

INDIAN SILK FABRICS IN THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY*

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An attempt is made in this paper to bring together the Persian as well as foreign travellers' accounts in throwing ample light on the following aspects of Indian silk manufacturing during the seventeenth century : 1. Origin and growth of silk manufacturing industries in Bengal Presidency. 2. Various techniques of silk manufacturing and silk manufacturing centres. 3. The typological varieties of silk fabrics with relation to their quality contents and manufacturing techniques. 4. The classification of silk goods, useful for domestic use. 5. The export and import of silk goods from India.

SILKEN CLOTH

Silk was prepared from silk worms which were fed on *arindi*¹ and mulberry² trees and also from the *mūga* or *monga* worms³. Among other places mulberry trees were grown in the Punjab⁴ and Bengal⁵ and *arindi* trees were found in abundance in the latter province⁶.

Bengal in the seventeenth century was renowned for the production of silk, raw and *tasar*⁶. The East India Company wrote to the Bengal factors in February 1658 to furnish them with raw silk as per specifications mentioned. They had sent from England the skeins of a particular specimen for this purpose. There was a kind of raw silk from Bengal termed as 'pigtail'⁷.

According to Hobson-Jobson, *tasar* was a kind of inferior silk. "Anglo-Indians generally regard the termination of this word in 'r' as a vulgarism but it is in fact correct". The term is derived from Sanskrit *tasara*, *tassara*, Hindi *tasar*, 'a shuttle'⁸.

Tasar is priced in the Āin at $\frac{1}{4}$ to two rupees per piece.⁹

According to another account, *herba* was a name for *tasar* silk.¹⁰

Bengal 'tessar' was known to the Company's merchants in 1619¹¹. A year later the English factor, Robert Hughes, wrote to the President and Council at Surat (August 6, 1620) that after having made further inquiries about Bengal silk

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he was sending them samples 'wounde of the serbandy'¹². On September 3 of the same year he wrote to the Agra factors that he had bought a dozen quilts of *Satgāon*, trimmed them with silk fringe tassels and lined them partly with *tāftas* and partly with 'tessur'¹³.

According to Sir Richard Carnac Temple, Mr. Streyntsham Master, the Chief Agent of the Company in 'the Bay' and the Coast (1676-80), rendered the Company a great service by the introduction of 'tassar' ('tussore') silk goods, 'a trade that has lasted on to present day in several forms of cheap silks. The material went by various names in Master's time—*arindi*, silk of worms fed on castor-oil plant, tester' and 'herba', of which the last term, from a false etymology, long led to belief 'that the *tassar* goods were not made of silk at all, but of some kind of grass'¹⁴.

The *tasar* silk of Bengal, half cotton and half silk, was about 14 yards long and 1½ yards in width and was available at Patna¹⁵ and Burhanpur¹⁶ also. At the latter place it was sold at Rs. 4 a piece or *thān* in July 1619¹⁷.

In Bengal, the village of Qasimbazar was a famous centre for the production of silk. All the country or the great part thereof about Qasimbazar was planted with mulberry trees, the 'leaves of which are gathered young' to feed the worms with and make silk fine. For that reason the trees were planted every year, writes Mr. Streyntsham Master on November 8, 1676¹⁸. Qasimbazar at one time could produce, in the seventeenth century, 22,000 bales of silk annually, each bale weighing 100 livres, one livre being equal to 16 ounce¹⁹.

Besides *tasar*, Bengal produced other kinds of silk as well. *Tāni*, silk used for the warp, was the best produced in that province and supplied to England. The appropriate times for the purchase of this silk were December and April when the silk could be taken from cocoons. The technical term for cocoon-rearing season in Bengal was called *bund*. When the *bund* was made in November and March, the servants of the Company had the samples ready and sent for the silk merchants, called *paikārs*, meaning brokers or chapmen. They gave the bills for the quantity to be supplied. From the advance money forwarded to the *paikārs*, an amount of Rs. 20 was kept by the Company for later adjustments arising from abatements or discounts or incomplete accounts. They got raw silk from merchants at Rs. 70 *sikka* (i.e. new coin of the time) per seer of 72 new rupees. This was in vogue since 1673 onwards²⁰. (Letter of November 3, 1676, from Mathews Vincent at Qasimbazar to the Company).

