

Indian Traders and Merchants: From Ancient to 20th Century

Introduction

India has a long history of trading activity. There are many Indian traders and merchants who had conducted businesses in their time period. It is very important to look at our Indian Traders, Merchants, Industrialists and Leaders who have done businesses and has been successful in their field. Throughout most of the sixteenth, seventeenth and eighteenth centuries India's most important markets were located in the countries bordering the Indian Ocean and the contiguous land mass of the Iranian plateau and the central Asian Steppe. To understand how Indian world economy functioned it will be necessary to explore profiles of Indian traders and merchants (Wills Jr, J. E.,1997). An attempt is made in this article to identify profiles of Indian traders and merchants from ancient period to 20th century.

Objectives

1. Identify profiles of Indian these traders/merchants/businessmen across various time period.
2. Understanding the nature of trade carried out by these traders/merchants/businessmen.
3. Find unique factors of these traders/merchants/businessmen.

Table 1: Showing the List of Businessmen Profiles

Century	Sl.No.	Name
Early time	1.	Trapusa and Bahalika between 411 and 400 BCE (or between 623 and 624 BCE).
	2.	Ananda (540 BCE to 443 BCE)
	3.	Dhanya
	4.	Bhadra Satthavahi
	5.	Arahannaka
	6.	Makandi
	7.	Sudatta
	8.	Nattal Sahu (1132 CE).
11 th Century	9.	Bhikshu
12 th Century	10.	Baha-ud-din Zakariya
	11.	Chattisetṭi
	12.	Kuñjasetṭi
13 th Century	13.	Vastupala and Tejahpala
	14.	Jagaḍū or Jagadeva

	15.	Vira Ballala III
14th Century	16.	Nagarsheth Topan Bhatia
15th Century	17.	Jivaraja Paprival
	18.	Diwan Mohanlal
	19.	Abdur Razzaq
16th Century	20.	Shantidas Jhaveri
	21.	Pepper Queen – Rani Chennabhairadevi
	22.	Malik Gopi
17th Century	23.	Bhimji Parikh or Bhimji Parekh
	24.	Virji Vora
	25.	Maryam-uz-Zamani
	26.	Jahanara Begum
	27.	Hiranand Sah or Mukim
	28.	Motiya family
	29.	Bandi Das
	30.	Hiranand Sahu and Manik Chand
	31.	Rai Bahadur Laxmipat Singh Doogar and Rai Bahadur Dhanpat Singh Doogar
18th Century	32.	Mulla Abdul Ghafur
	33.	Lovji Nusserwanjee Wadia
	34.	Jamsetjee Bomanjee Wadia
	35.	Cowasji Byramji
	36.	Bhagothi Ram Poddar
	37.	Jamsetjee Jejeebhoy
19th Century	38.	Dinshaw Maneckji Petit
	39.	Mahasingsh Rai Meghraj Kuthari
	40.	Hemendra Mohan Bose
	41.	Jibhabhu
	42.	Jamsetji (Jamshedji) Nusserwanji Tata
	43.	Jairam Shivji
	44.	Dwarkanath Tagore
	45.	Gazulu Lakshminarasu Chetty
	46.	Ranchhodlal Chhotalal
47.	Sathappan Ramananathan Muthiah Chettiar	
20th Century	48.	Premchand Roychand
	49.	Anant Shivaji Desai
	50.	Walchand Hirachand
	51.	Revi Karunakaran
	52.	Sumati Morarjee

Ancient Period

Trapusa and Bahalika

According to Buddhist tradition, Trapusa and Bahalika (also known as Bhallika) were the initial followers of the Buddha. The earliest mention of Trapusa and Bahalika is found in the Vinaya portion of the Tripiṭaka, in which they provide the Buddha with his initial meal following his enlightenment, seek refuge in the Dharma before the establishment of the Sangha, and become the Buddha's first pupils.

Xuanzang, a Chinese Buddhist monk and scholar, wrote that Trapusa and Bahalika (who are also known as Balkhika or Bhallika) brought Buddhism to Central Asia. He believed that these two merchants, who offered food to the Buddha after his enlightenment, were from the kingdom of Bhalhika and had traveled to India for trade purposes. Xuanzang suggests that the merchants may have come to Bodhgaya, the site of the Buddha's enlightenment, during their travels in India.

Trapusa and Bahalika were contemporaries of the historical Buddha, whose life is believed to have taken place between approximately 563 BCE and 483 BCE, according to the dating system used by many historians in the early 20th century. However, more recent research has suggested different timelines for the Buddha's death, ranging from between 486 and 483 BCE to between 411 and 400 BCE. Some scholars even propose that the Buddha's life may have taken place between 623 and 624 BCE. Regardless of the exact dates, it is clear that Trapusa and Bahalika lived during the same general time period as the Buddha and were among his earliest disciples.

The Mahavastu, a text in Buddhist literature, contains a story in its 28th chapter that mentions two wealthy and virtuous merchants named Trapusha (Trapusa) and Bhallika from the region of Ukkala. The story tells of how they traveled by sea from Myanmar to Tamralipthi, loaded with goods on five hundred carts to sell.

In addition to their business ventures, Tapussa and Bhallika were also involved in the construction of stupas and the enshrining of hair relics in neighboring countries to India, both in the east and west. This suggests that they were not only successful merchants, but also active

in spreading Buddhist teachings and promoting the construction of holy sites. (Vipasana Research Institute, n d)



Figure 1: Showing Trapusa and Bahalika (Source: Wikipedia)

Ananda (540 BCE to 443 BCE)

Gathapati Ananda was a wealthy man with many farms and a fleet of ploughs and bullocks. He asked Bhagwan Mahaveer to become his lay-votary since he couldn't become a monk. Ananda accepted the vow of non-possession and gave up all his possessions, including his coins, cattle, ploughs, land, carts, carriages, and even articles of daily use. He initially had twelve crore Hiranya (gold coins) and kept four crore Hiranya as a reserve, spent another four crore Hiranya on his needs and luxuries, and used the remaining four crore Hiranya for lending and investment in business. Ananda owned many sagada (carts) that were used for transporting goods and people, and he kept one thousand or fewer after taking a vow. He was respected in society and people sought his advice, including the king, officials, and other respectable individuals. The gathapatis, along with their friends and relatives, were wealthy and famous in society. Ananda initially used costly ornaments but later renounced all but a pair of ear-rings and finger rings. (Barua, B.M.1920)

Dhanya

In the Jnatadharmakathahga Sutra, there is a mention of a merchant named Dhanya (Dhanne) from Campanagari who organized a trade caravan to Ahicchatra nagari. He invited people to join the caravan and promised to assist them with various necessities such as food, water, shoes, medicines, and money. Dhanya led the caravan successfully, providing guidance to the members. Along the way, Dhanya warned them not to use the products of a particular tree, the

Namdi fruit-trees, as it may cause disease and death. However, some individuals disregarded Dhanya's advice and consumed the fruit, which resulted in their death.

According to the Jnatadharmakathafiga Sutram, after reaching Ahicchatra nagari, Dhanya sarthavaha presented expensive items to King Kanakaketu, who was pleased and allowed him to trade without paying taxes. Dhanya then took advantage of this opportunity and sold his merchandise in the city. With the profits earned from the trade, he purchased various other items.

Dhanya sarthavaha's purchase of commodities in Ahicchatra nagari during his return journey implies that there were trade transactions in both directions. Not only did the sartha sell its goods in distant places, but it also purchased commodities from those places to sell in its hometown. The challenge of organizing a sartha frequently likely encouraged sarthavahas to maximize each trip and conduct business whenever possible.

The information provided above highlights the leadership qualities of the Sarthavahas, who were not only skilled in their business, but also had a thorough understanding of their surroundings. They were observant and knew how to please kings in far-off places in order to secure concessions for their trade. This also sheds light on the land routes in Northern India during that time.

In another text, we learn about Dhanabasu Sarthavaha who was involved in trade between GampS and Ujjain via Koiambi and Banaras.

The Sarthavahas of Rayagiha (Rajagir) were known to lend money to traders with the intention of doubling their principal, indicating their shrewdness in business. (Puri, B. N. 1987).

Bhadra Sathavahi

In the 9th Ahga of the Jaina canonical literature, Anuttaropapatika Daṣa Sutram, there is a reference to a woman named Bhadra Sathavahi who was a caravan leader. The text mentions, "tattha nam Kagandie nagarie Bhadda namam sathavahl parivasai," which means Bhadra lived in a town called Kakandi and was a skilled trader. She was very wealthy and lived a lavish life, as evidenced by the thirty-two large buildings she had constructed for her son, Dhanya Kumara, and his thirty-two wives.

This record demonstrates that women in ancient India were actively involved in business and were not limited to traditional household activities. Bhadra Sathavahi is a prime example of

women who played an active role in commerce, proving that they were not far behind their male counterparts in this field. (Puri, B. N. 1987).

Arahannaka

In one of the anecdotes, it is mentioned that there were a group of maritime merchants (nava vaniyaga) who lived in Campa, which was a part of the Ahga Janapada, and were involved in international commerce. Among them was a merchant named Arahannaka. These traders were quite wealthy and traded in all types of goods, including those that could be counted (ganima), weighed (dharima), measured (mejja), or inspected (paricchejja).

Arahannaka, a shipping merchant from Campa, engaged in foreign trade and made extensive travels by land, river (Ganga salila), and ocean to complete his business transactions. During his journey, he sold his goods and made substantial profits, as well as purchasing other items to sell at a profit in other locations. Arahannaka's business was quite large, allowing him to accumulate significant wealth. (Puri, B. N. 1987).

Makandi

In the town of Campa, there was a wealthy sarthavaha named Makandi. His two sons, Jinapalila (Jinapaliya) and Jinarakrita (Jinarakkiya), had successfully completed eleven sea-journeys, earning huge profits from foreign trade. Despite their parents' objections, the two sons decided to embark on a twelfth journey with four types of commodities. Unfortunately, while at sea, they encountered a severe storm which caused their ship to lose control and crash into a hidden rock, resulting in the loss of all their goods and many lives. Miraculously, the two brothers who were skilled swimmers managed to survive by holding onto a piece of wood and swam to an island called "Ratna Dvipa". (Puri, B. N. 1987).

