

MICHAEL F. LOFCHIE

Zanzibar

Background to Revolution

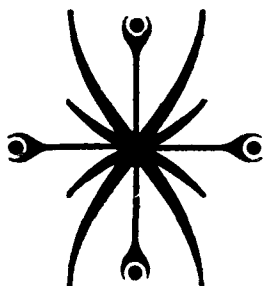


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ZANZIBAR
BACKGROUND TO REVOLUTION

*ZANZIBAR:
BACKGROUND
TO REVOLUTION*

BY MICHAEL F. LOFCHIE



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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Rapid and far-reaching change has become the central feature of political life in contemporary Africa. Despite this, revolution has been a rare phenomenon; successful revolution, still rarer. Zanzibar's recent past, therefore, is unique, and any effort to examine the causes of the Zanzibar revolution can be at best only tentative and exploratory. This volume claims no more than to set out certain factors which may be important in understanding why Zanzibar's multi-party parliamentary system collapsed in a violent episode of political transformation.

The list of those to whom the author feels a sense of indebtedness is practically endless, and it is impossible to thank by name more than a tiny fraction. Because so much of the information presented here was obtained in interviews and informal discussions with Zanzibaris, a special thanks is owed to the people of Zanzibar for their generosity and hospitality. Leaders of all political parties cooperated with this study. Among them, the author would like to acknowledge the indispensable assistance of the following: *Afro-Shirazi Party* leaders Abeid Karume, Aboud Jumbe, Othman and Ali Sharif, Rastom Sidhwa, Jamal Ramadhan and Khamis Masoud; *Zanzibar Nationalist Party* leaders Ali Muhsin, Abdulrazak Musa, Ali Serboko, Muhsin Abeid, Vuai Kiteweo, Hilal Muhammed, Ibuni Saleh and Ahmed Baalawy; *Zanzibar and Pemba People's Party* leaders Mohammed Shamte, Abdulla Suleiman, and Bakari Mohammed. Of the British colonial officials working in Zanzibar during my stay there, I owe special thanks to Messrs. M. V. Smithyman, A. L. Pennington and Clarence Buxton.

