismailis without relatives at least the comfort of cultural ties which had been denied to the first pioneers.

But the experience of a particular family speaks more clearly than generalizations. For this purpose, the Fazal family provides a typical example of why and how the families migrated to Zanzibar and the mainland. Their account shows how the established community helped the first migrant of that family and how, later when Hirji Jetha Fazal had set up his business, he helped the rest of his family in Kathiawar to migrate to Zanzibar.¹³

During the famine of 1900-1901, Hirji Jetha Fazal, like the rest of the population in the town of Khojaberaja, suffered greatly. The next year he set off in a dhow for Madagascar where he had relatives. The dhow was damaged on the way, and it stopped for repairs at Zanzibar, where Hirji Jetha got off. At that time he had very little money with him--about 10 to 15 rupees (\$2.84 to \$4.26). He was wandering about, trying to find someone who would provide him accommodations, when he came to a house of an Ismaili, Virji Nancy. Although in no way related to Hirji Jetha Fazal, Virji Nancy provided him with lodging and later gave him employment at 170 rupees (\$41.15).¹⁴ Hirji Jetha soon prospered in Zanzibar and sent his brother, Remtulla Jetha Fazal, the fare to join him.

Then, in 1924, Hirji Jetha paid a visit to Khojaberaja, his native village in India. During this time, Lalji Virji Fazal, Hirji Jetha's cousin, was living in poor circumstances, working on another Ismaili's farm. He was not able to send

his children to school because there were no schools in that village, and he could not afford to send them to a nearby town. Meanwhile, the famine conditions worsened. In addition, Lalji V. Fazal lost his job and it became hard to support the family. Hirji Bhanji saw the poor condition of his cousin, and being himself in a better position in Zanzibar, he encouraged his cousin to migrate to Africa.

Interestingly enough, it is extremely unlikely that Lalji V. Fazal would have left his village had it not been for the strong pull factors which his cousin provided. He had stayed in his village through famine, unemployment, inadequate food, and lack of educational facilities for his children; he had remained, in spite of these push factors, and in spite of recurring famines. But when he was offered better prospects and the help of relatives, when he was given the passage which he otherwise could not have afforded, and the promise of gainful employment, Lalji V. Fazal became a migrant.

These conditions, as evidenced in the life of one family, were not the only ones which contributed to the Tanzanian migrations. The firmans of the Aga Khan were also important. Perceiving the poor economic conditions in which his followers existed, the late Aga Khan III encouraged them to migrate to the Tanzanian mainland. It is important to note that such migration would not in any way affect the devotion of the Ismailis to their Imams; throughout their

history, the Ismailis had performed their religious obligations no matter where they were.

As early as 1895, the late Aga Khan III, advised Ismailis to leave Kutch and Kathiawar to go to Africa.¹⁵ Some informants have said that Aga Khan II, Aga Ali Shah (1881-1885), had also advised his followers in Kutch and Kathiawar to migrate. But it was the late Aga Khan III who repeatedly and persistently advised Ismailis to leave their native land and settle in East Africa. In fact, after the famine of 1900-1901, he said that his people would truly suffer if they did not follow his firmans. In addition to this advice given to the Ismailis in general, individual families were told specifically to migrate to Tanganyika.

Habib Karim Jetha provides an example of an individual who came to Dar es Salaam on the advice of the late Aga Khan III.¹⁶ His father was an outstanding businessman in Jamshedpur near Jamnagar in Kathiawar. In 1907 the business failed, and his father went bankrupt. On the failure of the business, Habib Jetha's father asked the advice of their religious leader, Aga Khan III, who advised him to go to Dar es Salaam. Since Habib Jetha was the eldest of the children, his father decided to send him first. Habib Jetha was studying in a nearby town, when he received the letter from his father telling him about the firman to go to Dar es Salaam. He immediately left his studies and began making preparations to leave. Arriving in the city in 1908, he soon prospered

and within three years was able to call for his father and family. Today he is a prominent member of the Ismaili community, having once been advised by the Aga Khan who saw it as his duty to migrate.

In dealing with the place of the firmans and the push they gave to migration, however, we must be careful not to overemphasize their influence. As one of a set of interrelated causes, they were important. But, just as it was the combination of push and pull factors, rather than just one, that seems to have effected Lalji V. Fazal's move, so the firmans proved effective only when certain other considerations were already present. For, in spite of the advice of His Highness the Aga Khan III to migrate, families did not do so--or, if they did, it was not until quite late in the twentieth century.

In spite of the advice of the Aga Khan, for example, Hussin L. Fazal did not migrate until 1948. He had a sufficient portion of land in Kathiawar, and enough cows and goats to be able to sustain himself and his family. Only when economic conditions made it impossible for him to continue to do so was he willing to follow the Aga Khan's firman.¹⁷ Few people like to leave the security of their home town and go to the uncertainty of a new land with a different language and culture. They would rather stay as long as possible in their own village, as Hussein Lalji Fazal did, even if it were to mean a violation of what had been given a religious sanction.

It would seem, therefore, that in the case of the later migrants to the Tanzania mainland, many factors had to come together before migration presented itself as a viable alternative. Without the presence of positive conditions in the new country, as we noted in dealing with Lalji V. Fazal, economic deprivation was not a sufficient cause for migration. Indeed, this factor alone, since it precluded the possibility of paying for passage, could not have been sufficient. But even when considering its effects only in terms of psychological motivation, economic deprivation in itself was not always enough. As one informant commented, "my uncle would rather eat one meal a day and stay in his own village than move to a new country."¹⁸

Conditions had to be difficult, certainly, but the positive effect of pull factors also had to be present. And only if both of these conditions were fulfilled were the Aga Khan's firmans able to exert an influence. In addition, other factors seem to have contributed to migration in ways not directly related to the Ismaili culture itself.

No doubt one of the most important of these was that migration was made possible, practically speaking, because of the reasonably low passage fares. The Ismailis who came to Zanzibar before 1905 came by dhows. Ismaili Daya Samji and Premji Kassam availed themselves of this cheap method of transportation when they came in 1896, as did Harji Jetha Fazal in 1901-1902. The journey was uncomfortable, but the

fares were possible for economically deprived passengers who had to pay only about 25 rupees (\$8.09).

After 1905, the means of transportation improved with the coming of steamships, but fares remained reasonable. Journeys were shorter and more comfortable; fares were no more than 40 to 65 rupees (\$12.90 to \$20.97). Habib Karim Jetha, arriving in Dar es Salaam in 1908, paid 65 rupees (\$21.03) for his fare from Porbander; Jamal Walji Fazal, who came in 1911, paid 50 rupees (\$16.18) from Bombay.¹⁹ In all likelihood, steamship fares were kept low because of the competition between the three shipping companies operating in the Indian Ocean: the British-India Steam Navigation Line, the Mogul Line, and the German East Africa Line. So it was that competition between the lines might have contributed greatly to the ease of migration. At any rate, it is believed that at one time competition between the lines was so great that passengers were taken free of charge on the Mogul and the British India Lines.²⁰

Another factor in encouraging migration was the role played by the Indian Association which provided a guarantee of paying for the return passage to India for any Indian who became destitute and needed help. For the policy of the Immigration Office was that all immigrants be covered for passage back to India should they become destitute in Africa. As one dispatch reads:

. . . whether your Association is prepared to defray the costs of a return passage to India or elsewhere on behalf of any person of the Indian community becoming destitute in this territory and desiring to leave: should the decision be in negative, it will be necessary in future for all new comers to deposit . . . in cash, or by cheque, as will be specified by the Immigration Officer. The amount so deposited . . . will be utilized partly or in whole, to cover the costs of return passage, in the event of the depositor becoming destitute, and requiring assistance to leave the country.²¹

Naturally, those who would have been most eager to migrate would have been the least able to pay their passage back. The role of the Indian Association, then, was to encourage many migrants who might not otherwise have been able to come to East Africa.

In the case of the Ismailis, however, the Indian Association does not seem to have figured as prominently as the sense of community which developed among the Ismaili people. Many of the Ismailis who migrated in the early part of the present century had relatives who were able to help them financially. In the case of those who had no kin-group, the community was well-organized and able to take care of the needy Ismailis and to make the necessary arrangements to repatriate them to India. Thus, although the Indian Association file shows some Hindus repatriated, we should probably assume that the Ismailis, rather than rely on the Indian Association, were able to take care of their own.²²

Efforts to encourage migration were also being made by non-Indians in East Africa. Like the earlier migrants, those of later date received encouragement from the Sultan of

Zanzibar. Offering the migrants trading opportunities, he also promised them something more important--the "fullest religious toleration."²³ Later migrants also received, initially at least, the blessings of the German government which realized their importance in Africa. Count Caprivi, Bismarck's successor, said of the Indian traders: "We want them. They have connections with the interior of Africa, and we would not be in a position to replace them; we shall strive to make use of their strength."²⁴

These, then, were the conditions prompting Ismaili migration to Tanzania. In spite of differences in time and in informing spirit between the early and late groups, both were motivated by poor conditions at home and by better prospects in Africa. Both were most certainly encouraged by leaders of countries who saw an Ismaili community to be to their advantage. And so migration became a viable alternative, especially since the Ismaili people were able to carry out their religious obligations even in this land far from India.

The pattern of Ismaili migration was distinct. Most of the Ismailis in Zanzibar and Tanganyika who migrated from Kutch and Kathiawar did so as individuals. Very rarely did the Ismailis migrate in groups, but even when they did the groups were small, seldom exceeding eight to ten people. Sometimes two or three families might be on the same dhow or steamer, but this was frequently an accident rather than a prearranged plan. In 1896, Premji Kassam and Ismaili Daya

Samji happened to be on the same dhow when coming to Zanzibar for the first time. Sometimes, however, certain family members or relatives decided to migrate together in the same steamship, as was true of Karmali A. Haji, Nasser Manji, and Mrs. Nasser Manji, sister of Karmali Haji. But this seems to have been the exception rather than the rule.²⁵

Furthermore, the Ismailis came, in most cases, without their families. Only after they had come, settled, and found employment or set up businesses, did the men send for their wives and children. There were several reasons for this. First, there was not always enough money to pay passage for more than one person. And second, the migrants frequently felt there was little sense in uprooting an entire family until the men could make sure of obtaining a better living in Tanzania and could themselves adjust to life in a new country. Perhaps this accounts for the low rate of emigration.²⁶

In spite of hardship and temporary family break-up, the migration of the Ismailis continued; and the Tanzanian mainland became for them a land where they were to establish, through the years, a self-sufficient community. In doing so, however, they also fit in well with the expanding trade population built around the Indian Ocean. In 1829, the Ismaili community in Bombay was fairly substantial. By 1866, it had moved out to establish trading centers everywhere. There were 2,300 families in Sind; 5,000 in Kathiawar; 1,400 in

Bombay; 400 in Muscat; and 450 families in Zanzibar.²⁷ It is not surprising that the Ismailis, given their adventurous spirit and willingness to accept hardship, would go forth; nor that, encouraged by others who had made a success of migration, they would be able to build for themselves a prosperous new life.

FOOTNOTES

¹The list of the members of the Ismaili community who kindly provided this information is in the bibliography. This is by no means a complete list of all the informants interviewed, but only those who provided the major information relevant for this topic.

²Information provided by Mr. Jamal Walji Fazal and Karmali A. Haji, July 3 and 8, 1968, March 15, 1970, Dar es Salaam.

³Oral evidence collected from the late Mrs. Sikinabai Lalji Fazal, July 6, August 12, 1968, Dar es Salaam.

⁴India, Census Commission, Census of British India, Vol. I (1881), p. 23; R. Mukerjee, Rural Economy of India (London, 1926), pp. 204-206.

⁵Juma Premji Rupani, Africano Vepar ane Hindio [The Role of Indians in Africa's Trade] (Vadodara, 1939), p. 133.

⁶Surat was a flourishing trading center by the beginning of the sixteenth century. Because of its importance, the British gained control in the seventeenth century. During the same period the Gulf of Cambay was the "gateway to Western Asia and Africa." See R. Mukerjee, Economic History of India 1600-1800 (London, 1950), p. ii; M. L. Dames, The Book of Duarte Barbosa, Vol. I (London, 1918), pp. 23-26. Sir John Gray, History of Zanzibar: From the Middle Ages to 1856 (London, 1962), p. 30, marks the date of the visit of Duarte Barbosa to Zanzibar as 1512.

⁷Picklay, History of the Ismailis, p. 143. The Ismailis sent their offerings to Persia until 1840; after that date Aga Khan I (1817-1881) moved his residence to Bombay. However, according to the evidence presented by E. I. Howard in the Bombay High Court in June 1866, throughout the nineteenth century the Ismailis in Africa and India used to send their offerings to the Bombay Jamat; from there it was transmitted to the Imam, wherever he happened to reside. See E. I. Howard, The School of Islam and Its Branches, Especially That of the Imamee-ismailies (Bombay, 1866), pp. 85-100.

⁸Banyans are people from Gujarat. The term can also refer to people who follow Hinduism. W. F. W. Owen, Narrative of Voyages to Explore the Shores of Africa, Arabia and

Madagascar, Vol. I (London, 1833), pp. 336-340; J. B. Kelly, Britain and the Persian Gulf: 1795-1880 (Oxford, 1968), p. 13.

⁹The figure was presented by one of the witnesses in the Khoja Case of 1866. See Picklay, History of the Ismailis, p. 141.

¹⁰R. Coupland, East Africa and Its Invaders from the Earliest Times to the Death of Seyyid Said in 1856 (Oxford, 1938), p. 295; G. S. Graham, Great Britain in the Indian Ocean: A Study of Maritime Enterprise 1810-1850 (Oxford, 1967), pp. 162-165; John Gray, History of Zanzibar from the Middle Ages to 1856 (London, 1962), pp. 82 and 132.

¹¹Oral information collected from Mr. Jamal Walji Fazal, July 3, 1968, Dar es Salaam. The dates correspond with those provided by R. Mukerjee, The Rural Economy of India, pp. 204-206. For further details on the conditions in India during famine, see E. W. Hopkins, India Old and New (London, 1901), pp. 237-239; A. Loveday, The History and Economics of Indian Famines (London, 1914), pp. 24 and 44-78, and appendix A, pp. 135-138; C. Blair, Indian Famines (London, 1874), pp. 111-134.

¹²Hopkins, India Old and New, pp. 265-272; Loveday, History and Economics of Indian Famines, p. 207. Also oral information from the late Mrs. Sikinabai Lalji Fazal, July 8, 1968, Dar es Salaam.

¹³Information on the Fazal family collected from the members of the family: Mrs. Sikinabai Lalji Fazal, Messrs. Hussein Hassanali Lalji Fazal, Rahim Lalji Fazal, Hassanali Lalji Fazal and Jamal Walji Fazal. Information on the late Hirji Jetha Fazal was obtained from his daughter and son-in-law, Mrs. and Mrs. Hassanali Lalji Fazal. July 3 and 8, August 12, 1968, and March 10, 1970, Dar es Salaam.

¹⁴For rate of exchange, see Joseph Whitaker, An Almanack for 1902 (London, 1902), p. 449.

¹⁵Information collected from the late Rai Shamshudin Tejpar, July 7 and August 23, 1968, Dar es Salaam.

¹⁶Oral evidence collected from Mr. Habib Karim Jetha, June 18, 1968, August 10, 1970, Dar es Salaam.

¹⁷Mr. Hassanali Lalji Fazal provided the information, August 5 and 6, 1970, Dar es Salaam.

¹⁸This was commented on by Mr. Remtulla A. Pirmohamed, June 8, 1968, May 5, 1970, Dar es Salaam.

¹⁹Information provided by the following: Messrs. Ismail Daya, Premji Kassam, Habib Karim Jetha and Jamal Walji Fāzal, June 18, 1968, July 3, August 15, 1970, Dar es Salaam. For exchange rate from rupees to dollars, see Whitaker, An Almanack for 1905, 1908, 1911, pp. 448, 443, 422-423.

²⁰It does not seem likely that competitive shipping lines would provide free passage. But at the present time I have no way of checking the information; nor am I aware of documents that explain why the lines might have given free passage.

²¹Indian Association File, "Indian Immigration 1929-32," from C. A. Hornett, Principal Immigration Officer, Dar es Salaam, to Gulamali Damji, Hon. Sec. Indian Association, Dar es Salaam, 25 February 1920. The above guarantee was renewed by the Association on 7 January 1924, with a note that the guarantee was of a "permanent nature."

²²Indian Association File, "Indian Immigration 1929-32"; James Christie, Cholera Epidemics in East Africa (London, 1876), pp. 342-343.

²³J. M. Gray, "Zanzibar and the Coastal Belt 1840-1884," in History of East Africa, edited by Roland Oliver and Gervase Mathew (Oxford, 1963), I, p. 218.

²⁴R. Burton, Zanzibar: City, Island and Coast, Vol. II (London, 1872), p. 342; L. W. Hollingsworth, The Asians of East Africa (London, 1960), pp. 27, 138-139; Roland Oliver and Gervase Mathew (eds.), History of East Africa, Vol. I (Oxford, 1966), p. 405.

²⁵Information provided by Messrs. Ismail Daya Samji and Karmali A. Haji, June 23, 1968, Apr. 7, 1971, Dar es Salaam.

²⁶India, Census Commission, Census of British India, 1921, shows that the rate of immigration into Bombay from these two cities had increased since 1881. The increase in the Indian population in Dar es Salaam from 1913 to 1931 is a clear indication of the high rate of immigration to Tanganyika. Tanganyika Territory, Census, 1931 (Dar es Salaam, 1932), p. 10.

²⁷Picklay, History of the Ismailis, p. 141.

CHAPTER III

EARLY SETTLEMENT ON THE COAST

In coming to Tanzania in the early nineteenth century, the first Ismaili migrants met with difficult conditions. Much of the country was infested with tsetse flies and malaria was endemic. Since there was no railway until 1900, travel into the interior was difficult. Everywhere people traveled by foot or, if the distance was great, by machero,¹ a contrivance resembling a litter. The first pioneers were forced to build crude houses with mud siding and iron roofs, or to rent. There were no medical facilities nor, as we have noted, was there an organized community. In spite of adverse conditions, however, the first migrants found hope in this new land and set themselves the task of creating a viable society which would serve both their practical and spiritual needs.

In detailing the general organizational pattern of the Ismaili communities in Africa, it is important to remember that all Ismaili Khoja groups, wherever they may be and no matter how small their community, retain the same basic structure. Working within this structure they have, to be sure, adapted to new conditions; and, as far as the Ismaili migrants have been concerned, they had had to adjust to conditions of increasing complexity. But, no matter what the

direction of development, there has always remained an integrated local communal organization which upholds and perpetuates the religious and spiritual significance of the larger community. Traditionally headed by the Mukhi, who is a treasurer or steward, and by the Kamadia,² who is an accountant, the local community put in their charge is conceived of as a congregation of people, young and old, called the Jamat. The Jamatkhana is their gathering place for prayers, an assembly-hall which, appropriate to its function among a people conceived of as a congregation, is the center of communal activity. Although the Mukhi and the Kamadia have administrative charge of Jamati affairs, the entire population exists more basically in its relation to the Aga Kahn, the spiritual leader of his people, than to these administrative heads. Any consideration of political and administrative developments in the Ismaili communities, then, will have to be seen in terms of such an orientation, though this is not to say that we must look for a basically static society secluded in spiritual isolation from the more practical tasks. Quite the contrary is true, as we shall see, in examining the political and administrative developments of the Ismaili people.

Before 1905, the basic organizational structure of Ismaili communities was relatively simple in nature. The pioneers who came to Zanzibar retained a great deal of their traditional organization.³ Clearly defined before, the structure was made even more so in the new country where it was

adapted to serve almost purely local needs. Previously in Kutch, Kathiawar and Sind, local Mukhi had been appointed to deal with communal, social and economic needs in the community, in addition to handling the local financial proceeds given voluntarily by members of the community. Contact beyond the community was maintained in the appointment of the Mukhis and Kamadias, by the Aga Khan as Imam (spiritual head), who made the stipulation that his appointees should retain their office "as long as they [were able to] give satisfaction."⁴ Besides the local Mukhis and Kamadias, there was also, in Sind and Kathiawar, a more central power in the provincial Kamadias who, appointed by the Imam, held a position above that of the local political heads. Their duty was to "collect and forward for transmission to the Imam wherever he should choose to reside, the contributions raised on his account by the Khoja community."⁵ Coordinating and centralizing these activities further was a Vazier, directly responsible to the Aga Khan. Although we have no information on the Vazier's specific duties and must guess that he did little more than act as intermediary between the Aga Khan, the Mukhi and the Kamadia, we can see that political organization at this point reached somewhat beyond the community, though in a fairly simple way.

The earliest evidence of the Mukhi and Kamadia in Zanzibar dates back to 1838.⁶ The Ismaili on mainland Tanzania, in order to facilitate adjustment in a new country,

introduced even more specialization into this basic structure as they moved to adapt to new conditions. Locally, the Mukhis and Kamadias conducted religious affairs during this early period and performed social, economic, and administrative duties. Since, further, there was no means for establishing relations between different segments of the community, the Mukhi and Kamadia also took on the responsibility of organizing monthly feasts in their respective towns. Creating a feeling of solidarity and oneness, these feasts were possible, however, only because of the relative smallness of the community. Later, as the communities expanded, the Ismaili would have to readjust to different means for establishing solidarity, by forming clubs or creating various economic organizations. Maintaining the purely local organization, they dropped the provincial Kamadia, at least at first. But as the Jamats grew in number and as many Jamatkhanas came to be built in various major centers on the coast and in the interior,⁷ the Mukhi and Kamadia of Zanzibar began to act as head Mukhi and head Kamadia. Responsible for collection of Sarkar Saheb, the Aga Khan's, revenue which came from the Ismaili communities, they were constitutionally delegated in 1905 to perform this function:

The whole revenue of His Highness Hazarat Maulana Sarkar Sir Aga Sultan Mohamed Shah Aga Khan, G.C.I.E. in Africa and Zanzibar is called the Sarkar Saheb revenue. The said revenue shall be collected by the Mukhi and Kamarias of Zanzibar and of all Africa appointed by His Highness Maulana Sarkar Saheb Sir Aga Sultan Mohamed Shah Aga Khan G.C.I.E., and all accounts thereof shall be kept

with great care. The accounts shall be kept from time to time by the Head Treasurer and Accountant of Zanzibar Sarkar Sahebi who are otherwise called the Head Mukhi and Kamaria of Sarkar Saheb.⁸

The list that we have of the Mukhis and Kamarias in the nineteenth century in Zanzibar indicates that the length of appointment was not open-ended but was for the period of one year. I assume, further, that the method of appointing was the same as that specified in the Constitution of 1905.⁹ That is, six months prior to the expiration of their terms of office, the present Mukhi and Kamadia probably nominated three eligible persons for each position and sent their names to the Aga Khan for approval. We do not know, however, how much control the Aga Khan exerted in the selection process, having no information as to which names were accepted by him and which--or how many--rejected. Evidence indicates, however, that these posts tended to stay in the hands of wealthy merchants. Symbols of success in a business-oriented community, the wealthy would quite naturally be nominated by the outgoing officer.

The community itself continued to be thought of as a Jamat and the center of its activities, as a Jamatkhana. It was here that communal feasts were held bringing together all Ismailis in a celebration of communal solidarity every week.¹⁰ Evidence for the establishment of the Jamat in Africa indicates that such cohesiveness existed as early as 1820. A court case of 1866 provides further documents attesting to such a form of communal organization.¹¹

From a court case of 1894, it would appear that adjudication of communal disputes rested in the hands of a Council of Elders, who were considered "authoritative as to Khoja custom."¹² The authority of the council derived from the consent of the community rather than from the prescription of written law. As the court case of 1894 reads: "The Jamat has no written rules, but adjudication on matters of this kind [i.e., maintenance of first wife after husband had taken a second wife] seems to have been left to them by the members of the [Khoja] caste, and no doubt they would have come to act upon some more or less ascertained principle."¹³ Such internal administration appears to have been self-sufficient and satisfactory to the community, since there were few cases taken on appeal to the local Zanzibar court. Of those cases appealed, the majority were in disputes arising between Ismailis and seceders where the seceder was challenging Ismaili custom.

At the same time the community structure was evolving, Ismaili migrants were also meeting the demands of their new country in establishing a successful economy based primarily on trade. As Dr. James Christie has noted, the Ismailis were "exclusively engaged in business, wholesale and retail, being the principal merchants and shopkeepers."¹⁴ Reasons for the Ismaili success were many, but primarily among them was the ability to adapt to an already established system of trade.

As mentioned earlier, ships from the west coast of India had long frequented the east coast of Africa, bartering Surat cloth, beads and brass wire in return for ivory, slaves, gum copal, tortoise-shell, and ambergris. Prior to the settlement of the Ismailis on the coast of East Africa, we have little evidence of the organization of the trade as it existed before the nineteenth century. However, it is clear that by the beginning of the nineteenth century the Arabs and the Swahilis conducted trade all along the coast and organized caravans into the interior. And we know that even before the Arabs and the Swahilis sent caravans to the interior, the Africans were already bringing ivory to the coast. We do not know when the trade with the interior started, but in all probability it is as old as the Indian Ocean trade. In Periplus of the Erythrean Sea, ivory is mentioned as the principal export from the east coast of Africa; and it is almost certain that the contact with the interior dates back to that day.¹⁵

Before the nineteenth century this trade was not, however, based on permanent settlement. Ismailis merely acted as agents for big mercantile houses in Kutch, Bombay, Surat, and other trading centers along the Gulf of Cambay, providing valuable service as money-lenders, bankers and financiers; they bartered their cloth, beads, and wire in return for ivory, slaves, rhinoceros horn and ambergris.¹⁶ Ismailis, arriving at a time of expansion, could go rather

quickly into profitable trading activities where there would be an opportunity for almost any enterprising young man to use his innovational resources in the expanding trade.

By the beginning of the nineteenth century, the increase in the demand for ivory and slaves and the emergence of American and European mercantile houses created a need for further expansion and organization of the already existing trading networks. Such networks required more capital and organization which was to be provided by the Indian financiers, the Omani Arabs, and the Swahilis. The Indians, having trading connections with the coast for so many years, were aware of the commercial potentialities of the coastal trade. Thus, in order to have a better control of the trade, the casual, sporadic contact of the early trading days was changed to permanent settlement.¹⁷

We do not know how many of these early traders were Ismailis or when they first settled on the coast, but we do know that by 1820 there was a substantial number in Zanzibar.¹⁸ Since then the community gradually expanded, especially during the second half of the nineteenth century. By 1866 there were 450 families in Zanzibar,¹⁹ and in 1870 they formed "by far the largest section of the mercantile community, permanently resident on the island . . . most of them having been born there."²⁰

Unlike the Hindus, the Ismailis came to Tanzania with a view to settling permanently, migrating either with their

families or arranging for their families to join them once they were settled. This willingness to settle permanently no doubt partly accounts for the high number of Khoja compared to other Indians. It also had a profound effect on the development of the Ismaili community in Tanzania. For the gradual increase in the number of Ismailis was closely correlated with the development of the established community and, through that, with the development and expansion of trade.

Indeed, it was through community and kinship ties that jobs were provided for new migrants who, from what we know about their activities, started by working at very low salaries in established Ismaili firms. Arising out of a sense of community, this initial period of apprenticeship provided the Ismailis with opportunity to acquire business skills, which were best acquired "on the job," and basic Swahili, which was the trade language of Tanzania. It was also the availability of manpower from among the new migrants that made it easier for the already established firms of men like Sewa Haji Paroo, Tharia Topan and Allidina Visram, to expand their businesses, by opening up shops all along the coast and the caravan routes instead of merely enlarging their Zanzibar based firms. In turn, business ties and connections reinforced the sense of communal solidarity among Ismaili migrants. Thus communal ties were particularly important in absorbing new community members into its business enterprise and in providing means by which that enterprise was sustained, supported, and given impetus for expansion.

Once he had saved enough, a new migrant could then start his own business with a small duka (a small retail shop) selling miscellaneous goods. The duka type of business involved buying from local wholesalers and selling to the indigenous population and the Arab everything from a "bead to a bale of cloth."²¹ The net profit varied from article to article, although it generally ranged between 5 per cent and 25 per cent, depending on supply and demand. As was to be expected, the largest profit came from goods which were in great demand but difficult to obtain, mostly imported goods.²² In setting up a duka, the Ismaili had two advantages. Used to a very low standard of living in India, he discovered that it did not take long to accumulate the means necessary to begin on his own. Moreover, and always significant in the Ismaili community, the closeness of the kinship group and the sense of communal solidarity enabled the Ismaili first going into business to get goods on credit from either a relative or a coreligionist.

The retail business, however, was not as profitable as wholesale business. The profits retailers could make were limited because the prices they had to pay for each article included the high markup of wholesalers eager for profit themselves. The retailers had no way out since charging prices sufficient to compensate for wholesale markup would have resulted in diminished sales on the competitive market. Thus, although the material life of the migrants was better

in Tanzania than in India, it still did not always meet their expectations.²³

A retailer, therefore, always wanted to establish a wholesale business. In general, business enterprise has been ideally characterized by Ismailis as following a transition from small-scale retail to wholesale activity, the transition reflecting both a response to perceived needs and to new opportunities allowing for expansion. The characterization does not represent all members of the community, since the majority remain small retailers, but it is representative of the more ambitious members of the community who also are generally considered to be community leaders. As such, the Ismaili trading economy must be characterized as hierarchically organized. The retailers were indebted to the wholesalers, who were indebted to the foreign mercantile houses. Nor could a retailer buy goods directly from the foreign companies except through a wholesaler.

By the second half of the nineteenth century there were about half a dozen of these wholesale merchants in Zanzibar.²⁴ Perhaps it is not accidental that the rise of these six wholesalers coincided with Tharia Topan's position as customs master. Topan was the only Ismaili to attain this post. The position being one which richer Indians bought and successfully used to control the export-import trade to their advantage. They usually bought goods on credit and in large quantities from the foreign traders and sold them in small

consignments to retailers. Other retailers, buying produce from upcountry, sold it to the wholesalers, who in turn sold it to foreign firms or exported it. Sir Bartle Frere clearly summed up the role of the Indian trader when he said:

Hardly a loan can be negotiated, or mortgage effected, or a bill cashed without Indian Agency; nor an imported cargo can be distributed, nor an export cargo collected which does not go through Indian hands. The European or American, the Arab or Sowaheli [sic] may trade and profit but only as an occasional link in the chain between producer and consumer, of which the Indian trader is the one invariable and most important link of all

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Although the statement refers to all the Indian traders, the description fits a select few in the Ismaili community.

With the changing economic situation, the progressive trend continued with the diversification of capital from retail and wholesale trade to caravan financing. As the market expanded, it created the need for better organization of the caravan trade. More and bigger caravans were to penetrate into the interior where ivory was more plentiful and cheaper. Burton estimated that the average number in a caravan varied from half-a-dozen to 200 porters organized under one trader to 1,000 porters. Krapf, whose estimate is much higher, puts the figure at 3,000 to 4,000.²⁶

Indian merchants financed these caravans by advancing loans and trade goods like beads, cloth, and wire which were used as media of exchange in the interior. The merchants would then be paid back in the form of ivory together with a high rate of interest for the loan advanced, the interest

rate varying from 20 per cent to as high as 40 per cent.²⁷

Beside the high rate of interest charged by Ismaili and other merchants on the coast for trade goods advanced to them, detailed information is not available on what kind of security was provided by the Arab and Swahili caravan traders. There is some indication that security was provided in the form of clove plantations or other properties. Mention is also made of Tippoo Tib, a caravan trader having neither a plantation nor a house, who put himself up as security, while sending a relative in his place into the interior.²⁸

Besides financing these trade caravans, the Ismaili also equipped expenditure for European explorers by providing porters, supplies, and imported goods. Sewa Haji Paroo and Sir Tharia Topan were two Ismaili entrepreneurs who profited from such enterprises. Stanley described Topan as "one of the richest merchants in town."²⁹

In financing these caravans, we assume the Ismailis themselves rarely penetrated into the interior. In 1873, Frere noted that "the Banyans generally keep to the Ports, or within a short journey of the Coast or navigable parts of large rivers. The trade with the far interior is almost exclusively in the hands of Arabs, or Arab half casts, and Swahili . . ."³⁰ Since we have no information of any

Khoja settlement in the interior until the 1890s, it is almost certain that Frere speaks of the Ismailis as well. Although Burton claimed that Khojas "travel far and wide [and]

several of them have visited the Lake region," our information indicates that he could not have been referring to permanent settlement. The only exception seems to be Musa Mzuri who, with his brother Sayyin, settled in Unyanyembe around 1830.³¹

In spite of the fact that these entrepreneurs did not expose themselves personally to the dangers of the interior, the financing of the caravan was a risky enterprise of unknown and delayed profits. It could take as long as six months to two years before the caravan returned from the interior. Sometimes the caravan might never return or it might not obtain enough ivory to pay back the loan advanced by ivory merchants on the coast. Unfortunately, we have no detailed statistics to show how much profit was made by the ivory merchant on the coast and the Arab caravaneers made after they paid the porters. We do know that no set amount was paid to the porters, as the rates varied from caravan to caravan, though Burton notes that the "Wanyamwezi demanded for a journey from the coast to their own country six to nine dollars' worth of domestics, coloured cloths, brass-wires, and the pigeon's-egg bead called sungomaji." Later, as the demand for ivory increased, the cost of portage increased as much as \$12.00 per porter, not including the ration.³² This information does not, however, give a true picture of the profitability of the caravan trade, since we do not know how much the Arab caravaneers paid to the Indian merchant on the coast, nor at what rate he sold the ivory when he returned

from his trip into the interior, nor the current market price for ivory.

