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## THE COMING OF THE EUROPEANS

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Europeans reached the Indian shores in search of wealth and power. In 1498, Portuguese traders became the first to discover the sea route to India when a Portuguese voyager arrived at Calicut on the western coast of India. The Dutch followed them in 1595, the English in 1600 and at last, the French in 1664. All these Europeans came to India for free trade.

The European nations established various commercial companies, such as the East India Company in England founded in 1600 and Verenigde Oost-Indische Compagnie-the United East India Company in the Netherlands-founded in 1602. These companies were formed to capture the spice trade by breaking the monopoly of Portuguese in Asia.

### **Rise of Autonomous States**

In the eighteenth century, when the Mughal Empire declined, autonomous states were established such as in Bengal Murshid Quil Khanj, Oudh Awadh (under Sadat Khan Mulkj, Hyderabad (under Nizam-Mulk, Asaf Jah), (under Saadatullah Khan), Mysore (under Hyder Ali), under chairman and Sarajmal) and the Sikhs (under Singh).

### **THE PORTUGUESE**

In 1498, Vasco da Gama, a Portuguese voyager, became the first European to discover the sea route to India. He arrived at Calicut on 27 May 1498. To secure the trade of spices and to look for probable Christian converts, the Portuguese challenged Arab supremacy in the Indian Ocean. They fitted their galleons with powerful cannons and established a network of

strategic trading posts along the Arabian Sea and the Persian Gulf. They soon set up political supremacy along the west coast of India. After Vasco da Gama, Captain General Alfonso de Albuquerque captured Goa in 1510 and made Goa as the centre of their commercial and political power. Goa was under their control for about four and a half centuries.

### **THE DUTCH**

The first Dutch fleet reached India in the year 1595. They formed Dutch East India Company in 1602, but they could not maintain their influence for very long period. However, they had a large supply of capital and support from their government with which they ousted the British from the East Indies (Indonesia). They also managed to establish trading factories along the Indian coast. They established their first factory in Masulipatnam (1605), followed by factories in Pulicat (1610), Surat (1611), Bimlipatnam (1641), Karaikal (1645), Chinsura (1653), kasimbazar (1658), Baranagore (1658), Patna and Balasore (both 1658) and Cochin (1663). These became the centres of international trade in spices, cotton, sugar, raw silk, calico and indigo. They were welcomed by the Indian rulers in order to put them against the Portuguese. In 1619, they were granted permission by the Mughal emperor Jahangir to trade at Surat on the west coast and Hoogly in the east. The Dutch supremacy ended with their defeat at the hands of the English in the Battle of Bedera in 1759.

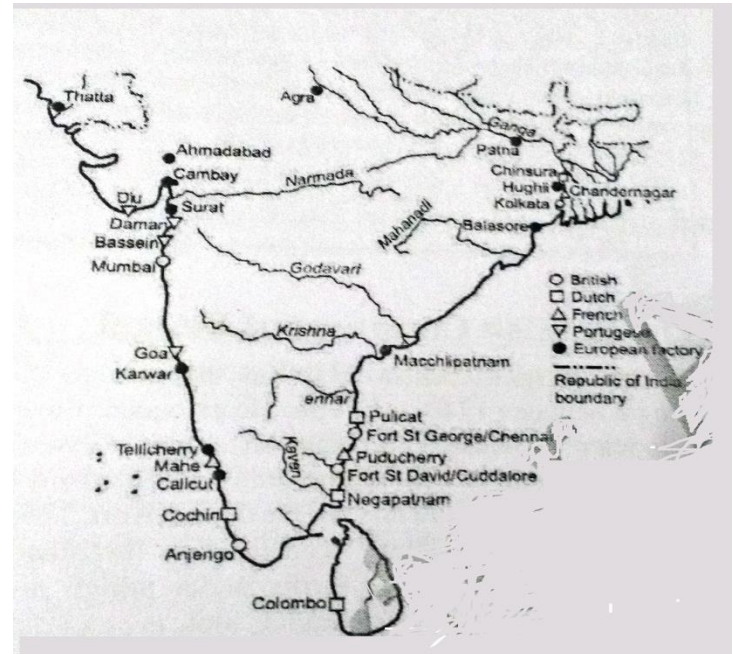
### **THE ENGLISH**

In 1600, the English East India Company was established through a charter

signed by Queen Elizabeth I in 1600. The charter granted the company the permission to trade with India. In 1608, Captain Hawkins visited the court of Jahangir but he was denied any trading rights. However, in 1619, when Sir Thomas Roe visited the court, they were allowed to set up their first factory in Surat. Gradually, the company was successful in setting up its factories at other places also such as Mumbai, Kolkata and Chennai.

