

UNIT 4 THE TRADING WORLD OF ASIA AND THE COMING OF THE PORTUGUESE

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4.0 OBJECTIVES

After reading this Unit you will be able to know that:

- the opening of the sea-route between Europe and Asia marked a period of great importance,
- monopoly over sea-borne trade was introduced by the Portuguese during this period,
- the system of trade and commerce introduced by the Portuguese showed the way to other European powers for trade, and
- the major items of export and import during this period.

4.1 INTRODUCTION

In the previous Units (nos. 2 and 3) we learned about the polity and economy in the two broad divisions of India namely, North as well as that of Deccan and South India. This Unit goes on to discuss the nature of trading activities through maritime trade. There was long distance trade connecting India with various parts of the South East Asian countries and West Asia. However, direct maritime trade relations with Europe, especially with the countries bordering the Atlantic Ocean, were not in existence. The Portuguese emerged as an important naval power in Indian waters especially after their occupation of Goa in 1510. (see Course EHI-03, Block 7 for further details).

The Chinese and the Al Karimi merchants of the Red Sea area were frequent visitors to the various trade centres of India till the middle of the fifteenth century. Then there was a sort of vacuum as far as the international maritime trade of India was concerned. Similarly, the conquest of Constantinople in 1453 by the Turks is thought by some scholars (but questioned by others) to have disturbed the route connecting the East and the West which led the Europeans to look for an alternative trade route

preparations for maritime exploits. They made use of their achievements in cartography and navigational sciences. After the initial breakthrough made by Vasco de Gama, organised attempts were made by the Portuguese to utilize the commercial potentialities of Asia in general and India in particular. Local rulers granted them permission to establish factories and other infrastructural facilities needed for the development of trade and commerce. In some cases fortresses were also established. At the same time, they initiated propagation of the Christian faith. Inter-marriages, conversions and settlements of Europeans led to the emergence of new social groups. Many local rulers made political and commercial alliances with Portuguese, the first Europeans to indulge in trade during this period. The Portuguese example prompted other European nations to come to Asia to get a share in trading activities.

In this background in this Unit we will deal with the trading activities of the Portuguese in Asia. It also takes into account their interaction with the various sections of society in the Indian subcontinent from 1500 to 1600. The economic consequences of the Portuguese trading contacts with Asia in general have also been dealt.

4.2 FACTORIES, FORTRESSES AND COMMERCIAL ARRANGEMENTS

The Italian merchants had established warehouses (factories) in Cairo and Alexandria to carry on trade and commerce. Following this example the Portuguese, too, founded factories on the coastal regions of India and certain other places in Asia. Factory could be defined as a commercial organisation having an autonomous existence set up within the country with which another country had commercial relations. Each factory had an officer called factor who was assisted by a number of persons appointed by the Portuguese king. He was the agent of the Crown to promote economic, financial and administrative activities of all sorts. In all situations Portuguese national interests were paramount considerations. Factories also required protection from hostile elements. Therefore, to consolidate and strengthen their power the Portuguese also attempted to fortify their factories. A chain of factories and fortresses came into existence for the support of the maritime trade conducted by the Portuguese. These fortified centres were expected to serve the Portuguese to check the movements of vessels owned by the others and to function as areas for the reserve of military and naval forces. The system of factories had a great role to play in the commercial arrangements in the period beginning with the sixteenth century till the mid-eighteenth century. Let us briefly discuss the factories established by the Portuguese in different regions.

Western India

In the Malabar region the Portuguese established their first factory in 1500 at Calicut. However, it had a short-lived existence (you have read in Unit 3 that the Zamorin of Calicut proved to be the major hindrance in the establishment of Portuguese power in Malabar). The Zamorins also did not allow the Portuguese to fortify their factories there. In 1525, finally, the Portuguese abandoned their construction at Calicut. However, in the other regions of Malabar coast, factories were established at Cochin (1501), Cannanore (1503), Quilon (1503), Chaliyam (1531), Rachol (1535), Crangannore (1536), Mangalore and Honaver (1568) and Bhatkal by the Portuguese. All of these factories were fortified in due course. Nizam-ul Mulk of Ahmednagar also permitted the Portuguese to have a factor at Chaul in the second decade of the 16th Century.

