

**Factories and Ports in India: A Study of the
English Settlement pattern on the Coromandel
Coast 1630-1724**

A Thesis Submitted to the
University of Hyderabad
for the Degree of
Doctor of Philosophy
in
History

BY

C. Srinivasa Reddy

Department of History
School of Social Sciences
University of Hyderabad
Hyderabad 500 046

1997

**to
the cyclone victims
of andhra pradesh, 1996**

Declaration

I hereby declare that the work embodied in this thesis entitled *Factories and Ports in India: A Study of the English Settlement Pattern on the Coromandel Coast 1630-1724* carried out by me under the supervision of Dr. R. L. Hangloo, Reader, Department of History, School of Social Sciences, University of Hyderabad, is original and this has not been submitted for any other degree either in part or in full to any other University or this University.

Hyderabad
Date:



(C. Srinivasa Reddy)


Certificate

Dr. R. L. Hangloo
Reader in History
Department of History
School of Social Sciences
University of Hyderabad
Hyderabad.

Date: 30-8-97

This is to certify that the thesis entitled *Factories and Ports in India: A Study of the English Settlement Pattern on the Coromandel Coast 1630-1724*, submitted by C.Srinivasa Reddy, in total fulfillment for the award of the degree of *Doctor of Philosophy in History*, is original and the work has been carried out under my supervision. The thesis or parts thereof has not been submitted for any other degree in this University or any other University.


Head of the Department
University of Hyderabad
Hyderabad.
30/8/97
HEAD
Department of History
University of Hyderabad
Hyderabad-500 045
TR
Dean of Social Sciences
University of Hyderabad
16 SEP 1997


Supervisor
(Dr. R. L. Hangloo)

Acknowledgments

A full seven years was spent in writing this thesis and has accumulated debt to individuals and institutions without whose help this work would not have been possible. I am grateful to my supervisor, Dr. R.L. Hangloo for his critical appraisal of the work. He has painstakingly gone through the drafts and helped me to complete this work so well.

I would not have pursued my study but for the encouragement of Prof. I.P. Gupta, my earlier supervisor who left the department.

My sincere thanks are due to the Head of the Department, Prof. V. Ramakrishna, whose ideas enriched me in understanding the early phase of colonialism.

DR. Atlury Murali, for introducing me to the question of transition in the early modern period of Indian history and for providing me with rare books.

To Dr. K.H.S.S. Seshan for making me sensitive to the region called Rayalaseema. I hope, this work has adequately brought out the early integration of Rayalaseema into the coastal politics of the seventeenth century.

I am also thankful to the Dean, School of Social Sciences, Prof. T.R. Sharma for his constant help.

I must single out with special mention, my heartfelt gratitude to

Prof. K.S. Mathew for drawing me into the world of Coromandel coast and providing me an opportunity to learn Dutch language at Pondicherry University. Unfortunately, I could not use most of the Dutch sources due to my inadequate knowledge of the language.

To my teachers at Jawaharlal Nehru University, Prof. Harbans Mukhia, Prof. Muzzafar Alam, Dr. K.K. Trivedi, and Prof. Champakalakshmi for their constant encouragement and guidance.

To Professors, Richard Barnett of the University of Virginia, and Andre Wink of the University of Wisconsin, Madison, for their comments on the early drafts of my synopsis.

At the fag end of the thesis, I had the opportunity to meet a person whose influence on this work is ubiquitous. Prof. Sanjay Subrahmanyam was a pleasure to discuss with on matters concerning with trade and regional economy.

To Dr. Swarnalatha for drawing the attention to the importance weaving economy.

I personally thank the staff of Andhra Pradesh State Archives, **Hyderabad and Tamil Nadu** State Archives, Madras, Connemera Library,

Madras, Oriental Manuscripts Library, Hyderabad and Madras, Indira Gandhi Memorial Library, University of Hyderabad, Osmania university, the Nehru Memorial Museum Library, Central Secretariat Library, Ratan Tata Library, University of Delhi, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi, for helping me to locate the necessary source material for this study.

I gratefully acknowledge to the Indian Council of Historical Research (ICHR) for granting me financial assistance for a period of three (1991-1994) years which allowed me to complete my work.

I am grateful to the former Vice-Chancellor, Bh. Krishnamurthy for giving a short term fellowship to learn the Dutch language.

I am deeply conscious of my indebtedness to my office, *The Guardian* and in particular, my Editors, Mr. C. Narender Reddy and Mr. P.R. Reddi for having understood the importance of academic research even in a newspaper office. T. Bhaskar Reddy and G. Murthy, who provided me the necessary inputs and computer facilities for the completion of this thesis.

My special thanks to my uncle, Mr. S. Veerarayana Reddy for his constant encouragement when most other family members had written me off.

Several of my friends pitched in to make my load lighter. In particular, I would like to specially mention the 'shelter gang' of the University of Hyderabad. My friends, Prasad Reddy, N.K. Meera, Rajgopal, Mustapha, C.Srinivas, Dr. Anand, Capt. Ramesh and Bhatti for keeping me in good humour in times of crisis.

Murali Mohan Reddy and Prasad made computer so easy for me.

Lastly, nothing will suffice to express my gratitude to the perseverance of my parents who were a constant source of inspiration.

Abbreviations

Bruce Annals	Annals of the English East India Company
CSP	Calendar of State Papers, Colonial Series
CSSH	Comparative Studies in society and History
EHR	Economic History Review
EPW	Economic and Political Weekly
IESHR	Indian Economic and Social History Review
Isl. Cul	Islamic Culture
IHR	Indian Historical Review
JAS	Journal of Asian Studies
JIH	Journal of Indian History
JEH	Journal of Economic History
JESHO	Journal of Economic and social History of the Orient
Kaifiyat	Kaifiyat: Village Records collected by Col. Colin Mackenzie
MAS	Modern Asian Studies
P&P	Past and Present
RFSG	Records of Fort St. George
SA	South Asia
SAS	Samagra Andhra Sahityamu
SS	Social Scientist
Vestiges.	Vestiges of Old Madras
UHAI	Urban History Association of India

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INTRODUCTION

Introduction

State of Historiography

Historiography on Indian maritime trade in the early modern period has undergone a significant change in the last three decades or so. Contributions came from distinguished historians who worked both at micro and macro level on the four important trading zones of India namely, Gujarat, Malabar, Coromandel and Bengal. In spite of regional variations between these trading zones in early modern period, the underlying question whether India was able develop on the capitalist lines on the eve of British colonialism has been the main field of enquiry for historians to study various facets of Indian commercial history. A rigorous economic analysis was therefore called for in all facets of early modern economic history be it agrarian structure and surplus extraction, non-agricultural production, the development of markets, inland and overland networks of trade, and finally the overseas commerce itself.

It is now recognised that trade, both overland and overseas was dictated by three fundamental and mutually dependent processes of commercialisation, monetisation and urbanisation. These three interrelated processes are also identified as the main harbingers of change or more especially to understand the transition from pre- capitalist socio economic formation to that of capitalist one. Among others, Irfan Habib opened up a debate on nature of 'Indian capitalist development' before the actual integration of India into Europe based capitalism prior to the establishment of British dominion. Irfan Habib's 'Potentialities of

Capitalist Development in Mughal India' has argued that in spite of high rate of urbanisation and monetisation, India failed to develop on capitalist lines independent of colonial intervention of the eighteenth century. According to him, the intense exploitation of peasantry by the state and by numerous economic intermediaries such as *jagirdars* and *Zamindars* in Mughal India had actually hindered the capitalist accumulation of money in spite of high degree of money and market production.¹ In fact he says, that "the subversion of peasant agriculture did not directly lead to a semi-capitalist forms of agriculture" as it happened in Europe. He then introduces the inevitability of crisis of "economic crisis transformed itself into a political crisis, marked by agrarian uprisings and with it weakened the economic and social structure that it sustained".² His argument rests on the notion that India failed to accumulate capital largely due to the nature of Mughal state formation, while the money generated by trade, be it internal or external, failed to intensify the commodity production on capitalist lines because most of it was appropriated by the "reckless" ruling intermediaries and the state without any corresponding economic benefits to the rural and manufacturing sectors. In a way then, 'Potentialities' became a major conceptual base particularly for economic historians concerned with non-agrarian production and overseas trade in the early modern period. Irfan Habib's analysis of Mughal India influenced a host of writings at regional level, especially on

1. Irfan Habib, 'Potentialities of Capitalist Development in Mughal India', *Journal of Economic History (JH)*, XXIX,1, 1969.

2. *Ibid.*, p.50.

Gujarat and Bengal, where the Mughal Empire reached its high point in the seventeenth century. In fact one can see a remarkable similarity of attempting to find nascent capitalist forms through external trade in different regions which had access to coastline and overseas markets. Thus Gujarat, Bengal and Coromandel were/are identified as main testing grounds for capitalistic growth but concluded that these regions failed to develop on capitalist lines correspondingly in spite of high density of commodity production for export markets. On the other hand, it has been postulated, that these trading regions seemed to have given way to English East India company trade and its subsequent domination after the fall of Mughal empire in the eighteenth century. This similarity is striking in spite concrete regional differences between say Coromandel and Bengal. Further it is assumed that the period between 1700-1820 saw the steady subjugation of the indigenous manufacture and it was left to the English East India company to integrate India into a capitalist system. Thus, the 'origins of capitalism in India' and the failure of it to develop on modern lines has been the single most important concept of analysis for historians of early modern India. Further, studies on capitalist growth, it is supposed, would lead to a better understanding of colonial intervention which was grounded, at least in initial stage, in subjugating the Indian merchant in the main trading regions of India. While the question of capitalist growth is as important as the historiography itself, one then needs to take stock of the present research in the field so as to identify various forms and shapes the studies on Indian mercantile history have expounded by historians.

Having identified the basic conceptual base for the study of economic history with a special emphasis on non-agrarian production and external trade; such as commodities and markets, rural and urban credit, role of merchants and brokers, indigenous and European trade in India, all of which being necessary inputs for capitalist development, it is necessary then, to elaborate on the nature of the existing historiographical trends and their influence over the prevailing and current notions on the actual nature of India's pre-colonial economy and society. This will clarify one hopes, to delineate 'regions', which is our concern here, from the 'dominant Historiography,' on early modern period. Further more, it is notionally found that majority of historians concerned with trade directly borrowed concepts from the dominant historiography on pre-colonial India not only at the empirical level but relied heavily at a theoretical level as well.³ Here dominant historiography refers to a particular group of historians whose writings on Mughal India influenced a host of scholars irrespective

3.We are particularly referring to the influential writings of Iran Habib, Satish Chandra, M. Athar Ali, Shireen Moosvi and N.M.Siddiqi. These historians are an important group not only because of their highly critical and productive writings on Mughal India, but also formed as a cohesive group with a definite methodological coherence given to the Mughal studies. The grid 'formulae' given to the understanding of the Mughal system, its decline and the subsequent domination of the English East India company was borrowed willy-nilly by the trade historians as well. Thus the Mughal 'formulae' remains, for any understanding of trade system, the main 'theoretical' base for any understanding the pre-colonial socio-economic formation and in identifying the early subjugation of Indian economy by the English East India company in the eighteenth century. See, Irfan Habib, *The Agrarian System of Mughal Empire, 1556-2707*. Bombay 1963, M.Athar Ali, *The Mughal Nobility Under Aurangzeb*, Bombay, 1966., Satish Chandra, *Parties and Politics at the Mughal court, 1707-1740*, Bombay, 1959 and Noman Ahmed Siddiqi, *Land Revenue Administration under the Mughals, 1700-1750*, New Delhi, 1970, Shireen Moosvi's highly sophisticated economic study based on the persian sources, *The Economy of the Mughal Empire, c.1590*, New Delhi, 1989.

of the disciplines they attempted to explain on early modern period of Indian history⁴

Though the primary focus of the works of Irfan Habib, Satish Chandra and Athar Ali has been on the agrarian and political history such as the structure of the state, revenue and surplus extraction, the role of numerous categories of political and economic intermediaries, ranging from *jagirdars*, *Zamindars* and other tributary chieftains across the empire, and finally the fall of the Mughal empire, their writings nevertheless provided the basic theoretical base for the history of external commerce as well. But it must be remembered that the relationship between the Mughal history and the history of external commerce is more implicit rather than being explicit.

Mughal studies pertaining to trade rests on two fundamental assumptions. That the Mughal empire by nature was a landlubber and showed least inclination for sea and its activities but provided the much needed infrastructural facilities such as peace and political security, development of transport facilities etc., all augmented the growth of trade in the seventeenth century. Being primarily dependent on the agrarian surplus and hence indifferent towards mercantile operations, port economies were left in the hands of local administration thus leaving the merchant to the arbitrary fiscal exaction by local officialdom. Thus, merchants of the Mughal empire, the central figure in maritime commerce is caught in a dichotomy of the Mughal fiscal system and the apathy of the

⁴See, Peter Hardy, 'Symposium, Decline of the Mughal Empire, Commentary and Critique', *Journal of Asian Studies*, (JAS), Vol XXXV, No. 2, February 1976, pp.257-262.

state towards commerce. On the one hand, we see a provision for infrastructure which bettered the prospects of Indian merchant while on the other hand, he was at the mercy of local administration which was rapacious and arbitrary which seemed to have had official sanction as well. In such a schema of analysis, the Indian merchant had to constantly negotiate for space between Mughal fiscal regime in the hinterland and the European presence on the sea front.

Imperial officialdom intervened in the ports and with merchants only as adjudicators of disputes and were merely seen as agents to create a market economy or to centralize the taxation system rather than "controlling the fiscal administration."⁵ One then fails to understand why the Mughal state in spite of its centralized character failed to balance its agrarian surplus and commodity production with that of external commerce and merely depended on 'nebulous' alliances its prebendaries forged with the mercantile elements in Gujarat or in Bengal (mostly European)?⁶

Turning into the actual historiography on external commerce with the above mentioned portrayal of Indian merchant, it is necessary to focus therefore, on how studies on Indian maritime trade seemed have originated as a by product of above mentioned schema. In order to illustrate the point we will take only random samples of how some of the most influential trade historians have

⁵ The Mughal Fiscal System in Surat and the English East India Company', *Modern Asian Studies*, (MAS)27,4, 1993 pp. 711-718. and K.N.Chaudhuri, *Trade and Civilisation in the Indian Ocean: An Economic History from Rise of Islam to 1750*, Cambridge, 1985 p. 16

⁶ Hasan, Farhat, Conflict and Cooperation in Anglo-Mughal Relations During the Reign of Aurangzeb', *Journal of Economic and Social History of the orient*, (JESHO), Vol xxxiv, pp. 351-360.

actually traced the maritime commerce in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Further it will also try to evaluate the works of "Indian Ocean" historians and looks at them critically from a regional perspective. Lastly, the contributions of the so called "revisionist approach" will be taken as an useful model for reconstructing maritime commerce in the second half of the seventeenth century.

Maritime trade and its important component, merchant, has come a long way from a 'Peddler' or that who traded in bulk goods to that of rich and powerful merchants, independent ship owners who traversed from say, the port of Masulipatnam to Bandar Abbas to south east Asia in a single voyage. The word "merchant" in pre-colonial context did not refer to one homogenous class or caste nor did they come from a single community, say komaties and Chetties on the Coromandel coast, banias and Khattris on the west coast. Commerce was by no means a monopoly of any single community in the pre-colonial context. On one extreme, we have great merchant princes such as Vriji Vora and Mir Jumla, members of royalty, professional class of merchants who participated in the oceanic trade. A peddler too was an important component of this high seas commerce who participated in trade for meagre profits and income. On the other extreme were small and medium peasants and itinerant merchants such as *banjaras* who brought bulk goods and raw material from the frontier to distant ports for export who can be termed as seasonal merchants.⁷ Then there were the

⁷ Inscriptions of *Chidipirala and jammulmadugu Kaifiyat*, A.P. State Archives, Hyderabad. 1964, cited in Srinivasulu, *Gandikota Charitra Mariyu Sanskruti*, Proddutur, 1994. For the activities of Banjaras in trade in south India,

great continental communities such as Persians and Armenians who dominated the Indian ocean. Persians, in particular were instrumental in forging close ties with the internal political structures of south India which further enhanced their trading prospects in spite of severe competition from European companies. In fact this was the only group of merchants that the European companies dreaded most in the Indian ocean. Though cannot be categorised as merchants per se, regional elite of the Coromandel as also of other regions, emerged as lending entrepreneurs not necessarily on the sea front but as those who closely monitored external commerce through their collaboration with merchants on the coast. The latter group who can be termed as 'politico- military entrepreneurs' were making inroads into the commercial world firstly through their direct intervention in agrarian expansion and local trade and secondly by controlling the port economies. However, it must be stressed that these people took recourse to trade only in special circumstances when their internal political position was threatened by other contesting groups or state.

Considering the flexibility of participation in trade, and the skills adopted at a very competitive level, it was also possible to find a peddler becoming a trans-oceanic trader, while new entrants into trade may have made huge profits or losses depending on the nature of demand and supply structures and may not have returned to trade at all. It was a very competitive world and fortunes fluctuated depending of diverse factors which ranged

see, Joseph. J Brenning, *The Textile Trade in India, A Study of Pre-modern ?Export Industry on the northern Coromandel in the Late Seventeenth century*, Ph. D Thesis, University of Wisconsin, Madison, 1975. Chapter III.

from purely economic to political and social. What drove such a varied category of persons into trade is extremely difficult question to answer. Profit maximization does seem to have been the single most important factor for such a wide participation in trade.⁸

While the historiography on the Indian maritime merchant is relatively voluminous, thanks to the regional studies conducted during the last three decades or so, It must be noted however, that very few historians were instrumental in situating the Indian merchant within the regional political economy of pre-colonial India or in region specific. In other words, as Ashin Das Gupta and M.N.Pearson has recently pointed out 'that maritime history is part of a larger interaction with the continental hinterland and any 'history of Indian Ocean area had to focus on 'some land area'.⁹ Further noting on the same lines, Frank Perlin wrote a " systematic treatment of how production fitted into and was adopted to these

⁸Tapan Raychaudhari does not totally agree with the notion of profit maximisation as the single most important factor for 'entrepreneurship' in pre-colonial India. According to him, traditional occupational structure, family honour, communal status all played a crucial role in determining the participation of such a wide variety of men in trade. However, as we shall see subsequently, Indian trade was highly individualistic oriented and seemed to have fewer pretensions of community participation. Persian merchants are a case in point. See, Tapan Raychaudhari, *The Entrepreneur in Pre-Colonial India: Aspirations and Expectations A Note*, in Rodrich Ptak and Dietmar Rothermund, Ed., *Emporia, Commodities and Entrepreneurs in Asian Maritime Trade, c. 1400-1750*, Stuttgart, 1991, pp. 339-351, For the study of Indian merchants See, S. Arasaratnam, " Aspects of the Role and Activities of South Indian merchants, c. 1650-1750, *Proceedings of the First International Conference/Seminar of Tamil Studies*, Kaula Lampur, Malaysia, April 1966 and 1968 and a good bibliography see, A.J. Qaiser. *The Role of Brokers in Medieval India*, *Indian Historical Review (IHR)*, 12, 1974, Ashin Das Gupta, *The Merchants of Surat c. 1700-1750* in E. Leach Ed, *Elites in South Asia*, Honolulu, 1978.

⁹ Ashin Das Gupta and M.N.Pearson Ed, *India and the Indian Ocean*, Calcutta, 1987 pp. 11-14 See, Laxmi Subramanian, *Alternative Approaches to Maritime India*, Book Review of Ashin Das Gupta, *Merchants of Maritime India 1500-1800*, **Variorium**, 1994, *Indian Economic and Social History Review (IESHR)*, 33,2,1996 p. 210.

markets (overseas markets) and to competition between industries and regions is left much more obscure". Elaborating further he says that " the growth of commercial manufacture in particular region must be contextualised within the larger framework of subcontinent itself and its must be extended beyond the sub-continent at the level of growing inter Asian nexus and that of the new international trading system".¹⁰

The extension of peasant production for local markets and its subsequent transformation into external trade through a hierarchy of markets starting from village fairs, to qasba towns to big centres of consumption and redistribution and finally to port towns all went hand in hand in the over all process of continental dynamics which became crucial for maritime merchant operating in the coastal areas. Indian merchant was connected inextricably with localised demand and supply curves as he was dictated by similar trends elsewhere in the Indian ocean. The neglect by historians of connecting these internal sectors of production and manufacture with that of external commerce stemmed from uncritical dependence on the dominant historiography for analysis on the relationship between land and sea in the pre-colonial India. In other words, maritime historians failed to enquire in *first hand* the internal production and manufacturing systems on their own but

10 See, Frank Perlin, 'Proto-Industrialisation and pro-Colonial India', *Past and Present (P&P)*, 1983 pp. 41,59. Some major exeptions to this neglect came from the so called revisionists historians such as C.A.Bayly and Sanjay Subrahmanyam who empirically worked within the regional economies and situated the Indian merchantile operations in the inter-continental dynamics. See, C.A.Bayly, *Riders, Townsmen and Bazaars, North Indian Society in the Age of British Expansion*, Cambridge, 1983 and the articles and monographs written by Sanjay Subrahmanyam, see, in particular, *The Political Economy of Commerce, Southern India*, Cambridge, 1990 passim.

relied heavily for aspects of peasant production and internal markets on the borrowed wisdom, in this case the Mughal studies. The problem is further compounded when such as burgeoning economy is linked directly to the political histories of contemporary India. This has been a classic portrayal of Mughal empire and its inevitable collapse.

In spite of considerable revision amongst historians working both at macro and micro levels, the reasons for the collapse of Mughal empire and its impact on the economy of India still tend to dominate even the logic a maritime historian as well. We shall illustrate the problem by taking some apparent examples on how maritime historians have time and again borrowed from the Mughal studies.

First and foremost has been the characterization of trade as a direct consequence of state fiscal needs. Trade merely existed for state as a source of revenue in spite of the state's apparent indifference to directly develop trading systems within its political control has been taken up willy-nilly by historians of maritime India. In the work on Surat, Ashin Das Gupta, the merchant is precariously placed between the fiscal regime of Mughal empire and the European competition .¹¹ This notion of revenue squeeze which is extended to merchants as well is grounded in the Aligarh notions of Mughal state as being highly centralised, bureaucratic

¹¹ . See, Ashin Das Gupta, *Indian Merchants and the Decline of Surat*, Weisbaden, 1979, Introduction and Chapter 3, 'The Logic of Decline. There seems to have been a change in his position recently. To cite only one example, Das Gupta now identified differences in the character of Asian Shipping at Surat, Hoogly and Masulipatnam. See, for details, Ashin Dasgupta, 'Changing Faces of the Maritime Merchant', in Rodreich Ptak and Deitmar Rothermund, *Emporia, Commodities and Entrepreneurs in Asia*, pp. 353-362.

which was predominantly an extractive body primarily existing on the revenues coming from civil society at large.¹² In this scheme of interpretation, merchants and his operations were more or less moribund and acted rather mechanically to needs of the state or its prebendaries.¹³ On the contrary, we shall see from Golconda's experience that internal and external trade and fiscal systems were mutually dependent and complementary to each other which was reflected in the rise of Masulipatnam as a major emporia port in the seventeenth century. In spite of being extractive system, Golconda state was instrumental in forging inextricable links with trading communities and developed alternative forms of economic mediation for the appropriation of social surplus. Secondly, the state did not show indifference towards trade but actively developed collaborations with mercantile groups which in turn expanded the share of revenues for the state. Thus the state, it will be seen, provided a space for a large informal sector dominated by fiscal mediators who stood outside the purview of the state and beyond its official reach but at the same time reaped economic benefits from the participation of these entrepreneurs.

There is yet another way in which one can display the relationship between dominant notions on internal political /fiscal systems and the historiography of external commerce. This stems specifically from the notion of decline of the Mughal empire; of

¹² See, Irfan Habib, *The Agrarain System of Mughal India*, and J. F. Richards, *The Mughal Empire*, The New Cambridge History of India, 1992. For a very critical analysis, See, Sanjay Subrahmanyam, Introduction', of *Merchants, Markets and the State in Early Modern India*, New Delhi, 1992. passim.

¹³ See, Ashin Das Gupta, "Indian Merchants and the Trade in the Indian Ocean", in Tapan Rauchaudhari and Irfan Habib, ed, *The Cambridge Economic History of India c. 1200-1750*, Hyderabad, 1982 pp. 407-432

political crisis transforming into economic crisis in late seventeenth and early eighteenth century. According to the historians of Mughal India, the intense exploitation of the producer by *jagirdars* and the state led to many peasant uprisings, the economic squeeze on account of the increase in the number of *jagirdars* without any corresponding increase in the resource base of the empire, the Mughal aggrandizement into southern states of Bijapur and Golconda all made the decline inevitable in the last decades of the seventeenth century.¹⁴ Though the decline oriented studies seem very simple and apparently does not have any direct bearing on the maritime history of India, at least at a regional level, its complex extension of 'structural crisis' into the regional political economy and the subsequent collapse of all economic activity had a direct bearing on the writings on external commerce. For example, Ashin Das Gupta and S. Arasaratnam have argued that Surat on the west coast and Masulipatnam on the Coromandel declined largely due to the collapse of the Mughal imperial system in the second half of the eighteenth century.¹⁵ It is significant to note that Masulipatnam which was outside of the Mughal empire for most part of the seventeenth century suddenly confronts decline in the wake of Mughal intervention in the last decades of the seventeenth century, Surely, Masulipatnam declined (or at least showed signs of

¹⁴ The exploitation of the peasantry has been the view point of Irfan Habib, while Satish Chandra and Athar Ali both trace it the crisis brought out by the Jagridari crisis as the cause for the decline of the Mughal empire. See, Irfan Habib, *The Agrarian System of Mughal India*, pp. 269-71, Satish Chandra, *Parties and Politics at the Mughal Court*, pp. 92-94 and M Athar Ali, 'The Passing of Empire: The Mughal Case', *MAS*, IX, 1975, pp. 385-396.

¹⁵ See, Ashin Das Gupta, *Indian Merchants and the Decline of Surat*, Chapter 3'. and Chapter 5'. and S. Arasaratnam, *Merchants, Companies and Commerce on the Coromandel Coast 1650-1740*, New Delhi, 1986.

regressin) by the second half of the eighteenth century, but the causes were to be found elsewhere firstly, in the restructuring of the hinterland in the last decades of the seventeenth century and secondly in the breakup of port complex' of Masulipatnam on the northern Coromandel during the same time. Further, the rise of smaller ports such as Divi and Ingeram into independent ports within the vicinity of Masulipatnam's accelerated the decline, while the rise of Vizagpatnam in first half of the eighteenth century may have been an additional cause for the decline of Masulipatnam on the northern Coromandel coast which became more pronounced in the eighteenth century. The rise of smaller ports on the northern Coromandel plains can be attributed to the failure of the Mughal imperial system in northern Coromandel, while their rise into prominence must be placed within the context of regional dynamics which came to be dominated by *Zamindars* and other tributary chiefs. Vizagapatnam, for instance, was a product of the consolidation of power by small *Zamindars* and other tributary chieftains who earlier served the Sultanate of Golconda. Contrary to these regional developments, it is of the opinion of S. Arasaratnam that no port of importance grew on the northern Coromandel sector in the last decades of the seventeenth century largely due to collapse of administrative apparatus in Ganjam and Srikakulam sectors.¹⁶ But this seem contrary to the developments on the northern Coromandel. In fact, this period saw intensifying

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, See in particular "Ports and Ocean" for the causes given for the inability of the ports to come into prominence in the last decades of the seventeenth century. J.F.Richards, *Mughal Administration of Golconda*, New Delhi, 1975. and 'European City States on the Coromandel coast', in Nayeem Ed, *Studies in the Foreign Relationships of India*, Hyderabad, 1975.p. 618.

of commercialisation of agriculture under ruling chieftaincies who though concurred with official state authority, nevertheless retained the freedom to impose their own fiscal structures at the local level. The intervention of the chiefs in the local economy had a direct bearing on the port economy of Vizagpatnam.

In the wake of Mughal intervention, these chieftains asserted their position in their respective localities. The tributary chiefs were able to forge links with the immediate production economy and local trade and to some extent on the overseas commerce as well which led to rise *of* small but independent port towns in northern Coromandel in the last quarter of the seventeenth century. In fact no other port on the Coromandel showed such an influx of Madras pagodas as was in Vizagpatnam which meant considerable monetisation *of* the local economy. However, the monetary benefits were used to refinance in the wars against the Mughal imperial structure. The combination of factors such as the Mughal intervention, the role of tributary chiefs and the English commerce helped in the rise of Vizagpatnam as a major port in the eighteenth century. In fact as Frank Perlin has commented, it was the 'informal economy' which existed beyond the 'official administrative economy' whose relationships "transcend political frontiers and whose interest included a complex of activities much more extensive than those related to taxation and financing of the regimes".¹⁷

The above elaboration on the rise of Vizagpatnam has been given to demonstrate that the Mughal decline (or for that matter

¹⁷ Frank Perlin, 'State Formation reconsidered', p. 465.

any political decline) did not necessarily lead to a general decline of regional economic formations. However, it is not the intention to deny 'crises' in the pre-colonial context. It is only to draw to the resilience of local and regional economies which saw localised forms of commercialisation and monetisation which was inextricably linked to external commerce in those areas where the economy had access to sea.

Interest in maritime history of India has witnessed a sudden crop of literature in the last decade with what is popularly called as 'Indian Ocean Studies'. Apparently influenced by Fernand Braudel's Mediterranean as an unified concept, maritime historians of India too tried to integrate Indian Ocean as a cohesive unit albeit with regional variations within it.¹⁸ Though they do not constitute any specialised school or category, Indian ocean studies did contribute immensely to the rich maritime tradition of India and its relation with other trading societies. There is no doubt that the Indian Ocean studies expanded the scope of maritime history of Asia in the on going debates on overseas trade and its impact on the Asian continent. The questions asked are related to activities of Asian and European companies, the latter only reinforcing the already expanding commerce in India, textile based export markets with seafarers as central figures, actions and reactions of Asian

¹⁸ For thematic influence of the Indian Ocean studies, see, Fernand Braudel, *Mediterranean and Mediterranean in the Age of Louis Phillpe*, London, 1979. For Indian ocean studies, See, K.N.Chaudhuri, *Trade and Civilisation in the Indian Ocean: An Economic History from the Rise of Islam to 1750*, Cambridge, 1985, Ashin Das Gupta and M.N.Pearson Ed., *India and the Indian Ocean*, Calcutta, 1987 and Satish Chandra, Ed., *The Indian Ocean: Exploration in History, Commerce and Politics*, New Delhi, 1987.

states towards merchants, and finally identifying India within the larger world's capitalist trends.

M.N.Pearson who wrote a major introduction to "India and the Indian Ocean" has identified six unifying factors for Indian Ocean as a cohesive unit of analysis. They are climate (monsoons), ports (their character and nature), shipping, and sailing, religion (particularly referring to Islam) and lastly to the similarity of specialisation's across Asian and African continents.¹⁹ In spite of integrating Indian ocean as a whole, the studies are not without limitations. Though these historians stress on the symbiotic relationship that existed between land and sea as a major field of enquiry, a closer reading of the contributions on the other hand, reveals inadequate attention paid to 'land economies' and the hierarchy of links between peasant and artisanal production, internal trade systems, local commodity production transforming itself into continental trade are particularly glaring. In fact as we have already mentioned the dichotomy between agrarian expansion and commercial history is maintained even in the writings of Indian ocean scholars. The problem lies, one supposes in the very nature of contributors. For, the contributions to Indian Ocean studies has been a major outcome of the individual scholars we have mentioned earlier, like Ashin Das Gupta, M.N.Pearson, S. Arasaratnam, Satish Chandra *et al*, did not show any qualitative difference in analysis from their individual monographs and articles published elsewhere.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 14-17 and these factors are reiterated in the work of K.N.Chaudhuri, *Trade and Civilisation in the Indian Ocean*, pp. 1-20.

The problem of borrowing from the dominant historiography out rather openly in the article of Immanuel Wallerstein's 'Incorporating Indian Subcontinent in the world capitalist Economy'. His assumptions focuses on the structural characteristics of dependence and interdependence of the capitalist world which thrives on profit and is grounded firmly in Europe. Though he finds the actual incorporation of India into Europe based world economy since 1750's, he however traces its origins to the seventeenth century. In large part of his work he ignored the local variables and depended mainly on secondary works, particularly of Irfan Habib and Satish Chandra's analysis of growth and decline in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries respectively ; former being a period of growth and the latter decline and hence incorporation'.²⁰ In order to prove Indian Ocean as a cohesive unit, and perhaps to show it as a comparative category with the western developments, the contributors seemed to have relegated regional history into margins. Thus, we have titles such as "Indian Ocean in the fifteenth century", "sixteenth" century", "seventeenth century "

One hopes, in future, that the rich contributions of Indian Ocean studies would also integrate regional differences and similarities in their further analysis.

it is clear from the above paragraphs that Indian maritime history can be distinguished into two major categories. First belonged to works of historians focusing on trading regions with a

²⁰ See for details, Immanuel Wallerstein, 'Incorporating the Indian subcontinent into Capitalist World Economy,' in Satish Chandra ,ed., *The Indian Ocean*, pp.223-253.

specific question of enquiry i.e. India's inability to develop on the capitalist lines. This, as we have seen, is actually a by product of a dominant historiography on pre-colonial India and how it influenced the writings of maritime historians at large. The second school/ group which is primarily concerned with maritime trade *per se* have attempted in a rather grand scale to reconstruct 'total' history through the concept of 'Indian Ocean'. Between these two categories of historians, is the so called revisionist approach. Though they do belong to a definite school of thought, this group of historians, with their thrust on regional histories challenged the dominant historiographical notions prevalent on pre-modern India. In fact, revisionists have come as strong critiques to the state oriented histories' and as well as against the theories of 'incorporation'.

Sanjay Subrahmanyam has identified four features of revisionist approach to early modern history. It stood on a) "that India in the early modern period was not caught up in a high equilibrium trap "as developed by Tapan Raychaudhuri b) that commercial activity, though most conspicuous in Bengal, Coromandel and Gujarat, was by no means limited to them, c) that not all commercialisation and money use was a function of purely and simply of state's revenue and d) that south Asia was not a passive entity 'merely' waiting to be incorporated into capitalist world economy".²¹

²¹ See, Sanjay Subrahmanyam, Ed., *Merchants, Markets and state in Early Modern India*, New Delhi, 1992, Introduction p.14.

The Revisionist approach has its antecedents in the writing of A.I. Chicherov who characterised the period between 1500-1800 as one that of commodity market relations and that India had all "prime socio-economic prerequisites for the rise of capitalist manufacture and that this was a period of transition and that the European trade was only one of the factors"²² This theme was recently revised by Frank Perlin with the notion of 'proto-capitalism based on the local merchant capital and commercial manufacture which emerged independently of Europe. Thus, the main trading zones of Gujarat, Coromandel and Bengal are studied within the context of subcontinental structure of relations also embracing peasant production in "ostensibly remote regions and in the context of increasing character of international commerce".²³

The contribution of the revisionists to early modern history of India lay firstly in giving importance to regional economic development within the context of expanding international trade. Regional economy in their writings, include not only the local production and marketing for local and domestic needs but also its transformation into export commodity for overseas markets. In fact commercialisation and trade form an integral part of political economy and merchants, in particular, are not seen as mere 'impotent appendages' but as a main complementary group *vis a vis* state.

²² A.I.Chicherov, *India Economic Development between 16th and 18th centuries*, New Delhi, 1971 pp. 9,160, 174 &234 cited in Immanuel Wallerstein, 'Incorporating the Indian Subcontinent', p. 224.

²³ Frank Perlin, 'Proto-industrialisation and pre colonial India', p.33.

The revisionist approach is especially refreshing because commercial economy and mercantile operations are not mechanistically linked to state appropriation but are seen as major mediators of surplus at various levels of economic activity within the structure of the state. The state does not show indifference to trade but was involved in the ongoing process of commercialisation and even perhaps stood on the threshold of mercantilism. The participation of state in trade was both direct and indirect. In south polity of Golconda at least, the state actively mediated in trading sector by way of royal monopolies and through collaborating with mercantile elements in the coastal areas. The Golden *Firman* issued by Abdullah Qutb shah to the English East India company in 1634 is particularly instructive to this collaboration. In this *firman*, Abdullah consciously tied the concessions given to the English company with those of Persian merchants which in reality proved beneficial to the latter group rather than the company.

Thirdly, the revisionists have redefined the concept of entrepreneurship in the context of developments in the early modern South Asia. As mentioned earlier, commercial enterprise and trade was by no means a monopoly of any single category of people. Merchants formed an extremely heterogeneous group in early modern Asia; they included the traditional merchant classes such as Chetties, komatis, Bania's, and khattris, foreign elements like the Arabs, Armenians, Persians who traded regularly with India, and lastly the regional elite who took recourse to trade for profit

²⁴ Sanjay Subrahmanyam, 'Introduction, in *Merchants, Markets and state in Early Modern India*, pp. 3-9.

maximization to invest the money thus made in political aggrandizement.²⁵ Thus, if Golconda depended for money on revenue farming as a response to crisis, the tributary *raju* clans of Srikakulam and Vizianagaram on the northern Coromandel took recourse to local trade and forged alliances with the European companies in the last decade of the seventeenth century again a kind of local responses to local crisis from the Imperial structure. Coastal politics on the Coromandel came to be dominated by politico-military entrepreneurs who established small marketing towns and organised local trade and revenue and thus put a check on the Mughal *faujdari*. The concomitant development of territorial control and the collapse of Mughal *faujdari* system was a crucial factor in the local economy, Thus by bringing mercantile economy within the ambit of political structures, the revisionists, have demonstrated that the early modern Indian merchant and other entrepreneurs were not a part of the periphery of production economy but as integral social components who mediated between state and economy.

Sanjay Subrahmanyam has convincingly argued for south India, the existence of 'portfolio capitalists' who traversed between worlds of commerce and politics as the primary agents of mediation in the overall state formation.²⁶ For north India too, C.A.Bayly has argued for the existence of portfolio capitalists who were involved in revenue farming not necessarily through overseas trade but who included the small merchant who controlled inter-

²⁵ C.A.Bayly, Ibid. p. 259.

²⁶ Sanjay Subrahmanyam, *The Political Economy of Commerce*, See, Chapter, 'Asians and Europeans in an age of Contained conflict'.

locality trade, great merchants and their role in state financing and patrimonial households who controlled huge revenue farms.²⁷ On the Coromandel one finds, apart from the great sea faring portfolio capitalists like Mir Kamaluddin and Mir Jumla, the existence of warrior elite who intervened in the production economy and local trade who were actually the products of the imperial crisis in the Deccan. Thus, for a small time renter's like Appa Rao of Divi island, to big proto-dynastic figures like Pusapati Anandaraju and Koliandar *Rajus* of Mogalteru, trade became a major source of revenue which in turn brought the European commerce into focus.

Ports , Hinterlands, and state on the Coromandel

The study of ports and port economies is still at a nascent stage for the students of Indian history. Unlike in the west, paucity of any written sources, maps or any systematic representations of cartography are perhaps some of the reasons for the lack of any study on the development of ports in early modern India. Geographers too are crippled in providing any concrete spatial distribution of the port town in the pre colonial India. However, with the coming of European companies to India, sources on port administration and economy more or less got systematized.²⁸ Further, the establishment of European factories and fortifications along the coastline of India and the necessity of the respective companies to minutely record the developments in Asia further provides useful information on ports in Asia. Information on the

²⁷ *Ibid*, p. 255-256.

²⁸ For a good methodological survey of Indian ports see, Atiya Habeeb Kidwai, Conceptual and Methodological Issues: Ports, Port Cities and Port-Hinterlands;, in Indu Banga ed, *Ports and Hinterland in India, 1700-1950*, New Delhi, 1992 pp. 7-43.

European settlements which were exclusively under the respective companies like Madras, Bombay and Calcutta is particularly rich when compared to other ports where the companies had nominal presence. It must be noted however, that apart from raising some thematic questions, scholarship on Asian port towns is still western oriented.²⁹

Coming to specific regional studies, Coromandel coast is yet to catch on with west coast and Bengal so far as the study of port cities is concerned.³⁰ Part of the reason, one supposes, is embedded in the manner in which Indian urban history has been constructed by historians. That north India witnessed stable polities in Delhi Sultanate and Mughal empire which fostered institutions that favoured urban expansion can be identified as an important factor for high incidence of urban studies on north India. In Mughal India, for instance, historians have postulated a high level of urbanisation with urban classes taking as much as 60% of the gross agricultural produce. In south India on the other hand, it is assumed that stable polities were non-existent with two exceptions being cholas and Vijayanagara. Even in these polities, it is argued, were based on peasant production and marketing in which external commerce was only incidental.³¹ Thus the segmentary approach of

²⁹ For some thematic questions raised by historians see, Ashin Das Gupta, 'The Maritime City', pp. 359-365 and S. Arasaratnam, 'Pre-colonial and Early Colonial Port Towns', pp.367-374 in *Ibid* . and Dilip Basu, ed, *The Rise and Growth of Colonial Port Cities in Asia*, Centre of South Pacific Studies, university of California, Santa Cruz, 1979.

³⁰ The only systematic survey of port towns is S. Arasaratnam, *Merchants, Companies and Commerce on the Coromandel 1650-1740*, New Delhi, 1986.

³¹ Burton Stein, *Peasant State and Society in Medieval South India*, New Delhi, 1980. For a specific critique related to nagaram and the neglect of external commerce in the segmentary approach of Burton Stein see, Sanjay Subrahmanyam, *The*

Burton Stein which focuses mostly on the 'ritual relationships' between the royal core and rural structure and the peasant-Brahmin alliance brought into focus the temple towns and *nagaram* as indicators of urbanisation. *Nagaram* which was the basic peasant marketing zone for short and long distance trade became a crucial determinant for overseas trade as well. In fact the thrust given to temple towns and the peasant marketing towns curiously led to a neglect of port towns instead of actually integrating these peasant zones with that of port towns. Thus in their period between 1000-1500 AD, there are no studies on the earlier history of the ports of Motupalli and Vizagapatnam on the Coromandel coast.

Coromandel which is defined as a macro region comprises broadly the whole of east coast starting from Ganjam in the north to Point Calimere in the south. Though the region covered under the rubric of 'Coromandel' seem too large for analysis, it is conveniently divided into north and south Coromandel with Pennar river dividing the two sub regions. This rough demarcation also has contemporary importance in the seventeenth century as the northern part was predominantly under the Sultanate of Golconda while the southern Coromandel, starting from Madrasapatnam, was under *Nayak* kingdoms. In this work we are concerned only with the northern part of the Coromandel and covers the whole of Andhra coast and spills into Madrasapatnam coast as well which was in Arcot region. This region is taken up for this study because of two major political developments which had

considerable impact on the regional economy. Coastal Andhra was consolidated by the Sultanate of Golconda by the beginning of the seventeenth century while its southward expansion along the coast was completed in 1656 which brought the whole of Coromandel up to River Pennar under one political control.³² This consolidation was of particular importance because of the high concentration of weaving economy which was the backbone of export markets in the seventeenth century.