Sudatta:

Sudatta was a wealthy merchant from Shravasti in the Kosala kingdom of India and a devoted follower of Shakyamuni Buddha. He was known for his generosity towards the poor and was given the nickname "Anathapindada" (or Anathapindika in Pali), which means "Supplier of the Needy". One day, he heard Shakyamuni preach at Bamboo Grove Monastery in Rajagriha and was deeply moved by his teachings, leading to his conversion to Buddhism.

Sudatta then decided to invite Shakyamuni to Shravasti and, with the help of Prince Jetri, he built Jetavana Monastery as an offering to the Buddha. Shakyamuni frequently visited Jetavana

Monastery to preach, which played a crucial role in spreading Buddhism throughout the Kosala kingdom. (Tibetan Buddhist Encyclopaedia, 2013).

Nattal Sahu

Nattal Sahu, a wealthy Jain merchant-prince, was born in Yoginipur (now Mehrauli, Delhi) during the reign of Tomara king Anangapal. The poet Vibudh Shridhar wrote about Nattal's life in the Apabhramsha text Pasanaha Cariu (Parshvanath Caritra), dating back to Vikrama Samvat 1189 (1132 CE). Nattal's father was Sahu Joja and he had two older brothers named Raghav and Sodhal. As the chief of the Jains in Delhi, Nattal controlled a vast commercial empire that extended through various regions such as Anga, Vanga (Bengal), Kalinga (Odisha), Karnataka, Nepal, Bhot (Tibet), Panchal, Chedi, Gauda, Thakka (Punjab), Kerala, Marahatta (Maharashtra), Bhadanaka (Bayana), Magadh, Gurjar, Sorath (Saurashtra) and Haryana. Additionally, he served as a minister in the court of Tomar Anangapala. (Wikipedia, 2023).

11th Century

Bhikshu

Bhikshu was a prosperous trader who resided in Kanchipuram, which is located in the state of Tamil Nadu today. He was well-known for his accomplishments in the pearl trade as well as his contributions to literature and education. (Kamil Zvelebil, 2006)

12th Century

Baha-ud-din Zakariya

Baha-ud-din Zakariya was a revered Sufi saint and prosperous trader who resided in Multan, which is in modern day Pakistan. He is renowned for his altruistic endeavours, which include founding numerous non profit organisations and building a mosque. (Sajid, M. A. 2017).

Chattisetṭi

An inscription provides a description of Chattisetṭi, who was a skilled courtier and master of the mint under the rule of the Hoysala emperor Vīraballāla II (1173-1220). The inscription also highlights his success as a trader in valuable commodities such as horses, elephants, and

pearls. Chatiseti gained prominence by trading in a variety of valuable commodities, such as horses that were considered ornaments to the horse of Hari, elephants that were equivalent to the elephant of Indra, and pearls that were as abundant as dewdrops. He happily sold these goods to various kings, which helped to establish his reputation as a successful merchant. Chatiseti was a member of the Ayyvole, a wealthy and powerful commercial enterprise. He belonged to the merchant-brahmana community. Chattiseti's philanthropic acts, including the construction and renovation of various tanks and the establishment of a Śiva temple called Chatteśvara, are also recorded.

Although Chattiseti's gifts were not particularly exceptional, the inscription is noteworthy for its portrayal of his prosperous trading career and his ability to navigate the world of court politics. Chattiseti's success as a trader not only brought him personal wealth but also earned him fame, which proved to be a valuable asset in both the marketplace and the court. He was able to use this fame to his advantage at the court and ultimately gained the right to produce currency.

Chattiseti became famous for his trading skills, bringing in a multitude of valuable commodities such as horses, elephants, and pearls, which he sold to many kings. His ability to trade successfully in these commodities brought him personal wealth and further established his reputation as a skilled and prosperous merchant.

Kunjasetti

Kunjasetti was born into a family of Malabar merchants who had settled in the Deccan plateau, south of the Tungabhadra. He was a pious initiate to the Vīraśaiva faith and a member of a prominent merchant family. He was known as a "most eminent" and "senior merchant" of the ubhayanānādeśi of Maleyāla, from the city of Kulamūkanagara (Quilon). He settled in Padiyur, and in 1254 CE, he died a premature and untimely death.

Kunjasetti's family had close connections with the royal court, and this can be traced matrilineally to a famous merchant who had the same name. This man, who would have been a contemporary of Chattiseti of Banavur, had a remarkable career, including high diplomacy and military service, both for and against the Hoysala king Vīraballāla. He was praised as the "promoter of the fortunes of the Maleyāla family" and had supplied the needs of the Chera, Mālava, Kaliṅga, Chōla, and Pāṇḍya kings. No other setti was equal to him throughout the Hoysala kingdom.

Kunjasetti's career showed a remarkable diversity of roles, enabled by his skills in both the world of the court and the marketplace. From the Hoysala point of view, Kunjasetti was a diplomatic and ministerial asset precisely because of his ongoing trans-regional mercantile links with other polities. (Ali, D. 2009)

13th Century

Vastupāla and Tejahpāla

During the Chalukya period, two Jain brothers named Vastupala and Tejahpala held various positions in administration, military, and finance beyond their roles as merchants in Gujarat. In 1220 AD, they were associated with the administration of Dholka and other important cities in Gujarat. Tejahpala was described as a conductor of the business of the department of mudrāvyaṅgāra under the mahāmaṅḍaleśvara Vīradhavalā in the Abu inscription of 1230 AD. Vastupala worked as the governor of Cambay and accomplished many feats such as ending piracy, creating a friendly environment for business, recovering arrears of revenue from uncooperative officials, and filling the state treasury. Additionally, Vastupala was a poet and composed various Stotras and Sūktis. The two brothers were also known for their religious and philanthropic activities, such as constructing and restoring temples, wells, tanks, alms-houses (sattrā), rest houses (upāśraya), and places of meditation (Pauṣadaśālās) throughout the kingdom of Vāghelas. (Phyllis Granoff, n.d)

Jagaḍū

Jagaḍū, a well-known Jain merchant from Bhadreśvar, is highly respected as an exemplary figure in the Jain community. He thrived during the first and second halves of the 13th century AD, after succeeding his father in the merchant trade. Jagaḍū amassed a tremendous amount of wealth through sea trading and expanded his family's inherited wealth, securing a prominent position in the mercantile community of his hometown. During this time, Jagaḍū's position was considered even more significant than that of a Nagarśeṭh, or head of the mercantile community. (Dinendra Chandra, n.d)

Vira Ballala III

Vira Ballala III, who ruled the Hoysala Empire from 1292 to 1343 CE, was not only a king but also a successful merchant and a patron of the arts. He took the throne at 21 after the death of

his father and reigned for over 50 years, expanding the kingdom through military campaigns and developing the empire's infrastructure. Besides politics and military affairs, he had a talent for trade, establishing links with Arab merchants and importing luxury goods that he sold within and beyond his kingdom. He was also a patron of the arts, commissioning many temples and monuments, including the Chennakesava Temple and the Hoysaleswara Temple, both of which are renowned for their intricate carvings and craftsmanship. Today, he is remembered as one of the most prominent kings of the Hoysala Empire, whose legacy continues to influence South India. (Kamath, Suryanath U. 2001)

14th century

Nagarsheth Topan Bhatia

The Bhatias, who originally belonged to the Yaduvanshi Sama dynasty Bhatti Rajputs of Jaisalmer, migrated to Sindh and Punjab in 1316 AD. They were mainly farmers and fishermen in Sindh during the 14th century. Later, some Bhatia families moved from Sindh to Kutch around 1350 AD. When the Kutch king Khengarji established the city of Mandvi in 1581, he invited the prominent trader Bhatia Topan from Sindh to develop trade and shipping in the city. With the help of Bhatia Topan and his fellow traders, Mandvi became a major port of western India in the Middle Ages. Bhatia Topan also built the Topansar lake and the grand Lakshminarayan temple in Mandvi in 1607 AD, which is known for its fine sculpture and stone carvings. The Bhatias of Kutch, whose surname is Toprani, are the descendants of Nagarsheth Topan Bhatia, the prominent trader of Mandvi in the 16th century

(Thread by Gujarath History on Thread Reader App, (August 24, 2020). Retrieved (26th February, 2023) from <https://threadreaderapp.com/thread/1297909147258646528.html>)

15th Century

Jivaraja Paprival

Jivaraja Paprival, a trader from Modasa in Gujarat, was responsible for the installation of around 100,000 Jain images in temples all over India during the 15th century. He was motivated by the destruction and defacing of idols in North India during the twelfth and thirteenth

centuries by Turkish invaders. Paprival was determined to preserve Jain culture by commissioning teams of workers to cut slabs of marble from quarries and employing armies of craftsmen to carve the images of Jain Tirthankars. Impressed with Paprival's audacity, a Jain monk Jinachandra Deva supervised the grand Pratishtha or consecration of as many as 100,000 idols over the next several years. A few of these idols were brought to Agarwal Jain communities in and around Haryana, and some traders settled in Delhi in the early 1600s. They built a temple that eventually became the oldest Jain temple in Delhi, located near the Red Fort. Despite the Mughal ruler Aurangzeb's destruction of many Hindu temples, he did not want to alienate the influential Jain community, and thus the temple in front of the Red Fort survived. The temple was rebuilt by the Agarwal Jain community in 1878, and today it is known as Lal Mandir. The story of Lal Mandir is a testament to the perseverance of communities in preserving their culture through difficult times, from the audacity of Jivraj Paprival and the vision of Jinachandra Deva to the faith of an army officer and the spirit of the Agarwal Jain community. (Vikas Aditya, 2019).

Diwan Mohanlal

Diwan Mohanlal lived in Jaipur, Rajasthan during the 15th century and was a successful textile merchant and banker. He was also a minister in the state administration and played an important role in developing key infrastructure projects in the city. Aside from his business and political pursuits, he was also known for his philanthropic activities and established several charitable institutions, especially in the areas of education and healthcare. Mohanlal was a prominent figure in the court of the Maharaja of Jaipur and was widely respected for his contributions to both commerce and society. (Singh, V. B. 1996).

