

Cambridge University Press
978-1-108-04602-2 - Travels in India: Volume 1
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Excerpt
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BOOK I

Concerning routes which one may take to go from
ISPAHAN to AGRA, and from AGRA to DELHI and
JAHÁNÁBÁD,¹ where the Court of the GREAT
MOGUL is at present ; as also to the Court of the
King of GOLCONDA and to that of the King of
BIJAPUR,² and to several other places in INDIA.

¹ Dehly and Gehanabat in the original. Sháh Jahán rebuilt Delhi, and called the new city Sháhjahánábád, which retains its form and fortifications to the present time, and is the Delhi of to-day.

² Visapour, in the original, was an early corruption of the name Bijapur (Vijáyapura). It is the principal town of what is now the Kaládgi District of the Bombay Presidency. An account of its buildings is given in Fergusson's *History of Indian and Eastern Architecture*.

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TRAVELS IN INDIA

CHAPTER I

*Route from ISPAHAN to AGRA by (way of) GOMBROON,¹
where particular mention is made of the navigation
from HORMUZ² to SURAT.³*

I SHALL follow in this account of my Indian travels the same order as I have observed in that of my Persian travels, and I shall commence with the description of the routes by which one can go from ISPAHAN to DELHI and JAHÁNÁBÁD, where the GREAT MOGUL at present resides.

Although INDIA presents a frontier towards PERSIA of more than 400 leagues, extending from the ocean up to that long chain of mountains which traverses the centre of ASIA from west to east, and has been known to antiquity under the name of MOUNT TAURUS or MOUNT CAUCASUS,⁴ there are, notwithstanding, not so

¹ Gomron in the original, for Gombroon, the modern Bandar Abbás, in the Persian Gulf.

² Ormus in the original, the modern Hormuz, more properly Hurmúz, formerly a city and kingdom near the mouth of the Persian Gulf.

³ Surate in the original, the modern Surat, spelt Suratte in the French edition of 1713.

⁴ Mount Taurus or Mount Caucasus. The former name was used by some of the ancient geographers for a supposed continuous range from west to east, through the whole of Asia, and embracing the real

many ways for passing from PERSIA into INDIA as there are for passing from TURKEY into PERSIA, because between PERSIA and INDIA there are only sands and vast deserts where one finds no water at all. Thus, in order to go from ISPAHAN to AGRA there are but two routes to select from—one partly by land and partly by sea, by taking ship at HORMUZ; and the other altogether by land, passing through CANDAHAR. The first of these routes has been fully described up to HORMUZ towards the end of the last book of my travels in PERSIA,¹ and I have now to speak of the navigation from HORMUZ to SURAT.

Navigation in the Indian seas is not carried on at all seasons, as it is in our European seas, and it is necessary to take the proper season, outside the limits of which no one ventures to put to sea. The months of November, December, January, February, and March, are the only months in the year in which one embarks at HORMUZ for SURAT, and at SURAT for HORMUZ: with this difference, however, that one rarely leaves SURAT later than the end of February,² but for leaving HORMUZ one may wait till the end of March,

Taurus of Asia Minor, the Persian Elbruz, the Hindu Kush, and the Himalayas. "The boundaries of India on the north, from Ariana to the Eastern Sea, are the extremities of Taurus, to the several parts of which the natives give, besides others, the names of Paropamisus, Emodus, and Imaus (Himalaya); but the Macedonians call them Caucasus," etc. (Strabo, Bk. xv, c. i, § 11; Bohn's ed., trans. by Falconer and Hamilton, vol. iii, p. 78.)

¹ Book V, chaps. xx, xxi, xxii, p. 653 *et seq.* The second route up to Candahar is described in Book V, chap. xxiv, p. 693, *Persian Travels*, Paris edition of 1676.

² This indication of the periods of the monsoons is of interest. It is availed of by M. Joret, in his *J. B. Tavernier*, Paris, 1886, p. 64, as a factor in determining the dates of Tavernier's journeys, regarding which his direct statements are so few, vague, or even contradictory.

and even till the 15th of April, because then the western wind which brings the rains to INDIA begins to blow. During the first four months a wind from the north-east prevails with which one may sail from SURAT to HORMUZ in fifteen or twenty days; afterwards, veering by degrees to the north, it serves equally the vessels which go to SURAT and those which are coming from it, and during this period the merchants generally reckon on spending thirty or thirty-five days at sea; but when you wish to go from HORMUZ to SURAT in fourteen or fifteen days, you must embark in the month of March or at the beginning of April, because then you have the western wind astern all the way.

