

The Indian Ocean in the Making of
Early Modern India

Edited by

PIUS MALEKANDATHIL



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CHAPTER 1

Africa and Africans in the Making of Early Modern India

EDWARD A. ALPERS

Gwyn Campbell, Director of the Indian Ocean World Centre at McGill University in Montréal, Québec, Canada, argues persuasively that Africa must be regarded as an integral component of the Indian Ocean World global economy.¹ In making his case he vigorously distances himself from the dismissive attitude of Kirti Chaudhuri, who says relatively little about Africa in his seminal *Trade and Civilisation in the Indian Ocean: An Economic History from the Rise of Islam to 1750* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985) and explicitly excludes it from his later *Asia before Europe: Economy and Civilisation of the Indian Ocean from the Rise of Islam to 1750* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990). It is therefore most welcome that in a volume devoted to the place of the Indian Ocean in the making of early modern India, the editor has decided to include a chapter on Africa. In fact, Africa and India, especially western India, have a long tradition of 'connected histories', to use Sanjay Subrahmanyam's felicitous construction.² In this modest contribution I propose to focus on the presence of Africans in India and the trade in textiles from India to Africa during the period under consideration as a means to understand the contribution of Africans and Africa to the early modern history of India.

India and Africa were linked by circulatory processes of exchange long before the early modern period. To take only one very early example, Indian spices were traded to Roman Egypt through the Red Sea port of Berenike, where the largest archaeological single

find of Malabar pepper was excavated.³ In the medieval period, Indian textiles were traded to the important Swahili city-states of eastern Africa in exchange for gold and ivory. In the fourteenth century the intrepid Moroccan traveller and jurist, Ibn Battuta, travelled extensively in India. Near the great fortress city of Gwalior, in modern Madhya Pradesh, Ibn Battuta described the small town of Alabur, the governor of which 'was the Abyssinian Badr, a slave of the sultan's, a man whose bravery passed into a proverb. He was continually making raids on the infidels alone and single handed, killing and taking captive, so that his fame spread far and wide and the infidels were in fear of him.'⁴ Later, when he embarked from the Bay of Khambhat bound for Malabar, the ship on which he sailed was accompanied by a roofed galley, 'which had a complement of fifty rowers and fifty Abyssinian men-at-arms. These latter are the guarantors of safety on the Indian Ocean; let there be but one of them on a ship and it will be avoided by the Indian pirates and idolaters'.⁵ Finally, at the great port of Calicut, which was the principal entrepôt for Chinese merchants in India, he noted that when the factor of one of the huge Chinese merchant vessels went on shore, 'he is preceded by archers and Abyssinians with javelins, swords, drums, trumpets and bugles'.⁶ In short, wherever Ibn Battuta travelled in India, he encountered Abyssinians, whether slave or free, serving as valued military personnel on both land and sea.

Elsewhere in medieval Muslim India, African military slaves were present in both the Delhi and Bahmani sultanates, where they often played an important role in palace intrigues by siding with one faction or another. As early as the first half of the thirteenth century, notable Africans appear occasionally in the early history of the Delhi sultanate. A century later the overextended Delhi sultanate began to break up and by the mid-fifteenth century independent sultanates were established across northern and central India. Africans played important roles in all of these new states. In Bengal an Abyssinian dynasty ruled briefly from 1487 into 1493.⁷ In the Bahmani state of the Deccan, Habshtis—the generic name for enslaved and freed Africans from northeast Africa—and Muwallads—the offspring of African fathers and Indian mothers—tended to

side with their Deccani hosts against outside claimants to leadership. One visible sign of African presence in the Bahmani sultanate is the Habshtî Kot (Abyssinian fort) at Bidar, where a number of important African figures from this period are buried.⁸

