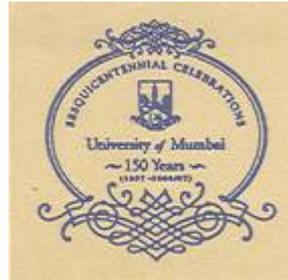


*India and Africa Unique Historical Bonds and Present Prospects, with Special Reference to Kutchis in Zanzibar*

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## **Contents**

<b>Acronyms</b>	<b>i</b>
<b>Resume</b>	<b>ii</b>
<b>Introduction</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>A Map on East African Trade routes</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The Beginning</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>The Causes of Move towards Zanzibar</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>The Settlements in and around Zanzibar</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>The Difficulties Indians faced during the early Nineteenth Century</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Demographic Figures about the Indians in Zanzibar</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>Conclusion</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>Endnotes and References</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>Tables</b>	
Table # 1: Indian Population of Zanzibar town in 1870	12
Table # 2: Indian Population of Zanzibar town in 1873-74	13

## **Acronyms**

MSA : Maharashtra State Archives  
PD : Political Department  
SPD : Secret and Political Department  
Vol. : Volume

## **Resume**

Dr. Chhaya Goswami Bhatt has received her Ph.D in History from the department of History, Mumbai University. Her dissertation entitled *Kutchi Traders in the Indian Ocean c.1800-1880*, focused on a comprehensive study of triangular trading relations developed between Kutch, Muscat and Zanzibar. At present Dr. Goswami has taken up post- doctoral research on the Impact of Piracy on the Trade of Western Coast of India, with reference to the Northern Pirates of Kathiawar and Qwasimi Pirates from the Persian Gulf. Her two research papers at the Indian History Congress were awarded the best paper prizes.

## **Introduction**

The tone, sense, and outcome of the recently concluded Indo-African Forum Summit, evidently indicates a leap forward in the strengthening of India Africa relations. The first-ever Forum Summit that began on the 8th April 2008, discussed varied issues such as; agriculture, trade, industry, investment, peace and security, good governance and information technology. An action plan for development and a political Delhi Declaration on global issues of trade, climate change and United Nations (UN) reforms were adopted at the Summit.

India according to Pranab Mukherjee, Minister of External Affairs, has a natural ally in Africa and a two-million strong Indian diaspora indicates enormous synergies and complementarities.<sup>i</sup> For India, the core emphasis is on South-South cooperation. India has always stressed to work towards democratic tolerance, economic development and social justice. Consequently for Africa, India's friendship is enduring, empowering and energizing.

So far the Pan-African e-network project that seeks to bridge the digital divide between Africa and the rest of the world is one of the far-reaching initiatives undertaken by India. The project covers 53 nations of African Union through a satellite and fiber optic network that will provide effective communication and connectivity among themselves. The project also aims in connecting regional centers in Africa to institutions in India to provide tele-education and tele-medicine facilities.<sup>ii</sup>

Indo African academic and cultural exchange programs are also going strong. The two month long 'Shared Histories Festival' held in 2007 that celebrated India in South Africa, was a great success. Annually over 15000 African students study in India and many qualified Indians live and work in Africa. India in return wants to learn lessons from African environmentalist who have pressed the frontiers of communication on sustainable development.

The bonds that tie India and Africa in contemporary times are historical and time tested. Be it the anti apartheid movement or promotion of the non- aligned movement; India and Africa have worked together. Going back into the nineteenth century the entrepreneurs from India ventured to the coastal regions of Eastern Africa for trading purpose. Though profit making in this resource rich region was their primary motive, their contribution in the expansion of commerce and greater understanding of the culture is noteworthy. Their pioneering inputs during the nineteenth century are enduring and has greater relevance in analyzing present economic relations with Africa

In greater understanding of Indo- African relations, this paper examines the influx and settlements of the mercantile communities of the western coast of India [Kutch] to the Eastern shoreline of Africa [Zanzibar] in the nineteenth century. Kutchis became prominent in East Africa in the nineteenth century and expanded the commerce of that region.

Prior to the bifurcation of East Africa between the British and the Germans [1886] the Eastern littorals and mainland of Africa were composed of present-day Tanzania and Kenya.<sup>iii</sup> Capital of this Omani colony was a very fertile islet of Zanzibar. This town was the central hub of the mercantile activities and presence of numerous nationalities, like that of the Arabs, the Indians, the French, the British, the Americans and including the locals like the Swahilis, the Somalis among others gave a cosmopolitan outlook. The Indians especially the Kutchis both the Hindus and the Muslims were settled in different parts of the Zanzibar dominion including Mogadishu in the north to Kilwa in the south, and all those who visited the island in the nineteenth century noticed their prosperous commercial adventures. The following study has focused largely on the nature of their settlement and demographic distribution of their population in the nineteenth century.



## **The Beginning**

Of all classes connected with the trade of East Africa there is none more influential than the natives of India generally known as "Banians".<sup>iv</sup>

In East African littoral the introduction of the Indian pattern of commerce expanded the coastal trade and linked the economy of interior with the coast. The merchants from India were a vital factor in the economic development of that region. Prior to the nineteenth century their ventures on the coast were limited yet conspicuous. In the fifteenth century at Kilwa, some of the Indian residents were financiers, moneylenders, or goldsmiths. At the other ports from Mogadishu to Zanzibar and Madagascar on the African coast Gujarati merchants were similarly involved in commerce and their presence was noticeable.<sup>v</sup> In the following two centuries the commercial transactions of East Africa with Western India gradually developed. It was during the eighteenth century, the increase of Omani interest at Zanzibar helped the entrepreneurs from Western India to develop substantial business relations with East Africa.