Abdur Razzaq

Abdur Razzaq, born in 1413 and died in 1482, was a wealthy merchant from Herat who settled in Surat, a city located in present-day Gujarat, India. He was renowned for his extensive travels and trading activities that took him across various parts of the Islamic world, including Central Asia, the Middle East, and India.

Razzaq is particularly famous for his book called *Matla' al-Sa'ayn fi Dhikr al-Af'al wal Sanam al-Isfahaniyyin* (The Beginning of Two Endeavors in the Description of the Deeds and the Crafts of the Isfahanis). The book offers an elaborate account of the commercial and cultural activities of the Isfahanis, a prominent Persian merchant community located in India. This

literary work is considered a crucial source of information on the history of trade and commerce in the Islamic world, as well as on the cultural and social aspects of the Isfahanis. (Afsaruddin, Asma. 2017)

16th Century

Malik Gopi

Malik Gopi, a Brahmin merchant, is credited with contributing to the development of Surat. The region he developed was named Gopipura after him, and the King of Gujarat granted him the title of "Malik". His wealth and influence at court were largely due to his strong trading interests. Malik Gopi was a successful merchant and owned many factors and agents who sailed on his ships to places like Malacca and other parts of South-East Asia. The primary commodity he imported was textiles, which was a significant trade in that era. (Gosh, S 2015).

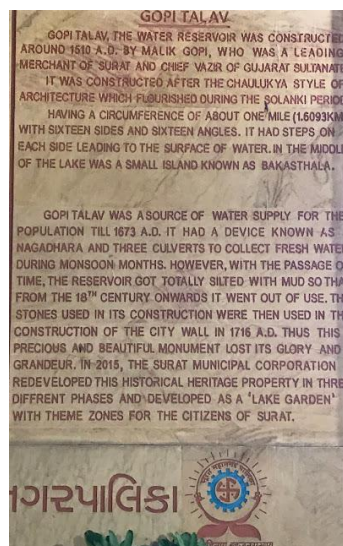


Figure 2: Showing the explanation on the history pond was built. (Source: Wikipedia)

Pepper Queen – Rani Chennabhairadevi

Rani Chennabhairadevi, a member of the Saluva Dynasty, ruled from 1552 to 1606 CE, making her one of the longest-reigning female rulers in India. She is also known as the "Pepper Queen" because her reign brought prosperity to the region, which was a center of pepper production. Her kingdom extended from Goa to Uttara Kannada, Dakshina Kannada, and the Malabar. She established trading centers that exported pepper, betel nut, and nutmeg to European and Middle Eastern countries. Portuguese Captain Alfonso wrote to the king of Portugal, describing the queen's lands and the high quality of her pepper. The Portuguese twice waged war against

Gerusoppe, her capital, but the queen's clever strategies and diplomacy led her to victory. She built Mirjan Fort to control the pepper trade and commanded a united army in 1571. During her reign, Honnavar and Bhatkala served as important trading centers for both domestic and international trade, importing Arabian horses and weapons from the West. (Angarika Gogoi, 2019) and (Sneha Shastri, 2023)



Figure 3: Rani Chennabhairadevi (Source: Wikipedia)

Shantidas Jhaveri(1580's-1659)

Shantidas Jhaveri, born in the 1580s, was a highly influential jewel dealer and considered the wealthiest merchant in Ahmedabad during the 17th century. He hailed from the Marwar region and belonged to the Oswal Jain community. Jhaveri was a prominent Indian jeweller, dealing in bullion trading and moneylending during the Mughal era. He had extensive knowledge of precious stones and used this expertise to amass a large fortune by selling jewels and precious ornaments to affluent households and royal families. Jhaveri employed agents at the royal court to sell his wares to the royalty and nobility. In 1644, he purchased the royal haveli of Haji Ikhlas for a sum of around Rs. 6,000. (Monika Sharma.2012)



Figure 4. Shantidas Jhaveri (Source: Wikipedia)

17th century

Bhimji Parekh

Bhimji Parikh was a businessman born in Surat in 1610. He was the first Indian to import printing machinery to India and the first to attempt printing in the Indian script. At the time, there was only one printing press in India, owned by the Portuguese in Goa, which was used to print the Bible. Parekh imported the press to Surat during Aurangzeb's rule over the Mughal administration in Surat. However, the printing press was just a minor aspect of Bhimji Parikh's life. He belonged to a wealthy Bania merchant family and had amassed a great fortune from various activities, amounting to approximately one million pounds in the 1670s. (Ahsish Vashi & Harit Mehat, 2010).



Figure 5: Bhimji Parekh (Source: Wikipedia)

Virji Vora (c. 1590–c. 1670s)

Virji Vora was a prominent Indian merchant from Surat during the Mughal period. He conducted various business activities such as wholesale trading, money lending, and banking from the late 1620s until his death in 1670. As a wholesale trader, Virji Vora dealt in a wide range of commodities including spices, bullion, coral, ivory, lead, and opium. He was known as a "merchant prince" and a "plutocrat" due to his immense wealth. His role as a financier of the East India Company between 1617 and 1670 was crucial to the company's success.

According to English records, he was estimated to be worth 8 million rupees, a substantial sum of money at that time. (Charlotte Mondal, 2021)



Figure 6: Virji Vora (Source: Wikipedia)

Table 2: Showing the List of Business Activities

Year	Business activities
1625	Virji bought the entire pepper stock brought by the Dutch to Surat.
1629	1. Bought coral from the English at a discount after they found it difficult to sell 2. Sold 20,000 mahmudis worth of pepper to the English.
1633	Traded 12,000 tolas of gold with the English
1641	Sold turmeric and cardamoms to the English.
1648	Bought cloves from the Dutch at a cheaper rate than the English thanks to his enormous liquid capital. He purchased the cloves at Rs. 45 per maund and sold them at Rs. 62-65 per maund.
1649	Bought all the available quantities of mace and nutmeg in Surat.
1650	1. Bought 20 maunds of tea from the Dutch. 2. Bought silver ingots from the English at the previous year's rates after the local shroffs (bullion traders) of Surat refused to take them. 3. Bought all the goods brought by the Dutch to Surat in alliance with Mohandas Parekh (the broker for the Dutch).
1651	Bought ivory from the English and coral from the Dutch.
1668	Virji Vora and Haji Zahid (another merchant of Surat) stored thousands of maunds of vermilion and quicksilver, "sufficient to supply the whole country for many years."

Maryam-uz-Zamani

In 1613, Portuguese traders captured a large Indian ship named Rahimi off the port of Surat soon after the monsoon season. The ship was known for its size and capacity, as it was 153 feet

long, 42 feet wide, and could hold over 1,000 tons. It was carrying a commercial cargo and 700 passengers, mostly headed for Mecca. What made the Rahimi particularly noteworthy was that its owner was Maryam-uz-Zamani, the mother of the reigning Mughal emperor Jahangir and the wife of his predecessor, Akbar. Maryam-uz-Zamani was a Kachhwaha Rajput princess from Amber, and as queen mother, she was one of the most powerful and wealthy women of her time. Despite her privileged position, Maryam-uz-Zamani was also an adventurous trader and had a keen interest in commerce. Her daughter-in-law, Nur Jahan, who lived from 1577 to 1645, was also known for her business acumen and maintained relations with the Portuguese while also granting favors to the English to ensure the safe passage of her own cargo.



Figure 7: Maryam-uz-Zamani (Source: Wikipedia)

Jahanara Begum, the great-granddaughter of Maryam-uz-Zamani and who lived from 1614 to 1681, had access to more liquid cash and immovable capital than any other Mughal woman in history. Surat was a prosperous commercial hub, attracting merchants from all over the world.

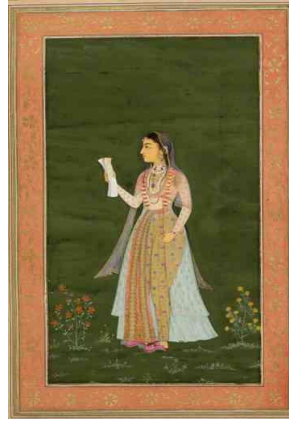


Figure 8: Nur Jahan (Daughter in Law of Marya, uz Zamami) (Source:Scroll.in)

Hindu and Muslim financiers and traders thrived there, and many pilgrims gathered each year to journey to Mecca. According to a contemporary account, the revenues from this port were enormous, amounting to Rs 7.5 lakh per year. Jahanara's unprecedented support for public charities, saints, architectural projects, and paintings indicates her wealth and potentially independent influence. It seems that she also invested some of her funds in infrastructure that facilitated "business" travel. According to two contemporary visitors to India, French merchant Jean Baptiste Tavernier and Venetian Niccolao Manucci, Jahanara owned a magnificent caravanaserai in Delhi that only the great Mughal and Persian merchants were permitted to use. (Aparna Kapadia, 2020).

Hiranand Sah or Mukim

Hiranand Sah, also known as Mukim, was a prominent figure in the commercial world of his time during the reign of Emperor Akbar. He was a wealthy jeweller and held a significant position as the representative of jewels (Mukim) for Emperor Jahangir. According to the Sammedashikharacaityaparipati written by Vira Vijay Muni, Hiranand organized a pilgrimage to Sammet Shikhar in 1603 AD, starting from Agra, with a large group of Jains. He sought permission for the yatra from Prince Salim (Jahangir), who was in Prayag at the time, and took on the responsibility of the entire congregation. Hiranand funded the entire sangha, which included cavalry, infantry, and a significant number of elephants. In 1610, Hiranand invited Emperor Jahangir to his house, gifted him many precious items, and held a grand feast. Poet Jagan described the numerous dazzling gifts that Hiranand showered upon the emperor during this occasion. An inscription on an image dedicated to a Swethambar Jain temple in Agra in AD 1631 also praised Hiranand for gracing the king's palace. (Timberg, T. A., & Das, G. 2014).