The expansion of Golconda also integrated the frontier of Karnatic into coastal economy by the second half of the seventeenth century. This region regularly supplied raw cotton, grain and indigo to the newly developing port towns of Madrasapatnam and Pulicat. Secondly, even after the Mughal take over of Golconda, the whole of Andhra coast became a major arena for various contesting parties to consolidate their political power.

Ports on the Coromandel as S. Arasaratnam has observed, were mostly outlets on the river mouths with bad berthing facilities due to shallowness of sea and rivers, bad anchorage capacity, and hence did not allow big ships to berth in the main ports. Barring Vizagpatnam and Narsapore in the vicinity of Masulipatnam, there were no natural ports on the Coromandel coast. The Coromandel coast was clustered with small, middling and big ports catering to diverse functions in the seventeenth century. As many as forty two

³² For the history of Golconda See, H.K.Sherwani, *A History of Qutb Shahi Dynasty*, New Delhi, 1972, S. Arasaratnam, *Merchants, Companies and Commerce on the Coromandel Coast 1650-1740*, New Delhi, 1986, Sanjay Subrahmanyam, *The Political Economy of Commerce, Southern India, 1500-1650*, Cambridge, 1990, J.F.Richards, *Mughal Administration of Golconda*, New Delhi, 1975. and Tapan Raychaudhari, *Jan Company in Coromandel*, Hague, 1969.

ports were identified between Ganjam in the north to Madrasapatnam in the Arcot region.³³ Most of the ports on the northern Coromandel were situated in close proximity to each other which perhaps was the main reason for frequent rise and fall of port towns in the period under study. To explain the rise and fall of the port towns on the Coromandel the concepts of "Port complexes, Port concentration and Port diffusion" is extremely useful.³⁴ Port complex simply means ports which are related to each other. This relatedness can be viewed both from maritime foreland and the hinterland as well. The relationship between related ports may be competitive and complementary: they compete for traffic in their common hinterland which in turn would affect the fortunes of a port within its complex. They tend to be complementary when the ports manage to streamline the nature of commodity export, say textiles from one port and grain from the other. In Masulipatnam sector, Madapollem, Narsapurpeta, Divi and Ingeram formed into one single port complex. Madapollem in particular was serving as feederpoint for textiles to Masulipatnam for most of the seventeenth century, while Narsapurpeta served the metropolitan port as the major ship repairing centre. Divi on the

³³ Contemporary European sources do not give us information on the ports which were outside the operations of company trade. However, observations of travellers like Thomas Bowrey, Strensham Master and other officials who were sent regularly to the coasts to identify new centres of productions have recorded the existence of ports on the coast. See, *RFSG, Letters to Fort St. George*. 1711, Memorials, of Strensham Master, *RFSG, Diary and Consultation Books*, for the years 1672-78 and Thomas Bowrey, *The Countreys around Bay of Bengal*, Hakluyt Society, 1907.

³⁴ B. Ogundana, 'Patterns and Problems of Seaport Evolution in Nigeria', in B.S.Hoyle, ed, *Seaports and Development in Tropical Africa*, Macmillan, 1970. cited in Atiya Habeeb Kidwai, 'Coceptual and Methodological Issues, Ports, Port Cities and Port-Hinterlands', pp. 23-25.

other hand', served Masulipatnam as port used exclusively for grain and wood. In varying degrees then, these ports assumed significance in different contexts of time, some times remaining as mere feeder points to the metropolitan port of Masulipatnam but by the end of the seventeenth century rose into prominence as independent ports with considerable autonomy from Masulipatnam. Divi and Ingeram came out the port complex of Masulipatnam which was a major cause for the decline of Masulipatnam. This "port concentration and port diffusion "in which a certain port gains in relative significance because either other ports have grown more modestly or declined in absolute terms or when high order ports decline and lead to an increase in the significance of new or previously smaller ports" was a common phenomenon on the northern Coromandel.³⁵ Thus, in the course of the seventeenth century Coromandel, there was a constant "changing of port hierarchies in which the ranking of ports changed over time and the composite pattern of the port complex showed an alternation of concentration and diffusion."³⁶ This seemed to have been the general pattern on the northern Coromandel stretching from Ganjam to Madrasapatnam which dictated the development and fall of port towns.

One of the major determinants for the rise of port towns in general and on Coromandel in particular was in the way in which they depended on hinterlands. Hinterland is a much loosely defined term which broadly means as a space which provided the

³⁵ *Ibid.*

³⁶ *Ibid.* pp. 169-70.

economic input for the ports. Hinterlands are defined more in terms of economic rather than merely restricting it to a specific geography. Thus the immediate hinterland of Masulipatnam did not comprise of any economic activity that could be used for the exports from the port so much as its distant hinterland contributed for its export economy. According to Thomas Bowrey the hinterland of Masulipatnam extended as deep as 300 miles interior. It attracted merchandise from as far as Khammam and Hyderabad in the interior and from Ganjam and Orissa on the north till Vizagpatnam became a prominent port. Likewise, in the course of the seventeenth century, Masulipatnam even attracted merchandise often eating up other ports such as Nizampatnam. While studies on the hinterlands have concentrated on mere 'economistic' point of view, (a presumption that hinterland already exists and mechanically provides goods and services to the port) there are very few studies which have concentrated on the formation of the hinterlands itself which affected the ports on the coast.³⁷

The formation of a hinterland is dictated by a complex factors in a given society. They stem from a series of developments in the inland ranging from economic, social and political. Though the basic function of the hinterland is to provide goods and services to ports, the combination of developments in the internal political economy are often neglected. For example, what were the factors which made various categories of persons to participate on market oriented economy which in turn expanded the hinterlands of the ports in a given context of time and space? To what factors, for

³⁷ For various theories on the hinterland see, *Ibid.*

instance, can one attribute the growing commercialisation, monetisation in the interior and what was the impact of these processes on the overseas trade?

Metcalf for example, introduced the concept of 'social hinterland' in respect to the business communities of Bombay and its hinterland. According to him, the existence of number of business communities who constantly travelled from the country side to the ports with roots in communal and caste organisation as a major conjecture in the study of hinterlands. Metcalf's definition has its limitations. For instance, by tying up hinterland with a specific business community or group of communities, he ignores the rich diversity of people who were involved in trade and restricts the scope mercantile operations/operators involved in the maritime enterprise to mere caste basis. In Masulipatnam and Madras for example, trade was by no means dictated by caste or communal organisations but involved a wide range of category of people such as Persians, Armenians, local elite (both during the Golconda and Mughal phase) , state and its apparatus. All these men were involved in varying degrees in trade and its allied occupations. Furthermore, entrepreneurship in early modern phase was based on individual enterprise rather than on the community lines which is clearly reflected in the nature of their participation on the Coromandel coast.

In the seventeenth century south India, trade was emerging as major source of sustenance for different categories of people; from a small peasant to that of great continental traders and the highly mobile 'Diaspora' communities like the Persians and

Armenians. The transportation of grain and raw cotton was the preserve of *banjara* community and small peasants who marketed it in local fairs and qasba towns in the localities. Above them came the professional merchants like komatis and Chetties to procure their merchandise from these centres to port towns. Apart from the professional merchants, trade was actively mediated and conducted by revenue farmers, local Zamindars and other local landed potentates of the region.

The consolidation of eastern sea-board by Golconda in 1580's gave access to rich fertile tracts of Krishna and Godavari deltas which had already developed huge commercial manufacture needed for both domestic and external markets. The state was not only able to exploit rich revenue base of coastal Andhra but also was instrumental in forging political alliances with traditional ruling clans of the region which furthered fostered the political expansion of Golconda.³⁸ These tributary chieftaincies cushioned Golconda by steadily supplying men and money as long as central authority did not threaten their independence in their respective zones of control. But as the events unfolded in the seventeenth century, Golconda faced a severe political threat from the Mughals and from Adil shahis of Bijapur. The problem was further compounded in 1636 when the Kingdom of Golconda had to submit to a humiliating 'Deed of Submission' with Mughal emperor, Shahjahan. Golconda responded to the crisis in two ways, internal and external. Internally the state tried a more decentralized

³⁸ J.F.Richards, *Mughal Administration of Golconda*, New Delhi, 1975. and Burton Stein, *Vijayanagara, The New Cambridge Economic History of India*, Cambridge, 1992.

set up in the functioning of provincial economy by providing space private entrepreneurship and subsequently elevating them into quasi- official status within the administrative set up. Thus a revenue farmer whose primary function was to farm an area for a stipulated amount of money and time was also given the positions of *havaldars*, *Sar samutu's* and *seerlaskars*, etc. which benefited the revenue base of Golconda. Revenue farming became a crucial factor in developing links between the state and the provincial economy which witnessed large scale commercialisation. This classic response to crisis was to prove to be a major boon to the state, for on the one hand it was assured of regular income more than it would generate if extracted by state officials, and on the other hand, it fostered the expansion of the agrarian economy even in the frontier zones. The expansion of the agrarian economy through revenue farming had its impact on the localised forms of commercialisation of the economy which in turn was linked to Coromandel trade.³⁹

On the external side, Golconda went on a massive political aggrandizement on the ruling dynasty of Vijayanagara in 1650's

³⁹ It is the opinion of Sanjay Subrahmanyam that revenue farming was limited the coastal regions of Coromandel coast and to manufacturing sector only. But evidence from *Kaifiyats* show that revenue farming was prevalent even in the frontier where the role of the state was hazy and dependent on local elite. This in fact was the technique adopted by the Golconda, that instead of outright political aggrandisement, it adopted the technique retaining the traditional elite or by fixing the place under revenue farming. Thus, Mir Jumla who took Gandikota in 1656 farmed the revenues from the local diamond mines while Podela Lingappa was involved in Grain trade largely due to his position in the same place. See, *Gandikota Kaifiyat*, *Munimadugu Kaifiyat*. See, Sanjay Subrahmanyam, "Aspects of State Formation in South India and South East Asia" *Indian Economic and social History Review*, 23,4, 1986 pp.357-377. Andre Wink on the other hand feels that revenue farming existed in the frontier of respective kingdoms in the eighteenth century. 'Maratha Revenue Farming' *Modern Asian Studies*, 17,4,1983 pp. 591-628.

and brought it directly under its dominion. This completed the process of consolidating the coastal areas from Ganjam to Madrasapatnam which gave Golconda unlimited scope to manipulate the rich trading tracts on the Coromandel. If we closely study the politics in early modern south India, one observes a general shift in the political arena towards coastal areas. This was an outcome of numerous layers of 'responses to crises' these polities faced in the context of seventeenth century political economy. To illustrate the point, we have already seen how Golconda pushed itself towards coastal region of Andhra as a step to consolidate its economic position. Beyond the 'formal' and recognised political structures such as Golconda and Vijayanagara, the existence of warrior clans such as Velugoti, Damerla, Matli lineage's who in theory were part of Vijayanagra were involved in expansion spree often feeding on the spoils of booty collected after overriding other ruling clans. These *Palegadu* elements who had already developed small and local microcosms of agriculture based on tank irrigation in their respective zones, were pushing into coastal strips to gain access to sea front which meant an enhancement in their economic status. The response to crisis was thus a part of larger changes in the hierarchies of power in the regional political economy of south India. This reflects in part the need to exploit revenues of the coastal regions which was an outcome of complex political realities of the time.⁴⁰ In order to do so, the states and other political authorities of the region had to necessarily forge links with the

⁴⁰ Sanjay Subrahmanya., *Improvising Empire: Portuguese Trade and Settlement in the Bay of Bengal, 1500-1700*, New Delhi, 1990.

already established mercantile groups of coastal areas. Thus, if Golconda established links with Persian merchants, the local elite were depended on the Hindu professional merchants such as komatis and chettis. Though, the links between the state and merchants was primarily economic, the fluid political environment forced the polity to reorganise them even in the political matters.

The Golconda and Iranian links can be thus seen as case through which the state directly entered the mercantile arena which centered around the port towns. Thus, in the south Indian context the question whether Golconda was a centralised polity or not is not of fundamental importance. On the contrary, the formal kingdoms and the informal political layers which existed in Golconda and Vijayanagara can be studied as classic cases of encouraging 'private' entrepreneurship by accommodating these elements in the political apparatus.

The purpose of this rather elaborate discussion on the seventeenth century political situation in south India has been to establish the importance of commercial hinterlands in the working of the political economy. The formation of political hinterlands at various layers of polity by entrepreneurs with quasi-administrative powers was extremely crucial to the formation of regional political economy in south India. Political hinterlands can be characterised as a participation of various groups of persons who intervened in commercial production and trade and those who had access to state power either directly or indirectly. These included not only men in power such as Mir Kamaluddin, Mir Jumla, Neknam Khan etc., but also those who aspired for a position within or outside the polity. In

a much divided and hazy political situation which was dominated by forging alliances at various layers of mediation; like the *Palegadu* elements, tributary chieftains, professional merchants, both Indian and foreign, the political power was directly related to the amount economic resource base they commanded in the respective localities.

To sum up, entrepreneurship in south India was evident at four levels of political economy. 1) state and in its capacity to establish relations with mercantile elements such as Persians and Hindus 2) At the intermediate level, the existence of big and small revenue farmers who participated in trade and other allied activities by virtue of access to administrative power, 3) the active collaboration of Zamindars and tributary chieftains, on the one hand with mercantile groups such as komatis and chettis and with European companies on the other, and 4) the entry of European commerce which was trying to negotiate a space in an already competitive world of Asian commerce.

The present work is divided into three chapters, or more precisely into three case studies of Masulipatnam (1634-1724), Vizagpatnam (1682-1724) and Madrasapatnam (1649-1712) and tries to establish the complex inter linkages between various layers of economic mediation in the regional economy with that of English commerce on the Coromandel.

Masulipatnam forms the first case study for the period between 1634-1724 in which the interaction between Golconda and the port are studied. It analysis that rise of the port as a conscious policy of Abdullah Qutb shah (1626-72), while the activities of local

Zamindars in the Krishna and Godavari deltas brought Hindu merchants within the ambit of Masulipatnam economy. The collaboration of Hindu merchants with European companies mutually benefited their trading prospects while the *Zamindars* of the deltas reaped the benefits of burgeoning commercialisation on the northern Coromandel. The decline of the port in the last quarter of the seventeenth century is attributed to changing nature of 'port complexes' which was wrought by the Mughal intervention on the Coromandel. New ports such as Divi, Ingeram, and finally Vizagpatnam all contributed in varying degrees in the decline of Masulipatnam. In a way, it is argued that the changing character of relations between *Zamindars* and the Mughal *faujdars* on the northern Coromandel contributed to the decline of Masulipatnam. On the other hand, European commerce was only a part of the whole trading world of Masulipatnam but seemed successfully manoevered into the local economy by the beginning of the eighteenth century.

Vizagpatnam, which was situated in the northernmost part of Coromandel displayed a totally different picture during the period under study. The rise of Vizagpatnam is attributed not so much to the participation of trans-oceanic participation of Asian merchants nor due to establishment of links with other Asian networks of trade but was a product of Mughal intervention on the Coromandel. Its rise, is especially attributed to the activities of tributary *raju* clans which dominated the region and to their intervention in the local economy. The changing character of Mughal officialdom (notably the *faujdari*), from mere officials to

that of 'local satraps' furthered the growth of Vizagapatnam. In swift changing political situation on the Coromandel, the forging and breaking of alliances between the warring *raju's* and Mughals in turn brought English company to Vizagapatnam which proved crucial in the rise of this port town in the last quarter of the seventeenth century. In other words the rise of Vizagapatnam into a major port was due to break up of Mughal administrative structure on the Coromandel which gave opportunity to local merchants to participate in trade.

Our last case study, Madrasapatnam clearly showed the dominance of English commerce on the central Coromandel plains. The crucial factor for the rise of English commerce at Madrasapatnam was due to expansion of the hinterland into the frontier of Karnatic and secondly due slow but steady subjugation of the chief merchant into a company servant. Unlike in the earlier case studies, the trade at Madrasapatnam was largely an outcome of English east India company and its ability to integrate commerce with that of local revenues which heralded a new dynamics of trade based on fortifications on grid colonial pattern in early modern south India.

CHAPTER I
MASULIPATNAM: FROM CONSOLIDATION
TO DECLINE 1634-1724

Chapter I

Masulipatnam: From Consolidation to Decline 1630-1724

Introducing the 'The Subject' of Indian ocean, M.N. Pearson stated that "politically all the(se) port cities had a large, or at least the necessary degree of autonomy. Some were completely independent though the port city ruler could govern an inland area as well. Others which were included in large land empires (meaning the Mughal empire), yet had autonomy enough not to be unduly harassed by their inland masters".¹ Apart from merely reiterating the notion of urban autonomy which is grounded in the European historiography, the statement also gives an important indication of pre-modern Indian historiography as far as the relationship between the state and external commerce is concerned. That the Indian trading communities operated in a context of state apathy and acted as merely 'objects of interest primarily for revenue' has been the dominant historiographical trend. It is not surprising then, that traders and merchants are seen as 'aberrations' who participated in trade at the expense of earning the 'odium of being a 'baniya'.² This theory neglects the large sub-structure which existed outside the purview of state such as villages inhabited by a highly differentiated rural population, including peasants growing cash crops for domestic markets which in turn transformed into long distance trade, the complex crisscrossing of networks of small and large urban centres bustling with rural and

¹ See the Introduction: The Subject, in Ashin Das Gupta and M.N. Pearson, ed, *India and the Indian Ocean*, Calcutta, 1987, pp. 13-14.

- See the Chapters on 'Foreign Trade' and 'Indian Merchants in the Indian Ocean' in Tapan Ray chaudhuri and Irfan Habib, ed., *The Cambridge Economic History of India*, Vol. I, Hyderabad, 1984, pp. 382-434.

urban manufactures which were catering to long distance markets. Further, one cannot imagine these developments without the active and even direct participation of state and its apparatus at various levels which particularly formed a vital link between the local, continental and international trade.³

Taking Masulipatnam as a case study, this chapter tries to explore such complex sets of relationships which not only fostered its growth in the seventeenth century but also led to its decline depending on the nature of changes in the rural and urban manufactures and in the political structure of the Kingdom of Golconda and finally the impact of Mughal intervention on the Coromandel in the last decades of the seventeenth century.

Despite the claims of being an ancient port, at least one Persian chronicle *Tuzuk-i-Waljahi* mentioned it as predominantly an Arab settlement which was called Bandar-i -*Mubarak*.⁴ Paucity of sources between the fourteenth and sixteenth centuries restricts us from any possibility of judging the trading activities of the port before the direct participation of the European companies.⁵ Even during the sixteenth century when the documentation on trade became more systematic, the port of Masulipatnam seemed to have

³ See particularly Frank Perlin's thematic conclusions on these lines. Frank Perlin, 'Proto-Industrialisation and Pre-colonial South Asia' Past and Present (*P&P*,) 1983, pp.1-98 and Sanjay Subrahmanyam/Rural Industry and Commercial Manufacture in South Eastern India' *P&P*, 1990 *passim* . and his 'Imarat and Izzat: Asian Merchants and State Power', *Comparative Studies in Society and History (CSSH)*, 1995, p.754.

⁴ See, Burhan's *Tuzuk-i-Waljahi*, Vol.I,p-39, cited in Manzoor Alam,' Masulipatnam: A Metropolitan Port in the Seventeenth century, *Islamic culture*, 1959, p. 169. For the ports supposed ancient antiquity see, R. C Mazumdar, *The Classical Accounts of India*, Calcutta, 1981,p.307.

⁵ Even the Venetian traveller Marco Polo, who visited the eastern coast does not mention Masulipatnam even in passing. He however, mentions Motupalli and to a lesser extent Pulicat or Pralayakaveri.

played only a marginal role in the overseas commerce. It was only from the 1560's that there was a regular mention of Masulipatnam and its participation in coastal trade in the Portuguese documentation. The meagre mention of Masulipatnam in the trading invoices of the Portuguese *Estado da India* can be accounted for its anti Portuguese network. There is evidence however, to suggest that the port may have been an important coastal trading centre catering to the whole of Bay of Bengal even prior to the European participation in the sixteenth century.⁶ The rise of Masulipatnam from an insignificant coastal outlet to that of a major 'emporium' centre in the seventeenth century can be attributed to two important developments in the last quarter of the sixteenth century. Firstly, the consolidation of the kingdom of Golconda in Krishna and Godavari deltas in which the port was situated and from where it drew most of its merchandise, and secondly to the changing continental dynamics of trade in consciously developing an anti-*Estado* network by the Sultanate of Aceh in northern Sumatra and by 1580's with Pegu. Pegu especially substituted Melaka as an entrepot which was at the heart of the Portuguese *Estado* network of trade.⁷ Thus, the south east Asian network became a major determining factor for the rise of Masulipatnam in the sixteenth century.

The Kingdom of Golconda was established by the Sultan Quli, the founder of the Qutb Shahi dynasty. His first concern was to subdue the chiefs of coastal Andhra which was implemented

⁶ See, Sanjay Subrahmanyam, *The Political Economy of Commerce: Southern India 1500-1650*, Cambridge, 1990. pp.147-149.

⁷ *Ibid.* p. 149

immediately after the death of Krishna Devaraya in 1530, the powerful monarch of the neighbouring Vijayanagara. After four years of rigorous campaigns, Sultan Quli gained control over the districts of Krishna and Godavari and successfully unseated the Gajapatis of Orissa and made it his eastern frontier. Nevertheless his conquests were only partial. It was left to Ibrahim Qutb shah (1550-1580) to consolidate the kingdom by successfully bringing most of the Chiefs of Krishna and Godavari river basins under his control. From then onwards, these local chiefs continued to be the tribute payers to the Kingdom and is therefore of particular importance to us because it represented the zone where the state penetration was met both cooperation and confrontation in a limited manner .⁸

By 1560's the links between the eastern seaboard centered around Masulipatnam and Peddapalli (Nizampatnam) and Golconda was firmly established. The consolidation of Krishna and Godavari deltas by Ibrahim Qutb Shah gave access to the rich fertile zones clustered with villages of craft production, specialised towns which till now catered to domestic markets and occasionally to foreign markets as well.

The political access to the coastal areas coincided with the expansion of trade to south east Asia from about 1570's which picked up rapidly by the next decade and brought Masulipatnam into the Coromandel and south east Asian network of trade. One

⁸ H.K. Sherwani, 'Qutbu'l- Mulk's Military Campaigns', *Journal of Indian History* (JIH,) xxxiv, April, 1956, pp.1-31. and by the same author, *Tilangana under Ibrahim Qutb Shah: Diplomacy and Military Campaigns, Part I* , 1550-1565, and *JIH*, xxxv, 1957, pp. 247-69 and 1958,pp.73-100.

notable feature of this expansion of markets has been the corresponding growth of hinterland of the port throughout the seventeenth century. For example, iron and steel which was in demand in Mocha, Achin, Arakan and Tennasarim came from the mines of Nagulwanche in Khammam, almost 100 miles interior from the port. Like wise most of the patterned cloth needed in West Asia, Indonesia and Europe came from Krishna delta, while the ports main export the plain calico was largely produced in the Godavari delta.⁹

Neither the contemporary literature on trade nor the modern scholars are sure of the extent of the hinterland the port commanded. Thomas Bowrey for instance, found many weavers and chintz makers in the near vicinity of two to four miles to that of a 100 miles radius.¹⁰ There is no doubt that the hinterland extended much deeper than what Thomas Bowrey had informed. Raw cotton for example, necessarily came from the central Deccan and perhaps from the Karnatic frontier of Rayalaseema and Telengana. The Dutch and the English for instance maintained a regular factory at Nagulwanche (khamman district in Modern Telangana) for the procurement of cotton, Indigo and cloth.¹¹

Despite such deep interior it is difficult for us to clearly demarcate the extent of its hinterland of Masulipatnam as it showed considerable variations in size and extent in the period

⁹ F. C. Danver's, ed., *Letters Received from its Servants*, Vol. I, 1602-13, p.75 and Sanjay Subrahmanyam/Rural Industry and Commercial Manufacture', pp.92-93.

¹⁰ R. C. Temple, ed., Thomas Bowrey, *The Geographical Account of Countries around the Bay of Bengal*, Hakluyt Society, 1908 p. 106.

¹¹ R. C. Temple, ed., Strenysham Master, *The Diaries of Stryensham Master and other papers relating Thereto 1675-1680*, (S. Master) in 2 Vols, Vol. I pp.267-268 fn and Vol. II p.1 10.

under consideration. The hinterland was susceptible to the fluctuating nature of the demand and supply structures which were violent in this period. Besides it was a common feature in the seventeenth century to find very often new places being added up to the port's hinterland, while the old suppliers declined whenever the localised specialization lost its export potential in the over seas markets which constricted the hinterland of Masulipatnam. The hinterland was also dictated by non-economic factors, most notably the regional political scenario, in this case the transformation of Golconda state into a more bureaucratic system in 1670's and finally to the Mughal intervention in coastal Andhra. It may be noted that the non-economic factors cannot be attributed to the so called 'disruption of hinterland theory' which is often encountered in the historiography on the subject but to use these factors specifically in the context of the imperatives of time and space. Various merchant/administrators, the lesser mentioned chiefs and other hereditary intermediaries (*Zamindars*) whose activities clearly played a decisive role in the hinterland of Masulipatnam became crucial factors in the expansion and constricting the hinterland in the late seventeenth century. Thus one can find the concept of "political hinterland " as a suitable analysis in understanding the political economy of the northern Coromandel.

The export trade of Masulipatnam depended on weaving industry located predominantly in the Krishna and Godavari deltas. The textiles exported from Masulipatnam may be broadly characterized into patterned and plain varieties. The patterned cloth, also called or paintings had a limited market and was mainly

exported to West Asia and Europe which the companies assiduously developed from 1620's onwards. The patterned cloth industry was predominantly concentrated in the Krishna delta. Basing on the Dutch documentation, Joseph J. Brenning has identified as many as seventeen weaving villages in the Krishna delta of which Viravasaram, Gunupudi, Elurupadu, Paravamundipeta, Peyyeru, Korraguntapalem and Bezawada had an average of ten to sixty weaving households in each of these villages.¹²

The calico, both coarse and finer varieties (*salnmpuris*, *percallas*, gingham and guinea cloth) were the principal exporting varieties from the port of Masulipatnam. These varieties were mainly produced in the twin districts of east and west Godavari regions. As early as 1613, Peter Floris wrote to Thomas Aldeworth,

"I do send you musters from the finest to coarsest— the advise is that coarser or common sort will sell better and in greater quantity with better profit than the finer sort. I don't see how the fine calicoes can give a great profit" ¹³

¹² Joseph J. Brenning, 'Textile Producers and production in late Seventeenth Century Coromandel' (*IESHR*), xxiii, 1986, Table 3, p.339.

¹³ Peter Floris was referring to the calicoes and not the finer ones like the muslins. The most important muslin variety was *bethelles* found in the Nagulwanche area, 100 miles from Masulipatnam. See, F. C. Danver's, ed, *Letters received*, Vol. II, 1613-1615, p.59. William Methwold, the Chief factor at Masulipatnam too commented in 1620's that " Calicoes of all sorts are in this place as cheap and plentiful as in any other parts of the country, but different in making and easily distinguishable from any other place" See, *Methwold Relations*, in W.H, Moreland ed, *Relations of Golconda in the Early Seventeenth century*, Hakluyt society, 1930, p.35 (*Relations*).

Within the eastern and western segments of Godavari, we find that the east Godavari had a substantial number of weaving villages. The Dutch who established factories here and gained preferential rights over some of the villages had extensively surveyed the weaving activity in the district. Joseph Brenning who studied the textile industry in the northern Coromandel plain has reconstructed the distribution of weaving villages from the Dutch documentation housed in *Algemeen Rijksarchief*, at The Hague, and graphically demonstrated the existence of extremely differentiated villages and marketing centres with specialised varieties of cloth catering to overseas markets in the late seventeenth century. The information here on the hinterland is taken from his study on pre-modern textile industry in the northern Coromandel and at the same time an attempt has been made to supplement it with the English documents (though meagre when compared to the VOC) thus providing a comprehensive picture of not only the participation of the companies but also of the Indian mercantile operations.

In the east Godavari delta, the Dutch factory was at Draksharamam, a major pilgrimage centre. The Dutch identified Dulla and Vemagiri as being important sources of supplying cloth while Teeperu of the same region as a major centre for cotton procurement. Draksharamam was the main marketing town and as many as 16 villages were identified with 6,000 households having 6,930 looms within its sector.¹⁴ The Dutch had gained preferential

¹⁴ Joseph J Brenning, *the Textile Trade of the seventeenth century- Northern Coromandel: A Study of Pre-modern Export Industry in the late Seventeenth century*, Ph.D Thesis, University of Wisconsin, 1975 p.240.

rights over the Draksharamam factory and exercised a near monopoly on the villages within its vicinity. Tuni had as many as 500 to 600 weaving households, Ponneru with 350 households and Upperu with 150 households, all involving in one activity or the other connected with weaving.¹⁵ It is interesting to note that the number of weaving households always exceeded the number of general households in these villages. Other prominent centres of weaving in the east Godavari delta were Nagaram, Amalapuram, Tatipaka, Mummadvaram, and Yudurulanka.

Palakollu was the main weaving marketing town on the west Godavari delta. Its hinterland comprised of as many as 23 villages of which the largest were Talleru, Viravasaram, Gunapudi, Daddanapudi, Sisali, and Kallakuru with an average of 30 households in each of these villages.¹⁶ Palakollu sector was famous for *salampuris*, long-cloth, *morees* and also for dyeing of cloth. The goods were sent either by overland routes or by flat bottomed boats to Vinteru and from there by road to Masulipatnam.¹⁷ Within Palakollu were the twin towns of Viravasaram and Madapollem. Madapollem acted as a sort of satellite supply centre to the port of Narsapurpeta which was just nine miles away. The English were instrumental in establishing

¹⁵ Tuni as a major marketing centre for cloth for both the English and the Dutch. Adjoining Tuni were two villages of Gollapalem and Gondavaram. Gollapalem for instance, had 34 weaving households out of total 61 houses while Gondavaram had 14 weaving households. Gondavaram however had 74 washermen houses who were involved in washing and bleaching of cloth. See S. Arasaratnam, *Merchants, Companies and Commerce on the Coromandel coast 1650-1740*, New Delhi, 1986, p.51 and Sanjay Subrahmanyam, 'Rural Industry and Commercial Manufacture,' *P&P*, pp.102-103.

¹⁶ Joseph Brenning, *The Textile Trade*, p.293.

¹⁷ S. Arasaratnam, *Merchants, Companies and Commerce*, p.52.

their factories in Viravasaram and Madapollem with preferential rights to procure and trade in cloth. On Viravasaram, the English factors wrote:

"It is necessary that had it not been for it we should not have invested half our monys in it. Most of the white cloth that hath bin provided was brought out of those small villages that are adjacent to it—"¹⁸

Though the English records do not mention about the number of villages and households under weaving like their Dutch counterparts did for Palakollu and Draksharamam, it can however, be suggested that this region was clustered with weaving villages for which Madapollem was the main centre for marketing. Viravasaram had been the main supply centre to Madapollem particularly when the latter became an independent factory of the English in 1680's.¹⁹ The English reported that they could procure yearly great quantities of calico, all the country near it being weavers".²⁰ The villages which may have supplied cloth to the factories of Madapollem were Modderupalem, Peddagollapalem, Chinnagollapalem, Kalipatnam, and Upputeru .²¹

¹⁸ William Foster ed, *The English Factories in India*, 13 Vols, (EFI), 1634-36 P. 296 and *EF1*. 1655-60 p. 39.

¹⁹ Joseph Brenning has suggested that the decline of Viravasaram from about 1670's to the deliberate policy of the English company in abandoning the factory. In his own analysis of Dutch documentation, Viravasaram was mentioned as a town with as many as 40 weaving households. The relative decline of Viravasaram from the English documentation can be attributed to the rise of Madapollem as an independent factory which reduced Viravasaram to a mere supply centre which did not necessarily mean any reduction in its weaving capacity. Joseph Brenning, *The Textile Industry* p.293

²¹ See, Memorial of Stryensham Master, *Records of Fort St. George, Diary and Consultation Book, 1679-1680 (RFSG)*, p.95 and *S. Master, Vol. I*, p. 88.

To the north of Masulipatnam, about 60 miles, was Eluru which produced *percallas*, *salampuris* and *bethilles* apart from being famous for carpet industry.²² Bapatla was the major centre for coarse cloth produced near Vetapalem and Nayanapalli. As many as 32 weaving villages were identified along the route to Masulipatnam.²³

Krishna district proper, did not have many weaving villages specializing in coarse varieties. The district specialised in the super fine variety of cloth called paintings which was not yet a major merchandise to the companies at least till the last quarter of the seventeenth century. Bezawada for instance, though had as many as 50 weaving households, an equal number of *komati* households suggests that it was a major marketing centre rather than that of production.

When we continue our journey along the river Godavari into the interior, we come to Nagulwanche sector (Khammam district), the main centre for production and marketing of *bethilles*, a cloth which was in demand in west Asia and European market. Nagulwanche itself had 150 weaving households and about 20 washermen houses suggesting the dyeing specialty of various kinds. Makkapeta which was situated close to Nagulwanche had about 100 weaving households.²⁴ The main weaving villages in Makkapeta division were Penuganchiprolu, Mustikunta, Nawabpeta, Jujur, Gosavidu, Vipparala, Makkapeta and

²² *Ibid.* Vol. I, p. 86., *RFSG, Diary and Consultation Book, 1679-1680*, pp. 99-100. and S. Arasaratanam, *Merchants, Companies and Commerce*, p. 53

²³ *EFI 1630-33* p. 230.

²⁴ Sanjay Subrahmanyam, *The Political Economy of Commerce*, p. 75.

Komaravalli (the last being just about 30 Km from Hyderabad, the capital city of Golconda).²⁵ Apart from cloth production, Nagulwanche and Palawancha were the centres of iron and steel which was regularly sent to Narsapurpeta, the main ship building centre on the northern Coromandel. Jean Baptiste Tavernier mentioned that Batavia could sell 1000 piculs of iron and 30,000 pieces of steel annually which were exported from Masulipatnam direct or from Narsapurpeta.²⁶ Though the contemporary evidence is silent on a possible route to Hyderabad from Nagulwanche we can however, surmise that there existed one such route, the former being the main centre of consumption of steel.

The naming of the eastern gate of Charminar as *Machilikaman* (literally meaning fish, in this case specifically meaning a gate to the fishing town of Machilipatnam) not only testifies the symbiotic relationship between port and the capital but also to the importance given to trade by the Sultanate of Golconda. Hyderabad was the biggest consumption centre in pre-colonial south India. The capital which housed the Kings and its retinue in twin cities of Golconda and Hyderabad (since 1591) and the residences of the nobility and other higher administrative staff, were the main consumers of the imports from the eastern coast, notably from Masulipatnam and Peddapalli. However, the city's economic base was not limited to consumption alone as we find high valued goods such as rarities and horses from Persia, and

²⁵ S. Master, Vol. I, p. 267, 268fn.

²⁶ William Crooke and V. Ball ed, Jean Baptiste Tavernier, *Travels in India*, 2 Vol.s, Vol. II, P. 239,251 and also See, Thomas Bowrey, *the Geographical Account*, p. 102.

other commodities going overland to Surat and various other parts of Mughal north India thus suggesting that Hyderabad was a major redistributive city for many a itinerant merchants going overland. Van den Broeke, a Dutch factor at Surat who travelled overland to Masulipatnam via Hyderabad recorded his itinerary. He found a substantial number of small and big urban centres which help us in establishing that Hyderabad was a main centre for itinerant merchants travelling overland between north and south and east and west axis in the seventeenth century. Van Broeke's journey took him from Surat to Baglan, Patoda, Nizampur, Daulatabad, Ambad, Sholapur and reached Golconda. From Golconda, Broeke took the more familiar route of Ibrahimpatnam, Kondapalli, Vuyyuru and reached Masulipatnam after one and half months.²⁷

Starting roughly from 1580's, the contacts between Golconda and Masulipatnam remained intact till 1680's — a history of hundred year span in which both port and the capital prospered due to their mutual interdependence. There was a constant

²⁷ Van Dan Broeke started from Surat in October, 1617 with 103 Dutchmen and 21 native guides and reached Masulipatnam after one and half months. See, F.C. Danver's, *Letters Received*, Vol. VI, 1617, p. xxvii. Other merchants who travelled overland from surat to Masulipatnam in the seventeenth century were Reyensyten, Andrew Cogan, Jean E3aptiste Tavernier and Thevenot. See for details, Sanjay Subrahmanyam, *The Political Economy of Commerce*, p. 79. For a typical itinerary between Golconda and Masulipatnam see, Diogo do Couto, *Da Asia, Decada Decima*, (reprint), Lisbon, 1973, Part 1, p.14-15, 74-83 and Arquivo Nacional da Torre do Tombo, Lisbon, *Mamiscritos da Livraria*, No. 1104, fl. 104-105. cited in Sanjay Subrahmanyam, 'The port of Masulipatnam 1550-1750' in Narayani Gupta, ed., *Craftsmen and Merchants: Studies in South Indian urbanism*, New Delhi, 1992. p. 54. Thevenot's route was different from those mentioned in the Portuguese documentation. From Golconda he travelled to Amberpet, Chalkapalli, Pangal, Amangal, surchelaquintla, Gurgaluru, Anantagiri, Pendyala, Madduru, Krishna, Vuyyuru, Nilapalli, Madduru, Guduru and Masulipatnam. See, S.N. Sen, ed., *Indian Travels of Thevenot and Carreri*, New Delhi, 1949 pp 146-147 and 334 fn. and *Santanavuru Kaijiyat*, Prakasam Zilla, A.P.State Archives, Hyderabad 1994.

movement of goods and men, traders of all kinds ~ from small time peddlers to seasonal merchants like the *banjaras* who carried bulk commodities such as cotton and grain, to great continental merchants such as the Persians and Hindus and finally the state itself. The relationship between Masulipatnam and Golconda was so important that the Sultanate of Golconda was able to develop a vast hinterland and one might even be tempted to characterize the Sultanate of Golconda as a state with strong leanings towards mercantilism.

The direct route between Golconda and Masulipatnam was clustered with marketing centres such as Pangal, Nandigama, Kondapalli, Bezawada and Vuyyuru. Though the European documentation is silent on the character of these small and big towns, most of them seem to have been centres of consumption as well as marketing for the local *Zamindars* and even to a substantial number of *Sar-samtu* officials of Qutb Shahi kingdom. Nandigama for instance, emerged as a main marketing town for grain to be transported not only to the coast for overseas and coastal trade but also to various *Zamindari* areas within the region. Kondapalli, the most important politico-administrative centre in Krishna district was perhaps the main centre of marketing and as well as consumption for the goods coming from and to Masulipatnam. The *Santanavuru Kaifiyat* mentions that during the reign of Abdullah Qutb Shah, two *Sar-samutu* officials, Aziz Khan and Asad Khan arranged *samutubandis* at Ravuru, thus bringing several villages like Motupalli, Chinna Ganjam, Mattigunta, Karampeta, Palakurti, Pamarru, Ananthavaram, Ganapavaram and Ramayampatnam

under its jurisdiction. This suggests the existence of various villages and local marketing towns operating within the Hyderabad and Kondapalli sectors.²⁸ These villages and *palems* played a crucial role in linking the local production to continental trade. Both the state apparatus and the local officials at the village level acted as main insulators for local trade which in turn was linked to overseas trade. The bulk goods marketed in small fairs (interestingly '*Santa*' of the above mentioned *Kaifiyat* literally means fair and '*vuru*' a village) became a major link between the local grain production and marketing for local and overseas trade and the weaving economy on which it depended. These markets regularly supplied grain to various specialist villages of weaving, notably to the coast and thus cushioned the export oriented textile economy of the coast.

The Krishna delta which was not yet on the textile map in the period under review had other advantages. It was the richest rice growing district and had substantial number of diamond mines which catered to demand in Europe and west Asia. Grain which was crucial for the port's economy came from the vast alluvial tracts of Krishna district. The peasants produced for markets which was perhaps sold in the local fairs while the *banjaras* and other itinerant merchants carried it to long distances. This level of economic activity was crucial because it was at this level that professional merchants came to interact in the actual production economy. As far as diamond procurement and trade was

²⁸ *Santanvuru Kaifiyat, Prakasam Zilla Kaifiyattulu*, A.P.State Archives, Hyderabad, 1992.

concerned, Tavernier identified as many as fifty diamond mines in the Kingdom of Golconda, notably in the Krishna district.²⁹ The biggest diamond mine was at Kolluru in the Krishna district. If we have to believe Tavernier, the mine was inhabited with around 100,000 souls and on an average 60,000 people constantly laboured in the mine. The mines were declared as a state monopoly and were often farmed to prosperous entrepreneurs in the seventeenth century.³⁰ However, it must be mentioned that the diamond industry and trade underwent violent fluctuations especially in the last decades of the seventeenth century when the Persian markets declined considerably.³¹ Nevertheless, the active participation and the formation of powerful syndicates by English private traders in this trade had considerably reactivated the diamond industry of Krishna district at least in the last quarter of the seventeenth century.³²

By the second half of the seventeenth century the hinterland of Masulipatnam was more or less streamlined. While there is no denying that the port's hinterland expanded considerably over a period of time, one can also witness frequent restructuring of the hinterland which proved detrimental to the

²⁹ Tavernier, *Travels in India*, Vol. II, p. 348-351.

³⁰ The mines of Kolluru in Krishna district and Manimadugu of Jammulamadugu Taluq in Cuddapah district were regularly farmed by Mir Jumla since 1650's. Like wise among the Europeans, the Dutch farmed a segment of Kolluru mines with the help of a Telugu merchant and in fact established a mill at Masulipatnam for trimming of diamonds. See, *jammulamadugu Kaifiyat*, Roll No 9, AP State Archives, Hyderabad, and *EFI* 1622-23 p.221.

³¹ Om Prakash, ed., *The Dutch Factories in India*, New Delhi, 1984, p.209,111 & 248.

³² Soren Mentz, *British country trade* ' pp.155-56.

port. In other words, the hinterland of Masulipatnam did not uniform development during the period under study.

To establish this, we will take only random samples of such frequent fluctuations in the hinterland of Masulipatnam. Vetapalem (Guntur district) for instance, which was traditionally sending cloth to Peddapalli (Nizampatnam), for some reasons not dear in the sources, started exporting textiles to Masulipatnam since 1660. This may have expanded the volume of trade at Masulipatnam, but on the other hand seem to have adversely affected the port of Peddapalli. It is also not clear if the Peddapalli merchants sent goods to Masulipatnam on regular basis, for, in 1676 the local merchants of Nizampatnam (Peddapalli) requested Stryensham Master, the Governor of Madrasapatnam, to reopen English factory in the port. Likewise, in the last decade of the seventeenth century, when the companies negotiated for Divi island (Krishna district) and Ingeram (East Godavari) to develop these ports as satellites to Masulipatnam it proved to be an additional advantage to the main port but once they lost their satellite character and became independent of Masulipatnam in the first decades of the eighteenth century, the trade at Masulipatnam was adversely affected. In fact it will be argued in the later section that the changes wrought in the east Godavari district which was so crucial for the port's export economy actually led to the decline of Masulipatnam.

