

C H A P T E R - V I

INDUSTRY, TRADE AND COMMERCE

It was a peculiar feature of the Portuguese colonization in the East that they did not look to the economic development of the colonies and used them as the instrument to provide money for their personal pleasures. When the western world was making tremendous progress and advancement with the new inventions in the field of technology, the Portuguese in their eastern Empire were interested mainly in their personal pleasures, and the spread of Christianity. They did not care to start new industries in their colonies. As a result, the Portuguese colonies remained very backward in the field of industrial development. Only indigenous industries continued to exist in their traditional forms. These industries were not promoted by the government but they existed to cater to the needs of the people.

Bassein was not an exception to the other Portuguese colonies. The indigenous industries like cloth-weaving, sugar producing, fishing, salt and leather production etc., continued to function as in the past, but the government did not show any special interest in them. Only the ship-building industry in Bassein was promoted by the Portuguese government being essential to their needs.

INDUSTRIES

During Portuguese rule, Bassein and Thane were very famous for their cloth-weaving industry. The linen and the

cloths produced in these regions, was greatly respected and valued not only all over the country but also was in great demand abroad.¹ It excelled in quality anything woven in Guimagacous.² These populated cities made a lot of money from the many thousand pieces of silk which were woven there.

The tradition of the cloth-weaving of Thane and Bassein became so famous that many weavers from Surat and Ahmedabad were attracted by this. They left their homeland and came to settle here for the purpose of their livelihood. These weavers made a great impact on cloth weaving in Bassein.³ They were followed by many others. The vassals of the Mughals and nearly 123 families from the neighbouring provinces left their homes and came down to settle in the region of Thane and Bassein.⁴

Though Bassein produced the finest cloth, it did not possess the raw material as cotton was not produced in or around Bassein. It came from Daman, Cambay and Boroach.⁵ The black wood marble much more durable and which was good to make clothes came from the island of Caranja.⁶ Sugar production was one of the major indigenous industries in Bassein during Portuguese rule. A lot of sugar was produced here in Bassein.⁷ Bassein also had a great fishing industry and salt production was in

1. Mss. Biblioteca da Ajuda, Lisboa, D.50-V.34. fl. 176_v.
Hereafter referred as BAL.

2. Mss., BNL, Collecção Fondo Geral, Cod.176, fl.179 (Report of Henrique Bravo Moraes to the Bishop of Goa).

3. OP. (BP), op.cit., p.153.

4. Mss., BNL, Notícia da India desde O Fim do Governo do V rei fl. 104.

5. Ibid.

6. J.H.Cunha Rivara, O Chronista da Tissuary, Part III, p.248.

7. Manuel Godinho, op.cit., p.12. OP (BP), 1935, op.cit., p.153.

abundance.⁸ The geographical situation of Bassein helped to develop these two indigenous industries. Bassein was an island surrounded by the Arabian Sea on the western side and the two rivers on the north and south adjoining the Sopara Creek. Salt water fish was made available from the sea which was supplemented by sweet water fish from the rivers. Moreover, there were many artificial ponds in which the fish was bred by the local people. Similarly, the rice-fields which were in the low areas became popular fishing spots during the heavy monsoon. Bassein was a typical place for the production of salt. The salt-pans were developed along the creek, especially the southern creek of the river Ulhas, from Naigaon to Gokhivare in the north. These areas produce the finest salt even today.

There was a flourishing business of furniture-making during the Portuguese rule. As Bassein produced plenty of wood in the neighbouring forests, it had a very good industry in furniture-making, which was made for the Fidalgos of Goa and Bassein. Many wealthy citizens of Goa also purchased this furniture which was produced in Bassein. It was sent to Goa by Ships and the major orders were for chairs and beds. All the furniture was made from very good wood which was plentiful in Bassein.⁹ There was a peculiar type of metal industry in Bassein. The metal wheels which were made in Bassein were

8. Manuel Godinho, op.cit., p.12.

OP (BP), 1935, op.cit., p.153.

9. Mss. BNL, Henrique Bravo Moraes, op.cit.,

OP (BP), 1935, op.cit., p.154.

purchased by Thana for the indigenous industries.¹⁰ Similarly, lead was manufactured in Bassein.¹¹

The Portuguese who had already started the geological survey of some of her colonies, did the same in Bassein. We get this reference from a letter of the Portuguese king sent to viceroy D.Duarte de Menezes in the year 1587. In it he mentions having sent a geologist named Augustinho de Souto Maior to Bassein and that there were signs of existence of iron and also of copper and silver in the island and that he would be glad to learn whether anything of the sort had really been found.¹² We do not know about the outcome of this experiment but it is certain that efforts were made in this direction.

Bassein had a great industry in building-stone,¹³ which was a beautiful and hard stone like granite. Pyrard de Laval gives the details of this industry in his travel account where he says that he was surprised to see the huge stones which were used in the building construction. This type of stone was always carried to Goa because ordinary stone necessary for the construction was available in Goa but that used for columns and other decorative work was provided from Bassein. It was available in very long blocks of very great strength. He was so astonished with the greatness and beauty of this stone of Bassein that he has written, "I have never seen single columns of stone so thick and long as those here in Bassein".¹⁴

10. Mss. AHU, India Caixa 9, D.212.

11. Mss. AHU, India Caixa 13, D.7

12. Mss. HAG. Livros das Manções, No.3 A. fl.94.
APO (CR) Fasc.III p.506.

13. Braz Fernandes, ARMAS ..., op.cit., pp.5 and 109.

14. Pyrard de Laval, op.cit., Vol.II, Part I, p.63.

Most of the churches and huge palaces in Goa were made of these black stones of Bassein.¹⁵

Bassein was also famous for its leather industry right from the 10th century. It had not only traded in leather but also manufactured slippers.¹⁶ Some cobblers made good money in this trade. One of the churches in this region is said to have been built by a man who became prosperous as a result of his slipper trade.¹⁷ There was one more important industry - the making of beads. The beads made on the West coast of India at the back of Bombay were needed for the African trade and was under the order from Portugal. No Portuguese was allowed to purchase them. The intention was that the king should buy these beads directly from the producers. The Captains of Bassein and Chaul became rivals in this trade, both fitted out armed bands to go up-country to make purchases and these bands nearly came to blow. The Captain of Bassein won the struggle and the king of Portugal had to buy the beads he wanted from him at a high exchange price.¹⁸