Hiranand Sahu(Jagat Seth):

The Jagat Sheths, who were once a dominant economic force in Bengal and laid the foundation for Marwari business in India, had their origins with Hiranand Sahu, who left his hometown of Nagaur in search of better prospects. He eventually settled in Patna and became successful as a moneylender and banker, expanding his business operations by trading in saltpeter. One of his sons, Manik Chand, became highly successful in Dacca and befriended Murshid Kuli Khan, the appointed diwan of the Subah of Bengal. When Murshid Kuli Khan relocated to Maukusabad and renamed it Murshidabad, Manik Chand followed and set up a grand residence in Mahimapur. Together, they worked to develop the new city. After Manik Chand's death, his nephew Fateh Chand took over the family business and inherited the title of "Nagar Seth". Under Fateh Chand's leadership, the business expanded to major cities across the Indian subcontinent, and in 1724, the Mughal Emperor granted him the title of Jagat Seth, or "Banker of the World". The Jagat Seths gained control over the mint and monopolized the supply of money in Bengal and the Indian subcontinent, serving as the personal banker of the Mughal Emperor and the Diwan of Bengal. Additionally, the family financed the trades of various European kingdoms including the British, French, and Dutch. (Stories Indica, 2021).



Figure 9: Jagath Seth (Source: 1700s tbsnews.net)

Rai Bahadur Laxmipat Singh Doogar and Rai Bahadur Dhanpat Singh Doogar:

The Dugar family has a long history of serving society and has been in power for almost a century. In addition, they owned their own railway line from Azimganj to Nalhati. One member

of the family, Pratap Singh Dugar, led a "Sangh" to Palitana in Samvat 1883 along with Upadhyaya shree Kshamaratana. Rai Bahadur Dhanpat Singh Doogar, the younger brother, has contributed significantly to religion, trade, and society. He constructed the well-known Dhanpat Vasahi, also known as Babu Ka Dehrasar, a temple dedicated to Lord Adinath, in the talhatti (Valley) of Palitana's Shatrunjaya Teertha. He also established a printing press in Azimganj to print all the Jain Agamas, which were considered sacred and holy texts. This was the first time in history that Jain Agamas had been published in a printed format. (Shaharwali, 2009).



Figure 10: Dugar Family photo Courtesy Sunil Dugar (Source: <http://azimganj-murshidabad.blogspot.com/>)

18th Century

Lovji Nusserwanjee Wadia:

Lovji Nusserwanjee Wadia (1702-1774) hailed from the Parsi community of Surat in Gujarat, India, and was a member of the renowned Wadia family of shipbuilders and naval architects who founded the Wadia Group in 1736. The Wadia family had a long-established presence in Surat, which was a crucial seaport on the west coast of India and the location of the first British East India Company establishment. Since all trade was carried out via sea, the shipping industry began to prosper in the region. Lovji Nusserwanji Wadia was highly regarded by foreign traders for his exceptional standards in shipbuilding craftsmanship. In 1736, the British East India Company enlisted Lovji's services for building ships and docks in Bombay. Lovji and his brother Sorabji constructed the Bombay dry-dock in 1750, which was the first dry-dock in Asia. This development helped to establish Bombay as a viable trading port for ships coming from both the East and the West. Lovji is rightly considered the founder of the shipping industry in Bombay, and he passed away in 1774. (A Zoroastrian Educational Institute. n.d)

Jamsetjee Bomanjee Wadia



Figure 11: Jamsetjee Bomanjee Wadia (Source: Wikipedia)

Jamsetjee Bomanjee Wadia, a renowned Parsi shipbuilder, served as the master-builder at Bombay Dockyard for almost three decades, starting from 1792 until 1821. He shared this position with his cousin Framji Manackjee until the latter's death in 1804. Over the years, their work received high praise from successive British commanders-in-chief in India, starting with Admiral Sir Edward Hughes in 1781. However, it was the 'Minden,' the first ship of the line built for the Royal Navy outside England, that established Jamsetjee Bomanjee's reputation. The 'Minden' was constructed from teak, like all the other ships built in Bombay, and was incredibly strong and long-lasting. Upon its delivery to England, their Lordships of the Admiralty conveyed their appreciation to Bomanjee in a letter and sent him a piece of plate. He also built four more two-decker ships for the Navy, including the 'Cornwallis' in 1813. The lower hull of the 'Cornwallis' survived until 1957 and was so sturdy that explosives had to be used to break it up. (Wadia, Ruttonjee Ardeshir.1955).

Bhagothi Ram Poddar:

Bhagothi Ram Poddar established the renowned business firm, Tarachand Ghanshyamdas, which dealt in banking, insurance, wholesale trade, and commodity futures. The firm had a vast reach, with offices in India and Shanghai, China, and played a significant role in introducing Marwari clans to the national and international business arena. The Poddar family's ancestral roots can be traced back to Churu in Rajasthan's Shekhawati area. They left Churu due to high taxes on wool trade and founded Ramgarh in the territory of the Raja of Sikar. Bugotee Ram, the earliest known patriarch of the family, held the prestigious position of treasurer for the Nawab of Fatehpur and was a trusted banker for royal families. Chaterbhuj, his son, expanded the family's business by opening branches in Amritsar and Hissar. Tarachand introduced the highly profitable opium trade to their business ventures, which became their

primary source of wealth. They obtained poppy or opium from inland areas and supplied it to Parsi merchants involved in the China trade and opium manufacturing units owned by Parsis in Ahmedabad and Surat. The firm remained active from 1791 to 1957 and played a crucial role in the Marwari community's business expansion. (Leonard, K.B. 1983; Wikipedia (2023).

Mulla Abdul Ghafur

During the 17th and early 18th century in Surat, Mulla Abdul Ghafur was the wealthiest and most powerful merchant, thanks to the opportunities available to him as a product of his region and era. Originally from Patan in Saurashtra, Abdul Ghafur was a man of humble means who moved to Surat and became involved in maritime trade. He owned between 17 and 34 ships and had a wharf for shipping to the south. With the naval support of Virji Vora, he and European companies controlled the sea trade and forced Indian traders to work as their agents. He dominated Surat's maritime trade for over 30 years from the mid-1680s and was a key figure in the city's affairs. Abdul Ghafur was so important that he was exempted from paying customs duties worth one lakh rupees at Surat port. (Akhtar, J. 2016)

Cowasji Byramji (1744-1834)

Cowasji Byramji was a cotton merchant who conducted trade with China, England, and various Indian cities. He also leased Poway estate, which is now known as Powai. Among Cowasji's seven sons, Framji was the oldest and Rustomji was the youngest. Framji Cowasji (1767-1851) established connections with Bengal and the Far East as a dubash and began his own business dealing in the opium trade, in addition to cotton. He even opened a Calcutta branch in 1811. Rustomji Cowasji Banaji (1790-1852), the youngest son of Cowasji, established a vast commercial empire in the early 1800s through shipbuilding and the opium trade. He made his maiden voyage to Calcutta in 1812 and, along with R.D. Mehta, played a vital role in consolidating Parsi religious and community life in eastern India. Rustomji Cowasji benefited significantly from the first Opium War of 1839-1842, exemplifying how early Calcutta Parsis became both successful commercial magnates and respected public figures. (Banaji, K.N. 1892).

Sir Jamsetjee Jejeebhoy

Jejeebhoy was born in the late 1700s near Mumbai. His father was a textile merchant from Surat who had moved to Bombay. Despite little formal education, Jejeebhoy made his first voyage to China to trade in cotton and opium when he was just 16. He made many voyages to

China and gained a reputation as an enterprising and wealthy merchant. In 1818, he, along with Motichund Amichund and Mahomed Ali Rogay, established "Jamsetjee Jejeebhoy & Co.", a business, trade, and shipping firm. Jejeebhoy's wife, Avabai Jamsetjee Jeejeebhoy, financed the construction of Mahim Causeway with Rs.155,800 and the causeway was named after her. He also donated Rs. 1,00,000 to build Sir J. J. Hospital and contributed to at least 126 notable public charities. (Murali Ranganathan. 2019)



Figure 12: Sir Jamsetjee Jejeebhoy (Source: <https://parsi-times.com/>)

19th Century

Dinshaw Maneckji Petit

Dinshaw Maneckji Petit, 1st Baronet (30 June 1823 – 5 May 1901), was a Parsi entrepreneur who established India's first textile mills. He became wealthy as a broker for European firms during a period of speculation in Bombay during the American Civil War.

Sir D. M. Petit used his fortune to support philanthropic causes, including the construction of the Towers of Silence and fire temples for Parsis, a hospital for animals, a women's college, and the Petit hospital. He also donated premises worth Rs. 3,00,000 in Byculla, Bombay, to the Victoria Jubilee Technical Institute (VJTI) to promote technical education. The Government of Bombay recognized the VJTI as the Central Technological Institute of Bombay Province. In 1923, the VJTI relocated to its current location in Matunga, Bombay. (MODE India, 2023).

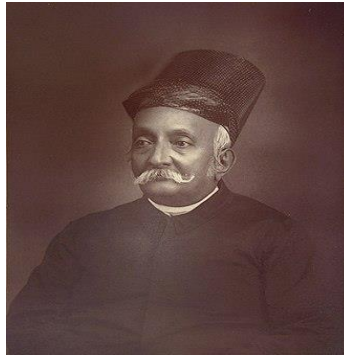


Figure 13: Dinshaw Maneckji Petit (Source: Wikipedia)

Mahasingh Rai Meghraj Kuthari

In 1812, Mahasingh Rai Meghraj Kuthari arrived in Assam from Bengal and expanded his foodgrain business in the region, introducing new products and establishing local branches. The family later became involved in the steamship carrier business, obtaining exclusive rights to the transmission network of radio-telephones and becoming primary carriers for the RSN and ISN companies. They supported the British Army during the Bhutan War and were awarded the title of Rai Bahadur. The Kuthari family owned 64 shops in various parts of Assam by the 1930s, making them the largest foodgrain wholesaler in the region for over a century. They contributed to religious and charitable institutions, addressed water scarcity problems by sinking numerous wells in the town. The family was the first sales tax payer in the town and possibly the first owner of a motor vehicle, as indicated by the registration number (ASK 1). The firm still has an iron chest with a golden British Royal insignia, which was used by the British government to store revenue collections for safekeeping. The Kuthari family is the oldest surviving business house in the town, with a legacy of almost two centuries. (Dipankar Banerjee, 2004).