The Persian Market, English East India Company and the
Freight Trade

The most significant development in the mid seventeenth century was the reopening of the Persian gulf market to the

Coromandel coast. This trade not only increased the volume of Masulipatnam's exports but also paved way for Persian immigrant merchants to trade between Masulipatnam and Bandar Abbas which in turn led to a large scale realignment of the political formation in Golconda. One can clearly see a shift in the mercantile operations from traditional Hindu mercantile groups into the hands of Persian emigrants. However, the direct participation of Persian merchants did not lead to the decline of Hindu merchants *per se*, but one suggest that their trading operations were restricted to the districts of Godavari, while the main route between Hyderabad and Masulipatnam came to be dominated by Persian merchants. The revival of Hindu merchants in the late seventeenth century was based on the relationship which they developed with the local *Zamindars* and the European companies. The direct participation of Persian merchants had far reaching consequences for the regional state formation in the Sultanate of Golconda.

Amongst the European companies, the Persian freight trade especially proved advantageous to the English company and to English private traders: the latter particularly seem to have supplanted the Asian freight operators in the last quarter of the seventeenth century.

Two unrelated developments, one in Persia and the other in Golconda fostered the Persia- Golconda links through overseas trade in the seventeenth century. On the Persian front, Shah Abbas 1 (1587-1629) resented the Portuguese control over the port of Hormuz. The silk routes of North-west and south-east axis was dominated by Portuguese at a time the Shah of Persia declared silk

as a state monopoly and made attempts to control silk price directly under royal seal.³³ The idea behind such a step was to recruit mercenaries and pay for armaments to check the external threats from the Ottoman's and the internal dissension within the empire. He was quick to realise that the necessary money came from the trading sector i.e., through an effective control of the ports of Persia.³⁴ By far the most important port of the time was Hormuz which was under the Portuguese control which restricted Persian operations especially in the silk trade.

The Shah of Persia entered into an alliance with the English company in order to curtail the growing presence of the Portuguese who had the exclusive control over the port of Hormuz. In the war that ensued between the combined forces of English and Shah of Persia and the Portuguese, Hormuz was effectively taken over by the Shah Abbas 1. According to the treaty between the English and Shah Abbas, the company was given half the spoils of the war and in addition were exempted from paying any taxes and dues to the Persian king in perpetuity.³⁵ One notable outcome of the fall of Hormuz was the development of Bandar Abbas which the Shah had built with great pomp and celebration.

On the Golconda front, the newly consolidated Sultanate was involved in a series of wars against the Vijayanagara (now centered in Chandragiri), while the first signs of Mughal threat was felt by 1620's which climaxed into what was called the "Deed of

³³ Sanjay Subrahmanyam, *The Portuguese Empire in Asia: A Political and Economic History*, Longman, p. 149.

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ *EFI* 1622-23 p. viii,x.

submission" in 1636. Within the state structure, Golconda was involved in the process of consolidation which involved the subjugation of traditional ruling elite at the local level under its control and supplanting state machinery in these areas which however, was met with limited success. Though, the main strength of Sultanate of Golconda depended on the collaboration of various *Nayak* elite of Telangana and northern Coromandel, the state had to reconcile to mere tribute paying and had to allow fiscal autonomy to these chiefdoms. Despite the fact that Golconda never achieved the desired centralisation at the local level, the pressures from the Mughal empire and the expanding kingdom of Bijapur from the westward forced Golconda to identify new economic zones for its sustenance. Thus the immediate fiscal necessity to achieve political consolidation at the localities, and to come into terms with the expanding neighbours pushed the state to intervene in the commercial sector to finance both external pressures and internal political contradictions. The state adopted two distinct methods to garner the finances, i) was to take recourse in revenue farming as a measure to increase economic surplus to the state, and ii) allying with mercantile groups, in this case the Persian emigrant merchants. The fiscal exigencies of the Sultanate of Golconda as seen in the revenue farming was primarily to extend the states influence on agrarian, commercial and trading sectors, and perhaps an attempt to centralise the state fiscal system.³⁶

³⁶ Sanjay Subrahmanyam has argued that revenue farming in Golconda was predominantly a product of response to crisis' to various external and internal pressures. While accepting that Golconda was piquently placed in the seventeenth century between the Mughals and its own internal contradictions,

There was one feature common to both the Sultanates of Persia and Golconda in the seventeenth century. Both the states aimed at political consolidation which necessarily came from the economic reorganisation at various levels of state authority. It pushed the states to intervene in commercial sector and trade rather than merely depend on the agrarian surplus. The states intervention in these sectors was done not so much by its direct participation but through encouraging various categories of 'private' persons to participate in the production economy and trade and by giving these men a 'semi- official' status within the state administrative structure. This was best exemplified in the nature of revenue farmers and their direct participation in state political systems as well.

Parallels between Persia and Golconda can be found in the way these states reacted to a given set of propositions in specific context of time. Both the states thoroughly exploited the non-agrarian resource base by imposing monopoly in certain sectors of industry and trade and by exercising tight controls over the movement of goods. Thus, if Shah Abbas tried to monopolise silk trade and controlled its sales price, his Golconda counterparts, imposed monopoly in diamonds, salt and grain markets through *Gudem* tax within its dominion.³⁷

revenue farming may also be seen within the context of the states desire to centralise its apparatus, no matter how much it succeeded in the process. Sanjay Subrahmanyam, 'Aspects of State formation in south India and south east Asia' pp.368-372

³⁷ The diamond mines for example, were exclusively farmed by the king, though he may have occasionally farmed them to private entrepreneurs as well. In the case of farming of the mines, the King demanded diamonds with 10 carats of weight and above as his monopoly. More important however, was the tight

The process through which the Sultanate of Golconda participated in trade was both direct and indirect. Some of the provinces which had direct access to ports were declared as *Khalisa*, the revenue of which directly went to the King. However, the King also gave some of the *Khalisa* lands to revenue farming for prospective entrepreneurs who in turn could sublet them to others. In coastal Andhra, one sees a hierarchy of revenue farmers operating in the ports. Throughout the period under consideration i.e., both under Golconda and Mughals, Masulipatnam and Nizampatnam remained under *khalisa*, the revenue being 1,80,000 pagodas and 80,000 per annum respectively, according to a seventeenth century estimate. Perhaps, more crucial was the indirect manner in which the state intervened in trading sector. It did so by actively collaborating/ aligning itself with the mercantile groups who operated in the port towns of Coromandel. The state consciously gave them preferential treatment in trade. Apart from the preferential rights extended to Persians, Golconda created a political space for these merchants within its administrative structure. Thus the dichotomy, we often find in the Asian historiography, between the merchant and administrator as two distinct entities was blurred in the Sultanate of Golconda.

Prior to the opening of Persian market through the sea, most of the trade between Golconda and Persia went through overland routes.³⁸ Though the overland trade had its own advantageous, it

control over grain trade in the Kingdom of Golconda through imposition of *Guddem* tax in the later seventeenth century.

³⁸ Though we do have evidence to suggest that Masulipatnam vessels were plying to Mocha from 1590's, the overseas trade seemed to be very marginal. In 1590 of total 54 vessels sent to the east Asia only 2 were actually directed to the

became increasingly unprofitable due to high rates of taxation along the route which often escalated the prices of commodities. It is perhaps for this reason that the Portuguese exports through sea from Hormuz to the east were much cheaper than those which were sent overland from India to Persia.³⁹ The merchants of Masulipatnam more than welcomed the revival of the sea route to Golconda from Persia in 1634, which was outside the logic of Portuguese control of trade.⁴⁰ The Masulipatnam merchants sent goods cheaper on ships specially meant to carry freight and in the process gained a huge profit margins.

Scale of Freight charges from Masulipatnam to Persia 1642

Cloth	1 1/2 pagodas per maund
Bengal Sugar	8 pagodas per candy of 500 lb.
Coarse sugar	4 pagodas per candy of 500 LB
Gunwale	7
Benzene	12/15
Cloves	16
Tin	8 " "
Steel	6 " "
Passengers	10

Source: *EFI*, 1642-45, p.65.

Bay of Bengal. See Neils Steensgard, *Carracks, Caravans, And Companies: The Structural Crisis in the European -Asian Trade in the Early Seventeenth Century*, Copenhagen, 1972. cited in Sanjay Subrahmanyam, *The Portuguese Empire in Asia*, p. 156

³⁹ Most of the Persian trade was centered in six ports of Iran: Harmuz, Banten, Jasque, Bandar Abbas Behrain and Rashell.

⁴⁰ The first freight ship from Masulipatnam sailed to Bandar Abbas in 1632 with 400 bales of cloth and 130 passengers, this ship sailed under the English flag but with varied merchandise belonging for most part to the Asian merchants. *EFI* 1630-33 p 236-37.

The freight trade between Masulipatnam and Persia was initiated by the English East India Company. However, it was dominated by Persian merchants throughout the first half of the seventeenth century. The careers of Mir Kamaluddin and Muhammad Sayyid Ardestani are interesting as they practically monopolised this trade from Masulipatnam to Bandar Abbas. The English company which was a keen competitor to Persian merchants in carrying freight trade, time and again complained that Mir Kamaluddin was reducing the English freight into a non-entity. Mir Kamaluddin operated his freight regularly from Masulipatnam from 1620's onwards. In the initial years of career in trade, Mir Kamaluddin preferred freighting goods in the company's ships belonging to the Dutch, English and Danes to Persia.⁴¹ He maintained good and steady relations with the companies for sending of freight before he himself embarked on independent shipping in 1628 which, however, proved disastrous.⁴² Mir Kamaluddin effectively used the governor ship of Narsapurpeta for building his own ships which ranged from 200 to 450 tones. However, his independent shipping failed to have any impact on the monopoly market and most often had to contend with freighting in the company ships. Further, his activities depended mainly on the cordial relations maintained with the companies, though we do have instances of his reprisals on the Dutch and English in 1630's.

⁴¹ Tapan Raychaudhury, *Jan Company in Coromandel*, S Gravenhague, 1969, p.87.

⁴² For Mirkamaludin's career, see, Sanjay Subrahmanyam, *The Political Economy of Commerce*, p. 314-322 and EFI 1630-33 p. 296.

It was left to his successor, Muhammad Sayyid Ardestani, popularly known as Mir Jumla, to embark on a massive politico-mercantile aggrandizement in south India. The main strength of Mir Jumla lay in his capacity to control the actual process of production which proved advantageous to his shipping career which spanned more than three decades.

Born in 1590, Muhammad Sayyid started his career as a horse trader and a leading diamond merchant in the kingdom of Golconda. As the *havaladar* of Nizampatnam, Mir Jumla entered into a conflict with VOC over sending freight goods to Persia.⁴³ Till about 1639, Mir Jumla mainly concentrated on freighting goods in European ships, but in the same year sent his first ship to Bandar Abbas. It was not an accident that Mir Jumla's independent voyage to Persia coincided with his elevation to the position of *Sar-i-Khail* in that year. This new position allowed him to expand his trade to Pegu, Kedah, Perak, and Persian Gulf which he continued till 1660's.⁴⁴ At the zenith of his career Mir Jumla owned as many as 10 vessels which dominated the Indian ocean area.

The companies very often complained the 'ubiquitous' presence of his ships in the Indian ocean.⁴⁵ Apart from the south

⁴³ Most of the information on Mirjumla is taken from the works of Sanjay Subrahmanyam, Joseph Brenning and J.N Sarkar. The analysis of Sanjay Subrahmanyam is of particular importance to us because he is perhaps the only historian to study Mirjumla as a merchant with a Portfolio interests such as trade and politics, the former obviously taking primacy over the latter. For that particular freighting voyage See, Sanjay Subrahmanyam, *The Political Economy of Commerce*, p.323 and *Dagh Register*, 1637, p.94 and *EFI* 1642-45. Andrew Cogan, the Chief of Masulipatnam wrote to the Company " to accept the freight to Persia, as they cannot expect any of it at Masulipatnam where the *Serkhail* will monopolise all that is available", p. 65-67.

⁴⁴ *ibid* p. 322-327. and Joseph Brenning, *The Textile Trade*, Chapter I.

⁴⁵ *EFI* 1642-45, p.207 and *EFI* 1651-54, p. 12-13.

east Asian voyages, Mir Jumla dominated the Persian gulf trade which allowed him to have a regular contact with his Persian counterparts at Bandar Abbas and Hormuz. The main success of his Persian trade came when he gained preferential rights from Golconda to trade in the Coromandel overseas commerce. For instance, in 1640's Mir Jumla attempted at breaking the Dutch monopoly in cloves and pepper by gaining preferential rights in its import trade to the Coromandel⁴⁶ Through his intervention in production process and a near monopoly position in overseas trade, Mir Jumla held the double advantage of operating very competitively with the Europeans in the high sea commerce ~ a typical character of a portfolio management in the seventeenth century south India. He often collaborated with his Asian competitors as he did with the English in freighting goods to Persia and never hesitated to confront them whenever necessary for his trading operations. As a Mir Jumla' he frequently flouted his official position by manipulating the royal *firman*s which gave concessions to the European companies, a process which vindicated the European trade. The English factors wrote in 1644:

⁴⁶ Sanjay Subrahmanyam, *The Political Economy of Commerce* , p. 326.

" He sends yearly from the coast to Persia a large quantity of goods which under pretense that they belong to the King of Golcondah, (he) expects should be landed free of customs, insoe much as concerns your proportion thereof in retaliation of the immunities you receive in his country: but they be properly Kings or his, is not much material since he governs the King and consequently the country".⁴⁷

There is every reason to believe that his trading prospects in the Coromandel trade increased correspondingly to the official positions held during the years 1630-1655. One might suggest after a closer analysis of Mir Jumla's politico-mercantile aggrandizement in the mid-seventeenth century and his subsequent defection to the Mughal camp in 1650's that defections/ factions were embedded in the very nature on how entrepreneurship developed in the seventeenth century. There is no doubt that revenue farming became crucial in determining the careerism in south India which implicitly provided space for defections as well. These entrepreneurs thoroughly exploited the political fluidity of the seventeenth century. In fact after the decline of Vijayanagara we find in south India, the numerous defections of *Palegadu* lineages in the central Coromandel region. Defection was a product of the logic of state formation in south India. South Indian states, including Golconda, were forced to provide independent economic

⁴⁷ *EFI 1642-45 p.207.*

and political space outside the purview of its official machinery which in turn gave scope for factions and defections which was done as career enhancement. Surely then, Careerism prevailed over loyalty to the state in the changing political equations which was wrought by constant threats due to Mughal expansion into south India.

Among the European companies, the English had a definite edge over the VOC in the Persian Gulf trade from Masulipatnam. In the period between 1620-40, the Persian market gave a new boost to the English company, especially at a time when the company was threatened at London by consistent financial losses, severe military reprisals of the VOC in south east Asia, the outbreak of thirty years war on the continent, war and famine in India and problems of share holders at the India Office ; on the whole phase of crisis for the English Company.

Three developments seemed to have contributed for the consolidation of the English commerce between Persia and Coromandel. Firstly, the privileges of free access to the port of Bandar Abbas in perpetuity, Secondly, the 'Golden *Firman*' from Abdullah Qutb Shah in 1634 and thirdly, the relative lack of interest of the Dutch in the freight trade west Asia .⁴⁸ Further the rise of Bandar Abbas and the subsequent decline of Hormuz checked the Portuguese presence in Persia which left only English and the Dutch to compete in west Indian Ocean. The English sent three separate voyages to Persia in 1628, 1629 and 1630 after a careful deliberation at the India office in London. This trade, the directors

⁴⁸ Ibid.

thought, was the only way out from the financial losses and to balance the loss of Bantam factory.⁴⁹ The first three voyages of the English company fetched substantial profits.

Years:	1628		1629		1630	
	Capital	Profit	Capital	Profit	Capital	Profit
	1,25,000	60%	1,50,000	80%	1,00,000	40%

Source: Holden Furber, *Rival Empires of Trade in the Orient 1600-1800*, Minneapolis, 1976 and K.N. Chaudhuri, *The English East India Company*, p. 70-72

In spite of the initial scepticism expressed by the Court of Committees about freight trade to west Asia from India, the factors at Surat, Coromandel and Bandar Abbas in Persia convinced the Board of directors about the importance of freight trade between these countries. On the Coromandel, freight trade was already established by Persian merchants and the English were quick to realise the importance of developing strong mercantile relations with Mir Kamaluddin. Unlike the Dutch who adopted a more aggressive stand *vis a vis* Indian authorities, the English on the other hand, were much more cautious as far as Golconda officials were concerned. However, we do have an instance in 1629 when the English along with the VOC participated in a reprisal against Mir Kamaluddin over the movement of goods at Masulipatnam.⁵⁰ This, however, did not affect the Golconda - English relations in the long run. In fact, when the first English

⁴⁹ For the history of the English East India Company for the years between 1620 and 1640 see, K.N Chaudhuri, *The English East India Company: A Study of the Early Joint Stock Company*, London, 1964, Chapter III.

⁵⁰ *ETI 1624-29* pp. 339,346.

freight ship sailed to Persia in 1634, most of the merchandise belonged to Mir Kamaluddin and other Persian merchants of Masulipatnam. The excessive dependence of Mir Kamaluddin on English ships casts doubts if he was instrumental in negotiating the Golden *Finnan* to the company.

The Sultanate of Golconda on the other hand, adopted a clear cut trading policy by granting the Golden *firman* to the English company. Abdullah Qutb Shah, well aware of the English role in the capture of Hormuz and the subsequent trading concessions given to the company by Shah Abbas 1, and the economic links Golconda wished to maintain with Persia had accelerated the granting of *firman an* to the English company. Significantly, both Shah Abbas and Abdullah Qutb Shah followed an anti- Estado policy which became an added benefit to the company. Further, the Golconda state perhaps wished to integrate the English company into their "official" Persian link as it did with the Persians. It may inferred that both Persia and Golconda were aware of each other's policies regarding European companies and in fact tried to use them for their advantage. The Golden *Firman* given by Abdullah Qutb shah to English company read:

"For as much as the English have declared that they will serve the king and that in Metchelepatnam, Nizampatnam, Vizagpatnam, and Bimlipatnam, and all other ports and sea port towns, they will bring horses from Persia —, It is agreed that the English shall be free from Bank shall, customes and other duties paid by other merchants. That they take junk an or other duties of them or of any other people— that they shall send their list of goods and other ships and things that the King may choose—Paying the full market price — and that if they take or own any strangers goods which if they do, he will take junkan from them. That whereas the English used to pay 500 or 600 *pagodas* annually, the king deducts out of the Governors rent assume of 800 *pagodas* old yearly and if he shall pretend the customes of the English goods more than it amounts they shall give account to the King"⁵¹

According to the Golden *Finnan*, the English company was exempted from the payment of following duties and charges: *Junkan*, levy on merchandise, *Rahadari*, *Danwaza*, Forest products and port duties for perpetuity. The Golden *Firman* forms an

⁵¹ There are two version of Golden Firman preserved in the India Office Library and Records, London. It is interesting to note that the contemporary version of the Golden Firman elaboratly mentions about the preferences extended to Persian merchants in the company's ships. The latter version of 1679 has no mention to Persian component in the firman. Obviously the companies who had to renegotiate time and again with the Indian rulers conciously avoided such 'native' preferences which which were perceived as detrimental to their future. For the Golden Farman See, *Original Correspondence*, (henceforth O.C), Vol. xiv, No 1471. and Appendix I.

interesting reading from the Golconda's point of view. In giving concessions to the English company, Abdullah consciously tied the *firman* with the expanding Persian trade and ensured from the company that trade carried by Persian merchants in English ships would have preferential rights. The *Firman* explicitly states that "commerce they (Persians) will bring from Bandar Abbas in gulf of Persia Countrey ships and vessels laden with rarities and horses upon which design their ships may sett sayle for (sic) ports of Hindustan unto the said Bandar Abbas and thence to proceed to our ports to augment our trade".⁵² Concerning the Persian merchants he stated that " they who shall come in the English ships, the said merchants (Persians) will for their own profitability endeavour to have their goods coloured under the name of the English, that so they can pass without being pained any duties which are liable unto others".⁵³ The *Firman* is instructive in two ways. By specifying the coveted trading networks (in this case Bandar Abbas and Masulipatnam), the state directly intervened in over seas commerce as a policy matter rather than a mere accident. Secondly, by tying the *firman* with the Persian merchants it strengthened its major collaborators in trade, in this case the Persian merchants.

The Golden *Firman* clearly distinguished the European trade from the non-European trade. The *firman* in reality gave a new boost to Persians operating from the ports of Masulipatnam and Nizampatnam. The Persian merchants operated both at individual

⁵² *EF1, Feb 1634,1634-36 p.14.*

⁵³ *Ibid.*

level (i.e through their independent shipping), while the newly granted Golden Firman accorded them new rights to carry freight at a very cheap rates in the company ships. On the Persian freight trade at Masulipatnam , the English factors wrote : " the Persian merchants who pay in freight and customs at least 15% more, thrive and throng between these places (Gombroon and Masulipatnam) and always have 8 or 10 vessels during monsoons". This was made possible, one can surmise, from the concessions of freight charges accorded to them in English ships. Ashin Das Gupta is of the opinion that a combination of factors helped in the relatively low price structure of freight; that the Indian merchants preferred to deal with ships owned by their communities and to the practice of Indian freights to split their risks even by distributing among the available shipping.⁵⁴ While there is absolutely no doubt that Asian freight had double advantage of a strong community based trading, and sharing of trade between themselves, our examples from Masulipatnam suggests that Persian merchants of Coromandel were freely sending goods in the English ships due to double advantage gained firstly due to independent shipping and secondly, due to the nature of preferential rights given by the state. Further it is doubtful whether Persian merchants of Masulipatnam were ever based their trade on community lines. They were highly competitive and individualistic mercantile group working on independent basis rather than sharing the spoils of trade on caste or community lines.

⁵⁴ See, Ashin Das Gupta, **Indian Merchants in the Indian Ocean Trade**, in Tapan Raichaudhuri and Irfan Habib, ed., *77K? Cambridge Economic History of India* p.417

By the second half of the seventeenth century, trade to west Asia was consolidated by the Iranian merchants operating between Bandar Abbas and Masulipatnam.⁵⁵ But as we advance into the last quarter of the seventeenth century, one witnesses a marked shift in the freight trade from Persian merchants to that of Europeans, be it company or non-company shipping on the Coromandel. Asian freight operators declined or became dependent on the European ships.

Freight had several components; the most important being its capital value, and the nature of consignment and distance. Firstly, the Freight trade between Masulipatnam and Iran showed frequent fluctuations — instances of slump and boom were a common feature in the period under consideration.⁵⁶ Secondly, only large vessels sustained freight trade. There is no doubt that European shipping was better equipped with larger tonnage capacity when compared to Asian shipping. Thirdly, the nature of European factories with their appreciable capacity to organise trade in different lands simultaneously through their corporate structure seemed to have dismissed these 'individual' based Asian operators. The nature of individual operations which was based on a sort of sole proprietorship was not able to withstand the European competitions in the long run. Private traders who were similar to Persian merchants in their mode of trade, had other advantages.

⁵⁵ Apart from those based in Masulipatnam, many merchants of Bandar Abbas frequented Masulipatnam carrying specific orders of Abdullah. We come across Mir Taj al din Qummi, Shah Hasan Riyas, Mriza Muhammad Mashadi, Kwaja Abd al Ali Ardestani and Muhammad Sabir of Bandar Abbas in Masulipatnam invoices. See, Shakleeb, 'Aspects of Goconda-Iran Commercial contacts', *Islamic Culture*, Vol. xix, No 2,1 April 1995, p.27.

⁵⁶ *S. Master*, Vol. I, p. 181,184,198.

They formed into trans-oceanic syndicates across Asia and reaped an additional advantage of 'maintaining nebulous' economic equations with the company officials at respective factories. The establishment of inland factories by the companies brought them closer to the areas of production which in turn brought down the freight price which till then was Asian monopoly. These were some of the causes for the relative decline of independent Asian freight trade in the last quarter of the seventeenth century.⁵⁷

Hinterland Factories and the Consolidation of European companies 1660-1724

The main purpose of this section is to study the impact of the European companies since their establishment of inland factories in the textile producing regions of coastal Andhra. While accepting the relative effectiveness of these inland factories, the main purpose of this section is to draw attention to the actual processes of 'penetration' of the companies which was met with mixed response from Indians at various levels of social system. In some areas, as those dominated by Persian merchants, the company trade remained limited, while, in the areas which was dominated by Hindu traditional elite and Hindu merchants, the companies were able to find collaborators who formed a significant link in the process of company penetration on the northern Coromandel.

The establishment of inland factories was dictated by three considerations. Firstly, it gave access to the marketing centres and to some extent to the areas of textile production. Secondly, the

⁵⁷ See, Joseph Brenning, *The Textile Trade*, p. 49

companies could now claim monopoly over certain villages exclusively given to them through preferential rights by the Sultanate of Golconda, which in turn led to clear cut demarcations in 'procuring zones' for respective companies. Thirdly, the companies were able to avoid the much dreaded moor' / Indian competition with whom the companies had to constantly confront in the ports *per se*. For various reasons, the companies were able to strike a chord of collaboration with the chiefs and *Zamindars* of the northern Coromandel which fostered the company trade in the northern Coromandel. Ever since the companies established factories in ports, their intention was to directly negotiate with the merchants in the actual place of production and in other local marketing towns. The provision for investment in the company invoices asked for a very precise specifications to be delivered to match the shipping schedules which required a steady relationship with the actual production process. For example, a freighting voyage from Masulipatnam to Pegu specified the factors about the length and breadth of cloth in yards:

Cloth	length	Breadth
Calicoes	21-24	
Veiling	16-25	
Muslin's	18-20	1-1 1/2
Neck cloths	7-10	1 1/2-2
Hand kerchief;	15	3/4
Veiling(silk)	25	
Cloths(silk)	4 1/2	3/4

Source: S. Master, Vol. I, p. 134-135 and see, Joseph Brenning, *The Textile Trade*, Appendix A, p. 286

The Dutch were the first to establish inland factories at Palakollu and Draksharamam in 1613 and at Hyderabad in 1661. As noted in the earlier section, one of the main provisions of the golden *Firman* was the exemption local cesses and customs. The *firman* clearly showed that the English need not buy goods only at the ports, instead could directly venture into the areas of textile production. On the strength of Golden *Finnan* the English immediately deployed factors to Viravasaram and Madapollem to establish factories. A host of *firmans*, perwanas and cowles given to companies between 1610 and 1687 by the Sultanate of Golconda and local administration allowed the European companies to expand themselves considerably into the actual areas of production and marketing.⁵⁸ Comparative statistics of the VOC and the English for the year 1682 show that the direct exports from the inland factories was far more than those exported from Masulipatnam.

VOC	yards	English	yards
Palakollu	1,895,000	Madapollem	2,173,000
Draksharamam	1,895,000	Nizamapatnam	628,000
Masulipatnam	1,054,000	Masulipatnam	1,778,000

Source: Joseph Brenning, *The Textile Trade*, Appendix A, and see, *Records of Fort St. George, Letters to Fort St. George*, 1682, p.78-92

While the statistics does illustrate the effectiveness of the company procurement from inland factories, this was by no means

⁵⁸ We can count as many as twenty *farmans* and a host of other grants and privileges given by the rulers of Golconda. While the initial *farmans* allowed the companies to establish factories at ports, while the later grants such as the Golden Farman and A Grant from the King given to the Dutch in 1647 permitted them to establish inland factories in the Kingdom of Golconda.

the total volume of trade from the port of Masulipatnam. Though, there is no quantifiable data on the non-company trade of Masulipatnam, we can, however, infer the non-company trade from the information available from the shipping lists. In 1682, out of 56 departures from Masulipatnam, 21 belonged to various European companies while the rest were owned either by Euro-Asians or by Asian merchants.⁵⁹ However, lack of any detailed documentation on non-company trade (especially of Asian shippers) will not allow us any systematic analysis on the volume of Asian trade during the period under study.

One of the most vexed question for historians has been the process of European 'penetration' into the hinterland and their subsequent hold over the indigenous capital which reduced the weaver and Asian merchant from a price worker to that of wage worker through the system of advances in the form of cash and hence the subjugation of Indian merchant to European capital.⁶⁰ While it is conclusively proved by historians that the European companies failed to alter the existing pattern of Asian trade on the sea front and that the company penetration into the hinterland was a phenomenon of late eighteenth century, its pre-history on the other hand, is assumed lay in the establishment of these inland factories in the late seventeenth century. However, a careful study of the northern Coromandel reveals that the European 'penetration' was a very limited affair to certain areas of regional industry and

⁵⁹ *RFSG Masulipatnam Consultation Book*, 1682, p. 2 & 83.

⁶⁰ Arasaratnam for instance, argues for the introduction of the Company Joint stocks though increased the indigenous merchant capital to some extent, were reduced to mere company servants in the long run as a major precursor of company dominance in the northern Coromandel.

was effective only in the villages or towns where the companies established exclusive control in the production process.

The companies, at least in theory, sought to achieve monopoly in procuring of textiles by taking some prospective villages and marketing towns such as Palakollu, Draksharamam, Viravasaram, and Madapollam under lease. But considering the spatial distribution and substantial number of weaving villages present in the Krishna and Godavari delta, it was very unlikely that the companies exercised controls outside their factory jurisdiction. Even in the towns where the European factories had gained preferential rights, we find the rival companies too procuring cloth on a regular basis. Thus, the English maintained three factors at Palakollu and Draksharamam which was under the VOC jurisdiction, while the Dutch regularly sent factors to Viravasaram and Madapollem, places where the English company had a regular factory.⁶¹

In order to curb the rival European competition and the local merchants alike, the companies introduced Joint stock companies in the hinterland which would legally bind the local merchant to the company. According to Joseph Brenning the establishment of Joint Stock companies was "an attempt by the European companies to exert greater control over their brokers and resources, and, from a broader perspective, an attempt to gain control through transfer of

⁶¹ The Dutch were more effective in having a say in the matter of procurement of textiles. They expelled English from Nagulwanche which forced the latter to buy piece cloth at neighbouring villages. See, *fn, no.* 11. Likewise the English were confident that the Dutch has no place at Viravasaram as 'wea hath bin well established here', See, *EFI 1655-60*.

a typically European mode of commercial organisation".⁶² The European joint Stock companies involved the participation of merchants using capital raised by them through an association of partnership. This supposedly reduced the internal competition among themselves and further entailed a kind of legal binding to the company by the local merchants. On the one hand, it ensured a steady rise in the Indian capital and on the other hand meant a streamlining of supplies of cloth and a greater reliability of the Indian Chief merchant to the company.

The VOC was the first to experiment with the formation of Joint Stocks at Pulicat in 1652. The Joint stock companies which were initially experimented in the port towns spread to the hinterland as well. By the end of the seventeenth century the companies made it mandatory for Indian merchants to form into Joint stock companies to deal with company trade. In the initial phases, both the company trade and Indian merchants were mutually benefited by the extension of Joint stock companies on the northern Coromandel. We have instances to show that the Coromandel merchants took their own initiative to form into joint stocks in the inland and sent regular petitions to respective companies to draw them into its trade. In fact at Palakollu and Madapollem, merchants formed a company and proposed to the Dutch and the English respectively to activate them into the joint stock. By 1675 all the inland factories of northern Coromandel were working on independent joint stock which were outside the

⁶² Joseph Brenning, *The Textile Trade*, p. 88.

purview of Masulipatnam jurisdiction.⁶³ In 1676, Stryensham Master, the Governor of Madrasapatnam decided to form separate joint stocks at Masulipatnam, Madapollem and Nizampatnam with at least 100 merchants in each of them which according to him, would " activate the stock, procure bad debts, secure full investments, shall bring natives to godowns and procure English cloth to Europe at cheaper rates".⁶⁴ At the zenith of English trade in 1680's , it was noted that the investments through Joint stocks in the inland factories was far exceeding the individual procurements by the company as far as the capital invested was concerned. Whether the formation of joint stock companies led to any institutional and structural changes in the pattern of India trade has been a major question in the existing historiography.

The formation of joint stocks in the northern Coromandel did not reflect the submissiveness of the Indian merchant to the European company trade, but on the other hand, the Indian merchant seemed to have retained his flexibility as far as his mercantile operations were concerned. His binding up with individual companies existed only in theory numerous instances of the period showed that chief merchants simultaneously operated with more than one company simultaneously during the period under study.⁶⁵ Contrary to the expectations of the

⁶³ For the study of Joint stock companies by the Indian merchants on the northern Coromandel See, Joseph Brenning, *The Textile Trade*, p. 87-102.

⁶⁴ *S. Mater*, Vol I.

⁶⁵ Sunca Rama the English Chief merchant not only looked after the English company joint stocks but also dealt in Paddy trade independently. In 1699 for instance, the Dutch Chief merchant, Golalore Narrain sent a proposal to the English at Madapollem from Draksharama that he is willing to do business worth 5000 to 6000 pagodas with the English but on the name of his son. This was a typical way by which the company merchants sought to overcome the

companies of subjugating the Indian merchant under the company dominance, this period marked a transition for Coromandel merchant. Coromandel merchant was highly competitive and on the other hand the petitions and requests sent to companies by the merchants by creating alibi's to find a place in company trade marks the initial transformation of Coromandel merchant into a dependent category vis a vis the companies.

Apart from taking the marketing towns and villages under lease, (now termed as factories), and extending Joint stock into the hinterland, the companies encountered a complex local political strata which played a decisive role in the commercial economy of the northern Coromandel. The companies, for example, who never overcame the prejudiced notions about 'moor' merchants remained extremely uncomfortable in the Muslim dominated trading sectors. The moods of the English company in respect to Persian merchants said "nothing but feare keeps a moor in awe, use him kindly and he will abuse you; but deal with smooth words and ripping deeds, he will respect and reverence you".⁶⁶ If we closely analyse the spatial distribution of the economic hinterland of northern Coromandel from the coast to its interior, the Muslim merchants were urban

legal bindings imposed by the Europeans on them. However, the very fact that albies were most often used to trade with more than one company it definitely reflects on the growing effectiveness of the Joint stocks as well. It must be stressed that the very fact that the merchant sought a rather 'back door entry' in his operations by way of legislating his family members is an indication of the growing strength of the company trade. See *RFSG, Public Department, Letters to Fort St, George*, 1682 p.30-31, 1699-1700, p.285 and Joseph Brenning, *The Textile Trade*, Chapter III, *passim*. See, P Sudhir and P. Swarnalatha, 'Textile Traders and Territorial Imperatives: Masulipatnam 1750-1850', *IESHR*, Vol xxix, 2, 1992, pp. 149-150.

⁶⁶ *Original Correspondence*, No 595, 1617-21, in *Calender of State Papers, Colonial Series*, p. 106 and Holden Furber, *Rival Empires of Trade in the Orient*, Minneapolis, 1975, p.7.

based and mainly operated in port towns and in the areas where the state penetration was more or less successful. Persians were the single most important urban community in the port of Masulipatnam. The *Bandar Kaifiyat* of the late eighteenth century gives graphic information on the nature of Muslim settlements at Masulipatnam. Out of 22 pettah's in the town of Masulipatnam as many as 12 pettas were named after Muslim merchants and other Muslim notables.⁶⁷ The Persian merchants were present in the port towns such as Masulipatnam, Narsapurpeta, Madapollem, Nizampatnam and in the provincial administrative centres of Kondapalli, Nizampatnam, Nagulwanche etc. dominated the trade and politics. It was precisely in these areas that the European commerce failed to make any impact as far as direct procuring of the merchandise was concerned. In these areas then, European companies had to depend on a complex hierarchy of brokers and other intermediaries which in turn escalated the prices of textiles. In the port towns of Masulipatnam and Nizampatnam, the European commerce had to contend with their competition as well as the extortion's by Muslim administrators which the companies thought 'arbitrary' and 'rapacious'.

The hinterland, on the other hand, was more diverse in terms of varied categories of professional merchants, offered the companies to establish relations in the areas dominated by the

⁶⁷ The pettas which were named muslim notables were Aneesupeta, Mustapha Khan peta (probably the Mughal faujdar), Mallikapatnam (named after Ibrahim Qutb Shah), Fakirullahpeta (Fakirullah Khan was the Mughal faujdar between 1700-1715), Kalekhan peta, Rustom Dil peta (Mughal faujdar of coastal Andhra, 164-96), Jawarpeta, Sukurabadpeta, Farusupeta, and MirHale peta. See, *Bandaru Kaifiyat*, in, *Krishna Zilla Kaifiyat*, A.P.State Archives, 1990.

Zamindars and tributary chiefs.⁶⁸ The distribution of the weaving economy on the northern Coromandel was spread in the areas where the traditional elite including the *Zamindars* dominated. Though the state allowed the traditional ruling clans of *Velamas* and *rajus* their independence as long as the tribute was sent to central exchequer, one can also see a simultaneous development of the increasing power of *havalgars* and *Sar samutu* officials in the period under study.⁶⁹ *Kaifiyats* (literally meaning information), on the other hand, provides information of different villages which were under the local elite from their antiquity to the nineteenth century.⁷⁰ Even the European documentation of the early eighteenth century do mention a certain "Rangaraju in possession of Madapollem", Timmaraju, the country raja of Draksharamam", and "Bairamma in hold of the 'Diu island' etc..⁷¹ One such *muniwar* (tributary chief) was Ashwa Rao of Palwanche in

⁶⁸ See, Sanjay Subrahmanyam, 'Rural Industry, *P&P*, p. 97.

⁶⁹ We often encounter in the European documentation of the areas being directly under the king. These are not to be taken as *Khalisa* (crown lands) but might actually suggest Zamindari areas which were directly supervised by the King. In 1655, the English factors wrote on the preference of Viravasaram to Masulipatnam as the latter being under the nabob and the former under the king directly. *EFI* 1655-60 p. 39.

⁷⁰ The *Kaifiyats* were collected by Col. Colin Mackenzie in the nineteenth century when he was appointed as Surveyor General of the Madras Presidency. The *Kaifiyats*, which were for most part the *Karanam* records, are to be interpreted very cautiously. They deal with myths, legends, histories and personalities of a particular place or village which are yet to be corroborated by other historical evidence. They also seem to fall into a particular pattern of starting with a myths attached to the place or personality, suddenly jumps to Kakatiyas, Reddi Kingdoms and specifically to Vijayanagara, then there is a long silence with only sporadic references to Qutb Shahis and finally culminates into the histories of Zamindaris of the eighteenth century. See, *Guntur Zilla kaifiyat*, 4 Vol.s, Prakasam *Zilla Kaifiyat*, and *Nellore Zilla Kaifiyat* for the history of Zamindars in the coastal Andhra. These are recently published by A.P. State Archives.

⁷¹ *RFSG, Public Department, Letters to Fort St. George*, 1712, p.48 and *Diary and Consultation Book*, 1714, p. 109-110

Khammam is of particular importance to us due to the Dutch presence there.⁷² With the consolidation of the Qutb Shahi Kingdom in coastal Andhra, the regional elite seemed to have come under crisis firstly, due to the presence of state machinery which sought to monitor the local economy and secondly, due to revenue farming which clearly eroded their traditional revenues. Coupled with this was the extension of privileges to the companies by the state which further reduced their income which came predominantly from *Rahadari, Junkan, Darwaza* etc.

The erosion of local revenues at the local level for the traditional elite necessitated the promotion of non-agrarian activity such as commercial production (in this case, textiles) and a need to negotiate with local traders and European companies as well. However, the relationship between European commerce and the *Zamindars* in the Krishna and Godavari deltas more or less remained implicit during Golconda period. Though, one is handicapped on the sources on the actual role of *Zamindars* in the local economy, one can however, surmise that were the major beneficiaries of commercialisation on the northern Coromandel. Their active collaboration with European companies furthered helped them to consolidate the local economic resources by the time of Mughal invasion which culminated in a series of revolts for political power.

⁷² The *Muniwars* or the tributary rajas who paid tribute and held only nominal allegiance to the state. The *Naikwarins*, on the other hand, were members of warrior/peasant castes involved in central administration as holders of hereditary garrison and actively involved in the political system as long as their autonomy was recognised. See, T. Sridhar Murthy and N. Sarveshwara Rao ed., *Dupati Kaifiyat*, Government Oriental and Manuscripts Library Bulletin, Madras, Vol xiii, No.2 pp.67-87.

The presence of *Zamindars* in the Krishna and Godavari deltas apart, the region itself offered two other major advantages to the companies. Firstly, the companies thought it was easy to deal with petty officials such as *havalgars* rather than dealing with *Sar-i-khail* /and other upper levels of administration. Secondly, the establishment of inland factories brought the European companies closer to the *komati* merchants 'who operated in the hinterland unlike the moors who operated on the sea front'.⁷³ Significantly the *komati* merchants who were spatially distributed in the *Zamindari* areas of Krishna and Godavari deltas had a wide knowledge of trade and prices in the region and were involved in diverse activities such as middlemen, money changers, petty shopkeepers etc.⁷⁴ When the companies established their inland factories, the *komatis* acted as the main complementary group between the weaving economy and the company trade. Most of the *komati* merchants were found in the *Zamindari* areas of Krishna and Godavari deltas and the extension of the company trade into these areas benefited the local elite considerably.

The annexation of Golconda by the Mughals in 1687 seemed to have transformed the relations between the regional aristocracy and the European commerce into a more explicit one. In the period between 1690-1724, *regional Naikwarins* and the *Zamindars* not only

⁷³ *Methwold Relations*, p. 16.

⁷⁴ To cite only one example of the diversity of their activities, In Madapollem we come across about seven merchants who formed the Joint stocks for the English company on procuring textiles, washermen, painters, and dyeing etc. They are Wordinneh Gurusvappa, Punde Caudama Bandu, Gobba Lingappa, Conda **Sambu**, Conda jaganna, Angedi Jogee and Collapilla Narasu. The paddy merchants included Biruda Gangappa, Bugganna, Narasaraju, Casua Narasimham. See, *RFSG, Public Department, Letters to Fort St George, 1682*, p.30-31 and 1684-85, p.83

participated in trade directly but also emerged as the main arbitrators of concessions given to the companies by the central authority. For instance, in the wake of fluid political environment of the last decade of the seventeenth century, companies preferred approaching the *Zamindars* for trading concessions on the northern Coromandel. The political uncertainty which followed after Mughal expansion opened up new opportunities to these *Zamindars* in more than one way. Firstly, they tried to assert their independence by openly revolting against the Mughal intervention and were involved in the process of chalking out distinct political zones of control. This called for quick money which came from local trade and in developing relations with the European commerce. For instance, Timmaraju, the *Zamindar* of Draksharamam was an active grain merchant and in fact negotiated for a contract worth 30,000 *pagodas* with the English.⁷⁵

In the changing political scenario, it became imperative for the companies to necessarily seek permission from the *Zamindars*. In spite of the *firman*s and *perwnas* given by the Mughal emperor and the *faujdars* such as Zulphikar Khan, Mustapha Quli Khan, Rustom Dil Khan, Fukirullah Khan and Mubariz Khan. At the local level the regional aristocracy emerged as the major adjudicator of affairs which dealt with Indian and European trade. In most cases the *firman*s issued by central authority proved ineffective without the sanction of raju clans at the local level of administration. To illustrate the growing interest of *Zamindars* in trade related aspects, we will take the case of Divi *seema* and demonstrate how a small time renter

⁷⁵ RFSG, Public Department, Letters to Fort St George, 1712, p. 48

Appa Row was elevated to the status of a *Zamindar* by the Mughal Diwan largely due to his intervention in production and trade.