Financing expeditions for the European explorers was clearly profitable, however. A copy of the agreement between Dr. Hans Meyer and Sewa Haji for a caravan to Kilimanjaro shows that the profit could be as much as 50 per cent. Dr. Meyer paid Sewa Haji \$11.00 per month for the hire of each porter and supplied the men with the necessary food and medicines, and paid the toll for right of way. Sewa-Haji himself paid the porters only the "customary hire of \$6.00 each." Excluding the loss incurred if any porters deserted, the profit margin was still high.³³

Unfortunately, there is conflicting testimony concerning the profitability of the trade caravans. Burton noted that "the Arab merchants gain but little beyond a livelihood in plenty and dignity of their expeditions in the interior." An investment of \$1,000 rarely brought more than 70 frasilas (2,450 lbs.) of ivory. If we take the average price of \$50.00 per frasila at Zanzibar, then the total ivory would be worth \$3,500, giving a net profit of \$1,050. Against this, one has to place the cost of portage and rations at \$5.00 per frasila, and the high rate of interest charged by the ivory merchant on the coast. Besides, there was the risk of loss, and the wastage of time and outfit.³⁴ At another time, however, Burton contradicts this statement in noting that Snay bin Amir, once a confectioner at Muscat, has as a caravan merchant

"risen to be one of the wealthiest ivory and slave-dealers in Eastern Africa."³⁵ And other reports have confirmed the profits derived from caravan trade. One notes, for example, that those Arabs who led caravans into the interior three or four times had accumulated enough wealth to become plantation owners in Zanzibar.³⁶ It is therefore most probable that enterprises on such a scale could be rendered profitable if they extended to meet the increasing demand.

In spite of the risk and the occasional losses incurred, caravaning must then be considered to have been a profitable enterprise. Since most of the wealthy merchants diversified their investments, the loss of a caravan could be compensated for by profit in other businesses.

While advancing the accumulation of private wealth, the caravan trade was also responsible for further expansion and a new kind of business enterprise. Ismailis began to settle all along the coastal towns acting as agents for major commercial houses there. As middlemen, they bought imported goods from the wholesalers on the coast and sold them to the caravans going into the interior. They paid back the wholesalers in upcountry produce, mainly ivory. Sewa Haji Paroo, Sir Tharia Topan and Allidina Visram had agents conducting business for them all along the coast. As in the expansion of the wholesale business, this expansion of caravan trade was facilitated by incorporating other newly arrived migrants into the expanding economic system. Such a development not

only provided jobs for the new arrivals, but it provided greater prosperity for the wealthy merchants.³⁷

In the nineteenth century, the Ismaili migrants adapted to the hardships of a new country by developing a social structure that not only served their spiritual needs but also advanced their economic prosperity. Aided by kinship groups and the sense of community ties, the early migrants were able to take advantage of an existing system of trade to increase their own wealth, to expand the scope of trading, and to provide for those migrants who came after them. The more progressive among the Ismailis exemplify these basic processes.

The earliest detailed evidence we have of a prosperous Ismaili business in Zanzibar is that of Sewa Haji Paroo (1851-1897).³⁸ Because of the enterprising spirit of the early migrants and their ability to venture into new trade, some of the pioneer families were, by the end of the nineteenth century, able to establish a monopolistic control over the caravan trade in the interior. This enabled them to accumulate large sums of money which later permitted them to diversify their investments. The business enterprise of the Sewa Haji Paroo family is a good illustration.

The late Sewa Haji Paroo first managed the Zanzibar branch of his father's business, Haji Kanji & Company, with its headquarters at Bagamoyo. We have no information as to how Sewa Haji's father, Haji Paroo, set up his business, but in all probability he worked for an employer before venturing

out on his own. Nor do we know the exact nature of his business. According to Count K. R. Paroo, Sewa Haji started his own business about the year 1875. But if this was so, one wonders about the father's business. Did Sewa Haji take it over and change its name or did he set out on his own?

Although at one point he conducted his business under the name of Haji Kanji & Company and Ratansi Manji & Company, by July 1894 "he had given up interests in the firm of Khoja Ratansi Manji" and "had no connection with the firm."³⁹

Whatever the case may be, we know that Sewa Haji worked as a "safari outfitter," recruiting porters for the Arab and European caravans and supplying them with trade goods.

By 1891, the business had grown and prospered. Sewa Haji had extended trade "all along the caravan routes, and he had opened stores as far as Tabora, Ujiji, Mwanza and other points in the Lake region."⁴⁰ His agents at Bukumbi, Mwanza, Ujiji and elsewhere were regularly supplied by his caravans from Bagamoyo, which carried cloth, firearms, beads, and brass-wire to the interior, and brought back primarily ivory, rhinoceros horn, and hippopotamus teeth.⁴¹ The various items found at one of his branches at Bukumbi in 1891 reflects the diversity and scope of his enterprise. The goods, worth about £18,150 (\$84,255.32) included 30,000 lbs. of Manchester satin, 30,000 lbs. of Bombay grey Merikani, 10,000 lbs. of gunpowder, 2,000 lbs. of white beads, 150,000 gun-caps, etc.⁴² His caravans were the most important in the

country. By the 1890s he held a near-monopoly over the caravan trade in the interior of German East Africa.

His business activities were not limited to organizing caravan trade or supplying trade goods to his agents in the interior. On May 6, 1896, an agreement was signed between Sewa Haji Paroo and the Sultan Seyyid Hamed bin Thwain extending for a period of ten years, from January 1, 1897, whereby the former was granted a virtual monopoly "on sale of all the crops grown on the government shambas." The contract stipulated the payment of Rs. 1,780,000 (\$816,513.86) to the Sultan, but it did not materialize, since Sewa Haji died nine months after it was signed.⁴³

The will of Sewa Haji Paroo is a partial indication of the wealth acquired from such profit-making enterprises. In his will Sewa Haji left his wife 50,000 rupees (\$22,935.87) including her ornaments and clothes. His sister Fatmabai received 40,000 rupees (\$18,348.63). Bai Jenu, his niece, Allidina Jaffer Paroo, his first cousin and Mohamed Paru, his uncle, received 1,000 rupees (\$458.73) each. Ratansi Ibrahim and Allidina Jaffer were entrusted to carry on his business, receiving 2 1/2 per cent commission, after all debts were paid. He left 5,000 rupees (\$2,293.65) to be used for funeral ceremonies. With the exception of one house which he left to the Padre Parmann, the rest of his estates were entrusted to the German government. The money was to be used in providing food for lepers.⁴⁴ It is, however, important to note that the amount shown in his will does not

reflect his total wealth by any means. During his lifetime he donated large sums of money to the Ismaili communities in Bagamoyo, Zanzibar and Dar es Salaam, and to the missions. Nor do we have the total value of goods in his head office and branch businesses.⁴⁵

The example of Allidina Visram (1863-1916)⁴⁶ adds to the picture of the business opportunities available to the early pioneers. His activities reflect the expansion of trade and the diversification of capital into different sectors. After the death of Sewa Haji Paroo on February 10, 1897, Allidina Visram took over his caravan trade, thus bringing to a "logical conclusion" what Sewa Haji had started by expanding it as far as "Uganda, Kenya and parts of Congo Free State and Southern Sudan." But more than this, he moved beyond trade into other businesses.

In 1877, Allidina Visram came as a young boy from Kutch-Bhuj to Zanzibar. It is believed that in the same year he went to Bagamoyo to work as an assistant to Sewa Haji. He worked for a few years under him and then, having earned enough money, began to organize caravans into the interior. His business expanded, at first slowly but later more quickly, as he gradually worked his way into Sewa Haji's territory. J. S. Mangat notes that "Allidina Visram had extended his operations all along the caravan route, opening branches of operations of his firm at Dar es Salaam, Sadani (near Tanga), Tabora, Ujiji and at Kalima and Tinde in the Congo Free

State."⁴⁷ Then, after the completion of the Uganda railway, he started diversifying. Around 1906, when Zanzibar and Mombasa formed the headquarters of his business, letterheads show that his firm acted as "General Merchants, General Contractors and Commission Agents" and as "buyers of ivory, rubber, hides, skins and all kinds of East Africa and Uganda produce." With interests outside of Africa, the firm also advertised as "Importers of Merchandise from Europe, India and America." Allidina Visram himself moved into furniture-making; he also had soda factories and oil mills at Kisumu and on the coast. Between 1912 and 1914, he established a cotton gin in Kampala.⁴⁸

A model migrant, Allidina Visram was also a model businessman. Indeed, his success seems to have been the product not only of a keen business sense, but also of the good reputation he enjoyed. If we can believe Mangat, Visram was the epitome of the good businessman: "perhaps the most important factor for the success of Allidina Visram's pioneering ventures," Mangat writes, "were the peaceful nature of his penetration of the country unaided by arms in search of 'legitimate trade'; the remarkable ability he possessed for organizing and leading his caravans . . ."⁴⁹ Before the abolition of slavery in 1833, the Arabs and Indian traders were engaged mostly in slave and ivory trade. Later, the slave trade was replaced by "legitimate trade" although ivory still remained important. Together with his peaceful search

for legitimate trade, Allidina Visram's reputation accounted in part for his success. And no doubt his reputation was enhanced by the substantial amount he donated to the Namirembe Cathedral, to the Red Cross and to a hospital in Kampala, and to the Indian School in Mombasa which bears his name.⁵⁰ But whatever was true of Allidina Visram, the man, he had fulfilled the Ismaili dream as few Ismailis had, in moving from apprentice to successful entrepreneur.

It is interesting to note in fact that during this period, between 1860 and 1900 all of the big businessmen like Sewa Haji Paroo, Allidina Visram, and Sir Tharia Topan were caravan owners, safari outfitters or money lenders, as conditions prevailing at the time warranted. No railway was built until 1900; nor for that matter were any transportation facilities available. Trade with the interior had to be carried on by caravans. The business of owning and dispatching caravans, outfitting safaris, or lending money to finance these ventures, therefore proved very profitable for those who were able to respond to the needs of an underdeveloped country.

In spite of the vast wealth amassed by the Ismaili pioneers, the business empires of the prominent entrepreneurs did not survive for more than a decade or two after their deaths. The business of Sewa Haji Paroo was bought by Allidina Visram, but even the latter, who was once an "uncrowned king of Uganda," and who left a fortune of three lakh (hundred thousand) rupees (\$109,489.05) was to have his entire empire collapse in less than two decades.⁵¹

The Ismaili inheritance pattern was no doubt the most important factor. A court case of 1891 in Zanzibar had firmly established that "joint family managership is not the custom among the Khojas in Zanzibar."⁵² Unlike the Hindus, the property and savings of Ismailis belong to individual partners, thus leaving the way open for division and misuse of funds. Such was the case, for example, in the conflict arising among Sir Tharia Topan's inheritors.⁵³ Sometimes, too, the vastness of the enterprise was a factor in the dissolution of an economic empire. Allidina Visram, for example, had 30 dukas or small shops spread out all along the caravan routes. Dependent on many agents for the conduct of business, the enterprise was unable to maintain itself without the strength and leadership of a strong man to make it cohesive. Allidina Visram employed non-Ismailis who had no sense of working within and for a community.⁵⁴ Often, too, the sons who inherited a business empire were not equipped to handle the vast enterprise left by the father. Having little experience in acquiring business skills, the sons were not prepared to work as hard nor were they as knowledgeable as their fathers. John Kirk's observation clearly reflects this tendency: "The rising Indian community here is undoubtedly far below the educational standard and business capacity of their fathers who came from Kutch, owing to their utter want of training."⁵⁵

Another factor limiting Ismaili expansion into wholesale business was the nature of the society. As members of a

status-oriented and hierarchically organized group, the Ismailis seem to have concentrated more on social rather than economic signs of prosperity. Profits gained from business were "consumed" to provide for upward mobility within a caste system, which unlike that of the Hindus, was not characterized by simplicity of life style. Typical of such a people is Christie's observation that well-to-do Ismailis entertained the entire community on special occasions like marriage, or birth. "The community spend a considerable portion of their wealth in this way," Christie continues, "and the custom is not without special and important advantages." Whatever the social advantages, however, business expansion was minimized. Sufficient profits were not available for rechanneling into business.⁵⁶

In spite of these limitations, the Ismaili community continued to prosper. We have already noted the success attendant upon advantages gained from the role of the community in providing opportunities for apprenticeships and making goods available on credit. Living in a small community and connected by marriage and kinship ties, Ismailis were also led by the sense of community commitment to take care of their poor, the needy, sick and old. From this point of view, it is no wonder that the physician to the Sultan of Zanzibar, observed that "in no class of society have I ever seen so much kindness and genuine affection displayed toward each other as I have witnessed amongst the members of this community."⁵⁷

Prosperity, however, was gauged not only in terms of entrepreneurial successes or the ability of the community to take care of its needy. For the majority, prosperity came in the form of small business enterprise in which the Ismailis retained the role of middleman. Few ventured into wholesale business, agriculture, industry, or government.

It is easy to understand why the Ismaili migrants, having left a failing agricultural community in India, would not be eager to reestablish such a community in Africa. Moreover, previous patterns of migration had set an example of movement from agriculture to business in urban centers. By 1866, for example, Khojas in Bombay were "mostly engaged in retail trade or commerce."⁵⁸ Thus, it would be only natural for Tanzanian migrants to follow the same pattern. Besides the early age at which most Ismailis migrated meant that they were not exposed to the farming techniques needed in agriculture. Then, too, the firmans of the Aga Khan would provide positive direction for the development of business enterprise. The colonial government, especially the German government, would discourage agricultural enterprise. Because of the policy of land alienation, the best farming lands were to be given to whites, especially German settlers. Thus, only a few Ismailis engaged in agriculture, settling mainly in Zanzibar where they were able to buy farms, generally coconut and clove plantations developed by the Arabs. Some Ismaili creditors also came to own farms transferred to them when

Arabs were unable to pay their debts. Information as to how many Ismaili farms were the result of Arab debts is lacking, however.⁵⁹

Just as external conditions turned the Ismailis away from agriculture, their own attitudes kept them from entering government service. Mr. Gulamhussein, who worked with the judicial department for thirty-five years, commented that the lack of interest in the civil service was due to the fact that the community was "business-minded."⁶⁰ The people felt that their best money-making prospects lay in business. Nor did they like working for someone unless there was an opportunity for promotion to a high post, and naturally those posts were kept for the British. The phrase "Nokeri Kare Che" (he is in service) was connected with the idea of noker--"a servant, hireling or even slave."⁶¹

So it was that the majority of Ismailis partook of the prosperity of their community by engaging in small retail trade businesses. Because of the lack of statistical data, however, it is difficult to know what this meant in terms of total African enterprise. From the descriptions of various writers, it is obvious that the Bhattias, the trading caste among the Banyans, had a larger share of the trade than did the Ismailis, since the Banyans controlled the important post of customs master. . . . With the exception of five years from 1875 to 1880, when Tharia Topan, a prominent Ismaili merchant who was successfully able to outbid a Bhattia, the post was

exclusively in the hands of the Kutch Banyan from 1835 to 1886.⁶² Perhaps, as Topan's success would seem to indicate, the Ismaili trader did not have enough capital to compete for the post of customs master with the already established and prosperous Bhattia merchant. As a result, trade benefits were denied the Ismaili trader.

In 1835, Jairam Sewji, a Kutch Banyan, farmed the custom dues at Zanzibar at an annual rent of \$110,000. He retained that post until 1853 when it was bought by another Bhattia, Ladha Damji.⁶³ Appointing agents to collect custom duties at different ports along the coast, the customs master at Zanzibar virtually controlled customs. All the agents were either tied by kinship or were caste members. As noted by Burton, during his visit to various coastal ports:

Ladha Damha [sic] farms the Customs at Zanzibar, at Pemba Island his nephew Pisu has the same charge: Mombasah [sic] is in the hands of Lakhmidas, and some 40 of his co-religionists; Pangani is directed by Trikandas and contains twenty Bhattias, including those of Mbweni; even the pauper Sa'adani had its Banyan; Ramji, an active and intelligent trader, presides at Bagamoyo, and the customs of Kilwa are collected by Kishnidas. I need hardly say that almost all of them are connected by blood as well as by trade.⁶⁴

Because of their advantageous position, the customs master and his agents dominated the import and export trade of Zanzibar and the coastal trading towns. Their contact with the major foreign commercial houses made it easier to enter into a business deal with them and buy complete cargoes of imported goods like piecegoods, wire and beads and then set their own price, thereby acting as middlemen between the

foreign merchants and the local wholesalers and retailers. It was natural that the Banyan customs masters would sell imported goods on better terms to their co-religionists than to outsiders. It is certain that the Banyans made large profits from such transactions.⁶⁵

It is not surprising, therefore, that the Banyans made every effort to retain their hold over such a prestigious and profitable post as customs collectors. By appointing their kin groups and their coreligionists, they formed a "closed ring," excluding outside competitors.

Other Muslims, like the Bohras, were mostly artisans, so there was little rivalry with them. It is likely that the control of trade by the Ismailis and Banyans affected the Arabs, Swahilis and indigenous people, but it is difficult to say how much and to what extent they were affected.⁶⁶

But, regardless of the extent of Ismaili retail trade in Africa, small business was, in terms of the Ismaili community, successful. No doubt the main reason for this success was a willingness to work long hours. There were no opening or closing hours: shops opened early in the morning and closed late in the evening. Since a business was a family enterprise, all the members of the family, including the wife, assisted in the shop. The wife not only helped in the household activities but as an "active and indispensable partner in business," thus making it possible for the husband to conduct outside business. Living arrangements further facilitated family

involvement in the business. The front section of the house was the shop; the rear section was the living quarters.⁶⁷

The profit margin was usually low. As the shops began to grow, the competition became stiff; and, in order to carry on and attract sufficient business, shopkeepers had to keep prices low. Rather than have to set ceiling prices for each article, the shopkeeper would use his "business sense" and vary the price depending on his customers. At times he would sell at a loss rather than lose a customer. This loss in one article could be made up, it was reasoned, in other goods and a good customer kept.

So it was that the majority of Ismailis successfully integrated themselves into the local economy and society. Unlike some of the Hindus whose economic livelihood was based on a specialized craft or occupation--Dhobi (washerman), Napit (barber), Kumbar (maker of earthen pots and bowls), Suthar (carpenter)--most Ismaili migrants developed a form of enterprise through which they could improve their social and economic status.⁶⁸ The typical Ismaili used most of his profits for social gain rather than business expansion. Noting this tendency, the present Aga Khan IV praised his people:

I am proud that my spiritual children are a nation of shopkeepers just as England was proud and flattered when Napoleon described it as a nation of shopkeepers.⁶⁹

However, if the Ismaili community gained relative stability in an economy based on small retail businesses, it was soon

to go through a period of religious dissension and controversy.

The first major controversy had arisen in Bombay in the 1850s and 1860s. For many years Ismailis, in fear of persecution, had practiced taqiya by adopting alien religious customs and incorporating orthodox Sunni beliefs and customs into the Ismaili faith. Further, during the fifteenth century when the Hindus of the Lohana caste had been converted to this faith, the Khojas, as the converts were known, retained some of the Hindu beliefs, traditions and customs. As a result, the Khojas had come to be in an ambiguous position regarding their true identity. This led to various controversies and allegations in the local Indian newspapers, that the Khojas were, in fact, Sunnis, a group of Muslims who do not believe in Imamat, and that Aga Khan I (1817-1881) was wrongly advising them to accept the Ismaili faith. This religious dispute also brought to the forefront the already existing question of paying obligatory dues like "Dasson" (tithes--one-tenth per cent of one's income) to the Imam.⁷⁰ At the beginning of the nineteenth century few Ismailis had objected to the payment of such dues nor had they questioned the absolute right of the Aga Khan to control and do as he saw fit with communal property and the funds given to the Imam by his Murids (followers). In the 1850s, however, wealthy Khojas began to challenge the collection of dues and the Aga Khan's right to control their use.⁷¹

In order to clarify the true origin and allegiance of the Khojas, therefore, Aga Khan I issued a firman (directive) asking the Ismailis of Bombay, Kathiawar, Kutch, Sind and Zanzibar to declare openly their allegiance to the Imam and to follow him in his interpretation of personal law regarding marriage, funeral and inheritance rights. The paper ended with a note: "Now he who may be willing to obey my orders shall write his name in this book . . . that I may know him."⁷²

The majority of the Ismaili signed this paper, confirming their allegiance to their Imam. In Bombay, the center of the dispute, 400 of 1,400 families refused to sign. But of 450 families in Zanzibar, only five families refused to sign the paper, and only twenty from Mowa in Kathiawar refused. For other places exact figures are not available, but it is certain that the majority of families gave their allegiance.⁷³

The matter was not resolved, however, and it was finally brought to the Bombay High Court by those against affirmation of the Ismaili faith. In the famous "Khoja Case" of 1866, Chief Justice Sir Joseph Arnould ruled against the dissenters, affirming that the Khojas were Shias, not Sunnis; and he legally confirmed the position of the Aga Khan I as Imam of the Ismailis, vesting in him absolute power over communal property and funds. The decision further defined the Khojas as "a sect of people whose ancestors were Hindus in origin; which [sic] was converted to and has throughout abided in the faith of the Shia Imami Ismailis, and which has

always been and still is bound by ties of spiritual allegiance to the hereditary Imams of the Ismailis."⁷⁴

Even then the judgment reached in the Khoja Case did not settle the issue within the Khoja communities. The conflict which started in Bombay later spread to East Africa. We have already noted that five families in Zanzibar did not sign the Aga Khan's paper. In 1877, two Ismaili families who had been excommunicated by the Bombay Jamat, settled in Zanzibar and further intensified the situation.⁷⁵ By 1894, 400 out of 1,200 adult males of the Zanzibar Khojas had left the Ismaili community to join the Isna'Asharis, or the Twelvers, as they were called.⁷⁶ Other places where the Ismailis joined the new group were Bagamoyo, Kilwa, Lindi and Mikindani.⁷⁷ Individuals who broke away from the Ismaili faith and joined another religious group of course made every effort to justify their actions and did all they could to persuade as many people as possible to join their new group.⁷⁸ It was partly due to this intense propaganda of justification and partly a result of dissatisfaction within the community that such large numbers of Ismaili seceded from the Ismaili community and joined the Shia Isna'Ashari Jamat.

By 1899, when the Aga Khan III (1885-1957) visited mainland Tanzania, the conflict had produced violent dissent among some members of the community. There were tensions between dissenting and loyal families which led to "violence and affronts [that] had to be settled at the Boma" (District

Office).⁷⁹ The matter was intensified because of the kinship ties which existed between the seceders and those who stayed with the community.

The conflict was complex, based as it was on matters both spiritual and secular. As in the Khoja Case of 1866, there continued to be various religious differences between the Ismailis and the dissenting group. Economic disputes also continued, centering around monetary obligations to the Aga Khan. At one of the matrimonial court cases of 1894, for example, the seceders asked for a "fixed rule for fees," the establishment of which "should not be left to the Jamat each time."⁸⁰ Set against the Jamat's right to collect variable fees dependent upon the amount of income, the argument was an attempt to decrease the amount of offering made to the Aga Khan for birth, marriage ceremonies and dasond (tithes). Given the economic nature of the split, it was not surprising that a large number of the Ismailis who actually seceded were wealthy merchants. In Kilwa, Lindi, and Mikindani, in fact, seceding Ismailis had business connections with the seceders which they wanted to protect. In order to safeguard their economic position, these Ismailis found it necessary to leave the community.⁸¹

Nor was the communal organization able to handle cases where one party had seceded. Where there were "no written rules but more or less ascertained principles,"⁸² cases of matrimony which were originally settled by the Jamat now became difficult to decide, especially when one member of the

party had joined the seceders. In addition, the position of the Aga Khan had been challenged.

Hatim M. Amiji has also maintained that the dissenters wanted community funds to be spent on schooling. According to this argument, the Aga Khan, who had been given control of these funds in the Khoja Case of 1866, diverted them from education, thus depriving the community of one of its most basic needs. The issue is complex, however, because the evidence is drawn from the statements of non-Indians--primarily from Sir John Kirk, the British Consul in Zanzibar, who showed little liking for the Ismaili community. Kirk, like the dissenters, resented the large sums of money given to the Aga Khan. As an unimpressed Englishman, he might also be expected to lament the lack of schooling and accuse the Aga Khan of "systematically" discouraging it. Nor would it be unusual for him to report that Tharia Topan's gift to build a school was turned instead to the building of a hospital, presumably under pressure from the Aga Khan. It is difficult to know, however, how much of this British criticism of Ismaili education was shared by the dissenters who came from a community in which education was not only considered nonessential but a hindrance in taking children out of the family business.⁸³

With increasing expansion and with the growth of the interior, it became more and more difficult for local organizations to function effectively. The need for a better and more central body soon became apparent. In 1905, therefore,

the first constitution was set up. I do not have any concrete evidence, but it is certain that the constitution was drafted after consultation with parties concerned. Providing guidelines and a common framework for the different communities which had grown up, it also set down rules for various social customs in matters of marriage, birth, and death, as well as procedures to be followed in decisions with seceders. It increased centralization by setting up a hierarchy of councils responsible for administrative, legal, and social matters. The local council at Zanzibar was designated a high council. Called the Supreme Council, it was to oversee the activities of more locally functioning councils, the Provincial Councils, and to see to religious matters. Coordinating the activities of the Provincial Councils, moreover, the Supreme Council also acted as an intermediary, transmitting reports concerning various aspects of the different communities from the Provincial Councils to the Imam, and transmitting from him various changes which were then to be enforced in the local communities.

Overseeing the organized community was the person of the Aga Khan. He was to see to it that the community successfully maintained a system of checks and balances. To be sure, local administration was handed over to a group of councillors who were empowered to make local resolutions. Nevertheless, the central figure around whom the entire community revolved and in whose hands lay absolute power was the Aga Khan. It

was he alone who was given the "Absolute Power and Sole Authority . . . to alter, amend, modify, vary or annul at any time or to grant dispensation from the constitution or any part thereof."⁸⁴

Since the Constitution of 1905, there has been no attempt to question the authority or legitimacy of the Aga Khan as head of the community. Although there have been minor protest movements and some internal strain, the social structure has proved flexible yet stable enough to incorporate various interest groups within the total framework.

Although the internal conflict resulted in some members leaving the community, it did not disrupt the entire settlement. In fact, the conflict strengthened the Ismaili settlement in helping to maintain group identity and in establishing boundary lines for the community.⁸⁵ Nor did the reemphasis on group identity lead to negative results. On the one hand, the presence of a highly developed trading activity and resultant social obligations assured that the Ismaili community would continue to retain relations with other groups. On the other hand, of course, the minority status of the Ismailis was reinforced as a separate and distinct group in the African-Indian community. Yet, even here it is possible to speculate that it was precisely this sense of separation that prompted the Ismailis to become self-sufficient by building their own schools, hospitals, insurance companies and banks.

With the Constitution of 1905, the Ismaili community had proved itself capable of providing stability in the midst of an ever-changing and progressive community. Flexible enough to institutionalize conflicts and incorporate change in adapting to new conditions, the society was able to benefit from, rather than be destroyed by, conflict. By modifying the old social structure, while retaining those elements contributing to stability, the constitution assured the continued existence of the community under new conditions. In establishing rules for governing the community, the constitution also institutionalized and served to perpetuate the values and goals of the Ismaili community.

Revised in 1925, 1937, 1946, and 1962, the Constitution of 1905 was to go through many changes in an attempt to meet new demands of the country, especially those which could be met through more effective organization. In fact, the majority of constitutional changes reflected not so much different values as renewed efforts at better organization through the reworking of committee structure. Of course, since the constitution provided a common framework for the entire Ismaili population, any changes in it were bound to create changes in the society itself, if only in emphasizing aspects more or less heretofore ignored. Nevertheless, constitutional revision was, practically speaking, more than anything else an attempt to coordinate local interests as the Ismaili society became more complex. Before considering the period

of German occupation, we shall turn first to an examination of Ismaili society as reflected in its Constitution and subsequent revisions.

FOOTNOTES

¹A machero is a square piece of cloth attached to poles on either side. It is carried by two people and will accommodate only one person at a time; Supreme Council of the Federation of Khoja Shia Isna' Ashari Jamats of Africa, Khoja Isna' Ashari Trade Directory of East Africa (Dar es Salaam, 1960), p. 113; see also Life History of Bandali Merali, compiled by the late Kassamali Merali of Morogoro.

²His Highness the Aga Khan, The Memoirs of Aga Khan: World Enough and Time (London, 1954), p. 23; Picklay, History of the Ismailis, p. 142. The word Kamaria was originally Kamdar, meaning a person in authority, controlling a certain area. This was later corrupted to Kamaria. See also His Highness the Aga Khan Shia Imami Ismailis Supreme Council for Africa, The Constitution of the Shia Imami Ismailis in Africa (Nairobi, 1962), p. 3, which defines Mukhi and Kamadia as "officers appointed to officiate at any Jamatkhana."

³Picklay, History of the Ismailis, p. 142.

⁴Ibid.

⁵Ibid.

⁶Allidina J. Paroo, Chaitun Yug-Salegra Ank (Zanzibar, 1933), pp. 36-38; provides a list of Mukhis and Kamadias of Zanzibar from 1838 to 1933. From 1933 to 1973, the list was completed by the Ismailia Association, Nairobi, Kenya.

⁷The earliest evidence we have of Mukhis and Kamadias for the Dar es Salaam Jamat dates back to 1880. See E. E. Kan, Diamond Jubilee Zavahir (Dar es Salaam, 1946), pp. 1-10. This book includes a list obtained from Hussein Jussa Dewji of the Mukhis and Kamadias for the Dar es Salaam Jamat from 1880 to 1946, and although I have no information about the Mukhis and Kamadias in Bagamoyo, a Jamatkhana was present there in the 1880s. This knowledge is based on oral information collected from the late Shamshudin Tejpar, August 23, 1968, Dar es Salaam. At the moment, I do not have detailed information about Mukhis and Kamadias in other parts of Tanzania.

⁸ Ismailia Council for Africa, Rules and Regulations of the Shia Imami Ismailia Council (Zanzibar, 1905), chapter II, rule 32, p. 8.

⁹ Ibid., chapter II, rule 36, p. 8.

¹⁰ J. Christie, Cholera Epidemics in East Africa (London, 1876), pp. 341-342.

¹¹ E. I. Howard, The Shia School of Islam and Its Branches: A Speech delivered by E. I. Howard in the Bombay High Court in June, 1866 (Bombay, 1866), pp. 86-87. The evidence presented at the Khoja Case of 1866 showed that in 1820, 90 rupees to be credited to the Aga Khan were received from the Khoja Jamat of Zanzibar. See also Picklay, History of the Ismailis, p. 142.

¹² "Sikinabai, wife of Allarakhia Khaki V. Allarakhia Khaki," Civil Case no. 89 of 1894, Zanzibar Protectorate Law Reports, I; compiled by William Murison and S. S. Abrahams (London, 1919), p. 46.

¹³ Ibid., p. 47.

¹⁴ Christie, Cholera Epidemics, p. 336.

¹⁵ J. S. Mangat, A History of the Asians in East Africa (Oxford, 1969), pp. 1-2; C. S. Nicholls, The Swahili Coast: Politics, Diplomacy and Trade on the East African Littoral 1798-1856 (London, 1971), pp. 74-85.

¹⁶ Nicholls, Swahili Coast, pp. 78, 89; R. Burton, Zanzibar, Island, City and the Coast (London, 1872), I, p. 328.

¹⁷ Nicholls, Swahili Coast, pp. 290, 328-47.

¹⁸ Howard, The Shia School of Islam, p. 87.

¹⁹ Picklay, History of the Ismailis, p. 141.

²⁰ Christie, Cholera Epidemics, p. 336.

²¹ Burton, Zanzibar, I, p. 323.

²² This oral information was collected from Habib Karim Jetha and Allibhai Kassam in July, 1968 and May, 1970, Dar es Salaam.

²³Because of the patron-client relationship which existed between the retailers and the wholesalers, the former were dependent on the latter for credit. This resulted in the big merchants forming a closed group, a situation which made it difficult for a retailer to advance beyond the level of retail trading. See also Hatim M. Amiji, "Some Notes on Religious Dissent in Nineteenth Century East Africa," African Historical Studies, IV, 3 (1971), p. 607.

²⁴Christie, Cholera Epidemics, p. 337.

²⁵F.O. 84/1391, Frere to Granville, May 7, 1873, enclosed "Memorandum regarding Banians or natives of India in East Africa," quoted in Mangat, Asians in East Africa, p. 12; Nicholls, Swahili Coast, p. 348.

²⁶R. Burton, The Lake Regions of Central Africa (New York, 1961), I, p. 341; J. L. Krapf, Travels, Researches, and Missionary Labours during an Eighteen Years' Residence in Eastern Africa (London, 1964), pp. 118, 421; Nicholls, Swahili Coast, p. 354.

²⁷Burton, Zanzibar, I, p. 407.

²⁸H. Brode, Tippoo Tib: The Study of His Career in Central Africa (London, 1907), pp. 48-49.

²⁹H. M. Stanley, Through the Dark Continent (London, 1878), I, p. 63; Mangat, Asians in East Africa, p. 19.

³⁰F.O. 84/1391, Frere to Granville, quoted in Mangat, Asians in East Africa, p. 9.

³¹Burton, Lake Regions, I, p. 224; Burton, Zanzibar, I, p. 339.

³²Burton, Lake Regions, I, p. 340.

³³Hans Meyer, Across East African Glaciers: An Account of the First Ascent of Kilimanjaro, tr. from the German by E. H. S. Calder (London, 1891), Appendix I, pp. 345-346. There was no standard contract for the expeditions. For another contract between Mr. Reginald Watkin, Edward Kenrick, and Sewa Haji Paroo for the sum of £1,000 (\$4,850.) in 1891, see Tanzania National Archives (hereafter T.N.A.), G1/14, pp. 36-37.

³⁴Burton, Lake Regions, II, Appendix I, p. 411; R. W. Beachery, "East African Ivory Trade in the Nineteenth Century," Journal of African History, VIII, 2 (1967), p. 276.

³⁵Burton, Lake Regions, I, p. 324; Nicholls, Swahili Coast, p. 358.

³⁶Nicholls, Swahili Coast, p. 358.

³⁷W. H. Whitely, tr.; Maisha ya Hamed bin Muhammed el Murjebi Yaani Tippu Tib Kwa Maneno Yake Mwenyewe (Nairobi, 1966), p. 3, notes that "Mukhi Kanji Hansraj" was Tharia Topan's "agent" in Bagamoyo recruiting wapagazi for caravans into the interior. Saudji Badjani [sic] "deputy" of Sewa Haji in Pangani was engaged in similar activities. See T.N.A., G1/14, pp. 38-57; Burton, Zanzibar, I, p. 328.