The agents of the English company soon became familiar with Indian customs and languages. They learnt Persian, the official language of the Mughals. The English agents of this period lived like Indians, intermarried Indians, and most of them settled here permanently'. All this gave the English an edge over their other European rivals.

The English set up their factories in Masulipatnam (1611), Agra, Ahmedabad, Baroda, Broach (1619), Arrmagaon near Pulicat (1626), Hariharpur and Balasore (1633), Patna, Dakha, Kasimbazar (1835), Fort St George in Chennai (1639), Hoogli (1651), settlements in Bihar, Bengal and Orissa (1658), Mumbai (1668) and Sutanuti (1690), Kalikota and Govindpur (1698). Later they founded the city of Kolkata which included the regions of Sutanuti, Kalikota and Govindpur. In 1700, they fortified the factory at Sutanati and named it Fort William. In 1686, the English fought war against the Mughal emperor Aurangzeb. They lost all their control over the settlements and factories in India to the Mughals. They were pardoned when they surrendered in 1690. In 1691, they were granted a Farman by the Mughal emperor. They exempted from paying customs duties in Bengal through the Farman.



**MAP 3.1 Locations of Various Colonies in India**

In 1717 the Mughal emperor, Farukhsiyar (1713 - 1719), granted the British another farman, thus extending the privilege to British in Gujarat and Deccan - who by then had already established themselves in the south and the west - a grant of 38 villages near Kolkata, acknowledging their importance to the continuity of international trade in the Bengal economy. As the Dutch and the French, the British also brought silver bullion and copper to pay for transactions, helping the smooth functioning of the Mughal revenue system and increasing the benefits of local artisans and traders. The fortified warehouses of the British brought extraterritorial status, which enabled them to administer their own civil and criminal laws and offered numerous employment opportunities as well as asylum to foreigners and Indians.

The British factories successfully competed with their rivals as their size and population grew. The original clusters of fishing villages (Chennai and Kolkata) and the series of islands (Mumbai) became the headquarters of the British administrative zones or presidencies as they generally came to be known. The factories and their immediate environs, known as the white town, represented the actual and symbolic pre-eminence of the British in terms of their political power as well as their cultural values and social practices. Meanwhile, their Indian collaborators lived in the 'black town' separated from the factories by several kilometres.

### **Spread of British on East and West Coast of India during the Seventeenth Century**

Anglo-Dutch hostilities from 1652 to 1654 drew the English and the Portuguese closer on the western coast of India. According to a secret article in the marriage treaty of 1661 with Portugal, the Portuguese possessions in the East were guaranteed by England against the Dutch, and the island of Mumbai was included as a part of dowry of Catherine of Braganza, the new queen of Charles II. In 1668, Charles II transferred Mumbai to the East India Company on an annual payment of 10 pounds. Mumbai gradually rose to prosperity during the administration of Sir George Oxenden (1662-1669), Gerald Aungier (1669-1677) and Sir John Child (1682-1690). In 1687, the seat of the western Presidency was shifted from Surat to Mumbai. In 1611, the English started a factory in the southeast at Masulipatnam. In 1632, they obtained Golden Farman from Sultan of Golconda and in 1639 were permitted to build a fortified factory in Chennai, known as Fort St George, which later superseded

Masulipatnam as the headquarters of the English in the East coast.

### **THE FRENCH**

The French commercial interest - Compagnie des Indes Orientales (East India Company, founded in 1664) - came late but the French also established themselves in India, emulating the precedents set by their competitors, as they founded their enclave at Pondicherry (Puducherry) on the Coromandel Coast. In 1664, they set up centres near Chennai and Chandemagore on the Hoogly to trade with India. They also established naval bases in the islands of Bourbon and Mauritius in the Indian Ocean. Initially, they flourished till 1706 but afterwards declined until 1720. After 1720, it was because of Governors Lenoir and Dumas that the French regrouped in India. However, during 1742, the French Governor Duplex started repulsing English power, which resulted in the Carnatic wars and eventually the defeat of the French.

### **THE DANISH AND THE AUSTRIANS**

Besides the presence of the Portuguese, Dutch, British and French there were two lesser but noteworthy colonial groups. In 1616, the East India Company of Denmark reached Indian coasts and established settlements in Tranquebar in Tamil Nadu (1620) and Serampore in Bengal (1676). Danish entrepreneurs established themselves at several ports on the Malabar and Coromandel coasts, in the vicinity of Kolkata and inland at Patna, between 1695 and 1740. Austrian enterprises were set up in the 1720s in the vicinity of Surat, in south eastern Gujarat. As with the other non-British enterprises, the Danish and Austrian enclaves were taken over by the British between 1765 and 1815.

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