The presence of African soldiers and political elites was not, however, confined to the medieval period. Conditions of conflict in both India and Africa combined to create a demand for military slaves in Gujarat and a ready supply of captives in warfare in Northeast Africa. Northeast Africa had long been a source of supply of bonded labour for India, but in the sixteenth century the outbreak of intense warfare between Christian Abyssinia, with its Portuguese allies, and Muslim Adal, supported by the Ottoman Empire, yielded thousands of captives who were shipped off to Arabia and India. The spark for this conflict was the decision by the Abyssinian ruler, Lebna Dengel (r. 1508-40) to strike a decisive blow against Adal after decades of alternating fighting and trade. At the same time in Adal there emerged a radical party to challenge the ruling Walasma dynasty, which shared many economic interests with the Solomonic rulers of Abyssinia. In 1527 a *jihad* was declared under the leadership of Ahmed Guray; two years later his army crushed the Abyssinians at the Battle of Shembera Kure, to the east of modern Addis Ababa, and Lebna Dengel was driven into monastic exile. In subsequent years, Ahmed Guray's armies swept across the Ethiopian highlands every dry season. Finally, with battlefield support provided by a Portuguese force led by Cristovão da Gama, in February 1543 the army of Emperor Galawdewos (r. 1540-59) defeated the Muslim army and killed Ahmed Guray at Wayna Daga, east of Lake Tana.⁹

Irrespective of whichever side had captured its opponents in battle, the sultanate of Gujarat was the major consumer of these soldiers. In the sixteenth century, the rulers of the sultanate of Gujarat found themselves challenged on land by the expanding Mughal empire and on the coast by the Portuguese. Maintenance of a powerful army was absolutely essential to the survival of the state and soldiers were recruited from wherever able-bodied men were available. During the reign of Bahadur Khan (1526-37), a population of some 5,000 Habshtis inhabited the sultanate's capital

at Ahmedabad. While not all of these individuals would have been soldiers, indeed some were probably captured women, such a great concentration almost certainly reflects the consequences of the Muslim victory at Shembara Kure in 1527.¹⁰ Bahadur's successor, Mahmud Khan (1537-54) is also reported to have had a retinue of Habshi servants and appointed several Habshi slave soldiers to high office.¹¹

As is fairly well known, Habshi military slaves and high officials became especially prominent in the Deccan during the early modern period. As Sunni Muslims, Habshis were natural allies of Deccani Muslims against Shi'a Muslim mercenaries who were infiltrating the kingdom from the north. Habshis were centrally involved in court intrigues following the collapse of the Bahmani kingdom and its replacement by several new, independent kingdoms. They were especially important in the sixteenth-century kingdoms of Ahmednagar, Bijapur and Golconda. By the last quarter of the sixteenth-century competition for political dominance in Ahmednagar had become fierce between the Deccanis, who included Habshis among their ranks, and the Afagis, who were mainly immigrants from Persia and the Arab world. One of these Habshis was involved in the chaotic political aftermath of the assassination of Sultan Murtaza Nizam Shah I in 1588 and his son Sultan Miran Husain Nizam Shah II a year later. Led by a millenarian figure named Jamal Khan, who was a follower of the Mahdawi movement, the Deccanis seized power and reduced the latest ruler, Ismail Nizam Shah, to a puppet. According to Abdullāh Muhammad al-Makki, author of the Arabic *History of Gujārat*, who claims he was a witness to these events, military support by Habshi military slaves was critical to Jamal Khan's victory. 'They were Malek Farhād Khān, Shamshir Khān, Abnak Khān, Shujā'at Khān, Jahāngir Khān, Habash Khān, Dīlāwar Khān. They were all habshis and their chief was Farhād Khān. They were ten thousand horses in strength.' This writer notes further that the 'pomp and glory of the habshis got strengthened'.¹² Farhad Khan was appointed chief minister (*peshwa*) by Jamal Khan, but two years later Jamal Khan was removed from power and the puppet monarch replaced by his father, Burhan Nizam Shah II (r. 1591-5). During what became a

bitter struggle against the Portuguese at Chaul, Farhad Khan was dispatched as head of some 4,000 reinforcements to relieve a fort. Burhan Nizam Shah had ordered to be built overlooking Chaul. In the final battle in September 1594 the Portuguese decimated the Ahmednagar forces, killing as many as 12,000 men. Among the captives taken by the Portuguese was Farhad Khan, who was ultimately converted to Christianity and taken to Portugal.¹³