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Los Angeles
June, 1965

Michael F. Lofchie



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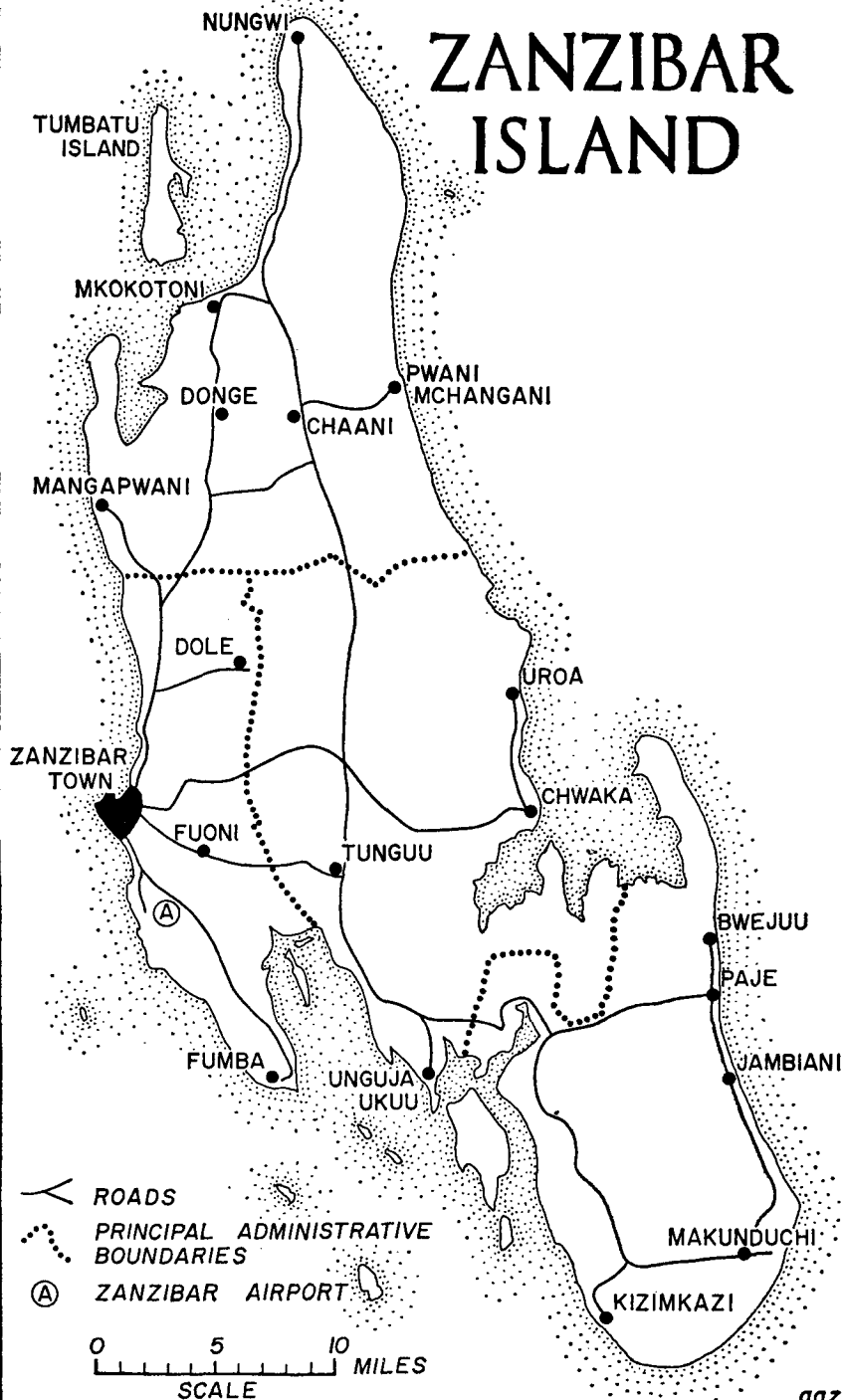
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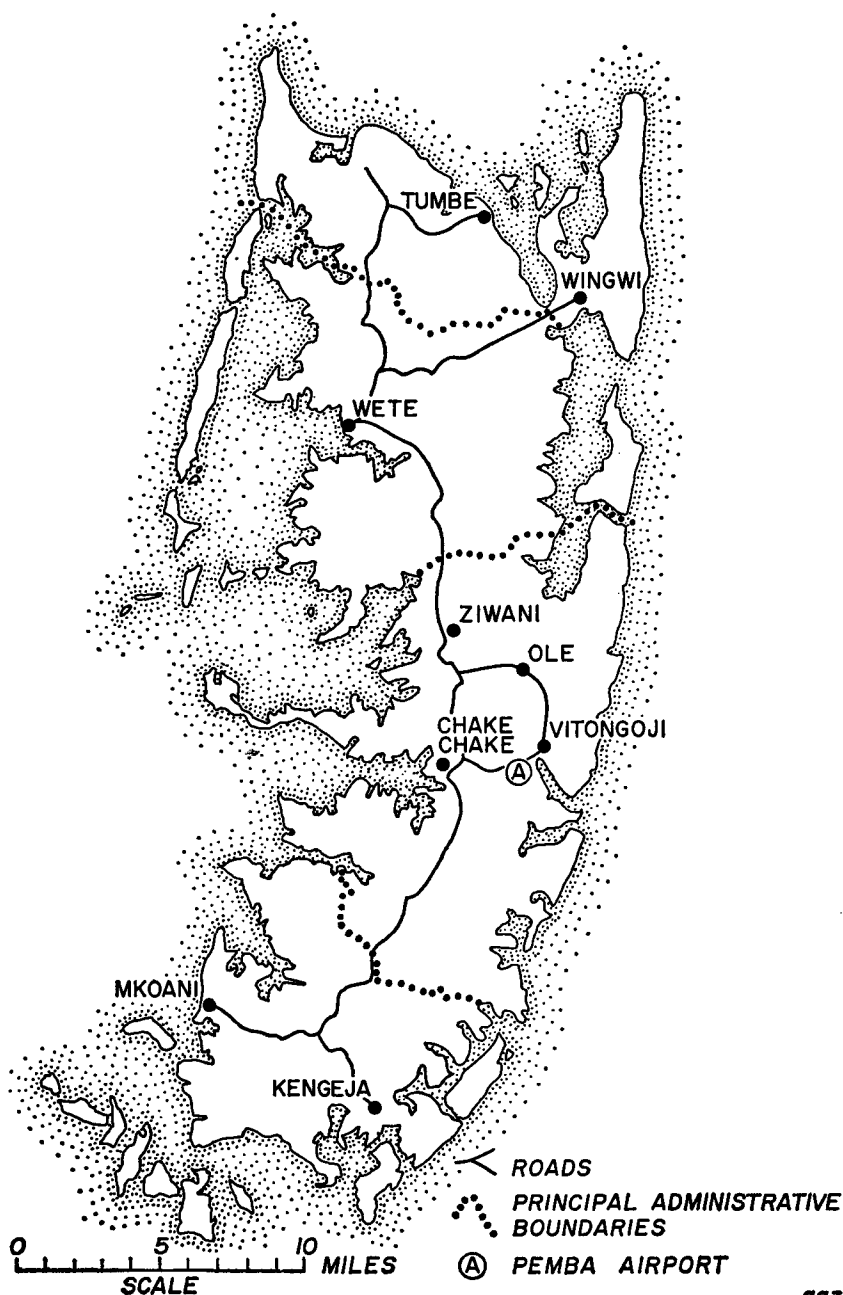
ZANZIBAR ISLAND