TIMBER TRADE AND SHIP BUILDING

During the Portuguese period, though Bassein did not possess well-established industries, ship-building was one of the major industries which flourished under royal patronage. Bassein could yield an excellent quality of teak wood which was in abundant supply. Ship-building developed in this part on a large scale. Agashi, a village in North Bassein, had an old

15. Pyrard de Laval, op.cit. Vol. II, Part II, p.227.

16. Niccolao Manucci, op.cit., Part I, p.254.

17. Hebers Narrative, op.cit., Part II, p.188.

timber trade and a ship-building yard. Though Bassein was poor in building, it had a rich timber trade and built ships as good as Portuguese ships, able to make a voyage to Europe. Bassein was so fertile and famous for the forests that it excelled all the parts of the kingdom of Cambay.¹⁹ The teak wood of Bassein was in great demand and was used even for the construction of the ships of the Muslims.²⁰ The merchants used to purchase wood from Bassein from which ships for their powerful navy was built. Many ships used to be loaded there with timber which they carried to Mecca to be used by the Turks for their fleet.²¹ All the timber required at Goa for building houses and ships came from Bassein.²² The excellent quality of teak wood was used to construct the sailing boats of the armada of Goa and those were made in Bassein. These ships were bigger in size.²³ In 1595, the commandent of Asheri was ordered to furnish a galleo every year built at Bassein.²⁴ Similarly, smaller vessels used for the coasting fleet of India were built chiefly at Bassein.

18. R.S.Whiteway, op.cit., p.299.

19. Silva Rego, Documentos Ultramarino, Vol.II, p.47.
 João de Barros, Decada IV, Part I, Livro II,Cap.XVI,p.223.
 Julio Gonsalves, Seis Fortalezas, op.cit., p.69.

20. Mss. British Museum, Additional collection, D.28, 433 fl.43.

21. Gaspar Correa, op.cit., Livro III, Parte II, p.449.

22. Radhakumar Mookerjee, A History of Indian Shipping and Maritime Activities, (Bombay, 1912), p.202.

23. Cunha Rivara, O Chronista de Tissuary, op.cit.,Part III,p.248.
 OP (BP) 1935, op.cit., p.153.

24. APO (CR), Fasc. III.

Pyrard de Laval who visited Bassein in 1608 makes a special reference to the fine teak wood which according to him, was supplied to all Portuguese settlements for building ships and houses. Due to the lack of timber in Portugal, the king of Portugal and Spain made every attempt to induce the Indian government to build ships in India. These ships were built mostly in Goa and Bassein.²⁵ Pyrard also furnishes the information regarding the strongest ship built in Bassein. He says that no vessel ever made so many voyages from Portugal to India as a certain ship that was built in Bassein.²⁶ In the field of ship-building, Pyrard compares Bassein with Biscay in Spain. During the Spanish control of Portugal (1580-1640) all the vessels built for the king of Spain in the East were constructed in Bassein because no other place yielded so much timber.²⁷ This may be an exaggeration. The kingdom of Pegu, Saim and Martabone had more timber but these places were remote and not convenient.

There were so many restrictions against the cutting of wood in Bassein. Nobody was permitted to cut the wood without a licence. The people could collect firewood from the jungle but they were not permitted to cut live trees for this purpose. The people who did not follow these regulations were fined which was double the cost of the wood cut.²⁸ Even the Captains of

25. Pyrard da Laval, op.cit., Vol.II, Part I, p.181.

26. Mss. Collecção São Vecente, Vol.XVI, fl.189.

Mss. BAL, 15, VII-30. fl.1.

Pyrard de Laval, op.cit., p.181.

27. Pyrard de Laval, op.cit., p.181.

28. Pissurlencar, Regimentos ..., op.cit., Vol. p.319.

Bassein who had the monopoly of teak wood were not permitted to cut other types of wood without a signed contract with the King.²⁹

The ship-building yard of Bassein did not cater to the needs of the Portuguese only but also provided some boats to the British. While the Portuguese were involved in non-commercial activities like the spread of Christianity, the British were busy establishing commercial control over the west coast. The Portuguese shipyard of Bassein constructed some ships for them. In 1636, two ships were built for the Surat Factory at Bassein.³⁰

Even Shivaji, the founder of the Maratha raj, had ordered the construction of ships in the Portuguese ship-building yard of Bassein. In fact, Shivaji was trying to lay the foundation of this navy to face the naval challenge of the Sidhi of Janjira. There were some well-known Portuguese ship-builders working in the ship-yard of Bassein. Rui Leitão Viegas and his son Fernão Leitão Viegas were known for their craftsmanship and decorative art. So Shivaji ordered the first twenty Galbate³¹ (Marathi), from Bassein.³² Initially he declared that these ships would be used against the Sidhi. There were nearly four hundred Portuguese and other people who were working under Rui Leitão.³³

29. Pissurlencar, Regimentos, op.cit., p.321.

30. William Foster - English Factories in India (1634-36) XVIII, p.226. Balkrishna, Commercial relations between India & England, (London,1924), pp.65-83.

31. Galbat is Marathi word for boat.

32. Pissurlencar, Portuguese-Marathe Sambendha, op.cit., p.42.

33. Ibid.

It clearly proves that the ship-builders in Bassein not only accepted the orders of Portuguese, Spanish and English but also the native kings like Shivaji. Rui Leitaó had appointed all these workers after getting the order from Shivaji. The total number of these workers, including their wives and children, was nearly four hundred.³⁴

The Portuguese Captain of Bassein could not tolerate the rising might of Shivaji. He decided to stop the construction of the fleet ordered by Shivaji because he sensed the danger from him. Though he had declared that these newly built ships would be used against the ~~Sidhi~~ there was a possibility of his using them against the Portuguese. So the Captain ordered the construction of this fleet to be stopped. The people who were involved in the construction of this fleet, ran to the Bassein Fort and Bombay.³⁵

In this way, the ship-builders of Bassein accepted the orders of the outsiders, neglecting sometimes the orders of the Portuguese. So the government was compelled to take the possession of some ships by force. In 1540, an expedition was sent from Bassein Fort to the ship-building yard of Agashi with the sole object of getting possession of a great ship which had just been built there and was ready for launching. The ship was taken by the Portuguese and afterwards, made several voyages to Portugal.³⁶

34. Pissurlencar, Portuguese-Marathe Sambendha, op.cit., p.42.

35. Pissurlencar, Assentos do Conselho..., op.cit. Part IV, p.6,7.

36. Couto, Decada IV, op.cit., Part II, p.99.

Radhakumar Mukherjee, op.cit., pp.202, 203.