Another good sort of silk made in Qasimbazar and the neighbourhood was *punjah* or *punjam*. *Punjam* was a skein of silk or cotton, consisting of 120 or 60 threads, prepared from the warp. This word, according to Sir Richard Temple, seems to have been taken to Bengal by the factors trained in Madras as it represented a Tamil and Telugu word²¹.

Lustrine

Lustrine or lustre was a glossy silk fabric sent from Bengal to England in the seventeenth century²².

Taffety Wale was striped tafety and 'Sarcenett', a fine, thin woven silk²³.

Arindi

Arindi was the silk spun by the *eri* or *arindi* silk-worm, so named because it feeds chiefly on castor-oil plant, called *arindi* in Bengal²⁴.

The Qasimbazar traders took their consignments of cloth to the English factory there in bags made of this cloth. It was made neither of cotton nor of silk, but of a kind of 'Herba spun by a worm that feeds upon the leaves of a stalke of tree called *Arundee*, which bears a round prickle berry of which Oyle is made'. Vast quantities of this cloth were made in the country about Ghorāghāt beyond Sherpur Murcha in the Bogra district of Eastern Bengal, where they kept silk worms. It did not rot, nor received damage by wetness, it burnt like hair, 'not in a flame nor keeps fire long, and wares to admiration.' When the cloth was made it was given to the poor for use, and 'to lay in shops to be footed upon' before it was fit to be sold. The English Agent at Qasimbazar ordered that some pieces of this cloth be dyed into several colours to be sent to England for trial. The usual dimension was $8 \times 1\frac{1}{2}$ yards and one piece of this cloth cost only half a rupee²⁵.

At a consultation held at Qasimbazar on December 1, 1679, the Council ordered that a bale of *arindi*, 'a raw sort of cloth, neither silk nor cotton', be purchased and packed up to be sent to England²⁶.

This cloth, however, fell into disrepute in England and was forbidden to be sent there till 1688. On August 27 of that year the Court of Committee wrote to Bengal factors about this 'strong cloth'. They had discontinued its purchase in view of its dearness and 'ill buying' and because the European buyers were unacquainted with its use. Now with a person like Mr. Job Charnock at the helm of affairs in Bengal, the Company were prepared to try it again, being loath to lose 'especially as staple and strong commodity as that is, if Europe were well acquainted to wearing of it.' They therefore ordered the Qasimbazar factors to purchase 20 bales of this cloth, 30×1 yards, and 4 bales of *arindi* yarn. "We adventure again upon this commodity in hopes by degrees to bring it into use, especially considering it as a cheap heavy commodity"²⁷.

(The Agent of the Company at Metchchlipatam had got some pieces of *arindi* silk to be dyed into several colours for transportation to England for purposes of trial towards the end of 1679²⁸.)

At a consultation held at Hughli on December 13, 1679, it was decided to order 600 pieces of *arindi* cloth and four bales of *arindi* yarn to be sent to England in 1680. Out of this quantity, 400 pieces of the cloth were to be 15 yards long and one yard broad, and 200 pieces were to be made of double twisted thread for sail cloth, 15 yards long and $\frac{1}{4}$ ell broad²⁹.

In January 1681 the Court of Committees of the Company in England ordered the provision 'at the Bay' of 1,000 pieces of blue *arindi* cloth, 16 yards long and $1\frac{1}{4}$ yards broad³⁰.

In 1682, directions were issued that the *arindi* yarn was 'not to be twisted to hard, which makes it cockle'³¹.

Moga silk was prepared from Mogta, *mugā* or *mungā*, a 'wild' silkworm. This variety was manufactured in Bengal (Qasimbazar) and Assam. It was a strong, coarse silk cloth. In June 1624, the Company ordered a sizeable quantity of this cloth.³²

The *śuśi* silken cloth was made in Mālda for export to England³³.

Rasta

Rasta, *Raster*, is a word of doubtful origin. It was a 'silk cloth for turbans, with gold or silver stripes running through it, corresponding to *dastār*, which is, however, usually of fine muslin. In 1681, the Court (of Committee) ordered 6,000 pieces of striped Taffeties or *rastas* of several colours, to be done plain without curling³⁴.

Mr. Edward Reade sold the Company at Hughli 130 pieces of this cloth for Rs. 722.8 in December 1679³⁵.