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MAP 1

PEMBA ISLAND





INTRODUCTION

*The Character of Zanzibar Politics*¹

As a small island country, Zanzibar's history has been profoundly affected by geographical factors. An unusually mild tropical climate, exceptionally favorable soil conditions, and a pattern of prevailing winds which place it directly on the Indian Ocean trade routes have, since ancient times, made Zanzibar both attractive and accessible to travelers and colonists from the Arabian peninsula, the sub-continent of Asia and the continental African mainland. Despite Zanzibar's equatorial position, it does not experience the grueling, enervating heat of many other similarly located areas. Year-round temperatures, cooled by almost continuous ocean breezes, rarely exceed 90° F. and the mean maximum temperature of Zanzibar Island is less than 85° F. Pemba Island, somewhat closer to the equator, has a mean maximum temperature only a degree or two warmer. Nor is there great seasonal variation. Both islands have mean minimum temperatures in the mid- to upper 70's. Moreover, Zanzibar and Pemba Islands both benefit from a moderate annual rainfall, 61" and 76" respectively, which, while quite adequate for nearly all forms of cultivation, does not foster the jungle-like growth characteristic of certain

¹ On April 24, 1964, Zanzibar merged with the neighboring country of Tanganyika and thereby ceased, in formal constitutional terms, to be an independent nation. As a sovereign country, Zanzibar had comprised the two large islands of Zanzibar and Pemba and a small number of adjacent islands off the coast of East Africa. Zanzibar Island is approximately 53 miles long by 24 miles wide (maximum measurements) with an area of 640 square miles. Its geographical coordinates are Latitude 6° South, Longitude 39° East. It is separated from the African continent by a channel about 22½ miles across at its narrowest point. Pemba lies about 25 miles to the northeast of Zanzibar and is approximately 42 miles long, 14 miles wide (maximum measurements) with an area of 380 square miles.

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West African countries or the Amazon River valley in Brazil.

Remarkably fertile soil conditions exist on both islands and, together with the relatively mild climate and moderate rainfall, make possible the intensive year-round cultivation of a wide variety of export and food crops. On Pemba, arable soil is ubiquitous and only in a few remote areas does the quality of the land deteriorate and become unsuitable for heavy commercial farming. Zanzibar Island differs significantly in this regard. Here, good land is to be found predominantly only in the western portion of the island. A ridge running irregularly north and south bisects the island and, in the area east of this ridge, soil conditions are much poorer and visibly unsuitable for intensive cultivation. This geographical division has had extreme historical importance. Colonial immigrant communities gradually came to possess almost monopolistic occupancy of the fertile western area and, by the end of the nineteenth century, the indigenous population had come to reside almost entirely in the eastern section.

Zanzibar and Pemba also differ enormously in respect of their overall topography. Pemba has an extremely irregular coastline indented by an almost infinite number of creeks and inlets. Within a mile of the coast, the island ascends in a series of separate steppes to an altitude of about two hundred feet above sea level. The most striking feature of Pemba is the extremely hilly quality of the interior. Though the highest point on the island is only slightly more than three hundred feet above sea level, the visual impression created by the interior terrain is one of precipitous valleys, steep ravines and hillside terraces with almost no areas of plain or flatland. This gives the island an erratic and meandering system of inland drainage. There are numerous small streams, many of which flow in opposite directions to-

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wards the eastern and western shores, while others end in marshes or swamps on the valley bottoms. Despite the obvious difficulties such a terrain places in the way of efficient cultivation, Pemba possesses an extremely productive agriculture. Tree crops such as coconuts, cloves and bananas are grown on the hillsides; groundcrops such as rice, cassava and other vegetables are raised on the valley floors.