The most famous of these influential Habshi figures in the political history of the Deccan was Malik Ambar, who was *wazir* and the virtual ruler of Ahmednagar from 1600 to 1626.¹⁴ Probably born in southern Ethiopia and bearing the name Chapu, he was enslaved, driven to the coast, and transported to Mocha. From there he was sold in Baghdad to an insightful merchant who recognized Chapu's intelligence, had him educated, converted to Islam, and renamed him Ambar, the Arabic word for ambergris and a characteristic slave name. His value undoubtedly enhanced, in the early 1570s his owner sold him to Chengiz Khan, himself a Habshi and former slave who was by then *peshwa* of the sultanate of Ahmednagar, one of the Bahmani successor-states. Over the next quarter century Malik Ambar rose to prominence as a military leader and savvy political operator, working tirelessly to beat back the encroachment of the Mughal empire under his contemporary Akbar the Great (r. 1556-1605) into the territory of the Nizam Shahi rulers of Ahmednagar. Having arranged a marriage between his own daughter and his favoured youthful claimant to the Nizam Shahi throne, Malik Ambar's army defeated an invading Mughal force in 1601 and secured the throne for the chosen heir, Murtaza Nizam Shah II. As regent and prime minister Malik Ambar rearranged the kingdom's revenue system, organized the army to defend against the Mughals, founded a new capital city at Khirki (later Aurangabad) in 1610, and ordered the construction of a sophisticated water supply system to the town. Following Malik Ambar's death, another Habshi, Hamad Khan, replaced him as major-domo for the kingdom, while he in turn was followed by Malik Ambar's grandson. During this same period, the Habshi Ikhlas Khan (1627-56) served as *wazir* of Bijapur.

Related to the renown enjoyed by Habshi military and court

officials in the Deccan at this time was the emergence of a small Habshi state as the dominant naval power along the coast of western India. Following the conquest of the coastal region of the southern Konkan coast from Gujarat either in the late fifteenth or early sixteenth century, the ruler of Ahmednagar gave command of the island fort at Janjira to the Habshi Sidi Yaqur because of his military exploits and leadership during its capture. Over the next century, successor Ahmednagar officials, none of them Sidis, ruled the strategically located island, rebuilding its wooden fort as a massive stone stronghold, construction of which was completed in 1567. In 1618 Malik Ambar appointed one Sidi Surur (r. 1618-20) to govern the island-fortress and its environs. For the next two centuries the Sidis, as they became known, dominated the coastal waters to the south of Bombay, whether serving Ahmednagar, the Mughals, or their own interests, and holding off challenges by both the English East India Company and the Marathas.¹⁵

Before leaving the broad topic of the African military presence in early modern India, it is well to remember that the Portuguese themselves regularly manned their ships with both slave and free Africans. Owing to the very high mortality rate of Portuguese sailors on the *Carreira da Índia*, without the labour of both slave and free Africans as sailors, the Portuguese would arguably not have been able to operate as an Indian Ocean maritime power in western India.¹⁶ Portuguese troop strength in India was also supplemented by the African slaves of Portuguese nobles, as well as by local mercenaries. Among these local freelance soldiers were both Indians and Sidis, the descendants of enslaved Habshis. In 1686, for example, the Portuguese army at Daman included a number of Sidis.¹⁷ As R.J. Barendse notes, these bands of free, armed Sidis were often as much a threat to those who employed them as their allies. In 1693 a group of Sidis threatened violence against the Dutch at Surat, who had imprisoned one of their number for manslaughter.¹⁸ Four decades later, during the intense competition between rival merchant groups at Surat to control the trade of Mocha, Sidis were still reckoned to be a powerful group in both the trade and politics of Surat.¹⁹ In general, however, it is quite evident that the Portuguese slave trade to India was minimal, most

captives serving as a form of conspicuous consumption for Portuguese notables who emulated their Indian counterparts by engaging large retinues of servants. Elsewhere during this period in the Indian Ocean world, captive Africans were steadily becoming employed in productive activities, but as we have seen, their primary role in early modern India was military and political, both as foot soldiers, cavalry, and ministers of state.