There was yet another kind of silk termed as '*nihāli*' used for bedding sheets³⁶.

Atlas

According to Draper's Dictionary, *Atlas*, "a silk stuff wrought with threads of gold and silver, and known by this name, was at one time imported from India" into England³⁷. Yusuf Ali calls it as Indian satin. The cloth was known in India as early as the thirteenth century. Fryer wrote in 1673: "They go rich in Apparel, their Turbans of Gold, Damask's Gold Atlas Coats to their heels, silk, Alejah or Cuttanee breeches"³⁸. The cloth has been mentioned in other seventeenth century accounts as well. According to the Diary of William Hedges, there were *tāstas* and '*atlases*' in the warehouses in Bengal in 1683 and 'I gave directions concerning their colours and stripes'³⁹. Ovington found Surat in 1689 'renowned for rich silks, such as Atlases.....and for *zarbafts*'.

Grass Cloth or Herba

The herba cloth was made from a 'hearbe' which they spun like yarn. This yellowish cloth was termed as the 'hearba' of Bengal. The herba thread was most cunningly used to 'stitch their coverlits, pavilions, pillows, carpets, and mantles', and 'make them with flowers and branches, and personages, that it is wonderful to see, and so finely done with cunning workmanship, that it cannot be mended throughout Europe'. Moreover, they made whole pieces of cloth of herba, sometimes mixed and woven with silk. It was however 'much fayrer' when mixed with silk. Linschoten says these 'webs' were known as 'Sarrijin' and were much used and worn in India for men's trousers. This cloth was washed like linen and after washing it looked as 'faire as if it were new'. From this cloth they made *sāris* also.⁴⁰

Grass-cloths are spoken of by foreign travellers as an item of export from Orissa and Bengal. 'They were probably made of rhea or some kindred species'⁴¹. It was also called as 'cloth of herbes' and was a kind of silk⁴². Fitch found in 1585 a great store of this cloth, made from grass, in Orissa, which they called *yerua*⁴³.

Tāftas

Tāfta is from the Persian word '*tāftan*', meaning 'to twist, to spin'. According to Draner's Dictionary, 'it was a name applied to plain woven silks, in more recent times signifying a light thin silk stuff with considerable lustre or gloss'⁴⁴. In the *Āin*, it comes in the list of silks⁴⁵. Richard Temple calls it as a 'smooth watered silk stuff'⁴⁶.

According to Mr. Crooke, originally *tāftas* were all 'plain silk goods, now a generic term for plain silk. The term has also been applied to mixed fabrics of silk and wool'⁴⁷. *Tāftas* were also 'striped stuffs of silk and cotton'. According to another description, *tāfta* cloth was made of two different kinds of thread, as a result of which both the colours were reflected in the cloth⁴⁹. Tavernier found the *tāftas* made from silken cloths⁵⁰. *Tāftas* sent from India to England were gummed there, after which process, they became as glossy as her Italian silks⁵¹.

Tāftas were made in Bengal. Hughli and Qasimbazar were renowned centres for their manufacture⁵². They were also made in Agra and Lahore⁵³. Striped bold *tāftas* were available also in Ajmer in 1616 at reasonable rates during the royal camp there⁵⁴. In Bengal the coloured *tāftas* (blue and green) were also prepared. The usual complaints were about their colours which did not prove fast⁵⁵. The process of their manufacture is also mentioned⁵⁶.

Tāftas supplied from Qasimbazar to the Company were fine, ordinary and unbleached or brown. The factors of the East India Company used to send for the local weavers and those from the neighbourhood whenever they required the cloth for the Company, and advanced them the requisite amount of money. For

the fine *bāftas* the warp was required to consist of 2100 threads 'up and down'; both warp and woof were to be different threads, yet of the best sort of silk in the country called *awwal namūna*, first quality. Each piece or *thān* was to be 20×2 yards, to weigh 50 new rupees, and of the colours previously agreed to. The ordinary *tāftas* were to weigh 40 or 50 rupees *sikka* per *thān*, the warp was to be of good silk and not twisted, and to consist of 1400 threads double or 'up and down'. In the contract the colour of the *tāftas* was also mentioned. The brown *tāftas* were to be 50 rupees *sikka* in weight each piece of 20 yards and the warp of 1400 single threads, to be of good sort of silk, made without *kāñji* or stiffening of rice starch.