Zanzibar, in marked contrast to Pemba, has both a fairly even unindented coastline and a relatively flat terrain. Though the highest point on the island, located on the central ridge, is more than four hundred feet above sea level, and though Zanzibar also has a steppe-like configuration near the coast, the interior terrain is relatively flat. The land ascends gradually from the coastal terrace to the central ridge and the general visual impression, on both sides of the ridge, is of flatlands and rolling plains. Due to the clear demarcation of areas of good and bad soil, the rural ecology of Zanzibar Island has far greater variation than that of Pemba. West of the ridge there are intensely cultivated clove and coconut plantations; the countryside is green, richly productive and heavily settled. East of the ridge, where the soil is rocky and poor, cultivation is sparse and the countryside largely consists of wild brush vegetation or unsettled forest. Here, the principal areas of human habitation are coastal villages where fishing is an important supplement to agriculture.

Zanzibar's most important crop is cloves and the clove industry is the basic mainstay of the domestic economy. The fortunate combination of mild climate, arable soil and moderate rainfall has furnished an almost ideal environment for clove cultivation and, in the past, gave Zanzibar a near monopoly of world clove production. Though coconuts, limes, tobacco and several other agricultural commodities are also grown for overseas sale,

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cloves alone have, in recent years, accounted for about three-fourths of the country's total export revenue. Approximately four-fifths of Zanzibar's cloves are grown on Pemba Island due to the wider and more even distribution of fertile land. But the economies of the two islands are closely interlocked through the migration of labor and the fact that Zanzibar Island has become the country's processing and shipping center.

Since the Second World War, Zanzibar has had to face increased competition from new clove producers such as the Malagache Republic. This competition, together with a series of other difficulties, has created a severe and chronic depression in Zanzibar's clove-based economy. Over-concentration on the production of cloves to the detriment of food crops, for example, has forced Zanzibar, though an agricultural country, to become a heavy importer of agricultural products while, in bumper years, Zanzibar's clove farmers harvest and process more cloves than are purchased by the entire world market. Moreover, the two principal world markets for cloves, Indonesia and India, are experiencing critical foreign exchange difficulties and have drastically reduced their clove purchases in order to conserve currency. Since these two countries often accounted for more than three-fifths of Zanzibar's total overseas sales, their cutbacks have had an enormous impact. As a result of all these factors, the world price of cloves has plummeted to a small fraction of what it was in the early 1950's, Zanzibar has been consistently unable to sell its entire crop, and the Government has been faced with rapidly declining revenue due to a loss of clove duty.

The heart of Zanzibar's economic and political life is Zanzibar Town, located on a triangular peninsula at about mid-point on the western coast of Zanzibar Island. The town is divided into two sections: Stonetown, at the extremity of the peninsula, and the Ngambo

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(African Quarter), by far the larger of the two sections and adjacent to the main part of the island. These two sections have differed fundamentally in their racial composition, physical appearance and economic development. The Ngambo has been populated almost entirely by Africans living in slum conditions either in mud huts or small, poorly built houses. Practically the only businesses in the Ngambo are the numerous retail shops and stalls which service the day-to-day needs of the African population. The physical appearance of the Ngambo has thus been one of extreme poverty, and in this respect the African area of Zanzibar Town does not visibly differ from the African slum areas of Dar es Salaam, Nairobi, or other large African cities.

The Stonetown area has become internationally known for its Middle Eastern appearance, its massive white stone buildings in an Arab architectural style, its narrow winding streets and its endless labyrinth of alleys. The Stonetown area also contains a spacious, well-protected, deep-water harbor. Indeed, a major reason for the development of this site as the contemporary capital of Zanzibar was its ability to offer safe accommodation to large ocean-going vessels. In addition to the Middle Eastern character of its architectural style, Stonetown also differs from Ngambo in creating an image of economic prosperity. Zanzibar's largest business concerns, its banks, insurance firms and overseas trading companies are all located here; its retail shops do not serve the day-to-day needs of the residents, but cater to the expensive tastes of the international tourist trade. Perhaps most important, the population of Stonetown has been almost entirely non-African and composed of immigrant ethnic groups from the sub-continent of Asia and the Arabian peninsula.