³⁸I am greatly indebted to Kassamali R. Paroo of Mombasa, Kenya, for providing not only the oral history of the Paroo family, but also the two most useful articles on Sewa Haji Paroo: Kassamali R. Paroo, "A Short History of the Life of Late Mr. Sewa Haji Paroo," and R. R. Scott, "The Story of Sewa Haji." For further information, see A. T. Matson, "Sewa Haji: A Note," Tanzania Notes and Records, 65 (March, 1966), pp. 91-94; David F. Clyde, History of the Medical Services of Tanganyika (Dar es Salaam, 1962), p. 6; Walter T. Brown, "A Pre-Colonial History of Bagamoyo: Aspects of the Growth of an East African Coastal Town" (unpublished Ph.D. thesis, Boston University, 1971), pp. 185-199.

³⁹Kassamali R. Paroo, "A Short History of the Life of Late Mr. Sewa Haji Paroo" (Mombasa, n.d.), p. 1; Matson, "Sewa Haji," p. 92.

⁴⁰J. S. Mangat, "Allidina Visram and A. M. Jivanjee: The Story of Two Pioneer Asian Traders in East Africa," Paper presented at the University College, Nairobi, Kenya (February, 1966), p. 1.

⁴¹Matson, "Sewa Haji," pp. 92-93.

⁴²R. W. Beachery, "Arms Trade in East Africa in the Late Nineteenth Century," Journal of African History, III, 3 (1962), p. 460. For the rate of exchange from the pound to the dollar, see Joseph Whitaker, Almanack (London, 1892), p. 653.

⁴³Brown, "A Pre-Colonial History of Bagamoyo," p. 192; henceforward, for rate of exchange, see Whitaker, Almanack (1897), p. 417.

⁴⁴Chief Secretary to Keeper of German Records, Dar es Salaam, March 10, 1925, T.N.A., 7652, p. 5. This includes the will of Sewa Haji Paroo and the list of his properties

in Dar es Salaam, which were left in trust to the Governor of German East Africa at Dar es Salaam.

⁴⁵Matson, in "Sewa Haji," p. 94, notes that in 1890 Sewa Haji donated land for a hospital in Zanzibar. For his contribution to the Ismaili community, see E. E. Kan, Diamond Jubilee Zavaheer (Dar es Salaam, 1946), p. 3. Sewa Haji contributed an unspecified amount towards the building of the Jamatkhana in Dar es Salaam.

⁴⁶Two articles by J. S. Mangat provided most of the information on Allidina Visram, see "Allidina Visram and A. M. Jivanjee," pp. 1-5, and "Was Allidina Visram a Robber Baron or a Skillful and Benevolent Commercial Pioneer?," East African Journal, VI, 2 (February, 1963), pp. 33-35. Oral information was collected from Mrs. K. J. Walji, August 23, 1968, Mombasa, Kenya.

⁴⁷Mangat, "Allidina Visram and A. M. Jivanjee," p. 2.

⁴⁸Ibid., p. 3.

⁴⁹Ibid., p. 2.

⁵⁰Mangat, Asians in East Africa, p. 81.

⁵¹The Zanzibar Gazette for March 9, March 16, 1892, April 27, 1892, and June 15, 1892, discusses the dispute among the successors of Sir Tharia Topan and Jairam Sewji. It is quoted in Mangat, Asians in East Africa, p. 21; Mangat, "Was Allidina Visram a Robber Baron," p. 34.

⁵²"Fazal Isa V. Mohamed Lakha Kanji," Case No. 753 of 1891 in Zanzibar Protectorate Law Reports 1868-1918, compiled by Sir William Murison and S. S. Abrahams (London, 1919), I, pp. 37-39.

⁵³Mangat, Asians in East Africa, p. 21.

⁵⁴Oral information obtained from Mrs. K. J. Walji, August 23, 1968, Mombasa, Kenya.

⁵⁵F.O. 84/1773, Kirk to Principal Secretary for Foreign Affairs, May 1, 1886, quoted in Brown, "A Pre-Colonial History of Bagamoyo," p. 195.

⁵⁶Christie, Cholera Epidemics, pp. 341-342.

⁵⁷Ibid., p. 343.

⁵⁸Picklay, History of the Ismailis, p. 141.

⁵⁹ Michael F. Lofchie, in Zanzibar: Background to Revolution (New Jersey, 1965), pp. 107-118, notes that the Arab indebtedness to Indian financiers led in many cases to the transfer of their mortgaged estates to Indian creditors.

⁶⁰ This information was provided by Mr. Hassanali Gulamhussein, February 17, 1970, Dar es Salaam.

⁶¹ D. F. Pocock, "'Difference' in East Africa: A Study of Caste and Religion in Modern Indian Society," Southwestern Journal of Anthropology, XIII, 4 (1957), p. 292. Although the article deals with the Hindu society, similar attitudes were known to have existed among the Ismailis of Tanzania.

⁶² Mangat, Asians in East Africa, pp. 15-18.

⁶³ Ibid., p. 15.

⁶⁴ Burton, Zanzibar, I, pp. 328-329; Nicholls, Swahili Coast, p. 320.

⁶⁵ Mangat, Asians in East Africa, p. 16; Nicholls, Swahili Coast, p. 292; B. F. Fabens to M. Shepard, Zanzibar, January 4, 1845, in New England Merchants in Africa: A History through Documents 1802-1865, Norman R. Bennett and George E. Brooks, Jr., eds. (Boston, 1965), p. 340.

⁶⁶ Christie, Cholera Epidemics, p. 343.

⁶⁷ Ibid., p. 337.

⁶⁸ Satish C. Misra, Muslim Communities in Gujarat (Baroda, 1964), p. 170.

⁶⁹ K. R. Paroo, "Ismailis in East Africa: Small but Progressive Community," East Africa Today, B. G. Vaghela and J. M. Patel, eds. (Bombay, 1960), p. 80.

⁷⁰ Picklay, History of the Ismailis, pp. 127-140, 150; Hatim Amiji, "Some Notes on Religious Dissent," pp. 609-610.

⁷¹ Picklay, History of the Ismailis, p. 151.

⁷² Ibid., p. 150.

⁷³ Ibid., pp. 141, 151.

⁷⁴ Ibid., p. 165; Zanzibar Protectorate Law Reports, p. 665.

75 Supreme Council, Khoja Isna 'Ashari Trade Directory, p. 181. Allarakhia Vali and Dewji Jamal were two Ismailis excommunicated by the Bombay Jamat.

76 "Sakinabai, wife of Allarakhia Khaki," pp. 44-49.

77 This information was obtained from Badruddin Kanji, May 5, 1970, Dar es Salaam.

78 Lewis A. Coser, The Functions of Social Conflict (Free Press, 1956), pp. 170-71; Arthur H. Hardinge, A Diplomatist in the East (London, 1928), p. 100.

79 Otton Mahnke, "When the Aga Khan First Visited East Africa," in The Diamond Jubilee Souvenir Yearbook 1885-1945, A. M. Sadruddin, ed. (Nairobi, 1946), p. 150. This article refers to the conflict in Bagamoyo.

80 "Sakinabai, wife of Alarakhia Khaki," p. 47.

81 This was noted by Mr. Badruddin Kanji, May 5, 1970, Dar es Salaam.

82 "Sakinabai, wife of Allarakhia Khaki," p. 47.

83 Hatim Amiji, "Some Notes on Religious Dissent," p. 613.

84 His Highness the Aga Khan, The Constitution, 1962, part II, article 5, p. 3.

85 Count Abdulla Shariff Kanji, President of His Highness the Aga Khan's Ismailia Supreme Council for Africa and Count Gulamhussein Mahomed Nasser Jindani, Chairman of His Highness the Aga Khan's Executive Council for Africa, Rules of H.H. The Aga Khan's Ismailia Councils of the Continent of Africa (Mombasa, 1937), chapter I, rule 16, p. 3.

George Simmel and other sociologists, when dealing with the functions of conflict in group formation, have raised similar points. See, for instance, George Simmel, Conflict: The Web of Group Affiliations (Free Press, 1955), pp. 48-50, 96-107; Coser, The Functions of Social Conflict, pp. 33-38, 151-157; see also Aziz Esmail, "Some Aspects of the History of the Ismailis in East Africa," Paper presented at the Annual Conference of the Historical Association of Kenya (Nairobi, 1972), p. 14.

CHAPTER IV

CONSTITUTIONS, HIERARCHIES, AND FORCES OF SOCIAL COHESION
IN ISMAILI SOCIETY, 1900 THROUGH THE 1950s

The Constitution of 1905 helped to formally institutionalize the structure of Ismaili society and the values, customs, and traditions which underlie these structures. Future revisions, at the same time that they carried on Ismaili values, also provided for necessary changes for a society of increasing complexity. Since 1905 more administrative bodies have been added, but in many cases these bodies have merely taken over duties previously entrusted to the local councils. Education and welfare concerns, for example, became the tasks of specific committees rather than the councils. But this finer discrimination of duties and the corresponding proliferation of administrative bodies fundamentally reaffirmed, more than they reordered, the structure of Ismaili society and the values on which that structure is based.

As noted, Ismaili society is hierarchical in nature. Power is vested in the formal leadership position, with the status of such a position reinforcing the power holder's opportunity to direct the community. Unlike Hindu society, the Ismaili hierarchy is not, however, organized as a caste system. And although religion is important, status has not been based on attendance at the Jamatkhana (prayerhouse) or on the

observance of religious norms. Nor has religion ordered the stratification of society.

To be sure, the Constitution of 1905 specified that the local Mukhi (treasurer) was to be president of the local council, an indication in early Ismaili Africa of the close tie between religious status and administrative authority.¹ By 1925, however, the functions of the council president and Mukhi had been separated. Although the Mukhi continued to serve as a council member, he was no longer automatically its chief officer. Moreover, it was clear by 1925 that the Mukhi was not superior to the local council members. For example, the Mukhi, like other councillors, was not to miss a meeting unless he was given permission by the council. The strong wording of the rule--that in the matter of the Mukhi's absence, the council is "authorized to grant leave only to one of whomsoever the council thinks fit to grant leave"²--suggests not only that the Mukhi may have been accustomed to running the councils but also that the council was determined to have him do so no more. The needs of the community could no longer be met by the religious hierarchy but had to be handled by a central body that could act as a Parliament, where issues could be discussed by councillors before decisions were reached.

Those who attain high status have done so primarily by commanding administrative and economic power. Since administrative power comes to those with economic power, status

is ultimately associated with wealth. Moreover, since the expenses of office belong to the administrator rather than the community, wealth is a determinant of one's capacity to serve.

Not all wealthy Ismailis, however, have served in administrative positions. No doubt time is an important factor, preventing those with a wide range of business commitments from engaging in communal service. Furthermore, since many of the wealthiest Ismailis eventually came to play a prominent role in the African government, they have had even less time to give to the administrative posts of the Ismaili community.³ And again, since the Ismaili structure is maintained through voluntary workers, it may be that some of the wealthy have not been inclined to provide services which were not remunerative.

In addition to wealth, Kinship ties have played an important part in raising men to leadership positions. Those who are related to other power holders through blood or arranged marriages in which families of equal financial standing have united, have often attained prestige and position. Moreover, the area in India from which original migrants came has served to distinguish local community members from one another. Migrants from the same area in India tended to settle together in East Africa; leaders in a particular town were usually members of the town's dominant migrant group. Thus, although wealth has served as a primary determinant in questions of status and power, kinship ties and migrant origin have also affected the gaining of power.

The system of nomination has reinforced these determinants of administrative position. In giving the power of nomination to retiring council members, the Ismaili Constitution has encouraged the selection of wealthy office holders, linked to the retiree through marriage, kinship, and/or migrant group. As a result, the administration of the Ismaili community has tended to remain in the hands of an elite, wealthy, and self-perpetuating group.

In other ways, the nominating procedure circumvents some of the difficulties associated with seeking office. A member of one of the Councils, be it Supreme or Provincial, is appointed for a fixed number of years. Six months prior to the expiration of his term, the retiring member sends the name of three eligible persons to Mowlana Hazar Imam, His Highness the Aga Khan.⁴ But, although the retiring member sends these names, it is the Aga Khan who makes the final decision as to who the new member shall be. Power is his, if he thinks it best to dismiss the names sent to him and appoint another who he feels to be more competent. Since the final decision lies in the hands of Hazar Imam, then, the councillor does not have to depend--in fact, can in no way rely--on factional support. The interests of the community can be kept in the fore, and struggles for power not only can be, but actually are, reduced. Further, as representatives of the Aga Khan, councillors cannot be representatives of any party or organization so that they are at least inhibited in,

if not totally prevented from, bringing into the council the spirit of factionalism. Moreover, the members of any council are held responsible to the rules and regulations of the whole society rather than to the self-serving interests of any one group or of themselves. For the Constitution supported by the Aga Khan's power makes it clear that "should a member of the Council be guilty of a breach of the prescribed rules, the council shall have power to punish such member."⁵

Once established, status positions have been reinforced through recognition given in the Jamatkhana (prayerhouse). Councillors have continued to retain a special place in the prayerhouse, separate from the rest of the congregation, on the right side of the Mukhi (treasurer). Title holders in the religious hierarchy are similarly singled out and given seats to the left of the Kamadia (accountant). This honor is accorded them by the Aga Khan in recognition of their voluntary services to the community either as councillor or as member of one of the communal organizations like the Welfare Society, Voluntary Corps, or the like. So precise is the concern for the proprieties of hierarchy that each council member takes his place in a ranked position within the council. (See Appendix I of this chapter for the hierarchical administrative structure.) Title holders are also ranked as specified in the constitution.⁶ Unlike the title holders, however, council members do not continue to command respect once they are out of office.

Lower level leadership is provided through various groups which are subordinate to the local councils. The Constitution of 1905 mentioned the charitable work done through meetings "at the house of Gulmahomed Harji," an indication that the work being done was recognized, though not formally institutionalized or made the province of a special committee. As noted in the formally accepted translation of the Constitution:

The meeting generally held at Gulmahomed Harji is free to offer refreshments, to give in charity, to assist in the cause of education of children, to get them slates and books, to get the unemployed situations, and to help a fellow-religionist, or a member of the same tribe or community in emergent cases, to try to get married widows and girls, in puberty, to try its best to bring about reconciliation between husband and wife, in which case if the former Isnasheri and the latter Ismaili being expelled by her husband from his house and would not support her, such reconciliations when brought about should be commemorated. They are bound to keep a copy in the council of the resolutions passed by them relating to improvement in health or temper, etc. They cannot go beyond the resolutions stated therein.

In providing that community needs be met through administratively approved groups subject to the control of a higher council, the Constitution of 1905 established a pattern which continues in the Ismaili community today.

The first Constitution, however, is different from its revisions in this respect. It conceived of duties to be performed in terms of the people performing them--as much as the office through which they are to be performed. Although the Constitution of 1905 formally set up mechanisms for the performance of duties, repeated references to particular

individuals have not yet totally been deleted. It is Mr. Harji, for example, and not a Welfare Committee, that sees to the needs of marriageable girls and widows.

Similarly, "all the managements of the Panjebhai Club is [sic] entrusted to the President Mithabhai Jessa, and Bhai Mahomed Saleh Kanji and Bhai Jaffer Mahomed are appointed as secretaries."⁸ In addition, procedure is often explained in terms of present members of the community. The members of the Council have equal rights in voting; for instance, "the first member, President Mahomedbhai Varas Remtulla Hemani, and the last member, Janmohamed Jetha, both have equal rights."⁹ From this we may assume that the offices of government, at this time not far removed from the Council of Elders, were conceived of in more personal terms than was later the case.¹⁰ In spite of this difference, however, the Constitution of 1905 was similar to its revisions in setting up a hierarchically organized government.

The local councils in their turn were charged with making reports to a higher council. In the Constitution of 1905, the council at Zanzibar was to oversee the workings of the local councils through reports submitted every three months.¹¹ In later revisions, a Supreme Council was distinguished from the Council at Zanzibar to oversee local work. In the Constitution of 1925, councillors were to be sent out from the Supreme Council to acquaint themselves with the progress of the local councils.¹²

The entire administrative system was set up in such a way that the local councils had been relatively independent of the councils above them in the hierarchy; yet by sending regular reports to the higher governing bodies, and through the transmission of these reports to yet higher authorities, one level in this intricate bureaucratic structure was able to keep in touch with the work being done at all levels. Contact between the different levels of organization was reinforced when the Provincial Councils sent to the Supreme Council every two months reports concerning affairs of local communities, and when the Supreme Council in its turn made reports of its affairs to the Aga Khan every three months. In 1937, with the creation of the Executive Council as the central body through which all reports were cleared, all efforts were coordinated and interests aligned.¹³ The forwarding of these reports to the Aga Khan was the final step through which not only financial, administrative, and judicial matters were coordinated, but a network of communications maintained between the Aga Khan and individual Ismaili communities.

Constitutionally, the local councils were empowered to arbitrate any dispute arising in the Ismaili community including, in the Constitution of 1905, criminal cases. In practice, the councils have used their power primarily in matters of marriage, divorce, and maintenance (support of divorced wife and children, if any)--an important function

considering the centrality of marriage in the Ismaili community. Before 1905 the power of the councils to arbitrate in such matters was complicated by the fact that seceders, not feeling bound to Ismaili law, did not feel obliged to obey the rulings of Ismaili councils in marriage settlements.¹⁴ Indeed, much of the impetus behind early constitutional revision seems to have been based on the need to carefully delineate Ismaili "personal law" governing marriage and divorce relations so that local courts, which tended to uphold Ismaili rulings so long as they were not "against natural justice," might have some consistent basis for judging appeals brought by those who had left the Ismaili community.¹⁵

At the local level the Provincial Councils had other duties which involved meeting the spontaneous demands of and incorporating necessary changes within the local community. Although the Provincial Councils still maintained their position within the hierarchy of councils, they were "authorized to enact from time to time, certain 'Local Resolutions' to meet varying needs." But of course it had to be provided that such "Local Resolutions" in no way affected any of the enacted rules and regulations in the hierarchical structure. As stated in the Constitution of 1962:¹⁶

No Council shall have power to amend or modify the Constitution PROVIDED THAT a Provincial Council may from time to time and with the written approval of its Territorial Council pass resolutions to meet local conditions PROVIDED ALWAYS THAT such resolutions shall remain effective for a period of one year only PROVIDED FURTHER that such resolutions shall be read subject to the Constitution and if in any manner repugnant thereto shall to the extent of such repugnancy be void and inoperative.

Nevertheless, the dangers of centralization and of loss of contact with specific community needs were foreseen and dealt with here by introducing flexibility into the whole structure. This would allow for necessary adaptation to local conditions. An example of matters covered in local resolutions is contained in the Provincial Council's request that fund-raising be undertaken only after an estimate of need is made:¹⁷

Be it resolved that before any funds are raised from a Jamat for any purpose, estimate of funds required for that purpose shall be ascertained by the Council and Mukhi and Kamadia of Jamat concerned and the funds will then be raised according to the said requirements. This resolution be forwarded to the Territorial Council for their approval.

Within this hierarchical structure, Ismaili society has not, however, given absolute power over the rights of the individual to any administrative body. Some protection against the hierarchy has been provided in constitutional rules governing the procedure of councils so that the cases of the people might be processed uniformly and heard according to a consistent set of rules rather than by a possibly inconsistent or arbitrary council. In the Constitution of 1962, we find a precise refinement in the rule that councils are to follow parliamentary procedure--a procedure developed with an eye to fair and equal hearing of both sides of a case. The Constitution of 1905 itself indicates a sophisticated awareness of problems that endanger the rights of the individual. Rules note that a councillor who is affected by the case at hand should disqualify himself; that no councillor is to hear

testimony in private or privately consult another council member; that business before the council be disposed of as quickly as possible; and, interestingly enough, that undue harassment on the part of council members in the form of obstinately put questions be prohibited.¹⁸ In addition, the Constitution of 1905, and all subsequent revisions, detail an appeal procedure which, if it does not bring the appellant satisfaction at the highest council level, can be carried to the Aga Khan. As the final authority, the Aga Khan has the power to reverse council decisions or, by not responding, to reaffirm them. From the Aga Khan's decision there is, of course, no appeal.

For the Aga Khan as religious and spiritual leader is also the person in whom the administrative hierarchy terminates. So great is his authority, in fact, that he is in no way limited by the constitution; he has authority over the constitution, rather than it having authority over him. Thus it is to the Aga Khan that Ismaili society owes its first allegiance and not, as in many societies, to the constitution.¹⁹ This is not to say, however, that the constitution is not important. Relying on Plato, one might say that codification into law is necessary for the governance of a people because the person of wisdom and authority cannot be in all places at all times. As such, the constitution seeks to uphold the interests of wisdom and justice for the Aga Khan through administrative councils empowered to settle Ismaili disputes. When some persons believe a council has failed to uphold

these interests, appeal can be made to the Aga Khan as the ultimate authority.²⁰

At all levels, from the Supreme Council to committees serving under the local councils, the administrative structure has been held together by a concept of voluntary service. Considering the great importance placed on economic success, the idea of voluntary service may seem strangely out of place. Yet, one must remember that until very recently there was little time or opportunity in this community of migrants to develop a professional class which, by virtue of specific training or knowledge, might expect payment for services. Instead, there has developed an idea of serving, where a man may invest much time but where there is no remuneration. In place of monetary rewards, one derives satisfaction from having served one's Imam, from having made ready for the rewards of the afterlife and perhaps from having solidified one's prestige. The desire to serve has further been sustained by the belief that children will prosper as a result of their father's good deeds. Of course, some have used voluntary service to further their own economic well-being. Yet even in cases of so-called corruption, the Ismaili population has, in general, supported the efforts of their administrators who, though they may deserve chastisement, are nevertheless, thought to have accomplished a great deal for the community.

In fact, this general sense of satisfaction has been very characteristic of Ismaili society. Only two significant

protests have occurred: one in 1899, and another in 1939-40. Both were initiated by the wealthy--a group that cannot argue the failure of their society to provide the necessities of life. The first of these outbreaks served to unite the general population in support of the status quo. And the second was not even successful enough to arouse public opinion. Protests have not occurred among the poor Ismaili nor, until some of the young began to speak in the very recent past, among other groups objecting to the direction the society has taken. 21

No doubt some of this sense of satisfaction has derived from belief in the self-sufficiency of the Ismaili community; in its providing for the poor, the sick, the unemployed; in its creating an excellent school system; and in its funding its own business operations. Community funding has been made possible through offerings and contributions to the Hazar Imam (Aga Khan). These include obligatory dues, originally set at one-tenth of one's income and now at one-eighth, and voluntary offerings paid by individuals according to financial capacity and desire. Although the money thus collected belongs in theory to the Imam, it is in fact channeled back for communal use. It defrays the costs of running the Jamatkhanas, provides salaries for the caretakers of the Jamatkhanas, maintains communal institutions (schools, hospitals, etc.), and provides bursaries and loans to students pursuing higher education. In this respect, it is important

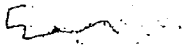
to note that the Welfare Society is sustained wholly on separate voluntary contributions, distinct from Jamatkhana funds, and bring the donor no public recognition.²²

So important a part of the community's self-sufficiency has been carefully controlled. The Mukhi and Kamadia of each Jamat (congregation) keep records of all finances. Above them is a higher council, presently stipulated as the Executive Council, which keeps the accounts of Ismaili Jamats for the whole of Africa. Beyond established expenses incurred, the Mukhi and Kamadia cannot spend funds at their discretion. If any new expenses occur, they must first approach the local council, which will present the matter to the Territorial Council for approval, before it goes on to the Executive Council. In this way the community assures the responsibility of its members and thereby its own continuance.²³

The existence of the extended family, which has cared for the old and for the interests of the poor cousin, has also absorbed much of what otherwise might be cause for discontent. But most of all it seems to have been the belief in the Aga Khan as absolute ruler that conveyed to Ismaili society its sense of rightness. Bound to him in trust and love, the majority of Ismailis consider his guidance as unquestionably right. If anything is wrong, the Aga Khan, who transcends any merely temporary dislocations, will see that all is made right.

The Aga Khan makes known his influence in several ways, though emphasis is always on personal contact between the leader and his people. Sometimes his influence is revealed in meetings set up between the Aga Khan and the community leaders. Guidance for the community as a whole frequently comes in the form of firmans, which are directives read in the Jamatkhana. These often direct the Ismailis to channel their efforts toward effective action--whether that action be migration, education, or the adoption of Western dress.²⁴ The Aga Khan guides particular individuals through personal correspondence. Usually initiated by the individual on matters as far-ranging as health, career choices, and businesses, the Aga Khan responds if he thinks the matter will not resolve itself without his personal attention.²⁵ Talikas (communiqués) are weekly or biweekly communications from the Aga Khan to the Jamat acknowledging reports sent by various committees, mandlis (religious assemblies), and local councils. Talikas also include blessings to the recently deceased, and to individuals for their voluntary contributions. The blessings of the Aga Khan are of particular importance conveying, as they do, a genuine influence for success if they are combined with initiative on the individual's part.

Should there be any great doubt that the Aga Khan has not, or cannot, make things right, there is also the possibility of excommunication, brought forward by the local council (not the Aga Khan) and acted upon by the Supreme



Council. In Ismaili society such a course of action is not to be taken lightly, since excommunication is an act of total deprivation--not only religious, but social and familial. For one who has been excommunicated there is no support, no possibility of uniting others with him. Historically, sufficient excommunications have been issued to the Ismaili community for it to be an effective deterrent.

Blind trust and fear are, however, two extremes which, although they must be taken into account in considering the Ismaili community, do not precisely define its sense of itself. On the one hand, the Aga Khan is an absolute ruler; but on the other, he does not stand in dictatorial isolation. In times of economic hardship, changes in policy have been the result of conferences, in which men with knowledge of local affairs have advised their ruler. Criticism of the society has been tolerated, even requested, for example, in preparing proposals for constitutional revisions in 1961. And, as we have already seen and will have an opportunity to see again, the people are not bound as individuals to the Aga Khan's firmans (directives), although the promise of rewards in the afterlife provides them with greater incentive. In short, there is a good deal of "give and take" between the ruler and his people in matters concerning their temporal welfare.

The limits of social conformity are, however, somewhat difficult to establish. The Constitution of 1962 (the only

constitution to isolate specific grounds for discipline and to set out kinds of disciplinary action) lists seven regular and five "special" offenses, almost all of them subject to wide interpretation. Regular offenses are listed as:²⁶

- 1) violating the Constitution;
- 2) violating Council orders made in accordance with the Constitution;
- 3) acting "in a manner prejudicial to the prestige or dignity of a Council or the Community";
- 4) doing anything in the name of a Council or the Community without obtaining permission;
- 5) "print[ing], publish[ing], or circulat[ing] any correspondence order, resolution or record, or mak[ing] any public statement whatsoever purporting to be on behalf" of the Aga Khan, the Community, or any Council or institution;
- 6) calling meetings on behalf of the Community without permission;
- 7) aiding or abetting any person in any of the above offenses.

Open to wider interpretation are the grounds for "special offenses" where an Ismaili is forbidden:²⁷

- 1) to print, publish or circulate anything about the Aga Khan, the Community, its Councils or institutions, which "is likely in any manner to cause disaffection in the Community";

- 2) to act in such a way as "to wound or offend the religious sentiments of the Community";
 - 3) to ridicule or "impinge" the tenets of the faith;
 - 4) to make "insulting or scurrilous remarks concerning Mowlana Hazar Imam (Aga Khan)";
 - 5) to expose "the Constitution, Holy Firman, Ginan [hymns] or other Ismaili Holy Books to contempt or ridicule."
- A sliding scale of disciplinary actions, ranging from observing penance to being excommunicated, adds to the difficulty of determining the limits of social conformity.

But if there is difficulty in determining exact limits, and if much depends on the understanding of council members, the codification of offenses clearly isolates areas of concern within Ismaili society and provides patterns for judgment. Further, the constitution openly presents offenses in social terms without obscuring the differences between social, political and religious doctrine. Thus, although Ismailis are dependent upon council interpretation, they are free from the obfuscation encountered in societies where the crime is sometimes remade to fit a punishment.

Moreover, from an historical, rather than constitutional, perspective, one can say that in the Ismaili community expressions of nonconformity are never welcomed though they are tolerated--up to a point. They are not welcomed because it is believed that injustice will emerge--if not in the deliberation of the councils, then in the appeal.

procedures which assure each member access to the judgment of the Aga Khan. The end of tolerance comes when it is believed that the authority of a leader--whether the Aga Khan or a council member--could be successfully undermined. When the Aga Khan's authority was challenged by one-third of the community in the late nineteenth century, for example, the challenge was not allowed to go unanswered. Similarly, when the authority of certain council members was threatened by an attempt to arouse public opinion against them, the threat was not tolerated. However, expressions of nonconformity by individuals who do not have (or try to get) a following large enough to successfully challenge leadership and authority seem to have been commonly dealt with by being ignored, ridiculed, or made the object of gossip.²⁸

Thus the fear of excommunication is an extreme which, though it may underlie the Ismaili consciousness, is not called up at the first notice of dissatisfaction or dissent. Social conformity has more regularly been enforced in the Jamatkhana, where the fear of gossip discourages those who might go too far, the names of offenders can officially be made public, and those who have offended may be called upon to publicly apologize.²⁹

In addition to these sanctions for social control, there is a sense of group identity fostered by religion. United in the past by having successfully maintained their beliefs through a series of religious disputes, the Ismaili

community is bound by a tradition which reaches out of the past and into the future. We have already seen that this sense of identity led to the helping of co-religionists and thus to the development of the early community. And we shall see it again in the extension of loans from Ismaili to Ismaili. Even today an Ismaili outside his local community is extended the benefits of hospitality. There is genuine concern for his well-being, even to the point of acquainting him with the opportunities and possibilities in the new community. With the gradual expansion of the community over the last few years, this extension of hospitality to one's co-religionist has come to be one of the more important factors in maintaining social cohesion.

That is not to say, however, that feeling for a co-religionist has prevented individual Ismailis from competing with one another. For, in spite of a highly developed sense of religious community, Ismaili business enterprise has never been communal. Based on the success of the individual, who may even undersell another member of his community, business for the Ismaili does not proceed from the efforts of the group. Ismailis therefore have never been hesitant about competing with their co-religionists, while, at the same time, providing help for those with whom they are not in competition.

In East-Africa the sense of group identity has been strengthened by the need of Ismailis to protect themselves from external forces. For the early migrants, settlement in

a new country created a need for a community which would provide security in an unknown environment. In the late nineteenth century the challenge of the seceders--a challenge both to the power holders and to the power of the Aga Khan--led to formulation of specific ways to deal with outsiders, thereby affirming even more strongly a sense of common religious identity. The Constitution of 1905, in forbidding all social contact with the seceders, in making possible the immediate divorce of Ismaili and seceder, and in providing for the maintenance of Ismaili women not supported by seceder husbands, initiated rules which have been continued in future revisions, to cast out dissenters and unite believers.³⁰

Later, when unfortunate economic reverses befell some members, the sense of community identity was fostered through establishing Ismaili companies to fund business enterprise.

Such group identity must not, however, be oversimplified in a community which also envisions itself as very much a part of the world. If a sense of religious identity and group self-sufficiency has tended to set the community apart, economic concerns have caused it to extend itself and to seek assimilation. Although Ismailis do not emphasize social relations with those outside their community, they very much emphasize business relations. Instead of isolating Ismaili businessmen, for example, constitutional rules have tended to encourage their involvement. Thus, in the Constitution of 1905, businessmen were encouraged to go to business meetings,

particularly local Chamber of Commerce meetings, regardless of other religious or national groups represented. And in one 1905 rule, mastering both the problems of seceders and of the incentive of businessmen, we discover that Ismailis may, so long as other groups are also present, attend meetings where seceders are present. By 1937, constitutional revisions indicate that economic opportunity may be advanced even if it revives business with someone of the Isna' Ashari, the seceder sect.³¹

There has also been a tendency to avoid conflict between Ismailis and the government of the country in which they live. Although bound together by common religious values and sharing an interest in an economy based on trade, the Ismaili community has also pledged its loyalty to uphold the ruling government. As a people who have never had political control, the Ismailis have not thought of themselves as a people without a country. Thus, as in the Constitution of 1905, they have been able to say, "It is the ancient custom of Shia Imami Ismaili Murids of the Honourable the Aga Khan Saheb to be well-wisher and loyal to the Crown of the country they live in, to offer thanks-giving service, to abide by the laws, to rejoice in joy and sympathize in sorrow, and also to give addresses on such occasion as may necessitate."³² In return, the Ismaili community has generally been allowed to follow its own customs and traditions unhampered by the ruling government except when, as the case of the German occupation

will make clear, conflicting economic interests become a consideration.

Within Ismaili society, customs and traditions governing personal relations have been as important as those between people and governments. In fact the Ismaili constitution is unusual in the attention it gives to what is known as "personal law" governing marriage, divorce and maintenance (support of divorced wife and children, if any); Ismaili relations with non-Ismailis; inheritance; and customs surrounding birth and death. The various constitutions are evidence of the social reforms which have changed the life of the Ismaili in these areas; particularly in the ceremonies attendant upon birth, death and marriage. From elaborate expensive rituals, it has moved toward simple and inexpensive ceremonies.³³ Although the social structure reflects a class differentiation based on administrative and economic power, Ismaili social customs outlined in the constitution aim at providing uniformity for every member of the group irrespective of social status.