The three varieties of silk were brought by the weavers in 3 or 4 months time to the English Factory where every piece brought in by the weavers was weighed and measured and the Chief of the English Factory made entries into the 'Weavers Vast booke' kept by him. The price of each piece was fixed after taking into consideration the gloss, fineness, weight and evenness of each piece⁵⁷.

There used to be *tāfta* camlets also⁵⁸.

The English invested considerable amount of money in Qasimbazar every year in raw silk, *tāftas* and other yarn⁵⁹. In 1658, they invested Rs. 50,000 in *tāftas* alone⁶⁰.

Every year they sent £4,000 to Qasimbazar to be invested in raw silk, *tāftas* and cotton yarn⁶¹.

Prior to 1658, the Bengal silk used to be very coarse and stiff. The English however began to take interest in improving the quality. This resulted in the production of better goods there⁶². By 1665, the quality of the *tāftas* manufactured there was much improved⁶³.

The Company exported quantities of *tāftas* from Bengal to England where they sold the cloth to customers or gave it in the form of presents to important persons⁶⁴.

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There was Portugese trade in *tāftas* also⁶⁵.

In March 1659, long *tāftas* were costing from Rs. 4.50 to Rs. 4.75 a piece in Qasimbazar and the short ones at Rs. 17 to Rs. 18 per score of pieces. Silk, ready wound, cost Rs. 3.75 per seer⁶⁶.

In the eighties of the seventeenth century, the Bengal factors of the East India Company got prepared from an English weaver black and blue, yellow and green *tāftas*, which were good pieces of '*Purnella* and other sorts of silkes'. The English weaver did not make a whole piece of silk, but left 'the evident testimony behind him that excellent good Silkes, and consequently as great quantities as can be desired, may be provided and sent home from this country: as well as of raw Silkes to what number of bales the Hon. Company shall think fit to order⁶⁷'.

In a letter of December 24, 1675, the Court of Committees sent detailed instructions regarding the quality of *tāftas* to be sent to England from Hughli. After having viewed the samples of their cloth sent from Qasimbazar to them, they were satisfied with the progress made in dyeing them black and green, although the green was not yet 'perfect grass green'. The pink colour was good, but not 'Isabelle' (the yellow of soiled calico). As the skein of black silk sent by them was more glossy, the Committee advised the Hughli factors to make note of this defect and at the same time to improve their 'glossing'. They were asked to be careful in sorting the silk so that there were no marks of lines or stripes in the piece as they found 'too much in those sent home'. The factors had sent from India samples of *tāfta* '*Wale*' (striped *bāftas*). 'We could have something also done in *Sarcenetts* (fine, thin woven silk) and *Lusters* (alias *Lusteringes*—a glossy silk fabric)'. The Committee brought to the notice of the factors the complaints of the English buyers that the *tāftas* sent were not of the full desired length and width, i.e. 10 × 1 yards. Those pieces which fell short of full length and width were to be carefully mentioned in invoices so that they 'may know in which Case or Chest they are put.' The Directors ordered the factors to be very careful in putting 'Numbers and Lengths' of all the pieces to avoid the trouble to customers and also loss of time. Moreover, they had to undergo much inconvenience in finding a few chests of *tāftas* of different prices. In order to avoid this trouble, the Bengal factors were advised to see that in future *tāftas* of one sort were placed in one chest only⁶⁸.

Qasimbazar silks were yellow like the *conde* silk of Persia and Sicily. The Qasimbazar weavers made them white with a lye which was prepared from the ashes of a tree, called Adam's fig. The Dutch carried this silk by the canal which goes from Qasimbazar to the Ganges, about 15 leagues⁶⁹. The English East India Company appreciated the importance of Qasimbazar as the centre of silk production and tried to provide facilities to the weavers there. For this purpose they invested money for making 'lodging' arrangements for them. In November 1659, the English factor, Ken, wrote from there to the Company in London recommending the provision of some such facilities for the silk winders and weavers and 'warehousemen', 'if you intend to trade in these commodities⁷⁰. The Company was always eager to invest money in the Bengal silks⁷¹.