This became feasible in stages. The Portuguese in East Africa were defeated in 1698 by Omani power. Nevertheless the Portuguese took advantage of the civil war in Oman and reoccupied East Africa in 1728. Therefore new Albusaid Sultan Ahmed bin Seyyid, who defeated the Yarriba in the civil war, attempted to re establish his authority in East Africa and sent Omani reinforcements on ships. For that purpose he approached Bania merchants for monetary support.<sup>vi</sup> The Omani interference marked the final expulsion of the Portuguese from there.<sup>vii</sup> Secondly the prosperity of Kilwa persuaded the Albusaid of Oman to take a firmer hold of East Africa. Consequently, in 1785 it was decided by the Sultan to concentrate littoral commerce at Zanzibar and Banias were employed to farm the customs there.<sup>viii</sup>

However the other ports on that littoral did not enjoy same prosperity as of Kilwa, since this boom came to Kilwa with its slave trade with the French. The trade in other

ports was not so extensive in nature. Captain Smee, a British officer in 1811 observed that the prospects of trade of Zanzibar were not much promising. Its main exports were slaves, ivory, bee's wax, and tortoise shell, mostly obtained from mainland. Its chief imports included cloth and earthenware from Kutch and Surat, iron, rice, and sugar from Bombay and dates from the Persian Gulf.<sup>ix</sup> Yet the Indian businesspersons did not leave the East African trade, when it was limited in nature in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century. At that time a few ships made an annual voyage from Mandvi in Kutch, Surat, Bombay, and occasionally from other ports of the Kathiawar and Malabar coasts.<sup>x</sup> One reason behind not leaving the commerce of the region was enhanced by the diversion of the ivory trade from Mozambique, with the early market being entirely to India, which also supplied early European demands from Bombay. According to Prof. Abdul Sheriff the ivory trade was a principal factor responsible for Indian immigration.<sup>xi</sup>

The commerce developed during that early period in Kutch was based on the exchange of produce of the countries like India, Muscat and Zanzibar. For instance Kutch imports were the products of Zanzibar, the Arabian Gulf and the Persian Gulf. These imports were meant for re-exportation in other parts of India except part of the rice, ivory, sugar, iron and spice, which were consumed in Kutch. In return Kutchi merchants exported their own products such as alum, cotton blue piece goods, ghee, grain, horses, and camels. Horses and camels were sent by way of Gujarat all over India, for which they received Mushru and other silk and cotton stuff for their African trade.<sup>xii</sup>

The increased commerce of Mandvi with East Africa raised some doubts in the mind of the British; this is evident through David Seton's, British representative at Kutch observation. He viewed in 1804 Mandvi's mercantile dealings with the coast of Africa "induced a similar connection between it and the French to that of Muscat."<sup>xiii</sup> British were worried on account of Kutch and Muscat's relations with Tipu Sultan, in turn had established relations with the French. This indicates that by the beginning of the nineteenth century Kutchis' business relations and settlement in East Africa was noticeable.

The evidence of Kutchi settlement at Zanzibar is also available through the British officer Captain Smee's Report. He remarked that the trade which existed was in the hands of Arabs from Muscat with a few adventures from Kutch and Sindh. He also observed that a considerable number of Banias, lived in the Zanzibar town and many of them appeared to be wealthy. They controlled the best part of the trade in their hands.<sup>xiv</sup> Kutchi merchant's business connections with East Africa in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century, proved to be instrumental in extending of trading networks between Muscat and Zanzibar.

### **The Causes of Move towards Zanzibar**

Kutchis gradually established their stronghold in the business of Zanzibar by the 1830s. The early success of some of the big business houses like that of the Topans made possible for other Indian traders to trade in this part of the western Indian Ocean. For them these prominent traders became the role models. These principal entrepreneurs not only inspired them to business but also supported them to begin their trade through necessary help.

In addition the rising prospect of commerce of Zanzibar in the 1820s attracted many more in greater number. Zanzibar as an Island along with other ports possessed a good harbour. In fact, Zanzibar occupied an important economic position because of its intermediate location between East African ports, and its large navigable port which made it safer to dock there than at other coastal sites.<sup>xv</sup> The resources of Zanzibar provided to the foreign merchants an extensive scope in the commodity exchange trade. The produce of the country included ivory, cloves, gum copal, coconuts, bee wax, orchilla weeds, tortoiseshell, rhinoceros hide and skin. To such productive island it is worth to associate one Swahili jingle, which goes like this:

Zanzibar bandari liari  
Kila sheri tayari.<sup>xvi</sup>

Literally, in Zanzibar harbour, the choice of everything was available, or more freely, "everything is found in Zanzibar, the best of all, near and far."<sup>xvii</sup>

The merchants in such a fertile islet required political backing, which Seyyid Said, the Imam of Muscat, provided. The Sultan had put Indians under his protection and allowed them to use his flag. Under Sultan Seyyid Said the Bhatia and other Hindu business classes, along with the Muslim Khojas, Bohras, and Memons were encouraged to set up establishment in his East African dominion. They were given protected status and allowed to enter the Arab dominated enterpot trade.<sup>xviii</sup> The Sultan himself wanted to move from Muscat in search of better revenue. Having succeeded his father Sultan bin Said in 1807, he was trapped in the crisis with Wahabis and Qawasim pirates till 1820. In the 1820s he directed his attention towards East Africa. Where during the struggle with the Mazuri of Mombasa in 1820s and 1830s he observed the dimension of Zanzibar's trade, which could provide him a lucrative income if managed properly.<sup>xix</sup> Besides, compared to Muscat Zanzibar's climate was pleasant and cool. To obtain peace from the Gulf politics and to increase revenue of his state, he decided to move his seat of government to Zanzibar in 1840.<sup>xx</sup> But he had initiated the process earlier.