Hemendra Mohan Bose:

Hemendra Mohan Bose was an Indian entrepreneur who manufactured Kuntalin hair oil and Delkhosh perfume. He was also the first Indian to manufacture gramophone records and was a pioneer of color photography in India. He started his own perfume manufacturing business, H-Bose Perfumers, in Kolkata in 1894, where he produced perfumes and later added hair oil and toiletries to his range of products. He also established a printing press and publishing house

called Kuntaline Press, and with his brother, Jatindra Mohon Bose, established the first Indian-owned cycle works, H. Bose and Co, which was also the distributor of Rover bicycles. Hemendra Mohan Bose also set up the first Indian-owned automobile distributor in Calcutta, The Great Eastern Motor Company, and a repairing unit called the Great Eastern Motor Works in Park Street. Bose started making sound recordings privately in 1900 after acquiring an Edison phonograph. He established the "Bose Pathe Recordings," which later became "H. Bose Swadeshi Records," and began producing his own cylinders for recording due to the growing demand for his recordings. Hemendra Mohan Bose was known for his support of the Swadeshi movement, and many of his records reflected this subject. (Sayantani Nath, 2019).

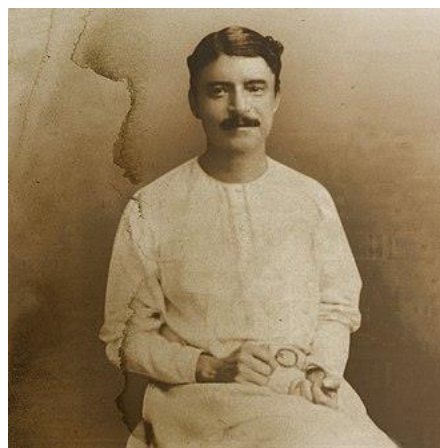


Figure 14: Hemendra Mohan Bose (Source: Wikipedia)

Jibhabhu:

Jibhabhu was an agricultural entrepreneur from Bharuch in the late 18th or early 19th century. Her husband, Lallubhai, headed a successful family-owned firm that dealt with land revenue. These types of firms collected taxes from landowners and made payments to the Mughal authorities. With the East India Company encroaching on this avenue of profit, these firms began making payments to Company officials. When Lallubhai was jailed for debt default in 1794 and died in 1799, Jibhabu convinced the English East India Company officials to acknowledge her as the head of the family firm, despite facing competition from male contenders. Through effective petitioning, Jibhabu convinced the officials that she had the same expertise and local knowledge as her husband to meet their revenue requirements. She managed to retrieve the lands the Company had confiscated from her husband and even got their word to stall any legal action against her from her debtors.

Not only did Jibhabu manage to recover her family's wealth, but she also gained recognition from the East India Company officials, who allowed her to maintain her family's social status and prestige. As a result, Jibhabu was able to travel in a palanquin, which was a rare and esteemed privilege during that time. (Arpana Kapadia 2020).

Naranbhai Keshavlal Parikh:

Naranbhai was born in Petlad in the late 19th century to a middle-class family. He was the eldest of five siblings and borrowed some money from his father to start his own business. He established the Petlad Turkey Red Dyeworks Company Limited, which became a successful conglomerate with offices in various locations in India and abroad. The company also led to the creation of two large mills in Petlad, Keshav Mill and Rajratna Naranbhai Keshavlal Mill. Naranbhai became one of the most prominent industrialists in India during his time. His reputation was such that when the Maharaja of Baroda State needed to borrow money for his education in England, he was granted a loan only after providing a reference from Naranbhai. Upon returning from England, the Maharaja conferred the title of "Rajratna" on Naranbhai as a mark of his popularity and generosity. (Wikipedia, 2023).



Figure 15: Naranbhai Keshavlal Parikh (Source: Wikipedia)

Jamsetji (Jamshedji) Nusserwanji Tata

Jamsetji Nusserwanji Tata was born in Navsari, Gujarat, India on March 3, 1839. His parents were from the priestly class but were not wealthy. After receiving his early education in Navsari, he moved to Bombay at the age of 13 to pursue modern education at Elphinstone College. When he was 20, he joined his father's small firm as a merchant and banker. In 1868, at the age of 29, he started his own trading company with a capital of Rs21,000. After an expedition to England, he became convinced of the potential for Indian companies to compete with British dominance in the textile industry. In 1869, he acquired an old and bankrupt oil mill in Chinchpokli, Bombay, renamed it Alexandra Mill, and converted it into a cotton mill.

He sold the mill two years later for a significant profit and then studied the Lancashire cotton trade during an extended visit to England. From about 1880 until his death in 1904, Jamsetji devoted himself to three great ideas: setting up an iron and steel company, generating hydroelectric power, and creating a world-class educational institution for science education in India. Although he did not see these ideas come to fruition during his lifetime, his efforts and determination laid the foundation for their future realization. (Remya Nair, 2019) and (tata.com, 2022).

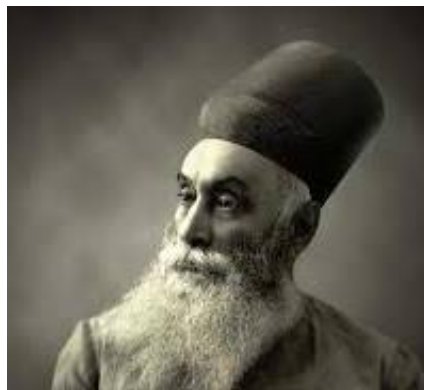


Figure 16: Jamsetji Nusserwanji Tata (Source: <https://www.tata.com>)

Jairam Shivji

Jairam Shivji, a merchant and banker from Kutch, India, worked in Zanzibar and Muscat during the 19th century. He began his career as an apprentice with his father and uncle Madhavji Topan, eventually succeeding his father. He dominated the Zanzibar market and became the wealthiest individual in East Africa during his tenure. As trade with the Western world grew, the Omani Sultanate granted contracts to various authorities and firms to collect custom duties at different locations. Shivji Topan secured a contract to collect custom duties in Zanzibar in 1819. In 1833, the competing firm of Bhimanis received the contract for MT\$ 70,000, but Shivji Topan regained it in 1835 for MT\$ 84,000. He secured the Zanzibar contract for MT\$ 1,10,000, and he also obtained contracts in mainland Mombasa and Marima in 1837. Although they were continued as sublets of local governors, he also received contracts in Mafia and Lindi in the 1840s. By 1850, he had contracts for collecting custom duties for all businesses from Cape Delgado to Mogadishu. (Goswami, C. R. 2006).

Dwarkanath Tagore

Dwarkanath Tagore, who was the grandfather of Rabindranath Tagore, played a pivotal role in establishing Jorosanko and was very successful in his entrepreneurial ventures with Great Britain. He made significant contributions to the Bengal Renaissance. He was a versatile Bengali man, much like many other prominent Tagores, who brought the family into the industrial sector, particularly in shipping, banking, tea, indigo, and mining. He also went beyond traditional norms by himself becoming a Brahmo, which means he was a follower of Ram-Mohan Roy, who was India's first social and religious reformer. It was Dwarkanath who solidified the family's social status and established the foundation of the Tagore legacy. (Parson, R. B. 2012)



Figure 17: Dwarkanath Tagore (Source: Wikipedia)

Gazulu Lakshminarasu Chetty (1806-1868)

Gazulu Lakshminarasu Chetty was born into the balija chetty community in Periamet, Madras, and his father Sidhulu Chetty owned a prosperous business in indigo, dye, and cloth, making him the first Indian member of the Madras Chamber of Commerce. Chetty worked as an apprentice under his father after completing his education, and the business was renamed Sidhulu Chetty and Co. The firm mainly traded in handkerchiefs and quickly grew into a thriving corporation. Chetty took over the business after his father's death and expanded its network.

During the American Civil War, the cotton trade was temporarily suspended between the United States of America and other countries. Chetty seized the opportunity and made significant profits by speculating on the price of cotton. In 1852, Chetty founded the Madras Native Association, which provided a platform for educated Indians to voice their protest against any British injustice. This organization was the first Indian political organization in the Madras Presidency, and Chetty served as its first president.

Gazulu Lakshminarasu Chetty became one of the most prominent Indian businessmen in the early 19th century. (Rungta, R. S. 1970)



Figure 18: Gazulu Lakshminarasu Chetty (Source: Wikipedia)

Ranchhodlal Chhotalal (Merchant *Prince of Gujarat*)

Ranchhodlal was a prominent figure in the textile industry of Ahmedabad, Gujarat, India. He was born in 1823 into a Sathodara Nagar Brahmin family. After working for over ten years in the British local government in India, he established a textile mill in Ahmedabad in the 1860s, becoming the second person to do so in India after Kawasji Nanabhai Dawar set up the first spinning and weaving mill in Bombay in 1854. Ranchhodlal's business was highly successful, and he opened two more mills in 1872 and 1877. Unfortunately, his second mill caught fire and was destroyed just three years after its construction. Despite this setback, Ranchhodlal rebuilt the mill in 1875 without seeking assistance from his shareholders and was able to recover the losses from the fire quickly.