The Bengal silks were exported to other places also⁷². The Dutch took these silks to Japan and to Holland⁷³. From Bengal they were also brought to

Ahmadabad and Surat where they were woven into fabrics⁷⁴. In Surat they made from them carpets of three sorts—only of silk, of silk and gold, of gold and silver. In Ahmadabad, ‘*patolas*’ of silk were made for export to the countries of South-East-Asia⁷⁵. From silken cloth were also made *satins* with bands of gold and silver, or with bands of various colours⁷⁶.

Murshidabad in Bengal was another centre for the production of raw silk⁷⁷.

In Patna there was produced a raw silk termed as ‘Serbandy’.⁷⁸

They made a sort of silk from a silk worm in Assam. The worm was on the tree for the whole year. The stuff prepared from this was brilliant, though not enduring⁷⁹.

‘*Adhpatta*’ meant probably ‘half-breadth’ and was made of silk in Sind⁸⁰. It was also termed as ‘lackee’. The ‘meame’ silken cloth was also manufactured in Sind for export to Persia^{80a}.

Alācha

Alācha, used in the English Factory records as ‘*aliya*’, was a Turki word. Its Hindi rendering was ‘*ilācha*’. It was a silk cloth with a wavy pattern running breadthwise⁸¹. *Alācha* is described as a ‘silk cloth 5 yards long which has a sort of wavy line pattern running in the length on either side’⁸². In the Diary of William Hedges it is described as a kind of silk stuff corded, or striped with gold or silver⁸³. In the *Āin* also it is referred to as *tarahdār* or corded⁸⁴.

According to Platt’s *Hindustani Dictionary*, it was ‘a kind of cloth woven of silk and thread so as to present the appearance of cardamoms’ (*ilāchi*)⁸⁵.

Bernier describes this cloth as ‘silken stuffs woven with gold and silver’.⁸⁶

Manucci refers to ‘*Alachak*’ silk cloth⁸⁷.

Mr. Yusuf Ali accepts the derivation from *Alcha* or *Alācha*, and thinks that it was probably introduced by the Mughals, and had historical associations with Agra where alone it was manufactured⁸⁸. This, however, is not true, as the cloth was made at other places as well.

Francis, in his ‘Monograph on Cotton Manufactures in the Punjab’, says: “This fabric differs from the *doriya* in having a substantial texture, whereas the *doriya* is generally flimsy. The colours are in general red, or bluish red, with white stripes”⁸⁹.

As late as in 1712 there was this advertisement in the London ‘*Spectator*’: “An Allejah petticoat striped with green and gold and white”⁹⁰

The *alācha* cloth seems to be very popular in England in the seventeenth century. Writing from Patna on August 6, 1620, the English factor Robert Hughes informed the President and Council at Surat that he had purchased 16 scores of pieces of 'layches' at Rs. 10, 12 and 16 per score. They were $5\frac{1}{4}$ yards in length and about $\frac{3}{4}$ yard in width. They were 'fitt lengths for petticotes, cheape, and doubtless will sell in England to good profit'. They were made five *kos* away from Patna in infinite quantities and were generally purchased by the Indian merchants for export to Persia⁹¹.

Richard Cocks from Japan wrote to Richard Wickham on December 15, 1614: "I also gave him (Simon) a Surat coat of allejas Amad (avad)⁹²" (Ahmadabad).

In February 1618, 20 scores of pieces of *aleju* or *alācha* cloth were shipped to the countries of south-east-Asia on Captain Bonner's Fleet. They cost 1840 *mahmūdis*.⁹³ In the same ship were also 79 scores of pieces costing 7,368 *mahmūdis* and meant for the same destination⁹⁴.

The consignment from Cambay to Bantam in April 1619 included 'allejayes cotton narrow'⁹⁵.

Alācha cloth was provided at Cambay for England at the end of 1621 also⁹⁶. There was continuous and considerable demand for this cloth in England as is evident from the various letters in the records of the Company⁹⁷.

Brocade was a silk stuff variegated with gold and silver or having raised designs of flowers, foliage and ornaments. The term was also applied to other stuffs wrought and enriched in like manner⁹⁸. The name was derived from the broca or reel carrying the silk or metal threads used in embroidery⁹⁹. '*Kulhas*' were made from green brocade¹⁰⁰. The Portugese also had a trade in the brocades and exported it from India¹⁰¹. There is a reference in the Jaipur Newsletters (Persian) to brocade of which two *thāns* were given by Aurangzeb to Abul Khair, son of Shāista Khān, on November 29, 1701¹⁰².