The other major connection between Africa and India over these 250 years was primarily through the trade in Indian textiles. This commerce can be divided into two major components. First, in the hands of Indian merchants conducting business in eastern Africa, textiles were exchanged for African primary products, most notably ivory. Second, when carried on European ships to West Africa to purchase captives for the Atlantic slave trade, Indian textiles were purchased with bullion. Sufficient data do not exist to enable historians accurately to winnow out the percentage of the African trade in the total, global export of Indian trade cloth in the early modern period, but there can be no question of its importance in fueling the exploitation of Africa's human and animal resources during this era. As for the impact of this trade on India, there are many competing interpretations. Looked at across the economies of the entire South Asian region, Africa probably was not a major factor, but looked at 'on a regional level', as Prasanna Parthasarathi suggests, 'cloth exports look much more significant'.²⁰ Three areas, in particular, were deeply committed to the manufacture and export of cotton textiles: Bengal, Coromandel, and Gujarat. All exported cloth to Africa. For example, in the second quarter of the eighteenth century, India provided about half of all textiles sent from Great Britain to West Africa, worth between half and three-quarters million pounds sterling.²¹ Although the African market constituted only one element in this business, its impact on India cannot be dismissed. Although Parthasarathi's analysis carries beyond the early modern period, his assessment still merits our attention for this period.

The manufacture of these cloths for export was vital for economic life in eighteenth century South Asia. It primed the monetary pump by bringing in bullion and other goods that were used as money. It generated a massive amount

of commercial activity and internal trade in cotton, yarn, grain, cloth as well as other goods that made up the basket of consumption for weavers and merchants.²²

Although both Bengal and Coromandel were linked economically to West Africa,²³ the most historically significant branch of the Indian textile trade to Africa focused on western India, in particular on Gujarat. At the end of the fifteenth century, the dominant port of Gujarat was Cambay, whose vessels traded directly to all the major ports of the Swahili coast, from Mogadishu to Sofala.²⁴ For various reasons, however, Cambay was rivaled and shortly surpassed by Diu, which became an early target of the expanding Portuguese seaborne empire. After a series of naval encounters and sieges over the first half of the sixteenth century against both the Gujarat sultanate and the Ottoman empire, in 1555 the Portuguese finally took control of this important island and port. For the next century textile exports to Mozambique were still carried primarily on official Portuguese ships. By the mid-seventeenth century, however, Vaniya merchants from Diu and Daman, who were primarily Hindus involved in the world of commerce and banking, had progressively increased their share of the shipping, in addition to their established control of supplying Indian cottons and other merchandise to Portuguese East Africa, extending from the Lamu Archipelago and Mombasa in the north to Mozambique Island and Inhambane in the south.²⁵ By the end of the seventeenth century the Portuguese lost control of Fort Jesus, Mombasa, to a combined force of local resistance and Omani intervention, thus limiting Portuguese claims to suzerainty to the coastline of modern Mozambique. As the ruling Ya'arubi dynasty of Oman imploded over the course of the first half of the eighteenth century, control of the Swahili coast became fragmented and trade undoubtedly suffered.²⁶ Yet even under these conditions we know that Vaniya merchants provided shipping to the Omani force that participated in the final expulsion of the Portuguese from Fort Jesus in 1728-9. They also were reported to trade to the southern Somali port of Barawa, which lay beyond Omani control.²⁷

Weakened by both more powerful European rivals and the Omanis—in the 1660s the latter launched devastating attacks on