In the north-west, Cambay (Khambayat) was the main port of call on the route from Malacca connecting Calicut, the ports of the Red Sea and the Persian Gulf with the ports of the Mediterranean. Besides Cambay, the Portuguese also established their factories at Diu (1509, 1535), Bassin (1534), Surat, Daman (1599) and Bhavnagar. Thus almost the entire coastal belt of Malabar, Konkan and north-west India was brought under the Portuguese influence.

Direct contacts began to be established with the Eastern coast of India in the wake of the capture of Malacca and the beginning of the Portuguese settlement there. The Portuguese navigators came across several merchants from the Eastern coast of India who had trade relations with Malacca and other South East Asian centres. The Portuguese collected textiles and other commodities from various port-towns of the Coromandel coast like Masulipatnam, Pulicat, San Thome, Pondicherry, Cuddalore, Porto Novo, Nagapatnam, etc. The latter was an important port for the Portuguese in their trade with Porto Novo, Malacca, Manila and other region of the east. Meilapore known as San Thome to the north of Nagapatnam, had also a Portuguese settlement which was surrounded by walls. The Portuguese also established a fortress at Manar in 1518 on the western coast of Ceylon. This fortress, though not on the main land of India, could control the movement of vessels to the East from the western side of the subcontinent.

The Portuguese also tried to establish commercial contacts with Bengal from A.D. 1517. The first effort in this direction was made at Chittagong, the chief port of Bengal during this period. After much manoeuvring, they at last obtained permission from Mahmud Shah, the king of Bengal, to erect factories at Chittagong and Satgaon in 1536. The second settlement at Hugli was granted to the Portuguese by Akbar in 1579-80. The third one was established at Bandel through a **farman** of Shahjahan in 1633. Yet, on the eastern coast during the 16th Century there were no fortresses as on the western coast. Still the settlements, with a few artillery, were able to oversee the movement of vessels carrying commodities.

South-East Asia

With a view to having an exclusive domination over the trade in the Indian Ocean regions, the Portuguese found it necessary to bring under their control the important trade centres in South East Asia. The well-known maritime centre of Malacca was their target which they acquired in 1511. They established a few fortresses at Colombo, Batticola, Jafnapatam, etc.—all in Ceylon. Subsequently, contacts with Java, Siam, Moluccas, Martaban and Pegu were established. From 1518, the Portuguese started a settlement in China on the island of Sancheu. It was here that St. Francis Xavier, a Christian missionary, died in 1552.

The starting of factories in various parts of the subcontinent of India and neighbouring Asiatic kingdoms provided an environment suitable for long distance trade to the Portuguese.

Check Your Progress 1

- 1) During the 16-18th century, in the context of trade and commerce, what does the word factory denote? What was its role?

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- 2) Why the factories were fortified?