Divi island which was situated 19 miles south of Masulipatnam was the most coveted place for the companies since the last decade of the seventeenth century. The island was known for its rich alluvial tracts and as the main outlet for grain trade. Divi, which was situated strategically with a good berthing capacity for country made flat bottom boats.⁷⁶ In fact both the English and Dutch companies had grand plans of constructing a port by developing inland navigation to the nearby weaving villages.⁷⁷ Between the years 1700 and 1720, the English desperately tried to acquire the island firstly, through negotiations with Zoode Khan, the Mughal *faujdar* to get an imperial *firman*, and later from Bairamma, the *Zamindar* of Divi island.

There were two main contestants to possess the island. Appa Row, the renter who had active support of the Mughal *faujdar*, and the English East India company who were supported by Bairamma of Divi island. The case is as follows: In 1709 Appa Rao took possession of the Divi island apparently 'on the recommendation of the Zoode Khan and moved around '25 families of weavers'. Meanwhile, the English also approached the *Faujdar* to recommend their case to Divan Mubariz Khan and Shah Alam for

⁷⁶ In 1676, the English factors wrote of Divi island as a place "rich in chay root and because of its convenience in settling the weavers there from **the** moors" See. *EI* (New Series), 1676, 1670-77, p.227. And on other related aspects of the island see, *Factory Records, Miscellaneous, 1717, G/40/26 IOLR*.

⁷⁷ William Norris embassy to the Mughal court especially requested for the cession of Diu to the English. It is surprising that none of the companies were successful in acquiring the port till the second half of the seventeenth century. See, Harihardas ed, *William Norris Embassy to Aurangzeb, and RFSG, Diary and Consultation Book, 1709, p.6.*

which the *faujdar* promptly agreed and even demanded rent from the company for the first three years. Appa Rao coming to know of the English interest in the island immediately farmed the place for 20,000 *pagodas* and moved weavers from adjacent parts. Zoode Khan who had 'considerable influence' on Appa Rao failed to convince the renter to move out and in a rather desperate situation asked the English company to forcefully take the island from Appa Row. The English realising the futility of such a step for 'it was known 'through our intelligence that Zoode Khan was behind Appa Row' approached Bairamma, the *Zamindar* who had considerable clout in the imperial court and had 'a particular grievance against Zoode Khan and Appa Rao'. Through her, the English company negotiated for the grant of privileges for the English company.⁷⁸ Though the company failed to acquire the island till 1740's, the above mentioned events, nevertheless, showed how important the local elite prevailed even over the imperial officialdom and how the English were forging alliances with the local *Zamindars*, during this period. However, it must be stressed that the collaboration between *Zamindars* and the companies were by no means steady for one finds numerous instances in which *Zamindars* involving in bitter conflicts with the English in the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

⁷⁸ See, *RFSG, Diary and Consultation Book, 1709*, p.6,1717, p.137 and *Letters to Fort, 1710*. p.37-38,1712,61,133.

**English Private Trade and the Decline of Asian 'Portfolio
Capitalism '1664-1687**

Recently, Sanjay Subrahmanyam has developed an interpretation on the rise of English private trade and the decline of Asian portfolio capitalism not as a cause but as a consequence. According to him, Asian shipping underwent a significant transformation in the post- Muhammad Sayyid era, i.e. in the second half of the seventeenth century and never recovered from his unscrupulous 'monopolistic' trade in the succeeding years. He suggests that the 'mercantile vacuum' created by Muhammad Sayyid in the second half of the century was taken over by the English private traders such as Samuel White and Robert Freeman (especially mentioned by Sanjay Subrahmanyam).⁷⁹ This section describes the actual private trade conducted from the port of Masulipatnam and secondly, draws attention to the role of Asian merchants in the 'post Muhammad Sayyid's' phase between 1664 and 1687. The period is justified by the fact that the private trade at Masulipatnam reached its zenith during this time.

Private trade is defined as a trade carried by the company servants with and within the east which was outside the purview of the company control to augment their personal wealth.⁸⁰ Ever

⁷⁹ See, Sanjay Subrahmanyam, 'The Port of Masulipatnam 1550-1750: A Bird's Eye View', p. 61 and Sanjay Subrahmanyam and C.A. Bayly 'Portfolio Capitalists and Political Economy of Early Modern India', in his Volume, *Merchants, Markets and the State in Early Modern India*, New Delhi, 1990 p. 253-254.

⁸⁰ By far the best work on the English Private Trade is by Bruce Watson, *Foundation for Empire: English Private Trade 1660-1760*, Delhi 1982. He identifies five categories of persons who can be called the private merchants. First were the company merchants who augmented their salaries by trading through their employment in the company, second, were the commanders and seamen on the ships in the Indo-european routes, third, the free merchants who resided in company settlements and carried on trade without encroaching into the company

since the English company was involved in trade with India, the factors and servants used it to augment their private fortunes in spite of the fact that the company declared it illegal in all sectors of trade. The power of private trade was such that the company was forced to liberalise its policy on private trade by allowing trade in certain commodities which were secondary to company invoices. Private traders were not allowed to trade in indigo, spices and textiles which were the main components of company dominion of trade. However, from time to time the company was forced to give 'restricted liberty' to its servants to carry on their private trade.

Private trade can be understood as the inability of the company to effectively curtail the private aspirations of its servants working in Asia. Though the company rather grandly prohibited private trade in the initial years, the inner logic of the company and its servants forced it to reconcile to what was called a 'permissive trade' and justified it as a mere 'deviance' of the servants operating in the east. Despite many legislation's and strictures against private operations both at Home and in Asia, private trade continued to thrive in all parts where the company had established settlements.⁸¹ The problem was most acute in the 'free ports' such as Masulipatnam, Nizampatnam, Hugli, Balasore, etc. where the English was one among other trading nations.

trade, fourth, were the interlopers or who came nearest to pirates who played a decisive role in the early decades of the eighteenth century and lastly were the Indian brokers and merchants, *Ibid* p.61-62.

⁸¹ For various legislations, strictures, punishments, petitions of pardon etc See, *Ibid*, and for the relationship between the country trade and private trade, See, Holden Furber, *Rival Empires of Trade in the Orient*, pp. 217-219.

Coming to the Coromandel coast there are very few studies which deal with the private activities of company servants for the period under study.⁸² Masulipatnam, being the main re-distributive centre for intra-Asian trade, offered many prospects for private traders to operate freely at the port. Private trade on the Coromandel reached its high point when Robert Freeman regularly freighted goods between Masulipatnam and Persian Gulf.⁸³ Country trade was particularly profitable to the private traders because of two reasons. Firstly, the profitability was high with less investments and secondly, it meant considerable freedom from structures imposed on them at London. Recently, Soren Mentz has argued, basing on the wealth/debts of the private traders of the Coromandel that the country trade was not as profitable as it thought to be unless supplemented by direct financial flow from London. He further categorized private traders into 'middle class' and elite operators, the former being Robert Fleetwood, Christopher Hatton, Mathew Mainwaring, Richard Mohun and Robert Freeman, while in the latter group were William Langhorn,

⁸² Even the most comprehensive work on Coromandel coast by Arasaratnam has totally neglected the activities of private traders and referred to them only in passing. Notable exceptions to this neglect are Sanjay Subrahmanyam, Joseph Brenning and Soren Mentz.

⁸³ In 1682 the English private shipping was substantial at Masulipatnam. Robert Freeman owned many as 14 vessels used for country trade. In fact according to Joseph Brenning, the ships of Robert Freeman virtually supplied the existing demand in the Persian Gulf. Robert Freeman started his career as an English factor in 1668 and worked at Masulipatnam till 1675. He later became a free merchant and was readmitted into the company at the capacity of Chief of Masulipatnam factory. He went on to become a leading shipowner on the coast. Robert Freeman developed links with other notable private merchants such as S. Master and Chomley, the notorious interloper. See, *RFSG, Diary and Consultation Book, 1681*, p.32, Public Department, *Letter to Fort St George, 1682*, p 30-31, Soren Mentz, 'Diamonds and Country Trade', p. 171, and Joseph Brenning, *The Textile Trade*, p. 48-49

Stryensham Master, Elihu Yale, etc. who were the Governors of Madrasapatnam.⁸⁴ There is no doubt that the private traders were backed by corporate financiers of London, while the Governors of Madrasapatnam used their official positions within Asia to enhance their private wealth. One should analyse private trade not on the individual assets accumulated by the private traders, as Soren Mentz does in his discussion, but on the total volume of private trade in the country trade.

The success of private traders in the country trade lay in their ability to direct the company's investments to a quicker port-to-port trade and to divert the benefits gained by the company from the Indian rulers to private trade. The factors openly flouted the privileges given to the English company. These private traders often traded under the company flags and thereby escaped from paying local taxation and other legal procedures. Further, the main strength of the private trade lay in the relationship they established with the chief merchants of the company. Abbe Carre, the French traveller has noted in 1678 that private traders "received gifts and loans and followed the advise of local merchants and brokers who gave them the means of carrying their trade that benefited themselves".⁸⁵ The Coromandel merchants on the other hand saw the benefit of collaborating with the English factors in their private capacity. The Indian merchants saw private trade as a relatively simple operation which did not entail various legal procedures/stricutures which the company trade demanded. As

⁸⁴ Soren Mentz, 'Diamonds and Country Trade' pp. 161-163

⁸⁵ Abbe Caree, *Travels*, Vol. II p.382

long as complaints were not lodged, both the English factors and their Indian counterparts protected each other in private trade. Legally, of course, even Indian merchants who participated in trade in their private capacity were also categorized as private traders, especially if the said merchant was part of the company joint stock. In 1682, for instance, Sunca Rama, the chief merchant and *Dubas* of Narsapurpeta factory anchored a vessel carrying grain at the bank shall, apparently under the company 'colours' and ordered the boatmen and other small time peddlers to carry grain to mainland at the payment of five *pagodas* per boat while the actual customs to be paid to the Diwan was twenty *pagodas*.⁸⁶ Surely, the vessel belonged to both Sunca Rama and the chief of the Narsapurpeta factory. Narsula Beig, the *havaladar* confiscated the vessel and on investigation found that "it belonged to chief merchant "and reported "when it was informed to the chief he said that they belong to him (meaning the English company), for there is no reason to believe that if it was his ship would (for it would)anchor in the company's bank shall⁸⁷ Muhammad Ali Beig, the Governor of Narsapurpeta lodged a strong complaint to Madrasapatnam on the incident and wrote " you please let me know whether you keep your chief to do your trade and merchandise or to share the Divans revenue betwixt himself and Dubas".⁸⁸

Though the history of Masulipatnam centered private trade goes back to as early as William Meth wold in 1620's, it became

⁸⁶ *RFSG, Public Department, Letters to Fort St George, 1682* p.101-102

⁸⁷ *Ibid*, p. 30-31.

⁸⁸ *Ibid*, p.39.

crystallised in, 1670's and reached its zenith in the succeeding decade. Each of Masulipatnam's chiefs between 1670 -1679, were involved in private trade which ruined the company prospects at Masulipatnam . The activities of William Jearsey, Richard Mohun, Mathew Mainwaring and Robert Fleetwood became a major concern for the company both at Madrasapatnam and at London.

William Jearsey who was the chief of Masulipatnam factory since 1662 was engrossed in private trade that "he neglected the company's business, used its stock for his own business and had not submitted company accounts for a period of five years". At the height of his career he owned as many as seven ships which sailed to all parts of Indies and Europe.⁸⁹ For over a decade, the company was helpless about his activities at Masulipatnam. The failure of the company to deal with him stringently was due to his active collaboration with Edward Winter, the Governor of Madrasapatnam and to the clout he enjoyed among the Board of directors.⁹⁰

⁸⁹ William Jearsey started his career as an accountant at Pegu in 1650. He was later sent to Burma as Chief of Syriam factory where he remained against the company orders and was dismissed from the service. His first activities as a private trader dates back to 1660's from Syriam factory. On a special appeal he was reinstated into the company in 1660 and came as the chief of Masulipatnam, factory in 1662. At Masulipatnam, he was actively involved in the private trade. it became so severe that he was dismissed in 1669. He later on stayed in India as an independent trader and died in 1690. On his career See, Robert Young, *The British East India Company's Pepper Trade at Sumatra, 1730-1760*, Ph.D Thesis, University of Perm, 1969, pp.55-98 cited in Holden Furber, *Rival Empires of Trade in the Orient*, p. 270.

⁹⁰ Edward Winter bought a ship of 800 tonne capacity from Mir Jumla in 1662 and named it Great George. In 1661, the factors wrote that the goods "aboard Marigold, which the factors had described as provisions and other necessities for Edward Winter and his family, had proved to be largely private trade" See, *EFI 1662-64, 1661*, p. 36, 42.

On the whole, William Jearsey's private trade had overshadowed the company trade of Masulipatnam for over a decade. He was dismissed in 1669 and was replaced by Richard Mohun. Richard Mohun was sent to Masulipatnam with a special mission of reorganising the accounts at Masulipatnam factory and to stop William Jearsey from selling his property at Masulipatnam.⁹¹ Richard Mohun started of his career on a sound note but soon fell prey to private interests. He used his official capacity and special orders from the company which he manipulated for his own benefit at Masulipatnam. In 1675 the factors felt that the investment was low because:

"by all the information, (seems) to have been much to blame for undue and untrue entities of cash and more especially using the same for other uses — Gentoo merchants employed with him for receiving thereof and other undue practices of which he is ill minded".⁹²

However, unlike William Jearsey who was an active ship owner, Richard Mohun, on the other hand, manipulated the investments of the company and regularly freighted his goods on company ships. We have no evidence of Richard Mohun being a ship owner, but he was the first to collaborate with *komati* merchants for his private trade. Richard Mohun was suspended from the service. The Madrasapatnam council under William Langhorn confiscated the property of Richard Mohun and on

⁹¹ On Richard Mohun's career See, *EFI* (New Series), p. xix.

⁹² *RFSG, Diary and Consultation Book*, 1675,1672-78, p 45-46.

further investigation found that he was in a debt of 5800 *pagodas*.⁹³ Significantly the company suspended Richard Mohun not with the intention of curbing private trade at Masulipatnam but on the basis of regular complaints made by another private trader, Mathew Mainwaring, the second- in- charge of the Masulipatnam factory.

Mathew Mainwaring who was in the good books of William Langhorn was immediately appointed as the head of 'Commissioner for the management' of Masulipatnam factory. His first step was to file charges against Richard Mohun and sent a detailed report to President and Council. Richard Mohun, who remained in Masulipatnam, countered the charges and lodged complaints of private trade on Mathew Mainwaring. In 1677, he wrote to the Governor:

" That he had an account of 25 bales of cotton in ship *Anne* on private account, that he took 4000 pieces of silver from godown, that the boats taken by the Dutch at Pulicat were sent by Mainwaring, that he used company boats to Bantam and Gingelly, that he secretly sent money to Mohammad Narasinge (?), Venkata Brahmin (Chief Dubas at Madapollem) and Accanna, that he paid money to Robert Fleetwood and Chamberlin, that he took a loan of 2000 *pagodas* on company account"⁹⁴

Due to his close association with chief merchants of Masulipatnam, Madapollem and with Accanna, Mainwaring was

⁹³ *Ibid* p. 48, 65,67.

⁹⁴ *RFSG, Diary and Consultation Book, 1677, 1678-79, p.29-30.*

instrumental in getting a *firman* from Tana Shah for "free exporting and importing, either by sea or land, all sorts of commodities, gold and silver" and secondly, in activating the investments in Madapollem and Viravasaram.⁹⁵ Mainwaring was particularly disliked by other factors at Masulipatnam and when Streynsham Master became the Governor of Madrasapatnam, Christopher Hatton was appointed due to special favours accorded on him by the Governor. Meanwhile Mainwaring was dismissed from the company service on a murder charge but later on returned to India as an interloper working for Captain Alley and died in 1679. Meanwhile, Richard Mohun too was reinstated in the company after pleading guilty but preferred to operate as free merchant at Madrasapatnam. Streynsham Master, who visited Masulipatnam factory on 'express orders' from London, to activate the factory and to introduce 'rule books' for the working of the factory' appointed Christopher Hatton as the new chief. Christopher Hatton who was asked to submit a report on the activities of his predecessors found that differences between Richard Mohun and Mathew Mainwaring arose due to breaking down of joint trade that they were involved in 1671.⁹⁶

Unlike Richard Mohun and Mathew Mainwaring, the activities of Robert Fleetwood were slightly different. He joined the

⁹⁵ *EFI* (New Series), 1675, 1670-77 p. 294. On Mainwaring's career, See, *Court Minutes*, Vol. xxvi, fol. 48, Vol. xxxiv. fol. 95, 114 and 5. *Master*, Vol. 1, 283 and 284fn. Mathew Mainwaring came to India as a factor in 1667. From 1669 to 1671 he was a second at Balasore. In 1672 he came to Masuliptanam and was in variance with Richard Mohun. Mainwaring was suspended in 1678 on the charge of Murder of Robert Crawley. Later on he went to England and returned back as an interloper by associating himself with Captain Alley.

⁹⁶ *RFSG, Diary and Consultation Book, 1672-78*, pp. 29-35.

company service in 1661, was sent to Masulipatnam on the recommendation of William Jearsey and was appointed as the chief of Madapollem factory. When his mentor William Jearsey fell into the bad books of William Langhorn, Fleetwood was also vindicated. In 1674, he was threatened of dismissal from the company service for having revenue farmed the town of Viravasaram . Fleetwood who bought a revenue farm to collect taxes worth 300 *pagodas* , collected 1200 *pagodas* and in the process made a profit of 900 *pagodas* per annum.⁹⁷ When the orders came from President and Council to surrender the revenue farm, Robert Fleetwood submitted it to the company and sought reinstatement into the English service. Fleetwood died of debts to governor and the company in "1679 at Navarazpuram.

The purpose of this elaborate description of the careers of these private traders has been two fold. Firstly, we see a considerable difference in mode of operation of these traders. We find three different categories of private traders at Masulipatnam, i) Sea borne traders with independent shipping such as William Jearsey and Robert Freeman, ii) traders who manipulated company's investments at their respective factories in collaboration with local komati and chetti merchants and freighted goods in company's ships such as Richard Mohun and Mathew Mainwaring and 3) traders like Robert Fleetwood who tried to penetrate into inland by revenue farming.⁹⁸ Considering the differentiated modes

⁹⁷ S. Master, Vol. II, p. 284fn.

⁹⁸ For the intervention of private traders in the political arena and for the development of "sub-imperialisms" See, Sushil Chaudhari, 'Trade, Bullion and Conquest: Bengal in the eighteenth century', Presidential Address, *Proceedings of Indian History Congress*, Gorakhpur, December, 1989 (mimeograph), For the

of operation by these private traders, it is questionable if they were merely ' port-centric'¹ as Sanjay Subrahmanyam opined, but on the other hand seemed to have combined (though in a small way) a complex pattern which involved local merchants (mainly Hindu) to that of central administration like Accanna.

The nature of private trade at Masulipatnam further reveals a nexus between the company factors and the Governors of Madrasapatnam. The Governors of Madrasapatnam like Edward Winter, William Langhorn, Streynsham Master etc., sponsored the local private trade by appointing their favourites as chiefs in respective subordinate factories. Secondly, the governors of Madrasapatnam provided capital to the factors involved in country trade. In our period, barring Edward Winter and Elihu Yale, the participation of Governors of Madrasapatnam in private trade was rather indirect. Streynsham Master, for instance regularly sent money to Robert Freeman for diamond trade, who instead of investing it in diamonds as expected by the London financiers, used it for his own country trade.

As late as 1713, Master wrote letters to Thomas Pitt of Madrasapatnam about the money he left behind with Freeman to administer the diamond trade." From the company's point of view there is no evidence to suggest that private trade at Masulipatnam led to a decline in the company trade on the Coromandel.

history of Private Trade in the eighteenth century, See, Peter. J. Marshall, *East Indian Fortunes*, Oxford, 1976. and his more recent monograph, *The Bengal Bridgehead, The New Cambridge History of India*, Cambridge, 1994.

⁹⁹ See, Soren Mentz, 'Diamonds and Country Trade' p. 171.

Asian shipping underwent a significant transformation in the second half of the seventeenth century. Sanjay Subrahmanyam is of the opinion that Asian shipping witnessed a general decline attributed it to the unscrupulous intervention of Muhammad Sayyid in Asian trade. In fact he says that the attacks on Masulipatnam shipping in the western Indian ocean and the dwindling political fortunes of the Persian portfolio interests in Golconda as a major cause for the decline of Persian shipping at Masulipatnam.¹⁰⁰ Joseph Brenning on the other hand argues that the Asian shipping declined due to the opening of the Hyderabad factory by the VOC with exclusive privilege for import trade between Golconda and Masulipatnam.¹⁰¹ However, both the scholars agree that Asian shipping at Masulipatnam declined by the last quarter of the seventeenth century and that it was a phenomenon which took place long before the Mughal conquest of Golconda. While accepting what the scholars have to say on the decline of Persian shipping partially, this section will try to analyse the actual process of transformation of the Persian elite in the period under study. The second half of the seventeenth century witnessed a change in the nature of economic and political activity Persian merchants from shipping to that of financiers to company and non-company trade.

In the above paragraphs, it was seen that the seeds of decline of Asian shipping and the concomitant growth in private trade in

¹⁰⁰ Sanjay Subrahmanyam, 'The Port of Masulipatnam', p.61, *The Political Economy of Commerce*, pp. 217-218, and 'Persians, Pilgrims and Portuguese: Travails of Masulipatnam Shipping in the Western Indian Ocean 1590-1665', *MAS*, Vol XXII, 3, 1988.

¹⁰¹ Joseph Brenning, *The Textile Trade*, pp. 36-38.

1680 was actually sown in the decade immediately preceding it. Politically, the death of Abdullah Qutb Shah in 1672, and assuming of the throne by Tana Shah in the same year witnessed a massive transformation of political structure of Golconda. Soon after the accession of Tana Shah, Madanna was appointed as *Sar-i-khail* (Chief Revenue Officer) with an additional charge of the provincial administration of Masulipatnam, Mustaphanagar, Murtazanagar, Eluru and Rajahmundry. Interestingly these are the areas where the Brahmin *havalendars* were dominant and through favours extended by Madanna were able to consolidate their positions in their respective areas. Niyogi Brahmins who remained as *havalendars* in the earlier periods largely due to Persian dominance in the higher strata of administration, were now able to aspire for higher levels of administration. The reforms of Madanna of making the officials to be paid in salary rather than through farming, increase in salt taxation, monopoly of copper minting, etc. enlarged the scope of local *havalendars* in coastal areas. In reality, Madanna's reforms reflect the process of centralisation of the state which left out Persian entrepreneurs.¹⁰² Madanna's policies had two major consequences for Coromandel economy in general and Persian merchants in particular. The Persian elite who were concentrated in the urban centres, now had to contend with mere official positions such as *havalendars* and *seerlaskars* which meant a considerable erosion of their 'portfolio' management.¹⁰³ In such a scenario, the Persian elite had

¹⁰² Ibid., pp. 186-188.

¹⁰³ It may be noted that the positions of *havaladari* in the kingdom of Golconda is given for a short period of time and was totally unsupervised by the central administration. Often the tenure was held for a period of three years and was

two options. They either migrated to other parts of the coast or rechannalise the money into other spheres such as providing finance to traders. They regularly gave loans and perhaps even provided capital to the company and non-company trade which centered around Masulipatnam. In 1677, Agha Jalal demanded from Stryensham Master of the debts of Fleetwood at Viravasaram.¹⁰⁴

Name of the Merchant	Amount payable in (in months)	<i>pago(ias(@ 2% interest)</i>
Mulla Ali (1675)	4 months	2440
do	-do-	1080
Mir Nasir (1676)		375
Haji Omar (1676)	6 months	600
InayatMeer (1676)	- do-	400
Abdullah Bakir(1676)	- do-	2000
Mir Jamal (1676)	4 months	1485
Mir Fakkuridin (1674)	6 months	600
Haji Mohammad		500
Mir Inayatullah		300
Total		9780

Source: S. *Master*, Vol. 1, p. 58 and Vol. II, pp. 100-101

Though the amounts financed seem small, it nevertheless represents a period of transition for Persian merchants on the northern Coromandel. However, it may be added with certain caution, the transformation of Persian merchants into financing is only a conjecture and is not adequately backed by contemporary source materials. The second major consequence of the reforms

publicly auctioned and ranged between 20,000 to 30,000 pagodas. For details see, Sanjay Subrahmanyam, "Aspects of State Formation", pp.368-69.

¹⁰⁴ On the Persian finance to the company and to Private traders see, RFSG, *Diary and Consultation Book*, 1679, 1684. S. Master, Vol I, p. 58 and Vol II, pp.100-101.

was the fact that it led to a large scale restructuring of the nature of the character of state itself. The proposed streamlining of administration into a more bureaucratic system by Madanna left little space for Persian 'portfolio' interests.

Madanna's career in trade bears a remarkable similarity to Mir Jumla. By streamlining the bureaucracy, Madanna eliminated competition in trade and claimed monopoly in grain and freight trade. However, unlike Mirjumla whose participation in trade was outright aggrandizement in the sea borne commerce, Madanna's activities were more localised and indirect and never achieved the eminence of his predecessor. For some unknown reasons, Madanna used his brother Accanna and other Brahmin officials to manage his shipping. In 1682 the English reported: "Worshipfull already hath heard of a ship belonging to Accanna which is already built and goods providing for her".¹⁰⁵ In 1684, John Coates, the chief of Madapollem seized two ships of Madanna which led to reprisals on the English company. The English were sceptical about their position in Madapollem. On the merchandise in the ship the English chief recorded

"The Braminy's ships at Madapollem, it said to very rich with owners estates in 2 or 3 chests which action is likely to bring great trouble to the English in these parts and put a stop on company's business"¹⁰⁶

¹⁰⁵ RFSC, Public Department, *Letters to Fort St. George, 1682*, p. 57.

¹⁰⁶ RFSG, Public Department, *Letters to Fort St. George, 1684*, p. 365.

From the information given by John Coates, it is clear that Madanna owned about 3 ships with a tonnage of 170, 330 and 220 tones¹⁰⁷ Apart from shipping activities, Madanna intervened in the production process by appointing Brahmin officials in the most coveted areas of the kingdom. He appointed intermediaries such as Podela Lingappa, Linguana etc. to augment his trading activities. One significant aspect of his trading career had been an overemphasis on grain trade. This was crucial in the period when the prices of grain went up by as much as '100%' in the Masulipatnam sector of trade.

Coming back to Persian merchants, one cannot say that they declined totally in the changing politico-economic structure of Golconda in the Madanna' phase of intervention. An early eighteenth English letter has recorded some resident Persian notables at Masulipatnam. They were Mirza Asseddula, Mosuam Khan, Mirza Habib Khan etc. who mediated in the disputes between the company and Indian merchants. Persians continued to trade, probably on a smaller scale as carriers of textiles and grain from and to Bengal and other parts of the sub-continent. A recent work on the eighteenth and nineteenth century has shown that there was considerable revival of Persian activates (called *Mogal* merchants) on the Coromandel coast even during the phase 'company dominance'.¹⁰⁸

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.* p. 379.

¹⁰⁸ On the role of Persians in the eighteenth and nineteenth century see, *Reports on the Disturbances in Purlakimcdxj, Vizagpatnam and Gomsoor, 1832-36*, and P. Sudhir and P. Swarna Latha, " Textile Traders and Territorial Imperatives: Masulipatnam 1750-1850, *IESHR*, Vol xxix, 2,1992, pp. 149-69.

Masulipatnam: The phase of Decline 1687-1724

In the above section, a suggestion has been given on the slow transformation of state into a bureaucratic enterprise under Madanna and its impact on the trading economy of northern Coromandel. Though scholars like Arasaratnam and Joseph Brenning are clear on the timing of the decline of the port of Masulipatnam, the causes for the decline have been variously interpreted. Discussions on the decline of Masulipatnam fall into two propositions. Scholars like Tapan Raychaudhari and Arasaratnam argued that the Mughal invasion of Golconda had direct impact on the fortunes of Masulipatnam. However, recent interpretations by Joseph Brenning and Sanjay Subrahmanyam traces the cause to the complex nature of economic changes in the last decade of the seventeenth century. They include, a general decline of Asian shipping, steady rise in the prices of rice, and the tightening of revenue controls in the Sultanate of by Madanna in 1670's and 80's. This section will consider each of these discussions and tries to locate decline in a paradigm of port-hinterland nexus.

All the above mentioned scholars agreed, albeit with differences that Masulipatnam declined in absolute terms only in the eighteenth century. Joseph Brenning remarks that the decline of Asian shipping had direct impact on the fortunes of the port which started with the opening of the Hyderabad factory by the VOC in 1661 with monopoly rights. According to him, this concession given to the VOC cheapened the prices of imports to Hyderabad which adversely affected the Asian merchants who dominated between

Golconda and Masulipatnam.¹⁰⁹ His conclusions are drawn from two contemporary observations of Christopher Hatton and Daniel Havart. Christopher Hatton who was asked to submit a detailed report on the trade in 1678 at Masulipatnam observed that:

"Found 20 sailes of ships of goods belonging to the native merchants here constantly employed to Arakan, Pegu, Jahore, Tennasarim, Queda, Malacca, Jahore, Achen, Mocha, Persia — and continued for many years, till the Dutch settled a factory at (1661), *where keeping of all sorts of commodities, they furnished these merchants that usually come down to this place and thereby occasioned a decay of trade here*" (emphasis added).¹¹⁰

Joseph Brenning's argument has two limitations. Firstly, he seems to be over emphasising on the Dutch monopoly of import trade to Hyderabad factory. It was noticed that there were other centres of consumption spread across the kingdom apart from Hyderabad. The *paraganas* of Kondapalli, Bezawada, Payakaraopeta, Bobbili, Rajam, Vizianagaram, Draksharama etc., emerged as main consumption points which were directly drawn into the dynamics of company trade by the second half of the century. These centres not only imported goods from Masulipatnam but were well connected with port towns of

¹⁰⁹ Joseph Brenning, *The Textile Trade*, pp. 36-38.

¹¹⁰ For details of Christopher Hatton's report, See, *S. Master*, Vol II, p. 113.

Vizagpatnam, Bimlipatnam, Masulipatnam and Nizampatnam which fell within their provincial jurisdiction.¹¹¹ Further more the vibrant *Zamindari* belts of the Krishna Godavari deltas surely diverted much of the import trade of Masulipatnam since the last quarter of the seventeenth century. During the Mughal phase the Imperial *firman* of 1691 which revoked the concessions given to the companies stated that all goods on transit (even those which belonged to the VOC) were to pay flat duty of 3 1/2 %. The *firman* revoked these concessions particularly on the behest of the local officials who objected to exemption of duties and internal customs which officially formed their prerogative.¹¹² The revoking concessions given to the companies may have led to a considerable diffusion of trade to other centres within the regional economy. In the Madanna phase and in the Mughal phase, local officials were increasingly demanding the central authority to cancel various concessions given to the companies in the earlier periods.

Interestingly, Daniel Havart mentioned about the role of local officials as "merciless local tyrant, capable of any act from thrashing a visitor's peon within an inch of his life for stealing a lemon from his garden, to squeezing foreign traders without any regard for longer term consequences". We have yet another evidence to suggest the powers of local officials was steadily increasing during this time. Stryensham Master mentioned that " Sayyid Mir Jafir, who rented this country to such would give most, and they to raise their summes, by which meanes grown double to

¹¹¹ *Prakasam Zilla Kaifiyatulu*, AP State Archives, 1993 pp. 20-21, Daniel Havart, *De Op- en Ondergang*, Vol. II, p 40-41. and S. Master, Vol. II, p. 113,

¹¹² S.Arasaratnam, *Merchants, Companies and Commerce*, p. 74.

the former rents, oppressing the people, have now reduced this place to low condition --for the present the whole trade and support of this depends on EIC and VOC-"¹¹³ . These statements apart from being a mere stereotype on the nature of Indian administration also reflects the growing authority of local officials in matters of trade.

Secondly, Joseph Brenning is not clear on how the decline of Asian shipping *per se* became a cause for the decline of Masulipatnam. According to the shipping estimates cited by Joseph Brenning for the year 1682, one stills finds Asinas at a very competitive stage when compared to the first half of the seventeenth century. In the period between 1624-34 an average of 10 to 15 Asian vessels departed from Masulipatnam while the 1682 statistics which the historian records, had as many as 12 Asian ships .¹¹⁴

However, one sees a major change in the shipping lists of 1682 when compared to the earlier period. As many as 14 ships belonged to European private traders which exceeded the Asian shipping. Thus, if we argue that the Asian shipping was supplanted by the European private traders in tonnage and volume of trade carried from the port, it then becomes difficult to directly link between Asian shipping and the decline of the port.

¹¹³ Daniel Havart, *De op-en Ondergang*, Vol. I, pp. 226-28, cited in Sanjay Subrahmanyam, *The port of Masulipatnam 1550-1750*, p. 60. and S. Master, Vol. II., p. 113.

¹¹⁴ Compare the statistics of Sanjay Subrahmanyam and Joseph Brenning for the first half and the second half of the seventeenth century, See, Sanjay Subrahmanyam, *The Political Economy of Commerce*, p. 214,334 and Joseph Brenning, *The Textile Trade*, p. 46.

Arasaratnam, whose source again is Daniel Havart, argued that there was considerable disruption in the port's economy due to Mughal invasion of in 1687. According to him Masulipatnam never recovered to its former glory and witnessed numerous slumps and depressions in the post-Mughal invasion period. According to him the general investments and profits of the Dutch and English companies which reached its height in the 1680's fell drastically from 1690 and between 1702-1712; the exports from Coromandel to Europe were in a range of 40,000 to 50,000 lb¹¹⁵ But the quantitative evidence of K.N. Chaudhuri and the more recent work of George. D.Winus and P.M. Vink for the English and Dutch companies respectively showed definite signs of recovery of the Coromandel between 1720-1730 .¹¹⁶ However, it must be remembered that the statistics mentioned above covered the whole of Coromandel coast and of Masulipatnam *per se*. There are no sources in the seventeenth century to assess the actual volume of trade carried from Masulipatnam in this period and hence only of a limited value for any discussion on the actual decline of trade at Masulipatnam.

Sanjay Subrahmanyam, who agrees with Joseph Brenning on the decline of Asian shipping argues that the port of Masulipatnam showed cracks due to a combination of factors. He highlighted on the transformation of state especially under Madanna, steady rise in prices of rice, the regularity of slumps between 1730-1740 and a

¹¹⁵ S. Arasaratnam, *Merchants, Companies and Commerce*, pp. 189-191.

¹¹⁶ See, K. N. Chaudhuri, *The Trading World of Asia and the English East Company 1660-1760*, Cambridge 1972, Appendix and Marcus P. M. Vink, *The Merchant Warrior Pacified: The VOC and The Political Economy of India*, New Delhi, 1991. Appendix.

shift in the European commerce to the Gingly and southern coast of Coromandel.

There is no doubt that the companies started concentrating in their southern settlements such as Madrasapatnam and Fort St. David by the English and Nagapatnam by the Dutch in the last decades of the seventeenth century. But how one can attribute the decline of Masulipatnam to shifting of European commerce to southern Coromandel is still hazy. If one carefully study the situation in the northern Coromandel in the last decades of the seventeenth century, one finds that the decline was rooted within the port - hinterland nexus as emerged in the phase of Mughal intervention. In the first instance, the Mughal intervention surely put an end to central authority of Golconda while the imperial apparatus failed to consolidate its position in the northern Coromandel. The failure of Mughals to consolidate their position was effectively manipulated by the local chieftains and *Zamindars* who demarcated territorial controls in respective areas of coastal Andhra.

The *Zamindars* of the northern Coromandel chalked out limited territorial controls which in turn led to constriction in the vast hinterland the port commanded in the earlier periods of the seventeenth century. Thus, to cite an example, *Timmaraju*, the *Zamindar* of Peddapuram whose political control extended to about 50 Sq.Km now started using Ingeram as a main outlet for goods produced within his area of control. In this context the hinterland was more defined but small and Masulipatnam had to sacrifice its trade to the emerging small ports in east Godavari delta. It was for

this reason alone that the European companies started negotiating to develop 'satellite ports', exclusively under their jurisdiction. Masulipatnam at the end of the seventeenth century was a classic case of hinterland shrinkage, an opinion which Ashin Das Gupta has tested for Surat in the eighteenth century.

One can identify at least two factors for the emergence of smaller ports within the northern Coromandel region. Firstly, the European company trade underwent a massive transformation during the phase of Mughal intervention. The European commerce which was more or less consolidated in the hinterland through their factories started seeking permission to gain exclusive control on ports such as Divi, Ingeram, Jaganathapuram, Vizagpatnam, Bimlipatnam etc. on the northern sector of Masulipatnam. These ports which were located closer to the weaving villages led to the cheapness of finished textiles as it did not involve too many taxes along the route, especially if one is speaking in the wake of revoking of concessions by the imperial authority. It may also be emphasised that in initial years after the war, there was steep rise in *Rahadari* and *Darwaza* due to uncertain political conditions along the coast. These ports which earlier acted as 'satellite ports' to Masulipatnam were slowly coming out of their satellite character and claimed independent status by the beginning of the eighteenth century. These ports became crucial suppliers of cloth and grain to the companies in the coastal trade. On Divi the English factors wrote:

" We have given particular direction about Divi and the grant of it from the crown directly would be the best jewel you have in India. There is everything upon it that can be wished or derived in such a place. The water is excellent, plenty of wood, soil is fruitful to a productivity of everything that is useful and necessary, especially Chayroot and a good harbouring of vessels from 100 to 200 tonnes".¹¹⁷

Divi island solved the problems of procuring grain and chay root directly from the hinterland but also provided an alternative to Masulipatnam, However, it is not clear whether commodity trade at Divi was directly routed to other Coromandel ports. For instance, on Ingeram the factors stated that:

"The goods we use to have at Madapollem were made in this country, and upon those islands surrounded with deep and broad rivers, which makes ground fertile so that it maintains vast number of inhabitants"¹¹⁸

By the middle of the eighteenth century, these ports of east Godavari were able to channelise most of the oceanic trade which hitherto was exported from Masulipatnam. The reduction of distance between production areas and the ports enhanced exports with greater reliability. Masulipatnam had to sacrifice hinterland

¹¹⁷ See, *RFSG, Despatches to England*, Vol IV, 1714.

¹¹⁸ *RFSG*, Public Department, *Letters to Fort St. George, 1712*, p. 133

of east Godavari to the smaller ports in the same delta. The notion of 'Port complexes, Port concentration and Port diffusion' in which the competition or traffic in trade in their common hinterland affect the fortunes of other ports (even if they were of Metropolitan nature) holds ground for the port of Masulipatnam at the beginning of the seventeenth century.¹¹⁹ The consolidation of these smaller ports was a by product of Mughal invasion and the consequent processes of consolidation of territorial jurisdiction by the tributary and other *Zamindars* of the region. In Vizagpatnam for example, the local chief Pusapati Ananda Raju encouraged English trade by allowing the company to fortify the town and with additional concessions of farming the villages around the port. At Ingeram the factors wrote,

"very civil treatment from the governor
and all people at Ingeram and
Timmarazu, that countrys rajah gives frequent
assurances of his favour and friendship, so that
we can hope considerable trade may be
carried for the company in spite of the Dutch
who have begun and continue to trade
there"¹²⁰

By 1690, the role of *Zamindars* and tributary chiefs in trade became more direct when compared to earlier periods. The role of

¹¹⁹ See, B. Ogundana, 'Patterns and Problems of Seaports Evolution in Nigeria' in B.S.Hoyle, ed., *Sea ports and Development in Tropical Africa*, London, 1970, cited in Atiya Habeeb Kidwai, 'Conceptual and Methodological Issues: Ports, Port Cities and Port-Hinterlands' in Indu Banga, ed., *Ports and their Hinterlands in India, 1700-1950*, New Delhi, 1992 pp. 23-25.

¹²⁰ *RFSG*, Public Department, *Despatches from England, 1712*, p.61

Zamindars and their attempts to streamline trade through smaller ports which lay within their territorial jurisdictions had an adverse impact on Masulipatnam. It was a common feature in the eighteenth century to find ports with small but definite hinterland survive over those which commanded vast hinterlands such as Masulipatnam of the preceding century.

CHAPTER II

VIZAGAPATNAM: URBAN PROCESS

AMIDIST DECLINE 1682-1724

Chapter II

Vizagpatnam: Urban process amidst 'decline' 1682-1724

In his major survey of the rise and fall of the Coromandel ports, Arasaratnam is of the opinion that the ports of Masulipatnam, Peddapalli and Pulicat showed signs of regression which accelerated into their decline by the end of the seventeenth century. He attributes this decline to two major causes: 1) the rise of European companies and the forceful expulsion of Indian merchants from the open trade system and 2) the political disintegration which started with the decline of Vijayanagara in the mid seventeenth century and later to the Mughal conquest of Golconda in 1687.¹ He also stresses the diversity of Coromandel coast in which the southern Coromandel ports such as Porto Novo and Nagore displayed signs of growth while the northern Coromandel counterpart declined rapidly by the end of the seventeenth century. Consequently, he argues that no other port emerged or rose into prominence in the period between 1690-1740 on the northern Coromandel. Ports such as Ingeram, Kakinada, Coringa and Vizagapatnam are merely dismissed as mere 'feeder ports' involved in the coastal trade. Their rise, in particular of Kakinada and Vizagapatnam are attributed to the eighteenth century *per se* and are largely seen as being the products of European appropriation of Asian trade with autonomous territorial jurisdictions called fortifications.² Talking specifically of the Gingelly and Vizagapatnam coasts, Arasaratnam attributes the

¹ S. Arasaratnam, *Merchants, Companies and Commerce on the Coromandel Coast, 1650-1740*, New Delhi, 1986, pp. 162-165.

² *Ibid.*

failure of these ports to various internecine wars between the tributary *raju* and *Velama* clans which was a consequence of Mughal intervention in northern Coromandel in the last decade of the seventeenth century.