At the same time that constitutional revisions have indicated directions for change, they have also reaffirmed basic Ismaili values. In the case of marriage, for example, the early custom of encouraging a girl's marriage at puberty and a boy's at 14 gave way to the later stipulation that children "can best be got married" at fourteen and sixteen; then to the stipulation-only that both shall have reached "their majority"; and finally that the girl shall be sixteen,

and the boy eighteen. Nevertheless, the importance of marriage before one gets too old has continued throughout these changes, as indeed has been the case with most other matters subject to revision.³⁴

The one exception is the change in laws governing polygamy. In the Constitution of 1905, polygamy was allowed if the husband deposited with the local council a sum to go toward the maintenance of his first wife.³⁵ A later revision set extreme limitations on the practice of polygamy, allowing it only in cases of "serious illness, insanity, cruelty or non-bearing of children of [the] first wife" which causes had to be medically certified.³⁶ By 1962, the law read that "polygamy is prohibited."³⁷ Even in this case, however, one might argue that changing laws did not significantly affect Ismaili society. At least if Anderson is correct in his assertion that polygamy never was practiced widely anyway, a law for its prohibition can hardly loom as significant in comparison to, say, the United States' rejection of Mormon polygamy.³⁸

But even if one attaches practical social significance to its eventual abolition, one can also see in the limitations placed on polygamy a continuation of a tradition long part of Ismaili society. Very early the woman's well-being had to be assured by the sum deposited with the council. Later she was to be protected from a man's right to do as he pleased by a law requiring him to provide exact and certifiable reasons for another marriage. And finally she was guaranteed the right to

her husband's undivided support. This belief in the need to protect women from an irresponsibly polygamous husband was in fact specific affirmation of a more general value, "that as much protection as possible [be] given," as Aga Khan III noted, "to women."³⁹

Historically, the Moslem husbands have had an unfettered right to cast away their wives for whatever reason, and without concern for her care. Insofar as local councils were empowered to arbitrate marriage disputes, this autocratic right had been denied to the Ismaili husband who now had to give reasons that would be judged. And insofar as all constitutions from 1905 to the present settled the obligations of maintenance on the husband, they have protected the rights of the wife who, as a woman, was not expected to provide her own economic security. To be sure, a remnant of the husband's right to cast off his wife remained in the early constitutions which forbade the wife maintenance (though granted the divorce) if she were the one to bring charges.⁴⁰ But the Constitution of 1962, stating that maintenance would have to be decided in a case where the woman brought charges, removed legal sanction of such a custom. Thus, in polygamy as in divorce, constitutional revisions moved through change to reaffirm an unchanging and basic value that women needed to be protected.⁴¹

In matters of marriage, changes in constitutional law reflected significant social change at the same time that they maintained the centrality of marriage. We have already noted

revisions concerning the age when children may get married. In addition, the rôle of parents in arranging their children's marriages has been somewhat diminished and there is presently a general move on the part of the young to enter into the decision-making. Thus the old habit of arranged marriages solidifying connections between families or increasing wealth or status has more or less broken down, at least as a bargain struck between parents. For the most part, status distinctions, however, have not disappeared, even in the eyes of the children. And although the latest constitution for the first time prescribes rules for marriage outside the Ismaili faith (always excepting the seceder), there remains a strong pull toward marrying within.

The present constitution, for example, stipulates that those who wish to marry outside the Ismaili community should first consult the local council. It shall appoint a committee to "investigate the merits of the application" and "explain to the applicant and his parents the effect of the applicant's proposed action." The council is then to "give its decision." Any Ismaili contracting such a marriage, further, "without the prior consent of the Council or acting in contravention of the Council decision shall be liable to disciplinary action."⁴² Parental pressure too is also usually exercised in favor of Ismaili marriage. And the sense of communal solidarity frequently causes children to regard Ismaili proposals more favorably than non-Ismaili ones.

Nevertheless, marriage outside the community is tolerated and even accepted. More recently young people have married outside the community without even consulting the council and, although I have no exact information on disciplinary action; it seems that none has been taken. Thus, in spite of the pull toward marrying within, the spread of the community outside Africa, and the corresponding opportunities to become acquainted with compatible non-Ismailis which have resulted, seem to have outstripped constitutional provisions. However, the community's sense of the need not to alienate its members has remained firm. There has also been little pressure on the non-Ismaili marriage partners to convert. Though many do convert for matters of convenience as much as of conviction, the Ismaili withdrawal from overzealous proselytizing has, by and large, left married couples to settle their own religious ways. Moreover, the late Aga Khan III has lent support to this sanctioning of non-Ismaili freedom in his Memoirs:⁴³

As a good Muslim I have never asked a Christian to change her religion to marry me. For the Islamic belief is that Christian and Jews and, according to some, Zoroastrians and reformed Hindu Unitarians may marry Muslims and retain their own religion.

No doubt one of the reasons that interfaith marriages can be accepted in such a strongly religious community is that marriage in Ismaili society (unlike most Western marriages) is neither sacrosanct nor holy but a purely secular event. As the late Aga Khan III so clearly stated:⁴⁴

It is important that it should be realised among non-Muslims that the Islamic view of the institution of marriage--and all that relates to it, divorce, plurality of wives and so on--is that it is a question solely of contract, of consent and of definite and mutually accepted responsibilities. The sacramental concept of marriage is not Islam's; therefore, except indirectly there is no question of its religious significance, and there is no religious ceremony to invest it with the solemnity and the symbolism which appertain to marriage in other religions, like Christianity and Hinduism. It is exactly analogous to--in the West--an entirely civil and secular marriage in a Registry Office or before a judge.

As a secular event, marriage is a practical arrangement, then, "defined to be contract which has as its object the procreation of children."⁴⁵ Settlements for the divorced wife are, in fact, as much directed toward child maintenance as toward the wife's support. Special consideration is given to the children of seceders, who are taken away from the mother if she is from the seceding party. Further, most Ismailis of interfaith marriages make sure that the children are raised in the Ismaili faith. Because of their regard for territorial law, however, Ismailis have not insisted on exclusive jurisdiction in matrimonial disputes on the method of raising children. At this point the matter has been left to the courts to determine whether or not children should be brought up in the Ismaili faith or not.⁴⁶

Regardless of questions concerning the faith of the children, the Ismaili family is a strictly ordered group in caring for them. The man is the breadwinner, the woman the nurturer and mother of children. Until recently, in Ismaili society, household policy was primarily the husband's; household

chores were the wife's. Business schemes were the province of the man; women and children were to aid in running the business. Presently, women are beginning to have somewhat more authority in running the house; and with the Aga Khan's emphasis on education for girls as well as boys, a few women have jobs outside the husband's business. The role of the woman, however, still includes raising and caring for the children in the home, and subordinating her interests to those of her husband. In consideration of her traditional roles, the wife continues to enjoy her protected status; she is economically dependent rather than independent.

The importance of marriage in Ismaili society is underlined by the constitutional provisions surrounding its accomplishment and dissolution. Through a formally established committee serving under the local council, proposals are taken from the boy's parents to the girl's, and (if the girl's parents are interested) an examination is made of the boy's education and character, the family financial standing, and other items of interest to the girl's parents. A period of betrothal is then initiated to determine whether the two parties are compatible. If they are, marriage proceedings can then begin.

The importance of marriage is reiterated in the constitutionally established procedure for divorce, where the local council--or committees appointed for the purpose--work with the couple to see if there exists a possibility of reconciliation. Only then is the council empowered to begin divorce

proceedings. Grounds for divorce are not, however, exactly specified. As conveyed in the latest constitution, "an application may be made to the council by the husband or wife on a number of grounds like adultery, desertion, imprisonment, failure to consummate marriage or to perform marital obligations, insanity, cruelty, serious illness which could be dangerous, unknown whereabouts and renunciation of the Ismaili faith." The wife can also request divorce on additional grounds that "the husband has neglected her or failed to provide maintenance for a year and becomes impotent subsequent to the marriage and continues to do so."⁴⁷ In cases where the divorce is granted, provision for the maintenance of wife and children is usually assigned to the ex-husband. However, it is not a cultural more, as is more or less true in Hindu society, that the divorced woman not remarry. In fact, the committee appointed to arrange marriages most frequently takes over the divorced woman's case and, again emphasizing the centrality of marriage, tries to make another match.

From the above discussion, various questions can be raised. Why have the Ismailis accepted such a hierarchical structure? Why do they conform to the constitutionally set rules and regulations? What forms of social control are applied to ensure group conformity, and why has the group agreed to the need for group survival? No one factor is responsible, but rather a series of them. The Ismaili constitution which has been termed a "strict code of social discipline" has

informally imposed a series of laws which, though they look forward to change, reaffirm long-held Ismaili values.

Community solidarity, once achieved through monthly feasts, is now retained through the constitution, the hierarchical structures it provides for, and the values it upholds. Through providing for continuous interaction among groups and through restricting terms of office, the system is one which allows each separate organization or committee to carry out its own work while seeing to it that all work will ultimately be representative of the best interests of the whole Ismaili community. From another point of view, one can say that the revised constitutions refine the original system of checks and balances by which no individual group or person is free to act in isolation and/or against the interests of another organization.

Generally, people conform willingly to the values on which the constitution is based, especially when they are sanctioned by the Aga Khan. Individuals who do not conform are either ridiculed or gossiped about and in extreme cases may be excommunicated: in the latter case, the security of the community has been made more compelling than the right to dissent. These factors, along with the guidance of the Aga Khan and the Ismaili sense of religious community, have no doubt been major ones in holding together a community that continues its tradition, customs, and values at the same time that it leaves room for change in its constitutional provisions for maintaining the social order.

FOOTNOTES

¹Ismailia Council for Africa, Rules and Regulations of the Khoja Shia Imami Ismailia Council (Zanzibar, 1905), chapter I, rule 73, p. 14. (Henceforward cited as Rules, 1905.)

²Varas Mahomedbhai Remtulla Hemani, President of the Shia Imami Supreme Council of Zanzibar, By-Laws of the Shia Imami Ismailia Councils of the Continent of Africa (Zanzibar, 1926), chapter III, rule 39, p. 17. (Henceforward cited as By-Laws, 1926.)

³This was especially true in the late nineteenth century when some of the wealthy Ismailis like Tharia Topan, Peera Dewji, Sewa Haji Paroo played a prominent role in local government but had no formal leadership positions in the community. An exception was Tharia Topan, who was Mukhi for only one year. Allidina Visram was a member of the Bagamoyo Council in 1905. See Rules, 1905, chapter II, rule 32, p. 26.

⁴Count Abdulla Shariff Kanji, President of H.H. the Aga Khan's Ismailia Supreme Council for Africa, and Count Gulamhussein Mahomed Nasser Jindani, Chairman of H.H. the Aga Khan's Executive Council of the Continent of Africa, Rules of H.H. the Aga Khan's Ismailia Councils of the Continent of Africa (Zanzibar, 1937), chapter II, rule 12, p. 18 (henceforward cited as Rules of H.H. the Aga Khan, 1937); High Highness the Aga Khan Ismailia Supreme Council for Africa, The Constitution, Rules and Regulations of His Highness the Aga Khan Ismailia Councils of Africa (Mombasa, 1946), chapter III, rule 7, p. 10 (henceforward cited as The Constitution, 1946); His Highness the Aga Khan Shia Imami Ismailia Supreme Council for Africa, The Constitution of the Shia Imami Ismailis in Africa (Nairobi, 1962), part III, article 106, p. 13 (henceforward cited as The Constitution, 1962).

⁵Rules, 1905, chapter I, rule 13, p. 3; Rules of H.H. Aga Khan, 1937, chapter III, rule 74, p. 35; The Constitution, 1946, chapter IV, rule 13, p. 13.

⁶Rules of H.H. the Aga Khan, 1937, chapter III, rule 68, pp. 32-33; The Constitution, 1946, chapter III, rule 20, p. 23.

⁷Rules, 1905, chapter II, rule 3, p. 1.

⁸Ibid., chapter II, rule 49, p. 10.

⁹Ibid., chapter I, rule 57, pp. 11-12.

¹⁰One might argue, of course, that the need to resolve conflicts created the need to refer to specific individuals in the constitution. Even if the point were valid it would not therefore counteract the personal nature of this particular constitution, because the reference to individuals, even in the case of conflict, resolves that conflict in personal, not impersonal, terms.

¹¹Rules, 1905, chapter II, rule 39, p. 11.

¹²By-Laws, 1926, rule 21, pp. 4-5.

¹³Rules of H.H. the Aga Khan, 1937, chapter I, rule 6, p. 12; rule 16, p. 8; chapter III, rule 9, p. 17; The Constitution, 1946, chapter III, rule 11 and 14, p. 11.

¹⁴"Sakinabai, wife of Allarakhia Khaki," pp. 44-49.

¹⁵See, for example, the decision reached by the High Court of Tanganyika in the case of "Nurbanubai Karim Rattansi V. Husseinbhai Karim Mohamed," civil case no. 94 of 1953 (1955) Z.T.L.R.(R) 212, p. 8, quoted in "Report Submitted by Constitutional Committee on November 3, 1961," in "Report-Pocket-Ismaili Law," File No. 194C, in the collection of Mr. A. M. Sadruddin of Nairobi, Kenya. This is discussed in detail in Chapter VI,

¹⁶The Constitution, 1962, part VI, article 197, p. 22; Rules of H.H. the Aga Khan, 1937, chapter III, rule 13, pp. 18-19.

¹⁷The local resolution quoted which was enacted by the Provincial Council, was read in all the local Jamatkhana. Although the example falls beyond the period covered in this study, it shows what types of resolutions were discussed by the local councils.

¹⁸Rules, 1905, chapter I, rules 16, 17, 18, 34, pp. 3-4, 6.

¹⁹Rules, 1905, chapter I, rule 80, pp. 15-16; Rules of H.H. the Aga Khan, 1937, chapter I, rule 14, p. 3; The Constitution, 1962, part II, article 5, p. 3. Also see J. N. D. Anderson, Islamic Law in Africa (London, 1954), pp. 324-326.

²⁰Rules, 1905, chapter I, rule 12, p. 2, and rule 32, p. 6; Rules of H.H. the Aga Khan, 1937, chapter IV, rule 54, p. 52 and rule 59, p. 53; The Constitution, 1946, chapter V, rule 47, p. 20.

²¹For further information on the protest during the nineteenth century, see Chapter III, p. 70ff, and for the conflict of 1939-40, see Chapter VI, pp. 181-182.

²²For different kinds of voluntary offerings and gifts, see Rules of H.H. the Aga Khan, 1937, chapter VII, rules 18 to 37, pp. 75-81; The Constitution, 1946, chapter VI, rules 21, 23, and 25, p. 24.

²³Rules, 1905, chapter II, rules 31 to 35, p. 7; Rules of H.H. the Aga Khan, 1937, chapter I, rule 12, p. 3; chapter III, rule 59, p. 30; chapter VII, rules 35 to 47, pp. 79-89; The Constitution, 1946, chapter VI, rules 4 to 7, p. 21; The Constitution, 1962, part IX, articles 381, 396 to 400, pp. 39-40.

²⁴See, for instance, Sherali Alidina and M. J. Kassim Ali (compiled and translated), Precious Pearls: Firman Mubarak of Hazarat Mowlana Sultan Mohamed Shah (Karachi, 1954). This book includes firmans on various subjects.

²⁵There is no such thing as a "no" or "not worthy of attention" communicated to Ismaili followers by the Aga Khan. In place of a negative answer, the Aga Khan conveys no answer at all, an act which is understood as merely suggesting that his personal blessings and/or intervention is not necessary, not that he is against the communication.

²⁶The Constitution, 1962, part VI, article 200, p. 22.

²⁷Ibid., part VI, article 214, pp. 23-24.

²⁸The most prominent exception is the case of the young men who, in the name of the Aga Khan, killed several dissenters during the 1860s conflict in Bombay and were excommunicated. In this instance, of course, the problem was not of directly challenging the authority of the Aga Khan but of exceeding moral limits agreed to by a leader and the majority of his people. See Picklay, History of the Ismailis, p. 149.

²⁹See, for instance, Chapter VII, pp. 230-231, which describes Mr. Bhinjli's case, who was made to read a letter of apology for going beyond the constitutional rules.

³⁰Rules, 1905, chapter I, rule 49, p. 9; Rules of H.H. the Aga Khan, 1937, chapter VII, rule 66, -p. 93.

³¹Rules, 1905, chapter I, rules 66 and 67, p. 13; Rules of H.H. the Aga Khan, 1937, chapter VII, rules 64 and 65, pp. 92-93.

³²Rules, 1905, chapter I, rule 68, p. 13.

³³The change is clearly evident in the case of marriage ceremonies. See, for instance, Rules of H.H. the Aga Khan, 1937, chapter V, rule 5, p. 59; The Constitution, 1946, chapter IX, rule 15, pp. 32-33.

³⁴Rules of H.H. The Aga Khan, 1937, chapter V, rule 1, p. 55, rules 2 to 4, p. 56; The Constitution, 1946, chapter IX, rule 3, p. 30; The Constitution, 1962, part VII, article 224(c), p. 26.

³⁵Rules, 1905, chapter I, rule 50, p. 9.

³⁶Rules of H.H. the Aga Khan, 1937, chapter V, rule 8, p. 61; The Constitution, 1946, chapter IX, rule 19, p. 34.

³⁷The Constitution, 1962, part VII, article , p. 26.

³⁸J. N. D. Anderson, "The Ismaili Khojas of East Africa: A New Constitution and Personal Law for the Community," Middle Eastern Studies, I, 1 (October, 1964), p. 26.

³⁹His Highness the Aga Khan, The Membirs of Aga Khan: World Enough and Time (New York, 1954), p. 26.

⁴⁰Rules, 1905, chapter I, rule 51, p. 9.

⁴¹The Constitution, 1962, part VII, article 273, p. 29, and article 289, p. 31.

⁴²Ibid., part VII, articles 334 to 342, pp. 34-35.

⁴³The Memoirs of Aga Khan, p. 275.

⁴⁴Ibid., p. 26.

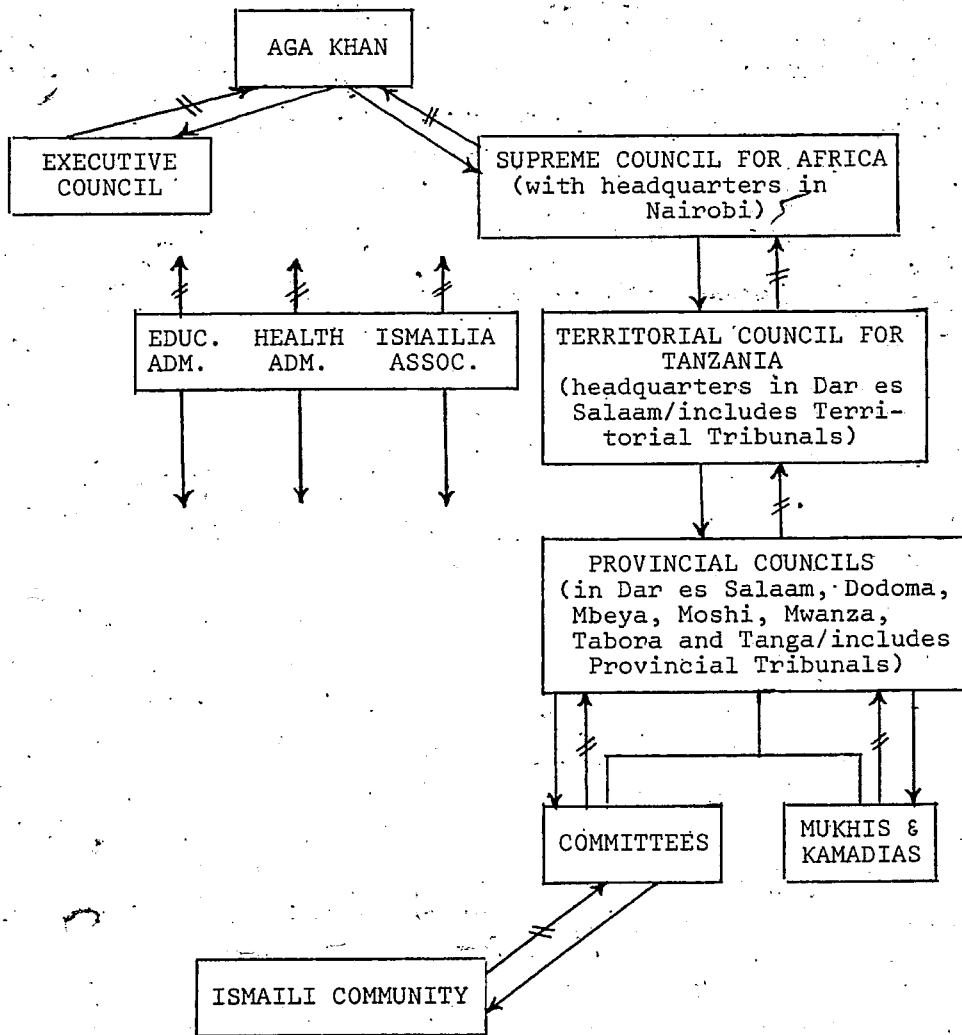
⁴⁵"Report of the Ismaili Constitutional Committee for Kenya (Nov. 3, 1961)," p. 19, see "Report Pocket Ismaili Law Conference," File 194b, in the collection of Mr. A. M. Sadruddin, Nairobi, Kenya.

⁴⁶Ibid., p. 58.

⁴⁷The Constitution, 1962, part VII, article 276, p.

APPENDIX I.

ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE OF THE ISMAILI COMMUNITY



--> Reports, Finance (dasond, voluntary offerings, gifts)

→ Resolutions, money for schools, bursaries, medical facilities

The chart is based on the Constitution of 1962. See, The Constitution of the Shia Imami Ismailis in Africa (Nairobi, 1962).

CHAPTER V

A PERIOD OF TRANSITION: THE ISMAILIS IN
GERMAN EAST AFRICA.

As a result of colonial trading policies and rivalries in East Africa in the 1890s, the Ismaili trading community experienced a period of rapid change and dislocation. When the Imperial German Government first took control of its mainland possessions, the larger Ismaili firms had their headquarters on the British-controlled island of Zanzibar with subsidiaries in major coastal cities of the German mainland. Traders in German East Africa were tied to Zanzibar: in value, 48 per cent of German East African goods went to the island; of this 48 per cent, the island consumed 43 per cent, re-exporting the remaining 53 per cent back to the German mainland.¹ In the period of a few short years, this pattern was upset as Germany sought an increase in national revenue through introduction of new trade policies in East Africa.

Of primary importance in the upset of old trading patterns was the decline of Zanzibar as an outlet for German East African goods. In 1899 Britain imposed an import duty of 5 per cent ad valorem on goods arriving from the mainland. Later in the same year Germany imposed a similar tax on goods coming from the island into German East Africa.² From Germany's point of view, the reduction of profits through

taxation was no doubt considered beneficial. Brode mentions that Germany did not object to the British tax, believing it would help mainland trade.³ Similarly, the German tax--although ostensibly against German interests--would serve those interests if it were to direct trade away from Zanzibar. But from the Ismaili merchant's point of view, the tax was a decided disadvantage. Ismaili trading firms tied both to Zanzibar and the German mainland found profits decreased by what amounted to a 10 per cent tax. In addition, merchants had to pay the cost of storage on re-exported goods while they waited to ship back from Zanzibar what had just been shipped in.⁴

At the same time Germany had been working to establish its own trading networks. In 1890 a direct shipping service was set up between Hamburg, Dar es Salaam and Tanga, allowing merchants to bypass Zanzibar. Two years later another direct service was established between India and Dar es Salaam. To protect Germany's interests in Zanzibar, the island was linked by cable to the most flourishing German port of the time, Bagamoyo. To facilitate communication, post offices were set up at Bagamoyo and Dar es Salaam.⁵ By 1899 the Imperial Governor was able to report that the largest German firm, the German East Africa Company, had set a successful example by opening subsidiaries on the coast and importing and exporting goods without the mediation of Zanzibar.⁶ Other companies followed and, as the governor noted, "the coastal trade became less dependent on Zanzibar." "It was only

natural," he added, "that commerce exploited the immediate and regular trips of the German East African line since it should desire to save the costs arising from reloading in Zanzibar or landing there and storing."⁷

Figures support the governor's statement. In the years 1898-1902, 51 to 66 per cent of German East African imports came from Zanzibar; 62 per cent of its exports went to Zanzibar. By 1908, both imports and exports had dropped to less than 18 per cent.⁸ With their agents in German East Africa, Ismaili firms in Zanzibar would of course have been affected. In the absence of figures suggesting failure, however, one can only assume that with their subsidiaries on the coast, the Ismaili firms--like the German East Africa Company--were able to take advantage of increased activity on the mainland.

Conditions surrounding Ismaili trade were not the same, however, as they were for German trade. With little real political and economic control, the Ismaili community found itself confronted by a German policy which, though it did not attempt to remove them, envisioned a specific and limited role for Indians in its developing economy of trade. Under this plan, the German houses, like Oswald & Co., Hansing & Co., and the German East Africa Company, were to continue in the wholesale business. Berlin was to finance the construction of a railway linking the interior with the coast. The Indian was to be the middleman between the African and the German economy by handling goods between the local

villages and the railway.⁹ As part of Imperial Governor Rechenberg's scheme for the development of East Africa, the plan seemed practical from a short range point of view, an assignment of complementary functions which would bring prosperity to all.

Following colonial governmental policy, major German commercial houses made strong efforts to set the Indian trader up in business. Frequently they tried to help the small merchant start a new duka by advancing credit in the form of goods. In return the sponsoring German firms expected the merchant to purchase only its imports. As Hooker described the situation, the Indian trader was the fortunate recipient of an enlightened economic policy at the same time that he was drawn even more securely into German control of the economy:

He [the German merchant] sells his sugar to the Indian merchants taking six months bill. If as is probable, half the merchants cannot retire their drafts, he then extends them at 6 percent, the local rate being nine percent. Naturally from the very first, and while anything is owing, a proviso is made that he [the Indian merchant] also makes his purchase of other merchandise from the German. If the Indian merchant does not do well in one place, the German plants him, his family and his goods, lock, stock and barrel, somewhere else.¹⁰

Considering the importance of Ismaili kinship ties, and the economic advantages gained from them, the German policy of setting up a merchant, then moving him at German will, is doubly significant. Not only did it force the Ismaili into the hands of the German economy, it also broke up the communal network whereby Ismailis had been able to advance their own

and their community's interests. From this point of view, the long range effect of the plan suggested the possibility of Germany's monopolistic control of trade in German East Africa.

German attempts to control Indian trade were also found in their promises of free land. According to the late Kassamali Merali, a German officer had promised free land to Ismailis who would start a duka and take an active role in the development of the country. Because no Ismailis accepted the offer, Mr. Merali assumed either that no one believed the officer or that no one was assured of success.¹¹ Yet, because Ismailis were considered British subjects, and because the free land came only with German citizenship, it might also be the case that Ismailis rejected the offer out of concern that they would be tied too exclusively to German trading interests. At any rate, the Aga Khan's refusal of a general offer of free land tied to German citizenship in 1899 suggests that the concern over German control was not an insignificant matter.¹²

By 1899, the German Imperial Governor reported the desired results, that "the intensive trade between the Indian and the local population [had] retained its importance" and may have picked up here and there." But "whereas retail and middleman's trading is done by the Indian, the wholesale trade is almost exclusively in German hands."¹³ Although the report was probably something of an exaggeration in the face of the

the colonial government's need to convince Berlin of its policies for economic development, it was true that Ismaili traders were not able to prosper so greatly under German rule as they had before. Although men like Allarakhia Kherāj, Jaffer Hāji and Jamal Walji rose to prominence, they were unable to attain the same stature as earlier families like Sewa Hāji Paroo, Tharia Topan and Allidina Visram, who had built up trading empires before the Germans came.

Other factors discouraged Ismaili prosperity. The building of railroads meant an end to the lucrative practice of financing caravans. The colonial economy was dependent on an international trade situation where any change in supply or demand would be certain to affect previous import-export trade balances. In 1908, for example, owing to the depression in the American market, there was a decline in the export of hides and skins. Correspondingly, there was a decline in the import of cotton goods, of which America was the main supplier, from 681 tons in 1907 to 310 tons in 1908.¹⁴

The build-up of other colonial powers in East Africa also affected Ismaili trade in German East Africa. According to the Imperial Governor's report of 1899, the Congo State had taken away a significant portion of German import trade as well as ivory exports to areas outside of Tanganyika. The development of communications in central Africa, and especially use of connecting waterways on the Shire-Zambesi, had taken away much of the trade with the Nyassa area to the

south, its development of British East Africa had taken markets away from Bagamoyo and the Pangani, Tanga, and Moshi areas.¹⁵ The importance of British-controlled Mombasa as a center for the re-export trade continued to plague Germany in East Africa.¹⁶

Germany's difficulties were not, however, totally shared by Ismaili traders. Some, like Allidina Visram, simply moved to British territory. Changing his headquarters from Bagamoyo to Mombasa, Visram opened branches in such places as Bukoba and Schirati, and established a yearly business of about Rs. 300,000 (\$4,872.93), importing cloth and small articles worth about Rs. 200,000 (\$3,248.62), and exporting hides, skins and rubber worth about Rs. 100,000 (\$1,624.31). In 1903, with the opening of a regular lake steamer service, the transport of Ismaili goods along the Uganda railway was facilitated. When the German East Africa Company opened a Mwanza branch in 1898, its business in hides, skins, rubber and wax, provided outlets for more Ismaili traders.¹⁷ Others took advantage of the railway and opened shops along the Usambara and central line selling goods to the Africans who worked for the railroads or lived nearby.¹⁸

The one area of trade which was not controlled by Germany was ivory exporting. Although Germany would have liked to increase its business in ivory, the trade was controlled in the 1880s by the Arabs and the Swahilis.¹⁹ By the turn of the century, its transportation system in the interior was

still based on the caravan. As a result it would not compete with the water and rail transportation of other colonial powers.²⁰ Further, the Indian's ability to work at a low margin of profit seems to have kept the Germans out of the market. As the District Officer at Kilwa noted so bitterly, the Indian trader, "in order to pacify his creditors in Zanzibar through a delivery . . . more often pays prices for India rubber and ivory which the [German] firms cannot pay. It is merely the Indian's concern to keep his head above water for the moment," a habit which allowed the Indian an advantage over the German in the ivory trade.²¹

Such, however, was not to be the case. One explanation rests on the complicated combination of factors that had previously made the trade so profitable. According to Memon, ivory traders realized high profits because of the delicate balance between import and export exchanges. Before the abolition of the slave trade, he explains, ivory was carried out by porters who, also being sold as slaves, paid for the cost of transportation. Cotton, which was the primary item of exchange, was brought in at a profit high enough to make worthwhile the risks encountered in the caravan trade. With the abolition of slave trading, however, transportation costs became prohibitive so that, in spite of rising prices on the world market, ivory no longer proved profitable.²² However, the question of the importance of slaves in the ivory trade is still not settled.

Further, if one is to believe German and Indian accounts, it was not so much the disruption of the import-export balances as it was the influence of rival colonial powers. We have already mentioned the new British transportation routes which diverted trade from Germany's mainland possessions. From the Indian point of view, difficulties in the ivory trade were not so much due to the abolition of slavery or the opening of new traffic routes as to difficulties imposed by British and Belgian authorities. From Bagamoyo we have a German communication presenting the Indian point of view:²³

As is commonly known, the trade in the great centers of the interior, particularly the stations at Tabora and Ujiji, has declined, in part because goods from the Congo has been cut off by rigorous procedures of the officials there, and in part because of the Uganda railroad; the wares can be sent cheaper to the coast than by carrier. The traders themselves prefer to bring their wares to the German coast but have been hindered by the duty they have to pay for taking goods out of the English district. Ivory can be brought to the German coast from a neighbouring English colony at some profit if, as they openly have declared, it could be smuggled through. But smuggling would not be possible because the German border authorities imposed difficulties on the traders. If the origin of the ivory could not be determined, it would be assumed that it came from elephants shot in the German district and a payment of game license duties [toll] would be demanded and the prescribed penalties would be invoked--about 70 per cent of the ivory came from Uganda and Urgoro, but only 30 per cent from the German district, which is generally less productive than the English.

The Indian community in East Africa was also beset by many tax proposals. We have already noted the tax on goods at Zanzibar. In the early 1890s the German Imperial Governor of the time, Baron von Soden, proposed a tax on the gross

turnover of merchants. The ordinance was particularly distasteful--to the German East African Company and Indians alike--because no provision was made for possible losses. Obviously then the Ismaili community would have protested the imposition of such a tax. But in the absence of further information, it is difficult to say exactly what happened.²⁴

According to the late Kassamali Merali, except for a license fee of Rs. 24.00 (\$10.56) and an additional fee of Rs. 3.00 (\$1.32), there were no taxes during the German period.²⁵

From British sources, however, we know that Germany levied a 4 per cent profit tax, and that this tax had been in effect for a long time.²⁶

No doubt the difficulty of assessing account books not kept in Latin script led to the imposition of a straight licensing fee to make up for part of the tax. The additional Rs. 3.00 (\$1.32) referred to by Mr. Merali could then be understood as his particular additional assessment, necessary to bring successful merchants up to the required 4 per cent tax. That the tax was based on profits rather than gross turnover was no doubt a result of the influence of the powerful German East Africa Company.

Other tax proposals threatened Ismaili profits. From 1891 to 1893, a harbor tax "with high tonnage rates" was introduced at Zanzibar on coconuts imported from the German mainland.²⁷ In 1899 the Imperial Governor proposed a "differential tax" on goods coming from the interior into German East Africa. According to his proposal, goods coming

"directly from the producing country would have to pay only a 5 per cent tax. Those having passed a transit port, however, should pay 10 per cent and, in addition, a reloading tax."²⁸ Although Berlin rejected the differential tax (presumably because it feared a redirection of goods away from German East Africa and because it was concerned over possible British countermeasures) and although the tax on coconuts was lifted in 1894, Ismailis were being made aware of the difficulty of their position.²⁹ When the Aga Khan visited the community in 1899, he assured Ismailis that, "after having gone carefully into the question," he believed the German system of taxation "to be absolutely fair."³⁰ Nevertheless, Ismailis continued to resent attempts to increase German revenue at their expense.

In spite of taxes, the official policy of the German colonial government was, as we have noted, to encourage the Indian retail trader and increase his role as middleman in the German trading economy. Although the German government had originally feared Indian loyalty to "the original Arab owners of the soil," and had suspected them of illicitly trading arms in a country where African rebellions had just occurred, official policy had changed by the 1890s. In the words of the Aga Khan, "the Germans came to the sound conclusion that Indian assistance was requisite for the full commercial development of their colony. While, as the Indians often told me at the time, the Germans were hopelessly

ignorant of Indian divisions, communities, castes and internal organization, they did make an effort to understand and tolerate them."³¹

This official policy contrasted, however, with the attitude of German settlers in East Africa who feared for their safety and economic security.³² As the Bagamoyo communique on ivory suggests, the Indians were not above smuggling, a practice that could easily eat into German profit. This, along with several other factors, led to an attack by German settlers on Indian trading practices.