The superiority of Indian teak wood over European pine and oak for ship-building purposes was recognised early by the authorities in Lisbon and Goa. But there was not much unanimity about whether it was cheaper to build ships for Carreira in Portugal or in India. A royal order of 1585 repeated textually nine years later, emphasised the importance of building ships for the Carreira in India rather than in Europe both, because experience had shown that those which were built in India lasted much longer than those built in Europe. Moreover, the ships that were built in India were cheaper and stronger.³⁷

Though ship-building in Bassein was quite a prosperous industry in the 16th and early 17th centuries, it began to disintegrate in the later part of their rule. There were certain important factors which were responsible for this situation. Later experience showed that although the Indian-built ships were certainly stronger, they were not always cheaper than those constructed in Europe. One reason for this was that the Captains of Portuguese forts on the West coast of India, whose pre-requisites usually included the cutting and selling of local timber, habitually charged outrageous prices from the Crown.³⁸ Portuguese kings complained to the viceroy about this attitude of their Captains. During this period, the Captains of Daman and Bassein

37. C.R.Boxer, PSE, op.cit., pp.211-12.

38. DPI. (AD), op.cit., Vol.V, pp.156-57.
C.R.Boxer, PSE, op.cit., p.212.

charged forty xerafins for a quantity of wood although it had only cost them five.³⁹

Moreover, European cordage was also more satisfactory than most of the Asian varieties. So the Portuguese government revised their policy regarding the construction of ships. Instead of ordering ships from Bassein and Cochin, they started the construction of ships in Lisbon itself, where the Ribeira da Naos or the royal dockyard employed some 1500 men in 1620.⁴⁰

MARKETS

There were various markets at different places in Portuguese Bassein. The fort city had a huge market and it was within the wall, which was in the front of the sea-gate where the products of the country was sold. The people who lived outside the fort wall, in the neighbouring villages, brought their vegetables, foodgrains etc., to this market and sold them to the wealthy citizens of the town. Some of them came from the mainland in the North but many more came from the South over rivers in small boats.⁴¹

The city council could assign places of streets to the artisans and merchants. It could enact necessary market regulations in order to control the quality and prices of the articles. The inspectors of every craft had to make their rounds and destroy the articles which did not come upto the expected standards. The

39. DPI. (AD) op.cit., Vol.V, pp. 156-57.

C.R.Boxer, PSE, op.cit., p.212.

40. Ibid.

41. James Campbell, op.cit., vol.XIV, p.39.

Municipality or Camara had developed a three-pronged market. This was achieved through the Municipality posturas, incorporated into the decree of the viceroy and confirmed by the royal orders.⁴²

The Municipality had a full-fledged body of officials to implement them. It had three types of officials to exercise there this multiple control. They were Almotacel, Jurados and Zeledores. Two almotacels or market inspectors, appointed by the Municipal board every two months, had to inspect the food-stuffs brought into the town for sale and to see that they were sold at the market price where this was fixed and to ensure that the vendors used standard weights and measures.⁴³ Besides they had to ensure that the artisans and the journeymen did not charge more for their labour than they were authorised by the Municipal regulations.⁴⁴

The almotacels were helped in the task of inspection by four sworn accusers (Jurados) who issued violation chits to the culprits and collected surveys if they feared that the culprit might run away. Once a week those punished by the jurados, were brought to the market control room where the Almotacel judged the cases and fined the violators if necessary. The cash collected by way of fines was submitted to the city attorney. Over and above the sworn accusers and Almotacels, there were two Zeledores

42. T.R. de Souza, op.cit., p.165.

43. For details regarding the weights and measures which were in practice during the Portuguese rule, see Appendix III.

44. C.R.Boxer, Portuguese Society in the Tropics, Minisota, Wisconsin (USA, 1965) p.7.

or general superintendents who were elected once a year to check whether the Almotacel or Jurados were doing their duties according to the rules and regulations of the government.⁴⁵

As regarding the standard quality of articles, it was either established in the posturas or in the clause of the licences issued to the artisans. The distribution and control was carried out through price fixation and through a check on weights and measures, at least in the case of certain commodities. For instance, as soon as the food grains and oil were unloaded and taken to the custom house, an importer who did not have thirty Khandis or more to show, had the price fixed by the judge of the market (Juiz do terreiro). He issued the price tags with the date of issue on them to be placed on the containers of grain and other materials for sale. These price tags were valid for two months in the case of grain and for one month only in the case of butter or oil.⁴⁶

There were licenced fish vendors who exploited their monopoly rights by disposing the greater and best part of their catch, straight from their residence for the benefit of the monastaries and well-wishers. They would salt and dry the remaining fish without bothering to send any fresh fish to the fish market. In order to put an end to this severe inconvenience to the general public, the municipality generally decided that there should not be limited fish vendors.⁴⁶

45. T.R. de Souza, op.cit., p.178.

46. Mss. HAG., No.7795.

T.R. de Souza, op.cit., p.177.

The control over the import of raw material utilized by the city artisans was also essential. It directly benefited the town artisans but also brought to the consumers, a regular supply of goods at moderate prices. The immediate benefit was evident from the fact that the cobblers and tanners themselves had taken the initiative to come to an agreement with the men of the slaughter-house. The former would provide the latter with advance money that would be sufficient for them to buy cattle for one full year and the latter in turn, were obliged to sell the hide to the former at a mutually agreed rate.⁴⁷

Whenever the right of collecting market fines was formed and as it was during the most of the 17th century, the farmer could arrest the violators of the market regulations and produce them before the Almotacels in the market control room (Cazinha). In case an Almotacel was not available, the two farmers could take prisoners to the state prison known as 'Sala das Bargas' where the arrested party could be kept but for not more than 24 hours before bringing him to competent authorities.⁴⁸

In order to curb the tendency to accuse people without sufficient reason, it was determined in the municipality posturas that no close relation of the tax farmers could be allowed to act as his clerk or sworn accuser. If the Almotacels suspected the character of a sworn accuser they could order the tax farmer or his sworn accuser to produce two other witnesses who had to be either Portuguese or local Christians.⁴⁹

47. Mss. HAG. No. 7701, Registos Gerais, 1648-57, fl.58_v.

48. T.R. de Souza, op.cit., p.178.

49. Mss. HAG. No. 7795, (Livro de Posturas) fl. 31.



Portuguese Coins used in Bassin
for details see Appendix No II

Guilds

The working of the guild system in India was common even from the ancient times. The craft guilds and merchant guilds were well known during this period. Kautilya, the famous economist of ancient India devotes a full adhikarna in his celebrated Arthashastra to the description of Shreni. By the time of the composition of the Buddhist scriptures, guilds certainly existed in almost every important Indian town, embracing almost every trade and industry, including thieves.⁵⁰

But it was only by the end of the sixteenth century that the urban economy of Portugal gained its complexity. By that time the guild had reached high development in most of the other parts of Europe. It was only then onwards (1572) that the craft guilds of Lisbon received a judicial description.⁵¹ By the end of the 16th century, the Portuguese also introduced this guild system into their overseas colonies like Goa, other important settlements in India and in Bassein too. The artisans and craftsmen governed by these guilds included masons, stone-cutters, tile-bakers, goldsmiths, silversmiths, jewel-cutters, polishers, wax workers, coppersmiths, shoemakers and lime manufacturers.