One such effort was the signing of treaty with America. This treaty of 1833 between Muscat and America increased the commerce of Zanzibar to such an extent that it became the leading emporium of trade of the western Indian Ocean during the period under research. Thereafter the treaties signed with Britain in 1839, with France in 1844 strengthened this commercial position of Zanzibar.<sup>xxi</sup>

The Americans in the 1820s began trading with Majunga [situated on the western side of the island of Madagascar] Madagascar and eventually with Zanzibar.<sup>xxii</sup> Between September 1832 and May 1834, 32 out of 41 vessels visiting the port were American. Twenty of these vessels had hailed from Salem, three each from New York and Boston, and rest from other American ports. Seven ships came from Britain and one each from France and Spain.<sup>xxiii</sup> After the treaty of 1833, the American consulate

was established in Zanzibar in 1837. This subsequently accelerated the mercantile traffic of Zanzibar with America. That increase helped Indians as well. For them new avenues in the mercantile field were opened. In 1840 Elbridge Kimball, a merchant from Salem reported:

There has been quite an excitement in Zanzibar amongst the trading community caused by the *Cherokee's* coming on top of the *Rolla*, with such a large quantity of goods. A French Brig came in at the same time, made quite a fleet. The Banians held meeting and advanced the price of goods most roundly.<sup>xxiv</sup>

Although the entry of Americans and Europeans provided competition to them, the Indians retained the management of greater part of import export trade in their hands, by playing the different role as the broker, investor, agent, retailer, middleman, wholesaler, shopkeeper and above all as the customs collector. They gave loans against mortgages, some of them were in the export business, and Arab landlord employed others as bookkeepers and financial controller. They were also petty traders. Gradually except for a few, the Arabs lost their economic power and became dependent upon the financial and commercial expertise of the Indians. Eventually the Arabs found themselves only owners of lands and with the monopoly of political power.<sup>xxv</sup> This was so, because certain Arabs were reckless borrowers and were not concerned about the repayment of the loans. Consequently, money lending was risky, and, as a result, moneylenders charged high rates of interest.<sup>xxvi</sup> This suggests the effectiveness of Indian capital and its use in the expansion of commerce.

The other factors such as the general peace in Europe, and the final suppression of piracy, especially the latter factor cleared the danger to the commerce of the Indian Ocean.<sup>xxvii</sup> In such worthwhile circumstances the Kutchis and other merchants from western India developed business with Zanzibar. This resulted into increase in the number of Indian residents on Zanzibar Island from 200 by 1819 to 1000 by the end of 1840s.<sup>xxviii</sup>

## The Settlements in and around Zanzibar

In 1800 most Indians to Zanzibar had come for temporary visits; a decade later many of them settled on a permanent basis and their number grew along with the value of the island's commerce. Bohras and Khojas were among the early visitors in this coast. In the middle of the eighteenth century the first Bohras of Surat settled in Zanzibar. They next formed 'trading Stations' on the East African littorals between Lamu and Pate.<sup>xxx</sup> Few Khojas moved north of Mombasa. After about 1820 most of the Hindus from Kutch immigrated to Zanzibar.<sup>xxx</sup> Among the Bohras the first business family to live in Zanzibar was a Surti family from Surat. They settled at Mkunazini and had a burial chamber there. As they were small in number, they later mixed with the Memons to bury their relatives.<sup>xxxi</sup> The Bohras were numerous in Mombasa. Though initial settlers were from Surat and Cambay, the later arrivals were almost entirely from Kutch.<sup>xxxii</sup> The Bohras who resided in Lamu had their own mosque and burial grounds and formed a special community, since their families usually accompanied them when they emigrated from Kutch and Surat.<sup>xxxiii</sup> Although they devoted their energies to commercial enterprise, many of them were artisans.<sup>xxxiv</sup>

The other group which settled in Zanzibar with their families were the Khojas. They were from Kutch and Kathiawar. The Khojas were much more assimilated into community life. Since they came with their families, they became numerous in Zanzibar, forming some 10 per cent of the town's population by 1861, and were mainly shopkeepers. Although some achieved great influence and fortunes, they seldom developed the political influence of the Banias.<sup>xxxv</sup> These followers of Aga Khan reached East Africa in as early as 1800. They carried on a remunerative business in local and foreign merchandise. They chose a large gravesite at Kizingo adjacent to Mnazi Mmoja. Where as Sunni Memons used a burial site outside the town on the jail road.<sup>xxxvi</sup> The Swahilis called the Indian Muslim merchants *Wahindi*.<sup>xxxvii</sup>

Bhatias were amongst the early immigrants to trade in Zanzibar and represented the Hindu population. The Hindus were moneylenders and brokers as well as merchants.