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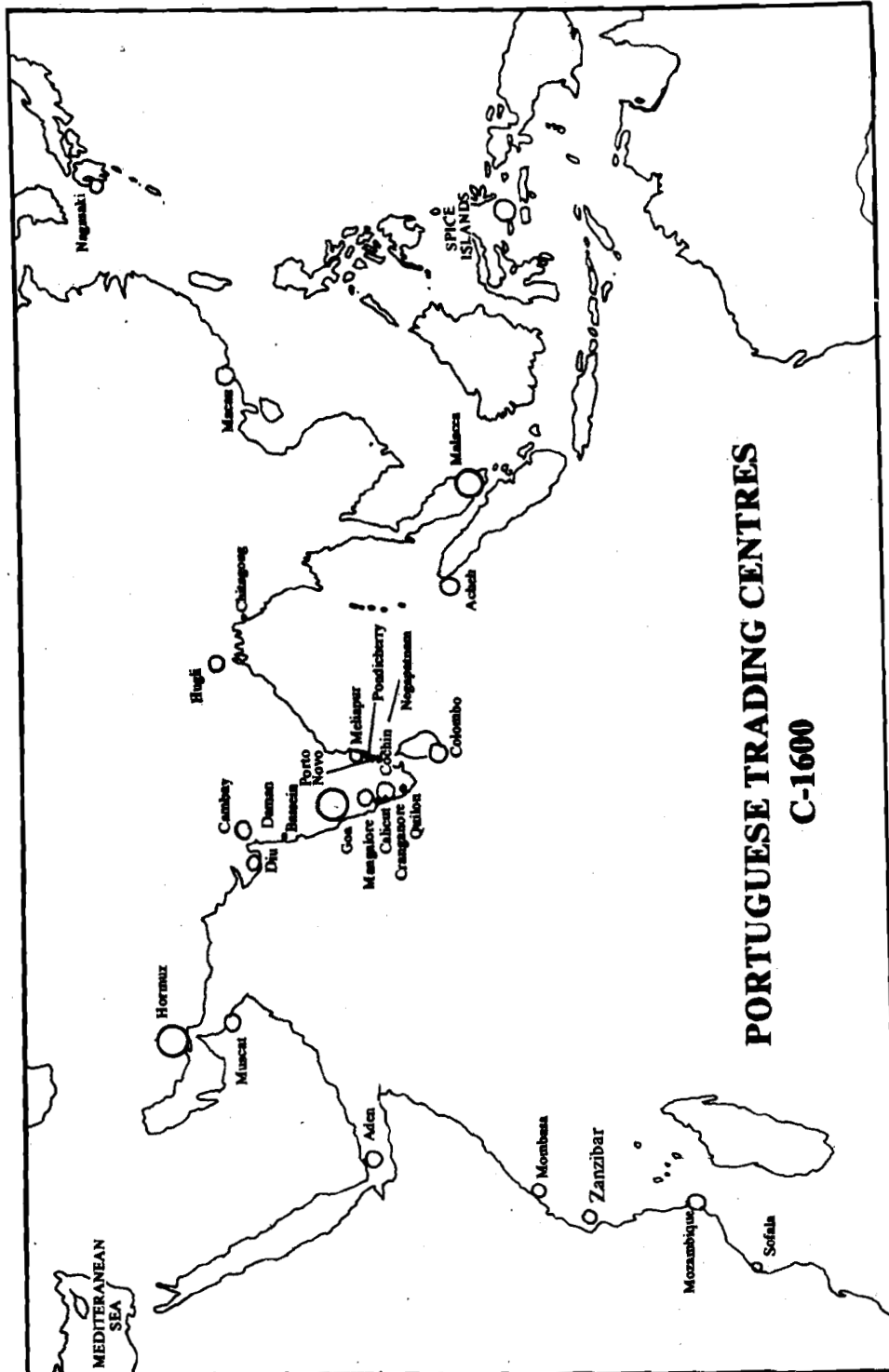
- 3) Discuss the pattern of Portuguese penetration in India.

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4.3 COMMODITIES OF EXPORT AND IMPORT

The chief aim of the Portuguese in discovering the sea-route connecting the East with Portugal was to collect spices directly from the places of production rather than from the hands of the intermediaries like the Italian or the Muslim traders. Pepper became a necessary ingredient in European food. The demand for pepper went on increasing, especially for the sake of preserving meat. Besides, ginger, cinnamon, cardamom, mace, nutmeg and several exotic herbs from the east had a market in Europe. A special variety of textiles like Muslin, chintz, etc. and few animals like elephants, too, found their way to Portugal.

The Portuguese did not have enough commodities to exchange for those available in the East. Their commodities had a limited market among the eastern nobility. Hence precious metals, especially silver, minted or in bullion; were brought to the East from the West for buying goods.

4.3.1 Malabar and Konkan Coasts

Pepper occupied the first place among the commodities traded from Malabar and the Konkan coasts. In the initial stage pepper from Malabar was considered to be far better in quality than that from Malacca, Java and Canara. Towards the second half of the sixteenth century and the beginning of the seventeenth, pepper from Canara began to be exported in larger quantity than before. It is estimated that the Portuguese exported from Malabar about 25,000 to 30,000 quintals of spices of all sorts annually to Lisbon in the first decade of the sixteenth century. By the end of the century, the contractors were given a targeted export of 30,000 quintals of pepper from the Malabar coast to Lisbon. The records of the first half of the sixteenth century show that 36,664 quintals of pepper was sent to Portugal from the Malabar and Konkan coasts in 1546.

Ginger constituted another bulk item of trade from the Malabar coast. It was available as conserve, too, for export. Cinnamon was another commodity exported from Malabar, though its quality was not as good as that from Ceylon. White and red sandalwood also found their way to Portugal from the Malabar coast.

Besides these Myrobalans of all sorts were collected from Malabar, Dabul, Vijaynagar and Deccan in general for export to Portugal. Similarly sealing wax, indigo, spikenard, tamarind, arecanut, textiles, ivory and turmeric were other items that were exported in varying quantity to Portugal from the Malabar and Konkan coasts. Slaves, too, became a commercial commodity for export.