In order to fully understand the conflict between German settler and Indian trader, one must first understand the growth and development of Indian trade. Before World War I, the system operated in the following fashion. Along the coast Africans producing coffee, copra, and cotton sold their produce to German and Ismaili firms on the mainland. In addition, European traders had moved into the export of hides and skins, coffee, rice, groundnuts and cotton around Lake Victoria. With no specialized business, most of the dukawallas sold inexpensive imported goods to the Africans--cheap cotton goods originally imported by the Germans from America, as well as German sugar, beads, kerosene, cigarettes, and household products of use to the African.³³

In the absence of an organized market, the isolated African communities allowed the Ismaili to make a high profit. Unaware of the real value of the commodities he sold, the

African was frequently paid a minimum. The resulting high profit margin encouraged the Indian trader and so the establishment of new trading centers and networks was facilitated. Thus the Ismaili took his place as middleman in the African trading enterprise.

As middleman, the Ismaili agent would be supplied with imported goods on a forward contract by a wholesale firm on the coast. The agent would also sometimes hire an African to go into the interior to exchange goods for produce.³⁴ Because of the great profit incentive, and the ease with which one might set up in business, the market became increasingly speculative and competitive.

Imported goods were frequently overstocked as a result both of the forward buying method and of overestimating the African demand for such goods. Overestimating was in turn based on the assumption that the African producer, although he had just begun to grow cash crops, would buy more than his profits would warrant. The result was frequently bankruptcy. From an objective point of view, Hooker has described the situation in this way:

... of late years an exceedingly dangerous element has sprung up into existence and matured. Agents, or agents' agents enter the country, possibly with the best intentions, collect orders, chiefly retail, taking no risk of any sort or kind themselves, and often five times as much as a district can possibly consume of an article within reasonable time. They will go from shop to shop, never exactly mentioning that they have already secured large orders for exactly similar articles. The orders come to England where the head of the agency is perhaps equally careful to distribute the indents among various

✓ exporters. Consequently the goods arrive practically simultaneously and are a drug in the market. The result can be imagined, and the loss often falls on the exporter, while the agent safely pockets his commission. Often his indenter thinks his buyer knows of the supplies going to others and expects him to act accordingly.

Many Indians (and British too for that matter) often fail to realise the cost of the indents they give, and many think that with ninety days D/A terms it is all quite safe, as they can realise on goods; but when the day of reckoning arrives, they find themselves still with stock and short of cash.³⁵

German settlers were not so kind to Indian traders. Particularly at Kilwa, well-situated for Indian smuggling activity, resentment was strong among government officials. In his communiques, the Imperial District Officer at Kilwa was quick to take the settler point of view in finding the Indian trader of disadvantage to German interests:

It is evident that the present troubles have had a bad influence on the entire trade as well as upon the economic life of the district. On the one side we see progress in the development of economic life but on the other regression in trade. The causes are not to be sought, as is commonly supposed, in the retrogression of the Colony but must lie elsewhere. As I have explained . . . there are four European houses here, with many hundreds of thousands working, seventeen independent Indian traders and 182 small ones. Previously the collective import trade went into the land through European firms; also the greater portion of exports were taken care of through them. The European firms purchased their wares in India or Europe in gross more cheaply than it could be shipped by the Indian with his small capital; in the same way, the firm shipped to the D.O.A.G. [German East Africa Company] more cheaply than the Indian, and yet today the great firms can no longer compete with the Indian. The Indians seize increasingly more trade and the great firms were working at a loss.³⁶

Because of the stiff competition in trade, the Indian was also felt to have gained an advantage in being able to dispose of his goods at a rate so cheap as to cause German

firms to go out of business. Since the businesses were mostly family concerns, Ismaili traders could afford to carry on at a low margin of profit. The big commercial houses, however, had to pay numerous clerks; and this, in addition to other incidental costs, meant that their profit margin had to be high. German competitors also resented the religious and kinship ties which allowed Indians to borrow even when they were in an insecure financial position. Moreover, the split between the Ismaili and Isna'Ashari was seen as making it even easier for traders to obtain credit, since both groups were trying to retain followers and so would extend credit on the best possible terms. Particularly resented was the Indian habit of declaring bankruptcy, only to be refinanced by his coreligionists. In a notably harsh attack on the Indian community, the Imperial District Officer at Kilwa summarizes the nature of German sentiment regarding Indian business:

It is the opinion of the Europeans entrusted with local relations that 30 per cent of the Indians of Kilwa and Mohorro are bankrupt as soon as accounting becomes obligatory. And it is exactly this element that is binding up a healthy development of economic life. They deceive the negro in an inexcusable, unjustifiable way and they deceive their money lenders, since they have nothing to fear; also, their fellow-believers (here where a competition of faith is carried on in the keenest way between the Ismaili and the Ithnashari) will always help them in the deception and it means nothing to these people to declare bankruptcy. They always receive new credit from their fellow-believers. Scarcely a month passes when Indians are not coming forth to declare themselves bankrupt in one of the other cities of our colony. They gladly pay the 200 rupees of the establishment tax.³⁷

This anti-Indian sentiment found its outlet in two ways. In 1903, Kilwa's Imperial District Officer proposed measures

which would rid the German mainland of competition, provided by small Indian traders. Those declaring bankruptcy on the mainland were to be expelled; those declaring bankruptcy in Zanzibar were not to be allowed to set up business on the German mainland. Indians were expressly ordered to engage in retail trade in the colony. Those who survived to do business there were to be assessed a business tax of at least Rs. 60.00 (\$194.92).³⁸ Although the district officer noted that the tax assessment had been practiced in Kilwa, there is no indication that his proposal was seriously considered as part of Berlin's official policy in East Africa.

A second attempt to intrude on the Indian trading economy received more attention. In 1906 anti-Indian sentiment congealed around the issue of requiring all traders to keep accounts.³⁹ The accounts were to be written in Latin script, in either Swahili or German. In such a way, it was argued, government officials could more easily check accounts for the levying of taxes and in searching for bankruptcy. In Pangani the Imperial District Officer realized the difficulties such a measure would impose on Indian trade and the result it might have for German prosperity. The small Indian trader, he argued, would not be able to afford an accountant familiar with the Latin script. Neither could he have the education "necessary for the directing and conducting of book accounts." As a result, the small trader "would probably not be able to continue their businesses, and would wander off to some place where there are fewer burdensome prescriptions."⁴⁰

The toll inspector at Bagamoyo warned that such a measure would be "a severe blow for our Indian as well as for our own collective trade." After 1903, a great deal of the German East African imports and exports to be transported were channeled through the German lake ports of Mwanza and Bukoba, providing an alternative to British routes out of Mombasa.⁴¹ Fear of losing control of the area to the British, if Ismaili wholesalers established themselves in British rather than German territory, the inspector noted that "there is already an unmistakable intention of emigration of the better Indians to British East Africa where they will be received with open arms. With a view to the new trade routes over Mwanza the realization of this intention might harm our trade badly. Ali Visram has already pushed his trade from Bagamoyo to Mombasa and from there has an eye on our sea province. In a similar way, Nasser Virji is founding an association in Mombasa and others are wishing to imitate his example."⁴² Considering the invaluable services rendered by the small Indian retail traders in opening dukas far into the interior, and the links provided to the interior through the large Ismaili firms on the coast, their removal would have meant a great loss to the total German trade. For the above reasons, it was obvious that the settlers' demands for the keeping of accounts could not be met by the German colonial government. As a result, the Ismaili trading community continued to prosper though in ways more limited than before the German presence.

At the same time that Ismaili traders were engaged in economic reorganization, Ismaili society was moving toward social and educational goals. With the Constitution of 1905, an administrative structure in the form of councils was established. The main thrust was in the direction of centralization with the establishment of a hierarchy of councils governing and coordinating the activities of the Ismaili community. The council at Zanzibar was given jurisdictional control as Supreme Council over several Provincial Councils, themselves given charge of settling primarily matrimonial disputes in major cities. In German East Africa these were in Dar es Salaam, Bagamoyo, Kilwa and Sadani.⁴³

These were the years in which the Ismailis established a successful educational system. Ismailis were, for example, the first among the Asians to start small, private schools. By making capital and personnel available, they were also able to expand and develop educational facilities to meet basic requirements related to the faith and the community. At first when the communities were relatively unsettled and diffuse, education had been vested in the Mukhi (treasurer) and Kamaria (accountant). But with the Constitution of 1905, education became a matter of central, rather than merely local, planning.⁴⁴

As provided for in the Constitution of 1905, supervision of education was taken from the local communities and given to the School Committee, directly under the supervision

of the Ismaili Provincial Council. Members of the School Committee were to serve four years. The committee was empowered to enact rules and regulations after first submitting them to the Provincial Council.⁴⁵ The number of teachers and places where schools were to be established were, however, stipulated by the constitution. In 1905 seven teachers were to be engaged from India and brought to Zanzibar, Dar es Salaam, and Bagamoyo. Zanzibar, the base for all migrants coming from Kutch and Kathiawar, had the largest need since the majority of Ismailis were to settle there permanently or at least remain on the island for several years before going to the mainland. Consequently, Zanzibar was to have five teachers, three for boys and girls in the adolescent years, and two for younger boys. Dar es Salaam and Bagamoyo, which had fewer Ismailis, were to have one teacher each.⁴⁶

Originally the purpose of Ismaili schools was to provide a religious education for the Tanzanian migrants. Since the religious writings of the Ismailis were in the Sindhi language, Sindhi was incorporated into the curriculum. Practical needs, however, were not neglected, especially after 1905. In Zanzibar where British control made it beneficial to have at least an acquaintance with the English language, English was taught as well as Gujarati.⁴⁷

In German East Africa the situation was somewhat less favorable, although educational facilities were available. Concentrating their particular efforts only on religious

education and the teaching of Sindhi, these schools did not teach German. Nor was there a population large enough to warrant the building of a private school. Ismaili students did, however, attend the official German schools where both German and Swahili were taught so some of the practical needs of the population were served, if somewhat less adequately than in Zanzibar.⁴⁸

It was possible for Ismailis to attend official government schools in Tanganyika because, unlike the Zanzibar government, the German government took an interest in educating the entire population of her colony. In 1898 the first experimental school was opened in Tanga. This proved satisfactory, and after 1900 more administrative schools were set up in Kilwa, Pangani, Tabora, Dar es Salaam and Bagamoyo. Swahili was used for all educational purposes. The curriculum included knowledge of local geography and history, and a working knowledge of the German language. Opened to Indians and Africans both, the schools served primarily to train clerks. Hussein Nasser Shariff and Kassum Sunderji Samji attended these schools. German and Ismaili advantage was served when Samji joined the firm of the German Oswald and Co. as a clerk.⁴⁹

Socially as well as economically, then, the German period in Ismaili history was a time of transition from a state of relative isolation and unhindered activity to one of increasing involvement in the complexities developing in Africa.

FOOTNOTES

¹H. Brode, British and German East Africa: Their Economic and Commercial Relations (London, 1911), p. 8. Since I do not read German, the chapter is not based on exhaustive archival research of German documents. I am grateful to Professor Helmut Bley for reading the German files (which are in the Tanzania National Archives, Dar es Salaam), and Mr. Hermann Hoffman for his help with the translation.

²Brode, British and German East Africa, pp. 14-15.

³Ibid., p. 15.

⁴Ibid., pp. 15-16; Governor, Dar es Salaam to the Office of Foreign Affairs, Berlin, October 6, 1899, Tanzania National Archives (hereafter T.N.A.), G1/28, p. 131a.

⁵Brode, pp. 8-10.

⁶Governor, Dar es Salaam to the Office of Foreign Affairs, October 6, 1899, T.N.A., G1/28, p. 107a.

⁷Ibid., pp. 107b and 108a.

⁸Brode, pp. 15-16.

⁹J. Iliffe, Tanganyika Under German Rule 1905-1912 (London, 1969), p. 93.

¹⁰W. H. Hooker, The Handicap of British Trade with Special Regard to East Africa (London, 1916), p. 18. Mr. Hooker was the Deputy Director of the East African Section of the London Chamber of Commerce in 1916.

¹¹"Life History of the late Bandali Merali," compiled by the late Kassamali Merali of Morogoro. Bandali Merali arrived in Zanzibar from Kutch in 1905 and settled in Morogoro in 1907.

¹²His Highness the Aga Khan, India in Transition: A Study in Political Evolution (New York, 1918), pp. 120-121.

¹³Governor to Office of Foreign Affairs, T.N.A., G1/28, p. 130a.

¹⁴Brode, p. 56.

¹⁵Governor to Office of Foreign Affairs, T.N.A., G1/28, p. 135a and 135b.

¹⁶P. A. Memon, "The Spatial Dynamics of Trade and Urban Development in Kenya during the Early Colonial Period up to 1915," Working Paper No. 8, Institute for Development Studies (University of Nairobi, Kenya, January, 1973), p. 11.

¹⁷Brode, pp. 48-50.

¹⁸"Life History of the late Bāndali Merali," p. 4.

¹⁹W. O. Henderson, "German East Africa 1884-1918," in History of East Africa, Vincent Harlow and E. M. Chilver, eds. (London, 1965), II, p. 129.

²⁰Memon, "Spatial Dynamics," pp. 9-11.

²¹"Memorandum on Causes for the Decline of Trade and Comprehensive Measures for a Recovery of the Same," fr. Imperial District Office, Kilwa, May 19, 1903, T.N.A., G1/29/II, p. 53.

²²Memon, p. 6.

²³Imperial District Office, Bagamoyo to Imperial Governor, Dar es Salaam, May 10, 1903, T.N.A., G1/29/II, pp. 49a-50.

²⁴"Introduction of Mercantile Trade Books Through Asiatic Tradesmen," Imperial Officer, Dar es Salaam, April 17, 1906, T.N.A., G1/29, pp. 147-148; "Management of Company Books in Respect to Asiatic Merchants," Imperial District Officer, Bagamoyo, April 22, 1906, T.N.A., G1/29, pp. 151-160.

²⁵"Life History of the late Bandali Merali," p. 3.

²⁶"Memorandum on Profit Tax by Treasurer," May 5, 1925, T.N.A., 7596, pp. 7-9.

²⁷Governor to Office of Foreign Affairs, T.N.A., G1/28, p. 123a.

²⁸Ibid., p. 136b.

²⁹Ibid., pp. 123a, 136b, 137b.

³⁰F.O. 403/159, Aga Khan III to Basil Cave, Sept. 30, 1899, p. 30.

- p. 119.
- ³¹ His Highness the Aga Khan, India in Transition,
- ³² Iliffe, pp. 94-95.
- ³³ Memon, p. 10.
- ³⁴ "List of Traders in German East Africa," G1/25.
The File shows that in some remote places African and Arab traders acted as agents for major Ismaili commercial houses on the coast.
- ³⁵ Hooker, p. 96; Oral information obtained from Allibhai Kassam, June 8, 1970, Dar es Salaam.
- ³⁶ "Memorandum on Causes for the Decline of Trade and Comprehensive Measures for a Recovery of Same," fr: Imperial District Officer, Kilwa, May 19, 1903, T.N.A., G1/29/II, p. 56.
- ³⁷ Ibid., pp. 57-58.
- ³⁸ Ibid., p. 58.
- ³⁹ Iliffe, p. 95.
- ⁴⁰ Imperial District Office, Pangani, to Imperial Officer, Dar es Salaam, May 13, 1906, T.N.A., G1/29, p. 154b.
- ⁴¹ Memon, pp. 9-10.
- ⁴² "Management of Company Books in Respect to Asiatic Merchants," fr. the Toll Inspector, Bagamoyo, April 22, 1906, T.N.A., G1/29, p. 152b.
- ⁴³ Ismailia Council for Africa, Rules and Regulations of the Shia Imami Ismailia Council (Zanzibar, 1905), chapter II, rule 36, p. 8.
- ⁴⁴ Ibid., chapter II, rules 53 and 54, pp. 12-13.
- ⁴⁵ Badroodin Pirmohamed, A Study of Some Aspects of English Education with a View to Improve Ismaili Education in East Africa (London, 1967), p. 15.
- ⁴⁶ Rules (1905), chapter II, rule 53, p. 12.
- ⁴⁷ This was noted by Mohamedali F. Shariff. He worked for the Aga Khan Education Board in Zanzibar. August 5, 1968, Dar es Salaam.

48 R. H. Harris, "Education in East Central Africa:
The German System Outlined," The Empire Review, XX (1910),
pp. 185-187.

49 Oral information obtained from Premji S. Samji,
May 5, 1971, Dar es Salaam.

CHAPTER VI

ECONOMIC AND ADMINISTRATIVE DEVELOPMENT DURING
THE INTERWAR PERIOD

At the end of the First World War, the British government formally took control of the administration of the former German colony of German East Africa. Renamed Tanganyika Territory, it was to be administered under the supervision of the League of Nations. The mandate had stipulated that equality was to be assured to nationals of member nations. Since India was a member nation, Indians in Africa were to be included. The assurance of equality, however, was cause for concern in India where the government demanded "to know what form of government will prevail in German East Africa and what class of people will have power to legislate and to conduct the administration." For, the Indian government had continued:

While it is true in theory that under the Mandate every resident of an original member of the League of Nations will have equal rights in the new territory, everything will depend in practice upon the people who exercise the governing power.¹

Denied adequate representation in the governance of Tanganyika, Indians there were soon to discover that the British-dominated government sought to effect policies that were, in practice, discriminatory. Depressions in the world market, first in the early 20s and again in the early 30s,

added to the difficulties of the period, along with disruptions occurring at the end of the war. In spite of a period of prosperity at the end of the 20s, then, the Ismaili community found the interwar period a difficult one, demanding new alliances and major institutional changes.

Of the many dislocations brought about as a result of the war, the major one was the disruption of a relatively prosperous plantation economy. Before the sale of ex-enemy property by the British in 1921, plantations had been leased, pending their sale, on an annual basis to contractors. During the years 1918 to 1919, the export trade was confined primarily to sisal, with a decline in commercial crops like coffee, cotton, and tobacco. In 1921 it was reported that the rubber plantations, from which Germany had profited greatly, were completely unproductive and needed to be cleared of their "useless rubber trees."² Peasant crops, primarily sorghum and cotton, were doing well. The decline in plantation crops meant a decrease in the buying power of a significant number of farm laborers engaged in plantation production. As a result, Indians who under German administration had come to rely on the plantation economy for the sale of imports, found a diminishing market.

At the same time the world depression of the early 1920s affected Indian merchants whose trading activities included the buying of African produce like cotton, coffee, and groundnuts. The beginning of the year 1920 had been one of

hopes for a postwar boom. Trade was brisk. Prices of local produce had soared. And so, traders, relying heavily on credit, bought large stocks of these goods at high prices in the hope of a demand in the overseas market. The producers in turn received good prices for their produce and had cash to buy imported goods. Large quantities of imported goods flowed through customs and there was a thriving business in the bazaars. The demand for raw materials in foreign markets had been, however, badly miscalculated. In August-September of 1920 there was a total collapse due to the fall in demand from overseas markets. Merchants found themselves with large amounts of local produce for which there was no demand. They had no cash and large sums were due to their coastal creditors. Thus, many firms were forced to declare bankruptcy since they were all dependent on a network which had been upset--the small traders depending on the large firms to provide credit and the large firms depending on the traders' cash realized from the sale of goods.³

In spite of the League of Nations mandate, further, the Indian community was experiencing economic difficulties in working through a political system in which they were not represented. Typical of this early period was the argument over profits to be realized by Indians on goods bought by the British military. On the surface, the problem seemed to be more than a testy dispute between two parties trying to save a penny. The Indians argued that they should receive a 10

per cent net profit, as was British practice; British officials argued that Indians should receive a 12 per cent gross profit. The Indians countered with figures showing that a 12 per cent gross profit would yield them only 2 1/2 per cent net profit; the British countered with charges of Indian sly dealings. After a penciled note informing the Indian Association that their letter was being forwarded, the British closed the case with the terse comment that, "it has definitely been decided that no further concessions in regard to the questions raised by you can be given."⁴ Without regard to the merits of the economic issue, the disagreement highlights the confusion between economics and politics which continued to be of concern to the Indian community.

Banks were also a source of irritation for the Indians of Tanganyika. Before 1918, they had offered their monetary facilities to Indian businessmen and, in the beginning, had never hesitated to lend money on credit. By the end of 1918, however, well before the depression of the 20s, the banks had stopped giving credit and had even ceased offering loans though merchants had to continue making payments falling due. In addition, the banks had started to refuse "small coins," a measure of particular irritation to small traders. Although the British government did ask that the banks begin to receive small coins; and although the system of financing among coreligionists was adequate to support Indian business, economics continued to build political/economic tensions.⁵

There was also the problem of the settlement of war claims. In 1915-1916, Germany had forbidden anyone in German East Africa to possess cash in excess of what was needed for business and personal expenses. Those who had cash were to exchange it for 3 per cent notes which Germany was to repay after the war. Indian claims on these notes, along with claims for damaged property came to about Rs. 20,000,000 (\$10,000,000). After the war the Tanganyikan government had declared that it was not obliged to meet the claims, although proceeds from the sale of ex-enemy property could be used to pay debts due to British nationals in Tanganyika, presumably therefore to Indians who were British subjects. Germany also refused to honor the obligations.⁶

With the imposition of a Profits Tax, the Indian community erupted. Originally imposed by the German government (probably, as we noted, in the form of a license fee), the British ordinance imposed a tax of 4 per cent on the net profits of those engaged in trade. To protect the small trader, those with a profit margin of less than £150 (\$729.93) per annum were exempted. In order to make up for this decrease, however, the ordinance also imposed an annual licensing fee of £1 (\$4.87) for retail traders and £20 (\$97.40) for wholesale traders. In order to avoid evasion and to ensure correct assessment, the ordinance further required the traders to keep their accounts in a language assessors could be expected to know--English, Swahili, or French.⁷

The British government was familiar with the problem associated with the equitable assessment of a tax based on profit. It was also familiar with the fact that the tax addressed itself only to a certain segment of the population in Tanganyika, the traders, who were of course Indians. In 1925, the treasurer for the colony, admitting the validity of the objection against the language requirement, goes on to mention politely the objection against discriminatory taxation:

I consider that the language requirements of the ordinance constitute the only legitimate objection to the existing legislation from the traders' point of view. It must be admitted, however, that here is a certain anomaly in a percent tax on income which falls on one section of the community only⁸

But the treasurer went on to support the tax ultimately, as had the British government. On February 9, 1923, the introduction of the new ordinance was officially gazetted in the local newspaper.

A mass meeting of the Indian business community was held in Dar es Salaam. After discussion with various up-country centers, the Indians declared a hartal (general strike) suspending all business for 54 days, from April 1 to May 25, 1923. Upcountry traders were informed of developments by their respective Indian Associations through newsletters.⁹

The strike was the first organized resistance by the Indians against colonial government policy. An Ismaili, Akber Ratansi, was one of the organizers. An Isna' Ashari, Abdulla Khimji and a Bohra, A. Karimjee, were all instrumental in the organization. For the Ismailis, the unity was indeed an

unusual one, where Ismailis worked with someone of the seceder Isna'Ashari sect. Indians themselves were joined by Arabs and Goans.¹⁰

Upcountry traders took part in this territorially organized resistance after pressure from the coastal wholesalers. It was obvious that the present legislation affected the major wholesalers who had high profits and therefore high taxes. Since the small traders depended upon their major commercial houses for their credit and goods, it was thought they would have to comply with instructions received from the Central Committee in Dar es Salaam. Any trader who failed to comply with the orders of the Central Committee was to be boycotted by the rest of the traders.¹¹

The boycott by the Indian community was quite unsuccessful on the whole in its attempt to disrupt trade and exert pressure on the government. Many upcountry traders carried on "back door trading." Perhaps only in Dar es Salaam, where it was strictly enforced, was the strike felt.¹²

Even for the government's purpose, however, the ordinance never worked successfully. It was not a question only of language. Since many of the tax assessors were not familiar with the "commercial bookkeeping" used by the Indians, the latter could provide inaccurate accounts in English which would agree with the Gujarati accounts and there would be no way of checking it.¹³ Also, the retention of the ordinance meant the creation of bureaucratic machinery. The cost of

the machinery for collection of the tax was so great that the tax was not worth collecting. Thus, in 1927, this "unpopular and unworkable" tax was replaced by a Trade Licensing Ordinance. The revenue which would have been collected from a profit tax was now to be covered by an increased license fee.¹⁴

In spite of difficulties during this early period, Indians were strengthening their foothold in the Tanganyikan economy. Soon after mandatory German deportation after the war, the British began to dispose of German property. The first auction was held in Dar es Salaam in May 1921. A sum of £300,000 (\$1,459,854.01) was realized from the disposal of several township plots and several coffee and sisal estates. Indians bought actively. British settlers in Africa, having been drawn off by what they considered better opportunities in British-owned Kenya, provided little competition. Because of a scarcity of cash from the world depression, and because of the uncertainty of Tanganyika's political future, prices were low. Although we have no documented information to indicate how it was that Indians as one of the primary victims of the depression of early 1920's had cash, we can guess that coreligionists financed individual endeavors. Perhaps, as in the German period, even to the extent of financing those who had declared bankruptcy. At any rate, by 1924 it was stated by official government sources that in Dar es Salaam Indians owned all but two of the retail businesses and had complete control of retail trade in the interior.¹⁵ The Ismaili

community, now centered in Dar es Salaam, was reputed to be the controlling Indian group in the increasing Indian activity there.¹⁶

As a result of the sale of ex-enemy property, Indians also became involved in the plantation economy. By 1924, British government sources listed Indians as owning more than 266,000 acres of land in Tanganyika and noted that they owned 30 per cent of the capital invested in agriculture.¹⁷ Many Ismailis who were well-established in business and had enough capital bought large numbers of plots and a few invested in sisal, coffee, and cotton estates in Tanga, Kilimanjaro and Morogoro-Kilosa districts. By 1929, when most of the land had been sold, Indian ownership had declined to 166,000 acres but whether this decline can be attributed to British policy, Indian mismanagement, world market conditions, or a combination of these factors is not yet clear.¹⁸

During this period the British government entertained a further idea for the development of Tanganyikan agriculture. The British in Kenya had proposed that Indians there be brought into the League-mandated territory where they might be encouraged to farm small holdings.¹⁹ Sir Benjamin Robertson was dispatched to make a report which, as might be expected, found the plan totally undesirable. At this time Indian immigration was increasing in Tanganyika where the government was not allowed to restrict movement of nationals. No doubt an increase of Indians from Kenya in the face of rising

immigration was more than British officials could take. At any rate, outside of pressure from Kenya there seemed to be little support for the project.

The British point of view was represented in the fears that such a program would bring unjustifiable expenses in creating an environment for Indian success. It was argued that the tsetse fly and malaria infested many of the areas. Other areas, though rich in soil, were under water much of the year. Indians would need training in agricultural methods. They would not have the capital needed to hire farm labor. Additionally, the British agreed with the Indian contention that such policy was against their long-range interests.²⁰

The Indian argument was based on the fear that such a policy would lead to "race segregation." By isolating an area of Tanganyika for Indians alone, they noted, the British were--even though the scheme looked favorable--setting a precedent for government location of groups of people, a precedent that might contradict the mandate provision that all nationals were to be treated equally. As K. K. Chanda replied:

We feel that by claiming "special" treatment in a particular place we shall forfeit our claim for "equal" treatment everywhere By asking for special treatment in German East Africa we shall be violating the fundamental principle that we have all along been fighting for, namely, that there shall be no differentiation in the treatment meted out to various sections of His Majesty's subjects.²¹

One might also note the Indian point that there seemed to be interest only in large landholdings, not the small ones the British government proposed.²²

With an increase in migration, renewed activity in the retail business and some expansion into agriculture, the Ismaili community was confident as the 20s edged toward the 30s. The success of the late 1920s and the bright prospects at the beginning of the 30s had encouraged them to engage in considerably larger transactions than before with the hope of an increased demand for goods. It was possible during times of prosperity to obtain ready cash and long-term credit from relatives or coreligionists in major commercial houses on the coast. Such advantages were not, however, long to continue. The major commercial houses reached a point at which they were no longer able to advance credit, thus making it difficult, if not impossible, for the small traders to meet their obligations.

Factors which contributed to the declining trade situation were numerous and incredibly complex. Perhaps the most devastating circumstance was the world depression of 1930. It happened at a time when local economic conditions looked promising. The volume of cash crops for export was higher than in the previous year, and traders were enthusiastic. But Tanzania's economy was based on the export of cash crops such as coffee, cotton, sisal, and groundnuts, the prices of which were determined by the world market. When world

market prices fell, Tanzania's economy followed suit. The export of coffee, for example, increased by 30 per cent but its market value was 33 per cent lower than in 1929. The peasant producers, finding it unprofitable to carry more produce to market than was necessary to satisfy their immediate requirements for hut and poll tax, kept as much produce off the market as was economically feasible. Furthermore, because of low prices, the purchasing power of the African population was affected. Consequently, traders found themselves with a large stock of imports for which there was no demand. Holding back exports, and oversupplied with imports, the Indian trader was left by the depression in a precarious position.²³

But the depression was not the only unfavorable circumstance in 1930. Heavy rainfall had made it difficult to move goods between upcountry and Dar es Salaam along the Central line. The roads also remained unfit for motor traffic for some months after the rains had ended. As a result, upcountry merchants found it impossible to meet their obligations with major commercial houses on the coast unless they borrowed money from money lenders with high interest rates. At this time banks were cautious in advancing any loans at all. Because of the shortage of cash, moreover, local people were not in a position to buy retailers' goods, and retailers were unable to dispose of existing goods in sufficient quantities to enable them to buy new goods. Almost all traders, therefore, were so handicapped by debts and outstanding

accounts that credit was difficult to obtain. Meanwhile, immigration had not stopped but had increased bringing a disproportionate number of retailers into a country where the aggregate amount of trade was insufficient for the existing number.²⁴

As a result of complex circumstances, then, trade became increasingly speculative and, at times, viciously competitive. Many traders lost heavily, if they were able to continue in business at all. A world depression, excessive rainfall, and a breakdown in the system of credit, combined to create a disaster. As one observer of the 30s put it, the usual energy of the marketplace had given way to a sense of desolation:

At the end of last month I happened to be at Tabora which is a very large centre of native trade and the commercial link of nearly half the territories. I was shocked to find for this time of the year when the bazaars should have been crowded with seething mobs of natives buying selling quarreling yelling and drinking that utter desolation prevails in the entire town. There are no lorries tearing along crowded streets loaded with produce and in the bank instead of merchants jostling with each other trying to draw bags of shillings for buying the groundnuts and hides there were people with stacks of money to be sent to Dar es Salaam.²⁵

The observer further noted that after careful inquiries in the bazaar, he discovered that out of 100 cloth shops in Tabora, the average daily business amounted to a pitiful 10/-shs. (\$2.43).²⁶

Ismailis also lost heavily in the sisal industry. Although there was an increase in production from 46 to 50 tons between 1929 and 1930, the market price declined, bringing

only £1,172,000 (\$5,703,163.02) in 1930, compared to £1,486,000 (\$6,982,968.37) in 1929.²⁷ Then came the failure of the cotton crop. Several large commercial houses collapsed. Ismaili merchants lost large investments. Planters and buyers like Bandali Merali, Fazal Kassam, and Bandali Lalji of Morogoro incurred heavy losses. To be sure, there is no evidence that individual Ismaili traders went bankrupt because of their investment in cotton, perhaps because they had diversified their investments in the commercial sector. Bandali Merali, for example, had a well-established retail and wholesale business in piecegoods, cigarettes, matches and sundries which catered to both the local and European community; he was also engaged in the transport business, acting as agent for the ginnery of Mathuradas Kanji. He owned three cotton stores through which he supplied the ginnery, and he had investments in several cotton shambas. The cotton crop failure did not therefore destroy a man like Bandali Merali. Nevertheless, such a failure did bring heavy losses and introduced a severe limitation in what had been expected to be an expanding market.²⁸

Nor were the new regulations concerning the marketing of crops helpful to Indian traders. In 1930 the nonavailability of cash had led traders to barter goods for produce. Producers had become dissatisfied since their primary incentive to production had been removed. Forced through lack of other outlets to exchange their produce for trade goods of limited variety, they found their purchasing power and

their capacity to pay taxes seriously circumscribed. Moreover, those who did not desire cloth, the primary item of barter, frequently kept their produce at home. Even where cash was available, producers felt squeezed to such an extent that they found it necessary to move from duka to duka, getting their produce weighed again and again, bargaining and arguing about its price, and finally disposing of it to the one who offered the greatest amount of cash. Given the existing market system, the peasant was not getting a fair price.²⁹ One can clearly see a conflict of interest between producers, anxious to remove Indian middlemen making large profits at their expense, and the middlemen, equally anxious to retain their hold on the distributive trade network which they had developed to their advantage.

On the surface the government program seemed to address itself to solving problems within the entire system of trade. It inaugurated a "plant more crops" campaign which was to enable African producers to pay their taxes and, incidentally, to increase the country's revenue. Then in 1932 it introduced a new marketing system. The primary objectives of the new system were to ensure that the producer obtained a fair market price, that he did not have to depend on individual bargaining for this price, and that he should obtain cash for his produce. In order to ensure these objectives, the markets were to be situated within reasonable reach of the producers as collecting and forwarding centers. The

markets which were started in the Lake, Eastern, and Central regions, were later to be introduced into other parts of the country.³⁰

Under the new system, the sale of commodities like groundnuts, rice, hides and beeswax, was to be restricted to special produce markets set up by the Native Authority. An African market master, employed by the Native Authority, was to be in charge of each market. A clerk, also employed by the Native Authority, was to weigh all produce entering the market and record on a card the weight together with the price that could be expected. Buyers were to rent buying posts in each market at the rate of 10/-shs (\$2.43) per month, the number of stalls being limited to exclude unnecessary middlemen.³¹ From government records, it is evident that the new marketing laws affected not only Ismailis but the total Indian community.

Exactly how much this plan affected the African producer is open to question. On the one hand, the producer was ensured that he would be paid in cash for produce which had been judged according to a consistent set of standards. On the other, the limitation on the number of middlemen in a controlled market could be seen as reducing competition among buyers--a situation that might have led to lower prices than would be found in a more competitive marketing system with more middlemen.