Arasaratnam's analysis on the northern Coromandel has both empirical and methodological problems. Firstly, he has not paid serious attention to the English documentation on Vizagapatnam which commences roughly from the year 1682 and seemed to have relied heavily on the work of J. F. Richards on Mughal administration rather than situating trade in specific context of 1690-1724. Secondly, his methodology on the changing regional political scenario in the wake of Mughal conquest of Golconda is seriously flawed. He uncritically accepts the well known historiography of the Mughal historians and their analysis of political fragmentation as being an evidence of decay/decline in all spheres of economic activity and transposes it to the regional economy of northern Coromandel coast.³ The development of Vizagapatnam into a major port was not a product of European appropriation of Indian trade, as Arasaratnam opines, but due to the rigorous economic intervention of the local elite in the economy of Gingelly and Vizagapatnam coasts in which the European commerce was only a part of the regional dynamics.

By taking Vizagapatnam as a case study in the period between 1682-1724, this chapter firstly, contests the above

³ See, Irfan Habib, *The Agrarian System of Mughal India 1556-1707*, Bombay, 1963, Shireen Moosvi, *The Economy of Mughal Empire, c.1595*, New Delhi, 1987., in particular. This notion extended to the regions outside Mughal empire say to south India. Thus see, J. F Richards, *Mughal Administration of Golconda*, New Delhi, 1977.

conclusions of S. Arasaratnam and to a lesser extent the work of J. F. Richard's and establishes that despite the political situation being volatile due to political flux created by the Mughal intervention and the local chiefs, the economy on the other hand displayed considerable resilience and even displayed signs of development which fostered the growth of Vizagpatnam into a major port town. Secondly, Various economic forces such as intense commercialisation of agriculture and monetisation remained intact in the local economy in spite of the imposition of imperial authority over the existing chiefdoms. It sustained itself on local agrarian production and trade which fostered urbanisation.

The expansion of the economic sub-structure was rooted through the active participation of the local chiefs in building up strong revenue resource base in agriculture and local trade.⁴ In the fast changing political environment, these people created an economic space of their own and emerged as politico-military entrepreneurs with diverse interests such as agrarian expansion, intervention in trading activities, especially grain markets to the ports of Ganjam, Vizagpatnam and Kakinada. Grain was cheap at Vizagapatnam which had its impact on the weaving economy of the region as well. The money generated through commercialisation was invested in political aggrandizement either on intra-regional conflicts or to stop the expanding Mughal empire.

⁴ C.A. Bayly for instance has studied the role of various categories of men like the local Mahajans, Mughal officials which included mansabdars, petty kings and finally the great household who participated in trade and other allied activities in the eighteenth century north India. See, C.A. Bayly, *Indian society in the age of British Expansion, The New Cambridge History of India*, Cambridge, 1991. and his earlier work, *Rulers, Townsmen and Bazaars* Cambridge, 1988.

Unlike in Masulipatnam which was dominated by trans-oceanic Asian traders such as Mir Jumla and Madanna, the situation on the Gingelly and Vizagpatnam was quite different. Here, the trade was more localised and the mediation between the agrarian economy and trade was indirectly conducted by tributary *raju* and *velama* clans. It may be noted that the nature of entrepreneurship was markedly different from Masulipatnam, that the participation of tributary chiefs in trade was more indirect and even negligible. However, these local political elements were instrumental in creating necessary conditions which fostered trade in the ports of Vizagapatnam and Bimlipatnam. In a situation where the European commerce made considerable inroads into the local economy, it was these local chieftains who acted as sole arbitrators between the production economy and the English East India company in the eighteenth century. The term politico-military entrepreneurs is best suited to these tributary chiefs, for, their primary interest was to chalk out autonomous territorial control a process which was achieved through their intervention and collaboration in the commodity production and negotiate its partnership with European companies.

The period between 1690-1724 witnessed a massive restructuring of relationships between the Mughal officials, tributary *raju* chiefs or politico-military entrepreneurs and the European companies. The emergence of tripartite relationship between the Mughals, the politico-military entrepreneurs and the European companies became consolidated during this period. However, it must be noted that this relationship was very fluid and

it was common feature to find erratic shifting and breaking of alliances between each of the contesting parties throughout the period under study. This feature became more endemic due to constant shifts in the political equations between the Mughals and local potentates in the hinterland: the latter, at least some of them like the Pusapatis, Gajapathis, Kolindar clan of Peddapuram and the Raja of Jeypore emerged as 'proto-dynastic' figures by the second decade of the eighteenth century.

In the fluctuating political fortunes between the *raju* and *Velama* clans and the Mughal *faujdar*s on the other hand, private finance of the company to local political players became significant. However, Neither of the parties followed any clear cut rules and regulations as to whom the finance was to be provided. Financially, the English east India company emerged as the main arbitrator, while the local merchants such as jagappa and Budde Narrain mediated between the company and the local elite. In fact the company's existence at Vizagpatnam depended on its flexibility to finance the local powers. The complex financial commitments between these contesting parties; the Mughal *faujdar*s, the politico-military entrepreneurs and the English proved beneficial to the latter group which furthered weakened the Mughal system on the Coromandel. It is with this background that this chapter proposes to study the history of the port of Vizagpatnam and sees the whole period between 1680-1724 as a period of transition rather than that of decline.

The early history of the port of Vizagpatnam is not clear before the direct participation of the European companies in the

Gingelly and Vizagpatnam coast. From the extant inscriptions of Simhachalam and Annavaram, the port was mentioned as the temple town of Vishakeshwara from which it derived its name.⁵ While we are handicapped on the early history of Vizagpatnam, the systematic integration of the port into the Indian ocean network can be traced to the English commerce of the late seventeenth century. The hinterland of Vizagpatnam comprised of two major economic zones of Gingelly coast with ports of Ganjam, Gopalpur and Kalingapatnam, (now part of modern Orissa) and the ports of Bimlipatnam and Vizagpatnam in the northern Andhra coast.⁶ In the English records the port was first mentioned in the Golden *Firman* of 1634 which gave trading concessions at Bimlipatnam and Vizagpatnam to the company. The Dutch maintained a regular factory at Bimlipatnam for exporting grain and textiles for most of the seventeenth century. Vizagpatnam may have been an important outlet for coastal trade before the English settled here in 1682.

The hinterland of Vizagpatnam extended to the modern districts of Southern Orissa, Srikakulam, Vizagpatnam, Vizianagaram and to some parts of southern Madhya Pradesh. Though this formed the main hinterland of Vizagpatnam, the port itself did not achieve any position of importance but was mainly used for wood and rice to be exported to Masulipatnam and southern Coromandel. As early as 1638, the English factors

⁵ See, *Simhavhalam and Annavaram Inscriptions*, Department of Archaeology and Museums, Government of Andhra Pradesh. Arudra, *Sumatra Andhra Sahityamu, Kumpini Yugamu*, Hyderabad, 1978.

⁶ See, Arasaratnam, *Merchants, Companies and Commerce*, p.11-12.

reported that the port can be used for repairing of the ships as the place had abundant wood which came from the nearby forests.⁷

In 1684, a grant was given by Abul Hasan Tana Shah to Richard Brown, the chief of Vizagpatnam, for a custom free permission to trade in the ports of Ganjam, Sonapuram, Poonde Barra, Kalingapatnam, Collipalli, Conaraa, Bimlipatnam, Walteroo, Madacca, Vatuda, Pentakota and Vizagpatnam.⁸ On the eve of the Mughal conquest, the English negotiated for a permanent fortification at Vizagpatnam. But as the trade grew in Vizagpatnam and Bimlipatnam, most of the smaller ports of Orissa and east Godavari sent merchandise to either Ganjam, Bimlipatnam or Vizagpatnam.⁹ Thus by the beginning of the eighteenth century, Vizagpatnam emerged as a main port complex within the Gingelly and Vizagpatnam sectors.

The main strength of Vizagpatnam lay in its fertile tracts producing rice needed both for domestic and export markets. The cheapness of rice a major motive for the English company to negotiate for Gingelly and Vizagpatnam. The English factors wrote in 1688:

⁷ *EFI* 1637-41, p..242.

⁸ See, *RFSG, Letters to Fort St. George* 1684/1685 p.26.

⁹ See, for a detailed discussion on ports on the northern Coromandel, S. Arasaratnam, *Merchants, Companies and Commerce*, pp.-14.

"Despite bad country, the company will must believe it ()capable from those undeniable advantages at first ()and poverty of people, the felicity of soil, the plenty of grain and provisions and cheapness of labour, the abundance of handicrafts and mechanics and quantities () and necessary for many factories so that there appear nothing wanting but money produce and industry it imploy all these benefits"¹⁰

When compared to southern Coromandel, the Gingelly and Vizagpatnam coast showed considerable variation as far as prices of rice and grain was concerned. For instance, Masulipatnam and Madrasapatnam showed steep rise in the prices of rice and grain (often shooting up to 100% increase) which had a telling effect on the weaving economy and consequently on the port of Masulipatnam.¹¹ Orissa and Vizagpatnam were the main surplus areas from which rice was regularly sent to southern Coromandel. In terms of volume of trade, rice became single most important commodity in port-to-port trade in the late seventeenth century Coromandel.¹² One finds numerous instances to show that rice was cheap at Vizagpatnam and Ganjam sectors.¹³

¹⁰ *RFSG, Letters from Ft. George*, 1688 pp.37-38.

¹¹ Basing of the Dutch documentation, Joseph Brenning showed a steep rise in the prices of rice in the Masulipatnam sector. He attributes this rise to the growing controls over grain by the Qutb Shahi administration under Madanna, and to the regressive nature of *Guddem* tax. See, Joseph Brenning, 'Textile Producers and Production in the seventeenth century Coromandel', in Sanjay Subrahmanyam, ed, *Merchants, Markets and the State in Early Modern India*, New Delhi, 1990 pp. 66-90.

¹² S. Arasaratnam, *Merchants, Companies and Commerce*, p. 209.

¹³ See, *RFSG, Letters from Fort St. George*, 1698, p.124.

But, what could have been the plausible reason for the cheapness of grain despite being affected by constant warfare between the Mughals and the country *rajus*? One can suggest two reasons for the surplus and cheapness of grain here. Firstly, the 'country *Rajus*' were able to effectively expand and create new agrarian frontiers by bringing new lands under cultivation and thorough their control of grain markets in the region. They were instrumental in organising local grain markets such as Payakaraopeta, Srungavarapukota, Gajapathinagaram, Palasa, Vizinagaram etc. and initiated company commerce on the coast. We have at least one instance of a certain chief of Vizagaptnam mediating the prices between the English private traders and the local grain market. The English chief lamented that rice trade by the private traders with that of indigenous elite was so high that it proved detrimental to the company largely due to the active collaboration of the former with the local chiefs. The said chief was paying a custom of Rs. 15,000 to 18,000 to the *Seerlaskar* to export the rice from Ganjam in the local country made boats.¹⁴

The revoking of the *rahadari* and other local concessions given to the Europeans by the Mughals was an additional reason for the cheapness of rice in the highly competitive local markets which in turn brought down the prices in the region. Thus the cheapness of rice was a major factor for the rise of Vizagpatnam before it came into the map of textile trade in the last decades of the seventeenth century.

¹⁴ *RFSG, Diary and Consultation Book, 1709,1 p.32.*

Hinterland, local Politics and Mughal expansion

The cheapness of provisions had direct bearing on the weaving economy of the northern Coromandel region. A comparative price structure of European goods at Vizagpatnam and Fort St. George for the year 1694 reveal that the goods were much cheaper in Vizagpatnam:

Fort St. George (in pagodas)	Vizagpatnam(in pagodas)	
Broad Cloth	28:10:30	24
Aurora	50	40
Cloth rashes	18:10:20	16
perpetuneuces fine	15	12
Perpetunueces ordinary	10	8

Source: *RFSG, Letters from Fort St. George, 1694, p.46*

In 1709 the English factors reported: " rice being cheap at Vizagpatnam and consequently cotton, it is agreed to send *Candy Copper* " a ship with a tonnage of 500 tones for the fort for immediate despatch.¹⁵

The whole Gingelly and the trans-Godavari river was clustered with cotton and textile marketing centres. However, paucity of sources does not allow any systematic estimation of weaving villages with their producing capacities for the period under consideration. The weaving villages were spread across the districts of Orissa, Srikakulam, Vizagpatnam and Vizianagaram. In Srikakulam district, Ponduru, Siripuram, Bonthalakoduru, Alianagaram, Cheepurupalli, Palakonda, Ompolu were the main weaving villages. In the districts of Vizianagaram and Vizagpatnam

¹⁵ *RFSG, Diary and Consultation Book, 1709, p.32.*

the main weaving villages and marketing centres were Srungavarapukota, Gajapathinagram, Veeravali, Gollagunda, Suravaram, Sarvasiddhi, Vizianagaram, Bobbili, Anakapalli, Rajam, and Nakkapalli.¹⁶ Close to these weaving villages were many local marketing towns such as Berhampore, Palasa, Chichacole, Parlakammidy, Narasampet, Ragunathapuram, Ichapuram, Ganjam, Kalingapatnam, Barwah, Russell konda, Copalpur of the Srikakulam district, while towns like Samulakota, Peddapuram, Vizianagaram, Bobbili, Vizagpatnam, Walteroo etc. of the Vizianagaram and Vizagpatnam districts. Rajam for example, was dominated by *Sale*, *Devanga* and *Pattu sale* communities and consisted of 1000 looms. As many as 30 villages around it supplied cloth worth Rs. 1,00,000 to the main marketing centre of Vizianagaram which in turn sent the merchandise to Hyderabad. The Pusapati *raju* was collected a *jama* of Rs. 2,00,000 thus making Vizianagaram the most powerful Zamindari in later times.¹⁷ From the last decade of the seventeenth century, Vizagapatnam was able to attract merchandise from east Godavari as well. Peddapuram, Neelapalli, Tuni, Coringa, Ingeram which supplied cloth to Masulipatnam in the preceding decades now came under Vizagapatnam circuit of trade. This shift in the hinterland of east

¹⁶ Most of the weaving centres are identified from various records of *Fort St. George* during the period under consideration. However, unlike Masulipatnam where the Dutch had recorded the weaving centres of Draksharama, Peddapuram, Gondavaram etc, in detail, sources are very scanty and very impressionistic on Vizagpatnam. See *RFSG*, Series, Government of Madras., and E.B.Haveli, *Report of the Madras Presidency*, 1886 (reprint), 1909, See particularly the Sections on Godavari, Vizagpatnam, Srikakulam and Ganjam.

¹⁷ *Ibid*, and See, *Rajam Kaifiyat*, Vizianagaram Zilla Kaifiyatulu, A.P. State Archives, 1992.

Godavari from Masulipatnam to Vizagapatnam was one of the causes for the decline of Masulipatnam.¹⁸

The hinterland of Vizagapatnam was dictated by some distinct features linked inextricably to the local politics of the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. Firstly the period witnessed many internecine wars between the Mughals and chiefs but also internal conflicts within the chiefs themselves. Secondly, the gradual emergence of tripartite relationships between the Mughals, chiefs and the English East India company had a direct impact on the trade and thirdly, the expansion of English company and its aggressive collaboration with the politico-military entrepreneurs directly led to the decline of Mughal system in northern coastal Andhra.

The trans-Godavari region was under Cholas and later passed to other regional kingdoms such as Gajapathis, Reddies and Vijayanagara. Except during the rule of Gajapathis, the contemporaries of Vijayanagara, the region was always considered as peripheral by respective central authorities. The first attempt to integrate the region began with the Qutb Shahi thrust into the coastal strips of Andhra during the reign of Ibrahim and Muhammad Quli Qutb Shah. The expansion marked a significant shift in the politics of the region. Ever since the consolidation of Golconda in coastal Andhra, the local warrior velama and *raju's* became tribute payers and pumped money and arms to the 'formal' central government at Hyderabad. However, the process of

¹⁸ See, Thomas Bowrey, *The Geographical Account of Countries Around the Bay of Bengal*, p. 124-125.

political integration remained hazy even under the Qutb Shahi rule and the regional elite more or less retained their autonomy and held sway over vast territorial tracts in coastal Andhra.¹⁹

The main administrative headquarters of the northern Coromandel was at Srikakulam and Kasimkota. As many as thirty big and small *Zamindars* and independent chiefs existed in the period under study. Most of them belonged to powerful peasant warrior clans such as *Velamas* and *rajus* while a few of them had strong tribal base, popularly termed in the later British documents as 'hill rajas'.

These peasant-warrior clans were always considered as potential threats to central governments, be it Golconda or Mughals. In most of the studies conducted on these local forms of dominance a mere stereotypical picture emerges as those who merely cushioned the state through fiscal and military supplies or as potential dangers to the central government in different times and contexts.²¹ They are characterised as 'seditious', 'rebellious' and 'recalcitrant' and sadly surfaced in historical writings as the main forms of destabilisation of the state structure. JR Richard's is of the

¹⁹ The region still lacks any systematic history prior to the Mughal invasion in the Deccan. Unfortunately, even today, one has to depend on the nineteenth century *Kaifiyats* collected by Colin Mackenzie. For the history of Srikakulam and Vizagapatnam See, C.D.Maclean, *Manual of Administration*, Vol. II, See, *Vizianagaram Kaifiyat, Pusapatirajula Vamsavali*, is the only available source for the history of Pusapati family prior to British dominion.

²¹ A typically nineteenth century British understanding of these men was as follows: " ... they took advantage of the periods of weakness of the latter (meaning the state) and erected castles from which like the baronial chiefs of Europe in the feudal ages, they plundered and oppressed the surrounding country. The English government was often obliged to purchase their orderly behaviour by giving them an independent power and jurisdiction. There is class whose subjugation proved so expensive to Great Britain." C.D.Maclean, *Manual of the Administration of the Madras Presidency*. Vol II, p.267.

opinion that the failure to assimilate these traditional elite into the Mughal structure as the primary reason for the decline of Mughal empire.²² One major problem in his study has been the failure to recognise any independent economic 'space' for these chiefs with its own logic of growth and development. Consequently, there has been a total neglect of complex inter linkages between this 'hazy' tributary zone and the state formation.

There is absolutely no doubt that the Mughal conquest of Golconda had unleashed new opportunities to these chiefdoms to chalk out autonomous territorial jurisdictions either by subduing other lesser chiefs of the region or by openly revolting against the central authority. Notable ruling clans of Pusapati Sitarama Raju, Gajapathis and Varasimha Deva of Jeypore went of massive aggrandizement on lesser chiefs and brought them into their fold. Though these wars on lesser chiefs did not mean a complete liquidation, it led on the other hand to hierarchy of chiefdoms with Kaumili and Vizianagaram as the epicentre. For instance, the Kolindar Raja's were dependent on the power of Pusapati Sitarama Raju but did not hesitate to change loyalty to Mughal camp whenever his interests were jeopardised by the Pusapati clan. Within this hierarchy of chiefdoms, even a big house like Pusapati's initially supported the Mughals in their war against the English under the orders of the Mughal *Faujdar*. But as its power grew over a period of time, it took a form of open revolts against the Mughal

²² See, *fn. 3* . and M. Athar Ali, *The Mughal Nobility under Aurangazeb*, Bombay 1966. For South India the arguments are extended by J.F.Richards, *Mughal Administration of Golconda*, New Delhi 1975, *The Mughal Empire*, The New Cambridge History of India, Cambridge, 1994.

authority.²³ Since 1694, the Pusapati family was constantly at loggerheads with the Mughals while maintaining cordial relations with the English company at Vizagpatnam. Sitarama Raju is only one such instance of a series of revolts during the period against the Mughal intervention. A closer examination of the revolts would reveal that they were rooted in the very nature of the Mughal expansion which threatened to disrupt the existing political economy of the northern Coromandel.

Immediately after the Mughal conquest in 1687, Aurangazeb moved cautiously over the Deccan affairs. Instead of directly transplanting the existing system with that of Mughal *faujdars* who came from Delhi, he allowed the old officialdom to continue in the remote areas of the coastal Andhra. Thus, Sayyid Abdullah, Hussain Beg and Mir Muhammad Hade, the erstwhile Qutb Shahi Governors were retained in the provinces with a new official designation called *Faujdars*.²⁴ With the appointment of Mustapha Quli Khan (1690-1697) as the faujdar in 1690 for the united province of Srikakulam, Eluru, Kondapalli, Kondavidu, Masulipatnam and Petapoli, a radical political and economic transformation took place on the northern Coromandel. The strategy of Mustapha Quli Khan was quite complex. He operated at two levels: political and economic. At the political level he adopted a simple strategy of following Mughal principle of totally subduing the *Zamindars* in the region. At the economic level, Mustapha Quli Khan tried to

²³ RFSG. *Letters to Fort St. George*, 1694, p. 46-47.

²⁴ J.F. Richards, *Mughal Administration of Golconda*, p.61.

assimilate the existing economic realities which was used for the enhancement of personal wealth.

It will not be out of context to elaborate and compare the pre-existing economic which linked the state with the tributary chiefdoms before the Mughal conquest. For instance, unlike in the Mughal revenue system, *Jama Caumil* was the basic taxation under the Qutb Shahis which was not uniform and varied from region to region. While much of the land revenue collected went to the state, the local potentates depended mostly on the customs, quit rents for the houses and other local cesses apart from retaining considerable fiscal autonomy from the central authority. The fiscal autonomy and its inherent capacity to enhance the economic status and consequently the political status, cushioned these local potentates to operate freely within their territorial jurisdictions as long as the demands of the state were met. The ancestry of Pusapati's reveals that the initial prosperity of this house depended on farming diamond mines in Krishna district before they migrated to Vizianagaram.²⁵ For these chiefs, farming of regional industry and access to grain markets became a necessary by-product to augment their military power in the localities.²⁶ For example, Gangaraju and Ramaraju of the Kolindar clan of Mogalteru amassed wealth through their participation in grain trade. Their close relative Appa Row who was a small time renter in Krishna district took Divi

²⁵ Madhava Varma, the founder of Vizianagaram Zamindari hailed from Pusapadu near Vinukonda (modern Guntur district) and farmed the diamond mines of Krishna district. See, *Pusapatwajula Vamsavali*, Vizianagaram Zilla Kaifiyatulu, pp. 10-11.

²⁶ *RFSG, Letters from Fort St George*, 1688 p.38. and, S. Subrahmanyam and C.A.Bayly, 'Portfolio- Capitalists and the Political Economy of Early Modern India', p.254.

island as a revenue farm from Zoode Khan, the Mughal *faujdar*, and by the end of the first decade of the eighteenth century became recognized as a *Zamindar* by the imperial government.²⁷

Equally interesting was the history of Pusapatis of Vizianagaram whose known family history goes back to 1650's: The dynasty was founded by Madhava varma and belonged to Pusapadu village in modern Guntur district. In 1458, one Pusapati Timmaraju seemed to have played an important role in the war against Kapilas. He may have been a subordinate of Deva Raya II. Within the paragona of Guntur, Timmaraju developed enmity with *velama* chiefs of Racherlakonda and Devarkonda (modern Nalgonda). During the Qutb shahi rule, Pusapati family was given the *paragona* of Vinukonda. In 1651 they were force migrated to Vizianagaram on the behest of one Sher Muhammad Khan, who took over the areas of Kondaveedu, Vinukonda, Kondapalli, Masulipatnam, Eluru, and Rajamundry areas directly under his control. At Vizianagaram, the family took over a number of villages under their control on the condition that they maintain a specified number of cavalry and infantry for the upkeep of the kingdom. The family acquired the paraganas of Gunderu, Devupalli, Putnuru, Nellamerla, Gudipudi, Anantha Caudhavaram, Alakala in and around the Vizianagaram.²⁸ Pusapati Sitarama Raju, the ruling chief of the dynasty during the time of Mughal expansion, had acquired many honorific titles and was referred to as 'raja' either in

²⁷ RFSG, *Diary and Consulation books, 1709-1711.S.Master, The Diaries of Streyntsham Master*, Vol. II, p.62. For a general theoretical discussion on this See, C.A.Bayly, *Indian Society and the making of the British Empire*, p.14.

²⁸ See, *Pusapatirajula Vamsavali*, pp. 10-11.

the Mughal phraseology or in the European documentation. By the time his son Pusapati Ananda Raju took over the reigns of Vizinagaram in 1704, this ruling clan surely threatened the very existence of the Mughal system and came to be recognised as a 'dynasty' within the region. The case of Pusapatis clearly points out that these *rajās* were products of political and economic exigencies "which is at one and the same time a symptom of the commercialisation of the state and political power, and a response to a set of material conditions -- the need to link ecologically disparate producing regions, to push back the agrarian frontier and organize commercial production".²⁹ Thus, the response to crisis theory of Sanjay Subrahmanyam not only worked for big recognised kingdoms such as Golconda and Vijayanagara in the earlier periods, but also in various levels of hierarchies of power at the level of localities. This, of course, has to be grounded in specific contexts of political behaviour as developed in south India, C.A.Bayly who has worked on these politico-military entrepreneurs in north India sees them predominantly as those who grew in power at the expense of the centre and products of Mughal decline remains relevant for ruling chiefs of northern coastal Andhra.

Mustapha Quli Khan, the first *faujdar*, tried to expropriate several villages belonging to various 'sardars' of which the most

²⁹ According to Sanjay Subrahmanyam portfolio capitalists declined in the late seventeenth century. A modification of the north Indian profile has been proposed by C.A.Bayly for the eighteenth century. For him the careerists were not the great oceanic merchants but those who operated in the local *Ganjas* and markets and the petty kings who mediated between the intermediate economy and the civil society. In Gingelly and northern Coromandel sector, we find the profile of C.A.Bayly more apt for discussion. See, S.Subrahmanyam and C.A.Bayly, 'Portfolio Capitalists and the Political Economy of Early Modern India', p. 253.

notable was Pusapati Sitaramaraju and Raja of Jeypore. Sitaramaraju on the other hand used the strategy of first subduing lesser chiefs in the region and in the process garnered the support of other rebels. He plundered the localities with about 4000 men and killed the Gajapati Raja of Petnor who refused to support him against the Mughals.³⁰ He had the active support of Varasimha Deva of Jeypore (now in modern Orissa) and by 1695 this rebellious chief was well in control of the situation. Even the family of Gajapathis, which was earlier antagonistic to the activities of Sitaramaraju supported the cause of the rebels and by 1695 were instrumental in marginalising Mustapha Quli Khan. Even the English factors at Vizagpatnam wrote: " It is not clear if the seerlaskar (*faujdar*) can fight the united *rajahs* and it will long before the Mughals send the second contingent. It is safest to suppose country *rajahs* will be the conquerors³¹ Mustapha Quli Khan sought the support of Kolindar *rajahs* of Mogalteru but in the mean time Jan Sipar Khan, the *Diwan* designate of Hyderabad removed Mustapha Quli Khan and replaced him with Rustom Dil Khan by a *perwana*.. The emperor on the other hand, instead of removing Mustapha Quli Khan sent him additional troops but proved futile. Mustapha had to reconcile with Sitaramaraju by allowing him to retain all the territories belonging to the combined rebel forces. ⁱ²

³⁰ *Vizagpatnam Consolations*, August 1694 cited in J.F. Richards, 'Mughal Retreat From Coastal Andhra', p. 56.

³¹ *RFSG, Despatches to England*, 1694-96 p. 23, 29, *RFSG, Letters from Fort St. George*, 1697 p.11-12.

³² J.F.Richards, 'Mughal Retreat from Coastal Andhra', p. 57.

In 1697, Mustapha Quli Khan was killed by the combined *raju's* of north coastal Andhra.³³

Rustum Dil Khan who replaced Mustapha Quli Khan was the son of Jan Sipar Khan, Governor of Hyderabad, who served coastal Andhra only for a brief period of time. Rustom Dil's main duty in coastal Andhra was to liquidate the recalcitrant chiefs and *Zamindars* and to collect the taxes and tribute overdue from them. His short tenure went uneventful and was replaced by Fakirullah Khan with a mansab of 1500/1000.³⁴ Fakirullah Khan, son of Mustapha Quli Khan, gained the office of *faujdari* after repaying his fathers arrears and 'bought the Srikakulam *faujdari*. He was sent to administer the entire coast from Nizampatnam to Srikakulam with both executive and fiscal powers in the *khalisa* lands.³⁵ Fakirullah Khan's career in coastal Andhra is particularly significant for the emergence of tripartite relationships which came to dominate the economy of Vizagapatnam in the first decade of the eighteenth century. Unlike Mustapha Quli Khan, the new *faujdar* did not attempt at out rightly imposing Mughal official code on the chiefs but collaborated with them at various levels of administration and slowly developed local roots in the region. Secondly, he entered into complex financial transactions with the English company at Vizagpatnam which surely goes against the Mughal norms.

In his chequed history as *the faujdar*, Fakirullah Khan fell into disfavour of Mughal *Wazir*, Asad Khan, as he failed to remit

³³ *Ibid.*

³⁴ Fakirullah Khan's total pay was 8,025,000 dams or Rs.200,625 with an established receipt of 83,593 with a contingent of 72,000. See J.F.Richards, *Mughal Administration of Golconda*, p. 94, 98-99.

³⁵ Harihardas, ed, *The Norris Embassy to Aurangazeb 1699-1702* p.145.

Rs 2.5 million to the central treasury. ³⁶ Fakirullah Khan faced considerable resentment both from the emperor and the *Wazir* and was replaced by Mehdi Khan Beig as the *faujdar* of Srikakulam affairs. Initially, Fakirullah Khan refused to recognise Mehdi Khan Beig as the *faujdar* on the ground that the order did not come from the emperor. Significantly, in the factional politics of Mughal empire, Fakirullah Khan was actively supported by the local chiefs who refused to recognise the authority of Mehdi Khan Beig³⁷

Mehdi Khan Beig went on massive military aggrandizement which proved not only expensive for him but to imperial government as well. In one bloody conflict, Mehdi Khan Beig attempted to take the villages of Timmaraju, the *Zamindar* of Peddapuram, directly under his control and in the process 100 of Timmaraju's men were killed. The combined *rajus* fearing any further onslaught asked Pusapati Anandaraju's assistance who in turn unified most of the warring chiefs against the aggression of Mehdi Khan Beig. The aggressive political thrust of Mehdi Khan Beig into the interiors of coastal Andhra costed the Mughal empire a sum of Rs. 100,000 to be paid to the *rajus* and also recognise them as legitimate rulers of the region.³⁹

The desperate acts of Mehdi Khan Beig gave Fakirullah Khan another chance to become the *faujdar* of the region. Though one does not find any direct reference to the role played by Fakirullah Khan in ousting Mehdi Khan from his position, his rapport and relations with the chiefs would leave considerable scope for

³⁶ J.F.Richards, 'Mughal Retreat from Coastal Andhra', p. 58.

³⁷ *RFSG, Diary and Consultation Book*, 1700,p.9.

³⁹ *RFSG, Diary and Consultation Book*, 1702, p. 26,32.

speculation and an assumption that he may have had collaborated with local chiefs to retain the *faujdari* of Srikakulam. For instance, 1707, when Fakirullah Khan blockaded the town of Vizagpatnam, he was backed by otherwise antagonistic political entities such as Pusapati Anandaraju and the *Zamindar* of Peddapuram.⁴⁰

The above mentioned series of political events between 1690-1712, starting from Mustapha Quli Khan to Fakirullah Khan show some features which had long term consequences for the economy of northern Coromandel. The events themselves were not sudden and were not mere political outcome of Mughal intervention in Deccan. They were products of a long transformation in the politico-economic structure which had roots in the pre-Mughal phase of Coromandel. The Mughal expansion became turning point because it unleashed the already existing political tensions at the local level which threatened for the first time, the expansion of Mughal empire.

After the Mughal conquest, Aurangzeb retained most of the pre-existing structures of the economy. However, the Mughal action of bringing the existing *Naikumrs* into the Mughal fold as primary *Zamindars* and to reduce them into *mansabdars* was seriously contested at the local level. The petty kings who were accustomed to paying tribute in lieu of fiscal autonomy were threatened by the logic of Mughal expansion which reduced them to mansabdars : in the Mughal phrase - intermediary *Zamindars*.⁴¹

⁴⁰ RFSG, Public Department, Letters to Fort St. George, 1711, p.80.

⁴¹ Chetan Singh, *Region and Empire:Panjab in the seventeenth Century*, New Delhi, 1991,p.136-153.

In the logic of Mughal expansion into northern Coromandel, the Mughal *faujdar*s realized the futility of imposing Mughal rules. In reality during the period between 1690-1712, the imperial system failed to penetrate into the local economy. For instance, despite abolishing the system of revenue farming, it continued to be the main form of economic mediation between the state and the coastal economy.⁴² There were two major limitations to the Mughal expansion in the period under study. One, because it failed to penetrate beyond certain level: the main contesting zone being the local levels of dominance which was under numerous *Zamindars* and chiefdoms, whose economic interests directly clashed with that of Mughal *faujdar*i system. Secondly, the empire failed to integrate the chiefs of coastal Andhra into the larger Mughal structure even by way of recognizing their hereditary powers - -a policy which the Mughals successfully followed in areas where the direct governance entailed financial and military liabilities.

In northern Coromandel, the Mughal system failed because the tributary chiefs had transformed themselves into politico-military entrepreneurs with independent revenues based on sound management of agrarian production and through indirect benefits in trade. This process, one may suggest, began much before the formal liquidation of Golconda by the Mughal empire. J.F. Richard's is of the opinion that the Mughal failure to assimilate

⁴² It will too exhaustive to account the number of revenue farms given during the Mughal phase on the Coromandel coast. The whole of Coromandel coast clearly shows a deviance from the Mughal rules as far as intervention into the economic structure is concerned. To cite only one example for the region under study, Mustapha Quli Khan himself gave many revenue farms both to the lesser *Zamindars* and the European companies. *Vizagpatnam Consolations*, 1693.

these chieftains as the main cause for the decline of the empire is only half true. The actual decline, as rightly explained by C.A.Bayly, was a result of the creation and controlling of new wealth by these chiefs and their ability to transform resources into larger political interests. Thus, Pusapati Sitaramaraju and later on his son Pusapati Anandaraju were not able to contend themselves as mere 'sardars' under the rubric of Mughal suzerainty but on the other hand preferred to chalk out independent political jurisdictions outside the Mughal structure.⁴³

The next factor for the conflicts in northern Andhra was the slow but steady transformation of the *faujdari* system. The faujdars were responsible for maintenance of public order in the districts and their main duty was to force reluctant *Zamindars* to pay tribute and taxes. However, in the peripheral areas where the Mughal system had to depend on landed intermediaries, *faujgars* were given additional responsibility of maintaining law and order as well. He was directly under the Diwan but had the power to directly report to the emperor and solely responsible to him. In the period under study the *faujdar(i)system* in coastal Andhra showed contradictory features. Firstly, the irregular nature of Mughal administration and the weakening of central authority made the *faujdari* system very weak in Srikakulam, Vizagpatnam and Masulipatnam sectors. However, it is significant to note that while the office (*faujdari*) was considerably weakened, the careers of

⁴³ The rise of proto-dynastic figures like the *Pusapatris* will taken up slightly later. C.A.Bayly however studied this phenomenon of rural gentry transforming into 'portfolio-capitalists' as something which emerged in the eighteenth century *per se*. But the continuity which was there in the seventeenth century is important for us to understand their final consolidation in the eighteenth century, *ibid*.

individual *faujdar*s like Mustapha Quli Khan and Fakirullah Khan on the other hand showed remarkable growth at the local level. This growing power of individual *faujdar*s was a product of the inability of the centre to control these distantly posted *faujdar*s. Therefore, before analyzing the Mughal empire in the late seventeenth century, one has to make a clear cut distinction between the office a person was holding (such as *faujdar*s) and the individual careers they embarked on in their respective administrative jurisdictions.

At one level the *faujdar*s were instrumental in manipulating the growing weakness of the Mughal system; Factions at the imperial centre had their repercussions at the regional level as well.⁴⁴ At another level the *faujdar*s were assimilated into local political and economic setup which in turn meant a close collaboration with *Rajus* of Srikakulam and Vizinagaram etc. which proved detrimental to the empire but which surely enhanced the status of individual *faujdar*s. In 1693, for instance, Mustapha Quli Khan, gave a *caul* to Simon Holcombe making him the *havaladar* of Vizagpatnam, which clearly was a deviance of the Mughal practice. Simon Holcombe paid Rs. 4862 per annum as the rent for the town of Vizagpatnam for a stipulated period of three years or till Mustapha Quli Khan remains in the office.⁴⁵ *The faujdar* also sublet farms of the major towns of Ganjam, Kalingapatnam, Bimlipatnam

⁴⁴ See, J.F.Richards, *Mughal Administration of Golconda* pp. 215. For the conflict between Rustom Dil Khan and Prince Kam Baksh for the governorship of Hyderabad. Mehdi Khan beig, the Faujdar of Srikakulam, for instance represented the anti -deccani faction and his appointment was opposed by Fakirullah Khan at Srikakulam. See, *RFSG, Diary and Consultation Book*, 1700 p.9.

⁴⁵ *Vizagpatnam Consultations*, 1693 cited in J.F.Richards, *Mughal Administration of Golconda*, p. 100.

and Vizagpatnam and in the process amassed wealth for their personal political interests. Both Rustom Dil Khan and Fakirullah Khan maintained good and friendly relations with the Pusapati *rajus* and Europeans for financial and military operations.⁴⁶ Fakirullah Khan's career demonstrates how the *faujdar*s manipulated the local political situation to better their individual prospects.

If, on the one hand, conflict between the imperial representatives and the local intermediaries became endemic, there was also close collaboration between these two contesting parties. The basic patterns of conflict and alliance depended on the objective of each party to gain support from each other either for military expansion or for individual profit enhancement. Significantly, the tacit collaboration and some time the open conflicts of the Mughal *faujdar*s with the chiefs actually benefited the local economy in the long run. The complex financial commitments of the *faujdar*s to the central treasury on the one hand (Rs. 3.5 million to be paid to the central treasury in the case of Fakirullah Khan, for instance) and the need for money to curtail or to pacify the Mughal expansion by the chiefs of the region brought the European commerce into focus.

Vizagpatnam: The expansion of English Commerce 1682-1712

In the late seventeenth century sweeping changes were taking place in the Coromandel commerce. Firstly, there **was a** shift

⁴⁶ Mustapha Quli Khan for instance had the active support of Kolindar rajus of Mogalteru during the revolts of Pusapati and Gajapathis against the Mughals.

in the intercontinental trade from west Asia to south east Asia which led to a shift in the trading pattern on the Coromandel coast. New sectors of trade such as Vizagpatnam were drawn into the commercial world. Ports which were able to dominate the oceanic commerce due to vast hinterlands failed, while ports with small but a definite hinterland such as Vizagpatnam grew in prominence in the changing politico-commercial relationships which were wrought due to Mughal expansion in the last quarter of the seventeenth century. Barring Masulipatnam which rose into prominence due to its specific links with west Asia or south east Asia, no ports with identical features emerged in the late seventeenth century.⁴⁷ Secondly, the rise of these new ports can be attributed to coastal trade carrying merchandise such as grain and textiles to other emporia ports on the same coast. These coastal ports transformed themselves into major towns with independent shipping and jurisdiction which in turn brought them into the intra-Asian dynamics of Indian ocean system.

The participation of European companies and private traders were crucial factor for the rise of Vizagpatnam, Diu, Ingeram, Kakinada, Yanam and Vizagpatnam. Thirdly, the changing nature of the European commerce which became aggressive in the Indian ocean area insisted on autonomous trading factories and fortifications with exclusive trading privileges became a common feature. In fact the idea of fortifications coincided with the larger

⁴⁷ See, Ashin Das Gupta, *Indian Merchants and the Decline of Surat*, Weisbaden, 1979. and S.Arasaratnam, *Merchants, Companies and Commerce*, See Chapter on *Coromandel Trade 1700-1740: Stagnation or Decline*.

monopoly controls which the companies sought to achieve in the oceanic trade of Indian ocean.

Anyone interested in the history of Vizagpatnam for the period under consideration is seriously handicapped as there are no studies done on the growth of the port town. J.F. Richards, studied the growth of European commerce and the rise of 'European city-states' within the context of Mughal decline. His arguments are familiar and concludes saying that the lack of political stability in the region led to expansion of the town as a major 'fortification after Madras' and sees Vizagpatnam primarily as an English enterprise.⁴⁸ While there is no denying that Vizagpatnam was exclusively under the control of English, any neglect of the interactions with local politics and economy would only do half justice to these so called 'city-states' of the late seventeenth century.

Vizagpatnam came into the regular English network of trade largely because of active participation of private traders. Though the English established a regular factory in 1682, the initial benefits of the trade went to private traders. In the early English records, private traders such as Richard Brown, Samuel Fleetwood and Clement du Jardin were involved in regular private trade at Vizagpatnam and with local merchants.⁴⁹ Richard Brown, chief of the newly established factory at Vizagpatnam had farmed certain towns around the vicinity of the town on individual capacity.⁵⁰

⁴⁸ J.F.Richards, 'European City -States on the Coromandel coast', pp. 517-519.

⁴⁹ *RFSG*, Public Department, *Despatches From England*, Vol. 7, 1685, p.95 and *RFSG, Diary and Consultation Book, 1688, p. 107-108.*

The development of English commercial interest at Vizagpatnam was an outcome of the Mughal conquest of the Sultanate of Golconda. Immediately after the war, the English were forced to shift their trading operations to Gingelly and Vizagpatnam coast. The Mughals who initially concentrated in the core areas of Telangana and Masulipatnam expanded into the northern most part of coastal Andhra by 1690 which furthered threatened English trade at Masulipatnam. Vizagpatnam which was situated in the frontier was seen as a safer place for trade by the English east India company. It was the only factory on the coast which was not abandoned after the war.⁵¹ The Dutch and the French were quick to realize the importance of approaching the 'grand mughal' for trading privileges on the coast. Even as the Mughals advanced to coastal Andhra, the English were desperately trying to prepare ground for re-negotiations with the Emperor as early as 1687. The Madras factors wrote,

⁵¹ *RFSG, Diary and Consultation Book*, 1687. Contemporary European documentation is full of descriptions of wars and their impact on the mercantile economy in general. Some often cited features had been the breakup of communications in the event of war, severe famine conditions due to artificial deficit, migrations of artisans from one part of the region to the other, rise in the prices of 'provisions' and consequently the decline in textile production. It will be totally unwieldy to handle the whole documentation on wars and its subsequent impact on the economy. See, *EFI, RFSG, Diary and Consultation Books, Letters from and to Fort St. George* etc. However to cite only few examples, "Hearing that Masulipatnam, Madapollem and Petapoli are likely to be in troubles; by reasons that some of the Mughal forces are intended thither to seize upon the King of Golconda's treasures, it is resolved to abandon the factory. *RFSG, Diary and Consultation Book*, 1687 p.113,176. At Vizagpatnam sector See, *RFSG, Despatches to England*, 1694-96 p.23 and *RFSG, Letters from Fort St. George*, 1697 p.11-12.