50. D.D.Kosambi, The Culture and civilisation of Ancient India in Historical outline, (Calcutta, 1974) p.219.

Basham, The wonder that was India, (Calcutta, 1974) p.219.

51. Langhans "As corporações dos Offiços Mecanicos," (Lisboa, 1943-46) Vol.I, XIII - XXI.

The Portuguese gave more importance to the specialisation of these artisans in their skills. The registration books of the examination, certificates issued to these artisans and their confirmation by the Municipality also pointed towards a high degree of specialisation of crafts. We come across many carefully issued certificates to canvas-makers, tanners, rope-weavers, sword-sharpers and many others.⁵²

It was determined that every artisan should present surety before the Municipal authority. The goldsmiths and silversmiths had registered a mark which was recorded in the books of Municipality and which they were bound to affix on any type of ornament prepared by them. The masons and carpenters had to present guarantee equipment to one-third of the value of the work undertaken.⁵³

The artisans could refuse, under penalty of 2000 reis, to attend immediately to the needs of any citizen of the category of squire (escudeiro) and above. The goldsmiths and silversmiths were forbidden to work anywhere outside the places assigned to them under the penalty of 50 Xerafins.⁵⁴ The washermen were warned not to lend the clothes of their clients to a third party under pain of paying a fine of five Xerafins. They were also required to wash the clothes twice a week during summer and once a week during winter and not to use rough stones to thrash the clothes.⁵⁵ A shoemaker was warned never to turn a client away for want of leather or with any other

52. T.R. de Souza, op.cit., p.164.

53. Ibid.

54. Mss. HAG., No.7795, Livro de Postura - fl.57.

55. Ibid.

excuse.⁵⁶ The government had regulated the rules for those who did not sell the goods at stipulated rates. They were 500 reis if caught once, 1000 reis and suspension from the market if caught a second time and 2000 reis plus a loss of privilege of selling in the market if caught for the third time.⁵⁷

The control of production was aimed at protecting the consumers against the adulteration of goods and fraud. The inspectors of every guild were instructed to tour the areas within their professional jurisdiction and check the quality of articles and destroy those which were found to be sub-standard. In Bassein city there was hardly any artisan staying within the city walls. The artisans used to come daily to the city from the neighbouring villages and return home before sunset.⁵⁸

There was an internal administrative system of the guilds. Each guild was controlled by its leader called Mukadam. A Mukadam was elected by the guild members but the election and the term of their allegiance to him had to receive the official sanction of the Municipality. Apparently the officials of the guild, Mukadams, like those of the guild inspectors and their clerks and guild representatives to the Municipal Board, continued to be restricted to the Portuguese.⁵⁹ The Mukadams played

56. Mss. HAG., No.7795, fl.65.

57. Ibid. It shows that the Portuguese were very strict against those vendors who violated the market regulations. So the people were protected from these troublesome elements.

58. Fryer, op.cit., 1698 Ed., p.74.

59. T.R. de Souza, op.cit., pp.165, 166.

an intermediary part at the time of differences of opinion on the trade. The Mukadam was also assisted by elected arbiters and anyone who disobeyed the Mukadam was liable to pay a fine of 10 Cruzados each time for the confraternity of St. George.

These were some of the main features of marketing and the guild system in Bassein during the Portuguese rule. As the fort City of Bassein was very compact and small, it did not face any problem in the field of marketing. The urban population was quite limited. Food provisions for the military were purchased in bulk. The missionary houses had their properties outside the fort wall. It was from these properties that they received food provisions. Similarly some Fidalgos who stayed inside the fort owned some land outside. This land was cultivated by their tenants. These farmers always provided the best of the produce to their landlords. So the urban market inside the fort wall provided the needs of the few people staying inside.

MODE OF PAYMENT

Payment of the Staff

As regards the form of payment, the Portuguese followed a somewhat complicated system. The basic pay of the military and the administrative rank-and-file was known as soldo, which varied with the social rank of the beneficiary. The equivalent of soldo, when it was paid to a non-Portuguese employee was called Musara. All those who received Soldo and Musara were also entitled to a maintenance allowance called Manimento in case of Portuguese beneficiaries and Batta in the case of local persons. Manimento or Batta were calculated monthly but while

the Manimento was paid either in cash or kind, Batta was always paid in kind.⁶⁰

High-ranking officials, who had their offices by appointment, received their salaries which were calculated annually. This was known as Ordenado. These officials were not entitled to Manimento. However, most of these officials derived other benefits. Those who did not have government quarters were paid posentadoria, a house rent, the least of which amounted to about a seventh of the amount paid as salary and the highest reached even to one-third of the salary.⁶¹

Moreover, the crew of the Carreira ships and some high-ranking administrative officials such as viceroys, the Vedor da Fozenda, the officials of the House of Accounts (Casa dos Contos) enjoyed the privilege of sending to Portugal on their account, certain partly or fully duty-free liberty chests and a fixed number of slaves.⁶² In addition to these facilities, the captains of various fortresses had the privilege of private trade. The Captain of Bassein had the privilege of the timber trade of Bassein which provided wood to the different Portuguese dockyards of Bassein, Goa and other places and which was used in house-building also. They sold the timber to the Crown at very high rates.⁶³

60. C.R.Boxer, PSE, op.cit., p.299.
Wheeler, op.cit., p.173.

61. Pissurlencar, Regimentos..., op.cit., pp.140-1, 151-2.

62. Mss. HAG, No. 2358 Alvaras Cartas Regias, 1610, 45, fl.299.
HAG, Manções 22A, fl. 201-3.

63. Pyarad de Laval, op.cit., Vol.II, Part I, p.181
C.R.Boxer, PSE, op.cit., p.212.

Finally the Fidalgos who stayed in various Portuguese colonies and worked for the state, received a special pay in the form of Moradias or home allowance. As they received huge amounts, it was a great burden to the public exchequer. So at the end of the 17th century, when the Portuguese government in India suffered an economic setback on account of the decay of commerce, it was decided that the Fidalgos should not be paid both Soldos and Moradias at the same time.⁶⁴