He was known as the "Merchant Prince of Gujarat." (S. M. Edwardes, 1920)



Figure 19: Ranchhodlal (Source: <https://www.peepultree.world/>)

Sathappan Ramanathan Muthiah Chettiar

Muthiah Chettiar was born in the town of Kanadukathan in approximately 1840 to Ramanathan Chettiar, a prominent leader of the Nagarathar community in Chettinad. Although he received very little formal education, he went on to become a successful merchant, banker, and philanthropist. Muthiah Chettiar followed in his family's footsteps and began working in banking at a young age. He expanded his business to other countries such as Ceylon, Burma, and Malaya, and amassed a great fortune. He was the head of the S. Rm. M. family and passed away around the year 1900. (Rajah Sir Annamalai Chettiar Commemoration Volume. 1941)

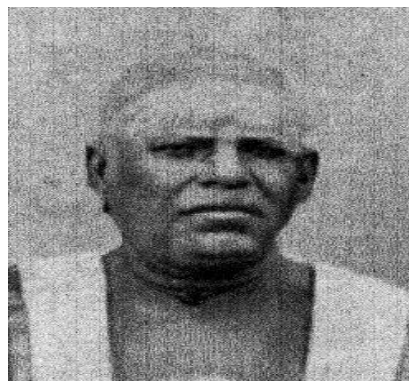


Figure 20: Muthiah Chettiar (Source: Wikipedia)

Premchand Roychand

Premchand Roychand was a successful businessman from Bombay in the 19th century, known as the "Cotton King" and "Bullion King". He was the first Indian broker who could speak, read, and write in English and began working as a stock broker in 1849. Besides the stock market, he had significant interests in the cotton and bullion trades. He founded the Native Share & Stock Brokers Association, which is now the Bombay Stock Market, the second-largest stock exchange in India. Roychand greatly benefited from the cotton boom caused by the American Civil War from 1861 to 1865. The Rajabai Clock Tower in the University of Bombay was named after his mother, and he donated ₹200,000 for its construction in 1878. He was also a director of the Bank of Bombay, the largest bank in the Bombay Presidency. (Ashish K. Mishra, 2015)



Figure 21: Premchand Roychand (Source: Wikipedia)

20th Century

Anant Shivaji Desai

Anant Shivaji Desai, who was also known as Bhausahab Topiwalla, was an Indian merchant originally from the former Sawantwadi State during British rule. He was born on October 17, 1853, in Walawal. In Mumbai, he established himself as a publisher and sold copies of Raja Ravi Verma's artwork. After Verma's death in 1906, Desai purchased the rights to the Baroda and Mysore collections, and published them until 1945, when the original Ravi Varma Press company closed down. Desai was only able to attend school up until the 3rd grade due to his family's poor financial situation. He came to Mumbai to work and make money, trying his hand at various businesses and physical labor. His business of manufacturing topis (headgear) became particularly successful, earning him the nickname Topiwala. (Kajri Jain, 2007)



Figure 22: Anant Shivaji Desai (Source: Wikipedia)

Walchand Hirachand (1882-1953)

Walchand Hirachand belonged to a Jain family from Wankaner in Gujarat but settled in Solapur in Bombay Presidency. He initially worked in his family's banking and cotton trading business, but later became a successful railway contractor in partnership with Laxmanrao Balwant Phatak. Despite his success in railway contracting, he was interested in other business ventures and had expressed interest in setting up a car factory in India as early as 1939, an idea also being pursued by the Birla family. He signed an MOU with Chrysler in 1940, but faced difficulties in obtaining clearances and concessions from the Mysore government, unlike in the case of his aircraft company. (PM Dr.Manmohan Singh's speech at the release of a Commemorative Postage Stamp honouring Seth Walchand Hirachand, 2004)



Figure 23: Walchand Hirachand (Source: Wikipedia)

Revi Karunakaran

Revi Karunakaran, also known as Revi Karuna Karan or Ravi Karunakaran, was a prominent coir exporter from Kerala, India. He was also a former director of the Industrial Development Bank of India (IDBI). Karunakaran headed the Karan Group of Companies, which was the largest exporter of coir products in the world. He played a significant role in modernizing the coir industry in India. In addition to his business ventures, Karunakaran was known for his philanthropy and made substantial donations to support various charitable causes. (The Hindu, 2003)



Figure 24: Revi Karunakaran (Source: <https://priyatom.com/>)

Sumathi Morarjee

Sumati Morarjee was a prominent figure in the Indian shipping industry and is known as the first lady of Indian shipping. Her contributions helped establish a modern shipping model that not only offered business values but also promoted Indian culture and heritage. She was well-versed in history, philosophy, and was an art collector. She was married to Shanti Kumar Narottam Morarjee at a young age and joined the board of directors when she was just 20. While her husband managed Hindustan Shipyard and Gokuldas Mills, Sumati built Scindia Steam Navigation from humble beginnings to become the largest fleet in India. She oversaw a fleet of 43 large ships, with a total dead weight of 5,52,000 tonnes and supervised over 6,000 employees for 69 years. She was also the President of the Indian Fleet Association. (One people One India, 2022).



Figure 25: Sumathi Morarjee (Source: Wikipedia)

Conclusion:

ancient Indian businessmen played a vital role in the economic development of India. They engaged in a wide range of businesses, including trade, finance, and manufacturing, and made significant contributions to the growth of the country's economy. These businessmen were known for their entrepreneurial skills, risk-taking ability, and business acumen. They established successful enterprises that have lasted for centuries and contributed to the development of Indian society. Some of the notable businessmen include the Birla family, Tata family, Kuthari family, and many others. Their legacy lives on to this day, and their contributions have been pivotal in shaping the Indian economy. Their stories serve as an inspiration to the future generations of Indian entrepreneurs who seek to build successful enterprises and make significant contributions to society.

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<https://www.vridhamma.org/Tapussa-and-Bhallika>

About the reference: Vipassana Research Institute (VRI), a non-profit-making body, was established in 1985 with the principal aim of conducting scientific research into the sources and applications of the Vipassana Meditation Technique.

Businessmen Tapussa and Bhallika offering the Buddha rice and honey cakes from Myanmar. This was the first meal taken by the Buddha after enlightenment. Blessed are Tapussa and Bhallika, who were instrumental in building stupas and enshrining the hair relics in both the eastern and the western neighboring countries of India.

<https://sites.google.com/site/abafna/teachingofbhagwanmahaveer>

About the reference: When there are National and International disputes, regional and provincial controversies, communal and linguistic-quarrels, economic in-equality and social injustices, and even lack of endurance for other religious people, the Philosophy of Tolerance in the realms of Intellect and Behavior embodied in the doctrines of syadvada (reality) and ahimsa (non-violence) should be properly understood and sincerely practiced. Respect for life, human welfare and tolerance for the view-points of others constitute the highest humanist philosophy. If we follow this faithfully we will succeed to be world-citizens and lovers of peaceful co- existence. That will be the highest tribute to Sramana Bhagwan Mahaveer, also known as Vardhaman Mahaveer, the illustrious Jnatr prince, the real world citizen who gave his message of TOLERANCE. This indeed is the only right way to celebrate the 2600th Anniversary of His Parinirvana - Final Emancipation

The Ajivikas, B M Barua, University of Calcutta, 1920

About the reference: We don't have any extant texts of the Ājīvikas. Our knowledge of the Ājīvikas comes from the Jain and Buddhist texts, especially the Bhagavatī Sūtra of Jains, Sāmaññaphala Sutta of Buddhists and the commentary on Sāmaññaphala Sutta by Buddhaghosha. Since, both of these religions were in direct competition with the Ājīvikas, the description of the Ājīvikas is not very flattering in these texts and is full of sectarian bias. The teacher of the Ājīvikas order has been called Gosāla Mañkhaliputta by the Jains and Makkhali Gosāla by the Buddhists [1]. B.M. Barua in his books "The Ājīvikas: A short history of their religion and philosophy" [2] and "A history of pre-Buddhistic Indian philosophy" [3] and A.L.

Basham in his book “History and doctrines of the Ājīvikas: A vanished Indian religion” [4] have tried to reconstruct the history of the Ājīvikas based on the Jain and Buddhist texts.

http://tibetanbuddhistencyclopedia.com/en/index.php/Sudatta_merchant_of_Shravastiiin_Kosala,_India

About the reference: A merchant of Shravastiiin Kosala, India, and a lay patron of Shakyamuni Buddha. He is said to have been one of the wealthiest men in the kingdom of Kosala. Since he often made donations of food and clothing to the poor and friendless, he was also called Anathapindada (Pali Anathapindika), Supplier of the Needy. Hearing Shakyamuni preach at Bamboo Grove Monastery in Rajagriha, he converted to Buddhism. Sudatta decided to invite Shakyamuni to Shravastiiand, with the assistance of Prince Jetri, built Jetavana Monastery as an offering to the Buddha. Shakyamuni often visited Jetavana Monastery to preach, which contributed greatly to the spread of Buddhism in Kosala..

Women in Deccan: An Epigraphical Substantiation, Dr. Rupali Mokashi, Volume 4, Issue 5, September-October 2022, <https://www.ijfmr.com/>

About the reference: International Journal For Multidisciplinary Research (IJFMR) is a widely indexed, open access, refereed / peer reviewed, multidisciplinary, international, scholarly online journal, and helping researches to share their research work since 2019.

India is an ancient land with a living and unbroken traditions of diverse religions, cultures and faiths. Women have always been a vital link in this process from the days of the Harappan Civilization. When one tries to appreciate and understand the women of historic ancient India, it is realized that customarily the position of women in ancient India is judged by analyzing the famous female protagonists depicted in the literary works produced by stalwarts or relying on the norms laid down in scriptures of different times, thus overlooking the „real“ women. Their patronages, contributions and personal achievements to the making of the Indian society were rarely brought to light. There is a need to re write the history of women in ancient India in general and in Deccan in specific.

<https://medcraveonline.com/JHAAS/female-patrons-of-early-buddhism-in-ancient-india-an-epigraphical-analysis.html>

About the reference: The MedCrave network is a collection of many perspectives and disciplines that come together to inform and inspire. We publish journals and eBooks of

original research and case studies, think pieces, editorial essays, and more. Our expert Editorial Board members ensure that everything we publish goes through a comprehensive peer review process.

The history of Buddhism is incomplete without understanding the contributions of these capable and confident female followers of Dhamma. Although these women hailed from different periods and geographical areas, and from different social and financial strata, they had one thing deep rooted in common: a passionate involvement with the teachings of the Buddha.

Patil, I. P. (2003). TRADE AND COMMERCE DURING 11TH AND 12TH CENTURY A.D. (WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO THE CHALUKYAS OF KALYANA). Proceedings of the Indian History Congress, 64, 149–154. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/44145454>

About the reference: JSTOR provides access to more than 12 million journal articles, books, images, and primary sources in 75 disciplines.

JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization helping the academic community use digital technologies to preserve the scholarly record and to advance research and teaching in sustainable ways.