Brocatel was a coarse form of brocade made of hemp and silk, a kind of damask, figured and much used in tapestry and hangings.' '*Tela*' meant 'any cloth'; also gold and silver lace (*tila*)¹⁰³. This cloth was one of the chief articles imported by the Portugese from Southern India¹⁰⁴.

Grogram was a stuff of silk and *mohair*¹⁰⁵.

Kapoornoor or *Kapoordhūr* was another variety of silk cloth mentioned in the *Āin* and by the contemporary Hindi poets¹⁰⁶. According to Abul Fazl, the cloth was woven in Tibet and was renamed by Akbar as '*kapoornoor*'¹⁰⁷.

Pāmri was also a sort of silk cloth¹⁰⁸. Ovington calls it a silk scarf¹⁰⁹. *Pāmri* was also used as a turban. It is written in one place : 'He covered my head with his *Pambre*'¹¹⁰. *Pāmri* was also woollen cloth¹¹¹.

Paṭolās were also silken stuffs, very soft, decorated all over with flowers of various hues¹¹². Barbosa speaks of 'coloured cloths and silks which the Indians call *pāṭolās*, and again the Cambay silk stuffs which they call *pāṭolās*'¹¹³. The word *pāṭolā* was derived from the Kanarese *pāṭṭuda*, 'a silk cloth'¹¹⁴. Terry calls them 'pintadoes', and also extols the art of displaying in stitching together 'fresh coloured taffets and pintadoes, and taffeta and satin, with cotton wool between, to make quilts'¹¹⁵.

Paṭolās were manufactured in Gujarat and on the Coromandel Coast¹¹⁶. In Gujarat, Cambay and Ahmadabad were the main manufacturing centres for this cloth. Those made at Ahmadabad cost from Rs. 8 a piece to Rs. 40 a piece¹¹⁷.

The Dutch carried on a flourishing trade in *paṭolās* and regarded this as a profitable investment. They exported *paṭolās* from Ahmadabad to Borneo, Java, Sumatra and other neighbouring places¹¹⁸. In January 1640, all the silk *pāṭolā* weavers at Cambay were employed by the Dutch¹¹⁹. The English also traded in *pāṭolās*¹²⁰. The English East India Company exported this cloth from India to Bantam¹²¹, Sumatra¹²², Java¹²³ and Malaya¹²⁴. In Malaya the *pāṭolās* were called as *Chinda Sūtra* (i.e. silk Malayan *Sūtra*) chintz¹²⁵.

The *paṭolās* were used also as waistcloths¹²⁶.

Paw was a silken cloth with fringe on the end, 'with little quarls of checks through'. It was made in Bengal and on the Coromandal Coast and was much vendible in Bantam¹²⁷.

Satins from India were exported to England. There were also satin 'tabenees'¹²⁸.

Sahibi silken cloth was manufactured in Ahmadabad and exported to Achin¹²⁹.

Tzinde was a silken cloth with red stripes and was in great demand in the East Indies where it was carried from India by the English and Dutch merchants. Another name for this was *tzidle*. This cloth was vendible in Bantam, Amboyna and Celebes¹³¹.

It is not certain whether the term *tzinde* was derived from Sind or if the cloth was manufactured there.

Tafsil was a 'striped stuff with silk and cotton', costing from Rs. 7 to Rs. 12

per piece¹³². It was also termed as *tafsil* silk. *Tafsil* silk and thread were sent from Cambay to Bantam¹³³. Both broad and narrow *tafsils* were manufactured by the Surat weavers also¹³⁴. The cloth was exported by the Company to England where it was much liked by the customers^{134a}. It is referred to in the *Ain* also as stuff from Mecca¹³⁵. The cloth has also been referred to by Downton¹³⁶. It was as well supplied in Kasiari in Midnapure district¹³⁷.

Nihāli was a silken cloth for bedding made at Malda¹³⁸.

Organzine was silk thread for the warp¹³⁹.