The request made by the Zamorin of Calicut in 1498 to Vasco da Gama gives a clue to the commodities that were imported into the Malabar and Konkan coasts. He had asked for gold, silver, coral and scarlet. Afonso de Albuquerque, the Portuguese governor of Goa, gave a list of commodities to the king of Portugal in 1513 that could be marketed in India. This included items like coral, copper, quicksilver, vermilion, brocades, velvet, carpets, saffron, rose-water and cloths of various kinds. All these items were not from Portugal, but the Portuguese started procuring them from various places, like Flanders, Germany, England and other European countries. For example, damask, lead, cinnabar, gold from Soffala, French and English linen clothes, alumstone, tin, opium, steel, Genwa velvet, scarlet from Florence, red cloth from London, cloths from Holland, raw and worked corals, etc. were brought to India. Minted coins of various denominations were included in this list. All these were brought to Cochin which was the commercial headquarter of the Portuguese in India. From there they were later sent to various parts of India. When the Portuguese headquarter was shifted to Goa, most of the important articles like gold, silver and cash were taken there and distribution was done from there.

4.3.2 North-Western India

Indigo, textiles of various types, silk and curious items like handicrafts made of tortoise shells, etc. were collected from the North-western India for export to Portugal. Taffeta was one of the expensive export varieties. Satin, chintz, **malmal**, striped cotton cloths, cambric-muslin, silk scarf, Golkonda muslins and various other varieties of silk products available in Chaul, Dabhol and the ports of Gujarat were exported to Portugal. Among these items silks were produced in places like Burhanpur and Balaghat, chintz in Cambay, calico in the vicinity of Daman and Guingao in Cambay and Balaghat. The volume of textile products increased in the seventeenth century.

Copper, broadcloths and cash in various denominations were sent to the North-western coast. In addition to this, a few products such as pepper and other spices from the South were also taken to North-Western India for the purchase of textiles.

4.3.3 Eastern Coast

Textiles of various kinds constituted the chief export from the eastern coast of India. Sandalwood from the Coromandel was an important item of export to Portugal. Spikenard was cultivated in Bengal and this was brought to Cochin to be exported to Portugal. The most expensive item of export from this region was pearl, chiefly collected from the pearl fishery coast. Cotton and silk textiles and embroideries from Bengal were exported by the Portuguese. Ginger in conserve, myrobalans, butter, oil, wax and rice were the other commodities that were collected from Bengal.

The Portuguese brought to Bengal brocades, damasks, satins, taffetas, cloves, nutmegs, mace, camphor, cinnamon, pepper, chests, writing desks, valuable pearls and jewels. Most of these were from Malacca, China, Borneo, Ceylon and Malabar coast. Sea-shells or **cowries** from Maldives, white and red sandalwood from Solor and Timor were also taken to Bengal by the Portuguese.

4.3.4 South-East Asia

Various types of spices were collected from Ceylon and other South-East Asian regions; for example, Malacca and Java furnished pepper for export. Moluccas produced good variety of cloves. The best sort of cinnamon was furnished by Ceylon for export to Lisbon. Timor and Tannierim produced good variety of sandalwood which was carried by the Portuguese to Lisbon. Sumatra provided sealing wax for Portuguese consumption. Borneo, Sumatra, Pacem and China furnished good variety of camphor for export to Lisbon. Benzoin from Pegu was also taken by the Portuguese to Portugal. Rhubarb was carried by the Portuguese from China and musk from Pegu.

In return, the Portuguese took cash, silver, gold and textiles to South-East Asian regions. Most of these textile goods were manufactured in India.

Check Your Progress 2

1) Why the Europeans were greatly interested in importing pepper?

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1) List the main items of export to Portugal?

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4.4 FINANCES OF THE PORTUGUESE TRADE

Taking into account the details of the Portuguese enterprise on the Malabar coast in the period between 1500 and 1506, an Italian estimated in 1506 that the total investment needed for conducting trade with the East was 170,000 ducats every year. The king of Portugal provided only one-fourth of this amount and the rest was raised by the merchants and financiers who collaborated with the Portuguese king. In 1500 he issued an order permitting native as well as foreign merchants to fit out their own vessels to the East. Revenues collected in the form of booty, tributes and taxes levied on ships of the private merchants also provided funds for the conduct of trade with India.