They burnt their dead at the Kringani burning ghat near the sea.<sup>xxxviii</sup> They lived without their families. It was common among them to live and trade in Zanzibar for four to five consecutive years and then return to their own place in Kutch for a year and come back.<sup>xxxix</sup> Thus their stay at East Africa was temporary in nature and that is why they were known as the "birds of passage". They were known as '*Wabanyani*' to coastal people.<sup>xl</sup> The Somalis called them "Milch Cows".<sup>xli</sup> In Zanzibar they occupied small shops. They led a simple life, and commenced work early in the morning and worked nearly all days. Most of them lived in modest houses in the bazaar zone of the Zanzibar town behind the sea front.<sup>xlii</sup> They used to drink water directly from the well where as the rest of the population including Indian Muslims, European, and Americans used water, which slave girls brought in earthen jars into the town.<sup>xliii</sup> Hindus for religious reasons used white un-crystallized sugar.<sup>xliv</sup> Among the Hindu, Bhatias were numerous and the wealthiest class. As in Muscat they did not mingle with the local population. They adhered to the same religious practices, style of dressing, vegetarian diet, in a word the same lifestyle as they followed in Muscat or Kutch.<sup>xlv</sup> It seems their strict following to their religion restricted their assimilation. They were guided by the codes set up by their Mahajan. In fact the Bhatia firms were closely related to the organisation of the Bhatia Mahajan. Since like the Mahajan the prominent traders organised religiously prescribed diets, provided suitable accommodation for the community members and arbitrated disputes.

The Baniyas possessed all the privileges enjoyed by the Muslims. They were free to practice their religion and burn their dead and wear the turban. They had one temple in Zanzibar city and would get together for the feasts and religious ceremonies in gardens in the vicinity of the town.<sup>xlvi</sup> They celebrated the Diwali festival by lighting up all their houses and the principal streets in the evening. It was considered an honour to be invited to the principal houses. The owners [the host] and the visitors were found attired in the cleanest and the whitest of very fine linen, with scarlet and gold turbans; sweetmeats and refreshments were served to the assembled company and a dance was performed.<sup>xlvii</sup> They were a peaceful community. This quality of the Baniyas was observed and praised by almost all contemporaries irrespective of class, caste, country, or religion.

Overall at Zanzibar the Arabs, the Indian Muslims, the Banias represented the higher and the middle class of the society. These classes owned the estates, ships and the trade.<sup>xlviii</sup> In Mombasa the town was divided into the two portions. In one lived the Arab families and the Indian merchants. In the other portion the older Swahili inhabitants and their followers.<sup>xlix</sup> At Zanzibar the narrow streets, the narrow shops and narrow window of bazar were set up in the usual oriental style, provides evidence of their extensive settlements and influence.<sup>1</sup>

### **The Difficulties Indians faced during the early Nineteenth Century**

British officer Captain Smee, who visited Zanzibar in 1811 received complaints from Surat merchants about the extortion by Yakut, the then governor of Zanzibar.<sup>li</sup> The French had a similar experience when they had established trade with Zanzibar around 1800.<sup>lii</sup>

In their initial settlement at Mombasa in the 1820s and 1830s when it was under the Mazuri chief, the Indians suffered much hardship. The Banias were by that time the most prosperous people, who financed much of the commerce. But the higher classes of Arabs cheated them out of their property. Thus their situation was insecure as the more powerful Arab family members sometimes defrauded them.<sup>liii</sup> Captain Owen, the British officer, observed that during his visit to Mombassa, the late Sheikh who died owed to the Banias 12000 dollars and the ruling Sheikh had imprisoned one who refused to deal with him on credit.<sup>liv</sup> Even at Zanzibar some Arabs behaved in the same way.

Prior to 1833 the Sultan signed no treaties so duty was levied according to the Arab customs and convention. Accordingly the Arab paid five per cent duty where as the Banias sometime paid as high as 20 per cent. The Banias also paid a high proportion of the irregular levies and obeyed the commands of the Sultan, when he had particular need for money to finance his war against the Wahabis or other opponents.<sup>lv</sup> The

circumstances improved when the Bhatias regularly collected the customs duties from 1818. It is likely that their taking over of the customs must have attracted others to trade with Zanzibar. In the late 1830s with the submission of Mazuri of Mombasa; the treaties with America and Britain followed by the consulate establishment, the confidence to trade with Zanzibar increased. This attracted many Kutchis to the port. In 1833 Ruschenberger observed 350 Bantias in Zanzibar.<sup>lvi</sup>

The Indian mercantile immigration to Zanzibar, which then began continued throughout the period under research. This is evident in the complaint made by the first British Consul Atkins Hamerton to the Bombay Government in 1844. He found that the vessels, which arrived from Bombay and Kutch, had the British colour but did not contain necessary documents and passes to use the British flag. He suspected that they did so to avoid payment of duty. Moreover they would wear the Arab flag in their ships at the other ports of the littoral for their advantage. Between January to March 1844 five such vessels of different types [Kotiya, Nowdi, and Bugela] came from Kutch or Bombay.<sup>lvii</sup> It is an indication of the increase in Zanzibar's commercial relations with Kutch and Bombay. The following discussion gives an insight on the actual breakup of the Indian settlements in the second half of the nineteenth century.

### **Demographic Figures about the Indians in Zanzibar**

In 1859 Rigby, British Consul at Zanzibar estimated the population of Indians, around 5000 to 6000 and he reported it was increasing.<sup>lviii</sup> It seems Rigby made a rough estimate of the number of Indian residents. This is evident through the administration reports. In 1870 John Kirk estimated the population of the Indians at 3,657 in Zanzibar.<sup>lix</sup> There were 2,558 Khojas within the Zanzibar dominions. The Consul reported that there were 535 Khoja families and 700 married females in the Zanzibar population of 2100 Khojas at Zanzibar town. In 1840 there were only 165 families and 26 married women. This shows that the Khojas had multiplied six-fold during 1840-1870. Moreover the married and settled portion had increased at a still greater ratio. This increase owed to the

arrival of emigrants from Kutch.<sup>lx</sup> The following table shows the distribution of the total Indian population of Zanzibar town in 1870.