Trade during the period 11th and 12th century played an important role in the field of commercial activities especially during the time of the Chalukyas of Kalyana. They paved the way for economic prosperity and social change and enriched art, architecture, industries and various guild organizations. Many dynasties like the Rastrakutas Chalukyas, Kalachuris and Bhamanis ruled the area under study. It was in 12th century that Kalyana became the center of the socio-religious reform movement by the Shivasharanas led by Basaveshwar. This movement further strengthened the historical forces working in the area to stimulate trade and commerce.

<https://www.preserveculture.org/stories-gallery/2019/4/18/lal-mandir-delhi>

About the reference: Preserve Culture is a non-profit, non-political and non-religious organization working on helping create awareness for our cultural heritage and investing in projects that preserve cultural elements at the risk of extinction by directly helping artists engaged in creating or practicing those cultural elements.

As you stand in front of the Red Fort and look towards the main promenade, known as Chandni Chowk, you can't help but notice another prominent red building right in front of you that's a Jain temple. Famously known as Lal Mandir - because of its color— this temple is as old as the Delhi city itself. Idols of the main deities in the temple are older still, dating back almost 500 years. Lal Mandir is a great example of how communities have preserved culture during difficult times. From the audacity of Jivraj Papriwal and the vision of Jinachandra Deva to the faith of an army officer and the spirit of Agarwal Jain community, a piece of history survived through centuries. And Sri Digambar Jain Lal Mandir Ji, as it is fully known today, has become a revered place for Jains from all over the world – a cultural icon in the old city of Delhi. And it's only fair that we keep this precious piece of history alive.

Source: <https://www.finelychopped.net/2019/03/decoding-spirit-of-surats-gopi-malik.html>

About the reference: This is the second of the two part series on his recent trip to Surat in Gujarat, and on the food that he ate there. This is a personal narrative and not a historical treatise.

Ghosh, S. (2015). <https://www.thebetterindia.com/203951/pepper-queen-gerusoppa-rani-chennabhairadevi-karnataka-unsung-portugal-women-rulers-india/>

About the reference: The Better India is the world's largest positive and solutions- based content-driven impact platform. We use the power of digital media and positive storytelling to showcase the journey of India's most inspiring individuals and institutions.

Ruling for 54 Years, This Little-Known 'Pepper Queen' Once Defeated Mighty Portugal. From the lush banks of river Sharavati, 'Raina De Pimenta' ruled over southern Goa, Uttara Kannada, Dakshina Kannada and Malabar for 54 years — the longest reign by any Indian woman ruler.

Proceedings of the Indian History Congress, 76, 214–220.
<http://www.jstor.org/stable/44156585>

About the reference: JSTOR provides access to more than 12 million journal articles, books, images, and primary sources in 75 disciplines.

JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization helping the academic community use digital technologies to preserve the scholarly record and to advance research and teaching in sustainable ways.

Luso-Muzaffarid Encounters: A study of the diplomatic strategies of Malik Gopi

<https://www.thebetterindia.com/203951/pepper-queen-gerusoppa-rani-chennabhairadevi-karnataka-unsung-portugal-women-rulers-india/>

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Ruling for 54 Years, This Little-Known 'Pepper Queen' Once Defeated Mighty Portugal. From the lush banks of river Sharavati, 'Raina De Pimenta' ruled over southern Goa, Uttara Kannada, Dakshina Kannada and Malabar for 54 years — the longest reign by any Indian woman ruler.

<https://www.historified.in/rani-chennabhairadevi-the-pepper-queen-raina-da-pimenta/>

About the reference: In 2020, The Visionary Founder Shiwani Kumar sensed the need to have a digital place for an authentic History Community that can provide the history in a fun way without compromising the facts. When she couldn't find any place that checked all the boxes she decided to create on her own. As she was organizing things, people interested not only in history but also with mythology, travelers joined the beautiful journey of Historified.

Indian queens have always left not only their natives in awe but also the foreign invaders mesmerized. The Portuguese were a group of people who invaded India, and when they saw Rani Chennabhairadevi, they were surprised by her intelligence and her expertise in trade. They gave her the name Raina-Da-Pimenta – 'The Queen of Pepper'.

<https://peoplepill.com/people/bhimjee-parikh>

About the reference: Peoplepill.com publishes news and biographical information about people in the news.

Bhimji Parikh or Bhimji Parekh (1610-1680) was a businessman. He was born in 1610 in Surat. He is remembered today primarily for having introduced the first printing press to Bombay in 1674-75. Bhimji intended to use this printing press for "the common good" of printing "ancient manuscripts" that would be "useful or at least grateful to posterity".

http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/articleshow/5590458.cms?utm_source=contentofinterest&utm_medium=text&utm_campaign=cppst

About the reference: This is an article written by Ashish Vashi and Harit Mehta in The Times of India on February 19th 2010. Gujarati imported 1st printing press during Aurangzeb era. A Gujarati played a key role in the paradigm shift from manuscripts to printing technology in the country. Bhimji Parekh, a Surat-based entrepreneur, was the first Indian to import printing machinery to India and the first to try printing in Indian script.

<https://scroll.in/article/955106/we-know-all-about-warrior-queens-like-lakshambai-now-lets-talk-of-medieval-india-s-businesswomen>)

About the reference: This article focuses on the medieval India's businesswomen. Mughal queens had several sources of income and were actively involved in trade and commerce.

Transformations in Indian History, Pratima Asthana, Saiyid Zaheer Husain Jafri,2009)

About the reference: Transcript of papers presented during the 18th session of U.P. History Congress held at B.R. Ambedkar University, Agra on 8-9 Sept. 2007. Originally published: 2009, Editors: Saiyid Zaheer Husain Jafri, Pratima Asthana

<https://www.mensxp.com/special-features/features/90716-jagat-seth-india-richest-family.html>

About the reference: mensxp is India's Largest Men's Lifestyle Destination. This article speaks about the Jagat Seths, An Indian Family From The 1700s Who Would Dwarf Bezos & Musk.

<https://www.marwar.com/the-rise-and-fall-of-the-jagat-sheths/>

About the reference: The Marwaris have historically been known for their enterprise and resilience. Hailing from an arid, inhospitable land, the Marwaris earned a reputation for their consistent commercial success, which became so legendary that the term Marwari grew to be synonymous with the entire mercantile class of Rajasthan.

The story of the Jagat Sheths, who once dominated the economy of Bengal and lay the foundations of Marwari enterprise in India, began with Hiranand Sahu, purportedly a jeweller-turned-moneylender, who is said to have left home in Nagaur in circa 1650, with the blessings of a Jain saint. His search for better prospects took him to Patna—a prosperous city and important business hub by then—where he started off with moneylending and banking operations. In addition, he started dealing in saltpeter, a commodity that was much in demand

among European traders owing to its multifarious uses, not least of which was as an ingredient of gunpowder.

https://storiesindica.substack.com/p/the-jagat-seth-family?utm_source=substack&utm_medium=email&utm_content=share

About the reference: Jagat Seth: The Richest Bankers In The 17th Century Known as the 'Bankers of the world', this Indian Marwari family was the richest in the world. They lent money to British, France and Mughals.

Marwaris, one of the prominent business communities in India is known for their business acumen and vast wealth. For centuries, the Marwari business families have played a crucial role in the development of the Indian Economy. Marwaris are known for passing their wealth and fortunes from generation to generation. Even today the list of richest Indians is dominated by the Marwari business houses. A few centuries ago, a Marwari family was considered to be “the richest” not just in India, but all over the world.

http://azimganj-murshidabad.blogspot.com/2009/08/famous-shaharwali-people-and-families_08.html

About the reference: Murshidabad is place of Nawabs and Azimganj- Jiaganj are towns in Murshidabad district situated in two sides of Bhagirathi (Ganga) river in West Bengal state of India. Jain society of Azimganj- Jiaganj and Murshidabad is predominantly referred as Shaharwali. Shaharwali society have very rich tradition and culture. Jyoti Kothari

<http://www.zoroastrian.org.uk/vohuman/Article/The%20Wadias%20of%20India.htm>

About the reference: The Wadias of India: Then and Now. The Parsis in India have had the tremendous good fortune of practicing their religion and customs generally without ostracism and persecution. This freedom has given them an opportunity to establish themselves in a country that not only refrained from proselytizing but also showed considerable tolerance towards all religions. Having been given this opportunity, they also had the encouragement of the British colonial rulers of India to develop their entrepreneurship skills and political savvy. The elevation in stature of the Parsis was undoubtedly one of the main causative factors in the small community's escalating fortunes. The legacy of the Wadias, as with other families, should, in the final analysis, be measured in terms of benefits not just to their own society and country, but how those benefits relate to the well-being of humanity at large.

<https://www.rmg.co.uk/collections/objects/rmgc-object-14276>

About the reference: Royal Museums Greenwich comprises the Royal Observatory, Cutty Sark, National Maritime Museum and Queen's House. We are also home to The Prince Philip Maritime Collections Centre and the Caird Library and Archive.

Together we're dedicated to enriching people's understanding of the sea, the exploration of space, and Britain's role in world history.

This speaks about Jamsetjee Bomanjee Wadia, c. 1754-1821. He was a great Parsi Indian shipbuilder from the and was the master-builder at Bombay Dockyard from 1792 to 1821, a post he shared with his cousin Framji Manackjee until the latter's death in 1804.

<https://www.magzter.com/stories/Business/MARWAR-India/Carving-His-Own-Destiny>

About the reference: Magzter Inc. is the World's largest and fastest growing self-service, cross-platform digital newsstand with over 85 million users since its inception in 2011 and thousands of magazines and newspapers across 40+ categories and 60+ languages. Headquartered in New York, Magzter has its local presence in Amsterdam, London, Mexico City, Chennai, Mumbai, New Delhi, Bengaluru, Singapore, and will soon be expanding to other countries. Founded by global entrepreneurs, Girish Ramdas and Vijay Radhakrishnan in June 2011, Magzter enables magazine and newspaper publishers around the world to create and deliver digital editions of their titles to global consumers.