Yet another variety of silken cloth was termed as 'culga' or 'culgi'. It was an item of export for England in the 17th century¹⁴⁰. One thousand pieces or *thāns* of this printed '3 or 4 sorts', 14 × 1 yards in size, were exported to England in 1678¹⁴¹.

Sarsenet was a silken cloth produced in Bengal in the 17th century. The cloth was in great demand in England at that time. It was exported to that country in 1684¹⁴² and in 1688¹⁴³. Two thousand pieces or *thans* of sarcenet cloth were sent to England in 1680. In 1688, white sarcenet was demanded by the East India Company¹⁴⁴.

Tabby was a sort of silk tāfia, so called from having been originally manufactured in a quarter of Baghdad called *al-'attabiya*¹⁴⁵. This quarter derived its name from a Prince of the 'Omairiyad family called 'Attab¹⁴⁶. This cloth was imitated by other countries. It was exported from India to England by the East India Company. Once the English presented this cloth to the king of Bantam.

The silken stuffs mentioned in the *Ain* are : velvets of many varieties (like *Kāshi*, *Yezdi*, *Meshedi*, *Herati*, *Lahori* and *Gujarati*), *keteech poorby*, *tejah baaf*, *mutebeq*, *sherwani*, *meekeh*, *kimkhab*, *tewar*, *khowry*, *mushajjar* (from Europe and Yezd), European and Persian satins, *khora*, *sihrang*, *quttany*, European linen, *Daryai*, *Suty poorby*, *qaba band*, *tatband poorby*, *leh*, *missary*, *saar*, *tuffir*, plain satin, *alacha*, *tafsil* and *kapoordhoor*¹⁴⁷.

Various kinds of silks mentioned in the Court Minutes of the East India Company are: 'adrasse' (from Arrash in Georgia¹⁴⁸), *legee* (from Lehijan¹⁴⁹), *messina*¹⁵⁰, *orsoy*¹⁵¹ and 'sette de maza¹⁵²'. There was considerable trade in the Persian silk by the East India Company¹⁵³. Even China silk was imported into India by the Company as in March 1656 a ship laden with this silk arrived in Surat from Ceylon¹⁵⁴.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

¹ *The Diaries of Streynsham Master*, II, p. 299 Notes.

² *Manucci*, II, p. 418; *Streynsham Master*, II, p. 28.

³ *The English Factories in India, 1624-29*, p. 25.

⁴ *Manucci*, II, p. 186.

- ⁵ *Diaries of Streynsham Master*, II, p. 28.
- ⁶ *Court Minutes*, 1644-49, pp. 99; 248; 360.
- ⁷ *The English Factories in India*, 1618-21, p. 56.
- ⁸ *Hobson-Jobson*, 2nd edition, 1968, p. 945.
- ⁹ *Āin*, Text, p. 106.
- ¹⁰ *Streynsham Master*, II, p. 299N.
- ¹¹ *The English Factories in India*, 1618-21, pp. 112; 116.
- ¹² *Ibid.*, p. 197.
- ¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 198.
- ¹⁴ *The Diaries of Streynsham Master*, I, p. 137.
- ¹⁵ *The English Factories in India*, 1618-21, p. 198.
- ¹⁶ *Ibid.*
- ¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 197.
- ¹⁸ *Diaries of Streynsham Master*, II, p. 28.
- ¹⁹ *Tavernier*, II, p. 2.
- ²⁰ *The Diaries of Streynsham Master*, II, pp. 9-11.
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- ²² *Ibid.*, p. 311.
- ²³ *Ibid.*
- ²⁴ *Ibid.*, II, p. 299 N.
- ²⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 299-300.
- ²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 312.
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- ²⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 300.
- ²⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 348.
- ³⁰ *Ibid.*
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- ³⁵ *Ibid.*
- ³⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 401.
- ³⁷ *Hobson-Jobson*, 2nd ed., 1968, p. 39.
- ³⁸ *Fryer*, p. 96.
- ³⁹ *Diary of William Hedges*, I, p. 85.
- ⁴⁰ *Linschoten*, I, pp. 95-96.
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- ⁴² *Ibid.*
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- ⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 708.
- ⁴⁵ *Āin*, Text, p. 106.
- ⁴⁶ *Diaries of Streynsham Master*, II, p. 260 N.
- ⁴⁷ *Manrique*, I, p. 30 Notes.
- ⁴⁸ *Court Minutes*, 1640-43, p. 274.
- ⁴⁹ *Bihari Ratnakar* (Hindi), Notes, p. 35.
- ⁵⁰ *Tavernier*, II, p. 3.
- ⁵¹ *Court Minutes*, 1664-67, p. 275.
- ⁵² *The English Factories*, 1661-64, pp. 62-63.
- ⁵³ *Ibid.*, 1668-69, p. 167.
- ⁵⁴ *The Journal of Thomas Roe*, p. 100.
- ⁵⁵ *The English Factories*, 1664-67, p. 402.
- ⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 1668-69, pp. 46; 62; 158; 290-291.
- ⁵⁷ *The Diaries of Streynsham Master*, II, pp. 9-10.