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**Table # 1**  
**Indian Population of Zanzibar town in 1870**

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<b>Caste</b>	<b>Males</b>	<b>Females</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Hindu</b>	200	0	200
<b>Khoja</b>	1400	700	2100
<b>Bohra</b>	75	65	140
		Grand total	2440

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**Source:** John Kirk, acting Political Agent and Consul, Zanzibar, to W. Wedderburn, acting Secretary to the Government, Bombay, # 54/ 167 of 1870, 18<sup>th</sup> July 1870, Administrative Report for 1869-1870, MSA, PD, Vol. # 142 1871, pp.15-17.

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In the rest of Zanzibar dominion, Hindus were 274, Khojas were 458, and Bohras were 335 [both male and female, and children excluded]. This means Indian preferred to stay within Zanzibar town proper than the other towns. Memons were in 250 in numbers all over the dominion.<sup>lxi</sup>

The Indian population by a report of 1874 was reckoned at 4198. The distribution of the population was uneven, in some places Bhatias were in a majority and in some Khojas or Bohras or Memons. In Zanzibar town the total population of Indians in 1873-1874 was as follows.<sup>lxii</sup>

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**Table # 2**  
**Indian Population of Zanzibar town in 1873-74**

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Caste	Males	Females	Children	Total
Hindu	314	0	0	314
Khoja	850	650	725	2225
Bohra	109	78	131	318
Memon	15	10	16	41
			Grand Total	2898

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**Source:** W. F. Prideaux, officiating Political Agent and Consul General, to C. U. Aitchison, Secretary to Government of India, 8<sup>th</sup> February 1875, Zanzibar, Administrative Report for 1873-74, MSA, PD, Vol. # 294 1875, p. 2.

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Out of this the greater numbers of Hindus or Baniyas resided on the mainland were merely agents for the houses and had their headquarters at Zanzibar. They were about 500 in numbers, at the average two to a house. Out of this Hindu Bhatias and Wania mainly resided in Zanzibar territories for few years. Very few Khoja women lived in Mrima.<sup>lxiii</sup> According to J. Fredric Elton at Dar-es-Salam Baniyas were more than Indian Muslims they were 15 in number whereas Khojas and Bohras were three each. At Magogoni, which was near Dar es Salam, Baniyas were around 13 and only 3 Khojas lived. At Tuliani they were in equal numbers, 10 Khojas and 11 Baniyas.<sup>lxiv</sup> At Kwale district there was equal distribution of 34 Bhatia and 34 Khojas noted, but only 3 Bohras. It seems the Baniyas and Khojas never lived in the same quarter in the interior. For instance Kitmangao there were 9 houses of Khojas and 6 of Bhatias, but the Khojas lived on one side of swamp and the Bhatias lived on the other.<sup>lxv</sup> At Samanga Bhatia and Baniyas were 15 whereas there were only 2 Khojas.<sup>lxvi</sup> In the towns of the littoral again the variation was noticed. At Kilwa there were 59 Khojas, 3 Memons and 25 Bhatias. At Kiswarra 2 Bhatias and one Khoja and at Mchinga ratio of 2:0 Bhatia and Khoja respectively. At Lindy 11:5, and at Mkindani 11:11.<sup>lxvii</sup> At Bagamoya there were 18 Khojas and 19 Bhatia and 2 Memons. Whereas 16 Bhatias, 3 Khojas and 2 Bohras formed the population of

Bugani.<sup>lxviii</sup> Thus at larger ports a few representative of all caste were found. But generally one or other caste was found to preponderate at all the smaller ports. For instance the Hindus were most numerous at and near Zanzibar. The Khojas were in more numbers on the island and mainland of the equatorial regions and the Bohras to the south in Madagascar and to the north in Galla and Somali land.<sup>lxix</sup>

Apart from trade other factors like security and climate of the place, were considered for settlements. Once Sultan Seyyid Said shifted his seat of government to Zanzibar and the British consul was appointed in the 1840s there was constant influx of Indians to Zanzibar, as merchants were assured of their lives and property. From Zanzibar they eventually penetrated to Pemba. The distance of the island from the trade route and its unwholesome climate acted as an impediment, and consequently Indians did not go there in large numbers.<sup>lxx</sup> Yet in 1846 in Pemba Island there were 50 Gujarati merchants present.<sup>lxxi</sup> Even at a place called Mafia J. F. Elton found one Indian resident. Mafia although fertile, was considered as unhealthy and many of the owners of the land there chose to live at Chole.<sup>lxxii</sup> The other factors also influenced settlement of Indians. For instance Khojas were most numerous in the town and lesser in the mainland and interior because they lived with their families. The importance of Merka a town 58 miles north of Brava was rapidly increasing during the 1870s and it was expected that it would become a colony of the Indians. They had long wished to bring their wives and families to the healthy port. But were deterred by the fear of the Somalians. When the Sultan had provided Merka with a strong force for its protection, Indians moved there in considerable numbers. Even the Hindus talked of obtaining a dispensation from their *Raja* [King] to permit them to bring their families to Merka.<sup>lxxiii</sup>

There was great inflow of the Indians in the second part of the nineteenth century in Zanzibar. In 1859 Khojas and Bohras inhabited the new quarter of Zanzibar. Each Bugela from Kutch during that period usually brought a number of Khoja families as settlers. Their children born on the coast knew only Kiswahili.<sup>lxxiv</sup>

## **Conclusion**

Indian involvement in trade resulted in the formation of settlement in and around Zanzibar. These merchants in their process of settlement influenced the set up of bazaar and houses of the nineteenth century Zanzibar town. During their stay in Zanzibar whether periodical or permanent, Kutchis retained a particular sense of cultural identity. The Hindus were guided by the codes of conduct of their respective communities and their strict adherence to their religion restricted their assimilation. Representations of the establishment of communities and the conduct of trade and nature of their settlement are important elements in understanding the culture and custom. Some of the Indians even adopted Swahili as their first language. This shows the impact of local culture on the migrants. In short as in Muscat, the Indians in Zanzibar were an essential part of the East African economy and society.