4.4.1 European Merchant-Financiers

Italians, especially the Florentines, occupied an important position among the financiers in the sixteenth century. Most of the Italian financiers concluded contracts with the Portuguese king. They supplied cash or materials to the king at Lisbon. The king used them to purchase pepper and other commodities from India. These commodities were given to these financiers at Lisbon in view of the contracts signed. However, some of the financiers also sent their own factors to India. Cash or commodities were always sent under the supervision of the Portuguese authorities to the East.

Indian commodities also attracted the German financiers and merchants. The Portuguese king welcomed them with open arms for he himself was finding it difficult to finance the Oriental enterprise on his own. Since copper was given in part-payment for Indian commodities, especially pepper and other spices, large quantity of copper was needed for transactions. Some of the German merchant-financiers like the Fuggers had a monopoly over the production of copper in Europe. This turned out to be of great use for trade with India. The German financiers could fit out their vessels, entrust cash and commodities to the India House in Lisbon to be taken to India under the Portuguese flag and buy the commodities from Lisbon according to the terms and conditions of the contracts signed.

During the second half of the sixteenth century both the Welsers and Fuggers joined the consortium along with Giraldo Paris and Juan Battista Rovalesco for the purchase of 30,000 quintals of pepper directly from India and agreed to send an amount of 170,000 crusados to India annually. Thus, the firms of Welsers and Fugger continued to be closely associated with the trade of India.

Apart from the Fuggers, other firms like those of Herwarts and Imhof were interested in trading various sorts of precious stones and diamonds from Vijaynagar.

There were a few Portuguese merchants who in their private capacity participated in the trade with India during the sixteenth century. State officials posted in India were also allowed to participate in the India trade. According to their position in the hierarchy, they had some rights to take certain quantity of commodities to Portugal, in lieu of remuneration in cash. The details of their entitlements were spelt out in their appointment orders and this formed part of their emoluments.

4.4.2 Indian Merchants and Rulers

Several Indian merchants supplied commodities to the Portuguese on credit when the latter did not have cash or commodities to furnish in exchange. The merchants of Cochin, especially the Marakkars, were of great help to the Portuguese in this respect and their services were gratefully remembered by the Portuguese officials. Sometimes, the Portuguese king was persuaded to grant some privileges to such merchants. Khwaja Shamsuddin Gilani, who had settled down in Cannanore after his services to the kingdom of Bijapur, was often helpful to the Portuguese in finding necessary funds on loan.

Some of the local rulers stood surety for the Portuguese when they did not have money to pay to the merchants for the commodities bought by them. For example, the king of Cochin came forward to help the Portuguese several times making the required volume of commodities available to them on credit.

The Portuguese had armed vessels plying in the Indian Ocean and the Arabian sea. Ships carrying commodities which were not given passes (**cartaz**) by the Portuguese officials were confiscated by them (for further details see Sub-section 21.4.2, of Unit 21, Course EHI-03). The booty thus obtained yielded a sizeable source of income which was again invested in trade. Defeated rulers were compelled to pay tributes to the Portuguese, either in cash or kind. This source was also exploited by them several times for investment. The persons interested in sending their ships to other parts of India or to Asian countries were required to take passes (**cartaz**) from the Portuguese for which a fee was charged. Though this was quite negligible in itself, such ships were obliged to visit any of the ports in India where the Portuguese had customs houses, and to pay taxes. This was another source of income for the Portuguese. Thus, in a variety of ways, the Portuguese organised funds for the running of their trade.

4.5 NATURE OF THE PORTUGUESE TRADE WITH INDIA

Right from the time Portuguese arrived at Calicut they had demanded that other merchants, Indian as well as foreign, should be ousted and a complete monopoly over trade be granted to them. Portuguese ships equipped with arms and ammunitions threatened other merchants and confiscated their merchandise and vessels. By 1501 the Portuguese king assumed a grandiloquent title evincing his proprietary right over the Indian Ocean regions. The title proclaimed him **Lord of Navigation, Conquest and Commerce of Ethiopia, Arabia, Persia and India**. In 1502, the Portuguese demanded an exclusive right over trade at Calicut to which the Zamorin, the king of Calicut, did not yield. The Vasco da Gama declared war on all ships plying in the Arabian Sea and Indian Ocean. He introduced an expedient under which those ships which carried a **cartaz** duly signed by the Portuguese authorities, namely the royal factor, were not to be attacked. This certificate was first issued in 1502.