What is more certain is that the Indian community saw the system as detrimental to their interests. Because of their marginal influence as a group, they were hardly in a position to control the larger economic system or to bargain with the government. Previously, Indians had been in control of both local buying and retail distribution of imported goods, a dual trade which had proven quite profitable. The new system took control from the Indian and gave it to the Native Authority, thereby interfering in this doubly profitable trade. Given the market squeeze, the only way traders survived was by using false weights.

The Indians saw the new laws as favoring the big merchants rather than individual traders, with the merchants profiting at the small traders' expense. Since the small merchants did not have the resources to buy stalls to compete with the big exporters, exporters could effectively shut out small or new traders by appointing several agents in each market. Such a system also meant that the trader would have to leave his shop for a day to go to market and this constituted distinct disadvantage to those who had prospered by being able to keep their businesses small and to survive without hiring outside help.³²

The compulsory marketing laws were also looked upon as a stepping stone to cooperative societies, which would eventually altogether eliminate individuals in the produce-buying business. In the 1940s new regulations were introduced

which further affected the Ismaili traders. Because of war-time shortages, the government had set up an Economic Control Board through which it took over and completely changed the allocation and control of commodities. Instead of leaving bulk buying and distribution to individual traders and their brokers, the government encouraged the formation of groups or associations that were to "preserve normal trade channels."³³ In response, various Indian associations, whose membership was open to all Indians alike, sprang up--associations like the Kilosa Produce Trading Association, the Morogoro Traders' Association, the Retail Traders' Association, Dar es Salaam, the Retail Merchants' Association, Tanga, the Piecegoods Wholesalers' Association, Dar es Salaam. There were also corporations formed on a communal basis; for example, the Morogoro Traders' Corporation, the Dar es Salaam Textile Corporation, and the Mwanza Commercial Corporation. Ismaili traders who were members of these corporations were also members of general Indian associations.³⁴

Membership in these associations was restricted to bona fide dealers in a particular trade item, say, piecegoods. Since trade quotas were established on the basis of "past performance," new traders who wanted to begin in the trade of a particular item could do so only by joining one of the local groups. This system of distributional control through groups and associations resulted therefore in a "closed ring" of trade whereby channels of distribution became crystallized.³⁵

It was most often, therefore, the exporters and wholesalers who benefited from the new methods of allocation. They had the financial resources at their disposal, and they knew the top officials of the Economic Control Board who could stretch things enough to give them high quotas. Overall, the system favored the big capitalists, concentrating wealth in the hands of the already rich, widening the gap between the rich and the poor, and offering the poor little opportunity to become involved in trade. The small traders, further, became dependent upon the wholesalers who acted as distributors for the retailers. The situation readily lent itself to high profits for large merchants though it failed to provide a sound economic base for the small Ismaili trader.³⁶

Other abuses occurred in the government's failure to adhere to the policy of the "group system." Complaints were launched, for example, by an Indian group--the Morogoro Traders' Association--because their produce rights were taken away and given to the British Tanganyika Cotton Company, which had no prior right on the basis of "past performance." After much protest, the Morogoro Association was allowed to operate as in the past, with the modification that all produce purchased by the association was to be delivered to the Tanganyika Cotton Company, which would act as the storage agent on behalf of the Economic Control Board. Similar dissatisfaction prevailed among members of the Indian community in Lindi where produce buying and export rights were taken away

from the wholesalers and exporters and given to Smith Mac-kenzie and Company as representatives of the Economic Control Board.³⁷

However, in spite of the increasingly depressing picture that trade presented, there were some individuals whose businesses did not fail. Ismailis who had accumulated enough wealth in the 1920s and early 1930s to diversify their investments found that they could, at times, succeed. The diversification was primarily into small scale industry catering to local needs.³⁸

Capital accumulated through profit-making ventures and investments, as well as successful diversification of capital, worked, however, towards the economic advancement of only a very few. In spite of the world depression and the disruption of the trading pattern created as a result of World War II, some Ismaili traders were, then, able to survive and take advantage of the changes. A few "new" families were also able to attain economic power as witnessed in the successes of Habib Punja, Jivraj Chachra, Bhatia Bros., Kassum Sunderji Samji, and Hussein Nasser Shariff, to mention just a few. But the changes also meant significant failures for other large businesses. Some of those so affected include Jaffer Haji and Co., Kanji Nanji, and Alarakhia Kheraj. Nor did agriculture provide a route to Ismaili success, primarily because the majority of Ismailis in Tanzania had so little interest in it. To be sure, a few in the Morogoro district

took to farming as a part-time venture. Sisal estates were owned by men like Rajabali Meghji Visram, V. M. Nazerali, and Fazal Kassam. Bandali Merali, Fazal Kassam, and Bandali Lalji became cotton planters. But, as noted before, these were not prosperous times for cotton planters and sisal growers. Full-time farmers like Yusufali M. Alidina and A. B. Ladhani were too few in number to be considered part of a general economic upsurge; and, in fact, it was not until the 1950s that Ismailis showed any widespread interest in farming. Thus, with the exception of a few individual successes, the economic opportunities in Ismaili society had become so limited that something had to be done.

As has been true of Ismaili history in general, so was it true in this case, that the needs of the people were served by an enlightened Aga Khan who provided both practical and spiritual guidance, as well as the capital, necessary for the community's advancement. For it was he who set up the Jubilee Insurance Company and the Diamond Jubilee Investment Trust Company,³⁹ organizations which provided the means for financing business ventures that otherwise would not have been possible. Thus were instituted communal organizations whereby the benefits of economic growth and advancement were to be made uniform and were to be extended throughout the greater part of Ismaili society.

After the Golden Jubilee Celebration of 1937, the Aga Khan called a meeting of Ismaili leaders to work out a program

for the betterment of the community. It was decided to set up an insurance company which would make available large sums of money for use in business expansion. Since the purpose of the company was to accelerate economic growth of all members of the community and to satisfy the immediate needs of a greater number of Ismaili individuals than had been satisfied before, the company was to be nonprofit-making. Risks were to be insured through major international companies. The result was the Jubilee Insurance Company, incorporated in Kenya with an authorized capital of £25,000 (\$102,880.66).⁴⁰

Public in nature, the Jubilee Insurance Company provided a spur to Ismaili economy and assured its continuance through the extension of loans both to Ismaili and non-Ismaili citizens of Tanzania. Terms were such that anyone applying for a loan could obtain it after providing two guarantors, who would assure repayment. Interest rates were reasonable, set at the normal rate of 6 per cent, and to be charged to Ismaili and non-Ismaili alike. Contrary to the belief of many, the company's loan capital did not come from funds raised through contributions specifically for the Golden Jubilee--an important point because the gold bars coming from the Jubilee celebration were used to stand behind funds put to other social uses. The Jubilee Insurance Company was self-sustaining: it was set up as a share-holding company, and it offered shares for public sale, each valued at 20/-shs (\$4.11) with 5/-shs (\$1.03) required as initial payment, and

the remainder to be paid in future installments.⁴¹ The funds deriving from the Jubilee celebration were used to set up the "Gold Grant Committee" with the Aga Khan acting as a "clearing agent." The Aga Khan returned these funds given to him as gifts and, under the newly established committee, channeled them back into areas other than business. Part of this money was offered to help those Ismailis who wanted to migrate to southern Tanzania, Zaire, and Rwanda-Burundi. Many of them took advantage of the offer, especially the substantial number who migrated to southern Tanzania and settled in Mtwara. And part of the money, as we shall see later, was offered to students who wanted to continue their education.⁴² Thus, although it is true that gold bars unconditionally presented to the Aga Khan were used by him for the economic and social welfare of the community, they were not used to finance the insurance company.⁴³

The expressed goal of the Jubilee Insurance Company was the dispersal of capital to create a broader economic base. The proposed method was that of offering long-term loans, which would enable middle- and lower-income groups in the community to begin or expand individual business enterprises.

Insofar as the lower-income families benefited from the loans of the company, it would seem that its goals of social mobility were reached. However, although it is certain that lower-income families were helped by these loans, it is

not so clear that more social mobility was achieved. Though there is no statistical evidence to back up such a theory, personal observation and extensive discussion with individual Ismaili families lead me to the conclusion that, while the status of the poor rose somewhat, that of the rich rose even higher. That is, the leaders of the community not only benefited in furthering their economic power proportionately more than the poor, but they also retained their hold on administrative power. This resulted because the leaders were able not only to provide better security for loans, but also were either the directors of the company or had better connections with those who were. Instead of leveling the economic differences in Ismaili society, then, it is most probable that the company and its activities broadened an already undesirable economic gap.⁴⁴

Then in 1937-38, the Tanganyika Ismailia Co-operative Society was formed in order to help small traders throughout the country. Non-Ismailis were not allowed to participate, and only Ismailis could be shareholders. But for the Ismaili community, the company provided opportunities that would have otherwise been unavailable, especially since interest was, once again, reasonable. One family, for example, was able to expand a small duka in the Kariakoo section of Dar es Salaam because of financing received through the Co-operative Society. Paying interest at the rate of 7 per cent per annum, Lalji Fazal borrowed from the society 50 per cent of the money

needed to finance expansion which, according to his son, would have otherwise been difficult--an indication of the service this organization performed. Nor were the Fazal family's loans always taken out for business purposes: later they also borrowed money from the Diamond Jubilee Investment Trust Company in order to build their apartment.⁴⁵

A second effort to aid the Ismaili economy was the founding of the Diamond Jubilee Investment Trust Company, Ltd. Like the Jubilee Insurance Company, this company was the product of a Jubilee celebration, marking sixty years of the Imamat of the late Aga Khan. Set up in 1946, the Diamond Jubilee marked the beginning of the Investment Trust Company, though once again its funds were to be derived from sources other than the Jubilee. In this case, however, the source of operating capital was expanded. As with the Jubilee Insurance Company, shares were offered for sale, here valued at £1.00 (\$4.49); and the company ultimately had 8,000 shareholders with a paid up capital of £1,000,000 (\$4,435,000). The money thus made available was to be turned back into community development so that Ismailis throughout East African communities might be assisted in the construction of necessary commercial buildings, as well as of places of residence. Lending money at a low rate of interest, the company also granted first mortgages and became so successful under the leadership of K. R. Paroo that it soon expanded and offered even more opportunities for Ismaili businessmen.⁴⁶

The result was the formation, between the years 1946-1948, of several corporations as subsidiaries of the Diamond Jubilee Investment Trust. These corporations were limited to fifty members so that they might be kept private. They were formed throughout the country as cooperative commercial houses to provide the means for buying in bulk in order to give retail traders the benefits of discounts. They also lent money to shareholders so that they might start other corporations.

Because of the number of corporations that sprang up--among them the Diamond Stationery and Printing Corporation, the Africa Import and Export Central Corporation, the Dar es Salaam Retail Corporation, the Usaramo Traders Corporation, the Dar es Salaam Textile Corporation--it seemed as if Isamili trade might be able to recapture the prominent position it held before 1930. However, most of these corporations proved ineffective. The Diamond Stationery and Printing Corporation and the Africa Import and Export Central Corporation had to be closed after sustaining severe losses. The other three, though still functioning, are almost defunct. Nor were the corporations later started in the interior any more successful. Though located in major centers like Dodoma, Mwanza, Mbeya, Morogoro, and Tanga, they proved incapable of effectively helping the community.

In spite of a few individual successes after 1930, it must be concluded that business opportunities for the Ismaili traders had become limited. The first pioneering migrants

were well-established by the 30s, but newer migrants found it difficult to set up businesses with the small amount of money they were able to save as apprentices. The credit situation was unfavorable at the time: the "invisible" line of credit had disappeared; banks were foreign-owned and their interest rates were high; loans were extended only on a short-term basis when business expansion demanded long-term financing. Competition between too many retailers, along with excessive mark-ups by established wholesalers, led to such unfavorable conditions that it became virtually impossible to borrow money and still make enough profit to pay back loans. With the world depression of the 30s and the new government regulations regarding marketing, the position of the Ismaili trader was made even more hazardous.

At this point one is tempted to consider from another point of view the nature of the economic forces that worked to break down the Ismaili trading system. Along with the effects of world depression, and the self-defeating mechanism of those who raised prices to gain profits that made it difficult for retailers to perform their function, one must consider the tactics of the local government. It introduced a marketing system of distinct disadvantage to the very population which had so successfully worked to open the African continent to trade. Certainly one would not criticize its efforts to see that the local producers received fair payment for their goods, whether by insisting that they be paid in

cash or by making sure that false weights were not used.

Beyond that, however, one must ask what actually was effected by taking the control of trade away from the Indian population and putting it in the hands of the government. From the nature of Indian complaints, one can rather safely assume that the effect--whether or not intentional, conspiratorial, accidental--was to squeeze out the small Indian trader.

Though more research is needed to establish the cultural ties and interests of, and the economic rewards given to, those who became successful members of the new government system, one cannot otherwise understand Indian complaints against the "crystallization of trade channels." Nor can one understand how Indians have been closed off from markets, since they could have joined a trade association appropriate to their interests or could have been appointed agents in the new markets, unless there were forces acting against Ismaili entrance. Further, that Indian complaints were received concerning the trade quotas assigned to various associations, and that these complaints were resolved, if at all, by giving non-Indian associations some benefit that they would not otherwise have had, suggests that the Economic Control Board was not favorably disposed to Indian trade. Finally, of course, one is led to question the government's restriction in the 1940s on Indian immigration. Though most Ismaili immigration had ceased by this time, and though one can hardly understand how, as the government argued, a restriction on Indian

immigration would help in meeting World War II emergency conditions, the government nevertheless continued its policy in spite of Indian complaints.⁴⁷

Without minimizing one set of economic circumstances, one is led to consider, then, another set of economic circumstances--those which create tensions not so much by enhancing the power of the rich to the exclusion of the poor, but which resolve conflicts of interest by redirecting business so that profits are taken from one group of people and directed toward another, who do not constitute a majority of the population but who control the means of distribution. The situation worsens when this controlling minority holds different cultural, ethnic, religious and economic interests from those of the displaced group, as was the case in Tanzania in the 1940s.

But, whatever the nature of external conditions, and whatever the combination of economic circumstances, the "nation of shopkeepers," as the Aga Khan had once proudly said in reference to his people in East Africa, was no longer an expanding nation. With such a reversal of fortune, it is not surprising that Ismaili society began to look to its own structures and governmental institutions for relief or help. Moreover, since the Ismaili population had grown considerably since the Constitution of 1925, it seemed necessary to clarify services to be performed by the government as well as to establish bodies to oversee the performance of these services.

As a result, the Constitution of 1925 was revised in 1937 and again in 1946.

Before 1937 every councillor had been responsible for all areas outlined by the constitution as part of the social contract, a situation which had become intolerable. In order to delimit duties and responsibilities more precisely, the Constitution of 1937 set up several distinct organizations with separate duties. The Executive Council was given ultimate responsibility for religious affairs with the charge to inspect the charitable donations made to the Aga Khan. It was also to watch over the various affairs of the local congregations in local communities and to coordinate their activities through reports sent to them from the communities.⁴⁸

Administration of local affairs was given to the Provincial Councils. Above the Provincial Councils was the Supreme Council, which was to supervise and inspect the affairs of the Provincial Councils as "H.H. the Aga Khan's Ismailia Supreme Council for Africa."⁴⁹ It was to keep in touch with local affairs by deputizing one or more of its members to inspect, once or twice a year, the work of the Provincial Councils. In addition, the Supreme Council was to direct its attention to the Ismaili community at large; and, though it was to allow for purely local interests, it was the body ultimately responsible for "all work concerning the welfare of the community," taking "all necessary measures to protect [the community's] interests in general throughout

Africa."⁵⁰ The Supreme Council was a major instrument of centralization in Ismaili society. This power seems to have been increased by the Constitution of 1946, which gave the Supreme Council the responsibility of appointing the local Mukhis and Kamadias, a duty which probably resided formerly in the local Provincial Councils. In addition, the Supreme Council was to decide on petitions or appeals made by those who were not satisfied with judgments reached by the Provincial Councils. As the only body empowered to excommunicate by a two-thirds majority of its members, the Supreme Council was then a court of appeal from the Provincial Councils.⁵¹

According to the Constitution of 1937, the Supreme Council was to be composed of the members of the Executive Council acting ex-officio; two members each from Zanzibar, Mombasa, Nairobi, Kisumu, and Dar es Salaam; one member each from Tangá, Mwanza, Moshi, Mbale, Pretoria, and Madagascar; and any other persons whom His Highness the Aga Khan nominated.⁵² Under the extension of membership in 1946, three members were to serve on the Supreme Council from Dar es Salaam, and two members each were to come from Tanga, Mwanza, Mbale, Pretoria, Usumbura, Tananarive, Lourenco Marques, Dodoma, Masaka, Majunga, Mozambique, and any other town which had a Provincial Council. In the constitutional revision of 1946 there was also a stipulation that there should be at least three women on the Supreme Council.⁵³ In this way

the constitution reflected not only a growth in population but also a growing awareness of the need to meet specific duties regarding the role of women in society.

As opposed to those of the Supreme Council, the duties and functions of the Provincial Councils were not clearly defined until 1946. Like the Supreme Council, the Provincial Councils were responsible, in a general way, for safeguarding the welfare of the community. They were entrusted with the duty of protecting and safeguarding "the interest of Mowlana Hazar Imam, His Highness the Aga Khan, the Ismailia [sic] religion and the Ismailia [sic] followers of Mowlana Hazar Imam His Highness the Aga Khan within its jurisdiction."⁵⁴ Like the Supreme Council, the Provincial Councils were also responsible for inspecting the charitable donations offered to the Aga Khan as well as for looking after the affairs of the local congregations. One or two Provincial Council members were to be appointed for those purposes. Then they were to make a report of this inspection to their own council. The report was then to be sent to the higher authority, the Supreme Council, to be forwarded to the Aga Khan.⁵⁵

The Provincial Council was also entrusted with the judicial affairs of the local community. It heard and decided all disputes and differences relating to social affairs concerning matters "arising out of betrothals, marriages, mohors, divorce, dej [dowry], and other gifts, maintenance [support

for a divorced wife and children], guardianship [and] ex-communication "56. Anyone wishing to bring a case before the Provincial Council could do so by presenting a written petition or plaint together with an admission fee of 2/-shs (\$.44). In the case of a divorce suit, for example, a couple living in Dar es Salaam would apply to the Dar es Salaam Provincial Council. Divorce would be granted only when circumstances made it unavoidable or when it was considered desirable.

The revised constitutions also stipulated procedures governing the selection and service of council members. We have already noted, with regard to the Constitution of 1905, those psychological factors which created an atmosphere in which one would want to serve well: the desire to perform well so that one might continue in a position of prestige; the power gained by transmitting the ideas and policies of the Aga Khan, and the hope of religious rewards gained from serving one's religious leader. In later revisions, certain external checks were added to those internal to the culture. Possible rigidities resulting from one person continuing too long in power were prevented by the constitutional limits set on the length of service. "No member," the Constitution of 1946 had stipulated, "shall remain in office for more than eight years consecutively without the special permission of Mowlana Hazar Imam."57 As a result, the constitution had at least prepared the way for a "continuous restructuring of the distribution of power, wealth and prestige and the rearrangement of different social groups and roles within the

constitutional framework."⁵⁸

As in the Constitution of 1905, new constitutional revisions continued to vest final authority in the person of the Aga Khan, who was to take responsibility for the correct functioning of the system of checks and balances. Although Provincial Councillors were empowered to make local resolutions, and the higher councils to make more general resolutions, the central figure around whom the whole community revolved and in whose hands lay absolute power was the Aga Khan; first, because he could bypass those nominated for the various councils and appoint those he felt were better able to handle the affairs of his people; second, because he retained "the absolute right in his own discretion to make any changes or alterations in the rules of the Constitution";⁵⁹ and third, because legal sanction had been given by African courts to the Aga Khan's culturally institutionalized role as absolute ruler in the Ismaili community. In speaking of a Ugandan court decision upholding this right, for example, Vice President Briggs noted that "the spiritual authority of the H.H. Aga Khan over his followers is such that it would be competent to him to alter even fundamental tenets of normal Shia law and religion."⁶⁰

This is not to say, of course, that the Ismaili system functioned perfectly in this period. If we ask, for example, about the nature of representation, we discover that it continues to rest in the hands of the wealthy. Although

limits have been set on length of service, restructuring and rearrangement of different social groups and their roles has not, in fact, been achieved. No doubt this is due to the system of nomination where candidates not only go to great lengths to get their names put into nomination but also get nominated because they are part of a group which shares values, goals, and ideals, and perhaps because of a certain class prestige. The list of office bearers from 1930 to 1946 shows that almost all were from the upper-income group and that many were in the prestigious export/import or wholesale business.⁶¹ Prestigious business ties were also reinforced by kinship ties, for many office holders were related to others through blood or marriage. And though it is true that new members came to power in the general trade upheaval of the 1930s, they did not represent segments of society which had not been present before. Of the eight new office holders for eleven offices, five were in general retail trade, one was in the wholesale business, one was in ivory trade, and one was a broker. Although one might argue that the high number of less prestigious retail traders represented a change in the kind of representation, one can not escape the fact that business success is still closely aligned with success in attaining office. This being the case, we might question how broadly local interests could be served by a group of office holders who share a particular interest in the business of trade, in the wealth which it brings, and who might be expected to support the majority of which they are members.

Of course, if it seems to the Aga Khan that local interests as well as the interests of the entire Ismaili community are not being served broadly enough, it is within his power to interfere and appoint over those who have been nominated someone who he feels can better represent the interests of the community. Thus, there is at least the possibility of checking a failure to represent Ismaili interests on a broad enough base. Whether or not this check has been used is unknown: we do not know if or how many times the Aga Khan has intervened in the nominating procedure. We do know from the lists of office holders that he has not intervened to break up a business orientation which the office holders represent or to destroy business groups reinforced by kinship ties. Nevertheless, the fact remains that the Aga Khan, should he see that office holders are not acting in the name of the total Ismaili community, can intervene to make the system a more precise instrument of communal good.⁶²

Moreover, although there has been dissatisfaction, there have not been protests against the system as a whole. In an unusual case of protest in 1939, some community feeling arose against particular office holders who, it was felt, had manipulated power to their personal advantage in spite of the constitutionally framed rules and regulations. The protesters expressed their views in a paper called the "Ismailia Union Bulletin." They gained some community sympathy, but failed to attract members. Further, having failed to find

redress through communal institutions, the protesting group took their case to the Chief Secretary of the government of Tanganyika who, however, refused to "take sides in the internal disputes among the Khoja community."⁶³

This case is interesting for several reasons. First, the protesters did not criticize the system as such; they were protesting against particular "power holders" and sought an end not to Ismaili institutions but to the abuses which they believed had been perpetrated. Second, the protesters were primarily from the upper-income group and had themselves served the community by holding office or by giving donations. Thus, although they represented a dissident faction, they did not represent new interests. Third, except for the earlier nineteenth-century protest, in which a group of Ismailis left the community, this protest was--and remains--the only one in which there was an attempt to arouse a large segment of the community in order to bring about change. The community's failure to respond underlines the Ismaili assumption that those who govern now govern best--one should not interfere. But, fourth, and perhaps most important, the protesters sought to resolve the problems of the Ismaili community by going to an outside authority. Although serious protest has never been much a part of Ismaili life, it is significant that as centralization increased within the community, extra-community institutions began to be used. In the protest of 1939, we noted that an appeal was made to the Chief Secretary

of the government of Tanganyika. However, such action has occurred not only in cases of factional politics; individuals have also challenged Ismaili rulings by going outside their society.

Typical in this regard is a divorce case of 1952. The couple involved was married on August 12, 1943. On July 9, 1951, the plaintiff gave birth to a daughter; and the defendant failed to bring the plaintiff and the child home from the hospital in spite of the plaintiff's repeated requests. The defendant said that he would not take his wife back because she could not "get along" with his mother and had threatened his mother with violence. In 1952 the matter was brought before the Provincial Council, with the woman claiming (among other things) a sum of 200/-shs (\$36.66) per month for maintenance of herself and her child. The council awarded the woman a monthly sum of 150/-shs (\$26.44) from June, 1952, to 28 February 1953, and for each month thereafter until the husband restored his wife's conjugal rights. The defendant claimed that the decision of the council was given ex parte; relying on local legal codes, he argued that the decision was against natural justice and therefore should not be binding on him.⁶⁴

The case was taken to the High Court of Tanganyika where a decision against the defendant was handed down. In concurring with the High Court's decision, the judge said:

I agree; therefore, with the conclusion reached by my learned Brother that from the inception of British rule in Tanganyika, it has been recognised quite apart from statute that the marriage and divorce of persons belonging to a recognised religious community were matters proper to be governed by religious and personal law of the community concerned subject only to the proviso that the customs of any such community were not repugnant of good order and natural justice.⁶⁵

The judge further concluded the case with the statement:

I would confirm the decision of the Ismailia Provincial Council which is a lawful order and which I consider to be just except that the amount of maintenance allowed appears to me inadequate. I would also, unless shown very good reasons, to the contrary, adopt it as a decision of the court.⁶⁶

Such dissent has produced effects opposite to those intended. For, in refusing to reverse the decision of an Ismaili council, the local courts sanction not only a particular decision but also the power of an Ismaili institution to make such decisions. In the above divorce case, for example, we conclude that the local courts have legally upheld and therefore given legal sanction to the Provincial Council's right to hear and determine matters concerning marriage and divorce; they have also given legal sanction to the Ismaili constitution to govern its people. And though it is possible for the local courts to contravene a council decision if it seems destructive of natural justice and order, it has so far been the case that local courts have only infrequently relied on this provision in order to give legal sanction to a dissenting group or individual.

Similarly, in the protest of 1939, the Tanganyikan government's refusal to become involved in the internal

affairs of the Ismaili people strengthened the Ismaili constitution and the institutions it established. Although the government rendered no decision except that of making no decision, and in so doing did not give legal sanction to the instruments of Ismaili government, it did throw the Ismailis back upon their own institutions as a means of redress. Thus the power of these institutions to govern the life of the community was strengthened as it would not have been had the courts intervened.

From this point of view, it might be said that the Ismaili system of government is not a precise instrument. Abuses can enter it even before the appointment of an office holder, during the scramble for nomination. Interests can become consolidated as ingroup office holders rally around each other instead of the community. Attempts at redress through the local court system merely reinforce Ismaili institutions. At this point we have come full circle to the scramble for nomination and the group selection process which can exclude the total community interest. However, we must not forget that this total process, if it becomes destructive of Ismaili good, can be stopped by the intervention of the Aga Khan, who has absolute power. And this power, having also been given legal sanction by the local courts, stands as the means whereby the processes of Ismaili government can be re-adjusted to serve more precisely the interests of the Ismaili community.

Education, health, and welfare programs were extended to meet the needs of the community. Under the direction of the Aga Khan, and through the growing interest of the Ismailis, the initial programs in education expanded into a more complex system than had been envisioned in the Constitution of 1905. With the increase of population in the interior came the need for more schools. New facilities had to be provided, and so the system grew larger as it moved into places like Tanga, Moshi, Tabora, Dodoma, Kigoma, and Mwanza. In turn, expansion seemed to call for changes in supervision. As the system grew, some local administration was reinstated, though not without the central coordination which had been initiated by the constitution. Now, however, the Provincial Council was displaced as the center of authority, and a "self-governing" authority directly responsible to the Aga Khan was set up. Under this new authority were the Central Education Boards, one in each territory, which coordinated the various school committees and provided administration for the schools of their district. This reorganization did not occur, however, until 1937 because prior to this the Ismailis were occupied with solidifying their educational system.⁶⁷ No doubt one of the reasons for their success is to be found in the capital made available to them for the purpose of education.

The expansion of school facilities itself was made possible, in part, by grants-in-aid from the Tanganyikan government. Before 1930, the Ismaili schools were financed

completely through community resources and annual grants received from the Aga Khan. By 1933, grants-in-aid were up to 50 per cent of the cost of education in some districts, though they could be less; later, they were increased to 66.6 per cent, and in unusual cases, could reach 70 per cent.⁶⁸ These grants provided for approved expenses, teachers' salaries, provident funds, and passage money for teachers from India to Tanzania. Remaining expenses were still met by the Aga Khan, however, and after the Golden Jubilee celebration of 1937, the Tanganyikan grants were augmented considerably by the Aga Khan's provision of an annual grant of £15,000 (\$61,601.64) for school maintenance, and £100,000 (\$611,522.63) for building and equipment.⁶⁹

Not all schools, however, were eligible for the grants-in-aid of 1930. The Ismaili schools in Mwanza, Moshi, and Tabora ran counter to Tanganyika's plans for educational development. The government limited grants to a single school after receiving assurances from the Indian community in each town that one school was adequate to serve all Indian children, and from the Ismaili community that it would send its children to this school. The policy is stated in a memorandum on one of the Aga Khan's letters concerning education:

Where a school has been erected with the full support of all communities with the aid of public funds and is adequate for the total number of school children of the locality, grants-in-aid have been paid to that school only. Where Indian communities subsequently changed their mind and continued a separate community school, though their children could have been accommodated at the local public school, they have not, as a rule, received grants-in-aid.⁷⁰

When the Supreme Council intervened, therefore, and advised the Ismailis not to send their children to the public schools serving these towns, the benefits of grants-in-aid were denied to them. It is hard, of course, to say why the Ismailis accepted the government proposal in the first place, and the Supreme Council's countersuggestion in the second. From the general policy followed by the community, we can infer that Ismailis had no intention of sending their children to the public school; being self-supporting, they had never before relied on the government for education. Perhaps, then, an element of cultural resistance underlay the Ismaili attitude, an attitude common among migrant groups in general, but reinforced in this case by the actual successes achieved without amalgamation. Whatever the case, though, the Ismailis did not go into the public schools in order to reap the benefits of governmental grants-in-aid.

Rather they stayed out of the public schools and pressed for the grants on their own terms. The government examined the matter. The Secretary of State and the Director of Education found at first that "the attitude of His Highness the Aga Khan is not unlike that of the Pope, who, by encyclical, has forbidden Catholics to send their children to other than Catholic schools."⁷¹ More practically, the Secretary of State decided that it would be "politic to make grants to the Ismaili schools that are concerned."⁷² And, in actuality, the government had been conciliatory in the past; though it had

denied grants-in-aid to separate communities when public schools were adequate, it had given "awards," as they referred to them, "from the Balance of an Education Fund."⁷³ Thus, as was to be expected, the Tanganyikan government agreed that Ismaili schools in the territory should be eligible for grants-in-aid, in spite of the existence of adequate public schools.⁷⁴

The Ismailis themselves were to be credited with an effective bid for these grants-in-aid. First, their handling of the school problem was not altogether so "clannish" as might be expected. Although emphasis was placed on communal schools, and Ismaili communities resisted amalgamation with other Indian communities, Ismailis did not totally limit enrollment. If openings existed, non-Ismaili students were admitted; in 1940, for example, both Africans and Indians attended Aga Khan schools.⁷⁵ Nor were restrictions placed on Ismailis, who were allowed to attend public schools. Guided by the broadmindedness of the Aga Khan and his willingness to grant individual freedom to those seeking an education,⁷⁶ the Ismailis were able to expand and develop their school system in ways they believed most beneficial to their people. The Aga Khan's financial support was a factor of major importance before Ismaili schools were given grants-in-aid. But his emphasis on the need for education for girls and his acceptance of the principle of individual freedom in education were just as important as his concern with matters of pure economics. Perhaps the former even outweighed the latter.

While the Aga Khan was instrumental in broadening the base of education and in proposing that the individual should be free to choose the education most appropriate to him, he was also significantly involved in the general move toward more education for Ismailis. One could not expect, of course, an emphasis on more education for the poor who, even had they been able to afford to go to school,⁷⁷ did not function within their society in the same way as the poor in western countries. But there was an emphasis, at first engendered by the Aga Khan and then adopted with enthusiasm by the Ismailis, on the need for better schooling.⁷⁸

For a long time, education remained of marginal quality. No one language served as the medium of instruction until after 1952, when English was adopted. Before that time, Gujarati was used in the primary schools, and English in the secondary. Nor was the level of education significantly high, in spite of the fact that the number of subjects increased. It was not until October, 1933, that the first Cambridge Junior class was started, an equivalent to the present-day English Form II or Standard X.⁷⁹ Most Ismailis were satisfied with this state of affairs. More education was considered a "redundant and expensive luxury."⁸⁰ As one informant explained, opportunities in business were so great that it would seem a "waste" to send children on for a higher education. Ismailis "needed manpower to expand their businesses."⁸¹ By tradition a business community, they saw

no practical need for more education and considered it enough for their children to possess some knowledge of English and the fundamentals of education. Business, business success, and wealth had been considered more important than education for the maintenance and development of the community.

Gradually, however, this attitude towards education began to change, largely through the influence of the Aga Khan who in repeated firmans advised Ismaili boys and girls to continue their studies. The Ismailis, aroused at last to a realization of the importance of education by the Aga Khan's firmans, responded, especially during the economic dislocation of the 30s and 40s. Boys' headmaster of the Aga Khan School, Mr. Padhye, went on record as requesting more classroom space in order to accommodate a 21.3 per cent rise in student numbers between January and May of 1934.⁸² In 1948, moreover, the Senior Cambridge examination (a program of instruction roughly equivalent to American high school) was introduced into the schools.⁸³

In addition, special provisions were made after 1937 to fund students interested in higher education. Although the poor were not at all to be involved in this program, nor even in the move toward more education in general, and even though the citizens who were the most eager to take advantage of the new opportunities were the wealthy, there was nevertheless a significant number among the middle-income group interested in obtaining the advantages of a higher education. And so

the "Gold Grant Committee" was set up in order to satisfy this new demand and to provide students who otherwise could not afford it with the means for a higher education.⁸⁴

The committee provided bursaries to be given to students going to India, where they would receive professional training in fields such as law and medicine. Covering expenses for a maximum of seven years, these bursaries were granted every year to four or five students from each of the three East African countries. Paid at the rate of sixty rupees per month, these bursaries were considered adequate for the student's needs: twenty rupees were to be given for room and board and thirty for food, leaving ten for pocket money. Nor were the conditions surrounding the acceptance of the bursary unduly restrictive. The student was, of course, to have passed his matriculation examinations, and he was to have been granted admission to a college. In order that student funding might be continued, he was required to pay back the total sum borrowed after completing his education. But most important to the Ismaili community within the Tanganyikan nation, the recipient was pledged to return and serve his home community. Thus, education in the Ismaili community came to serve the needs of the individual, his local community, and the larger Ismaili community within the Tanganyikan nation.