PAYMENT OF WORKERS

The details regarding the mode and quantum of payment to the government servants and workers continued to be regulated subsequently by a standing order or a requirement drawn by the Chief Revenue Superintendent.⁶⁵ The workers were counted twice a day by the keeper of muster roll and the time they were found absent during the working hours, was taken into account when computing their wages.⁶⁶ The payment was made in public if it was a small sum and in private if the amount was big.⁶⁷

The mason engaged in the building construction was paid four xerafins per brassa (10' x 10'), a painter was paid one xerafin and 15 reis for white-washing two rooms; a carpenter

64. Mss. AHU, India, Caixa 31, D.No.19.

65. Pissurlencar, Regimentos ..., op.cit., p.15.

66. T.R. de Souza, op.cit., p.168.

67. Pyrard de Laval, op.cit., Part II, p.36.

contractor received seventy one and a half xerafins for doing the ceiling of a church, a blacksmith was paid seven xerafins for casting an iron grills and basket weavers were paid one xerafim and a half for weaving some mats.⁶⁸ The employees of the royal hospital and of the House of Accounts were paid from the import duties on betel leaves and foodstuffs (Mantimento e betve). The officials of justice were paid from the chancery income (Renda da Chancelaria).⁶⁹

In addition to these forms of payment of wages, workers of the royal dockyard were paid ferias or daily wages, which was around 1607 and it amounted to 12,000 xerafins per year.⁷⁰ A rule followed in the making of payments was that the earner should receive it directly in person. This rule does not seem to have been strictly enforced because Diogo de Couto, who was an eye-witness to the administrative abuses, describes the prevailing practice of selling the Soldos or harassing the workers at length in several other ways.⁷¹ There were, however, instances of payment made officially to the families of those who worked far away from their homes.⁷²

Due to the low salaries, the skilled workers used to run away to the areas which paid more. The Portuguese government

68. T.R. de Souza, op.cit., p.173.

69. T.R. de Souza, op.cit., pp. 68-69.

70. Falcao L de F., Livro em que se Contem toda a Fazenda a Real Patrimonio dos reinos de Portugal, India.

71. Couto, O Soldado Praltico, op.cit., p.87.

72. T.R. de Souza, op.cit., p.169.

tried to eradicate this evil by increasing the salaries.⁷³ Moreover, the military suffered a scarcity of soldiers because of poor payment. The governor, Fernão de Albuquerque, raised the quarterly pay of the constables to twenty-five xerafins and of gunners to sixteen xerafins, and their maintenance allowance was to thirteen tangas per month.⁷⁴

The mode of payment of the labourer employed by private individuals depended upon mutual agreement between the employer and the employee.⁷⁵ In terms of quarterly payment in the course of 17th century, a barber received five xerafins, and a cobbler four xerafins, a washerman seven xerafins, a cook three xerafins, a Pandit fifteen xerafins, a palanquin or parasol bearer, six xerafins. It is also interesting to note that a washerman was paid one xerafin per wash, a baker received two xerafins to make bread of one Khandi of wheat flour given to him and a rope weaver worked in eight maunds of coir for a xerafim and three tangas.⁷⁶

In the case of local people employed by the government or private individuals, it was their duty to take care of horses and other menial works. It was ruled by the government that they should never be paid the monthly salary of three golden pardãos in advance because they were used to squander the amount on various vices and those who were not from the locality would often disappear without informing their employers.⁷⁷

73. Mss. HAG, Mancões, 46A, fl.505.

74. APO (CR), Vol.VI, p.1235.

75. T.R. de Souza, op.cit., p.171.

76. Ibid. p.172-173.

77. T.R. de Souza, op.cit., p.169.

Regulation and control of payment

The pay-procedure was controlled by separate departments, namely the General Registration Office, (Matricula Geral), the House of Accounts (Caza dos Cantos) and the factory (Feitoria). Everyone on the state pay roll had to have his name, designation, employment order and nature of salary registered in the muster roll of the General Registration Office. Even facial marks for the purpose of identification were noted down in these registers.⁷⁸

The House of Accounts did the auditing of the accounts of the various departments and all the high-ranking officials had to submit to it their quarterly, yearly and three-yearly accounts. Whenever any officer ended his term, a judicial inquiry was conducted to certify that he had carried out his duties in keeping with his office regulations and the House of Accounts had to issue a clearance certificate stating that he had owed no dues to the state. If an officer was found to have effected any payment not sanctioned by the government, he was required to make good the damage to the public exchequer at his own expense.⁷⁹ The Factor was the official who was directly responsible before the House of Accounts.

The higher authority to whom an appeal could be directed regarding the payment of the salaries or for that matter

78. Pissulencar, Regimentos, op.cit...., pp.140-1.

APO, (CR) V, 1325 ff, 1181 ff., provides details regarding the functioning of the Registration Office and of the House of Accounts respectively.

79. T.R. de Souza, op.cit., p.167.

regarding any financial problem was that Chief Revenue Superintendent (Vedor Geral da Fazenda) whose authority ranked practically next to that of the viceroy or the governor.⁸⁰

In addition to this state control of payment, the guilds of the workers played an important role in determining the modes and quantum of payment but there are instances when the city or state authorities also interfered. A decree of the viceroy had ordered in the closing year of the sixteenth century that no employee would be allowed to seek on redress of any dues in courts of law without hearing a contract signed by his employers determining all the terms of service and remuneration.⁸¹

Another contemporary order prohibited the local Christian artisans to continue the practice of celebrating weddings for fifteen days. The decree restricted such celebrations to a single day in order to put an end to the abuse of the artisans who took work on a contract basis and having left them pending even after taking advance money.⁸²

Minting and Coinage

Portuguese coinage in India was one of the major aspects of their administration. It is interesting to note that Afonso de Albuquerque started minting coins in India from the very year of the conquest of Goa. When he entered the city of Goa for the first time in February 1510, he ordered the minting of coins at

80. Mss. HAG, Manções, 53, fls.49.52 refers to a detailed description of the powers of a revenue comptroller in the Portuguese state of India.