The present government of Zanzibar is currently seeking to equalize the economic and material conditions of

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Stonetown and Ngambo but, until recently, the physical differences between these two areas of the city graphically symbolized the basic feature of social stratification in Zanzibar, the impoverishment and subordinate status of the African community. This pattern of stratification was the basic factor shaping Zanzibar's contemporary pattern of political development.

Immigrant non-African minorities have frequently sought to preserve a privileged position in societies where there are African majorities. The Union of South Africa, Southern Rhodesia, the Portuguese African territories and, until recently, Kenya are the most obvious examples of this type of situation. In Zanzibar, too, the central feature of contemporary political development has been the persistent effort of a powerful alien oligarchy to retain its position of political and economic supremacy. The Arab minority of Zanzibar constituted in proportion to the total population the second largest alien elite in all the countries of Africa south of the Sahara. It may be assumed that, out of a present population of more than 300,000, the Arab minority numbers about 50,000. Only in South Africa, where a minority of European descent comprises more than 20 per cent of the total population, is there a proportionately larger minority of alien origin than in Zanzibar.

The basic political technique of dominant immigrant minorities in Africa has usually been to avoid any liberalization of the institutions of government, so as to deprive the African majorities of access to political power. For in practically every country where African nationalism has led to the introduction of democratic institutions, the result has been to bring to power chosen representatives of the majority population. In this respect, Zanzibar's recent political history is unique for, unlike the Europeans of South Africa, Southern Rho-

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desia, the Portuguese territories or Kenya, the Arabs of Zanzibar did not seek to entrench themselves as a ruling caste through systematic and repressive subordination of the African community. Instead, they attempted to gain voluntary acceptance among Africans by fostering a multi-racial concept of national community and by championing the cause of representative self-government. Arabs, who had formed an autocratic ruling group since early in the nineteenth century, were not only the first to initiate a nationalist movement, but of all the communities in Zanzibar were the most vociferous in demanding that British colonial rule be replaced by fully democratic parliamentary institutions. Zanzibar nationalism was thus—at its inception and for a considerable period thereafter—the creation of the Arab oligarchy and not of the African majority population.

Arab political leaders started Zanzibar nationalism in 1954, partially in an effort to remove the British before the African community could become politically organized. In June, the Arab Association began to boycott the Zanzibar Legislative Council and demanded immediate progress towards self-government and a national common roll election. The boycott lasted for more than a year and a half, until early 1956 when the British Government agreed to these demands. During this period a nationalistic political party, the Zanzibar Nationalist Party (ZNP), was formed and Arabs began to take such an active part in organizing and leading it that throughout the pre-independence era, the ZNP sought to live down a reputation as an Arab-dominated party. By means of intensive organization, militant nationalism and a strong appeal to Muslim unity, it did succeed in attracting numerous non-Arab supporters and most of its members were African.

The nationalistic political activities of the Arab elite stimulated the formation of an African political party,

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the Afro-Shirazi Party (ASP). The ASP was an attempt to unite two historically and ethnically distinct African communities, an immigrant mainland African community numbering about 60,000 and a Shirazi or indigenous African community of about 200,000. From the very beginning of their party in February, 1957, ASP leaders were motivated principally by resentment of the social and political preeminence of the Arab oligarchy, resentment which expressed itself in virulently anti-Arab propoganda and in the publicly expressed desire of ASP leadership to transform Zanzibar into an African-ruled nation.

A third political party, the Zanzibar and Pemba People's Party (ZPPP), was formed in late 1959. It began as a splinter group from the ASP after a long conflict between mainland African and Shirazi African leaders. Initially the ZPPP hoped to be an independent third force in Zanzibar politics, one which would avoid the racism of the ASP yet remain essentially an African party devoted to African interests. Gradually, its antipathy towards the militantly anti-Arab views of the ASP and a sympathy for the multi-racial concepts being articulated by Arab leadership brought the ZPPP closer and closer to the ZNP; in June, 1961, after a bitterly contested election, a ZNP/ZPPP coalition government was formed. The formation of this coalition dramatized the deep division within the African community over the issue of Arab rule in Zanzibar and revealed the willingness of large numbers of Africans to accept Arab leadership.