"the Dutch and French had made their applications to him with great presents to settle affaires, we should on behalf of the company (in regard to the hostility in Bengal, only write him a plausible letter of complaint of governments injuries to us in Bengal and that upon the consideration of our differences we could not make our applications...., otherwise our respects to him are as great..."⁵²

The English were placed in a piquant position as they were already at war against the Mughals in Bengal. The French and the Dutch obtained favourable permissions from the Mughal emperor in 1688 and 1689 respectively.⁵³ The emperor re-confirmed most of the existing privileges to these companies. Till 1690, the English remained helpless and planned to meet the emperor through Surat council which unfortunately led to a total seizure of company goods at Surat. The English company seized six Indian ships belonging to the Mughals which sparked off new hostilities between the Mughals and the English. Aurangzeb ordered for an immediate confiscation and arrest of all English goods and merchants throughout the Mughal empire. This had immediate repercussions on the Coromandel as well. The *faujdar* of Srikakulam, Sayyid Abdullah laid seize on the factories of Masulipatnam, Madapollem and Vizagpatnam. At Vizagpatnam, it sparked off a gun battle when the English tried to resist the Mughal

⁵² *RFSG, Diary and Consultation Book*, p.29,113.

⁵³ For the privileges given to the Dutch and the French see, J.F.Richards, 'European City-States on the Coromandel coast,' p. 508-509.

seizure.⁵⁴ The situation of the company improved when the Madrasapatnam council gave a whole hearted support to the Mughals against the Telugu *rajahs*, and against Marathas at Madrasapatnam . The company also obliged to pay an indemnity of Rs. 150,000 to the Mughals and practically bought peace from the emperor.⁵⁵ In 1692, in a carefully worded request, the English requested Asad Khan, Wazir of the empire for trading privileges on the Coromandel coast and for a special provision to fortify the town of Vizagpatnam apparently for "security from the polligars and thieves, killing our people and plundering of a great amount of goods and money".⁵⁶ In a reply, the Wazir had ordered the *faujdar* of Masulipatnam, Nizampatnam and Srikakulam to compensate the losses suffered by the English in 1689 in the hands of Mughals. In the same year a *finnan* was granted to the English which included permission for a fortification at Vizagpatnam, apart from other trading privileges⁵⁷ By 1694 the English investments at Vizagpatnam increased on par with other settlements on the coast:

Fort St. George	20,000 (in pounds)
Fort St. David	10,000
Vizagpatnam	10,000

Source: *RFSG, Diary and Consultation Book*, 1694. p. 6

As the trade and investments expanded at Vizagpatnam, it also asked for a closer monitoring of the local economy. This meant

⁵⁴ The Vizagpatnam factors graphically described the events of this seizure. *RFSG, Diary and consolation Book*, 1689.p. 87.

⁵⁵ J.F.Richards, 'European City States on the Coromandel coast', p. 510.

⁵⁶ *RFSG, Diary and Consultation Book*, 1692 p.4-5.

⁵⁷ *RFSG, Diary and Consultation Book*, 1692 p. 10-11.

1) to streamline the procuring of the company's textiles and 2) to open up or renew relations with the local powers. In 1696, the English company established the first joint stock at Vizagpatnam, which for some unknown reasons, the company thought it fit to get permission from the *faujdar*. They wrote:

"The company desires to employ weavers and merchants constantly by dividing the contracts annually on Joint stocks, when your merchants have engaged the weavers, they cannot serve others and if they for the justice of your place.....ask Holcombe to get a grant such Rocca's will as will compel weavers and merchants"⁵⁸

The Account Books of Vizagpatnam for the years 1694-97 ended with a net profit of 20,000 pagodas per season which was calculated for 8 seasons which amounted to 1,60,000 pagodas totally.⁵⁹ Scattered references does not allow any deeper study on the affairs of chiefs merchants at Vizagpatnam. However, the name of Budde Narrain's name stands out in the history of early economic history of Vizagpatnam for the period under study. It is not clear when Budde Narrain joined the company service. His name was mentioned in the context of non-payment of debts to the company which stood outstanding for over eight years. In 1698 alone, he owed the company a sum of 63914:6:8 pagodas and did not pay the debts owing to "constant succession of war and famine,

⁵⁸ RFSG, *Letters from Fort St. George*, 1696, p.96.

⁵⁹ RFSG, *Letters from Fort St. George*, 1698 p.73-74.

seconded with scarcity of cotton ... which they (Budde Narrain & Co) will by this present shipping clear most of their debts if not all" Simon Holcombe, chief of Vizagpatnam who appointed Budde Narrain replied to Madras council's suspicion that Budde Narrain was involved in private transactions wrote,

" the company had proceeded from a person either ignorant or prejudiced for he was not dismissed from the Dutch service. . . . but upon commissioners coming to Bimli where he was the chief merchant, . . . with suitable purchases and in which he was asked to resign that place to him (punde merchants) and if he pleased to accept the position of the second which he refused" ⁶⁰

It is clear that for unknown reasons, Budde Narrain left the Dutch service and joined the English company at Vizagapatnam. Budde Narrain who was the chief merchant for the company for more than a decade fell in disfavour of Simon Holcombe. Simon Holcombe, the politically motivated chief of Vizagpatnam favoured Jagappa, a prominent 'braminy' which abruptly ended Budde Narrain's career. Jagappa was a typical example of those many social elements who provided capital, knowledge and support to European companies in pre-modern India. Jagappa mediated between the English company and local chiefs and heralded a new phase of collaboration between local politics and English

⁶⁰ *RFSG, Letters to Fort St. George, 1699-1700, p. 231.*

commerce. He stood as surety to the parties in various economic transactions between the company officials and the local chiefs.

The trade at Vizagpatnam was dominated by Jagappa in the first decade of the eighteenth century. His mercantile activities in textiles and grain spread as far as Ganjam, Kalingapatnam and Sonapur. While there is no information on the volume of trade he conducted, sources reveal his unscrupulous ways of eliminating other merchants of Vizagpatnam and its adjacent Bimlipatnam. However, we have no information on whether he traded with VOC at Bimlipatnam. In a petition of Freeman, the Chief of Vizagpatnam to Madrasapatnam Council, Budde Narrain & Co graphically described how they became the victims of Jagappa's manipulations in trade which ousted him from chief merchant ship.⁶¹ The main strength of Jagappa lay in the close political relations he maintained with politico-military entrepreneurs and the company at Vizagpatnam. Other prominent merchants who traded with the English company were Consium Linganna, a raw cotton merchant, Gunny Narso, traded in grain and cotton, and Cossavavera brought cotton to Vizagapatnam(?).

The next set of merchants were the Persians on whom there has been a sudden crop of literature on the Coromandel coast. Scholars like Sanjay Subrahmanyam and S. Arasaratnam have Persian merchants who carried trade mainly from the port of Masulipatnam migrated to northern Coromandel due to number of factors in the last decade of the seventeenth century. For Sanjay Subrahmanyam, the main cause lay in the decline of independent

⁶¹ *RFSG, Diary and Consultation Book, 1706, p. 22.*

shipping activities to west Asia, while for Arasaratnam the sweeping political changes and the liquidation of Golconda forced these Persian merchants to migrate to other parts of Bay of Bengal, especially to Bengal and Vizagpatnam. While the conjecture of migration of these merchants seem plausible, there are few documents of Vizagpatnam which testify such a migration in the period under consideration. However, documents do reveal that trade was conducted by 'moors' and as integral component to Vizagpatnam. But whether they belonged to Masulipatnam is question to be explored.⁶² In 1693, there is a single reference, at least in the English records, to one Sheik Hussain "bringing with him some 20 ox load of cloth and promised to speedily complete the investment".⁶³ It is also not clear from the records whether all the 'moor' merchants who traded at Vizagapatnam were of the Persian origin or not.

Private trade was an important component of Vizagpatnam port. From the point of view of Coromandel merchants, the difference between company trade and the private activities of English factors was quite hazy. All most all the Indian merchants such as Budde Narrain, Jagappa, Linganna traded openly with the private trade of Richard Brown, Sherars, Samuel Fleetwood, Simon Holcombe etc. The appointment and the subsequent dismissal of Budde Narrain from chief merchant ship was due to some differences in private trade conducted with Simon Holcombe. Private trade which centered around Vizagapatnam was mostly

⁶² See, Sanjay Subrahmanayam's various articles on Persian merchants.

⁶³ *RFSG, Letters to Fort, St. George, 1693-94, p. 26.* and *RFSG, Letter from Fort St George 1698, p.73-74.*

carried in rice and grain to be sent to southern Coromandel. There is also no doubt that the Vizagpatnam and Bengal links which got crystallized in the eighteenth century brought private traders directly into the intra-Asian network as well. In addition, some of the private merchants took adjacent places on revenue farm from the Mughals. Richard Brown had to quit his chief ship on the charges farming certain towns adjacent to Vizagpatnam. Likewise, Simon Holcombe, who practically 'ruled' the Vizagpatnam factory as his personal 'fiefdome' rented the town and became the first English *havaladar* with an annual payment of Rs. 4862 as rent for the town.⁶⁴ For some reasons the company allowed Holcombe to continue the renting of town because,

"...doubtless and advantage to the management of the business and may tend to enlarge and increasing the town... for this reason, Mr. Holcombe hath bound to the company for rent thereby binds himself to the town for 3 years"⁶⁵

Though this has been a major deviance from the policy of the English company of farming towns and collecting rents from the 'native population', it also shows the vulnerability of Madrasapatnam council in curbing private trade at Vizagpatnam. Interestingly revenue farm of Simon Holcombe was later on converted as a company's privilege which considerably expanded the town in the first half of the eighteenth century.

⁶⁴ *Vizagpatnam Consultations*, 1693.

⁶⁵ *RFSG, Letters from Fort St. George*, 1698, p.100.

The regular renting of town brought the English company closer to the hinterland powers. Throughout the period under study, the English company by necessity had to depend on the Mughals for various privileges. But soon it realized that the actual functioning of the economy depended largely on politico-military entrepreneurs who wielded power at the local level. Till about 1694, The English at Vizagpatnam were oblivious of local politics and expressed scepticism on the continuance of the factory. In fact the English expressed fears about Pusapati Sitaramaraju's attempts of plundering Bimlipatnam and Vizagpatnam made the company to press the *Seer laskar* for permission to fortify the town of Vizagpatnam.⁶⁷ There is no doubt that the local *rajus* were highly extortinate on the European companies both at Bimlipatnam and Vizagpatnam. The English company reduced the investments from 30,000 to 15,000 pagodas ; the reasons being 1) "it is not safe to trust investment in the country without peace and 2) the *rajus* are more or less governing than the moors of the country and may probably take the first opportunity to take the revenge."⁶⁸

However, the company realized that the most of the cloth production areas were located in the areas dominated by the local *raju's* and compulsions of procuring the merchandise pushed the companies to establish direct contact with them. Simon Holcombe, the chief of Vizagpatnam between the years 1686-1707, negotiated

⁶⁷ As mentioned earlier, Pusapati Sitaramaraju was an important ally of the Mughals till 1697. He blockaded the towns of Bimlipatnam and Vizagapatnam which had major impact on the company trade. Apart from this, Chitteram (?) the local Zamindar lately demanded the loan of money offering the rent of towns for security, which the company rejected, which renewed hostilities with this Zamindar. ,RFSG, *Despatches to England*, 1694-96, p. 20,23.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*

with these politico-military entrepreneurs (especially with Pusapati Anandaraju) and heralded a phase of intense collaboration between the English company and the local potentates of Coastal Andhra. This collaboration helped the English company in many ways. Firstly, as the records themselves testify, transportation of goods from the hinterland to the port went unhindered in an otherwise war ravaged economy. Writing on the wars in the region and the prospects of English trade at Vizagpatnam the English reported that "the new Nawab have impeded all travelling by keeping *Meltees* all along the country so that trade and all correspondence come to a stand still, *but our chiefs good understanding to the rajus our peons are passing freely* " (emphasis added) and further noticed that "we however have not suffered amidst all the revolutions either in our town or the country."⁶⁹ Secondly, the relations also brought the companies closer to the local Hindu merchants who in turn had close relationship with the chiefs of the region. It is a more or less established fact that Hindu merchants derived specific advantages of working with European companies and *vice versa*. During this period the chiefs of coastal Andhra especially maintained Hindu merchants for the sake of finances and for the necessary expansion of commercial sector on which their politics depended. Jagappa is just a case in point. Thirdly, the much needed arms for their wars was readily provided by the European companies. In fact by the end of the seventeenth century, European intervention in the Indian subcontinent became more militaristic rather than being dependent

⁶⁹ *RFSG*, Public Department, *Letters to Fort St George* ,1699-1700 pp. 122,155.

only on the system of passes on the oceanic front.⁷⁰ In a situation marked by political fluidity, the companies did not adopt rigid rules and framework on to whom the arms were to be supplied. The companies supplied arms to both the warring chiefs and to the Mughals alike, thereby maintained a certain neutrality as far as arms supply was concerned. Significantly, neither of these mutually antagonistic parties seemed to have objected to this method. From the Indian point of view, it seems, the companies were mere supplier of arms and ammunition and neither of the parties objected as long as their demands were met without any hindrance.

The English company, both by imperatives of trade and the exigencies of the political situation in the hinterland was drawn into the politics of the region which led to a complex pattern of conflict and collaboration which benefited the company in the long run.

The emergence of Tripartite Relations: *Mughal Faujdars*, Politico-military entrepreneurs and English East India Company

The first decade of the eighteenth century was marked by constant making and unmaking of alliances between the chiefs and the Mughal *faujdars* in northernmost segment of coastal Andhra. The balance of power definitely tilted in favour of combined *raju* clans of the region, while the Mughals failed to consolidate its position at the local level. The Mughal Diwan had to conclude a

⁷⁰ RFSG, Public Department, *Letters to Fort St George 1711*, p.9. RFSG, *Letters to Fort St George*, 1712 p.17, RFSG, *Letters to Fort St George*, 1711/12, p. 39.

humiliating treaty in 1697 treaty with the rebels which retained the autonomy of combined *raju* clans. However, from the point of view of Vizagapatnam, important changes took place during the tenure of Fakirullah Khan's (1699-1713) *faujdari*. Fakirullah Khan became dependent on local politics and used his position of *faujdar* for his personal gains. Fakirullah Khan who was appointed as a *faujdar* after paying a substantial sum of money to the emperor adopted a reconciliatory attitude towards the chiefs and the English company. During his tenure as a *faujdari*, Fakirullah Khan realised the futility of dislodging bigger proto-dynastic figures like the Pusapati Anandaraju and Varasimha Deva, instead concentrated his military operations on smaller *Zamindars* of the region. Fakirullah Khan who was aware of the factional politics at the imperial court and its concomitant effect at the provincial level embarked on personal aggrandizement to augment his wealth. It must be remembered that Fakirullah Khan bought the office of *faujdari* of Coastal Andhra by paying an additional sum of money to the emperor- an early indication of the Mughal version of *ijardari*.⁷¹

The local chiefs, after their initial success against the Mughals, consolidated their position by revamping the economy which was affected by internecine wars which spanned for over a decade. The strategy of Pusapati Anandaraju was similar to that of Fakirullah Khan. He tried to subdue lesser chiefs of the region and faced stiff resistance from Mogalteru and Peddapuram Zamindars who in turn lent support to Fakirullah Khan. However, when Mehdi Khan Beig was appointed as the *faujdar* of Srikakulam, the

⁷¹ J.F.Richards, *Mughal Administration of Golconda*, pp.98-99.

Zamindars of Peddapuram and Mogalteru shifted their loyalty to Anandaraju which led to a combined revolt against the Mughal expansion. *Anandaraju*, who stood at the apex of the hierarchy of chiefdoms needed money to augment his military power and thus entered into relations with the English company. One of the most important outcome of this new relationship was the import of Madras rupees into Vizagpatnam.⁷²

The relationship of Ananda raju with the port of Vizagpatnam, through English trade, gained him both long term and short term benefits. As part of long term strategy, Anandaraju directly intervened in the production economy and thoroughly exploited already well established networks of markets. He encouraged the formation of small marketing towns such as Kaumali, Vizianagaram, Bobbili, Ramachandrapuram, Gudipudi, Nellamerla etc. This led to integration of commercial sector with that of Vizagpatnam which benefited the English company as well.

Anandaraju's short term strategy was dictated by immediate political exigency of wars against the Mughals which forced him to depend on the company for immediate financial needs. Ananda Raju took loan from the company on the promise of giving away some weaving villages to the company and on providing security at Vizagpatnam.⁷³ Simon Holcombe readily provided a sum of Rs. 1,35,000 to Ananda Raju as a debt. But not having cash in hand,

⁷² J.F.Richards, 'European City-states on the coromandel coast', p. 517.

⁷³ The actual promises of Ananda Raju to the English are not clear from the documents. However, from the correspondence of Simon Holcombe to the Madras council, it becomes clear that Anandaraju favoured the chief of Vizianagaram. See, *RFSG*, Series between the years 1702-1705.

Simon Holcombe took the money from Fakirullah Khan, at an interest of one per cent.⁷⁴

In the above mentioned transaction, Simon Holcombe used the company seal regarding the debt to Fakirullah Khan, while it is also significant to note that the English chief did not possess any such written guarantee from Anandaraju.⁷⁵ Jagappa, the company 'braminy' and the chief merchant negotiated the deal between Anandaraju and the English and assured the company's prospects at Vizagpatnam⁷⁶ The initial reaction of Madrasapatnam council to this financial deal was positive and in fact hailed Simon Holcombe for having entered into such a deal for, 'it would help the relations between the native governments and the company'.⁷⁷

The financial transaction between the company, Fakirullah Khan and Anandaraju had major ramifications for working of the company at Vizagpatnam. As long as the relations between the Mughals, Anand a Raju and the English were smooth, neither of the parties bothered about the debt position. However, the developments after the death of Simon Holcombe in 1705 and the subsequent claim for the repayment of debt by Fakirullah Khan clearly reflects the 'fluidity' and the temporary nature of the relationships between these contesting parties.

The developments between 1705-1712 compounded into a major show down when Fakirullah Khan who blockaded the port of Vizagpatnam. On the one hand, the events that followed the

⁷⁴ *RFSG, Diary and Consulation Book, 1710, p.79.*

⁷⁵ *RFSG, Diary and Consulation Book, 1710, p.126.*

⁷⁶ *RFSG, Diary and Consulatiton Book, 1706, p.22.*

⁷⁷ *RFSG, Diary and Consualtation Book, 1702, p. 24-25.*

death of Simon Holcombe unfolded the predicament of Mughal *faujdar*s in coastal Andhra. Anandaraju whose power grew due to unification of chiefs under one political alliance left very little scope for Fakirullah Khan to exercise his authority over the districts Srikakulam and Vizianagaram, especially at a time when other *faujdar*s contested for power. In 1709, Bahadur Shah appointed Abid Khan as the *new faujdar* for entire trans-Godavari region and Srikakulam. Only Vizagapatnam remained under the *faujdar*i of Fakirullah Khan which meant considerable erosion in his territorial jurisdiction.⁷⁸ Abid Khan consolidated his position at Rajamundry independent of the imperial government in the Deccan. He soon extended his area of operations into the vicinity of Vizagapatnam which threatened Fakirullah Khan's position. Abid Khan was helped by the local Kolindar *Raja* of Mogaluru in his political ambition. Fakirullah Khan was caught in a piquant situation on both sides; he remained helpless about the growing power of Ananda Raju who declared war against the Mughal empire and the aggressive expansion of Abid Khan into Vizagapatnam sector.

Fakirullah Khan was hard pressed for money and hence demanded the unpaid balance and interest for the loan given to the English company. In 1710, Fakirullah Khan wrote a letter to Madras council ordering for Rs 10,000, a present worth 300 pagodas to the Nawab, and to send him the account of money and a complete account of dues from the 'country *rajahs*' to the company.⁷⁹ He also sent a detailed account of money to be remitted on his account which amounted to 44,000 pagodas and the interest for the last 12

⁷⁸ J.F.Richards, *Mughal Administration in Golconda*, p. 89

years which came up to Rs. 70,000 at the rate of one per cent. He accused the company of making at least 25 to 30% profit of the same sum by lending it to 'country *raju's*'. He wrote to the company: "you are trying to escape me and probably go to Madras or any other seaport, but will not leave you as you are still part of the Mughal dominions".⁸⁰ The English at Madrasapatnam were very sceptical about the whole affair of Fakirullah khan and in fact decided to abandon the fort and leave for Madrasapatnam. However, the President and Council decided "not to pay a pie until we are first well assured that the old *Cojees* seal is affix in the obligation of Holcombe."⁸¹ So desperate was the company's situation that they even tried to endorse *Koran* as 'their religion as contained in their *Koran* they cannot demand and indeed receive any interest of any person either of their own or any other'.

During the course of the events, Anandaraju had agreed to come to a fair adjustment of accounts and pay the balances and asked the company to send a Mulla and a Brahmin to them.⁸² However, Pyakarao and Ananda Raja who clearly dominated the politics of the region never paid the money which in turn aggravated the events into a blockade of Vizagapatnam. Seeing the mood of the English and their non-committal attitude to the repayment of the debt, Fakirullah Khan immediately ordered for the seizure and blockade of the town. Anandaraju used the blockade as an opportunity to get the loan waived and immediately sided with Fakirullah Khan .⁸³

⁸⁰ *Ibid*, p. 79.

⁸² *RFSG, Diary and Consultation Book*, 1709 p. 42-43.

⁸³ *RFSG, Diary and Consultation Book*, 1711,p.25.

In fact during the course of the blockade none of the *Raju's* of the region who maintained cordial relations with the company helped them at Vizagpatnam. The blockade extended to two years after which the English company finally agreed to pay "the moor Rs, 20,732, being the amount of bond given him by Mr. Holcombe together with a present of 500 pagodas."⁸⁴ However, the success of Fakirullah Khan was short lived; he was arrested and imprisoned by Abid Khan in 1713 who took over as *new faujdar* of Srikakulam.

The above mentioned financial transaction highlighted the fluid nature of relationships between various contesting parties at Vizagapatnam It further reflects on how Mughals and the English operated at local level. On the Mughal side it showed the transformation of *the faujdar* at the beginning of the eighteenth century. The careers of Fakirullah Khan and Abid Khan clearly indicated that the *faujdar* was acting independently of the empire. Fakirullah Khan for instance, had entered into financial transactions with the English company irrespective of the Mughal official policy in which private financial obligations were prohibited. The career of Abid Khan is slightly different from that of Fakirullah Khan. He embarked on a political career with the help of local Deshmukhs and chiefs of the Rajamundry area. So powerful was his position in the region that he offered to help the English company in lifting the seizure of Vizagpatnam by Fakirullah Khan. The English company seemed to have inclined to take his help and wrote to him that:

⁸⁴ *RFSG, Despatches from England, 1710-1713 p.86.*

" in order to compromise all the differences between Fukrela Khan and English, relating to what remains as the balance which our people at the factory say is 6500 pagodas and that the money be his if he does raises the seize of the factory and that all the formalities be done on his and company's seal"⁸⁵

The inherent characteristic of conflict between Abid Khan and Fakirullah Khan questions the long held view on the nature of intra-Mughal conflicts. It has been argued that the nature of conflicts in the imperial administration were vertical in nature, i.e. between the *Zamindars* and the Mughal officials at the provincial level. However, the activities of Abid Khan to override the neighbouring *faujdari* of Vizagpatnam is an indication of horizontal nature of conflicts in which of *intra-faujdar* conflicts became endemic in the provinces where the central authority was only nominal.⁸⁶ At the end of the seventeenth century the effective functioning of *faujdar*s depended on two traits. Firstly, in its conscious effort to become localised with autonomous territorial and administrative jurisdictions and secondly, on the active collaboration with local elite, rather than liquidate or assimilate them into the Mughal system *per se*.⁸⁷

⁸⁵ *RFSG, Diary and Consultation Book*, 1711, p. 46.

⁸⁶ See, Douglas Streusand, *The Formation of Mughal Empire*, New Delhi, 1989, 'Conclusion'.

⁸⁷ For instance, if we contrast the career of Abid Khan with that of Ayar Bek, he declared war against Koliandar Rajus of Mogalteru, Timma raju of Peddapuram, and Appa Row of Nuzvid. He forcibly extracted Rs 25,000 and an agreement to pay Rs.875,000 as arrears to the central government. The rajus on their hand refused to recognise Ayar Bek as the legitimate *faujdar* and thus had to face the mutiny of his own army. His administration collapsed in coastal Andhra and

In spite of huge financial losses to Fakirullah Khan, the English company was able to make an impact in the local political economy as a major source of 'private finance'. However, it must be noted that the company had not yet formulated any definite policy in dealing with the hinterland powers. In fact, as the course of events reveal the English company was still vulnerable in the political dynamics on Coromandel. The series of correspondence between 1700-1712 of Madrasapatnam council and the Court of Directors at London show that it initially welcomed the decision of Simon Holcombe with regard to financial transaction with the local *rajus* as a step which would bring the local powers closer to the company. But when the *rajus* refused to repay the debt which led to a blockade, the Madrasapatnam Council felt that " the chief has erred in his politicks (not to say worse)should have brought Fuckerela Khan to our terms and made the rajahs his enemies which would prove disappointment to his affairs and ...nothing but force of arms can take him off his high demands..."⁸⁸ This chivalry of the Board of Directors obviously did not work for the company at the local level. However, the local political exigencies in various regions forced the European companies to enter invariably into complex relations with the hinterland powers on which the trade in the region depended.

finally Abid Khan stepped in to assist the *Rajus* of Peddapuram and Mogalteru. See. J.F.Richards, *Mughal Administration of Golconda*, pp.257-261.

⁸⁸ *RFSG, Diary and Consultation Book*, 1710, p. 127 and *RFSG, Despatches from England*, Public Department, 1709, p. 149 and *RFSG, Public Department, Letters to Fort St George*, 1711, p. 108.

Vizagpatnam, English Company and the Logic of Fortification

The contemporary documentation of the European companies justified fortification at Vizagpatnam on three grounds. Firstly, it depended on the proposition that the European powers were helpless due to the 'rapacious' nature of local extortions. Secondly, on the ground that fortifications offered security to the artisans; especially to those who worked in highly volatile situation such as at Vizagpatnam, and thirdly, to the inherent capacity to generate revenues.⁸⁹ All these features, if analysed combindly, formed the basic character of fortifications which came to be defined as 'autonomous', 'city-states', with independent logic of growth irrespective of the role of inland administrative systems: the latter forming into a mechanistic provider of goods and services to these burgeoning 'islands of growth' amidst chaos and decline. This has been the dominant characterization of fortifications across Asia in the seventeenth century.

Force was part of the inherent logic in which indigenous powers Europeans interacted at various levels is now recognised by historians. However, scholars have failed to recognise the varied

⁸⁹ The characterisation of these fortifications as city states was first propounded by W.H.Moreland, *From Akbar to Aurangazeb*, New Delhi,1972 (reprint). Scholars who have argued for the extortionate and rapacious political hinterland include S. Arasaratanam, J.F.Richards and to a lesser extent by Ashin Das Gupta. J. F.Richards for instance, wrote on Vizagpatnam that "Clearly, the British in Vizagpatnam in 1689 were peaceful merchants who depended on indigenous authorities to protect them as they traded. By 1710 this was far from the case. ...by fortifying the town., they transformed from hitherto peaceful merchants into armed defenders of city-states" See, J.F.Richards, 'European City States on the Coromandel Coast', p. 518-519. For the inherent idea of force between the indigenous powers and the Europeans, see, I Bruce Watson, 'Fortifications and the 'Idea' of Force in the seventeenth Century, *P&P*, 1980. *passim*, and, Sanjay Subrahmanyam, *The Political Economy of Commerce*, See, Chapter on 'Europeans and Asians in the age of Contained conflict.

nature of conflicts which differed from region to region which threw up different responses in Asian-European relations.⁹⁰ Thus, regional specificity must be stressed before any analysis on European settlements in Asia.

Though the contemporary European documentation projects a mere stereotype of the extortion's of the local administration, the fact remains that European fortifications such as Pulicat, Fort St. George were firmly grounded in specific political and economic situations in which the Europeans had to operate. That the rise of Pulicat and Vizagpatnam as major fortifications cannot be attributed to same set of causes, though, offense and defense provided the fundamental base for building of fortifications on the Coromandel coast.⁹¹ For example, the rise of Vizagpatnam as a fortification was not so much due to extortionate nature of local administration but was a product of various internecine wars between the Mughals and local *rajus* chiefs in the region.⁹² In 1692, Elihu Yale, the Governor of Madrasapatnam sent a petition to Asad Kahn, and requested him to have a small fortification at Vizagpatnam, "that for the future we may live without fear from the country rajahs."⁹³ Curiously, enough the request does not mention about the Mughal pillage in Coroamandel which logically should have been the main incentive for construction of a fortification. Further more the clustered nature of port towns on the

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*

⁹¹ W.H.Moreland, *Relations of Golconda in the early seventeenth Century*, Hakluyt society, 1931.

⁹² J.F.Richards, 'European City-States on the Coromandel coast', p. 517.

⁹³ *RFSG, Diary and Consultation Book*, 1693-94, p. 22.

Coromandel which were located in close proximity to each other was seen as a detrimental factor by rival companies of VOC and EIC which called for a need for fortifications. Thus, the English were threatened by the Dutch at Bimlipatnam (which was situated at only 5 miles north of Vizagpatnam) thought it fit to request for a *firman* from the Mughal Wazir.

In 1692, the English were granted a *firman* from Prince Kam Baksh to erect a fortification at Vizagpatnam.⁹⁴ Immediately after the first revolts broke out between Mughals and the country *raju's*, the English expanded the fort on the southern side which had a circumference of 330 feet. As far as the permission of construction of fortification at Vizagpatnam was concerned, the English were put in an uncomfortable situation, for, in coastal Andhra, the power was hazily divided between Mughals and the local politico-military entrepreneurs. Theoretically speaking, it was the prerogative of the Mughal emperor to grant privileges for any settlement on the coast. However, his power existed only fitfully in the changing political context of the early eighteenth century. For example, as the revolts in coastal Andhra tilted towards the favour of the country *rajus*, the English, by necessity, had to approach these local potentates for any consideration of a settlement on the Coromandel. However, it must be noted that their power did not have any legal sanction from the Mughal emperor. In 1697, reacting to the dilemma of English factors on country affairs, the Madrasapatnam Council wrote to Vizagpatnam :

⁹⁴ RFSG, *Diary and Consultation Book*, 1692, p.10-11.

"It is not clear if the seerlaskar can fight the united rajahs and it will long before the Mughals could send the second contingent. It is safest to suppose that country rajahs are the conquerors. Any correspondence would be on the following lines: a) the business cannot be done without the favour of country rajahs, b) we do not quarrel with any other nation, c) we bring great treasures to the country, d) that we shall quit the place if they pay Rs. 100,000."⁹⁵

In the initial period of the company trade at Vizagapatnam, the English were sceptical about the consolidation of power by the *Raju's* in the long run and expressed doubts about their own presence Vizagapatnam in such an event.⁹⁶ The active collaboration of Simon Holcombe in the country affairs had radically changed the prospects of English trade and revenues at Vizagpatnam. For all day-today operations and other functional purposes the English depended on the local *Raju* chiefs for the expansion of the settlement. In fact the Madras council concurred with the opinion of Simon Holcombe on the issue that the actual interest of the company depended on the country *rajus* either for fortifications or farming of seaports and other towns of coastal Andhra⁹⁷

The company relations with regard to Mughal permissions depended on the individual strength of *each faujdar* rather than on the Mughal official policy. For instance, in 1698, when Rustom Dil

⁹⁵ RFSG, *Letters from Fort St. George, 1697*, pp. 11-12.

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*

Khan threatened a blockade on Vizagpatnam, the English factors decided to withdraw the factory without entering into any 'hostility with the *seer laskar*' and suspended all the trading activity till the appointment of Fakirullah Khan.⁹⁸ Fakirullah Khan, WHO pursued the policy of collaborating with the English company precisely at a time when the company forged alliances with the local chiefs. In fact, during the period under consideration, there is no evidence to suggest that the company had ever approached Fakirullah Khan for permissions of any kind apart from merely reconfirming the *husbulhukum*'s every three years.

However, the correspondence between the English and the Mughals became regular on the eve of the blockade of the town of Vizagpatnam by Fakirullah Khan. In 1709, Thomas Pitt, the Governor of Madras wrote to Zoode Khan on the revenues and fortifications of Vizagpatnam. This request to Diwan was sent to reconfirm all previously given *perwanas and firmans*, with an additional privileges of revenues of Vizagpatnam and other villages adjacent to it in perpetuity.⁹⁹

There is no doubt that the years between 1690-1712 saw a steady growth of Vizagpatnam primarily due to the tripartite relations between the Mughals, country *raju*'s and the English company. In the period between 1694-98, the company invested heavily on fortifications which steadily went up from 16748:5:3 to 63194:30:3 to 79038 for the years 1696-98 respectively.¹⁰⁰

⁹⁸ RFSG, *Diary and Consultation Book*, 1698, p.43.

⁹⁹ RFSG, *Diary and Consultation Book*, 1709, p.7.

¹⁰⁰ RFSG, *letters from Fort St George*, 1698, p.73-74.

Concerning revenues of Vizagapatnam, sources are very scattered and hence difficult to construct the nature of revenues at Vizagapatnam. As mentioned earlier, the town was rented to Simon Holcombe in 1693 at an annual payment of Rs. 4862 which for some unknown reasons converted it into a company rent.¹⁰¹ The English company expanded slowly into neighbouring villages of Perwada, Woodapoonda, Walteroo, Macuapauram and Dolphin's nose which came under company's territorial jurisdiction.¹⁰² For all these villages the English paid an annual rent of Rs. 1400 per annum.

One interesting feature at Vizagapatnam was the absence of weavers and artisans flocking to the fortified settlement in search of security, a feature which was often justified as a fundamental reason for the growth of fortifications in the early modern India. Perhaps, the absence of activities of Muslim merchants at Vizagapatnam may be regarded as a major reason for any development of urban groups *per se*. This also reflects the buoyancy in the economy despite of constant war in the region. Wars between the Mughal faujdars and the country rajas which included not more than 4000 men on either sides did not really affect the functioning of economy to push weavers and artisans to migrate to Vizagapatnam.

Nevertheless, Vizagapatnam as a town grew in size and importance in the eighteenth century which can be associated within the changing politico-economic dimensions of the later seventeenth century, firstly in the Mughal expansion. Secondly, the

¹⁰¹ RFSG, Public Department, *Letters from Fort St. George*, 1693/94, p. 140-41.

¹⁰² RFSG, *Diary and Consulation Book*, 1698, 1699-1700 and 1709.

crucial intervention of the politico-military entrepreneurs in the local economy played a major role in establishing links between the commercial production and the English East India Company. And lastly, the English chief, Simon Holcombe whose adventurous ministrations with the local chiefs and Mughals alike which fostered unhindered growth of Vizagpatnam and transformed it into a modern town in the eighteenth century.

CHAPTER III
MADRASAPATNAM: THE CONSOLIDATION
OF THE ENGLISH EAST INDIA COMPANY
ON THE COROMANDEL COAST 1639-1724

**Madrasapatnam : The consolidation of the English East India
Company on the Coromandel coast 1639-1724**

Madrasapatnam, the first presidency of the English East India company and a city that was assiduously developed by the English surprisingly stands neglected by urban historians of pre-modern India. Till date, no scholarly work is available on various processes of urbanisation that fostered the rise and growth of Madrasapatnam thus, forcing us to rely on the colonialist expressions of Talboys Wheeler, John Bruce, William Foster and Henry Davidson Love, to a large extent.¹ H.D. Love's *Vestiges of Old Madrasapatnam*, the only comprehensive work on the early history of Madrasapatnam wrote in his preface that the history of Madrasapatnam was undertaken 'at the instance of the local government' and 'with the primary object of supplementing known facts by the collation of topographical references that are scattered over the ancient records'. The main intention of his study, apart from collating source materials hitherto unpublished, was to trace the history of the English enterprise in India and in turn assist the later British colonial administrators of the nineteenth century in the sub-continent. He paid scant attention to larger political and economic formations in the hinterland and the complex inter linkages between the port and hinterland which impacted the growth of Madrasapatnam into a major colonial city in modern India. Thus, elaborating on his project, H.D. Love wrote **that**

¹ See, Talboys Wheeler, *Madras in Olden Times*, 3 vols, London, 1888, H.D.love, *Vestiges of Old Madras*, 4 vols., London New Delhi, 1988 (reprint) (hence forth *Vestiges*), John Bruce, *Annals of the English East India company*, 3 Vols, London, 1810 (henceforth *Bruce Annals*).

'attention is paid to the growth of the town and its fortifications, to the origin and development of the local institutions and to the manners and mode of life at Madrasapatnam. The history is restricted as far as possible to the city -- with an exception of San Thome'.² For most of the early colonial writers then, Madrasapatnam came to be represented as an 'island of growth'. The mission of colonial administration over the supposedly 'rapacious' inland administrative practices was the underlining concept in most of the early works on Madrasapatnam. It is perhaps, for this reason that these early works have remarkable similarity with the Gazettes published by the later British Raj which till date stand as primary materials to understand local administration in India.

Unlike the colonial predecessors, modern scholarship on Madrasapatnam has concentrated on two major themes. Firstly, the changing role and function of the Indian merchant in the European enclaves became a crucial subject of inquiry. The main argument has been that with the rise of these 'autonomous' European enclaves, Indian merchant and his trading operations were radically altered from a free enterprise to that of a company dominance and in the process became subjugated to the English company which was studied as the precursor of later colonialism.³ The second set of discussions came from American anthropologists whose main thrust of study was 'caste' and its changing dynamics in the early colonial phase of Indian history. The works of

² H.D.Love, *Vestiges*, Vol. I, p. 3.

³ See, S. Arasaratnam, *Merchants, Companies and Commerce on the Coromandel coast, 1650-1740*, New Delhi, 1986, passim.

American anthropologists came to be concentrated on the early colonial port towns of Pulicat, Madrasapatnam Negapatnam and focussed on the emerging caste cleavages between the right hand (*valankai*) and left hand (*idankai*) castes. Their findings suggested that the changing complexion of caste was largely due to the colonial intervention which were most pronounced in these early colonia settlements where the English gained dominance. In fact, competition for English trade by the chief merchants Coromandel coast led to numerous caste disputes between *balijas* and *Komatis* (right hand) and *beri Chetties* (left hand).⁴

While the questions raised by the scholars are no doubt relevant, very few of them have concentrated on the actual nature and character of these European enclaves, called fortifications which determined the changing relationships between the Asians and the Europeans in early- modern India.

This chapter argues that the rise of Madrasapatnam heralded a new dynamics of trade, introduced a whole new range of categories such as economic, social, military and strategic between the indigenous mercantile groups and the English company all of which went on to prove successful for the company in chalking out an independent political dominion of its own by the second half of the eighteenth century. In varying degrees, these fortifications manifested the early colonial pattern based on, as G. Balandier says, on four important traits. First, the economic and political domination of a foreign minority, second, the forging of

⁴ Arjun Appadurai, 'Right and Left castes in south India', *IESHR*, XI, 2 & 3(June-September, 1974, pp. 216-59.

relationships between the colonial and the colonised, third, imposition of an industrialised society over pre-industrial society and fourth, the tensions arose out of the subservient role in which the colonial people are subjected.⁵ Balandier though provides a working definition on nature of colonial urbanisation, is not free of limitations as far as regional dimensions are concerned. It does not provide, for instance, a space for the indigenous political and administrative structures, and the changing dynamics of port-hinterland nexus, the dependence of colonial over the colonised such as traders, merchants, local legal systems and finally the similarity of European enclaves with that of traditional port towns. Further, Balandier's definition contrasts between industrial societies over the pre-industrial ones which is of little relevance to early modern Indian situation. For example, the period under study was more of a commercial manufacture rather than that which depended on European 'factory production', the latter being a special characteristic of Europe.

The sweeping political changes in south India between 1630-1724 which started with the decline of Vijayanagara, the expansion of Golconda into the frontier of Madrasapatnam coast and the final liquidation of Golconda by the Mughal empire in the last decades of the seventeenth century had contributed in varying degrees to the consolidation of the English East India company at Fort St. George. It is argued that the successive changes in the politics of

⁵ See, G.Balandier, 'The colonial Situation: A Theoretical Approach', in Immanuel Wallerstein, ed., *Social Change: The Colonial Situation*, New York, 1966 pp. 54-5 cited in Susan J. Lewandowski, 'Changing form and Function in the Ceremonial and Colonial Port city in India: An Historical Analysis of Madurai and Madras', *MAS*, II, 2, 1977 p. 198.

south India provided a space for the English company to chalk out independent political dominion.

Contemporary English documentation, travellers accounts and even modern scholarship have attributed three factors for the rise of Madrasapatnam in the second half of the seventeenth century. Firstly, to the availability of patterned cloth (paintings) i.e. the area between Pennar river of Nellore and South Arcot districts of modern Tamil Nadu. Secondly, to the Anglo- Dutch conflicts at Amboyna (south east Asia) and Pulicat which left the English company few opportunities to trade between Coromandel and the A Rchipelago despite the peace agreement signed between the two nations in 1619. Thirdly, the 'extortinate' nature of Golconda administration at Masulipatnam which forced the company to look for a settlement outside its political dominions, preferably in Nellore and Arcot regions.⁶

There is no doubt that the demand for patterned goods was increasing in the Indonesian Archipelago and that the English were left out in these markets due to dominance of the Portuguese and the Dutch in this trade. These companies had an advantage of having settlements at San Thome and Pulicat respectively. However, one must be cautious regarding the so called extortion of the Qutb Shahi administration on its face value. John Bruce, for example, had identified the year 1638-39 as the most 'disastrous' year for the English at Masulipatnam so far as the local

⁶ It will be totally unwieldy to comment on the contemporary documents and scholars who have attributed the above reasons for the founding of Madras. To cite only few examples See, *EFI*, series 1630-36 and *EFI*, 1637-41, W.H. Moreland, *Relations of Golconda in the early Seventeenth century*, Hakluyt society, 1931 and *Bruce Annals*, Vol. I, p.269, H.D. Love, *Vestiges* Vol. I, Chapter 1 and II.

administration, was concerned without citing any specific instances of harassment by the local officials.⁷ Contrary to these impressionistic opinions of contemporary travellers and documentation of the European companies, the Golconda administration in fact realigned the central Coromandel trade after its Karnatic conquest which proved beneficial to English trade at Madrasapatnam.