81. APO (CR), Vol.III, pp. 469-70.

82. APO (CR), Vol.III, pp. 659-60.

the request of the local population in order to attend to the needs of the trade. The mint established for this purpose, no doubt, had to suspend the issues when the Portuguese lost Goa three months later and began again in November of the same year when the city was recaptured.⁸³ The successors of Albuquerque continued this practice of minting coins in India. The coins were being struck during the government of Nuno da Cunha., D. Garcia de Noronha and Martin Afonso de Souza and altogether comprising the period of 1529-1545.

Then we come to one important personality of this time. The viceroy, D.João Castro (1545-48), although it is not likely that any silver coins were minted during this reign. The first gold coins with the denomination of St.Thomas were ordered to be struck by this viceroy. This could be considered as the first specimen in any metal to bear an effigy in the Indo-Portuguese coinage.⁸⁴

The Portuguese started minting coins in Bassein from 1554.⁸⁵ These coins were pardão, tanga and fadya (Fedeads). The people used fedeads, which was a number by which the silver and gold coins were counted. Four fedeads were equal to one silver tanga and five tangas were equal to one gold pardão.⁸⁶

83. Fenelon Revello, Some of the rare specemens in early Indo-Portuguese Coinage, (Goa, 1970) p.6.

84. Fenelon Rebello, op.cit., p.21.

85. Narayan Bhaskar Naik, Govyancha Rajyakartyanchi Nani (Marathi) (Goa, 1964), p.35.

86. Antonio Nunes, "Lyvro dos Pesos da Ymdia," in Subsidios para a Historia da India, ed. by de Lima Felner, p.29.

71

pardau

Government taxes were paid in pardãos using five tangas of silver as one pardão. People who lived out of the fort city of Bassein generally did not use the gold coins. They used tangas and fedeads. They used to pay four fedeads for one silver tanga. One fedea was equal to 15 reis.⁸⁷

The fedeads were not used in export and import expenditure. The merchants always used tangas and pardãos, paying five tangas of silver for one pardão. The five tangas of silver were equal to 300 reis which were generally used in the payment of salaries. If the payment was made to other Portuguese cities in India then the five tangas were valued at 360 reis instead of 300. This was the usual value of tangas throughout India.⁸⁸

But minting in Bassein was not a regular feature. It was done for a short period or intermittently. Except in Goa, where the mint was in operation from the very beginning, other colonies like Daman, Diu and Bassein minted coins for shorter periods.⁸⁹

Sometimes there was a scarcity of Portuguese coins in the colonies. This situation was often exploited by the Portuguese viceroys or governors who tried to make a profit by using their own metal to issue debased currency and since the city market had to import most of the essential commodities, inflation

87. Antonio Nunes, op.cit., p.29.

Narayan Bhaskar Naik, op.cit., p.35.

88. Antonio Nunes, op.cit., p.29.

Narayan Bhaskar Naik, op.cit., p.35.

89. Fenelon Rebello, op.cit., p.6.

became unavoidable to absorb the monetary debasement. The crisis was also enhanced by black-marketeers, who waited for the opportunity to put into flow more and more fake currency which was made easier by the behaviour of minting authorities.⁹⁰

TRADE

External Trade

The words of Vasco-da-Gama became well-known in history when he landed at Calicut in May 1498. When asked about the purpose of their landing on Indian soil, he said that they had come for the spices and Christians. These two motives of the Portuguese led them to conquer more and more strategic places in the East which was transformed into their Eastern Empire and known as the Estado da India.

The international political situation also favoured them. After the partition of the Roman Empire, communication between Rome and India by the way of the Red Sea began to decline when the Greek empire flourished, Constantinople became the centre of international trade, especially between Asia and Europe.⁹¹

The hectic commercial activities between Cambay and Malacca and the importance of South-East Asian drugs, the Indian Ocean became the base for different types of merchandise. Within a short period, the Portuguese got involved in almost all the commercial routes of Indian Ocean⁹² and Egypt became the main centre of

90. Fenelon Rebello, op.cit., p.6.

91. R.H.Major, India in the 15th Century, op.cit., p.10.

92. Louis Filipe Thomas, "Sources on Economic History of India", op.cit., p.102.

commercial activities between India and Europe.⁹³ It was linked with many important ports of western India including Bassein and this ancient town was once again linked with Malacca, Ormuz, Muscat⁹⁴ and became one of the three main trading centres of the Portuguese eastern Empire.⁹⁵

When Bassein came under the Portuguese control, they developed it into a good commercial entrepot which once again became the emporium of foreign trade during the 16th and 17th centuries. The Portuguese were also helped by the local Muslims, who were different from the Arab pirates. The Portuguese by the beginning of the 16th century had already learnt that there were two kinds of Muslim communities in India. The first hailed from Arabia while the second had settled down in India centuries before. With the first community, there was no hope of any friendly relations with it, since it was always bent on war with Christianity. The second one, on the contrary, was quite different as the Indian Muslims were ready to trade with the Portuguese and be friendly with them, dwelling in their cities and submitting themselves to Portuguese laws. Albuquerque himself had learnt through personal experience about this new sort of Islamism.⁹⁶ Their swift adjustment to an extensive and rather complex economic environment was due to their association with the native merchants and the workers. They served as their commercial advisers and enabled them to grasp quickly the

93. R.H.Major op.cit., p.4.

94. DRI, (BP), Documentos Remetidos da India, Vol.V. 340.

95. AHU, Lisboa, Caixa 12, D.116.

96. Silva Rego, Portuguese Colonization..., op.cit., p.16.

commercial situation which was favourable to them.⁹⁷

Even after the union of Portugal under Spain from 1580, Portuguese trade did not suffer very much in the initial stages because by the eighth article of peace between Spain and Portugal in 1583, exclusive trade with India and all other parts of the incorporated Portuguese dominion, was reserved to the Portuguese.⁹⁸

The last reason for the development of Bassein as a sea-port during the Portuguese rule was their system of Cartazes. According to clause No. two of the treaty of 1534 between the Portuguese and Bahadur Shah of Gujarat, all the ships leaving the ports of Gujarat were compelled to visit Bassein to collect Cartazes for a safe journey. According to clause 3 of the treaty they were bound to visit Bassein to pay the duty on their return journey.⁹⁹ The Captain of Bassein started issuing Cartazes to all ships leaving the ports of Gujarat and thus collected passport fees.¹⁰⁰ The Portuguese coastal fleets from Goa visited the ports of Gujarat and Bassein and carried a large proportion of merchandise particularly cloth, exported from these ports.¹⁰¹

Bassein also exported rice, sugar, salt, dried fish, linen, cotton and silk, wood, granite stones during the sixteenth

97. Pissurlencar "Colabodoros Indus de Afonso de Albuquerque" in the proceedings of 'Congresso do Mundo-Portugues', 1940 Vol. IV, pp. 33-50.