However, success was not immediately forthcoming. To be sure, the program set up by the "Gold Grant Committee" had its limited successes. One of the bursary recipients, Dr.

Daya, returned the benefits of his education by working in the Aga Khan hospital for a number of years after the completion of his studies. Another, Mr. Sayani, worked with a number of local volunteer organizations, as indeed had Dr. Daya. Nor were these the only men to fulfill their obligation in Tanganyika. The grant program had wider effects. By requiring community service, the bursaries forced educated families to consider the needs of the whole community and widened their social outlook beyond the narrow bounds of their class. The educated Ismaili was required to provide more progressive leadership. Thus, even if only in a limited way, the educational program proved successful. At the very least, we can say that it exhibited a potential for success.

Schooling for boys and girls, which had once been provided by only five teachers, had now expanded. In the special edition of the Tanganyika Standard published for the celebration of the Diamond Jubilee, it was stated that:⁸⁵

There are at present in Tanganyika more than 46 schools of the community, more than the Indian communities put together, with a total of about 3,400 children.

Undoubtedly, the successes in education were due to the combined efforts of the Aga Khan and the Ismaili people, as the encouragement of the Aga Khan grew to become the desires of the Ismaili population. We shall see this same combination at work in other aspects of the Ismaili community as it moved to build a society capable of answering its own needs within the larger Tanzanian nation.

Schools received priority over health facilities.

This was due to the fact that health institutions required specialized personnel while a staff of very limited training could be recruited from the community to teach in the schools. Also, the size of the community in the nineteenth century did not warrant a charity hospital when local health facilities were available. Nevertheless the Ismailis did turn their attention to building health facilities as early as 1929, when the first dispensary providing free medical services was built at Dar es Salaam. Built in Kitchwele Street, it was officially opened in January 1930. The opening ceremony of the H.H. the Aga Khan Charitable Dispensary was conducted by the Acting Provincial Commissioner, E. C. Richards. During the opening speech, Mr. Richards said that "the provision of the institution was a striking illustration of the progressive spirit of the Shia Imami Ismailia Community in Dar es Salaam." He added:

The Dispensary itself is a model of neatness. Over £500 has been spent in equipping it with modern surgical instruments and drugs. An amazing array is maintained on the well arranged shelves and in compact glass cases. Nothing has been overlooked, even to the basket scale for weighing the babies, and the Ismaili community is fortunate in possessing this up-to-date dispensary. There are four rooms and the waiting room is furnished with comfort and taste. There is also an operating room with a convertible leather settee.⁸⁶

The total expense was paid by the Aga Khan in the amount of £60 per month.⁸⁷ Free medical care, part of the whole welfare program directed toward the poor, also benefited the rest of the community.

After this beginning, the development of medical facilities accelerated. The dispensary was moved from its temporary quarters on Kitchwele Street to the Jamatkhana building on Mosque Street, when that building was completed. In 1939, a ten-bed maternity home was opened where over 250 maternity cases have been handled annually. In 1948, a nursing home, equipped with surgical facilities and providing accommodations for 32 in-patients, was built.⁸⁸ As part of the Ismaili effort to increase medical facilities, these advances made good health possible and allowed the Ismaili people to use their money for necessities other than health care. But this was true only for those who did not live inland. There the population was not large and other considerations, such as the establishment of schools, seemed to demand more immediate attention. And so, inland Ismailis were left to rely on the general medical facilities. In more populated areas, though, the health program was of benefit particularly to the poor and to those who, though they might be able to afford limited medical care, did not possess great wealth.

As the population continued to grow, the number of people needing assistance grew. In addition, unemployment, resulting from the bankruptcy of a number of businesses, swelled the ranks of those needing assistance. In the beginning of the 1930s, therefore, the Panjebhai Committee-- originally begun in 1905 as an association to help the poor--

was organized on a larger scale in response to the world-depression and ensuing dislocation. The membership was raised to forty and was made permanent. No new members were to be brought into the committee until a position was vacated either by a regular member's leaving town, by his illness, or by his death. 89

Various subcommittees were formed to handle the increasing duties. General help for the poor was to be the province of the Garib (poor) Fund. Health facilities were charged to the Sarwar (sick) Committee. Aid to widows became the specific function of the Withwa (widow) Committee. The Educational Committee was given charge of buying books and stationery for needy students and of seeing to the payment of boarding fees. To those reluctant to seek help, the Private Help Committee offered clothes, provisions, and cash. The Employment Committee sought to find employment for those unable to find work. And the Mayat Shangar Committee was to see to the funeral arrangements of the poor. 90

For twenty years the Panjebhai Committee and its various subcommittees not only successfully responded to the immediate needs of the poor but also improved their overall lot. Any family in need had only to make a written application to the Panjebhai Committee, where the application was processed and either discussed in a general meeting or referred to the relevant committee. By the mid-1940s, however, the committee structure, as set up in the Constitution of

1925; proved to be too cumbersome. Several subcommittees had engaged in working with similar problems, thus causing unnecessary duplication. The previous limitations of membership had also proved ineffective. And it was thought that the name of the organization should be changed to reflect the nature of the work.

And so the Panjebhai Committee was dissolved under the Constitution of 1946, and the Welfare Society formed in its place. Following procedures similar to those of the earlier committee, the society was charged to perform similar works: "The Society shall carry out," read the constitution, "all the work of the Panjebhai, Economic and Progressive and such other committees." In addition, the constitution specified that the Welfare Society was "to do charitable work amongst our community, to secure work for the unemployed, to appoint a parents' association, generally to protect and encourage economical, social, and educational upliftment of the community." The society was also, however, to work out more successful committee structures to prevent duplication: "Various committees having similar objects," it was stated in the constitution, "should be combined and duplication of committees should not be encouraged." And membership in the society was opened, with permanent membership reduced to a term of two years.⁹¹

To see what kinds of families were helped by the Panjebhai Committee and later by the Welfare Society, it is best to look at actual examples.⁹²

Abdulla Ismail and his family profited by the aid extended through the Welfare Society. Mr. Ismail went blind and was unable to be usefully employed. The Welfare Society stepped in and took care of his rent, offered provisions, and furnished clothing. This particular family was also helped by relatives. Mrs. Ismail herself was able to provide some relief through her job as seamstress. After the Welfare Society had helped her to set up a small retail shop, it needed only to pay rent for the shop and the house in order that the family be adequately provided for.

Lessening the burden of poverty, programs like those set up through the Welfare Society increase the possibility of improving one's material life, and consequently provides yet another opportunity for social mobility. By helping the less fortunate, welfare programs are instrumental in producing social change. For example, Mrs. Ismail would not have been able to afford the expense of setting up her business had it not been for the aid of such welfare programs. With this kind of help, the poor can be integrated into the process of social change, which is the right of the whole community.

The poor, aided because the more fortunate Ismailis have contributed to the less fortunate, can share in the feeling of oneness which strengthens the community. Beginning in the 1930s, the Ismaili population of East Africa experienced serious economic dislocation, in part because of a world

depression, in part because they no longer controlled the trade which they had been so instrumental in opening up. Rather than be defeated by this dislocation, the people worked to restructure their community, under the guidance of the Aga Khan, so that it might better serve their needs and interests. In this we note a move toward greater centralization, serving the need for coordination in a larger and more complex society, while reaffirming the absolute power of their leader. Although this move toward centralization no doubt further increased the power and control of those working in the community's administration, this greater power did not, to any significant degree, excite dissent. Programs in education, health, and welfare prospered in spite of--and perhaps partially because of--economic hardships brought about by the decline of trade. Thus, although the Ismaili community found itself in a situation of disadvantage, it continued to show that spirit which had been present in its first migrants as they adapted to new situations under difficult conditions.

FOOTNOTES

¹Letter from the Government of India to Secretary of State for India, 10 February 1921, p. 7, "East India (Question of the Settlement of Indian Agriculturalists in Tanganyika Territory, and of the Future System of Administration of the Territory)," Cmd. 1321.

²"Report by Sir Benjamin Robertson, dated 4th August 1920, regarding the proposed settlement of Indian Agriculturalists in Tanganyika Territory," Cmd. 1321, p. 2.

³Annual Reports of different districts for 1920-21.

⁴District Political Officer, Dar es Salaam, to Sec. Indian Assoc., October 30, 1918, Indian Association File, 1918.

⁵K. J. Yadev, Sec. Indian Assoc., Dar es Salaam to the Base Commandant, Dar es Salaam, October 22, 1918; Sec. Ind. Assoc., to District Political Officer, Dar es Salaam, Nov. 16, 1918, Indian Association File, 1918.

⁶R. L. Buell, The Native Problem in Africa (London, 1965), I, pp. 440-441.

⁷Debate in the Indian Legislative Assembly at Delhi on 12th February 1925, T.N.A., 7596, p. 3; "Profit Tax Ordinance," Indian Association File-Pre-hartal, 1923.

⁸"Memorandum on Profit Tax by the Treasurer," May 5, 1925, T.N.A., 7596, p. 9.

⁹Indian Association File-Pre-hartal, 1923. The file contains telegrams sent to Indian Associations in upcountry centers. Oral information obtained from Abdul N. M. Daya, Feb. 11, 1971; Morogoro and Allibhai Kassam, June 8 and 9, 1970, Dar es Salaam.

¹⁰Indian Association File, 1923. Oral information provided by Messrs. Abdul N. M. Daya and Allibhai Kassam.

¹¹Indian Association File-Pre-hartal, 1923; especially see telegram sent by Ind. Assoc., Lushoto, to Ind. Assoc., Dar es Salaam, March 31, 1923.

¹²This was noted by Messrs. Daya and Kassam.

¹³"Memorandum on Profit Tax by the Treasurer," p. 8.

¹⁴Donald Cameron, My Tanganyika Service and Some Nigerian (London, 1939), p. 37; Gerald F. Sayers, The Handbook of Tanganyika (London, 1930), p. 106.

¹⁵Buell, Native Problem in Africa, I, pp. 438-439.

¹⁶Information provided by Premji S. Samji, May 5, 1971, and Allibhai Kassam, Sept. 12, 1970, Dar es Salaam.

¹⁷Buell, I, pp. 438-439.

¹⁸Sayers, Handbook of Tanganyika, p. 252.

¹⁹"Report by Sir Benjamin Robertsón, 4th August 1920," p. 7.

²⁰Ibid., p. 3.

²¹Letter from the Government of India, p. 6.

²²Ibid., p. 5.

²³"Trade Crisis in Tanganyika," speech delivered by S. H. Sayer, Chairman of Dar es Salaam Chamber of Commerce, Tanganyika Standard, October 4, 1930; Manyoni District Annual Report, 1930, T.N.A., 967:823, p. 1; Bukoba District Annual Report, 1930, T.N.A., 215/77/D, p. 20; Kigoma District Annual Report, 1930, T.N.A., 180/7/3/11, p. 12; Maswa District Annual Report, 1930, T.N.A., 246/P.C/1/67, p. 5.

²⁴Shinyanga District Annual Report, 1932, T.N.A., 215/686, p. 86, p. 100; Tanga District Annual Report, 1932, T.N.A., 967:822, p. 32.

²⁵Mangal Das to the editor, Tanganyika Standard, Dar es-Salaam; July 19, 1931, p. 25.; Whitaker, p. 456.

²⁶Ibid. According to the information obtained through interviews, it seems that on the whole the traders survived the crisis, and very few Ismailis went out of business. Some of the Ismailis which were affected by the depression were Alarkahia Kheraj, Dhalla Bhimji, Remtulla Jessa, Ladha Ebrahim, Merali Rawji and S. R. Hooda.

²⁷Iliffe, p. 6.

²⁸"Life History of the late Bandali Merali," p. 4.

²⁹An extract from the Report of the Conference of Advisers on Native Affairs held at Mwanza on August 22, 1933, T.N.A., 10138/II, p. 318; E. Harrison (Dir. of Agriculture, Morogoro) to Chief Sec., Dar es Salaam, Dec. 8, 1933, T.N.A., 10138/II, pp. 332-333.

³⁰An extract from the Report of the Conference of Advisers, pp. 317-319; an extract from an enclosure to the Governor's despatch to the Secretary of State, November 17, 1932, T.N.A., 10138/II, pp. 224-225.

³¹E. W. Richards (Provincial Commissioner, Lake Province) to Chief Sec., Dar es Salaam, April 20, 1933, T.N.A.; 20776/I, p. 25; Chief Sec. to General Manager Railways, Dar es Salaam, Feb. 18, 1932, T.N.A., 10138/II, pp. 134-135.

³²Director of Agriculture to Chief Sec., Dec. 8, 1933, T.N.A., 10138/II, p. 337; P.E.M. to Chief Sec., Secretariat Minute Papers, January 15, 1932, T.N.A. (S.M.P.), 10138/II, p. 250.

³³Dharsee and McRoberts to Sir William Bettershill (Governor, Dar es Salaam), September 27, 1947, T.N.A., 31546/I, p. 196; Information obtained from both retailers and wholesalers in Dar es Salaam and upcountry centers.

³⁴Information on different Ismaili corporations was obtained from Abdulla Tejpar, Dar es Salaam, Jan. 24, 1973; Saburuli Mawji, Mwanza, Oct. 2, 1971, and Abdul N. M. Daya, Morogoro, February 11, 1971.

³⁵Hon. Secretary, Indian Merchants Chamber, Dar es Salaam, to Chairman, Economic Control Board, Dar es Salaam, March 17, 1947, T.N.A., 36127, pp. 4-5; J. Riley (Dir. of Economic Control Board, Dar es Salaam) to Chief, Dar es Salaam, Nov. 21, 1947, T.N.A., 33161/I, pp. 213-256.

³⁶This was confirmed by two major wholesalers and few retailers about the various abuses that entered the new system which was set up to control the distribution of goods during wartime and after. Also see, S. R. Hoods, to Chief Secretary, Dar es Salaam, Jan. 16, 1945, T.N.A., 31546/I, p. 73; Kassamali R. Bata to Chief Sec., Dar es Salaam, Mar. 8, 1948, T.N.A., 33161/I, p. 256.

³⁷Chairman, Morogoro Traders' Assoc., to Chief Sec., Feb. 20, 1947, T.N.A., 31665/I, pp. 163-173; Indian Chamber of Commerce, Lindi, to Chief Sec., April 4, 1947, T.N.A., 31665/I, pp. 175-178.

38. The major oil and flour millers in the 1930s in Dar es Salaam were Habib Punja & Sons, A. G. Abdulhussein, Hassam Karim and Jaffer Haji & Co. Successful industrialists in the manufacture of soap include Habib Punja and A. G. and M. G. Abdulhussein. Oral information collected from different Ismaili industrialists in Dar es Salaam; also see Mike and Cathy Booth, "The Directory of Business Names for Dar es Salaam Township 1920-1950" (unpublished paper, Dar es Salaam, 1969).

39. In 1937, Ismailis celebrated the Golden Jubilee to mark fifty years of Imamah of His Highness Sir Sultan Mahomed Shah Aga Khan III (1885-1937). It was decided to set up an insurance company in commemoration of the Jubilee; in 1946, Diamond Jubilee marked the sixty years of Imamah--the outcome was the Diamond Jubilee Investment Trust Company.

In 1961, the assets of the Jubilee Insurance Company were £2,500,000, and assets of the Diamond Jubilee Investment Trust amounted to £3,500,000. B. G. Vaghela and J. M. Patel, eds., East Africa Today (Bombay, 1960), pp. 79-85; also see, The Aga Khan Legion (Africa), Address Presented to His Highness Sir Sultan Mahomed Shah Aga Khan, and Reply given by His Highness Sir Sultan Mahomed Shah Aga Khan (Mombasa, 1955) pp. 10-19. It provides in detail the activities and investment of the Jubilee Insurance and Diamond Jubilee Investment Trust Company.

40. Ibid., p. 10.

41. Information obtained from the late Shamshudin Tejpar, Dar es Salaam, July 7, 1968; Vaghela and Patel, East Africa Today, p. 83.

42. This information was first provided by the late Shamshudin Tejpar and later confirmed by Dr. G. M. Daya, one of the recipients of the Gold Grant bursaries, Dar es Salaam, August 23, 1968.

43. This point was emphasized by the late Shamshudin Tejpar. According to H. S. Morris, "Indians in East Africa: A Study in a Plural Society," British Journal of Sociology, VII, 3 (September, 1956), pp. 194-211, the funds collected from the Golden Jubilee were used to set up the Insurance Company.

44. The conclusion was reached after discussing the problem with various middle- and lower-middle class Ismailis and a few well-to-do Ismailis, who agreed with some of the criticisms leveled against the companies in general.

45 This was true of Lalji Fazal's family. They had a small retail shop in Kariako. It was not until 1937-38 that they were able to expand their business with a loan from the Tanganyika Cooperative Society. Information provided by his son, Rahim Lalji Fazal, Dar es Salaam, August 23, 1971.

46 The Aga Khan Legion (Africa), Address, pp. 12-15; Vaghela and Patel, pp. 83-85.

47 Report by the President, D. K. Patel, Tanganyika Indian Chamber of Commerce, June 13, 1948, T.N.A., 36098, p. 16; Presidential Address by Hon. Shamsud-Deen, M.L.C. (Kenya) at 2nd Inter-Territorial Conference held on April 8, and 9, 1944 at Nairobi, Kenya (Nairobi, 1944), p. 4.

48 Count Abdulla Shariff Kanji, President of H.H. The AgaKhan's Ismailia Supreme Council for Africa, and Count Gulamhussein Mahomed Nasser Jindani, Chairman of H.H. the Agakhan's Executive Council for Africa, Rules of H.H. the AgaKhan's Ismailia Councils of the Continent of Africa (Mombasa, 1937), chapter I, rules 6 to 14, pp. 1-3.

49 Ibid., chapter II, rule 1, p. 4.

50 The Constitution, 1946, chapter II, rule 11, p. 4.

51 Ibid., chapter II, rules 11-21, pp. 4-5.

52 Rules (1937), chapter II, rule 4, p. 4.

53 The Constitution, 1946, chapter II, rule 2, p. 3.

54 Ibid., chapter III, rule 10, p. 11.

55 Ibid., chapter III, rules 10 to 14, p. 11.

56 Ibid., chapter III, rule 10(b), p. 11.

57 Ibid., chapter III, rule 9, p. 4; chapter III, rule 8, p. 10.

58 S. N. Eisenstadt, Modernization: Protest and Change (New Jersey, 1966), p. 135.

59 The Constitution, 1946, chapter II, rule 8, p. 4; chapter III, rule 7, p. 10.

60 Briggs, Ag. Vice-President in "Sadruddin Saleh Mohamed V. Firozabanu Gulamhussein Bhimji," 23. E.A.C.A. 369, p. 371, quoted in a Report Submitted by the Constitutional Committee on Nov. 3, 1961, p. 2, in File 194c, "Report Pocket-Ismaili Law" in the collection of A. M. Sadruddin, Nairobi, Kenya.

⁶¹The list of the councillors for Dar es Salaam from 1914 to 1954 was compiled by interviewing ex-councillors. This is by no means an accurate list, but it gives a general picture of leadership patterns. From 1954 to 1962, the list was obtained from the office of the Territorial Council in Dar es Salaam.

⁶²I do not know of any case where a councillor was asked to resign.

⁶³The complete file, "Khoja Affairs," is very interesting. See especially the interview of members of the Ismailia Council with Chief Sec. on Feb. 3, 1940, and minute paper by D. W. Malcolm, Jan. 18, 1940, T.N.A., 27863, p. 4. Also see "Allegations against the Ismaili Council," by S. R. Hooda, July 31, 1942, T.N.A., 12302/II, pp. 10-13. This deals with the conflict of 1939-40. The "Ismaili Bulletin" File has complete sets of "Ismaili Bulletins" and other related papers and pamphlets dealing with the conflict. Oral information obtained from few members of the community provided better insight into the whole conflict, most of which did not appear in the archival documents.

⁶⁴Judgment of High Court of Tanganyika in "Nurbanu Karim Rattansi V. Husseinbhai Karim Mohamed," civil case no. 94 of 1953 (1955), Z.T.L.R:(R) 212, pp. 1-12, quoted in a Report Submitted by Constitutional Committee, Nov. 3, 1961, in archives of A. M. Sadruddin, Nairobi, Kenya.

⁶⁵Ibid., p. 8.

⁶⁶Ibid., p. 11.

⁶⁷Badroodin Peermohamed, A Study of Some Aspects of English Education, pp. 10-15.

⁶⁸Information provided by S. Peerwani, Education Secretary of H.H. the Aga Khan Department of Education, Nairobi, Kenya, Jan. 29, 1973.

⁶⁹Peermohamed, p. 18.

⁷⁰Department of Education Annual Report, 1932, p. 5.

⁷¹Director of Education to Chief Sec., Dar es Salaam, Mar. 24, 1936, T.N.A., 23761, p: 15. ✓

⁷²Ibid., p. 17.

73 Memorandum commenting on His Highness's letter of June 22, 1934, Chief Sec. to Dir. of Education, T.N.A., 23761, p. 7.

74 Chief Sec. to the Secretary, Governor's Conference of June 6, 1936, T.N.A., 23761, p. 13.

75 Oral information collected from one Ismaili who was closely associated with enrollment of students in the Aga Khan schools.

76 Director of Education to Chief Sec., June 1935, T.N.A., 23761, p. 11. Although the community as a whole did not attend public schools, individual Ismailis who wanted to attend could do so.

77 This is evident from the help provided by the Welfare Society for education, see "Report: H.H. the Aga Khan Welfare Society," Salagra Mubarak (Sar es Salaam, 1950 and 1951).

78 We do not have any statistical evidence to demonstrate this point, but the change in the attitude of the people toward education is obvious. The pressure on the Ismailis between the ages of 16 to 20 is so great that even the parents who never completed high school education would "push" their children to get a college degree.

79 Report by the headmaster of the Aga Khan 'Boys' School, Dar es Salaam, Mr. P. G. Padhye, June 13, 1934, T.N.A., 22310, pp. 16-18.

80 E. Nathoo, "Education," Platinum (December, 1960), p. 2.

81 This was noted by Jamal Walji Fazal, July 3, 1968, March 15, 1970, Dar es Salaam.

82 Report by the headmaster, pp. 16-18.

83 Information obtained from S. Peerwani, January 29, 1973, Nairobi, Kenya.

84 Information provided by Dr. G. M. Daya, one of the recipients of the Gold Grant Scholarships, May 9, 1970, Dar es Salaam.

85 Editorial, "Special Edition: Diamond Jubilee Celebration," Tanganyika Standard, August 10, 1946.

86 E. C. Richards, Acting Provincial Commissioner, Dar es Salaam, "Aga Khan's Gift to Dar es Salaam," Tanganyika Standard, January 31, 1930. Because of the lack of information on health institutions, it is hard to analyze the subject further.

87 Ibid.

88 President, Ismailia Provincial Council to Director of Medical Service, Dec. 4, 1950, T.N.A., 41226, p. 1.

89 This information was obtained from Messrs. Remtulla Pirmohamed and Habib Karim Jetha. Both of the informants were members of the Panjabhai Committee in the 1930s. June 8, 1968 and May 5, 1970, Dar es Salaam. Also see, Varas Mahomedbhai Remtulla Hemani, President of the Shia Imami Supreme Council of Zanzibar, Rules (1925), chapter III, rule 3, p. 85.

90 "Report: H.H. the Aga Khan Welfare Society," Salegra Mubarak (Dar es Salaam, 1950 and 1951).

91 The Constitution, 1946, chapter VIII, rule 2, p. 28; rule 5, p. 29.

92 Oral information provided by Mrs. Fatmabai Fazal Lalji, July 4, 1968, April 11, 1970, Dar es Salaam. Similar help was given to other families.

CHAPTER VII

CHANGE AND CONTINUITY IN ISMAILI SOCIETY UP TO 1960

The period after World War II was a continuing time of consolidation for the Ismailis. It was not an easy period. The hopes and energies of the earlier migrations had been dissipated. The trade situation had declined; and, with the local government retaining control of the markets, opportunities were few. Social customs and laws were changing so rapidly that the constitution was revised twice in a brief period--in 1937 and 1946. There seemed to be nothing else to do except regroup, gather forces, and attack what had once again become an unfamiliar, unaccommodating environment.

As early as 1945, during the Aga Khan's visit to celebrate the Diamond Jubilee,¹ Ismailis had been aware of the need to take steps to deal with the economic dislocation resulting from the territorial government's intrusion into marketing. In conjunction with the Aga Khan, Ismaili leaders had decided to advise their people to go into farming. An agricultural committee was formed, made up of two members from Dar es Salaam, and one each from Moshi, Morogoro, and Kilosa. The aim of the committee was to encourage Ismailis to move away from their duka-based economy and invest in farming.² Indians other than those from the Ismaili

community added their support. In 1947, D. K. Patel, president of the Tanganyika Indian Chamber of Commerce and Agriculture, noted the lack of future in trade. Africans, he said, were being encouraged to go into this area of business and would eventually replace Indians. The import-export business was controlled by foreign commercial houses, patronized in their turn by the Tanganyikan government, which granted them monopolies and agencies. The solution to the problem, Patel felt, lay in agriculture and in the building up of secondary industries.³

The Ismaili population felt that, by and large, secondary industries were not the answer. Profits were not sufficient for expansion unless one had a great deal of capital and could diversify. Few Ismailis had even the capital necessary to buy machinery for such industry. Many were also discouraged by the long-term investments which would delay a realization of profits. Agriculture seemed better.

In 1945 there were very few Ismaili families who worked on the land. In the Kilosa and Ulanga districts, for example, only about 20 Ismaili families owned land; another 28 farmed on rented land. In 1948 the High Commissioner for India in East Africa, A. B. Pant, approached the Tanganyikan government with the idea of encouraging Indian settlement in the Wami Magole area, about 32 miles from Morogoro, where Indians might grow cotton for the Indian market. In 1950, in response to Pant's request, the government invited applications for alienation of 32 farms of

approximately 500 acres each in the Magole area. There were 100 applicants, of whom 57 were Ismailis.⁴

Since one of the conditions attached to alienation of land was that farming would be mechanized, and since the majority of the Ismaili applicants did not have enough capital to buy heavy farm machinery, they requested a letter from the managing director of the Diamond Jubilee Investment Trust Company. Mr. K. R. Paroo gave his assurance that the Ismaili applicants would be given financial assistance on a cooperative basis to buy heavy machinery. No doubt as a result of this letter, nineteen Ismailis received plots of 500 acres each; seven Hindus, two Arabs and one Goan also received parcels. Because of the Hindu-Muslim conflict at that time, the government purposely allocated the farms in such a way that the Hindu farmers were given land on the east side and the Ismaili on the west side, with farms of two Arabs and one Goan forming a corridor.⁵

The successful Ismaili plot-holders formed a limited liability company under the name of Magole Ismailis Farmers' Corporation Ltd., with an authorized capital of 200,000/-shs (\$44,860.00) divided into 200 shares of 1,000/-shs (\$225.00) each, thus totaling 95 shares. The rest of the shares were allotted to Y. H. Allidina, who had been a well-established farmer in the Wumi area since 1943. The Diamond Jubilee Investment Trust granted a loan of 400,000/-shs (\$89,720.00) at 3 per cent interest per annum for machinery and agreed to

grant loans to individual plot-holders at a maximum of 15,000/-shs (\$3,375.00) at 6 per cent interest per annum. Since most of the plot-holders had no previous experience in farming, the corporation also decided to employ a retired agricultural officer to act as a secretary to the corporation and to give advice on farming techniques to the Ismaili farmers. Furthermore, as the whole object of the corporation was to pool the machinery amongst 19 farmers, such an independent person was necessary to deal with quarrels which would naturally occur.⁶

Unfortunately the scheme failed, no doubt because a majority of the men who got land had no previous experience in farming. Nor did the idea of a "joint effort" appeal to Ismailis who, though they had a sense of community solidarity, had never extended it into the business sector. At any rate, the farmers lost heavily and went into debt. Many sold their farms. The Diamond Jubilee Investment Trust got its money back, but the shareholders lost all their money--95,000/-shs (\$13,310.00). (Since this information was provided by Mr. Allidina, he told me what happened to everyone else's shares but his.)⁷ Thus, in spite of efforts by this communal institution, the individualistic nature of the Ismaili businessman and his inability to work with others in a profit-making situation made it impossible for the scheme to succeed.

The Morogoro Kilosa Farmers' Association did little better. Formed in 1956, the association was to enforce among

its members joint compulsory marketing. Those who failed to comply with the regulations were to be expelled. The United Africa Company was to act as the association's agent and to handle bulk storage by making initial advances against deliveries, in return for which the company would receive a fixed handling commission plus storage at actual cost. The farmers were not interested. Of 80 residents in the area, only 55 became members; and of these only 19 were Ismaili, the rest Hindus. The plan was not highly regarded because farmers, hoping for an individual success, feared that the joint enterprise of this plan might prohibit them from selling their merchandise at a good profit to merchants in Morogoro and Dar es Salaam. By 1959 membership had fallen to 37. In 1960 the association stopped functioning, indicating once again the difficulty of Ismailis working together in farming.⁸

For the most part, Ismaili society in Tanzania continued to engage in trade, with men oriented to the old duka economy as middlemen. It was proving difficult, now that the old migrant spirit had found itself settled in, to move away from what had once been so profitable.

A plan for housing was more successful. In the early 1950s the late Aga Khan suggested a scheme whereby "every Ismaili family in Africa should own a home--if poor a small one, an apartment, a room but absolutely his own."⁹ In order for the project to materialize, building societies were formed to help those Ismailis who could not afford to build their own

house. Different types of houses and apartments were to be constructed. In the beginning, individual houses were built, but later apartments were preferred because they were more economical. The aim was to complete the plan by 1960.¹⁰

The first society, The Chagombe Construction Company, was formed in 1953, and the first set of bungalows was constructed at Chagombe, a suburb about eight miles from the main city. The initial payment for each bungalow was about 9,000/-shs (\$1,259.00), and monthly rent was 275/-shs (\$38.70), which covered interest and instalment. After construction costs had been met in 1969, the housing became free. The second development was started in the Upanga area, two miles from the main city center. Here the initial payment was 7,000/-shs (\$979.00) for two-bedroom apartments and 9,000/-shs (\$1,261.00) for three-bedroom, with a monthly payment of 240/-shs (\$33.60), and 260/-shs (\$36.40), respectively. The society was started in 1955, and the apartments became free in 1970. As the demand for houses increased, more societies were created. Today there are about 42 building societies in Dar es Salaam with a total investment of about 21,000,000/-shs (\$5,860,000.00), and with an average investment of about 300,000/-shs (\$35,800.00) to 350,000/-shs (\$41,700.00) for each society.¹¹

This building scheme was also started in upcountry centers, where there were enough Ismailis to warrant a building project. The major centers where the building societies

were formed included Dodoma, Tabora, Mwanza, Iringa, Mbeya, Moshi, Arusha, and Tanga. In the upcountry the total number of flats built was about 800 to 900 with a total cost of about 22 to 25 million shillings (\$2,620,200.00 to \$2,980,000.00).

The initial payment in each building society depended on the cost of the construction and the price of the plot. The most expensive flats were "Crescent Flats" constructed on Upanga Road, near the Diamond Jubilee Investment Trust building, where the plots were expensive and the flats had the most up-to-date facilities. There were 48 flats and ten shops. Each flat cost about 66,000/-shs (\$7,860.00) for first floor tenants; 64,000/-shs (\$7,630.00) for second floor; and 62,000/-shs (\$7,400.00) for third floor. The initial payment for each apartment was 25,000/-shs (\$2,980.00) and the rest of the amount had to be paid within the next five years. The total cost of the apartment was 3,500,000/-shs (\$417,000.00). The cheapest flats (with two bedrooms) were constructed at 22,000/-shs (\$1,431.00). The initial payment for them was 4,000/-shs (\$477.00) with 100/-shs (\$11.98) rent per month, which covered interest and instalment.

All the building societies borrowed money from the Diamond Jubilee Investment Trust and the Jubilee Insurance Company at the rate of 3 per cent interest per annum. By 1955, about £2,100,000 had already been given by the two institutions as loans to individual Ismailis on mortgages on buildings.¹²

The aim of the housing scheme was not to create a new land-owning class in Tanzania but to help the lower- and middle-income groups to have apartments of their own. Unfortunately, many in the upper-income group misunderstood the purpose of the program, began to invest heavily in apartment buildings, and became landlords. Once again the scheme widened the gap between rich and poor. No doubt the interest in owning apartments rather than in giving each community member a home slowed down the impetus for building too. The last apartment was completed in 1970 rather than in 1960.

Other facets of Ismaili society were changing. We have already discussed the administrative and institutional changes brought about during World War II. To a significant degree these institutional changes, aided by the leadership both spiritual and practical of His Highness the late Aga Khan III, were making themselves known in the community at large.

Of particular importance during this period were the Aga Khan's firmans directed toward modifying Ismaili "Asiatic habits," such as dress and language, so that his people might become more Westernized. For the Aga Khan believed that changes in social and economic life were imperative if Ismailis were to become permanent and successful settlers in East Africa. To this end, he worked to redirect Ismaili social customs in light of their new homeland. In the process he provided for material prosperity in the community.

As we have noted, the Aga Khan derives his authority and prestige as an Imam who has full power for any innovation. Thus in the postwar period the great number of firmans concerning secular change continued to have religious sanction behind them. Although the community would not always put the firmans into effect, it--as well as individuals--were under more or less divine direction if they did so. To fail to actively support the Aga Khan's directives was to deprive oneself of such beneficial direction. Nor, given the structure of Ismaili society was there any compelling reason to reject a directive, since the authority and prestige of the Aga Khan was and is such that each man believes the Imam does only what is to their material and spiritual benefit.