Before we go to the specific study of Madrasapatnam, It will not be out of context to understand the idea behind fortifications in the seventeenth century. The origin of European fortifications in India had two important factors; to sustain the company trade both from the European competition and from Indian mercantile groups. The Dutch and Portuguese, for instance, were dependent on fortifications to establish control over the supply of spices in south east Asia and to levy tribute on the indigenous maritime trade through a system of passes in the Asian waters. The English company pressed for fortifications as a retaliatory step to counter the VOC and the Portuguese competition in Indian ocean. Added to this was the growing private interests of the factors which determined the nature of company trade at the local level who pressurized the Directors for unhindered trade within India. A closer examination of the English sources reveal that the founding of Madrasapatnam as a fortified settlement was part of a systematic policy in the conscious evolution of expansionist ideology on a long

⁷ Justifying on the non-continuance of Armagoan, the first fortification of the English East India company, the chief of Masulipatnam stated "it would be expedient to select some other place on the coast". *Bruce Annals*, Vol. 1, pp.359-360.

term basis.⁸ Apart from the inherent expansionist ideology of the companies, these fortifications provided political and administrative space within the indigenous systems. By adopting the local administrative practices with some modifications (the English no doubt introduced English laws at Madrasapatnam) it derived the advantage of attracting Indian merchants who formed the major chunk of the population of Madrasapatnam. In other words, the English administration at Madrasapatnam was similar to that of any provincial administration of Golconda with certain modifications and with a degree of autonomy. In fact, by the second decades of the eighteenth century, one notices that the company emerged as a big revenue farmer on the Coromandel coast.

From the English point of view, these fortifications provided, apart from defense and offense, an additional advantage of generating revenues from local resources and population. This was particularly beneficial to company because it made the company financially independent of London for its functional existence. By the last quarter of the seventeenth century, the English East India Company had already expended about Lb. 300,000 on warehouses, garrisons and on various negotiations with the Indian rulers.⁹ For the English the realisation of the importance of having fortifications in Asia was slow and erratic.

Till about 1650, the company was sceptical on establishing fortifications in the Asia. Sir Thomas Roe, for instance, was of a

⁹ Anon, 'A Treatise wherein is Demonstrated that the East India Trade is the most National of All Foreign Trades', London, 1681, p. 36 cited in *Ibid.* p. 73.

strong opinion that fortifications were 'delusions of a costly and ineffective nature' but by 1680's Sir. Joshiah Childe, insisted on fortifications in every region in which the company was involved in trade.¹⁰ Throughout the most part of the seventeenth century, fortifications in the East Indies thus had three motivating factors. Firstly, their origin was determined by the nature of intra-European conflicts, secondly, the nature of Asian and European relations, and thirdly to the systematic exploitation of revenues from local resources by incorporating similar tenural systems.

The search for a new settlement on the central Coromandel coast had started as early as 1620 after the peace treaty failed with the Dutch at Pulicat. Though the English gained trading privileges in the Golconda dominion through the Golden *Firman* in 1634, it did not immediately benefit their trade in south east Asia. Moreover, the English till the founding of Fort St. George did not possess a factory in the southern Coromandel which had the highest concentration of patterned cloth production.

In 1625, the English was instrumental in procuring a grant from a local Naik to erect a fortification at Aramagaon (Durgarazupatnam) with additional privileges of custom free purchase of plain and flowered cloth which could be exchanged for pepper and finer spices to be sent to Europe. Aramagaon became the first fortification of the English East India company in the East Indies.¹¹ The company immediately abandoned Masulipatnam

¹⁰ Ibid. pp. 71-72.

¹¹ Bruce, *Annals*, Vol. I, p. 269.

factory and moved to Armagoan in 1628. However, the factors were disillusioned at Armagoan as it was highly chargeable and felt

"it was a necessary station for preserving the company's stores, its situation is not favourable to the increase of commerce and that it would be expedient to select some other place on the coast".¹²

The unprofitable nature of Armagoan forced the company to search for a suitable place on the same coast and in 1632 Francis Day was despatched to explore southern Coromandel as far as Pollicherry (Pondicherry). In one of his coastal voyages, Francis Day met Damerla Venkatappa, the *Naik* of Pulicat and San Thome with his Head quarters at Wandiwash with Aiyappa as the governor the areas of Poonamalle and the coast. Francis Day sailed to the town called Madrasapatnam, three miles north of San Thome and obtained a grant of territory and license to erect a fort and form a settlement from the *Naik*.¹³

Immediately after the grant, the English factors at Masulipatnam ordered to abandon Armagoan and shift the base to Madrasapatnam. The factors at Armagoan who were in debt worth 20,000 pagodas to local merchants and to the *Naik* cleared the amount and sailed to Madrasapatnam. The party of Andrew Cogan and Francis Day left to Madrasapatnam in two ships, *Eagle* and *Unity*, which comprised of two English factors, and as many

¹² Ibid, pp. 359-360.

¹³ For the grant of Damerla Venkatappa Naik see, Appendix II, and H.D. Love, *Vestiges*, Vol. I, p.14-15., and William Foster, *The Founding of Fort St. George*, p. 17. and Appendix II of the present work..

writers, a gunmen, a surgeon, a garrison of 25 men, artificers, carpenters, smiths and a native powder maker and staff of servants.¹⁴ The initial settlement of Madrasapatnam was not given adequate encouragement from the president and Council at Surat, as they felt that such a fortification would only be chargeable and futile and refused to send money for investments at Madrasapatnam. Francis Day, for want of money took a loan of 2000 pagodas from local merchants (probably Mallaya or Sheshadra) and constructed the fortification in 1640 and named it Fort St. George.¹⁵ In 1656, Fort St. George was declared as the Presidency of all the English settlements in Asia.

Regional Political Economy, and the Growth of Hinterland of Madrasapatnam 1640-1687

The hinterland of Madrasapatnam was dictated by the political developments that wrought the central Coromandel coast in the mid seventeenth century. The southern Andhra and northern Tamil Nadu region (Pulicat and San Thome regions) was under the political control Vijayanagara which was dominated by migrant *Naiks* of Rayalaseema. Second, the whole of Pulicat and San Thome region formed the frontier to the expanding Sultanate of Golconda. The subsequent liquidation of Vijayanagara by Golconda brought

¹⁴ H.D. Love, *Vestiges, Vol I*, p.25.

¹⁵ It may be noted that it was against the company's policy to take finances from private merchants on interest for investments. However, at the local level the company many a times had to depend on private money to make speedy investments which inturn became issues of conflicts between the Indian merchants and European companies in the seventeenth century. See, *Original Correspondence*, 13, Sept., 1639 cited in H.D. Love, *Vestiges, Vol. I*, p.19. (Any reference to Original Correspondence, henceforth is taken from H.D. Love unless specified)

the whole region of Pulicat and San Thome areas under one unified administrative control which radically altered the existing relationships between the coast and hinterland.

Basing on the existing political divisions, the hinterland of Madrasapatnam can be divided into two distinct categories. The immediate hinterland included the districts of Nellore and Arcot of Andhra and Tamil Nadu respectively. The town of Madrasapatnam drew its merchandise mainly from these districts. The second, included the integration of Rayalaseema into coastal political economy which was made possible by the expansion of the Sultanate of Golconda in the mid seventeenth century. Though, Rayalaseema formed the distant hinterland of Madrasapatnam, it demonstrated how frontier regions came to be integrated into the mainstream economy in south India. The integration of frontier involved a shift in the political equations between numerous *Naiks* and Golconda and on the other hand changed the composition of trade in the central Coroamndel plains. However, the political consolidation of Golconda led to a relative decline in traditional portfolio management of Hindu merchants and were replaced by the officialdom of Golconda Sultanate such as Mir Jumla, Neknam Khan and Podela Lingappa who dominated the trade and politics from the second half of the seventeenth century.

On the eve of Golconda conquest, Vijayanagara surely was a broken house with several of the domiciled *Naiks* of Tamil Nadu and the new entrants from Rayalaseema threatened the ruling dynasty at Chandragiri. They formed into a combination of alliances between themselves and contested for power on the

coastal strips,¹⁶ The civil war of 1614-1618, which broke out after the death of Venkata II brought two important factions who dominated the coastal politics for over two decades. One faction was represented by Jagga Raya, the chief of Gobburu family and a relative of Venkata II through the latter's wife, Obamma. The other faction was represented by Yachama Naik of the Velugoti clan, with his capital at Venkatagiri.¹⁷ Interestingly both the factions had their traditional base in Rayalaseema, the erstwhile core of Vijayanagara and were relatively new entrants in the coastal politics. These chiefs who controlled vast stretches of black cotton soil tracts in Cuddapah and Chittor districts expanded into coastal politics by virtue of their sound management of agriculture and local manufacture.¹⁸ In fact one notices a major shift in the political epicentre from Rayalaseema to the coastal plains which was more or less completed by the mid seventeenth century.

By the turn of the seventeenth century, the chiefs of Rayalaseema had consolidated their power in Siddavatam, Chittivelu, Sriharikota, Venkatagiri, Jamulamadugu, Velugodu etc. and embarked on a search for areas to expand their political authority. In spite of constant threats from the Islamic polities of Golconda and Bijapur, the coast itself offered two major

¹⁶ Rev. H. Heras, 'The Great Civil War of Vijayanagara of 1614-1618,' *JIH*, pp.164-188.

¹⁷ See, *FSVH*, Vol. I, p.311 and Vol. p. 263, Nelaturi Venktaramaniah, ed., *Velugo'tivari Vamsavali*, pp. 412-17, 419-21, 423 and Heras, *The Great Civil War of Vijayanagara*, *Ibid*, and for a good interpretation on the politics of expansion see, Sanjay Subrahmanyam and David Shulman, "The Men who would be King? The Politics of Expansion in Early Seventeenth century Northern Tamil Nadu", *MAS*, 24,2.1990 pp. 225-248.

¹⁸ *Ibid*, and Burton Stein, *Vijayanagara, The New Cambridge History of India*, Cambridge, 1994 ,pp. 90-91.

advantages to these men of war. One was cotton and Indigo production and expansion of manufacturing and sea borne commerce of Pulicat and other ports.¹⁹ Velugodu, Gobburu, Damerla and to a lesser extent the Matlas were the most prominent lineage's which contested for power in the coastal plain .²⁰

The migration of warrior lineage's from hinterland had a major impact on the Pulicat and Madrasapatnam coasts. Many merchants followed or accompanied these warrior lineage's to coastal plains while the need for new resources to augment political power forced *Naiks* and the ruling house of Vijayanagara to actively collaborate with merchants in the ports of Jinji, Pulicat, Madrasapatnam and Tegnampatnam. A major outcome of this fluctuating political environment was the increasing participation of merchants in the politics of the region. Mallayya and Chinnana, for example, were not only able to control trade on the coast by virtue of their allegiance to Vijayanagara house but provided them a space to rise into prominent positions within the local administrative structure of Vijayanagara.²¹

The trading operations of central Coromandel merchants central covered Nellore and Arcot districts of modern Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu respectively. Nellore though did not have many weaving villages, offered good coast line with number of ports such as Pakalam, Ramapatnam, Chinnapalem,

¹⁹ Sanjay Subrahmanayam and David Shulman, 'The Men who Would be King' ,p.245.

²⁰ *Ibid.*

²¹ These merchants were involved in revenue farming, governing certain provinces etc., apart from trade which was their main economic activity. On the careers of Mallaya and Chinnana, See, Joseph J. Brenning, 'Chief Merchants and the European Enclaves', pp. 323-328.

Tummulapenta, Zuvvaladinna, Iskapalli, Ponnpuudi, Maipadu, Kistnapatnam, Tupili, Armogean and Pudi which acted as feeder ports to Madrasapatnam and Pulicat.²² The weaving activity was mainly centered in Chingleput district south of Nellore. In fact this region had the largest cluster of weaving villages on the coast. The main centres of weaving were Ponneri and Arani famous for bleaching and washing required for patterned cloth.²³ The Dutch fortification at Pulicat was situated in this *talug* and the VOC was able to exploit most of the merchandise coming from this locality.

South of Chingelput was Saidapet *talug*, with weaving centres of Salivakkam (probably belonged to *salevaru*), Padappa, Poonamalle (the regional Headquarters for governors of Vijayanagara, Qutb Shahi and later the Mughals) and Manimangalam. Most the villages and small centres displayed considerable overlapping of economic activity in the period under consideration.²⁴ For example, Poonamalle steadily emerged as the main grain market during the second half of the seventeenth century while Kanchipuram was a major centre of craft production and consumption.²⁵ The next main district for weaving was the district of Madurantakam which had a number of marketing towns like Manampady and Chempakam with a substantial number of weaving villages around them. Madurantakam was supplying

²² The distance between the northern most point of Nellore to Madras would be around 120 miles and region had good ports mostly used for coastal trade carrying diverse merchandise such as grain, Indigo, and textiles. *RFSG, Letters to Fort St. George*, 1711.

²³ S. Araratnam, *Merchants, Companies and Commerce*, p. 55.

²⁴ *Ibid* p. 56.

²⁵ *Ibid*.

goods not only to Madrasapatnam but also to southern ports such as Sadrasapatnam, and Kovilam.²⁶

The town of Madrasapatnam was situated in Saidapet taluq with Kanchipuram as its headquarters. The province comprised of 79 nadus and Madrasapatnam lay in Nayarnadu of a *cottam* called Puzha and Pullet which contained five smaller nadus of Nayar nadu, Ambattur, Agudi, Attur and Egmore. The near vicinity of Madrasapatnam was clustered with weaving and painters such as Comerpett, Muthailpet and Attapolem which the company acquired over a period of time during the seventeenth century' On the eve of the founding of Fort St. George, Francis Day who travelled in and around Madrasapatnam observed a vibrant weaving economy on the coast. He wrote to the factors at Masulipatnam that:

"Where I was entertained with much honour by the Naggue himself, merchants, painters and weavers.. I had free leave to visit the towns and so discourse, with all merchants, painters and weavers, who brought all types of musters of all sorts of cloathe. . . . Having compared both sortes and prizes with ours at Armagoan, I lament our masters great losses and cannot blame our friends... I need not tell you Armagoan was only chargeable.. 15% cheaper than those available at Armagoan". 28

²⁶ *Ibid.*

²⁷ H.D.Love, *Vestiges*, Vol. I. p. 83.

²⁸ *O.C.No. 1690*, 27, July, 1639. and *EFI, 1637-41*, p. 248.

Francis Day observed that the coast had the best paintings and likewise excellent from long cloth, *morees*, and *percellas* and cheap by 20% over Masulipatnam and Armagoan.²⁹ In the central Coromandel most of the trading was streamlined through European enclaves of Pulicat and Madrasapatnam .

Apart from the above mentioned immediate hinterland, the political expansion of Qutb Shahi kingdom into Coromandel plains through Karnatic led to the integration of Rayalaseema into coastal areas which formed the distant hinterland of Pulicat and Madrasapatnam. The political aggrandizement of Qutb Shahis was started during the reign of Ibrahim Qutb shah in the preceding century. A closer study on the nature of the political expansion of Qutb Shahis under Ibrahim Qutb Shah reveals that the thrust of political expansion had strong economic motives as it was consciously directed toward the coastal plains, initially the Krishna and Godavari deltas and later the central Coromandel. In coastal Andhra, i.e., northern Coromandel, Ibrahim's campaigns were more or less successful and was instrumental in getting large coastal tracts of Masulipatnam, Rajamundry and Peddapalli directly under his control. For most of the seventeenth century, the warrior lineage's of Telangana and coastal Andhra remained loyal to Qutb Shahis till the Mughals seized in 1687.³⁰ In fact as J. F. Richard's proposes, the success of Golconda regime in coastal Andhra rested on the collaboration of chiefs who were merely drawn into state

²⁹ *ibid.*

³⁰ .See, J.F.Richards, *Mughal Administration of Golconda*, p. 20 and Burton Stein, *Vijayanagara*, pp. 80-81

rubric as 'aristocracy', however were allowed to retain many of their chiefly authority.

In contrast to Telangana and coastal Andhra, Karnatic was represented by a much more complex structure in the sense that the warriors had greater independence and refused to accept the suzerainty of Qutb Shahi kingdom. They continued their loyalties to erstwhile Vijayanagara empire but but chalked out independent political jurisdictions once the central authority became weak. Karnatic was usually used to designate the Tungabhadra and Pennar Doab which includes Rayalaseema and eastern Karnataka. Before the Vijayanagara shifted its capital to Penugonda and later on to Chandragiri, the whole of Karnatic was part of the macro region of the Vijayanagara empire for nearly two centuries preceding the Golconda conquest of the seventeenth century.

The geography of Karnatic was predominantly represented by vast black cotton soil tracts based on tank irrigation. The region was also rich in minerals and the diamond mines which were mined from time immemorial. Politically the region was dominated by numerous warrior lineage's called *Palegadu's* (*Pallaikarar* or British *Poligars*) who owed their allegiance to Vijayanagara empire. Most of the *Palegadu* lineage's of the region attained fame and wealth as leaders of military contingents in the service of Vijayanagara Kings and by the beginning of the seventeenth century, embarked on independent political careers, not only at a locality level but even threatened the basic political fabric of Vijayanagara at Chandragiri. The complex milieu in which these *palegallu* operated at the local level was dominated by extremely

fluid political environment which on the one hand saw numerous inter *Palegadu* skirmishes and constant and on the other hand between *Palegadu* lineage's and the Sultanate of Golconda. However, the fluid political environment in Karnatic threw open unlimited opportunities to *Palegadu's*, the strength of each individual chief depended on his capacity to legitimize his position both at locality level and at supra locality level.³¹

By the end of the sixteenth century the political economy of Karnatic was more or less in place: the chiefs brought many places of dry peninsula and developed them into highly developed microcosms of agriculture based on tank irrigation and by production of cash crops like cotton and indigo during the seventeenth century. The warriors used their fighting skills to augment their wealth which in turn was used in warfare in the peninsula which forced them to look for alternative sources of revenue from the newly developing commercialisation in the region. Burton Stein observed that all major lordships were supported by accountants, scribes and bankers, record keepers, money specialists, etc., through whom tribute was transferred over long distances to the imperial capital.³² Irrespective of the power and status they held amongst other competitive chiefs, the logic of political expansion was directed towards chalking out independent political ambitions or as the recent scholarship characterized: proto-statehood.³³

³¹ See. Sanjay Subrahmanyam and David Shulman, 'The Men who would be King?' *passim* and Burton Stein, *Vijayanagara*, p. 90.

³² *Ibid.*

³³ Sanjay Subrahmanyam and David Shulman, 'The Men who would be King?' *passim*.

Thus, when Ibrahim Qutb shah embarked on the Karnatic campaigns, he was in reality encountering varied political interests, big and small, in the region. His political and military stratagem was directed in two directions. After subduing coastal Andhra, Ibrahim directed his campaign towards southern districts of modern Guntur and Prakasam where he subdued Kondapalli, Bellamkonda, Vinukonda and then turned south-west and south-east axis and took over Macherla in Guntur and Nellore and defeated Velugoti Kasturi Ranga.³⁴ From here he moved towards the Pennar and Tungabhadra doab on the ground that the chiefs did not pay tribute of 2 lakh Huns to the central treasury.³⁵ The Chiefs of Rayalaseema, most notably the Matli lineage and other smaller political entities agreed to pay a tribute of 2 lakh Huns per annum. Some notable places which came under Ibrahim Qutb shah were Gandikota, Chennuru, Siddavatam, and Gurramkonda. However, Ibrahim Qutb shah had to contend with tribute paying and the Sultanate of Golconda itself had to wait for another 50 years before the whole Karnatic region was finally brought under its direct control.

The actual political and economic integration of the Karnatic-coromandel region was started during the reign of Abdullah Qutb Shah (1626-1672). Golconda which was till then dependent for its prosperity on the ports of northern Coromandel was searching for new areas of economic expansion. The thrust was

³⁴ Apart from the major forts, smaller forts like Addanki, Ammanabrolu, Kandukuru, Podili, Darsi, Kambham, Kakula, Dupadu, Tangeda, Gurajala, Katavaram, Karempudi and finally Kondavidu. See, *FSVH*, Vol. I p. 307.

³⁵ *Ibid.* Vol. I, p. 304.

necessitated by the political imperatives of the time: On the one hand it faced constant threats from the Mughals from the north and on the other hand, it had to ward off the expansion of Adil Shah's of Bijapur which was pushing itself on the southern. The Qutb Shahi expansion into southern was thus a conscious effort to extend the area of operations to the whole of northern and central plains. For this, the state realised that conquest of Karnatic was the only route through which they could slowly expand into the central Coromandel. Yet another factor was the changing political dynamics of Qutb Shahi state which came to be dominated by Persian entrepreneurs who were integrated into the system as revenue farmers and administrators of Golconda. For this new Persian elite, for whom trade, revenue and politics overlapped over each other were searching for new resource bases to expand over already existing resources. Mir Jumla's political campaign into Karnatic is a case in point.³⁶

Modern scholarship has concentrated on the sea-borne activities of Mir Jumla and had paid scant attention to his intervention in the production process in the hinterland which was crucial to his oceanic aggrandizement. Till about 1650's, Mir Jumla had concentrated in the northern Coromandel with Masulipatnam as his base for his activities. In 1650, he extended his operations to Karnatic as well and in the process gained access to rich cotton

³⁶ Some of the most important forts which were conquered by Golconda were Gandikota, Gutti (Mir Jumla gave it Pemmasani Timma Nayudu), Betamcherla, Jutur, Adavani (Adoni), Chnnuru, Cuddapah, and Gurrampkonda. For an analysis of Persian elite see, Sanjay Subrahmanyam, *The Political Economy of Commerce in south India: 7500-1650*, Cambridge, 1990. Especially the chapter on "Asians and Europeans in an Age of Contained Conflict".

producing area. Gandikota, in modern Cuddapah, which was strategically located was the bone of contention for both Bijapur and Golconda. Apart from being politically strategic, Gandikota was the main transit for merchandise coming from western India. Further the areas around Gandikota was rich in diamond mines which was the primary interest of Mir Jumla.

The Munimadugu diamond mine was discovered according to the *Kaifiyat*, by some Pakanadu ryots and were marketed by Gujarati merchants.³⁷ The mines were under the jurisdiction of Pemmasani Chief, Timma Nayudu who supervised the mines as his monopoly before Mir Jumla's intervention. Immediately after the conquest of Gandikota, Mir Jumla strengthened the fort and took over the diamond mines. He appointed Mizalam Saheb as the *Khiladar* and to employ labour contractors for the mining activity. From then onwards Mir Jumla regularly sold diamonds to European traders at Pulicat and Madrasapatnam. Basing at Gandikota, Mir Jumla then concentrated on expansion to central coast which was completed by 1655.

If we follow the route taken by Mir Jumla in the conquest of Karnatic in 1647, it is possible to trace the route from Cuddapah to Madrasapatnam which may have become major itinerary for merchants travelling from Karnatic to Madrasapatnam. The itinerary might have taken this route: Gandikota, Gutti (which Mir Jumla gave it to the Pemmasani chief, Timma Nayudu), Gurrankonda, Kanchi, Wandiwash, Arcot, Pulicat, Mylapore and

³⁷ *Gandikota Kaifiyat*.

Chennapatnam.³⁸ A contemporary English letter describes Mir Jumla's campaign as:

"... and now the king of golcondah hath sent his Generall, Meir Gumsiak with a great army to oppose the king and where the king hath sent Mallay who hath put together 50,000 soldiers. . . . he hath his own proper 4000 horse, 300 elephants, 400 camels and 10,000 oxen which transporth his goods to severall] country's..." (emphasis added).³⁹

The first step of Mir Jumla after the conquest of Coromandel was to make the whole region of Karnatic - into one single administrative unit under one *seerlasknr*. Neknam Khan became the first *havaladar* of Gandikota in 1663 and was later elevated to the position of *subedar* of united Rayalaseema -Arcot region. During the *havaldari* of Podela Lingappa, the successor of Neknam Khan, Gandikota was recognised as a major *paragana* with 25 villages.⁴⁰ Though the Qutb Shahi penetration in the Karnatic was limited to areas of Jummulamadugu, Kamalapuram, Chennuru, and Cuddapah, there is no doubt that the state was able to gain hold in most of the prime economic zones of the region.⁴¹ Paucity of sources does not allow any analysis on the internal economic

³⁸ Mir Jumla's conquest is traced from various Kaifiyats mentioned in **the text** and foot notes.

³⁹ *O.C. No. 1974 & 1975, 1645/46.*, cited in H.D.Love, *Vestiges*, Vol. I, p. 100

⁴⁰ Neknam Khan was the first Subedar of united Rayalaseema-Arcot province with its capital at Conjeevaram. It is only from this time that one can use the term 'Karnatic' to the whole region comprising Rayalseema, Nellore and Arcot. *Gandikota Kaifiyat*, and *Sugumanchi Palle Kaifiyat*.-

⁴¹ Areas like Siddavatam, Hande Anantapur, Chittivelu, Gurramkonda **remained in the hands** of local chiefs.

systems and their links with external commerce. However, scattered inscription evidence and the Mackenzie Manuscripts, does show the existence of small and medium marketing towns which traded in cotton, indigo, and grain. Inscriptions of Animala, Madduru, and Chidipirala mentions the gift (tax revenue) of the toll incomes on several articles such as cotton, yarn and cloth passing through the trade routes of Gundikamma, Chinta Kumma etc.⁴² Chennuru, Siddavatam, Produtturu, Duvvuru, Kamalapuram, Porumamilla, Pedda Pasupula and Cinna Pasupula and Badvelu were emerging as small marketing centres which dealt in cotton and indigo and to some extent in diamonds which were transported to Madrasapatnam coast. It may be surmised that with the rise of Pulicat and Madrasapatnam most of the merchandise from Karnatic was absorbed by these two ports. Perhaps most of the trading was done by peasant cultivators themselves which also included transportation of goods to port towns on the coast.⁴³ The hierarchies of markets starting from villages, small fairs which marketed the local produce, local towns and major administrative centres like Gandikota, Cuddapah, Jamulamadugu, Nandyal etc.

⁴² Inscriptions of Animala, Chidipirala and Madduru, Journal of Andhra Historical Research society, Vol 2,1962.

⁴³ Unlike in the Masulipatnam sector, we do not have any references to Banjara traders operating on the coast of Madrasapatnam of the same period. The existence of numerous Palegadu lineage's with independent territorial jurisdiction may also be participating in trade of some sort and probably employed many mobile peasant bands to transport goods from one region to other. *Velugoti Vamsavali* refers to many such mobile peasant warrior groups who apart from lending support to Major households were also involved in agriculture and allied activities. The Vamsavali refers to Katnenivaru;, Marrikunavaru, Pulivaru, Peddapotuvuru, Alasesavaru;, Vemulavaru, Kaluvapallivaru, Machupallivaru, Potturuvaru, Konavaru, Challavarusuvuru, Savaramvaru etc. who assisted Velugoti Kasturi Rangappa in his wars against Golconda and Matli chiefs.

transformed the local production into that of long distance trade. However, unlike in the most organised sectors of trade such as Masulipatnam which was purely in the hands of professional merchants, the Karnatic trade on the other hand seemed to have been very unorganised and was carried for most part by the peasant cultivators themselves. The volume of trade from Karnatic may have been small when compared to coastal plains which had direct access to ports of Pulicat and Madrasapatnam , nevertheless, was the major source of raw material (cotton) to the main weaving centres of Ponneru, Arani, Kanchipuram etc. in the period under consideration. Thus the conquest of by Golconda integrated new areas of production which continued to expand concomitantly with the growth of Pulicat and Madrasapatnam throughout the period of our study-

Trade, Merchants and Economy of Madrasapatnam 1640-1710

The establishment of the European commerce in India was inextricably linked to the textile economy in the region. Although the primary motive of the companies was to buy spices from the Indonesian Archipelago, they soon realised that Indian textiles formed the major commodity as a barter for spices. The companies were pushed into intra-Asian networks of trade (country trade) which necessitated the establishment of factories in all the three major trading zones of Gujarat, Coromandel and Bengal. The patterned cloth which was mainly produced in the vicinity of central Coromandel had high demand in south east Asia and Europe. The companies which were aware of the complexity of Indian trade realised the links between coastal trade - country

trade - Euro-Asian trade as interdependent phenomenon. By and large, big ports like Masulipatnam, Pulicat, Madrasapatnam became involved in re-distribute trade in the Indian ocean.⁴⁴ For the companies too, the redistributive character of Indian trade necessitated the need for exclusive privileges in the port towns. Initially the companies asked for trading concessions like custom free trade, exemption from certain duties and taxes, trading privileges in new port towns etc. which led to the establishment of factories at various trading ports. In fact all the factories in the seventeenth century thrived on concessions given by the Indian powers in different time and contexts.

Although the companies thrived on the concessions given by inland powers which definitely enhanced the European commerce in general, it led to, on the other hand, to confrontation with other competitive companies and the Indian merchants involved in similar trade. These conflicts, according to the contemporary logic of mercantilism, was to be countered by establishing fortifications at various port towns across Asia. As Bruce Watson elaborates, "the development from factory to fort was an economic necessity, it was based upon the power of maritime traders to enforce demands at sea" and to create an awe over the inland administration.⁴⁵ In the world of fierce competitive mercantilist phase, such as that of the seventeenth century, the existence of the company trade specific depended on their capacity to generate profits constantly and if possible, local revenues as well for their sustenance. While most of

⁴⁴ K.N. Chaudhari, *The Trading World of Asia and the English East India Company*, Cambridge, 1978.

⁴⁵ Bruce Watson, 'Fortifications and the 'idea' of force', p. 73.

the features of factories and fortifications remained more or less similar, the capacity of a fortification to develop independently on its own revenues definitely seem to have been the major advantage for the European companies in Asia. That armed trading proved profitable as long as the companies maintained discretion on the use of force prompted the companies to seek permission for fortifications in Asia.⁴⁶

As mentioned earlier, Madrasapatnam was chiefly a trading town. The coast of Madrasapatnam was famous for longcloth, *murees*, *percallas*, and *sakmporis*. It also traded in plain cloth (calicos) varieties which probably came from deep interior. Apart from textile trade, the town of Madrasapatnam was able to attract other commodity trade in indigo, cotton and grain largely for local consumption or to re export to other southern settlements. From the last decades of the seventeenth century, diamonds became a major exporting item for Europe which was dominated by English private traders and free merchants who resided in Madrasapatnam. The trade of Madrasapatnam revolved round intra-Asian trade. For instance, the shipping lists of 1661 show that out of 16 ships, only two of them carried European goods.

⁴⁶ However, there is one marked difference between factories and fortifications of the seventeenth century. If the factories were constantly seeking concessions from the inland powers, the fortifications on the other hand were able to impose similar customs and duties on the merchants trading from these respective places.

⁴⁷ Most of the indigo was produced in Nellore and Cuddapah region. There are no sources to say that indigo was exported from Madrasapatnam. Most of the Indigo may be been consumed for local needs by the weaving economy of the Coromandel. Like wise, Cotton was consumed in Madras and by the last decades of the seventeenth century, a regular cotton market was established in Madrasapatnam. *RFSG, Diary and Consultation Book*, 1688, p. 42.

Shipping list 1661: (Country trade)

Katherine	Love*
Madrasapatnam Merchant	Marigold*
East India Merchant	Henry*
May flower	Discovery
Truroe	Coast Frigate
Anne	Persian merchant
Concord	
The Hope	
Winter Frigate (belonged to William Jearsey)	
Great George	
Little George	
Royal James	

* Ships for England carrying European goods.

Source: *EFI*, 1661-1664, p. 33-47.

Likewise, the list of passes issued by the Agent and Council for the year 1679-80 reflects the importance of intra -Asian trade at Madrasapatnam. On the orders of President and Council as many as 12 vessels were stationed at Madrasapatnam which were meant exclusively for intra-Asian trade. Most of this trade was conducted between Madrasapatnam and south east Asia and Persia and to Pegu. The development of Pegu-Madrasapatnam links is important for two reasons. First, Madrasapatnam was able to revive the Pegu trade at a time Masulipatnam -Pegu links were on the decline thus showing the buoyancy of Coromandel economy.⁴⁸ Second, the revival of Pegu - links brought Madrasapatnam into the bay of

⁴⁸ It may be recalled from the earlier chapter that the emergence of Masulipatnam in the oceanic trade was due to its revival of links with Pegu in the last quarter of the sixteenth century. Masulipatnam was able to sustain this trade for most part of the succeeding century, but as noted earlier, the port was showing signs of regression from about 1680's. Madras was able to extend the Peg trade and thereby continued with the much needed markets of Peg. See, *RFSG, Diary and Consultation Book*, 1679/80 pp. 1-11. For the revival of correspondence between Pegu and Coromandel. For the actual granting of trading rights for the English to trade in Pegu see, pp. 80-81 of the same volume.

Bengal trade which extended from Bengal to Achin through Jafnapatnam and from Madrasapatnam to west Asia.⁴⁹ This trade received impetus especially after the Dutch shifted their operational Headquarters from Pulicat to Negapatnam thus paving way for Madrasapatnam to develop as a major emporia centre on central Coromandel.

Within the perspective of Coromandel, the intra-Asian trade of Madrasapatnam depended on two factors. Firstly, on company's ability to curb other European competitors like the Portuguese, Dutch and the French within the coast. In 1685 for instance, the English ordered Chinna Venkatadri, the chief merchant of Madrasapatnam to get an order from Sanganna (governor of Poonamalle) to hinder the Dutch company from settling or trading at the ports of Armagoan, Ramapatnam, Krishnapatnam and Congapatnam in Nellore district.⁵⁰ Within the vicinity of Madrasapatnam, the real threat was posed by San Thome which was initially under the Portuguese which was later taken over by the French in 1672. It was the policy of the English not to entertain any competition at San Thome.⁵¹ Secondly, the company had to adopt a 'judicious' balance between Indian and the European private traders. Unlike their Dutch counterparts, the English company did not insist on the company's monopoly over trade in their settlements. The success of the English company lay in the fact that it allowed merchants of various denominations and

⁴⁹ See, the list of passes given to country trade by the Agent and Council for country trade, Appendix III.

⁵⁰ See, *RFSG, Public Consultations Book*, 1683-84, p. 77 and 1684-85, Vol. X, p. 44.

⁵¹ On Santhome see, Charles Fawcett, ed, *EFI*, New Series Vol. II. pp. 278-9.

nationalities to trade from Madrasapatnam. The permission given to merchants such as Hindu, Muslim, Armenian, private traders and free merchants (merchants who traded on their own account with the permission of the company) not only increased the trade at Madrasapatnam but also brought populations into the town.⁵²

The company at Madrasapatnam realised the importance of Indian mercantile operations in intra-Asian trade and instead of eliminating from trade, insisted, on settling Indian merchants at Fort St. George. The slow decline of Pulicat in the last quarter of the seventeenth century accelerated the movement of merchants to Madrasapatnam.⁵³

Although the Indian ocean trade can be divided broadly into intra-Asian and Euro-Asian trade, one however, cannot clearly demarcate a line of distinction between those two patterns of trade. Euro-Asian trade was directly dependent on the country trade, especially because of the redistributive character of the settlements in Asia. Euro-Asian trade became a major concern for the Board of directors at London only from the last decade of the seventeenth century. By 1700, the company maintained three vessels on regular basis for European goods. Ships from Europe brought to Coromandel, textiles such as auroras, scarlet, popinjays, fine cloth, embrost cloth and longells, while Madrasapatnam exported long

⁵² Though, there are no accurate figures of number of Indian merchants residing in the town on private trade, the number of Free men in Madrasapatnam on the other hand increased steadily from 30 in 1674 to 120 by 1710. See, H.D.Love, *Vestiges*, Vol. I, 485 and Vol. II, 120.

⁵³ One major reason for the decline of Dutch settlement can be attributed in their policy of establishing the company monopoly trade, which did not allow any scope for other merchants to trade within their settlements, notably at Pulicat, which made most of the Coromandel merchants to migrate to Madrasapatnam.

cloth, *salemporis*, *bettellis*, *oringall*, and *morees* directly to Europe.⁵⁴ The company at Madrasapatnam employed regular contractors and even delegated additional duties to the chief merchants to send agents for the procurement and sale of company's European goods which was made mandatory.⁵⁵

Merchants of various denominations and nationalities formed the back bone of Madrasapatnam trade. By the end of the seventeenth century the town became the hub of mercantile activity on the coast.⁵⁶ Most of the merchants of either resided in the town or carried their trade at Madrasapatnam as itinerary merchants. For instance, merchants from Pegu, Achin, Bencoolen regularly sent ships with spices and took back textiles from the coast. Muslim merchants were operating on the west Asia axis traded in textiles, took spices and diamonds from Madrasapatnam.⁵⁷ Significantly the population of Persian and other Muslim merchants was small when compared to other nations. Armenians of Madrasapatnam dominated the diamond trade . So important was the Armenian trade, that the administration at Madrasapatnam felt the need to have a separate Armenian street in the town. The success of

⁵⁴ See, H.D.Love, *Vestiges*, Vol. II, p. 154

⁵⁵ By the end of the seventeenth century, the English company insisted on chief merchants to carry European imports to be sold hinterland.

⁵⁶ There was steady growth of merchant population in Madrasapatnam between 1650-1724. The merchants who operated were mainly Hindu, Muslim, European and Armenian.

⁵⁷ The trade with Pegu was revived in 1679 when the English sent a full fledged delegation to the King asking for special grant to settle a factory at Peg. Regarding the Persian trade, there is no clear cut evidence on when it came into the Madras circuit of trade. However it may be surmised that Madras -Persia links was a logical outcome of general Persian trade on the Coromandel which centered around Masuliptnam in the firsts half of the seventeenth century.

Armenian merchants at Madrasapatnam was largely due to the flexibility they displayed in trade and other allied activities.⁵⁸

By far the largest mercantile group which resided in the town of Madrasapatnam were the Hindu merchants of coast. The Hindu merchants came from two important caste groups; komatis and Chetties, most of them being the migrants from northern Coromandel or from the hinterland. These merchants were involved in coastal trading, wholesaling and retailing, brokerage, banking and shroffings.⁵⁹ The komatis belonged to the right hand caste division and dominated the textile trade mainly as brokers and suppliers of cloth from the hinterland to the port. Like in the northern coast, the komatis of Madrasapatnam too had established direct links with the weaving villages. They were a highly mobile group and operated from the hinterland and ports and some of their individual operations extended to the whole Coromandel. The main competition for Komatis came from another telugu speaking caste group, the Chetties. The Chetties belonged to the left hand division and concentrated only in the northern and central coasts. Apart from komatis and Chetties, baliyas who belonged to the right hand castes, dominated the coastal trade and oceanic trade. They

⁵⁸ The flexibility of the Armenians can be gauged by their diversity of roles performed in Madras. Apart from their involvement in diamond trade, they also reached high positions in Madras politics. For instance, Cojje Abanues was appointed as the egib of Golconda in 1682. It is interesting because of the fact that the position of egib was highly competitive and the fact that an Armenians could compete with powerful Hindu Brahmins surely demonstrates the increasing position of Armenians in Madras. He was instrumental in getting various Husbulhukums from the King of Golconda. See. *RFSG, Diary and Consultation Book*, 1682, p. 24.

⁵⁹ S. Arasaratnam, *Merchants Companies and Commerce*, p. 215

were also active in the politics of the coastal region, especially during the first half of the seventeenth century.⁶⁰

There is no doubt that the European enclaves of Pulicat and Madrasapatnam attracted these merchants in large numbers. A number of factors contributed for Hindu merchants to settle in the European enclaves. By far the most important reason was the nature of the political environment in which these merchants were operating in the plains. The period between 1630-1650 witnessed the decline of Vijayanagara which was finally conquered by the Sultanate of Golconda in 1656. The political flux created two contradictory situations for the merchants of the Coromandel. On the one hand it paved the way for some prominent merchants to negotiate for a political space within the state structure of Vijayanagara which enhanced their careers, while on the other hand, pushed many medium scale merchants of the coast into the vortex of company company.

The first category of merchants included Mallaya or Astraapa chetty and Chinnana. both of them operated at the Dutch settlement of Pulicat.⁶¹ These portfolio managers exercised unlimited freedom in their relations with the European companies in the sense that they were not bind to a particular company *per se*. It may also be noted that none of these merchants resided in the

⁶⁰ There are numerous sub-divisions with the Baliya community. They came under numerous subsects such as gajula baliyas, Kaveri chettis, pericaver baliyas etc. They however, took a more generic caste titles called Nayudu or chetty. Ibid, pp. 215-216.

⁶¹ The careers of Mallaya and chinnana have received a good deal of attention from modern scholars as well.see, S.Arasaratnam, *Merchants, Companies and Commerce*, pp. 222-223, Joseph J Brenning, *The Textile Trade of the Seventeenth Century*, pp. 52-87 and his article, 'Chief Merchants and the European Enclaves', pp. 323-328.

European enclaves, their political and commercial operations were streamlined from the provincial administrative head quarters such as Ponnammalle, Wandiwash, Chandragiri etc. However, their investments in trade were huge while they reaped additional benefits from revenue management as well. For example, the total capital resources of Chinnana amounted to about 200,000 pagodas which came from his investments in trade and farming of the revenues.⁶² The first prominent merchant who came to reside in Madrasapatnam was Seshadra Chetty who was appointed as the chief merchant of the English east India company. However, there is a marked difference between Seshadra chetty and his contemporaries like Mallaya and Chinnana. As Joseph Brenning remarks, the position of these new resident merchants was relatively insecure when compared to Mallaya and Chinnana, for, their trade depended largely on the cordial relations they had to maintain with the English company. If we follow the careers of these 'resident merchants, often referred to as 'oure chief merchants', one can see a shift from free mercantile practices to that of being 'company merchants'.

The company merchants differed with their predecessors in two ways, firstly, they had to depend increasingly on the English trade and secondly, by merely being company merchants most of them lost their traditional political bases which eroded their freedom considerably over a period of time. The successors of Seshadra and Chinnana at Madrasapatnam represented, as Joseph Brenning says, a new generation of merchants whose prospects

⁶² See, Joseph Brenning, *The Textile Trade in the Seventeenth Century*, p. 81.

depended on the company alone.⁶³ But then what could have been the reasons for this shift in the relations between the merchants *vis a vis* the English company.

The conquest and subsequent consolidation by Golconda 1647-1660 proved to be a death knell to the traditional Hindu portfolio managers who were replaced by the Persian administrators in the Karnatic- Coromandel coast. In fact one can see a major shift in the arena of economic operations which from now on shifted to Golconda politics which marginalised the merchants who had links with Vijayanagara.⁶⁴ This was further aggravated when Accanna, the governor of Karnatic ruthlessly tightened the resources and finances of Karnatic which had adverse effect on the merchants.⁶⁵ At least in the second half of the seventeenth century, one does not come across many Hindu portfolio managers on the coast as the whole of the coastal politics came to be dominated by Golconda administration.

The shift from free political merchants to that of chief merchants of the company had both positive and negative impact on the merchants. On the positive side, the merchants were assured of regular consignments of commodity trade which centered around intra-Asian trade which definitely expanded their prospects in trade. The merchants were also assured of security on the basis of the fiscal autonomy given to the companies in these

⁶³ Joseph Brenig, 'Chief Merchants and the European Enclaves', p. 326.