Among Kolkata's oldest Marwari business houses is Tarachand Ghanshyamdas, a legendary firm whose interests ranged from banking and insurance to wholesale trade and commodity futures. Founded by Bhagoti Ram Poddar of Ramgarh, it boasted pan-India operations and even beyond in far-off places like Shanghai, China. It is to this historic firm that the Neotias of the Ambuja Neotia Group trace their genesis as a business house.

Leonard, K.B. (1983). *The Marwaris: From Traders to Industrialists*. By Thomas A. Timberg. New Delhi: Vikas, 1979. vi, 176 pp. Appendixes, Bibliography, Glossary, Index. \$15.95. (Distributed by Advent Books, New York.). *The Journal of Asian Studies*, 42, 447-448.

About the reference: Semantic Scholar provides free, AI-driven search and discovery tools, and open resources for the global research community. *The Marwaris: From Traders to Industrialists*. By Thomas A. Timberg.

https://modeindia.co.in/special_days/birthday-of-dinshaw-maneckji-petit/

About the reference: મોડે Movement for Development, a Gujarat based voluntary, non-profit and an ISO 9001:2015 compliant organization works to promote equality, empowerment and help people develop to their fullest potential.

Sir Dinshaw Maneckji Petit, 1st Baronet (30 June 1823 – 5 May 1901), Parsi entrepreneur and founder of the first textile mills in India. He was the grandfather of Rattanbai Petit, who later became the wife of the founder of Pakistan, Mohammed Ali Jinnah.

As broker to European firms he amassed a large fortune during the period of speculation in Bombay at the time of the American Civil War. He founded the Manackji Petit Spinning & Weaving Mills.

<https://www.telegraphindia.com/north-east/a-200-year-old-shop-still-selling-salt-and-masur-dali-j-heritage-bargola-fancy-bazar/cid/1552202>

About the reference: This article focuses on a 200-year-old shop, still selling salt and masur dali j - Heritage/Bargola, fancy Bazar.

In the lockdown, a reminder of the missing histories of women at work-Scant historical records offer us glimpses into their lives, Aparna Kapadia, 27th April 2020, Scroll.in, <https://scroll.in/article/959919/meet-medieval-indias-working-women-who-defied-societal-roles-and-rose-to-power>)

About the reference: This is an article written by Aparna Kapadia in the Scroll.in on April 27th 2020. Aparna Kapadia is a historian of South Asia at Williams College in the US.

This article focuses on the affirming stories of less privileged women who stepped outside their traditionally assigned roles and, like their royal counterparts, impacted trade and commerce before the “modern” era.

<https://kreately.in/sumati-morarjee-the-woman-who-ruled-a-mans-world/>

About the reference: This is an article written by Shesha Patangi in the kreately.in on March 13th 2021. This article focuses on SUMATI MORARJEE – The Woman Who Ruled A Man’s World. Sumati Morajee, the first woman of Indian shipping, is credited to have become the first woman in the world to head an organization of ship owners- Indian National Steam ship Owners Association.

<https://oneindiaonepeople.com/sumati-morarjee-1909-1998/>

About the reference: One India One People Foundation (OIOP) is a not-for-profit organisation, set up by the late Mr. Sadanand A. Shetty, an industrialist, in August 1997, coinciding with India's 50th year of Independence. The purpose of the Foundation is to build awareness about various issues concerning India, in order to bring about a systemic change.

Sumati Morarjee, was known as the first lady of Indian shipping. She helped establish a model for modern shipping companies offering the world not only business values, but propagating Indian culture and heritage. Well-versed in history and philosophy, she was also a discerning art collector.

<https://theprint.in/theprint-profile/jamsetji-nusserwanji-tata-a-swadeshi-who-tried-to-make-india-a-manufacturing-hub/200152/>

About the reference: This is an article written by Remya Nair in the print.in on 3rd March 2019.

This article focuses on Jamsetji Nusserwanji Tata, a Swadeshi who tried to make India a manufacturing hub. On Jamsetji's 180th birth anniversary, ThePrint remembers the industrialist who set up India's most well-reputed business empire.

<https://www.tata.com/about-us/tata-group-our-heritage/tata-titans/jamsetji-tata>

About the reference: We are the Tata group: India's only value based corporation — a visionary, a pioneer, a leader, since 1868.

Jamsetji Tata The Founder of the Tata group began with a textile mill in central India in the 1870s. His vision inspired the steel and power industries in India, set the foundation for technical education, and helped the country leapfrog into the ranks of industrialised nations.

Timberg, T. A., & Das, G. (2014). *The Marwaris: From Jagat Seth to the Birlas (The Story of Indian Business)*.

About the reference: *The Marwaris: From Jagat Seth to the Birlas (The Story of Indian Business)* by Thomas A Timberg (Author), Gurcharan Das (Foreword)

In the nineteenth century, a tiny community from the deserts of Rajasthan spread out to every corner of India. The Marwaris controlled much of the country's inland trade by the time of the First World War. They then turned their hand to industry and, by the 1970s, owned most of

India's private industrial assets. Today, Marwari businessmen account for a quarter of the Indian names on the Forbes billionaires list.// What makes the Marwaris so successful? Is it their indomitable enterprise, or their incredible appetite for risk? In this new book, Thomas Timberg shows how the Marwaris rely on a centuries-old system for conserving and growing capital which has stood them in good stead, alongside a strong sense of business ethics which has earned them respect.// Family businesses in general and the Marwaris in particular might have a vital role to play in shaping India's economic future.

Rungta, R. S. (1970). The rise of business corporations in India, 1851-1900 (No. 8). CUP Archive.

About the reference: The Rise of Business Corporations in India, 1851-1900

This book traces the rise of modern businesses in India by looking at the growth of joint stock companies. Apart from discussing the growth of cotton mills, and the tea, jute, coal, iron and steel industries, insurance and other trading companies, it analyses developments in transport (railways, shipping, road), banking, and agriculture and their role in the industrial growth of the country. The development of the Bombay and the Calcutta stock exchanges and the growth of company law in India are examined. The book considers government policy on industrial development and discusses the problem of the labour supply for industry. The changes in the capital structure and financial policies of companies and the way they were managed is examined. In particular the book traces the origin of the managing agency system and assesses its contribution to India's industrial development.

Banaji, K. N. (1892). Memoirs of the Late Framji Cowasji Banaji. Bombay Gazette Steam Printing Works.

About the reference: Aim in this book is to save from the oblivion the memoirs of the late Framji Cowasji Banaji, whose long and splendid career has long since ended, and he has departed this transient life, for a happier one in the next. This will at once convey to the mind of many, that the capacity of a near relative, in which I stand to the deceased gentleman, has induced me to undertake this difficult task ; but I think, I cannot pay a better tribute of respect to his memory, than to draw out his memoir in an impartial light, holding up at the same time his good and amiable qualities, for the imitation, as well as the admiration, of the public. For a life of his, there has been a public call, for the sudden gloom, which overspread the Indian communities here, by his death, had called forth the sweetest expressions of sorrow, mingled

with the admiration of his many good and noble qualities, not only from the Parsee community, of which he was for a very long time the cherished friend and champion, and on whom they looked with pride and endearment, as a patriarch, but from every other caste.

<https://www.livehistoryindia.com/story/people/ranchhodlal-chhotlal-pioneer-of-modern-ahmedabad>

About the reference: Peepul Tree is a platform for the best hand-made artisanal works from the deepest corners of India. It celebrates the rich and varied legacy that these artisans carry.

Ahmedabad, Gujarat's commercial capital, traces its wealth to the textile mills that once dotted the city. But this was no random development; the city's textile revolution was deliberately set in motion by one man, Ranchhodlal Chhotlal, whose legacy goes far beyond the industry.

A practical man fired by great dreams, Chhotlal also brought modern sanitation to Ahmedabad and played a pioneering role in education.

It was largely due to the efforts of this one man that Ahmedabad made the transition from a trading town to the vibrant and modern city it is today.

Puri, B. N. (1987). *Buddhism in Central Asia* (Vol. 4). Motilal Banarsidass Publ.

About the reference: *Buddhism in Central Asia* is a saga of peaceful pursuit by Buddhist scholars from Kashmir and Kabul to propagate the message of the Buddha. This vast region between the Tien-Shan and the Kunlun ranges was the centre of activities of these Buddhist savants. Here people of different races and professions, speaking many languages, were finally blended into a cosmopolitan culture. This created an intellectual climate of high order. In this context, the famous silk trade route was helpful in adding to the material prosperity of the people in this region. The present study, therefore, is not one of Buddhism in isolation. It equally provides an account of the political forces confronting each other during the course of history of this region for well over a thousand years. For centuries the drifting desert sand of Central Asia enveloped this civilization and the religion connected with it. The late-nineteenth and early-twentieth century explorers and archaeologists successfully uncovered it at different centres along the old Silk Route. This has been helpful for a comprehensive study of Buddhism with its literature and art. The finds of hundreds of inscriptions have added to the cultural dimensions of the study.

Parson, R. B. (2012). *The Bazaar and the Bari: Calcutta, Marwaris, and the World of Hindi Letters*. University of California, Berkeley.

About the reference: The Hindi literati of Calcutta will always boast that Bengal was the starting point of the various paths taken by Hindi prose and publishing. The admixture of colonial, orientalist, missionary, comprador, and nationalist forces gave rise to a lively Calcuttan Hindi press from the mid-nineteenth century well into the twentieth century. It remained in constant dialogue with the Hindi-speaking publics beyond Bengal, while staying grounded in the socio-economic world of Calcutta's Barabazar. However, toward the end of the twentieth century, Calcutta's Hindi legacy was by most accounts moribund; scholars lamented that the lack of institutional support and interest had desiccated Hindi literary production in Calcutta. But then, along with other upheavals and ruptures that attended the liberalization of the Indian economy beginning in 1991, a spate of Hindi novels emerged on the scene; they came from an unexpected portion of Calcutta's demographic - Marwari women. This dissertation discusses the 200 year tradition of Hindi in Calcutta, exploring the continuities from the inaugural phase to contemporary novels, and how Marwaris, who had their own language and script, and as a merchant community from Rajasthan not previously known to produce literature, had come to make the language their own and publish in it.