98. Braz Fernandes, ARMAS, op.cit., p.39.

99. Couto, Decada IV, op.cit., Liv.IX, Cap.II, p.36.

100. M.N.Pearson, Merchants and Rulers, op.cit., p.97.

101. Pyrard de Laval, Viagem II, p.183.

century.¹⁰² In the initial stages, the Portuguese tried to obstruct this trade since it was connected with the Muslim land of Gujarat. Once Christopher Correa, a Portuguese naval Commander, was sent in a Catur to burn three boats that were in a river near the island of the cows (Arnala-Bassein). These boats carried provisions and wood to Diu for making boats.¹⁰³ The merchants used to purchase wood for the Muslims who depended on these supplies for the construction of their ships.¹⁰⁴ A ship of Manoel Christovão, which left Bassein carrying rice and wood for the fort of Muscat with one ship of João Gomes da Silva, the Captain of Ormuz took 8000 Khandis of rice from Bassein.¹⁰⁵ Manuel Godinho who was in Bassein also writes that Bassein exported enough sugar to the British, Turks, Gujaratis, Arabs and Baniyas. It exported a lot of rice.¹⁰⁶ Bassein also exported indigo, ivory, crystal, amber and beautiful stones of different colours and varieties.¹⁰⁷

At one time the people who lived in Mombaça wrote that there was a scarcity of rice which came from Bassein.¹⁰⁸ Linschoten also mentions that Bassein exported peas and other grains, butter and oil of India nuts and sweet oil.¹⁰⁹ The Muslims from

102. OP (BP), op.cit., 1935, p.154.

Mandelslo's Voyage, op.cit., p.233.

Thevenot, op.cit., p.248.

103. Barros, Decada IV, op.cit., Part III, Cap.XVI.

104. Gaspar Correa, op.cit., Part II, Liv.II, p.449.

Julio Gonsalves, Seis Fortalegas..., op.cit., p.69.

105. Couto, Decada X, Cap.XI passim.

106. Manuel, Godinho, op.cit., p.29.

107. Silva Rego Ed. Documentos Ultramarino, Vol.I, p.262.

108. DRI (BP), op.cit., Part III, p.13.

109. Linschoten, op.cit., Part I, p.63.

the neighbouring countries used to come with big caravans consisting of ten to twenty thousand bullocks to carry salt from Bassein.¹¹⁰ Bassein also produced enough quantity of cate (catecheu). It was collected from the trunk of a particular tree. It was exported to Malacca and China in large quantities as well as to Arabia, Persia and Khorasan.¹¹¹

The imports of Bassein were varied like wheat, iron, steel, saltpetre and ivory,¹¹² many of these things and other merchandise were imported from Balghat and also from Cambay.¹¹³ The spices were brought from the South, especially from Canara and Malabar. It is clearly mentioned in a letter of Antão de Naronha that the spices purchased from Canara were cheaper and better than the Malabar spices.¹¹⁴ This was due to the heavy pressure on Malabar ports which provided spices for foreign export also. Mangalore provided chillies to Bassein.¹¹⁵ The local merchants were given preference for this import of spices. There are many contracts of merchants who used to sign with the Portuguese authorities in Bassein. Vyankatappa Naik, was one of the important merchants, involved in this trade¹¹⁶ during the time when chillies were also exported to Lisbon, Ormuz etc. from the port of Bassein.¹¹⁷ Simão Botelho, who was in Bassein

110. Garcia da Orta, op.cit., Vol.II, pp.69-70.

111. Pissurlencar, Assentos do Conselho ..., Vol.II, p.297. OP. (BP), op.cit., 1935, p.135.

112. Pyrad de Laval, Viagem, op.cit., APO (CR), Part II.p.227.

113. Manuel Godinho, op.cit., p.29.

114. Mss. ANTT, Corpo Chronologico, Parte I, Tomo III No.78.

115. Mss. AHU, India, Caixa 5 No.21.

116. Mss. AHU, India, Caixa 7 No.29, The contract of Vyankatappa, Naik.

117. DPI, (SR), op.cit., Vol. 10, p.160.

during 1548-49 also writes about the import of wheat from the neighbouring Muslim country.¹¹⁸ The import and export was completely dominated by the outsiders and not by the local merchants. Manuel Godinho says that in Bassein there was no lack of Jewish and Muslim people and these were the masters of trade.¹¹⁹

The government had imposed certain limitations on export and import. The citizens were not granted exemption from contributing to works of public utility. Also they were not allowed to trade freely in the prohibited goods such as spices. In order to prevent indiscriminate imports that might lead to competition among the guild members, the Municipality also had regulations enacted to the effect that no raw materials could be imported and sold without first contacting a judge and an inspector of the guild concerned.¹²⁰

HORSE TRADE

Before the arrival of the Portuguese, the horse trade was the main source of income to the Muslim traders on the western coast of India.¹²¹ These horses were imported from the Gulf countries like Basara, Ormuz, Muscat etc. When Bassein came under the Portuguese, it became one of the most important centres of the horse trade. In fact, when the treaty of Bassein

118. Simão Botelho, Cartas, op.cit., p.7.

119. Manuel Godinho, op.cit., p.30.

120. Mss. HAG, Livro de posturas, fl.58_v.

121. George Schurhammer, St. Francis, Xavier ..., op.cit., Vol.II, p.143.

was signed at the time of its cession to the Portuguese, some important clauses were incorporated in this treaty to regulate the horse trade.¹²² Basara supplied 600 horses to Bassein every year.¹²³ The Arabian horses were very popular at this time. The horses especially brought from Ormuz were in great demand.¹²⁴

The horses from Ormuz, Strait of Mecca and Basara were shipped to Bassein generally before the beginning of the monsoon and then they were taken to Goa, etc., because due to the bad weather the ships could not reach Goa. The import duty on each horse was forty two gold Pardãos, two of which went to the broker.¹²⁵ The price of the horse was 400 to 700 ducates to 900-2000 ducates. There were certain rules and regulations regarding the transactions of the horse trade. All the matters were settled through the Factor, the factory clerk and the overseer of the sea (Alcaidemor). The traders were compelled to declare the number of the horses in the ship. The duty was levied on the live horses only because some horses used to die on the way. They were required to bring the proper certificates and other documents from the places where the horses were purchased and from where they were embarked. If all the conditions are not fulfilled, the cargo was confiscated.¹²⁶

122. Couto, Decada IV, op.cit., Part I, p.318.

123. British Museum, Additional collection, MS 28, 433 fl.41_v.

124. Pissurlencar, Regimentos ..., op.cit., p.314.

125. Simão Botelho, Tombo..., op.cit., p.55.

Pissurlencar, Regimentos ..., op.cit., p.314-14.

