

Wld. Hist. 9 **Ch. 19 sec. 1: Europe Discovers the Riches of India** NAME: _____

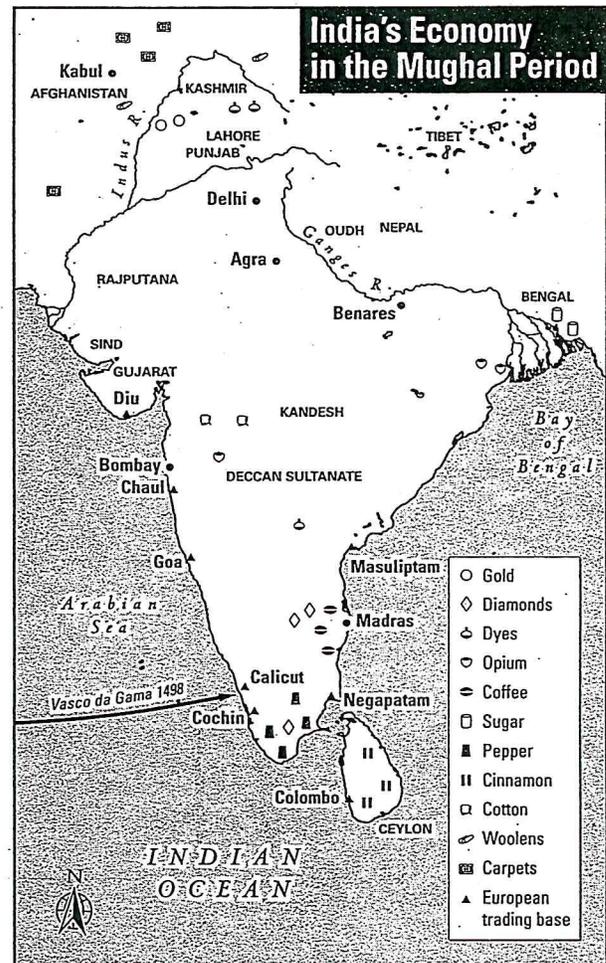
After reading the paragraphs below and studying the map, answer the questions that follow. You may record your answers on this sheet.

In 1498 the Portuguese explorer Vasco da Gama was the first European to reach India by sea. In contrast to most outsiders reaching India, he was interested only in the country's natural resources, not in conquering territory. Da Gama landed at Calicut, the richest of several Indian port cities. He was totally unprepared, however, to encounter shops and warehouses stocked with such items as cotton textiles and diamonds. Europeans had underrated India's sophistication. Da Gama had brought as gifts to his Indian hosts only striped cloths, hats, strips of coral, sugar, oil, and honey. These items had impressed the African kings he had met but now were considered an insult to the lord of Calicut. The gifts were refused. Da Gama was told that his presents should have been made of gold.

The failure of the Portuguese to offer the proper respect angered the Mughals, and so da Gama returned home only with stories of what he'd seen—and some spices he had bought himself. The spices, however, were sold in Europe at 27 times their cost, and the scramble for Indian products was under way. Pepper became the most desired of India's spices. Indian dyes were sought everywhere. Most popular of all were textiles—especially rugs—as weaving had been done in India for centuries.

During the 1500s Portuguese traders controlled sea routes to India and seized several trading forts along the Indian Ocean and Bay of Bengal. However, the Portuguese traders eventually lost their Indian strongholds to the Dutch, who took over trading posts in Colombo in 1641, Negapatam in 1658, and Cochin in 1663. Soon thereafter French and English traders took over Dutch trading claims. Mughal

rulers were still relatively strong during these years, and they never permitted Europeans to capture anything more than an economic toehold on the subcontinent. That power ended when Aurangzeb's death broke up the Mughals' central state.



1. Who was the first European explorer to reach India by sea?
2. What gift was the lord of Calicut expecting from the European visitors?
3. What was the most desired Indian spice? Where in India did it come from?
4. On which coast of India were most of the European trading posts located?
5. What is the sole major product of Ceylon [Sri Lanka]?