Mozambique Island, Mombasa, Pare, and Diu—the Portuguese ability to control trade at Mozambique suffered significantly. It is in this context that the Vaniya merchants of Diu who were already trading successfully to Mozambique concluded an agreement with the Portuguese that gave them a monopoly of the trade in Indian merchandise to Portuguese East Africa and in ivory from there to Gujarat. These men, who are identified in the Portuguese documents as 'the Company of Mazanes', were in reality members of a city-wide *mahajan* or merchants' organization in Diu. Unfortunately, we know very little about how this monopoly operated until the 1750s, that is, at the end of the early modern period.²⁸ Furthermore, we can only guess at the number of Vaniya firms and residents at Mozambique Island before the later eighteenth century, when there were perhaps two dozen or more firms and some 300 residents.²⁹ Nevertheless, as Parthasarathi suggests, it seems quite reasonable to argue that the impact of the Mozambique trade at Diu and into its hinterland, involving spinners, weavers, dyers, and middlemen, was a significant regional feature of Indian economic life during the decades after 1686. Certainly, by the 1730s, contends Pedro Machado, the link between the Vaniya merchants of Diu and Daman and the hinterland region of Jambusar was intimate. Located in the most important cotton district of western India, Jambusar also grew its own indigo and sustained a large population of spinners and weavers. 'By the mid-eighteenth century they concentrated their procurement there to the almost complete exclusion of other weaving centres in Gujarat'. Indeed, Machado asserts, 'between 85 and 95 per cent of all textiles exported to Africa on Indian vessels were manufactured in Jambusar'.³⁰

While there were certainly other connections between Africa and India during the early modern period, I have isolated what I believe to have been the two most important features of this relationship as they related to the impact of Africa and Africans on India. These were the role played by different groups of Africans and by individual African personalities in the military and political history of early modern India, most notably in Gujarat and the Deccan, and the regional impact on Gujarat of the export textile trade. As we have seen, in different times and places there were political

situations where African slave soldiers and mercenaries were engaged by Indian and European authorities to supplement existing military strength. Equally, in the fluid political situation that characterized the collapse of the Bahmani sultanate at the end of the fifteenth century in the Deccan, there were opportunities for ambitious and skilled African elites like Malik Ambar to emerge as major Indian political figures. But although most of the Africans who figured in the early modern history of India were either enslaved or the descendants of slaves, nowhere were Africans engaged in any serious economically productive activities. In this regard, then, the experiences of enslaved Africans in early modern India were distinct from those of captive Africans in the long nineteenth century, who were for the most part employed as labourers on agricultural plantations in Africa itself, Arabia, and the Gulf, although some were also recruited as military in Arabia.

The rise of the British Raj and the emergence of British domination over the Indian Ocean in the nineteenth century further stimulated the trade in textiles to East Africa as Bombay and Karachi became integral nodes in the imperial linkages connecting India to Muscat and to the Omani Empire in Zanzibar.³¹ As a consequence, the modest increase in Indian settlement in Mozambique that marked the early modern period was now extended to Zanzibar Town and significantly increased. This later period also witnessed the exploitation of Indian indentured labour to replace the slavery that had mainly affected Africans so that thousands of Indian peasants migrated to both South and East Africa as agricultural and railway labourers in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. These developments and the settlement of many of these Indians after completion of their contracts reflected a major change in the relationship between India and Africa from what had obtained in the early modern period.³²

To return to the place of Africa and Africans in the making of early modern India, in this short chapter, I have neither argued for an unexpected influence of Africa on early modern India nor have I lamented that Africa was inconsequential in the Indian history of this period.³³ What I suggest, instead, is that in certain places at particular moments in time, Africa and Africans were an important

presence in India. To claim more would be hyperbole; to claim less would be to ignore history.