In the modern times, the study of such influential class of the Kutchi merchants explains that many generations of Indians in East Africa were inspired to make great fortunes. These merchants who were an integral part of the Indian Ocean network left behind a deep impact. What began as a commercial adventure in the nineteenth century and a period prior to that, has been transformed into a great Indian influence in Africa in number of areas covering people to people exchange, promotion of tourism, e-network, cultural interaction, academic contacts, environmental awareness, and above all economic cooperation. To meet the challenges of the new millennium this kind of shared vision based on trust and goodwill is indeed essential. This unique historical bond is helpful in understanding the changing needs of people of the Indian sub-continent and the African continent in the era of globalization. As a final word India must not lose sight of Africa. Minister of state for external affairs, Shri Anand Sharma summed up these linkages very succinctly at the April 2008 Summit and stated : “one does not forget old friends.”<sup>lxxv</sup>

## Endnotes and References

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<sup>i</sup>Inaugural Dr.DharmPal Memorial Lecture Pranab Mukherjee on “India and Africa Strong Bonds and Future Prospects” August 11 2007, Observer Research Foundation , New Delhi, in Africa Quarterly Vol. 47 Aug-Oct 2007, p. 75

<sup>ii</sup> Manish Chand , “Say India in Sudan.” , in Africa Quarterly Vol. 47 Aug-Oct 2007, p. 69

<sup>iii</sup> In the treaty of 1886, Germany renounced its claims on the Witu area (on Kenya's coast, north of Mombasa) and on Uganda, and Britain recognized Germany's claim to what was to become German East Africa. In another treaty of 1890, Germany traded the islands of Zanzibar and Pemba for the much smaller island of Heligoland, off Germany's coast in the North Sea. The Germans bought off the Sultan of Zanzibar's rights to the Tanganyikan coast for \$800,000.

<sup>iv</sup> Memorandum by Sir Bartle Frere regarding Banians or Natives of India in East Africa Sir Bartle Frere to Earl Granville, Enclosure # 51, 7<sup>th</sup> May 1873, Poona, MSA , PD Vol. V # 114, 1873, p.198.

<sup>v</sup>Genevieve Bouchon and Denys Lombard, 'Indian Ocean in the Fifteenth Century,' Ashin Das Gupta and M. N. Pearson [ed.], *India and the Indian Ocean 1500-1800*, Oxford University Press, New Delhi, 1999, p. 56.

<sup>vi</sup> M. Redha Bhacker, *Trade and Empire in Muscat and Zanzibar, Roots of British Domination*, Routledge, London and New York, 1992, p.13.

<sup>vii</sup>Lieutenant Colonel S. B. Miles, Biographical Sketch of the Late Seyyid Saeed-Bin-Sultan Imam of Muscat, E. C. Ross, Report of Administration of Persian Gulf Political Residency and Muscat Political Agency for the year 1883-84, MSA, PD, Vol. # 131 1885, pp. 27-28.

<sup>viii</sup> M. D. D. Newitt, 'East Africa and Indian Ocean Trade', 1500-1800, Ashin Das Gupta and M. N. Pearson [ed.], *India and the Indian Ocean 1500-1800*, Oxford University Press, New Delhi, 1999, p.219.

<sup>ix</sup> Coupland R., *East Africa and Its Invaders*, The Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1938, p.182.

<sup>x</sup> Memorandum by Sir Bartle Frere regarding Banians or Natives of India in East Africa Sir Bartle Frere to Earl Granville, Enclosure # 51, 7<sup>th</sup> May 1873, Poona, MSA, PD Vol. V # 114, 873, p.199.

<sup>xi</sup>John Wilkinson, *The Imamate Tradition of Oman*, Cambridge University press, Cambridge, 1987, p. 55.

<sup>xii</sup> Captain David Seton to the Governor of Bombay, 4<sup>th</sup> January 1803, Mandvi, SPD[Secret and Political Dept] Diary # 134 of 1803, p. 195.

<sup>xiii</sup> David Seton, to the Governor of Bombay, 23<sup>rd</sup> March 1804, Mandvi, MSA, SPD, Diary # 156, 1804, p.1313.

<sup>xiv</sup> Captain T. Smee and Lieutenant Hardy, 'Observation during a voyage of Research on the East Coast of Africa from Cape Guardafui south to the Island of Zanzibar in the H. C's cruiser Ternate', the Secretary [ed.] *Transactions of the Bombay Geographical Society* from September 1841 to May 1844, Vol. # VI, the Times Press, Bombay, p. 45.

<sup>xv</sup> Pamela Caser-Vine, *Oman in History*, Immel Publishing limited, London, 1995, p. 476.