126. Pissurlencar, Regimentos ..., op.cit., p.315.

The merchants connected with the horse trade in Bassein were permitted to import eighty horses every year without paying taxes but after fulfilling certain conditions. The officials of the fort were given certain privileges and trading facilities, in the case of horse trade but sometimes they misused their privileges. Many times the Camara of Bassein complained to the viceroy of Goa regarding their behaviour.¹²⁷

INTERNAL TRADE

The Portuguese seaborne empire flourished mainly on external trade. The significant trade activities were carried from the western coast to Africa and Europe. So they did not give much importance to internal trade. Secondly, Bassein was detached from the hinterland, which was surrounded by enemies of the Portuguese. So it was not possible for them to have commercial relations with them.

Most of the regional trade was with the ports of western India. The Portuguese connected all the ports in this region with their naval expeditions. They had two motives behind this; firstly it could facilitate the collection of shipping licences known as Cartazes, and secondly, to guard the trade from the local pirates. As Bassein was the centre for collecting the Cartazes, many ships visited the port of Bassein.¹²⁸

Bassein was connected with Vengurla, Rajapor, Chaul, Dabhol, Goa, Mangalore, Cochin, Calicut, etc.¹²⁹ It provided paddy and

127. Mss. AHU, India, Caixa 4-D-117.

128. A.K. Disney, Twilight of the Pepper Empire, Harvard University Press, (Cambridge, 1978), p.24.

129. Pissurlencar, Assentos do Concelho..., op.cit., Vol.II.p.297.

rice to Goa, and to the other Portuguese colonies. In Goa, there was great scarcity of food provisions. So it was brought mainly from Bassein.¹³⁰ It also provided coconut and other crops to the neighbouring ports.¹³¹

PRIVATE TRADE

Private trade was a typical characteristic of the Portuguese seaborne empire. In fact this was one of the major reasons for the decay of Portuguese trade and commerce in the East. Since the Crown was unable to pay adequate wages, its officials overseas were sometimes directly and sometimes indirectly, permitted to trade on their own account. This concession was usually made on the understanding that this private trade did not take precedence over the official trade which was channelled through the Crown's Factors and the Customs established in all principal ports of the Portuguese empire. Sometimes the captains or governors were actually authorised to absorb all the trade for themselves having contracted with the Crown to do so in return for the inadequate payment during their triennial term of Office.¹³²

In 1545, João de Castro sent Jeronimo from Goa to assume the office of the Captain of Bassein. He was given extensive privileges like his brother, Dom Francisco had enjoyed. During his three years of office, he could send ships to Bengal, Basra, Coromandel and China. He could import a series of wares, tax free, and he could freely distribute all the offices in Bassein.¹³³

130. Linschoten, op.cit., p.177.

131. Mendes da Luz, Livro das Cidades, fl.26_v .

132. C.R.Boxer, PSE, op.cit., p.325.

133. George Schurhammer, Vol.II, op.cit., p.415.

We get many references in the documents regarding the request to the Portuguese kings to grant such privileges to have private trade by different officials.¹³⁴

The attitude of the Portuguese Crown in allowing its official overseas private trade was quite distinct. If any colonial governor and high official made fortunes in trade legitimately or otherwise and by judicious money-lending, the Crown also expected that such individuals should come to its aid in financial emergencies as in fact they often did. Diogo de Couto gives a typical example of these public spirited Fidalgos. The ex-governor-general of India, Francisco Barreto, who had made a fortune during his captaincy of Bassein (1549-52) had spent freely in the service of the Crown.¹³⁵ But there are some instances when these captains behaved in the opposite way. The captains of Bassein had the sole privilege of trade in timber which was in abundance in Bassein, and provided the wood to most of the ship-building yards in the Portuguese colonies. They charged an outrageous price from the Crown for the supply of timber for ship-building.¹³⁶ It was not only the high officials of the crown who were engaged in trade but also some of the missionaries who earned a lot with this enterprise. There was illicit trade in ivory which generally came from Sofala.¹³⁷

134. Mss. ANTT, Corpo Chronologico, Parte I, Maço 102, No. 49, Maço 115, No. 21.

135. C.R. Boxer, PSE, op.cit., p. 328.

136. C.R. Boxer, Ibid. p. 212.

137. Mss. ANTT, Corpo Chronologico, Maço 100 D. 65, fl. 2.

The widespread contacts of the Missionaries plus the accumulation of capital in the hands of their organized management, permitted the religious orders to multiply their capital in commercial transactions while the limited capital of the lay individuals and highly corrupt state machinery offered no scope of any profitable trade to these parties.¹³⁸

In this way, government officials and the clergy who engaged in maritime trade, usually commanded greater capital resources than the average Casado and hence the latter sometimes complained of unfair competition from the former but often they co-operated and both categories traded in conjunction or partnership with the Asian merchants.¹³⁹ It is impossible to calculate the volume and the importance of the trade conducted by the government officials and private individuals in the Portuguese empire since so much of it was contraband and since so few of the relevant account books and records have survived.

In this way, the private trade was one of the major characteristics of the Portuguese commercial activities in the colonial empire. Since the Crown could not pay adequate salaries to its officials in those companies, the officials were permitted to have some concessions such as private trade. But most of them misused the privilege which resulted in the final breakdown of

138. Meilink - Roelofs - Asian Trade in European Influence in the Indonesian Archipelago between 1500 and about 1630 (The Hague, 1969) pp. 130-31.

C.R.Boxer PSE, op.cit., p.328.

139. C.R.Boxer, PSE, op.cit., p.328.

Portuguese economy. We will see the results of this private trade in the succeeding chapter.

These were some of the salient features of Portuguese industry, trade and commerce in Bassein. It was not as flourishing as Cochin or Diu in these respects. The Portuguese were not interested in the industrial development of any of their colonies. And Bassein was not an exception. Only ship building flourished in Bassein as teak wood was easily available there. But it became one of the biggest port of Portuguese commercial activities since it was the main centre for issuing cartazes on the western coast of India.