The vast majority of Zanzibar Africans, however, regarded the ZNP and, by association, the ZNP/ZPPP coalition as well, as dedicated to preserving the political and economic supremacy of the Arab community. Their growing conviction that the coalition government operated in Arab interests was clearly revealed in Zanzibar's last general election held in July, 1963. The ASP polled

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more than 54 per cent of the popular vote and received over 13,000 votes more than the coalition parties combined. Because the ASP's popular support tended to be concentrated in a relatively small number of constituencies, however, it gained only 13 out of 31 seats in the National Assembly. The two coalition parties won 18 seats and were able to remain in power.

The results of the July, 1963, election meant that the Arab oligarchy had, at least temporarily, succeeded in preserving its political supremacy after the introduction of democratic institutions. The establishment of complete representative democracy with universal suffrage and freely contested elections did not end Arab domination over Zanzibar's African majority because the African community was by no means solidly opposed to Arab hegemony. The Arab-led ZNP was able to gain sufficient African support to do extremely well in several constituencies where there were overwhelming African majorities and, in coalition with the ZPPP, formed the Government of Zanzibar during the final stages of constitutional development. In more than two and one-half years of ZNP/ZPPP coalition government, ZPPP leaders publicly supported the ZNP and accepted its views on practically every major issue of national policy. Thus, when independence occurred in December, 1963, the most salient feature of Zanzibar politics was the strong likelihood that, despite a representative constitutional framework, the Arab oligarchy would be able to use the ZNP to strengthen its domination of state and society in Zanzibar.

This book seeks to explain the Arab oligarchy's success in establishing a popular basis of support within the African community, and hence why democratic constitutional arrangements failed to reverse the traditional political relationship between the Arab minority and the African majority. This was, in a sense, the funda-

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mental cause of the African community's violent seizure of power in January, 1964; force had become the only method by which African leaders could oust the Arab ruling caste from its historic position of political and economic supremacy and create an African-ruled state. The following analysis of the African revolution and of the unique pattern of political development which preceded it emphasizes three related factors: first, an inherent ambivalence in Zanzibar's political culture—a powerful impetus toward multi-racial unity based upon common adherence to Islam, and a strain toward extreme disunity based on economic differences between the races; second, major regional differences in Arab-African race relations between Zanzibar and Pemba; and third, the special role of the British colonial government in helping the Arab community to preserve its dominant position.

The strains toward and against multi-racial unity were the basic political forces which operated in Zanzibar society. They had existed in continual opposition to one another since Zanzibar became an Arab colony early in the nineteenth century. Islam furnished a powerful impetus towards inter-ethnic solidarity among a racially stratified population and was conducive to widespread African support for the nationalist movement sponsored and led by the Arabs. But, at the same time, economic differences which operated along racial lines accentuated ethnic divisions and caused them to become an alternative and divisive basis of political loyalty.

Islam in Zanzibar created a pervasive religious environment highly favorable to inter-racial political solidarities. This environment furnished Arab leaders with the basic ingredient of an effective appeal for African political support: a common faith. Arab and African Zanzibaris shared not only the same theology, but all the various institutions and practices which accompanied it

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such as mosques, Koranic schools and a host of identical holidays, rituals and ceremonies. These made Islam a highly visible symbol of the common religious identity of Zanzibaris of all races.

The explicit social teachings of Islam provided forceful impetus to cordial and cooperative relations between races. Islam endows racial diversity with sacred status as a divine creation: "Among His signs is the creation of the heavens and the earth, and the diversity of your tongues and complexions (sic). This is surely a sign for all those who possess knowledge."² The Koran is, in fact, quite explicit in making harmonious race relations a religious duty: "Men, we have created you from a male and female and divided you into nations and tribes so that you might get to know one another."³ Arab leadership employed these precepts to foster a widespread conviction among Africans that the Faith enjoined multi-racial unity upon all believers as a holy obligation.

The political theory of Islam contributed, as well, to the ease with which Arab political leaders, though members of an immigrant oligarchy, were able to find political support among Africans. The Koran lacks a clear concept of the State, but one important passage reads: "Obey God and His Apostle and those who have authority over you."⁴ Thus, obedience to those in power is, like racial harmony, a divinely imposed duty. Since Arabs constituted Zanzibar's closest approximation to a traditional ruling class, the Koranic insistence on deference to established leadership in effect gave religious legitimacy to their political role and their status as a dominant elite.

The highly integrative potential of Islam suggests that some explanation is necessary for the absence of a uni-

² Koran: 30, 31.