Vessels leaving HORMUZ steer for MUSCAT,¹ on the coast of ARABIA, in order not to approach too near to that of PERSIA, and to give it a wide berth. Those which are coming from SURAT do the same, in order to find the entrance to the gulf, but neither the one nor the other ever touch at MUSCAT, because custom dues have to be paid to the Arabian Prince who took this place from the Portuguese.

MUSCAT is a town on the sea-coast, opposite to three rocks, which render the approach to it very difficult, and it lies at the foot of a mountain upon which the Portuguese had three or four forts. It may be remarked that MUSCAT, HORMUZ, and BASSORA² are the three places in the East where the heat is most unbearable. Formerly the English and Dutch monopolised this navigation; but for some years past the

¹ Mascaté in the original, the modern Muscat, or more properly Mäskät, the capital of Oman, in North-East Arabia.

² Balsara in the original, Balsora of the *Arabian Nights*, the modern Bassora (*Basra*), in the Persian Gulf.

Armenians, Muhammadans of INDIA, and *Banians*¹ also have vessels, upon which, however, one does not feel so safe as on those of the *Franks*,² because necessarily the Indians do not understand the sea so well, and have not such good pilots.

Vessels sailing for SURAT, which is the only port in the whole empire of the GREAT MOGUL, steer for DIU and POINT ST. JEAN,³ and then anchor in the roads at SUWÁLI,⁴ which is only four leagues distant from SURAT, and but two from the mouth of the river, bearing from it northwards. They carry the merchandise from one place to the other either by cart or by boat, because large vessels cannot enter the river at SURAT, until after they are unloaded, on account of the sandbanks which are at the mouth. The Dutch return after having landed their goods at SUWÁLI, and the English did the same, neither being permitted to enter into the SURAT river; but since, some time back, the King has granted to the latter a place to winter⁵ in during the rainy season.

SURAT is a city of moderate size, with a poor fortress, which you must pass, whether approaching it by water or by land. It has four towers at its four

¹ *Banians* in the original, see Book III, chap. iii, and Index.

² *Franks* in the original, and *Franguis* on p. 59, names in the East for all Europeans except Greeks; Pers. *Farangi*.

³ Diu and Point St. Jean. Diu is on an island (from which fact the name is derived—*dvīpa*, Sanskrit for an island) off the southern extremity of Gujarát. It occupies an important position in the history of the Portuguese, and still belongs to them. St. Jean is the port in Gujarát called Saján or Sanján, the Sindán of Arab writers, corrupted by the Portuguese into San Gens and the English into St. John's. (See Yule and Burnell, *Anglo-Indian Glossary*, s. v. St. John's, p. 591.)

⁴ Souali in original, a roadstead near the mouth of the Tápti (*op. c.*, p. 671).

⁵ The term winter (*hiver*) is used by several early writers on India to indicate the rainy season, viz. June to October.

angles ; and as the walls are not terraced, the guns are placed upon scaffoldings. The Governor of the fortress merely commands the soldiers of the garrison, and possesses no authority in the city, which has its own separate Governor to receive the customs and the other revenues of the King throughout the extent of his Province. The walls of the city are of earth, and the houses of private persons are merely barns, being built of nothing but reeds, covered with cow-dung mixed with clay to fill the interstices, and to prevent those outside from seeing between the reeds that which is done inside. In the whole of SURAT there are only nine or ten well-built houses, and the *Sháh-bandar*,¹ or chief of the merchants, has two or three of them. The others belong to the Muhammadan merchants, and those of the English and Dutch are not the least fine, every president and commander taking care to keep them in repair, the cost of which they charge against the accounts of their companies. These dwellings are, nevertheless, only hired houses, the King not permitting any *Frank* to possess a house of his own, fearing that he would have that of which he might make a fortress. The Reverend Capuchin Fathers have built a very commodious one upon the model of the houses of EUROPE, with a beautiful church, and I myself furnished a large portion of the money which it cost ; but the purchase had to be made under the name of a Maronite merchant of ALEPPO² named CHELEBI, of whom I have spoken in my account of PERSIA.