<sup>xvi</sup> Justus Strandes, *The Portuguese period in East Africa*, translated from the German by Jean. F. Wallaork, East African Literature Bureau, Nairobi, Dar es Salam, Kampala, 1961-62-63, p. 120.

<sup>xvii</sup> Ibid.

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<sup>xviii</sup> John Wilkinson, op. cit., p. 64.

<sup>xix</sup> Mazuri were originally Omani tribe that had established hereditary rule over Mombasa during the Yarriba period. Mazuri governor of Mombassa in 1744 renounced the authority of Oman. There after began the struggle between the Mazuri and Al Busaidi dynasty, which lasted till 1837 when finally Seyyid Said subdued the Mazuri.

<sup>xx</sup> For the political history of Imam of Muscat in Zanzibar see, Coupland R., *East Africa and Its Invaders*, The Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1938; See also Captain C. H. Stigand, *The Land of Zinj, Being an account of British East Africa*, Constable & Company ltd., London, 1913.

<sup>xxi</sup> Ibid, p. 314.

<sup>xxii</sup> Isaacs Nathaniel, *Travels and Adventures in Eastern Africa*, in 2 volumes, Edward Churton, London, 1836, pp. 360-361.

<sup>xxiii</sup> W. S. W. Ruschenberger, *Narrative of a Voyage Round the World During the Years 1835-36-37, Including a Narrative of an Embassy to The Sultan of Muscat and the King of Siam*, Vol. I, Richard Bentley New Burlington Street, London, 1838, p.66.

<sup>xxiv</sup> Mohammed Sulaiman Al-Khudari, *The Sultanate of Muscat and the United States*, [Ph. D. thesis], University of Essex, September 1989, p. 33.

<sup>xxv</sup> Amir A. Mohammed, *A Short History of Zanzibar*, Al Khariya Press Ltd., Zanzibar, 1991, p. 3.

<sup>xxvi</sup> Benjamin N. 'Trading activities of Indians in East Africa [with special reference to slavery] in the nineteenth century', Dharma Kumar, *The Indian Economic and Social History Review*, XXXV # 4, Sage Publications, New Delhi, October- December 1998, p. 411-412.

<sup>xxvii</sup> Bartle Frere, op. cit., p. 199.

<sup>xxviii</sup> Norman R. Bennett, *A History of the Arab State of Zanzibar*, Methuen co ltd., London, 1978, p. 30.

<sup>xxix</sup> John Kirk, acting Political Agent, Zanzibar, Administration Report of the Zanzibar Agency, 1870, MSA, PD, Vol. # 1871, p. 16.

<sup>xxx</sup> Marguerite Ylvisaker, *Lamu in the Nineteenth Century*, African Research Studies Centre, Boston University, 1979, p. 22.

<sup>xxxi</sup> Abdul Sheriff, Mosque, 'Merchants, and Landowners in Zanzibar Stone Town', Abdul Sheriff [ed.] *The History and Conservation of Zanzibar Stone Town*, James Curry, London, 1995, p.74.

<sup>xxxii</sup> The Political Agent and Consul, Zanzibar, to C. U. Aitchison, Secretary to the Government of India, Foreign Department, # 78, 6<sup>th</sup> November 1873,MSA, PD, Vol. III # 231 1873, p. 263

<sup>xxxiii</sup> Marguerite Ylvisaker, op. cit., p. 23

<sup>xxxiv</sup> Abdul Sheriff, op. cit., p. 75.

<sup>xxxv</sup> John Wilkinson, op. cit., p. 64.

<sup>xxxvi</sup> Abdul Sheriff, op. cit., p. 75.

<sup>xxxvii</sup> Marguerite Ylvisaker, op. cit., p. 23

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- <sup>xxxviii</sup> Abdul Sheriff, op. cit., p. 75.
- <sup>xxxix</sup> Ruschenberger, op. cit., p.42.
- <sup>xl</sup> Marguerite Ylvisaker, op. cit., p. 23
- <sup>xli</sup> Richard F. Burton, *First Footsteps in East Africa and on an Exploration of Harar*, Longman, Brown, Green, & Longman, London 1856, p. 442.
- <sup>xlii</sup> Abdul Sheriff, op. cit., p. 48.
- <sup>xliii</sup> John Kirk, Political Agent and Consul, Zanzibar, to C. Gonne, Secretary to the Government, Bombay, # 24/52 of 1870, 15<sup>th</sup> March 1870, MSA, PD, Vol. # 144 1870, pp. 132.
- <sup>xliv</sup> J. Frederic Elton, *Travels and Researches among The Lake and Mountains of Eastern and Central, Africa*, John Murray, London, 1879, p. 52.
- <sup>lv</sup> Richard Burton, *Zanzibar City, Island And Coast*, Tinsley brother, London, 1872, p. 106.
- <sup>lvi</sup> C. P. Rigby, Political Consul, Zanzibar, to the Secretary to Government, Bombay, the Administrative Report of Zanzibar for 1859, MSA, PD, Vol. # 158 1860, p. 42; See also J. F. Elton, op. cit., p. 34, Fredric Elton describes it as "a pointed temple of Hindu architecture." The Gujarati books of Dulerai Karani and Sampat Dugarshi Dharamshi mentions that the Hindu traders were permitted to construct the temple at Zanzibar by the Sultan but they politely declined the offer.
- <sup>lvii</sup> J. F. Elton, op. cit., p.68.
- <sup>lviii</sup> Henry M. Stanley, *How I found Livingstone, Travels Adventures and Discoveries Central Africa*, William Claes and sons, Stanford street and Charing Cross, London, 1872. p. 9.
- <sup>lix</sup> Sir Bartle Frere, Memorandum on the Position and Authority of the Sultan of Zanzibar, 17th April 1873, Enchantress, off Makran Coast, MSA, PD, Vol. IV# 297 1875, p. 109. Swahili people were half Arabs and half Africans.
- <sup>i</sup> J. F. Elton, op. cit., p. 50.
- <sup>ii</sup> Translation of a petition from Lalchund Bhai and others to Captain Smee, 31<sup>st</sup> March 1811, Zanzibar, MSA, PD Dairy # 380, 1811, p. 4878.
- <sup>iii</sup> Captain P. Dallons, 'Zanzibar in 1804,' G. S. P. Freeman-Grenville, *The East African Coast*, Clarendon press, Oxford, 1962, pp. 198-200. Captain Dallon was a settler in Bourbon and it is probable that he had made number of voyages to Kilwa and Zanzibar prior to 1804.
- <sup>liii</sup> Captain W. F. W. Owen, *Narrative of Voyages to Explore the Shores of Africa, Arabia, and Madagascar*, Vol. II, London, Richard Bentley, New Burlington Street, 1833, p. 155.
- <sup>liv</sup> Ibid, p. 150.
- <sup>lv</sup> Kenneth Ingham, *A History of East Africa*, Longmans, Green and co. ltd., London, 1965, p. 22.
- <sup>lvi</sup> Ruschenberger, op. cit., p. 42.
- <sup>lvii</sup> Atkins Hamerton, British Consul, Zanzibar, to J. P. Willoughby, Secretary to the Government, Bombay, #13 1844, Zanzibar, MSA, PD, Vol. # 56/1589 1844, pp. 183-187.