Indian merchants, rulers and all those engaged in maritime trade, had to take **cartaz** from the Portuguese. While issuing such passes, it was specifically mentioned that certain items like pepper, horses, ginger, coir, ship pitch, sulphur, lead, saltpetre, cinnamon, etc. were not to be loaded on their ships. All these were monopoly items of the Portuguese. Routes and destinations of such ships were also sought to be controlled. Rulers like Akbar, and his successors, Nizam Shah of Ahmednagar, Adil Shah of Bijapur, kings of Cochin, the Zamorins of Calicut and the rulers of Cannanore purchased passes from the Portuguese to send their ships to various places.

4.5.1 Monopoly Trade

Till the end of the fifteenth century, merchants from various quarters of the world were found on the coastal regions of India engaged in trade and commerce. As Vasco da Gama reported in 1498, there were merchants from Mecca, Tenasser, Pegu, Ceylon, Turkey, Egypt, Persia, Ethiopia, Tunis and various parts of India at the port of Calicut. It is well-known that Chinese merchants as well as merchants from the Red Sea areas used to frequent the Indian ports. There is no record of any group of merchants demanding exclusive right of trade in general, nor of any attempt made to declare a few or all commodities set apart for any body. But, with the arrival of the Portuguese, this state of affairs underwent considerable change. Kings were pressurised to forbid other merchants from trading with their ports. Similarly, certain commodities were declared forbidden to be traded by others. In other words, the Portuguese demanded monopoly of trade. The treaties concluded with the Indian rulers specifically mentioned this. The setting up of Portuguese fortresses at strategic places, surveillance by their patrolling vessels, and the insistence on passes for other ships were the attempts made to establish monopoly of trade in Asian waters.

4.5.2 Trade of the Indian Rulers and Merchants

The Portuguese attempts at establishing total monopoly did not bring about a situation in which trade conducted by the Indian rulers and merchants was totally uprooted. The king of Cannanore, for instance, used to collect passes from the Portuguese to send his vessels laden with commodities to Cambay and Hormuz. He imported horses from the above mentioned places though this was identified by the Portuguese a monopoly item. Sometimes such vessels ran the risk of being confiscated by the Portuguese. The same was the case with the kings of Tanur, Challe and Calicut on the Malabar coast. The nobles of Gujarat continued their trade despite the Portuguese monopoly. Malik Gopi, Malik Ayaz, Khwaja Sofar and others interested in trade plied their ships with or without passes from the Portuguese.

Besides, the local and foreign merchants settled in India carried on their trade with or without **cartaz**. It was estimated that out of the 60,000 quintals of pepper produced annually in the area between Calicut and Cape Comorin, only 15,000 quintals were delivered to the Portuguese factories and the remaining three-fourths were taken to other ports. This was termed illegal by the Portuguese. The Portuguese were not willing to enhance the price of pepper agreed upon in 1503 even after several decades. Hence, the producers of pepper did not have any alternative other than supplying it to the merchants who might buy it and send it to other centres of trade without the knowledge of the Portuguese. Moreover, several Portuguese officials conducted their own private trade in various commodities without the knowledge of their government. In fact, Portuguese monopoly was never effective in the Red Sea zone.

4.5.3 Trade and Production

Overseas trade conducted in the sixteenth century in Asia in general and India in particular was, by and large, of long-distance in nature involving the Asiatic ports on the one side and the Atlantic ports on the other. The commodities exported from India reached various parts of Europe. There were a number of elements in the pattern of this trade, as explained earlier, which distinguished it from just "peddling" trade.

In view of the greater demand for pepper, the cultivators strove to increase the production. It is calculated that the production of pepper in the Malabar area went up by 200 to 275 per cent in the period between 1515 and 1607. As there is no reliable account of the volume of production before the arrival of the Portuguese, it is rather difficult to make a comparison and assert with certainty the exact percentage of increase in production. At any rate, it is reasonable to conclude that the production of pepper in India increased after the Portuguese advent. But it must be borne in mind that the internal demand for pepper from the Mughal Empire and the external one from the Safavi Empire also might have contributed to the increase in pepper production in India.

Check Your Progress 3

- 1) Discuss the role of foreign investments in the Portuguese trade of India.