³ Koran: 49, 13.

⁴ Koran: 4, 62.

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fied political culture in Zanzibar for, despite the social and political teachings of the Koran and despite the assertive structural visibility of common Muslim institutions, Zanzibar politics have been bitterly divided along racial lines.

The explanation is to be found largely in the pronounced tendency for race to coincide with economic class. Arabs constituted a privileged political and economic elite until the African revolution; they were the owners of the largest coconut and clove plantations and occupied many of the highest administrative positions in the Zanzibar civil service. Asians (persons of Indo-Pakistani descent) formed Zanzibar's commercial and middle class; they dominated wholesale and retail trade, import and export businesses and enjoyed nearly exclusive occupancy of the middle tiers of the civil service. Africans were historically the broad underprivileged mass of the Zanzibar population; they were the unskilled manual and agricultural laborers, tenant farmers and petty agriculturists. Each racial group possessed a separate social and economic sub-culture, and most social relations were carried on within ethnic boundaries. With few exceptions, the only extensive inter-ethnic contact was in the marketplace, and here race relations were conducted in the idiom of economic superior to economic inferior: employer-employee, master-servant, or landowner-laborer. This made race an extremely important part of the life of every individual, and caused it to become an important basis of loyalty and group solidarity.

There have been other societies in which race and class were overlapping categories and in which inter-racial violence was not a characteristic phenomenon. The caste structure of classical India is an example. Here, and in other comparable areas, stability resulted largely from a basic congruence between the prevailing

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social ethos and the existing social arrangements. Usually the religious beliefs performed a legitimizing function, and explained the class structure in sacred terms to make it acceptable.

Zanzibar never possessed a fully-developed caste system, for Islam did not lend itself to buttressing a racial pattern of stratification. If anything, Islam contained strongly implied egalitarian strains in its liberal racial doctrines and in its principle that the only differences between men are those of piety.⁵ In addition, Zanzibar, like other African territories in recent times, experienced a wholesale infusion of overtly and explicitly egalitarian political norms and social values. These, too, made its class structure appear increasingly illegitimate to the African majority.

As egalitarian ideas gave rise to a pattern of aspirations deeply at variance with the economic relations between ethnic groups, some Africans organized separate racial associations in order to seek rapid social and political changes. A basic division arose during the era of nationalism between these Africans and a large number of Africans who felt that such separate racial political organization was against Islamic multi-racial precepts. The latter joined in common cause with Arabs to give an Arab-led political party a parliamentary majority. The former, frustrated in their attempt to gain political power by constitutional means, participated in the African revolution which overthrew the Government of Zanzibar shortly after Independence.

Despite the ubiquitous economic differences between Arabs and Africans, however, there were large areas of Zanzibar where the African population did not resent the Arabs. A powerful sense of racial grievance and resentment emerged, on the whole, only among the Africans of Zanzibar Island. Pemba Africans were far less

⁵ Koran: 49, 13.

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motivated to end the Arab community's status as a dominant elite. Their implicit willingness to continue the traditional relationship between the races was critical in enabling the Arab oligarchy to retain political hegemony within a representative institutional framework. Pemba Africans were consistent supporters of the ZNP, and their support alone gave that party about one-half of its National Assembly seats.

The fundamental differences in attitude between Zanzibar and Pemba Africans can, in part, be explained historically. Zanzibar's African population suffered massive social upheavals under the impact of Arab settlement in the nineteenth century. Here, the Arab immigrants quickly imposed their authority over the local tribes and created an autocratic colonial regime. Though the Arab colonists sought to administer the indigenous population through a form of indirect rule, the traditional African political institutions collapsed as a result of their sudden forced subordination to alien government. In the course of the century, the Arab settler colony indulged in wholesale alienation of the best land and the African population was confined to remote coastal areas of poor quality soil. The principal form of social contact between Arabs and Africans on Zanzibar was the forced labor which Africans were compelled to perform on some Arab plantations. This experience and the racial friction it had created led Zanzibar Africans in recent years to join eagerly in political movements seeking to establish an African government.