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<sup>lviii</sup> C. P. Rigby, Political Consul, Zanzibar, to Secretary to Government, Bombay, Administrative Report of Zanzibar for 1859, MSA, PD, Vol. # 158 1860, p. 31.

<sup>lix</sup> John Kirk, acting Political Agent and Consul, Zanzibar, to W. Wedderburn, acting Secretary to the Government, Bombay, # 54/ 167 of 1870, 18<sup>th</sup> July 1870, Administrative Report for 1869-1870, MSA, PD, Vol. # 142 1871, p. 1.

<sup>lx</sup> Ibid, p. 15.

<sup>lxi</sup> Ibid, pp. 15-17.

<sup>lxii</sup> W. F. Prideaux, officiating Political Agent and Consul General, to C. U. Aitchison, Secretary to Government of India, 8<sup>th</sup> February 1875, Zanzibar, Administrative Report for 1873-74, MSA, PD, Vol. # 294 1875, p. 2.

<sup>lxiii</sup> Ibid.

<sup>lxiv</sup> J.F. Elton, 1<sup>st</sup> Assistant to Political Agent and Consul General, Zanzibar, to Captain Prideaux, acting Political Agent and Consul General, Zanzibar # 1, 14<sup>th</sup> December 1873, Dar Es Salam, MSA, PD, Vol. # 279 1874, pp. 5 6-57.

<sup>lxv</sup> J. F. Elton, 1<sup>st</sup> Assistant to Political Agent and Consul General, Zanzibar, to Captain Prideaux, acting Political Agent and Consul General, Zanzibar, # 8, 8<sup>th</sup> January 1874, Isle of Chole, ibid, pp. 167-169.

<sup>lxvi</sup> J. F. Elton, 1<sup>st</sup> Assistant to Political Agent and Consul General, Zanzibar, to Captain Prideaux, acting Political Agent and Consul General, Zanzibar, # 11, 10<sup>th</sup> February 1874, Kilwa Kiwanji, ibid, p. 204.

<sup>lxvii</sup> J. F. Elton, 1<sup>st</sup> Assistant to the Political Agent and Consul General, Zanzibar, to Captain Prideaux, acting Political Agent and Consul General, Zanzibar, # 12, 17<sup>th</sup> February 1874, Kilwa Kiwanji, ibid, pp. 208-209.

<sup>lxviii</sup> J. F. Elton, 1<sup>st</sup> Assistant to the Political Agent and Consul General, Zanzibar, to Captain Prideaux, acting Political Agent and Consul General, Zanzibar, # 12, 18<sup>th</sup> March 1874, Zanzibar, ibid, pp. 244-245.

<sup>lxix</sup> Sir Bartle Frere, Memorandum op. cit., p. 200.

<sup>lxx</sup> Craster J. E. E., *Pemba the Spice Island of Zanzibar*, T. Fisher Unwin, London, 1913, p. 129.

<sup>lxxi</sup> Rajgor ShivPrasad, *Gujaratno Rajkiya Ane Sanskrutik Itihas*, University Book Production Board, Gujarat State, Ahmedabad, 1975, p. 54.

<sup>lxxii</sup> J. F. Elton, op. cit., p. 94.

<sup>lxxiii</sup> W. F. Prideaux, officiating Political Agent and Consul General, to C. U. Aitchison, Secretary to Government of India, 8<sup>th</sup> February 1875, Zanzibar, Administrative Report for 1873-74, MSA, PD, Vol. # 294 1875, p. 22.

<sup>lxxiv</sup> C. P. Rigby, Political Consul, Zanzibar, to the Secretary to Government, Bombay, Administrative Report of Zanzibar for 1859, MSA, PD, Vol. # 158 1860, pp. 32-33.

<sup>lxxv</sup> Seema Sirohi, "The Trouble With Goodwill Hunting", in *Outlook*, April 8-14 2008, p 26

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