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- 2) Define a **cartaz**?

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- 3) How did the Portuguese succeed in establishing their monopoly in Indian waters?

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4.6 LET US SUM UP

We have seen in this Unit how the arrival of the Portuguese generated some new trends in the trading world of Asia, especially in the context of India. Maritime trade so far open to everyone was claimed now as the monopoly of the Portuguese and, to effect this, they built factories and fortresses. Introduction of passes for other ships lest they should be attacked was something unheard of till the dawn of the sixteenth century. The Portuguese after establishing themselves on the coastal regions of India reaped large profits by conducting trade in spices. For the first time in the history of international trade, commercial treaties with Indian rulers were concluded. The production of cash crops, especially spices, kept its stride with the increasing demand. It should also be emphasized that agricultural production had become enormously market oriented, with an eye to international trade.

4.7 KEY WORDS

- Cartography** : art of making maps
- Crusados** : a gold coin of Portugal; 390 reis = 1 crusados; reis (plural of Real), is a Portugal monetary unit; currently 1000 reis = 1 escudo (Portuguese coin)
- Ducats** : an Italian coin; a gold ducat was worth four silver rupees of Akbar; while silver ducat was equivalent to two silver rupees of Akbar
- Factor** : an officer in charge of the factory.
- Factory** : it was a commercial organisation having an autonomous existence set up with the permission of the local ruler by foreign merchants or powers
- Zamorin** : the title of the rulers of Calicut (perhaps a corruption of Samudra Rai)

4.8 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS EXERCISES

Check Your Progress 1

- 1) The concept of factory as commercial organisation is different from the factory where manufacturing activities were held. Factory was not the simple commercial representative of a nation but was more than that (see Sec. 4.2).
- 2) Point out the importance of fortified factories. See Sec. 4.2.
- 3) Examine how the Portuguese from Malabar moved gradually towards further North-west and Eastern coasts. Also analyse the difference in their Eastern and Western settlements (see Sec. 4.2).

- 1) See Sec. 4.3. It was mainly related to their food.
- 2) See Sub-secs. 4.3.1, 4.3.2, 4.3.3, 4.3.4.

Check Your Progress 3

- 1) See Sub-sec. 4.4.1. Discuss why the Portuguese king allowed foreign merchants to trade in the East.
- 2) See Sec. 4.5.
- 3) Describe the role of **cartaz**; military power and advanced navigational skill in establishing the Portuguese trading monopoly (see Sec. 4.5.1).

A NOTE ON SOURCES

The present section aims at introducing you to major sources of Indian history for the period under discussion. For this period, information is very rich in the form of literary works, archaeological, epigraphical and numismatical sources. However, here we will focus mainly on literary sources which were largely written in Persian. However, contemporary accounts in other languages, like Rajasthani, Marathi, Bengali etc. are also very rich. Besides, this was the period when the Europeans, (Portuguese, English, French and Dutch) also entered on the Indian scene. Their recorded impressions about India also constitute important source of informations. We are giving below a **selective list** of the contemporary sources which are important for you.

Persian Sources

We get information in the form of administrative and accountancy manuals, statistical tables, administrative records (**farmans, nishans, parwanas**, etc.), epistolary works, letters, (**insha** literature), historical and topographical works, dictionaries etc. However, we are primarily concerned with the historical works.

The most important is the **Memoirs of Babur**, (**Baburnama**), written originally in (Chagatai) Turkish. It contains information from Babur's birth in 1483 to 1529.

The next is the **Humayunama** written by Gulbdan Begum (daughter of Babur) which covers mainly the reigns of Babur and Humayun and was completed during Akbar's reign at his instance. The **Tuhfa-i Akbar Shahi** (**Tarikh-i Sher Shahi**) of Abbas Khan Sarwani, written sometimes after 1586 is another important historical work. It preserves the details regarding the life and works of Sher Shah.

The **Muntakhab-ut Tawarikh** of Abdul Qadir Badauni is the only work of Akbar's reign not dedicated to Akbar. Badauni is highly critical of Akbar for his "heresies" and "innovation". The first volume deals with the history from Subuktgin to Humayun. This volume is a political narrative. The second volume contains the events of the first forty years of Akbar's reign. The third volume is **tazkira** where he gives short biographical sketches of the **mashaikh, ulama**, physicians and poets of Akbar's reign. Various important matters not dealt with in detail in the **Akbarnama** find their place in the **Muntakhab** (**mahzar**, etc.).