¹ *Cha-bander* in original, *Sháh-bandar*, i.e. Governor of the port or harbour and customs master.

² *Alep* in original, for Aleppo, described Book II, cap. ii, p. 134, of the *Persian Travels*, Paris, 1876.

CHAPTER II

*Concerning the Customs, the Money, the Exchange, the
Weights, and the Measures of INDIA.*

IN order to avoid repetition, which one cannot escape in the course of a long journey, it is desirable to make the reader acquainted from the first with the practice in INDIA in reference to customs, money, exchange, measures, and weights.

As soon as merchandise is landed at SURAT it has to be taken to the custom-house, which adjoins the fort. They are very strict and search persons with great care. Private individuals pay as much as 4 and 5 per cent duty on all their goods; but as for the English Company and the Dutch Company, they pay less. But I believe likewise that, taking into account what it costs them in deputations and in presents, which they are obliged to make every year at court, the goods cost them scarcely less than they do private persons.

Gold and silver pay 2 per cent, and as soon as they have been counted at the custom-house the Mintmaster¹ comes to take them, and coins them into money of the

¹ The Mintmaster was called *Darogha* (of the mint); the assays were made by the *Sairafi*; other officials in the mints were the *Amin*, who was a kind of spy on the others; the *Mushrif*, to keep the accounts, etc. (See *Áin-i-Akhdri*, Blochmann's transl., vol. i, p. 18.)

country, which he hands over to you, in proportion to the amount and standard of your silver. You settle with him, according to the nature of the amount, a day when he is to give the new coins, and for as many days as he delays to do so beyond the term agreed upon he pays interest in proportion to the silver which he has received. The Indians are cunning and exacting in reference to coin and payments; for when money has been coined for three or four years it has to lose $\frac{1}{2}$ per cent, and it continues in the same proportion according to age, not being able, they say, to pass through so many hands without some diminution.

You may carry all sorts of silver into the Empire of the GREAT MOGUL, because there is a mint in each of the frontier towns, where it has to be refined to the highest standard,¹ as is all the gold and silver in INDIA, by order of the King, and it is coined into money of the country. Bar silver, or old silver plate which has been bought without payment for the workmanship, is that which has the least to lose, for on coined silver one cannot avoid the loss on coinage. Sales are in general conditional on payment being made in money coined during the current year; and if one pays in old pieces it is necessary to submit to loss, according to the time they have been coined, as I have said above. In all places at a distance from towns, where the common people do not understand silver well, and where there are no Changers, they will not receive a piece of silver till they put it into the fire to ascertain

¹ The method of assaying which was practised in India is described in the *Ain-i-Akbari*, and upon it there are some important remarks and explanatory notes to be found in Percy's *Metallurgy of Gold and Silver*

if it is good; and this is practised especially at the river crossings.¹ As their boats are made of osiers, covered only with oxhide, and are consequently very light,² they keep them in the woods, and will not take them on their shoulders for crossing the water before they have received their payment.

In so far as regards gold, the merchants who import it use so much cunning in order to conceal it, that but little of it comes to the knowledge of the customs' officers. They do all they can to evade paying the customs, especially as they have not so much risk to run as in the custom-houses of EUROPE. For in those of INDIA, when any one is detected in fraud, he is let off with paying double, 10 per cent instead of 5, the King comparing the venture of the merchant to a game of hazard, where one plays double or quits. However, for some time back this is somewhat changed, and it is to-day difficult to settle with the customs' officers on that condition. The King has conceded to the English Captains that they shall not be searched when they leave their vessels to come on shore; but one day an English Captain, going to TATTA,³ one of the largest towns of INDIA, a little above SINDI,⁴ which is at the mouth of the river INDUS,⁵ when

¹ Only a few years ago I found the people in a remote part of the District of Raipur, in the Central Provinces, most unwilling to accept any payment in silver; they would take copper, but preferred cowries.

² Coracles. See Book I, chap. xviii, and Index for further references to them.

³ Tata in the original, the modern Tatta, in Sind (see p. 17), a *taluk* in the Karáchi District.

⁴ Scindi in the original, sometimes written Simdi by Tavernier—*e.g.* p. 17—for Sindi, the Province of Sind, derived from the River Sind, *i.e.* Indus.

⁵ River of Indou in the original, *i.e.* *Hindú* or *Sindú*—the Indus river.