NOTES

1. See, e.g. Gwyn Campbell, 'The Role of Africa in the Emergence of the Indian Ocean World Global Economy', in Pamela Gupta, Isabel Hofmeyr and Michael Pearson (eds.), *Eyes Across the Water: Navigating the Indian Ocean*, Pretoria: Unisa Press, 2010, pp. 170-96; and for his provocative critique of the application of the 'early modern' framework to Indian Ocean history, see Campbell, 'Africa, the Indian Ocean, and the "Early Modern": Historiographical Conventions and Problems', in Toyin Falola and Emilly Brownell (eds.), *Africa, Empire and Globalization: Essays in Honor of A. G. Hopkins*, Durham, NC: Carolina Academic Press, 2011, pp. 81-92.
2. Sanjay Subrahmanyam, *Explorations in Connected Histories*, 2 vols., Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2004.
3. Steven E. Sidebotham, *Berenike and the Ancient Maritime Spice Route*, Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press, 2011, pp. 224-7.
4. *Ibn Battuta, Travels in Asia and Africa 1325-54*, ed. and trs. H.A.R. Gibb, London: Darf Publishers, 1983 [1929], p. 224.
5. *Ibid.*, pp. 229-30.
6. *Ibid.*, p. 236.
7. Fitzroy André Baptiste, John McLeod, and Kenneth X. Robbins, 'Africans in Medieval North India, Bengal, and Gujarat', and Stan Goron, 'The Habshi Sultans of Bengal', in Kenneth X. Robbins and John McLeod (eds.), *African Elites in India: Habshi Amarat*, Ahmedabad: Mapin Publishing, 2006, pp. 125-37.
8. Fitzroy André Baptiste, John McLeod and Kenneth X. Robbins, 'Africans in the Medieval Deccan', in Robbins and McLeod (eds.), *African Elites in India*, pp. 31-43.
9. For a reliable summary of these events, see Richard Pankhurst, *The Ethiopians: A History*, Oxford/Malden, MA: Blackwell, 1998, pp. 81-93.
10. E. Denison Ross (ed.), *An Arabic History of Gujarat: Zafar ul-Walid bi Muza'ffar wa A'ib*, by 'Abdallah Muhammad bin 'Omar al-Makim, al-Asafi, Uluughkhanî, London: John Murray, 1910, pp. xxxiii-xxxiv; Omar Khalidi, 'African Diaspora in India: The Case of the Habshis of the Dakan', *Hamdard Islamicus*, XI, 4 (1988), p. 7.

11. Abdullāh Muhammad al-Makkī al-Āsafi al-Uluḡhkhānī Hajjī ad-Dabir, *Zafar ul Wāliḥ bi Muzaḥfir wa Aḥib, An Arabic History of Gujarat (English Translation)*, tr. M.F. Lokhandwala, Baroda: Oriental Institute, 1970, vol. 1, pp. 228, 243, 247.
12. *Ibid.*, p. 157. For the Mahdawi movement and Jamal Khan, see Muzaḥfir Alam and Sanjay Subrahmanyam, *Writing the Mughal World: Studies on Culture and Politics*, New York: Columbia University Press, 2012, pp. 174-5.
13. *Ibid.*, pp. 176-7; Baptiste, McLeod, and Robbins, 'African in the Medieval Deccan', pp. 37-9.
14. See the excellent summary of Malik Ambar's life and career in Richard M. Eaton, 'Malik Ambar and Elite Slavery in the Deccan, 1400-1650', in Robbins and McLeod (eds.), *African Elites in India*, pp. 45-66; also Omar H. Ali, *Malik Ambar: Power and Slavery Across the Indian Ocean*, New York: Oxford University Press, 2015.
15. On the Sidis of Janjira, see Faeza Jasdawnalla, 'The African Legacy' and John McLeod, 'The Later History of Janjira', both in Robbins and McLeod (eds.), *African Elites in India*, pp. 177-83 and 188-93.
16. Malyn Newitt, 'Mozambique Island: The Rise and Decline of an East African Coastal City, 1500-1700', *Portuguese Studies*, 20 (2004): 27.
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18. *Ibid.*, p. 115.
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20. Parsaman Parthasarathi, 'Cotton Textile Exports from the Indian Subcontinent, 1680-1780', GEHN Conference, University of Padova, 17-19 November 2005, p. 10.
21. *Ibid.*, p. 6, citing Marion Johnson, *Anglo-African Trade in the Eighteenth Century*, ed. J.T. Lindblad and Robert Ross, Leiden: Brill, 1990, pp. 28-9, 54-5.
22. *Ibid.*, p. 13.
23. For the regionally important trade of cotton textiles, including so-called Guinea cloth, from French Pondicherry to Senegambia, see Richard Roberts, 'Guinée Cloth: Linked Transformations within France's Empire in the Nineteenth Century', *Cahiers d'Études Africaines*, 32, 128 (1992): 597-627; see also Colleen E. Kriger, 'Guinea Cloth: Cotton Textiles in West Africa before and During the Atlantic Slave Trade', in Giorgio Riello