The **Akbarnama** of Abul Fazl is the monumental work written during Akbar's reign. It consists of **three** volumes, the first two are the narrative part and the third is the **Ain-i Akbari**. The first volume covers the period from Adam to the first seventeen years of Akbar's reign. The second volume covers the narrative at the close of the 46th regnal year (R.Y.) of Akbar. The third volume (the **Ain-i Akbari**) was completed by the end of the 42nd R.Y. **Ain** gives an account of the various imperial departments such as, the mint, calligraphy and painting, arsenal, royal stables etc. We also get information on prices of numerous articles. It also tells us about the duties of various revenue and administrative officials, revenue rates, etc. Cultural and philosophical aspects too are available. Besides, the **Ain** provides detailed **suba, sarkar** and **pargana**-wise figures for measured land, revenue statistics and other details of Akbar's Empire.

During Shahjahan's period, three official historians were entrusted with the task of writing the official history of his reign. Amin Qazwini wrote the account of the first 10 years. Later Abdul Hamid Lahori took up the task and wrote the account of the first 20 years of Shahjahan's reign, followed by Mohammad Waris who covered 21st R. Y. to 30 R. Y. of Shahjahan. The works of all the three are called **Badshahnama** or **Padshahnama**. Shaikh Farid Bhakkhari's **Zakhirat-ul Khawanin** is another monumental work which is primarily a biographical account of nobles (Akbar to Shahjahan).

For the first ten years of Aurangzeb's reign also we get information from official chronicle the **Alamgirnama** (1668) compiled by Mohammad Kazim. After that, Aurangzeb decided to discontinue the task of official history writing. Moreover, we get ample information for his period in other contemporary accounts. Khafi Khan's **Muntakhab-ul Lubab**, Isardas Nagar's **Futuh-at-i Alamgiri** (1-34 R. Y.) and Saqi Musta'id Khan's **Ma'asir-i Alamgiri** (1710-11), **Nuskha-i Dilkusha** of Bhimsen (1708-9) are other useful works of Aurangzeb's reign.

Rajasthani Sources

There is an ample quantity of source material available in Rajasthani that shed light on Medieval India. The most important is Munhta Nainsi's **Marwar ra Pargana ri Vigat** (c. 1666) and his **Khyat** (after 1667). The **Aradhakathanak** of Banarasidas Jain is also an important source of the period. The **Vir Vinod** of Shyamal Das compiled much later is full of important facts and documents.

European Sources

Contemporary Portuguese, Dutch, English and French accounts throw much light on various aspects of Indian life. The nature of information available is in two forms: memoirs, travelogues and letters (of the Jesuits) and the Factory Records. Antonio Monserrate, a Jesuit, who wrote his *Commentary* (1597) in Portuguese, leaves a graphic account of Akbar's court. William Hawkins' work gives details of Jahangir's court. Sir Thomas Roe's (*Embassy*, 1615-1619) during Jahangir's reign offers political and economic information. The Dutch factor, Pelsaert's account is brief but very valuable. The *Travels* of Peter Mundy (1628-34) and Fray Sebastian Manrique (1629-43) provide important information about Shahjahan's reign. For Aurangzeb's period our information from European sources is very rich. *Travels* of Francois Bernier, (1656-68) gives vivid description of Agra and Delhi, revenue resources of the Mughal Empire, etc. Niccolao Manucci (1656-1712, in *Storia do Mogor*) enriches our information on various aspects of contemporary life. He was present at the battle of Samugarh. Thus, his account on the war of succession is very useful. Besides, information about Mughal Empire can also be gleaned from the large number of documents maintained by various Factors in India. Similar type of records about the Dutch East India Company is also available in Dutch archives. These records are very useful and important for understanding trading activities and commercial practices of the period.

SOME USEFUL BOOKS FOR THIS BLOCK

R. P. Tripathi: **Rise and fall of the Mughal Empire**

Prof. H. K. Sherwani and Dr. P. M. Joshi: **History of Medieval Deccan** in 2 vols.

A. B. Pandey: **The first Afghan Empire in India**

I. H. Siddiqui: **Some Aspects of Afghan Despotism in India**

M. A. Nayeem: **External Relations of the Bijapur Kingdom**

K. S. Mathew: **Portuguese Trade with India in the 16th Century**