Arab contact with Pemba Africans has been altogether different. The Arab incursion into Pemba was much later than that into Zanzibar, and was undertaken only after the consent of the local African rulers. Since this consent made it comparatively unnecessary for Arabs to employ repressive measures to ensure social control, the autocratic nature of Arab colonialism was

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not nearly so visible in Pemba as it was in Zanzibar. Moreover, Arab land alienation in Pemba did not result in widespread disruption of indigenous social life. Though a certain amount of land alienation did occur, there was no wholesale expropriation by Arab settlers of the best land. Fertile soils abound in Pemba, and the local African communities continued to retain possession of highly cultivable areas. Thus, the creation of an Arab colonial community in Pemba did not involve serious hardships for the indigenous African communities, either through forced administrative subordination or through land acquisition, and for this reason Pemba Africans were far less disposed than Zanzibar Africans during the era of competitive party politics to enter into anti-Arab political movements.

Unevenness in the incidence of modernization may also help to explain the vast differences between the contemporary political attitudes and behavior of Zanzibar and Pemba Africans. Zanzibar Island has been the scene of far-reaching development in the introduction of western educational, economic and technological institutions. Most of these have been concentrated in Zanzibar Town, which is the center of its administration, commerce and trade, and the matrix of an extensive infrastructural network. Nearly one-fourth of the African population of Zanzibar has been fully urbanized and resides in the town on a fairly permanent basis. Thousands of Africans have thus been absorbed into the modern occupational sector of the Zanzibar economy and brought into intense contact with a new, secular political culture. Uprooted from traditional ties and affiliations, and alerted to the full meaning of the concept of representative government, they were available for recruitment into African mass movements seeking a major political reconstruction of Zanzibar society.

Pemba, on the other hand, has had relatively little so-

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cial change during this century; there is little urbanization, and the island remains a predominately rural and agrarian society. Pemba Africans have been both geographically and culturally remote from the forces of secular modernization which mobilized the Africans of Zanzibar. An Islamic religious culture and traditional forms of social organization remain the paramount commitment of most Pemba Africans, and African mass movements have had little success in attracting their support.

British colonial policy in Zanzibar helped to perpetuate the dominant status of the Arab oligarchy. Great Britain first established its political hegemony over Zanzibar in 1890 by signing a protectoral treaty with Zanzibar's Arab Sultan, and consistently thereafter interpreted its rule as protecting power as one which involved a special obligation to protect Arab interests. The colonial administration believed firmly that Zanzibar was, in constitutional terms, an Arab state. This belief was reflected in the vastly disproportionate representation awarded Arabs on legislative and advisory bodies; in the heavy recruitment of Arabs into top positions in the administration, the judiciary and the educational system; and in a pattern of close cooperation and consultation between top British officials and leaders of the Arab community. These policies, in effect, preserved the Arab colonial state intact within the overarching framework of British imperial rule.

The British administration virtually ignored the political interests of the African majority throughout this century. No African was nominated to Zanzibar's Legislative Council until after World War II and, until the revolution, very few Africans ever managed to gain important administrative positions. The British colonial administration may also be held ultimately accountable for the heavily discriminatory nature of Zanzibar's educational system which strongly favored Arabs and Asians

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against Africans, particularly at the secondary school level. This grave racial imbalance in access to higher education contributed directly to the static quality of Zanzibar's race-class system. Britain's unwillingness to undertake major educational reform may well indicate an unspoken assumption that the African community would remain permanently in a subordinate economic and political condition.

Britain's long-range desire to introduce parliamentary institutions and to transform the Sultanate into a constitutional monarchy did not basically qualify the assumption of permanent Arab paramountcy. Administrators in the country saw no tension between their desire to create a democratic majoritarian state and the strong sense of obligation to respect and preserve the special position of the Arab community. The process of evolution of representative government was regarded, somewhat ethnocentrically, as a changing relationship between Protector and Protected rather than as a development having enormous bearing on the character of race relations within Zanzibar society. It was perhaps more important, however, that the full institutionalization of parliamentary democracy was viewed as an extremely long-range enterprise in political tutelage, and one in which the Arab community could play an important role.

The notion that democratic self-government could occur only after many generations of careful instruction characterized British attitudes in many colonies. Throughout the period during which Britain was seeking to establish parliamentary institutions in Zanzibar, there was an implicit assumption that once representative government occurred, other problems would sort themselves out; and not until recently was any serious attention paid to the political consequences of enfranchising an overwhelming African majority. Moreover,

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the massive enfranchisement of Africans after 1957 was not accompanied by a corresponding effort to undertake the other reforms necessary to place Africans educationally and economically on a competitive basis with Arabs in the electoral arena.