- and Parsaman Parthasarathi (eds.), *The Spinning World: A Global History of Cotton Textiles, 1200-1800*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009, pp. 105-26.
24. Edward A. Alpers, 'Gujarat and the Trade of East Africa, c. 1500-1800', in *East Africa and the Indian Ocean*, Princeton, NJ: Markus Wiener, 2009, pp. 9-10; Pedro Machado, 'Awash in a Sea of Cloth: Gujarat, Africa, and the Western Indian Ocean, 1300-1800', in Riello and Parthasarathi (eds.), *The Spinning World*, pp. 164-6. We know much less about trade from Gujarat to Madagascar at this time; see Sophie Blanchy, *Karana et Banians: Les commerçants commerçants d'origine indienne à Madagascar*, Paris: L'Harmattan, 1995, pp. 33-50.
25. For a nuanced discussion of the Gujarati Vaniya, see Machado, *Ocean of Trade: South Asian Merchants, Africa and the Indian Ocean, c. 1750-1850*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014.
26. See Patricia Russo, *Oman & Muscat: An Early Modern History*, New York: St. Martin's Press, 1986, pp. 39-46, 119-21; Michael N. Pearson, *Port Cities and Intruders: The Swahili Coast, India, and Portugal in the Early Modern Era*, Baltimore and London: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1998, p. 159.
27. Alpers, *Ivory and Slaves: Changing Pattern of International Trade in East Central Africa to the Later Nineteenth Century*, Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1975, pp. 90-1.
28. See *ibid.*, and for the period after the mid-eighteenth century, Machado, *Ocean of Trade*.
29. Machado, 'Gujarati Indian Merchant Networks in Mozambique, c. 1777-1830', Ph.D. thesis, School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London, 2005, p. 32.
30. Machado, 'Cloths of a New Fashion: Indian Ocean Networks of Exchange and Cloth Zones of Contact in Africa and India in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries', in Giorgio Riello and Tirhanakar Roy (eds.), *How India Clothed the World: The World of South Asian Textiles, 1500-1850*, Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2009, p. 75.
31. For a recent overview see Thomas R. Metcalf, *Imperial Connections: India in the Indian Ocean Arena, 1860-1920*, Berkeley/Los Angeles/London: University of California Press, 2007; see also Abdul Sheriff, *Slaves, Spices & Ivory in Zanzibar: Integration of an East African Commercial Empire into the World Economy, 1770-1873*, London: James Currey; Nairobi: Heinemann Kenya; Dar es Salaam: Tanzania Publishing House; Athens: Ohio University Press, 1987.
32. Two outstanding examples of how these changes played themselves out

- during the twentieth century are James R. Brennan, *Tajifa: Making Nation and Race in Urban Tanzania*, Athens: Ohio University Press, 2012); and Sana Aiyar, *Indians in Kenya: The Politics of Diaspora*, Cambridge, MA and London: Harvard University Press, 2015. For an important early literary treatment, see M.G. Vassanji, *The Gummy Sack*, Oxford: Heinemann, 1989.
33. For a comparative critique of efforts either to inflate or to minimize the influence of Indians on Africa, see Pearson, 'Indians in East Africa: The Early Modern Period', in Rudrangshu Mukherjee and Lakshmi Subramanian (eds.), *Politics and Trade in the Indian Ocean World: Essays in Honour of Ashin Das Gupta*, New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1998, pp. 227-49.

CHAPTER 2

Trade in the Shaping of Early
Modern India: Notes on the Deccan*

ARCHISMAN CHAUDHURI

INTRODUCTION

With a focus on the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, this essay wishes to look at how trade contributed to the shaping of early modern India, particularly urbanization and political processes. The Deccan has been chosen as the unit of study because it provides the essay with a thematic and geographic coherence. Nearly corresponding to the three levels of analysis attempted here, the essay has been divided into three sections. While the first section looks at the nature and implications of trade in the Qutb Shahi Sultanate of Golconda, the second and third sections try to raise questions for further research. This essay is mainly based on secondary literature. The idea here is not to provide the readers with a mine of new information on the theme, rather to reflect on the subject through secondary literature. Far from concluding as a definite voice on the theme, the idea here is to raise questions if possible.

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