Moreover, the Aga Khan's approach to change and the validity of what he proposed made it possible for the people to accept his ideas on pragmatic, as well as religious, grounds. Always careful to take a long-range view in his innovations, the Aga Khan minimized the shock of sudden and sweeping change by gradually leading his people to new ways. Had he overlooked long-range planning, he might have found Ismailis somewhat less receptive to innovation, especially in the earlier periods when people had enough to do in settling a new land.

The Aga Khan's successful approach to innovation also owed a good deal to his ability to involve the people themselves in planning. As noted in the previous chapter, the

hierarchical administrative structure, in addition to coordinating and directing, provided a communications network between the Aga Khan and his people. The primary link was in the Provincial Councils in major population areas, from which the Aga Khan received regular reports on religious, economic, and social conditions. He also made it a practice to consult representatives of these councils before making any crucial decisions. The Jubilee Insurance Program, for example, came out of a conference of councillors and other community leaders which the Aga Khan called in 1937, and the program was established with the advice and confirmation of these leaders. The advantage of such consultation was that those who were involved then took an active role in supporting and implementing the plans.

In addition to using the council as a communication link, the Aga Khan kept in contact with his people by prompt response to individual correspondence and by frequent visits to major population centers, and sometimes even to the most remote villages. One of the most mobile religious leaders in the world, the Aga Khan, if called upon, would reach his followers almost overnight. The fact that the Ismailis were able to expect such direct and often personal attention from their leader strengthened their identification with him and, in turn, strengthened the influence and position of the Aga Khan.¹³

A good example of the nature of the Aga Khan's directives came in 1952 when he called a conference at Evian, in Switzerland, to discuss various economic and social problems confronting the Ismailis. It was attended by 40 members including the president and the secretary of the Supreme Council, the presidents of the Provincial Councils and of the Ismailia Association, educational administrators, the managing director of the Jubilee Insurance Company, and three members of the East African Legislative Council.¹⁴

One of the major decisions reached at the conference urged all Ismaili women of East Africa to adopt western dress for "political and economic reasons."¹⁵ In the beginning only a few women, mostly the wives of the leaders, responded, thereby setting an example for the rest of the community. They were, to be sure, ridiculed for their compliance. But the Ismailia Association had also arranged lectures by missionaries in the Jamatkhana to encourage women to adopt western dress. And so as the original few women continued wearing colonial dress, others gradually followed, and the change in custom was established. Nor was the acceptance of the firman confined to the younger generation for whom the break with tradition would come easily; women in their sixties and seventies also changed their habits of years' standing.

This particular firman is also a good illustration of the Aga Khan's reasoning in urging change on his people. Often these changes emerged from his wide experience with western

culture and western ways. In this particular case, his judgment came from his observations of other communities. He saw that adopting western dress would make it easier for Ismailis to be identified with and assimilated into the indigenous population. Also, since the majority of Africans were not well-to-do, the wearing of a simple western dress would not reinforce the image of an economic gap between richer Indian and poorer African. Moreover, the way one dresses is an essential link with one's culture; here was an important change which would pave the way for others but which people could adopt fairly easily without being conscious of changing anything but their dress. That the firman was accepted is both a commentary on the Aga Khan's astuteness and on the willingness of the women to participate in the process of change.

While there is no evidence that any of the Aga Khan's innovations were a complete failure, it is true that not all of his firmans were immediately followed by all members of the community. Failure to comply usually came not from active rejection, but from an inability to meet the terms of the directive. Firmans were issued urging higher education for young Ismailis during the 1940s and 50s. Some families could not afford it, and bursaries were limited. Other families, even if they had access to bursary funds, could not afford to lose income by taking their sons from the labor market and enrolling them in school.

Gradually this attitude towards education began to change, largely because of the changing economic system. In 1944, the Asian population in the territory numbered about 34,000, of whom 20,000 were males. The majority of the working population--then consisting almost entirely of males--engaged in trade or paid employment. It clearly would not be possible to absorb the present and the succeeding generations of young Indian men into trade and commerce. Moreover, the time would come when the Africans would want to be able to run their small retail shops and expel many of the Indians. It appeared certain that in the absence of any other occupations to which they could turn, large numbers of Indians would grow up with no prospect of earning a livelihood. Thus in order to meet the demands of the changing economic system, it was important that Ismaili parents accept the reorientation of education for their sons. Under the guidance of the Aga Khan, girls' education was also stressed.¹⁶

After the Evian conference, various changes were brought about in the school curriculum. Gujarati was gradually replaced by English as the medium of instruction. It was decided to introduce French as the second language and, in another effort to break off their ties with their native land and to make Tanzania their homeland, to introduce one African language. Because of the lack of qualified teachers, however, and greater emphasis placed on the national Swahili language, French was never introduced. Emphasis was also

placed on the teaching of commercial subjects for boys and domestic science for girls. Since the Ismaili community in Tanzania was mostly an urban and trading community, interests were centered on providing the kind of knowledge which would help student progress in commerce and in professional occupations.¹⁷

Instruction in the schools was based on a syllabus approved by the Director of Education, a procedure directed toward standardizing the curriculum throughout the country. The syllabus of the primary schools was similar to that of English primary schools, except that little attention was given to handwork or general science. The subjects taught up to standard VI were Gujarati, geography, hygiene, religion, nature study, physical education, and bookkeeping. From standard VII through XII, algebra, geometry, physics, and chemistry were added along with domestic science for girls. The syllabus suggests that the aim of the school system was to provide a general education which would prove useful to those students who wished to go on for higher education. In spite of the emphasis on moving out of trade, however, very few students went for higher education. A majority still joined their father's business.¹⁸

At the same time, changes were being made to help Ismailis obtain a higher education. The Gold Grant Committee of 1937 was taken over by the Central Committee in 1946 with a fund of £10,000 (\$44,860.00) and an annual grant of £3,000

(\$13,458.00) from the Aga Khan. The grant was later raised to £35,000 (\$157,000.00). Because of limited communal resources, it was decided after the Evian conference that bursaries would be granted for those professions only of direct benefit to the community. Such funds would be given for a specific number of years and at an agreed amount.¹⁹

As before, the poor did not benefit from the granting of bursaries. The wealthy were the only group that enthusiastically sought higher education. But some of the members of the middle-class were funded. Further, changes in the distribution of education at a time when education became more important for material success gave rise to new interest groups. Economic power was no longer associated only with business but also with the professions. As a result, the funding of students reduced the possibility that the educated would become separated from the rest of the community at the same time that it acted as a cohesive social force in providing progressive leadership for the community.

A corollary effect of increased educational opportunity was the changing role of women, which in turn had its effect on the family. Unlike other Muslim women, some of whom still live in purdah or seclusion, the Ismaili women were no longer limited to the traditional role of housewife. But the main effect of educational opportunity on the woman's changing role was to open a broader range of career possibilities. As late as the 1940s, teaching was the most

respectable--indeed almost the only possible--career choice for women, partly because a woman could teach as a hobby or for humanitarian reasons without really seeming to be hiring herself out.

But increasing numbers of women had begun to acquire a higher education and wanted to apply their education and training. Moreover, the higher cost of living during the postwar period lent appeal to the idea of working wives. Although a husband's income might be adequate to provide basic necessities, two incomes would bring a better standard of living and provide better educational opportunities for the family's children. Nevertheless, the majority of women preferred to stay in the home, and few chose to combine careers with marriage. This may well have been because the majority of men, particularly those in the upper- and middle-income groups and in the professions, preferred their wives to stay at home. Many parents also ignored the Aga Khan's advice to give girls a higher education, preferring to see their daughters marry as soon as they completed their secondary education. The change in the role of women, then, was more in terms of a climate of opinion which allowed them increasing latitude and independence. A new possibility for women had been created and still awaits its fulfillment. But even the change in opinion about women's role had some effect on traditional family structure, particularly when taken with the impact of urbanization and the emphasis on education.²⁰

In addition to being headed by a forward-looking leader whose progressivism was reinforced by religious appeal, Ismaili society had several other characteristics which furthered change. Among these was the basic fact of its being a community of migrants. The very process of migration had encouraged change. To adapt themselves to new conditions, Ismaili migrants had to discard some of their traditional customs and values. Moreover, the drive for improving their material conditions, which made the Ismailis migrate in the first place, also motivated them to accept change. And for the Ismailis, as for other migrants, the weakening of their traditional order had the effect of making them more mobile and giving them a sense of empathy which, in turn, made them receptive to their new environment.

Migrant groups also tend to be closely-knit communities, and the Ismailis were no exception. There was a small community in which most of the members were related by blood or by marriage. As noted earlier, large numbers of Ismailis migrated to Tanzania because they had relatives there. Unlike other Indians, they married and settled permanently in Tanzania, rather than going back to India. Also, the Ismailis are an endogamous group, and the community was small which reinforces the cohesiveness of the community. The implication of this structure for implementing change lies in the ease with which acceptance of new ideas can be diffused: once one member of a family accepted an innovation, his decision would influence others in the kinship network.

Of course, one might ordinarily expect that family cohesiveness would be as effective in discouraging change as in implementing it. And no doubt this is true in societies where the family unit draws support from itself in denying the values of particular changes. But in Ismaili society where change is under the direction of the Aga Khan, it is considered valuable (though not immediately binding upon all individuals). The family unit, therefore, does not serve as a basis of support in denying the value of change. To be sure, change can be--and in Ismaili society, is--feared. But in this case the family unit, bound in trust to the Aga Khan, discourages more than it encourages fear.

While family structure helped pave the way for change, then, it was, in turn, strongly influenced by the change it helped promote. For example, as new business and trade opportunities opened, particularly in the interior, the quest for economic advantage began to take precedence over bonds of kinship in determining where people lived. Similarly, the widening of educational opportunity had substantial impact both in initiating change and in weakening kinship bonds. Once people were better educated and could enter a trade or profession, they were no longer so dependent on the family as an economic unit. The outside world, not merely the primary world of the family, determined their status, success, and livelihood.

Change also occurred in the family. Like most Indians, the Ismailis had perpetuated the extended family structure. It included paternal grandparents, father and mother, paternal uncles and aunts and children, with primary authority resting in the hands of the paternal grandparents as the eldest and most respected. In this context, modernity has had the effect of undermining somewhat the authority of the elders, so that the trend has been toward more "rational obedience" by the younger generation. The change, however, has been a very gradual one; and even today the social structure stresses the importance of respect for elders. Similarly, though various factors have weakened the extended family, the feeling of solidarity and unity on which it was based still prevails.

While the change was fairly gradual, it accelerated after the 1950s. By that time two generations of Ismaili young people had grown up in an Afro-Eurasian atmosphere; most of them had never been to India and had none of the traditional ties their elders remembered. Some of the young people, particularly those under the influence of western education, tended to ignore the conservative attitudes of their elders altogether and went far beyond the rest of their community in adopting western values, including differing conceptions of the family.

Marriage customs have also been more radically affected since the 1950s. Until then, the traditional custom of "arranged marriages" persisted. The parents found a

partner for the girl, basing their choice not on the compatibility and interests of the couple but on the social possibilities which would result from uniting the couple's families. Not only did Ismailis not marry outside the Ismaili community, but there was very little intermarriage between groups of differing social status within it. While emphasis on marrying within the community still exists, the changing role of women has altered the situation to some degree. Now women do have some "freedom of selection," and in most cases they exercise it.

It is interesting to note that these changes in family structure and family practice seem to me, as an observer, to have served in a roundabout way to reinforce the power of religion. As secular changes in custom and structure brought uncertainty and frustration, the Ismailis seem to have looked to their religion for reassurance more readily than before. Correspondingly, the influence and power of the Aga Khan seems to have been enhanced, and with them, his capacity for introducing change acceptable not only to the middle, but also to the younger, generation who have maintained faith in the traditional religion.²¹

Not surprisingly, the same forces which affected individual families had an equally strong impact on the Ismaili community as a whole. Nor is it surprising, given the high degree of stratification within the community, that the effects of this change have varied from group to group. In

fact, since the process of change clearly distinguishes between the rich and influential as decision-makers and the low-income groups as followers, social change has had the effect of reinforcing social stratification. This effect occurs in spite of the fact that the structure of the community in some ways has allowed for upward mobility and for all strata of the community to be involved in decision-making. Yet, the poor have remained passive, reinforced in their roles as nonleaders and nonparticipants, accepting the position as one removed from direct involvement in the affairs of government.

While this situation might seem to support Parsons' argument that "poor people are helpless, which makes them vulnerable objects for exploitation,"²² this is not totally true of the Ismailis. Though there has been little flexibility outside the set rules, the rights of the powerless have been safeguarded within the framework of the constitution. But the right of access to the priority-setting process is not guaranteed, and while the situation is changing, it will take some time before the poor can have a proper say in the community and can directly influence action. It may be that equalizing educational opportunity will ultimately enable the disadvantaged to voice their opinions more effectively and to participate in decision-making more widely. On the other hand, the fact that they have not yet been brought into these activities suggests that the obstacles

to their being heard are built into the political and socio-economic structure and that educational opportunity alone cannot make the difference.

As is nearly always the case in discussing any aspect of Ismaili social structure, comments about the rigidity of social stratification must be qualified. In spite of the differences among groups and in spite of the fact that social change has solidified the position of leaders, Ismaili "culture" still provides a common ground for the upper- and lower-income groups, for the professional and the Businessman, for the traditional and the modern. The Ismailis in Tanzania have evolved a single culture which is neither traditional nor purely African or European in nature, and this common culture has played an important part in enabling social change to transform the society as a whole.²³

Here, again, belief in the authority of the Aga Khan as Imam is extremely important, providing a "common framework of cultures and common orientation towards the basic problems of life."²⁴ As noted earlier, the belief system of the Ismailis is institutionalized and forms an important part of the main social structure. These common values provide a framework within which to operate. People feel responsible for carrying out obligations which are oriented toward a common goal. Consequently, "collective actions" of the people become an habitual act.²⁵

In spite of change, cultural identity is assured in other ways. There are still sanctions to ensure that people accept the institutionalized framework. Although acceptance appears to be voluntary, in reality the constitutional framework allows for little deviation; and, in most cases, people remain bound to it. If a person violates constitutional law, he is summoned to the Provincial Council for questioning. The handling of such misdemeanors is illustrated by the case of Mr. Bhimji, who violated the following provision of the Constitution of 1962:

The bride and the groom jointly or separately may arrange either a reception or a party on the day of the marriage or on the day following. If such reception or party is a joint one, the number of guests shall not exceed 200 persons. . . . guests mean and include family members, relatives and friends.²⁶

Bhimji, quite able to afford a larger celebration than the constitution allowed, and quite determined to observe the wedding of his only son in grand style, decided to invite all his friends, even though this meant violating the guest limit. As a result, he was asked by the Provincial Council to write a letter of apology acknowledging his mistake and promising not to repeat it. The letter was read in the Jamatkhana to discourage the community at large from such offenses.

Since he was a rich man, Bhimji's case also indicates that the constitution is meant to be followed by everyone, regardless of his status in the community. The rule he broke is also an illustration of the cross-over from social mores to constitutional law. The point of the law is to prevent

rich people from spending lavishly on weddings and emphasizing their superiority over the poor who cannot afford such luxury.

Although Provincial Councils have the power to punish members who do not follow constitutional rules and regulations, it is not always the case that men of mutual interests will take such a stand. In theory, individuals can make an appeal to the higher authorities, though this does not often work in practice. Instead, what can happen is that the council members themselves may rally round; as in fact they did when a niece of one of the councillors was married, and the guests invited exceeded the limit set by the constitution. Although people protested the excessive number of guests, and some actually came to the council chamber to raise their protest, the Provincial Council failed to take any action. In spite of this incident, however, the Ismaili community has, by and large, continued to accept community restrictions (perhaps because this is an isolated incident, and most assuredly because few have the power and control to succeed in protecting themselves from the lodging of a complaint).

Besides religion and common values, divergence of language has also been the result of social change.²⁷ As noted, the Ismailis in Tanzania have evolved a culture which is different from the traditional culture, and their language has similarly been modified from the traditional.

Swahili	Gujarati (original)	Gujarati (incorporated)	English
mayai	inda	mayay	eggs
fagio	savarni	fagyo	broom
kuku	margi	kukdo	chicken
machungwa	santra	machunga	oranges
birika	kitli	biriko	tea-pot

In Zanzibar, where the Ismailis have been settled longer, the modification process has gone further. Ismailis there have not only incorporated words like the Ismailis in Tanganyika, but they have also devised a language which is half Gujarati and half Swahili. For instance, instead of saying Kite vineti (Gujarati), they would say Kite (Gujarati) na Kwenda (Swahili), meaning "Where are you going?". There is no standard way of speaking this language. It is spontaneous, reflecting another facet of adjustment to a new environment.

Another factor which is important in determining the shape of change is the socialization process. The Ismaili child was and is consciously inducted into his culture and carefully trained to be a member of his society. The majority of families send their children to the Aga Khan schools, where religion is a compulsory subject and where community members stay together in their own social group. Outside school they attend community functions, and in the evening the Jamatkhana provides communal feeling. This pattern has recently changed to a certain extent because an increasing number of non-Ismailis are entering Aga Khan schools and exposing Ismaili children to different cultures. Ismailis are also

increasingly participating in social activities outside community sponsorship. Still, since most of the Ismaili children undergo the same process of socialization, it seems likely that they will, in Pye's words, "develop roughly similar personalities which constitute the essence of their sense of common cultural identity." This is especially true of Tanzanian-born Ismailis.²⁸

Clearly, the Aga Khan's own willingness to accept new ideas; his skill in translating them into holy firmans and in channeling them through the councils, while communicating with his people at large, were important forces in creating change while perpetuating continuity. He lived at a time when vast changes were occurring, and he realized that the success of his people depended on their capacity for accommodating to these changes while maintaining their cultural identity. As the late Aga Khan himself has said in his Memoirs: "Ismailism has survived because it has always been fluid. Rigidity is contrary to our whole life and outlook."²⁹ It is this "fluidity" of the Ismaili community which has made it the only Indian community in Tanzania living in the twentieth century while retaining its tradition.

FOOTNOTES

¹The Diamond Jubilee was celebrated in March 1946, to mark the sixtieth anniversary of the late Aga Khan's Imamate (1885-1945).

²"The Ismaili Agricultural Society" File outlines in detail the development of Ismaili agricultural schemes in Wami-Magole area. The oral information obtained from A. B. Ladhani, August 19, 1971, Morogoro; and Y. H. Allidina, August 18, 1971, Kimamba. I am particularly grateful to Nizar Manji for the time he spent in taking me to different Ismaili farms in the Wami-Magole area.

³Presidential address presented by D. K. Patel at the conference of the Tanganyikan Indian Chambers of Commerce and Agriculture held at Morogoro on May 18-20, 1947. See The Tanganyika Indian Chambers of Commerce and Agriculture (Dar es Salaam, 1947), pp. 12-19.

⁴"Ismaili Agricultural Society" File. See especially, "Board of Directors of Diamond Jubilee Investment Trust Ltd. minutes re: "Aid to Ismaili Agriculturists: Morogoro/Kilosa/Kimamba Districts." Kaka Kalelkar, Purva Afrikama (In East Africa) (Ahmadavad, 1953), pp. 118-119. Oral information was collected from two farmers--A. B. Ladhani, August 19, 1971, Morogoro, and Y. H. Allidina, August 18, 1971, Kimamba.

⁵"Ismaili Agricultural Society" File, Information was obtained from A. B. Ladhani, August 19, 1971, Morogoro; Y.H. Allidina, August 18, 1971, Kimamba, and H. K. Mitha, June 9, 1971, Dar es Salaam.

⁶"Ismaili Agricultural Society" File, Minutes of the Kilosa Production Committee, June 8, 1951, p. 250A.

⁷Ibid.

⁸The minutes of the meetings of Morogoro and Kilosa Farmers' Association, December 20, 1956, June 12, 1957, and November 19, 1959. See especially, "The Memorandum Submitted to the Deputy Director of Agriculture by the Morogoro and Kilosa Farmers' Association," on September 7, 1957, and which outlines in detail the history and activities of the Morogoro and Kilosa Farmers' Association (prepared by the chairman--Y. H. Allidina).

⁹The Aga Khan Legion (Africa), Address Presented to His Highness Sir Sultan Mahomed Shah Aga Khan on the Occasion of the Presentation of the Platinum Fund on Completion of Seventy Glorious Years of Shia Imami Ismaili Imamate and Reply Given by His Highness Sir Sultan Mahomed Shah Aga Khan (Mombasa, 1955), p. 15.

¹⁰Ibid., pp. 17-18.

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¹²The Aga Khan Legion (Africa), Address, pp. 12-15.

¹³T. Thompson, "Three Faces of Prince Karim, the Fourth Aga Khan: Imam, Sportsman, Entrepreneur," Life, November 17, 1967, p. 51.

¹⁴Zanzibar Voice, June 29, 1952, in "Ismaili Affairs" File 256, collection of A. M. Sadruddin, Nairobi, Kenya.

¹⁵East African Standard, August 18, 1952, Goan Voice, August 9, 1952, clippings in "Ismaili Affairs" File 256, ibid.

¹⁶East African Standard, August 8, 1952, ibid.; "Morogoro Ismaili School" File; oral information was obtained from S. Peerwani, September 15, 1969, and January 29, 1973, Nairobi, Kenya.

¹⁷"Report of the Central Education Committee," March 28, 1939, Tanzania National Archives 28867, pp. 51-52; "Ismaili School Morogoro" File.

¹⁸Oral information was collected from S. Peerwani, September 15, 1969, and January 29, 1973, Nairobi.

¹⁹East African Standard, August 8, 1952, clipping in File 256.

²⁰Most of the information on the role of women was collected from two Ismaili women who were teaching in the late 1940s: Mrs. Sakarbai R. Rajabali and Mrs. Fatmabai A. Kanji, July 9, 1968, and September 2, 1970, Dar es Salaam. The majority of teachers came from the middle class. The role of Ismaili women is very similar to that of the women in Asia. See B. Ward, Women in Asia (Amsterdam: Unesco, 1963), pp. 268-285.

²¹I do not have any evidence to substantiate this statement, but it is based on personal observation.

²²Talcott Parsons, The Social System (Illinois, 1959), p. 445; Everett E. Hagen, On the Theory of Social Change (Chicago, 1962), pp. 65-70.

²³Parsons, The Social System, pp. 14, 33-41; Hagen, On the Theory of Social Change, p. 113.

²⁴S. N. Eisenstadt, Modernization: Protest and Change, Modernization Traditional Societies Series (New Jersey, 1966), p. 136.

²⁵Parsons, The Social System, pp. 99-100.

²⁶The Constitution, 1962, chapter VII, articles 239 to 240, p. 27.

²⁷Max Weber, Theory of Social and Economic Organization (New York, 1964), p. 138; K. W. Deutsch, Nationalism and Social Communication (Cambridge, 1966), pp. 121-125.

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²⁹His Highness the Aga Khan, Memoirs, p. 185.

CHAPTER VIII

CONCLUSION

The Ismaili community has often been described as a "state within a state." With its constitution, its administrative and judicial organizations, its community-run institutions such as hospitals, schools, welfare societies, and its insurance companies and banks, the characterization is not without foundation.

From its first establishment in the early nineteenth century through its development in the 1950s, the economy of this self-sufficient community has been based on trade. Few Ismailis were able to break out of the duka (small shop) economy to establish wholesale houses or to develop trading empires. Internally, cultural restraints imposed by the laws of inheritance tended to break up large businesses by making partners, rather than the family, heirs. Externally, Ismailis have not been able to control the import-export business to their advantage as other Indian groups have. For the most part, then, Ismailis retained the role of middlemen in African trade in their duka economy which, though it created few entrepreneurs, brought prosperity to the early community.

During the colonial period, conflicting economic interests between the territorial governments and the Ismaili community led to concern that the Ismaili duka economy would no longer bring prosperity. A depression in the world market added to this concern. Finding themselves shut off from the financial services and backing they had previously enjoyed, Ismailis tried to meet the difficulty by establishing financial institutions of their own.

It became increasingly obvious, however, that Ismaili prosperity depended on opening up new and ~~different~~ opportunities. Attempts were made to involve individuals in farming. To help the Ismaili farmer, the community once again set up its own institutions. In farming, however, individual initiative did not play the role it had in the trading economy. Farming, based on a cooperative, communal approach, proved to be largely unsuccessful in a community of individual and competitive business interests.

Other opportunities began to appear. Through a new emphasis on education, Ismaili society was able to provide itself with people trained in service occupations--doctors, lawyers, and people of academic and intellectual interests. With an emphasis on westernization, the community hoped to create for itself a new image as a culture no longer self-contained, nonassimilating, and alien. This might enable them to take part more freely in the expanding opportunities.

Ismaili government also changed. Initially it had been very similar to governance by a council of elders. But the community soon established an administrative apparatus whereby issues might be discussed and conflicts heard in accordance with definitely established rules rather than with the "more or less ascertained principles" upon which the council of elders had relied. As the community expanded, so too did the administrative apparatus, in an attempt to coordinate the activities of a more diverse population. Although something of the personal nature of early Ismaili government was lost in the formation of the new administrative system, a sense of justice came to play an important part in the rules governing the procedures of the hierarchy.

Throughout its history, the Ismaili community in Africa has prided itself on its self-reliance. In addition to economic institutions, it created mechanisms whereby the poor might be cared for, schooled, and given medical attention. And, after a slow start, it developed what is generally considered one of the best school systems in the entire Indian community.

With its emphasis on education and the creation of a professional class, social mobility has increased within the Ismaili community. Although the results have not yet been fully felt, patterns of leadership are beginning to change so that it is not the wealthy entrepreneur only who is most fully represented. Adequate income has not, however,

completely lost its power insofar as the educated professional requires access to an educational system that does not address itself to the needs of the poor. Moreover, the community-- both those who are economically successful and those who are poor--still maintains a sense that the poor are not capable; though recognition of the possibility of their active involvement in matters of government concern is slowly beginning to emerge in the community.

The expanding community has brought other changes in social structure. As Ismailis have become more mobile, the authority of the family hierarchy has begun to loosen, although paternal grandparents continue to command a position of respect, wives are still subordinate to their husbands, and children to their elders. But the increasing involvement of women in matters beyond the home, and the action of the young in affairs of government, indicate that Ismaili society is not so tight as it once was. This loosening of hierarchical control in both government and the family suggests that as the Ismaili community continues to expand, a sense of religious identity freed from the administrative control of social matters will come to be the major unifying force in this changing society.

The person most responsible for successfully establishing this self-sufficient community has been His Highness Sir Sultan Mohamed Shah Aga Khan III. With the cooperation of various organizations, he has been able to channel social,

economic, and administrative changes throughout the Ismaili community to make it one of the most progressive and prosperous Asian communities in Tanzania.

Given the traditional aspects of Ismaili society, the crucial agent for initiating change was Aga Khan III. An experienced international statesman, educated in both the Anglo-Indian and Persian traditions and exposed to many cultures, he was unusually well-equipped to isolate societal problems, delineate alternative solutions, determine policy changes acceptable to the people, and direct them toward change. The present Aga Khan, both as unchallenged coordinator of all the people and as a source of ideas about actual changes to be made, continues this tradition of a spiritual leader well-educated in the ways of the world.

As any migrant group, of course, the Ismailis have themselves been instrumental in initiating and accommodating to social changes. In modifying their culture and customs in adjusting to a new society, they have, however, resisted complete assimilation into an alien culture. Thus, change has had the paradoxical effect of altering the community in many ways without essentially changing it.

The fact that Ismailis have accepted change and evolved a culture which is completely different from their original Indian culture does not make them in any way "less" or "more" Ismaili. It is the unified system of belief in the Imam which has provided a group identity. Other factors

have reinforced this cohesion. By enacting court decisions which largely back up those made in Ismaili councils, the colonial government has maintained a policy of noninterference with Ismaili values and customs. Also, since various communal institutions like schools, hospitals, welfare societies, insurance companies, and banks satisfied the needs of all strata in the Ismaili society, the people did not find it necessary to look beyond their community for aid.

The administrative system did by no means perform perfectly. There have been limitations and loopholes, and a few individuals have exploited the system to their advantage. But, with the exception of the conflict of 1899, and with the exception of a few minor internal conflicts and tensions, the community has not only successfully adapted to the new conditions and accepted change, but has also maintained its identity as a resilient and self-reliant people capable of the challenges which lie ahead.

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 21291 Planters' Association, Kilosa
 21761 Indian Association, Kigoma
 21884 Tanganyika Indian Merchants' Conference, Vols. I and II
 22130 Aga Khan School Magazine
 22813 Licensing of Produce Buyers
 23429 Settlers' Association, Morogoro
 23761 Grants-in-aid of Ismailia Schools
 24612 Visit of His Highness the Aga Khan
 24722 Will of late Sewa Hadji
 27863 Khoja Ismaili Affairs
 28302 The Produce Dealers' Association, Dar es Salaam
 31546 Complaint against Officials of the Economic Control
 Board, Vols. I and II
 31665 Complaint against the Control of Distribution of
 Produce, Vols. I and II
 31826 Inter-Territorial Conference of Indians in East Africa
 31834 Eastern Province Producers' Association
 32892 Aga Khan Boarding School
 33126 Piecegoods Wholesalers Group, Dar es Salaam
 35904 Distribution of Piecegoods, Complaint by Lindi Merchants
 36096 Commercial Education in Indian Schools
 36098 Tanganyika Indian Chamber of Commerce and Agriculture
 36127 Import Controls and Trade Restrictions Operated by
 the Economic Control Board
 44126 H.H. the Aga Khan's Nursing and Maternity Home,
 Dar es Salaam

2. District Files

- 215/918 (Bukoba) Indian Association
 68/A6/1 (Singida) Asian Association
 5/25/21 (Moshi) Chamber of Commerce

46/44/11 (Dodoma) Indian Merchants' Association
 73/31/5 (Lushoto) Indian Association
 72/51/3 (Lushoto) Indian Affairs
 180/A6/3 (Kigoma) Indian Association and Muslim Association
 180/A6/7 (Kigoma) Indian Chamber of Commerce
 16/36/21 (Lindi) Khoja-Shia Imami Ismailia Community
 16/36/1 (Lindi) Indian Association
 32/E2/T13 (Lindi) Retailers' Association
 472/COM/5 (Arusha) Indian Community
 45/988 (Tanga) Indian Community
 304/25/27 (Tanga) Retail Merchants' Association
 327/A6/20 (Mbeya) H.H. the Aga Khan Community
 Annual Reports of Different Districts, 1920 to 1950

3. German Files

G1/5 Annual Report, Mwanza
 G1/7 Annual Report, Iringa
 G1/6 Annual Report, Mahenge
 G1/14 Annual Report, Pangani
 G1/29 Trade General, Vol. II
 G32/8 Sewa Hadji

C. Community and Family Papers

Files, minute books, reports--all dealing specifically with the Ismaili community.

Aga Khan School--Morogoro (includes syllabus, and other correspondence).

Ismailia Bulletin--includes copies of "Ismailia Union Bulletin" and "Ismailia-Mission Message," plus other papers dealing with the conflict of 1939.

Minutes of the Morogoro Traders' Corporation, 1950 to 1955.

Minutes of the Board of Directors' Meeting, Dar es Salaam Retail Corporation, Ltd.

Reports of the Ismaili Constitutional Committees of Tanzania, Kenya and Uganda, 1961.

Ismaili Agricultural Society File--includes detailed information on the Ismaili Agricultural Scheme in the Wami-Magole area.

D. Files of Various Indian Organizations*

- Indian Association, 1918--Letters, telegrams and dispatches primarily concerning Indian discontent with the government.
- Indian Association Pre-Hartal File, 1923--Telegrams to Standing Committee and Indian Associations in different upcountry centers.
- Indian Association Hartal File, 1923--Telegrams protesting the Profits Tax Ordinance.
- Indian Association Hartal File, 1923--Telegrams from upcountry centers supporting the strike.
- Indian Association File, 1929-32--Immigration.
- Indian Association File, 1936--Complaint against the Acting District Officer, Mr. A. T. Culwick, of Ifakara.
- Indian Association File, 1940--Applications for passage to Bombay.
- Indian Association File, 1940--Business correspondence with foreign companies.
- Indian Association File, 1942-43--Telegrams protesting against granting produce monopolies, from traders in upcountry centers.
- Indian Association File, 1945-46--Applications for passage to India.
- Indian Association File, 1946--Immigration.
- Minutes of the Settlers' Association, Morogoro (started February 1933).
- Minutes of the Indian Merchants' Chamber, Dar es Salaam, Vols. I to IV.
- Minutes of the Kilosa Production Committee, 1944-1950.
- Minutes of the Morogoro and Kilosa Farmers' Association, January 26, 1956 to December 1959.
- Magole Land Settlement File, 1957.

*The Indian Association Files listed above are not complete and many papers are missing.

Minutes of the Kilosa District Chamber of Commerce, Industry and Agriculture, Kilosa.

Minutes of the Seventh Meeting of the Eastern Province Advisory Council at Morogoro, on December 19 and 20, 1957.

Minutes of the Eighth Meeting of the Eastern Province Advisory Council at Morogoro, on June 24 and 25, 1958.

Minutes of the Ninth Meeting of the Eastern Province Advisory Council at Morogoro, on December 11 and 12, 1958.

Minutes of the Tenth Meeting of the Eastern Province Advisory Council at Morogoro, on December 3 and 4, 1959.

E. Newspapers

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Dar es Salaam Times, Dec. 29, 1923, "Tabora Mwanza Line."

Tanganyika Standard, Jan. 31, 1930, "Aga Khan's Gift to Dar es Salaam. Formal Opening of New Institution: The Progressive Spirit."

Tanganyika Standard, July 19, 1930, "The Agricultural Market."

Tanganyika Standard, Oct. 4, 1930, "Trade Crisis in Tanganyika."

Tanganyika Standard, Mar. 16, 1935, "A Splendid Work: The Sewa Haji Hospital. What It Is and Does."

Zanzibar Voice, June 29, 1952, "Important Conference of Ismailis--Delegates Summoned to Europe by H.H. the Aga Khan."

East African Standard, Aug. 5, 1952, "European Dress."

East African Standard, Aug. 8, 1952, "English to be First Language in Ismaili Schools."

Goan Voice, Aug. 8, 1952, "European Dress for Ismaili Women."

East African Standard, Aug. 12, 1952, "Aga Khan to Return Gift of Platinum to Benefit Ismailis."

F. Censuses

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