- ⁵⁸ *Court Minutes*, 1664-67, p. 208.
- ⁵⁹ *The English Factories*, 1664-67, p. 275.
- ⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 1655-60, p. 275.
- ⁶¹ *Ibid.*, p. 296.
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- ⁶³ *The English Factories in India*, 1665-67, p. 139.
- ⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 1655-60, p. 188; *Court Minutes*, 1640-43, p. 274; *Ibid.*, 1664-67, pp. 26; 77; 144, 108, 179, 293; 75; 191; 270
- ⁶⁵ *Manrique*, I, p. 29.
- ⁶⁶ *The English Factories in India*, 1655-60, p. 275 Notes.
- ⁶⁷ *The Diaries of Streysham Master*. I, p. 86.
- ⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, I, pp. 311-313.
- ⁶⁹ *Tavernier*, II, p. 4, 293.
- ⁷⁰ *The English Factories*, 1655-60, p. 296.
- ⁷¹ *Ibid.*, p. 46; *Ibid.*, 1668-69, 0. 65.
- ⁷² *Ibid.*, p. 188.
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- ⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 3.
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- ⁷⁷ *John Marshall in India* (May 1671), p. 114.
- ⁷⁸ *The English Factories in India*, 1618-21, p. 197.
- ⁷⁹ *Travernier*, II, p. 281.
- ⁸⁰ *The English Factories*, 1646-50, p. 29.
- ^{80a} *Ibid.*, pp. 29; 152.
- ⁸¹ *The Diaries of Streysham Master*, II, p. 272 Notes.
- ⁸² *Baden-Powell* : Punjab Handbook, p. 66.
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- ⁸⁶ *Bernier* (Constable), pp. 120-121.
- ⁸⁷ *Manucci*, *Storia*, II, p. 424.
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- ⁹⁰ *Hobson-Jobson*, p. 13.
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- ⁹² *Letters Received*, 1613-15, p. 228.
- ⁹³ *The English Factories in India*, 1618-21, p. 63.
- ⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 64.
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- ⁹⁸ *Manrique*, I, pp. 29; 30. Notes.
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- ¹¹⁰ *Letters Received*, IV, p. 344.
- ¹¹¹ *Ibid.*, VI, 1617, p. 185.
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- ¹¹⁵ Terry : *A Voyage to East India*, (1777), p. 127.
- ¹¹⁶ *Letters Received*, II, p. 166; *Ibid.*, IV, p. 293.
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- ¹¹⁸ *Tavernier*, II, p. 3.
- ¹¹⁹ *The English Factories*, 1637-41, p. 225.
- ¹²⁰ *Ibid.*, 1618-21, pp. 63, 64, 94.
- ¹²¹ *Ibid.*, p. 93.
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- ¹³¹ *Ibid.*, p. 71.
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- ¹³³ *Ibid.*, 1618-21, pp. 93; 292.
- ¹³⁴ *Ibid.*, 1655-60, p. 57.
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- ¹³⁵ *Ain*, I, p. 94
- ¹³⁶ *Purchas*, I, p. 504.
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- ¹³⁸ *The Diaries of Streynsham Master*, I, p. 401.
- ¹³⁹ *Ibid.*, II, p. 12.
- ¹⁴⁰ *Records of Fort St. George: Despatches from England*, 16-6- ; letter dated 16th April, 1677.
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- ¹⁵¹ *Ibid.*, p. 143.
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- ¹⁵³ *Ibid.*, 1646-50, pp. 4; 179; 180; 187; 212; 223; 241 etc.
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