⁶⁴ There is no absolutely no doubt that Golconda had superior resource base when compared to that of Vijayanagara kingdom. This is amply represented in the meek surrendering of Mallaya to Mir Jumla, see, H.D. Love, *Vestiges*, Vol. 1, p. 100.

⁶⁵ see, S. Arasaratnam, *Merchants, Companies and Commerce*, p. 228.

fortifications. Within the company trade (however, restricted it may have been) these merchants negotiated for a political space as the companies had to depend on their knowledge and capital resources.

On the negative side, Coromandel merchants lost their important character of portfolio management such as the combination of trade and politics. Their economic and political base became restricted and revolved round the company trade. But to discount them as mere suppliers of cloth to the company would only undermine the role of these merchants in Madrasapatnam. If we follow the careers of Beri Timmana, Kasi Viranna, Pedda Venkatadri, Chinna Venkatadri and Serappa, one finds ample evidence of their varied nature of interests within the urban settlement of Madrasapatnam.

Beri Timmana, for example, was the chief broker for the company who replaced Seshadri Chetty. He rose from humble origins and rose to the rank of chief merchant at Madrasapatnam. He dominated the company trade between 1645 - 1669 as the chief merchant, with additional privileges on the town customs, and as a magistrate of choultry. However, the high mark of Timmana's career came due to his close association with Edward Winter, the Governor of Madrasapatnam (1662-1668). Timmana was actively involved in private trade with Edward Winter who gave Timmana the monopoly trade at Madrasapatnam. Timmana built the Perumal Kovil temple in Triplicane and managed to get

concessions on *rahadari* from Neknam Khan, the Golconda governor of Poonamalle.⁶⁶

Kasi Viranna, the successor of Beri Timmana was even more versatile in his career than his predecessor. He joined the company business along with Timmana and was jointly associated in the management of trade. He was an extremely pushy operator and regularly dealt with English and Dutch. Apart from his involvement in the company trade, he was a big tax farmer, and was extremely influential in Golconda administration.⁶⁷ The success of Kasi Viranna was based on the effective manipulation of the Joint stock company at Madrasapatnam. While increasing the investments of the company, Viranna was able to net many more merchants into his trading partnership.⁶⁸ During his time the joint stock company expanded considerably which gave additional leverage to Kasi Viranna to better his private trade through overseas shipping. While supplying of cloth to the company was the main occupation of Kasi Viranna, there is absolutely no doubt that he was able to divert most of this trade for his private interests.

⁶⁶ On the career of Beri Timmana see, S. Arasaratnam, *Merchants, Companies and Commerce*, p. 229, Joseph Brenning, *The Textile Trade in the Seventeenth Century*, pp. 76-79. and H.D. Love, *Vestiges*, Vol. 1, 201-202.

⁶⁸ Kasi Viranna was instrumental in roping most of the merchants into the company trade. By getting them into the joint stocks of the company. Viranna was able to expand his operations not only with the company but also in his private capacity. Some of the Hon'ble merchants who were under the main Joint stock of Kasi viranna were Callian Chitty, Batch Chitty, Chetty Branco, Nella Chitty, Venkata Sesha, Bali Chetty, Chetty Prato, Mutta Mara, Katti Saya, Nereedha Veyana, Ayapachetty, Tombo Chetty, Ramanaya Neeredha Yellapa, Rangayya Chetty, Ballasha Chetty, Sure Veyana, Pasamarthy Nagar Chetty, Mooku Chetty, Walla Gopa Chetty, Chayaya, Maatu maya, Nulla Tamby, Ponnappa, Lingaloo, Paapa Chetty, Canagopa Chety, Mutta Muttu Chetty, Rangappa, Chaati, Ammayapa Chetty, Skeeku mosa, Pette Galu Bali Chetty, Raazu Pandit, Naganapa, Ambramia Mores, Sure Ayyapa, Gopalu, Toppa Chetty. *RSFG, Dairy and Consultation Book, 1672-78, 1675 p. 76.*

The main success of Viranna, therefore depended on his effective manipulation of the Joint stock company in Madrasapatnam. That the company time and again expressed its inability to curb the growing power of Viranna is enough evidence to highlight the position of Viranna in Madrasapatnam trade. However, Kasi Viranna represented the last of the merchants with portfolio interests on the coast. From then on the company was instrumental in breaking the monopoly of the merchants who became company merchants trading exclusively for the English company.⁶⁹

The death of Kasi Viranna in 1680 also witnessed the effective control of the English company over the chief merchants. During the time of Pedda Venkatadri and Chinna Venkatadri, the company's power over the Chief merchant increased steadily, which eroded the varied nature of activities of merchants. During the tenure of Chinna Venkatadri, the company surely dictated the activities of merchants which otherwise were outside the ambit of trade, most notably the tax farming. The English for whom tax farming was of secondary importance till then, started using local merchants as a front to acquire land on rent from Golconda. Thus, the English used Chinna Venkatadri as a front man to get the lease of San Thome in 1688 by William Langhorn.⁷⁰ Though the company gave Chinna Venkatadri many administrative positions such as the membership of the corporation to advise the company on Hindu laws and customs, and commander of Arms with 100

⁶⁹ For the transition of the company merchants see, S. Arasaratnam, *Merchants, Companies and Commerce*, p. 233. and Joseph Brenning, 'Chief Merchants and the European Enclaves', p. 328.

⁷⁰ RFSG, *Public Consultations*, 1688, p. 84, *Despatches from England, 1681-86* p. 170. and H.D.Love, *Vestiges*, Vol. I, pp. 522-523.

peons, his role seem to have been restricted and localised. His relations with inland powers was also very shaky.⁷¹ Chinna Venkadri's position at Madrasapatnam more or less depended exclusively on the company trade. This helped the company in two ways. One, the company was assured of investments without any diversification in trade by merchants into other allied interests such as revenue farming (distancing from which also meant a slow erosion of political clout in the inland administration), and independent trade. Two, it meant that a large chunk of trade at Madrasapatnam was streamlined into the ambit of company trade without any private aspirations among the merchants. These factors resulted in the growing investments on the company's name by the merchants. By the beginning of the eighteenth century the investments reached a record high of 19687:18 pagodas.

Articles of agreement and contract made In Fort St. George between the company and the 100 share merchants: viz., Chinna Serapa, Narso Veranna, Chicca Sevaram, Arreppa, Pomegatte Harasu, Ekkambarum Moodelly Anandee, Verdua Mootappa, Condaiah Ram Chitty, *Raju* Chinnia.

	Covets:			At the rate of	Fanams	Total
	Length	Breadth	Pieces	Pagodas	(per gorge)	
Long Cloth	72	2.5	6,000	79	18	2385
Long cloth Middling	72	2.5	3,000	43	16	6516
Long cloth ordinary	72	2.5	20,000	36	1	36097:2
Salempore middling	32	2.5	24,000	17	17	20966
Salempore fine	32	2.5	4,000	30	26	6144:16
Moore's fine	18	2.5	6,000	38	5	114412
Moore's ordinary	20	2.5	12,000	21	7	12716:24
Ginghams ordinary	40	2.75	1,500	68	32	5166:24
Bettles ordinary	50	2	10,000	39	7	19547:18
Bettles	40	2	6,000	39	7	11758:12
Bettles original	32	2	9,000	74	7	33387:00
Bettles	32	2	3,000	33	13	5004:00
Sucatones fine	40	2	1,000	74	7	3009:00
Total Pieces:			105,500			196287:1

⁷¹ Ibid.

The changing character of chief merchant in Madrasapatnam had a direct bearing on the weaving economy of the region in general and of the town in particular. The weavers of the contemporary Madrasapatnam belonged to amorphous caste groups without any clear cut distinctions dividing them. They belonged to different castes which were crystallizing during the period under study. The main castes of weavers were *sales*, *Kaikolans* and *Devangas* who broadly formed the right hand and left hand caste groups. '

Ever since the founding of Madrasapatnam, the company by necessity had to depend on the weavers and followed a conscious policy of settling weavers within the limits of the town. As early as 1646, the company wrote that as many as 15,000 weavers settled in the town of Madrasapatnam, which surely seemed to have been an exaggeration. Another contemporary document says that as many as 300 to 400 families of weavers came to settle at Madrasapatnam during the same period.⁷³ As the town of Madrasapatnam grew, many weavers and painters came to reside in the town. The actual migration of weavers to Madrasapatnam started from about 1660, when the hinterland was affected by a series of cyclones and

⁷² The *sale* community for instance, was again divided into *Pattu sales* and *Padma sales*. While the former belonged to right hand division the latter was part of the left hand division. It is also interesting to note that women leather workers belonged to the right hand while the male members to left hand division thus showing the amorphous nature of the caste groups in the contemporary Coromandel, see, Edger Thruston, *Castes and Tribes of Southern India*, Madras, 1909, VI, p. 187 and H.D.Love, *Vestiges*, Vol. I, p.88-89.

⁷³ H.D.Love, *1 Vestiges*, Vol. I, pp.35, 64-65.

political turmoil.⁷⁴ The movement was further accelerated during 1670's when Madanna imposed strict financial regulations which hiked up the prices of grain and cotton in the inland. By this time the company was able to check the unhindered rise of the prices of paddy which became the main incentive for the weavers to come and settle in Madrasapatnam.⁷⁵

The migration of weavers to Madrasapatnam can be directly attributed to the increasing dependence of the chief merchant on the company trade. Contradictorally, however, the concerted effort of settling weavers into the town enhanced the position of the chief merchant within the urban society and politics of Madrasapatnam.⁷⁶ Serappa, the chief merchant of the company during 1701-1712 requested the company to give permission to settle the weavers at Triplicane between Tangamanaigue and Allingal' Pillai's gardens and requested a piece of land required for 20 or 30 houses to settle weavers.⁷⁷ Serappa further reported to the company that Warrior palem had as many as 8000 looms and in fact negotiated with the weavers there to exclusively send cloth to the company.⁷⁸ The settling of the weavers at the instance of the

⁷⁴ The period between 1640- 1662 witnessed as many as four major cyclones which affected the local economy adversely. Added to this was the political turmoil in the hinterland wrought by the Golconda expansion and its subsequent consolidation of the central plain of Coromandel.

⁷⁵ *RFSG, Public consultations*, 1685-86, p. 162.

⁷⁶ It may be noted that the chief merchants settled only those weavers who belonged to their respective caste groups. This gave scope for the prominent merchants to meddle with the company whenever his position as chief merchant was threatened. In fact, it is noted that the main background for numerous caste disputes in Madrasapatnam can be attributed to the manipulations of chief merchants to gain access to the position.

⁷⁷ *RFSG Public Department, Diary and Consultation*, 1696/97 p. 37,39.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*

chief merchant helped the latter considerably especially in situations where his position was dictated by his capacity to increase the investments but to successfully manipulate the caste divisions on which his position depended. For instance, in 1711, the English reported that the reason for the caste disputes at Madrasapatnam was due to the altering of the old method of advancing money and contracts.⁷⁹ In fact Serappa's position as a chief merchant was inextricably depended on the support of the right hand caste weavers who settled at Madrasapatnam.

In the period under study, one finds a marked difference between the weavers of the hinterland and those settled at Madrasapatnam. While the former definitely had more freedom, the weavers in these enclaves more or less worked as company employees. Most of the cloth produced or dyed within the vicinity of Madrasapatnam was procured by the company through their respective chief merchants, and as Arasaratnam opines, were slowly being reduced to wage workers. For example, in 1680, the washermen and painters came into the employment of the company through the chief merchant, drawing wages per piece of cloth.

Daily wages to washers at Fort St. George: (1706)

Corge of long cloth	36 Fanams for each piece of cloth
Corge of Sallem pores	16 Fanams for each piece of cloth
Moores	10
Fine Moores	12
New cloths	3
Ginghams Corge	10

Source: *RSFG, Diary and Consultations 1706*, p.24.

⁷⁹ *RSFG, Despatches to England, 1701-1711, 1707*, p. 80.

The washermen and painters formed into joint stock company with their own share holders in the same year.⁸⁰

A closer scrutiny of the contemporary English documentation reveals that in spite of the company's desire to bring weavers into the town, there were few specialist artisans actually residing in the town. The revenue statistics of 1706 collected regarding the construction of black town wall clearly indicates that the number of specialist weavers was considerably small when compared to merchants.⁸¹

The weavers resided mainly in the acquired pettah's of Sttangudu, Ambattur, Egmore etc. where the Indian populations were residing. The residential areas of the weavers was based on the grid pattern based on caste divisions of right hand and left hands. Thus, Western petta, Peddanaik petta, was given to the right hands while the Bridge gate street, and Muthial petta was occupied by the left hands. The weavers who broadly followed the right and left hand divisions, too concurred to this pattern of settlement. But as the weaving population grew, new inhabitants were allowed to reside in Triplicane, Egmore, Pursewakam etc.⁸²

Apart from trade, Madrasapatnam was able to expand its economy by virtue of the grant given to them By Sri Ranga Raya in 1646. This allowed the company to have exclusive privileges with

⁸⁰ 1. Narso: Owned two parts of the share (The rest of the washermen mentioned below owned one part each) 2. Sina Varupu Narasiah 3. Bandara Raggaiyah 4. Piduri Jaggam 5. Salepu Muthyalu 6. Casi Vardhaiyya 7. Rajakundi Akkaiah 8. Damaramadugu Ayyanna 9. Kandaveetu Papaiah 10. Gannagaiyya 11. Sanampudi Ayyanna 12. Kolakula Yagganna *RSFG, Diary and Consultation Book*, 1680.

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⁸² H.D. Love, *Vestiges*, Vol. II, pp. 25-28.

minting rights and collection various duties such as customs and revenues from adjacent areas. The company realised the importance of revenues which were to be used for the expansion town outside the confines of Fort St. George. The collection of revenues from the indigenous population and economy was a significant feature of the fortifications in the European logic of trade. In most of these fortifications revenues became by products of trade. The revenues of the town was directly connected to the ability of the company to acquire neighbouring villages and towns such as Trivetore, Egmore, Pursewakam, Sattangudi, etc. directly under its jurisdiction. The acquisition of villages resulted in the growth of population at Madrasapatnam.

The principle revenues of Madrsapatnam came from customs, which included anchorage duties, tonnage, customs on grain (*ad valorem*), land and choultry. These apart, the revenues came from quit rents, house rents, rents from industries, ruby brokerage, and fanning of the areas and tax on sale of slaves.⁸³ In 1649, the company took stock of revenues which amounted to 15,000 *livres* ⁸⁴ However, the company had to face a bitter criticism in 1649 as the expenditure far exceeded over the revenue.

Initially, the Board of Directors at London were highly sceptical about the nature the revenues as they thought that it would increase the liability of the company. Already, the company

⁸³ The customs duties were 3% on export and import, Land and choultry was 37.. authorized brokerage, 1% quit ad volerem, 3/32 on Christians and 5/32 on genttoos and Muslims. Anchorage duties differed on the capacity of the ship and tonnage. The average anchorage collected was 3 to 9 *pagodas*, tonnage i Re per tonn while the custom on grain was 5% and ruby brokerage 2/12 %. see, H.D.Love, *Vestiges*, Vol. I, p. 135, 512-513.

⁸⁴ H.D.Love, *Vestiges*, Vol I, p. 27.

pulled up Francis Day for investing on the fortifications at Madrasapatnam with private money.⁸⁵ However over a period of time the company at London realised the importance of revenue on the ground :

enough to cultivate for the sustenance of fort and a body of people as we have at fort St., George and the city of Madrasapatnam that we might in time create as good revenue from thence as the Dutch at Batavia..."⁸⁶

The seventeenth century English documentation is silent on the nature of revenues except for the proposed collection of the quit rents and other minor cesses. But as one moves into the eighteenth century, the documentation more or less fell into place as far as the revenues of the town was concerned. In 1718 the sea customs amounted to 28,349 pagodas, land customs to 5608 while the coinage fetched the English 5297 pagodas. Within the sea customs, anchorage and tonnage became a major source of revenue for the English company. For example, the anchorage duties depended on

⁸⁵ *O.C.*, 1784,1644 cited in H.D.Love, *Vestiges*, Vol. 1, 52-53.

⁸⁶ *RFSG*, Public Department, *Despatches from England*, Vol. 5,1683-84, p. 166.

the tonnage of the ship; Rs. 1 was levied on each ton.⁸⁷ In 1685 the revenues of Madrasapatnam aggregated to 70,000 pag.⁸⁸

The acquisition of neighbouring territories beyond Fort St. George, further expanded the revenues of the town. Now the company was able to collect revenues from renting of territories, and other farms such as arrack, betel leaves, tobacco, land and choultries, custom on grain and on slaves. The revenues from the territories of San Thome and Triplicane during Kasi Viranna amounted to 1200 pagodas. In 1687, Chinna Venkatadri farmed the town of San Thome and its adjacent paddy farms for 400 pagodas to be paid in three installments which the company decided to take it with an expected profit of 4300 pagodas. Egmore, Pursewakam, and Tondiarpet which were farmed through to Serappa fetched 1300 pagodas. In 1704, the above farms were given to Kalavay chittee and Venkata chittee at the amount of 1750 pagodas. In 1707, Shah Alam, the Mughal emperor gave a grant for Trivetore, Nungambakam, Vasalpada, Catawakah, and Satanagudu, which were rented at the rate of 1500 pagodas per annum.

The industries of Madrasapatnam though small fetched substantial revenues for the company. In 1700, the company's

⁸⁷ Anchorage duties at Madrasapatnam:

Europe ships	200 tonnes upwards	9 pag
	under 200	6
	100 or up	5
	less than 100	3
Country ships	sloops and ketches	2
	Great boats	1
	small boats	1/2

see, *RFSG, Diary and Consultation Book*, 1693, p. 20

⁸⁸ H.D.Love, *Vestiges*, Vol. I, p. 135 and Vol. II, 81-82. and Lockyer's Account in 1702 estimated the customs revenues at 30,000 *pagodas* and the land customs at 4000 *pagodas*.

⁸⁹ *RFSG*, Public Consultations, Vol. 12,13,1687 p. 28-29., and *Ibid*, Vol II, p. 22.

arrack farms were rented to Peter Des Pommare for 3400 pagodas, while the distillation was done by Gurruvappa. The betel farms and tobacco fetched the company 8000 pagodas.⁹⁰ In 1714 the list of farms and revenues fetched 90,812 pagodas under various heads.

Anchorage	9 pagodas on Europe ships of 200 tonnes and above 6 pagodas less than that.
Tonnage	Rs 1 per ton
Customs on grain	50% advalorem
Ruby brokerage	2 1/2 upon value sold
Slaves	8 fanams

Source: *Despatches To England*, 1714, p. 32

In 1718-20 the estimated revenues from the farms for the company came from the following heads:

Farms:	
Betel and Toddy	7000
Arrack and wine	4000
Egmore and towns	1785 (old towns)
Duty on grain	820
Fishing	50
Town brokerage	800
Rent on paddy fields	710
Toddy farms	500
Trivetore and towns	1200
Collected by Choultry	
Gardens between Mannuci and 4 brothers	40
shroffs duty	332
Old garden	120
Quit rent	2161
scavengers	947
Total	20495 pagodas

Source: H.D. Love, *Vestiges*, 1718-1720, Vol. II, p. 180

⁹⁰ *Ibid*, Vol. II, p. 43.

The company tried to impose taxes on the houses to increase the revenues which was called quit rent. Streynsham Master, the governor of Madrasapatnam (1675-1682), initiated the demand for ground rent from the inhabitants and to levy tax on conservancy of the town. But it caused discontent amongst the Indian inhabitants and the move was opposed by komatis and Chetties. The company resolved to lift the proposal for quit rent but was reimposed in 1686. The company divided the quit rent under two heads. The quit rent was not to exceed 6 fanams and was imposed on the size of the house. The levying of quit rent in 1686 more or less legitimized the imposition of tax not only on the house but paved way for the English company to impose similar taxes on different residing populations during the tenure of Thomas Pitt.

By and large the company revenues averaged at 100,030 pagodas per annum. In the decades between 1680-1700, the directors at London were pushing the factors at Madrasapatnam on

⁹¹ *RFSG, Diary and Consultation book, 1686, p. 4-6, Despatches from England, 1686, p. 13 and H.D.Love, Vestiges, Vol. I, 442-443, 512.*

Quit rent Revenues for the year 1688:

Name of the street	Amount
Middle street	17:18
Choultry Street	14:18
Choultry Alley	8:18
Glochestor street	4:18
York street	12:27
York Lane	7:18
Clarkes street	11:18
James Street	15:9
James alley	5:9
Thomas Street	20:9
St. Thomas lane	2:9
Church street	4:9

RFSG, Diary and consultation book, 1688, pp. 121-123.

⁹² See, for details H.D.Love, *Vestiges, Vol. II, p.11.*

the need for revenues often comparing the revenues the Dutch were able to obtain at Batavia.

" The Dutch raise a revenue of 140,000 lbs, per annum at Batavia. It is only the trade and population of the place that give opportunity to the governors to create revenue and not by conquest... but the trade and the number of people by what means so ever acquired, is the cause of the revenue.... regarding the Dutch at Pulicat, they can never make revenue unless they could give liberty for trade and free shipping as wee do which they never can..."⁹³

Population of the city was a major determining factor for the collection of revenues at Madrasapatnam. Though, the initial settlers were the English and some Portuguese who came from San Thome, the expansion of population between 1660-1700 became a crucial factor in the processes of urbanisation of Madrasapatnam. Like most of other port towns of pre-modern Asia, the paucity of sources limits us of any systematic study of the population movement in Madrasapatnam. However, the need for revenues for the company, fortunately left a fairly good deal of documentation on the population of Madrasapatnam.

John Fryer was the first traveller to document the population at Madrasapatnam. According to him, in 1682, the European population was 1300 with 300 English men and 1000 Portuguese.⁹⁴ During the tenure of William Gryfford, the European population consisted of 41 company merchants, 30 freemen, and 3 women and

⁹³ RFSG, Despatches from England, 1686, p. 53.

⁹⁴ John Fryer, *An Account of East Indies*, cited in H.D.Love, *Vestiges*, Vol. I, p.283.

by 1700 the European population increased substantially to 2000.⁹⁵ The main information on the overall population of Madrasapatnam came from two main sources. In 1692, on the insistence of the company at London, the factors collected the census of the town from the year of its founding to 1691,

year	Population	Source from which taken
1639	7000	rough estimate deduced from deaths
1646	19000	
1648	15000	the reduction in the population can be accounted for the cyclone
1670	40,000	Thomas Bowrey
1673	33,000	
1674	50,000	William Langhorn
1681	2,00,000	
1685	3,00,000	Letter book, vol. IX
1691	4,00,000	The sudden increase in can be accounted due to the changing political situation in the hinterland.

The next major source on the population of Madrasapatnam came from the proposed collection of money from the native inhabitants in 1706 by Thomas Pitt to construct a wall around black town. The money was collected on the caste wise basis and was levied each individual house hold. According to the revenue statistics, the population was divided under 30 caste heads. The total amount collected amounted to 11053 pagodas.⁹⁶ However,

⁹⁵ H.D.Love, *Vestiges*, Vol. 1, p. 485.

⁹⁶ The revenue collected according to the castes is as follows: Portuguese-3300, Armenians-600, Chittee-2000, Moorme.n-300 Komatis-800, Vellomwaru-200, Balijas-350, Oilmen-400, Shopkeepers-] 00, Brick makers-400, goldsmiths-500, gujaratis-500, Weavers-20, Canic.opolys.-300, puliwar-18, Weavers-100, Chulia-

from the records it is not clear on how the company assessed the money to be collection each household.

By the end of the seventeenth century, Madrasapatnam had a substantial population residing within its jurisdiction. The major question then, is how did Madrasapatnam sustain such a huge population in the period under study ? One possible answer and surely a major cause for the success of English company in the second half of the seventeenth century was the effective management of grain markets. As we have seen in our earlier chapters, grain was emerging as the most important commodity of trade in the later decades of the seventeenth century.⁹⁷ There was a steady growth in the prices of paddy and grain in the northern Coromandel which was the main exporting zone to southern coastal strips. Madrasapatnam which was the main consumption centre, therefore had to constantly look and monitor grain which came from three sources: Gingelly, southern and northern Coromandel and its own hinterland. According to a contemporary estimate the consumption of Madrasapatnam in 1719 was 4000 garse of rice per annum priced at 80 pagodas per garse which totalled to 3,20,000 pagodas.⁹⁸

The period between 1682-1720 witnessed violent fluctuation in the prices of grain and Madrasapatnam became the main deficit

150, Waswhermen-100, Shepards-70, Fishermen-10, Bamboo cooleys-10, Barbers-20, Toonapas-50, Grass cutters- 25, Toddy-180, Sattigaru-200, pot makers-100, Mukhwas-100, Brahmins-100 and Cattamarans-40 which amounted to 11053 pagodas, See, h.D.Love, *Vestiges*, Vol li, p.11 and *RFSG, Diary and Consultation Books 1706*, p. 23.

⁹⁷ On the Rice trade See, S.Arasaratnam, *The rice Trade in Eastern India'*, *passim*. and Joseph Brenning, *The Textile Trade in the seventeenth century*, pp. 193-225

⁹⁸ *RFSG, Despatches from England, 1719*, p. 1.

town on the coast. Therefore, Madrasapatnam necessarily depended on the import of rice. In 1693 for instance, Narasulla Ballu, the grain merchant from northern coast requested for a *cowle* for a free liberty of selling their grain as buyers and sellers without limiting the price and said that the *havaladar* of San Thome and Pulicat had lowered their customs to 2 1/2 % and 3% respectively. He came to Madrasapatnam with 30 boats along with other merchants from northern Coromandel.⁹⁹

Within the town, the company was involved in streamlining the prices of grain which came either from the sea or land. The prices of grain at Madrasapatnam fluctuated between 60-80 per garse, but during the times of crisis such as wars in the inland or during the blockades, the price shot up to 100 pagodas per garse.¹⁰⁰ The company therefore had to maintain a buffer stock for times of exigency and did not hesitate using violence against the hoarders or against the administration.¹⁰¹ The company also offered many incentives to traders such as the liberty to carry 1 1/2 to their house to be disposed off at the free will while the rest would go to the bank shall.¹⁰² In 1687, the company banned the private selling of grain and any such act was severely punishable. For example, a chitty caste member was fined 100 pagodas for selling grain privately by small measures 'at a dearer rate'. Through the privilege of grants given to the company by various inland

⁹⁹ *RFSG, Diary and Consultation Book*, 1693, pp. 165-166.

¹⁰⁰ *RFSG, Diary and Consultation Book*, 1703, pp. 10-14.

¹⁰¹ The grain prices shot up on the eve of the Mughal conquest of Golconda. See, *RFSG, Diary and Consultation Book*, 1681, p. 16 and 1687, p. 136.

¹⁰² *Ibid.*

powers, the administration of Madrasapatnam was able to confiscate grain in and around Madrasapatnam.¹⁰³

Apart from the stringent regulations on passing of grain into Madrasapatnam, the company particularly paid attention to the near hinterland such as Triplicane, San Thome, and Condore which produced and marketed rice in large quantities. From at least the later decades of the seventeenth century, the company regularly maintained country sloops and ketches for procurement of grain from the inland riverine systems. In 1715, the company advised factors to employ special ships with flat bottoms with 5 or 6 factors continually at different ports of call for freighting the grain to Madrasapatnam.¹⁰⁴ By the last decades of the seventeenth century then, Madrasapatnam was able to implement a kind of social security net for its inhabitants which was the main reason for influx of population into the town.

Indian administration and Madrasapatnam Economy: Zone of Conflict 1650-1712

The rise and development of trade and settlement at Madrasapatnam with exclusive privileges was bound to lead to a confrontation with the local administration, who actually saw the growth of Madrasapatnam as an infringement into their revenues.

¹⁰³ Sometimes the severity of scarcity was so much that the weavers were ready to sell cloth in exchange for paddy, See, 1. Jangamma Setty 2. Managama Setty 3. Venkatdri Setty 4. Guruliga setty 5. Veeranna 6. Swamialavar's petition to the company Source: *RSFG, Diary and Consultations*, 1694.

¹⁰⁴ As early as 1658, English built a paddy granary with the money given by Beri Timmana and Kasi Viranna. H.D. Love, *Vestiges*, Vol. I, p.383, *Despatches from England*, 1715, p. 47.

Recent scholarship has argued on the inevitability of conflict between the Asians and Europeans not only on the sea front **but** also in the inland. In other words, the European enclaves with their inherent strength of expansion were threatening the traditional linkages in the hinterland on which the local administration sustained. Sanjay Subrahmanyam has characterised the relations between Asians and Europeans as an 'age of contained conflict. While Sanjay Subrahmanyam and other scholars like Bruce Watson, K.N. Chaudhuri all agree in varying degrees that conflict was part of the larger dynamics of external commerce, their works concentrated on the competitive Indo-European mercantile conflicts in the open seas.¹⁰⁵ The study of conflicts between local administration and company trade and settlement is important because they differed markedly with the those in the high sea trade.

Unlike, the conflicts in the sea which were borne out of the European mercantilism *vis a vis* Indian mercantile aspirations, conflicts in the European enclaves stuck at the supposed intervention of the European companies into the arena which according to the contemporary state logic, belonged to the local administration. Interestingly, these conflicts focused their attention at the basic patterns of economy such as production and distribution of commodity trade to the European enclaves. Significantly, these conflicts were grounded in reality, in the processes of European penetration into the regional economic

¹⁰⁵ see, Sanjay Subrahmanyam, *The Political Economy of Commerce*, pp. 252-298 and Bruce Watson, 'Fortification and the 'Idea' of force,' pp. 73.

systems, such as the local appropriation of revenue, tax farming, collection of customs and cesses etc. which officially were the prerogative of local administration. It may be noted that these conflicts were more regional and sometimes even local, as they were restricted to individual settlements where European commerce had taken a central position. At the same time, these conflicts reflected the aspirations of internal administration to enter into the world of commercialisation and in the process reap economic benefits from the company trade.

Conflicts between local administration and the European companies at Madrasapatnam fell into three basic patterns. Firstly, they were aimed at breaking the monopoly of the company trade secondly, aimed at intervention of company revenues and thirdly, to interfere into the basic structure of company trade as agents of state. In order to understand the relations better, we will take profiles of three such regional administrators namely, Mir Jumla, Neknam Khan and Podela Lingappa, who all claimed high stakes in the trade of Madrasapatnam. Here, it might be significant to add that the careers of these persons was based not in the European structure of trade but in the hinterland.

The regional administrators controlled a vast resource bases in the frontier zone of Karnatic through their intervention in the local economy before they finally encountered the English company at Madrasapatnam. With the exception of Mirjumla, who cannot be termed as regional administrator, the careers of Neknam Khan and Podela Lingappa were more localised and had had fewer pretensions of controlling the sea -borne trade. However, the

campaign of Mir Jumla to paved way to these persons to enhance their careers on the coast.¹⁰⁶

The English company basically feared Golconda administration which was supposedly rapacious and extortionist, a view which was long held by the contemporary European documentation and supported, at the face value, even by the modern scholarship as well.¹⁰⁷ The company logic which was based on armed defenses against the local elite and to put them in awe on sea and land, immediately necessitated the erection of defenses at Madrasapatnam on the eve of Mir Jumla's campaign in Karnatic. Surely, by the second half of the seventeenth century, the use of force with discretion against the local elite was a well recognised fact, both officially or otherwise, within the constitution of European companies.¹⁰⁸ On the Indian front, the rise of fortifications were basically viewed as interventions into the traditional sources of revenue, and hence thought it mandatory that the revenues so earned in Madrasapatnam should logically go to

¹⁰⁶ Mir Jumla clearly is an exception because of the length and breadth of his activities in the coastal economics. Unlike the other two whose careers were more local, and even perhaps agrarian based, Mir Jumla's operations involved a whole range of activities both in the hinterland and in the oceanic commerce.

¹⁰⁷ See, in particular the writings of W.H. Moreland, *From Akbar to Aurangzeb*, New Delhi, 1972.(Reprint), and Tan Raychaudhari, *Jan company in Coromandel*, Hague, 1968.

¹⁰⁸ Force was necessary and was primarily used against the competitive European companies, in the case of the English against the Dutch and the Portuguese, but as the companies trade grew in the coasts, it became mandatory for them to use 'discreetly' against the local mercantile elements for better profitability of trade. However, with the rise of fortifications and their subsequent expansion of the revenues, collected from the indigenous groups, force was necessarily used against the local elite, for the latter saw these fortifications with suspicion.

them. This was bound to create conflicts which often took the form of blockading the port of Madrasapatnam.¹¹⁰⁹

Mir Jumla's Karnatic interest spanned from 1647-1658, i.e. till his defection to the Mughal side in 1656. Mir Jumla's grievance against the English at Madrasapatnam was due to the seizure of his ship in 1653, which snow balled into a major crisis in 1650's between the company and Mir Jumla.¹¹⁰ The problem was further compounded in 1656 when Mir Jumla alleged the company of supporting the Vijayanagara King, during his absence in Karnatic.

However, the actual reason for the Mir Jumla - English conflict in 1656 was based on his policy to strengthen his financial resources by procuring his share of customs and duties, on having commercial relations with the company merchants and endeavoring to gain control over production and consumption at Madrasapatnam.¹¹² According to the grant given by Sri Ranga Raya, "the town rent was half the cutomes paid by strangers" and it was not until 1658, during the tenure of Thomas Ivie, that a regular composition was made for a fixed amount of 380 pagodas per

¹⁰⁹ Blockading of the port towns was a common feature in the seventeenth century. We have numerous instances of local elite blockading the ports. See, *EFI*, Series, 1622-23, pp. 234,279, *EFI 1630-33*, *EFI*, New Series, Vol II, on the blockade of San Thome.

¹¹⁰ On the impact of Mir Jumla's campaign, the English reported that he sends a revenue of 200,000 *pagodas* to the King and collected 400,000 *pagodas* from the Vijayanaara king. On the seizure of Mir Jumla's vessel the English reported that the seizure was in retaliation against the extraction of local governors- Bala Rao and Sayyid Ibrahim. H.D.Love, *Vestiges*, Vol. I, pp. 165-166.

¹¹¹ Mir Jumla returned to and retired to Gandikota after his initial success in Karnatic. In his absence, the Vijayanagara king made Konara Chetty, his general and reasserted his position. Mir Jumla was aided by tupaki Krishna Naik, a merchant of the Coromandel. Konara Chetty, was a powerful merchant on the Coromandel and was closely associated with ruling house of Vijayanagara. H.D.Love, *Vestiges*, Vol. 1,168-169.

¹¹² HD Love, *Vestiges*, Vol. I p-265-267.

annum.¹¹³ Mir Jumla wanted to appoint an officer at Madrasapatnam so as to check the growing revenues of Madrasapatnam and intended to take a share in them. After blockading the town for six months in 1658, the English and Mir Jumla agreed on terms according to which the company had to pay a fixed sum of 380 pagodas per annum to Golconda. At the end of Mir Jumla-English affair, one might wonder about the actual gains of Mir Jumla at Madrasapatnam.

The next major problem to the company came with the appointment of Neknam Khan as the governor of Poonamalle in 1663, after the death of Sayyid Mir Jaffir. Before his appointment as Governor of Arcot, Neknam Khan had earlier served in Cuddapah and Gandikota. Like his predecessor, Mir Jumla, Neknam Khan was a Persian by origin and came into limelight because of the patronage extended to him by Abdullah Qutb Shah. Before joining the Golconda service, Neknam Khan was an official in the court of Shah Abbas of Iran, and later on migrated to Golconda. Popularly known as Raza Quli, he took the title of Neknam Khan from Abdullah Qutb Shah and was appointed as the governor of the newly integrated administrative unit of Cuddapah and Arcot regions. He took many regions of Jummulamadugu, Kamalapuram, Chennuru, Cuddapah, and a few places of Gurramkonda which were given in farm to his subordinates and the local chiefs.¹¹⁴ He was instrumental granting lands to *agraharas* and other *inam* rights to the local religious centres in Cuddapah district. He constructed

¹¹³ Ibid, *Vestiges*, Vol. I, p. 71.

¹¹⁴ *Neknampeta Kaiḥiyat*, and *Gandikota Kaiḥiyat*

Neknambad, which is now part of Cuddapah town. By way of direct supervision in the production economy, Neknam Khan was able to extend his activities to the coast. He streamlined the administration of Karnatic by instituting the office of *havaladar* for Gandikota area.¹¹⁵ The appointment of *havaldars* under him was the turning point in his career. Through these *havaldars*, he expanded into interior of Gandikota and brought new areas under cultivation. In 1663 he was elevated to the position of *Seerlaskar* for the combined regions of Cuddapah and Poonamalle which brought him to coast. On his arrival the English wrote " the new nabob, is within one league of us with an army of about 40,000 men and we are in a treaty with him concerning the rent of the place"¹¹⁶

Immediately after his appointment as the subedar of Karnatic - Arcot region, Neknam Khan demanded for the rise in town rent from 380 pagodas to 1200 pagodas on the ground that the revenues of Madrasapatnam increased since its founding in 1639. The dispute arose over the successive *cowls* given to the English, since their founding of the town which provided that half of the customs received on goods should be paid over to the inland governments which was called town rent. In 1663, Neknam Khan not only demanded the whole of customs but also claimed to establish *ahavaladar* to check the receipts of customs at Madrasapatnam on regular basis.¹¹⁸ The initial reaction of the English was to construct fortifications and secure the town against any eventuality. Edward

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁶ *O.C. No.*, 2893,1663, cited in H.D.Love, *Vestiges*, Vol. I, pp.213-216.

¹¹⁷ *Letter Book*, Vol. HI, 1664 .and *EFI*, New Series, 1670-77,1671 /72 pp. 36-37.

¹¹⁸ H.D.Love, *Vestiges*, Vol. I, p.266.

any eventuality. Edward Winter, the governor of Madrasapatnam, delayed the demand of Neknam Khan on the pretext that he referred the matter to England. The issue was put in abeyance by the English but in 1670, the relations between the Nawab and the English got so strained that Neknam Khan ordered for a blockade of the town. In the mean time, Neknam Khan cancelled the farm of Triplicane which was given to the company and took it directly under his control. In 1670, William Foxcorft, who succeeded Edward Winter as the Governor of Madrasapatnam finally agreed to pay a sum of 1200 pagodas henceforth as the town rent. Neknam Khan after his initial success over the English, now demanded for the arrears for the last 10 years which amounted to 11000 pagodas. In 1672, the English agreed to pay the arrears in addition of 1200 pagodas for renting of Triplicane.¹²⁰ The sudden change in the attitude of the company in complying the demands of Neknam Khan was its realisation that the local administration was justified in asking for enhancement of rent proportionately to the revenue of the town and to conceal the actual revenues of the town:

¹¹⁹ *Factory Records*, Fort St. George, Vol. XXVI, 12 July, 1672. cited in H.D.Love, *Vestiges*, Vol. 1, p. 350.

¹²⁰ *RFSG, Diary and Consultation Book*, 1672-78, p. 3-5.

"That the revenues of the town may not be known to the moors as they desire, it is thought good that the accounts thereof and specially of the customs upon the goods be kept in English and the Brahmins are not to keep any books or accounts."

However, after claiming the rent, Neknam Khan died and was succeeded by Musa Khan in 1672. Till 1682, there was a quick succession of administrators in the Karnatic region. In the period between 1670-1684, the Kingdom of Golconda witnessed sweeping political transformation largely due to intervention of Madanna in provincial administration through Brahmin intermediaries. Surely the days of Persian elite was on the wane and the power at provincial level tilted towards Brahmin administrators. The first thing Madanna did after his appointment as prime minister was to remove Sayyid Mir Jaffar and Musa Khan from Masulipatnam and Karnatic respectively and appoint Polepally Yenganna and Podela Lingappa as governors .¹²²

Unlike Mir Jumla and Neknam Khan, Podela Lingappa rose from humble origins and was considered as the most dreaded Governors of Poonamalle region. He was a Niyogi Brahmin who started his career as *havaladar* of Gandikota under Neknam Khan. Lingappa was a case of a small time administrator who rose to the rank of Governor of Arcot along with Polepalle Yenganna. In the political structure of Golconda, the lower ranks of administration was

¹²² The successors of Neknam Khan were Musa Khan, Namdar Khan, Muskmia, Muhammad Ibrahim and Podela lingappa.

was dominated by Niyogi Brahmins. By virtue of the system of revenue farming, these local officials were instrumental in farming small areas under them and played a crucial role between the state and the production economy. When Madanna became the prime minister of Golconda, many of these Niyogi Brahmins were elevated to high positions, especially in the Karnatic region. During his tenure as Governor of Gandikota, Lingappa constituted it as a major paraganas with 25 villages. In 1682, Lingappa was elevated to the position of *Subedar* and managed the combined revenues of Chera, Cuddapah and Conjeevaram. He was given an additional Jagir of Triplicane which was then included into the *Jama Caumil*.¹²³

The career of Lingappa on the Coromandel coast was more adventurous than his predecessor, Neknam Khan. He was actively involved in grain production and trade which was brought from the Karnatic to Coromandel. As suggested earlier, grain which became an important item of trade in this period, was actively conducted by these local officials. Lingappa wanted to push his grain in the town market of Madrasapatnam. He stocked his grain at Vepery and Egmore, the suburbs of Madrasapatnam, and issued a decree that no grain from other sources should be admitted into Madrasapatnam.¹²⁴ He also took possession of San Thome from Kasi Viranna on the ground that he rented Karnatic at 2 lakh pagodas, "that Madrasapatnam and Palliacat people keep up the price of paddy there by which other people sayeth, are hindered

123 on the career of Podela Lingappa in Karnatic see, *Gandikota Kaifiyat*, and *Sugumanchi Palle Kaifiyat*

¹²⁴ H. D.Love, *Vestiges*, Vol. 1, p. 412.

from fetching out of his country".¹²⁵ The English replied that the company will not comply to the demands of Lingappa saying that "the English are free people and have government of the town which produces great summes of money, formerly Nawab Neknam Khan let him have the yearly yields of several thousands"¹²⁶

The problem was compounded when the company arrested Chinna Venkatadri who petitioned to the King which immediately led to the blockade of the town which lasted for more than two years.¹²⁷

During the period of embargo (1678-81), Lingappa wrote a letter to Kasi Viranna that the paddy be sold in the market of Madrasapatnam at the rate of 10: calums for a pagoda. The Governor replied that grain market was free and the current price being 12 calums, paddy will be sold at a fixed price only.¹²⁸ The embargo continued till 1681 upon all goods and provisions coming to Madrasapatnam, and Lingappa decided to take Triplicane as well which was then rented by Venkatadri. The embargo was lifted in 1681 after Venkatapathi brought a *cowle* from the court which reconfirmed the old customs at Madrasapatnam.

A study on the nature of these blockades on Madrasapatnam, one can see a systematic development of rupture between local administration and the English company. First, it was only the rent which mattered, but during the tenure of Neknam Khan, revenues along with proposed imposition of *havaladar* was demanded and

¹²⁵ *Ibid.*

¹²⁶ *RFSG, Diary and Consultation Book, 1672-78, p. 78,90.*

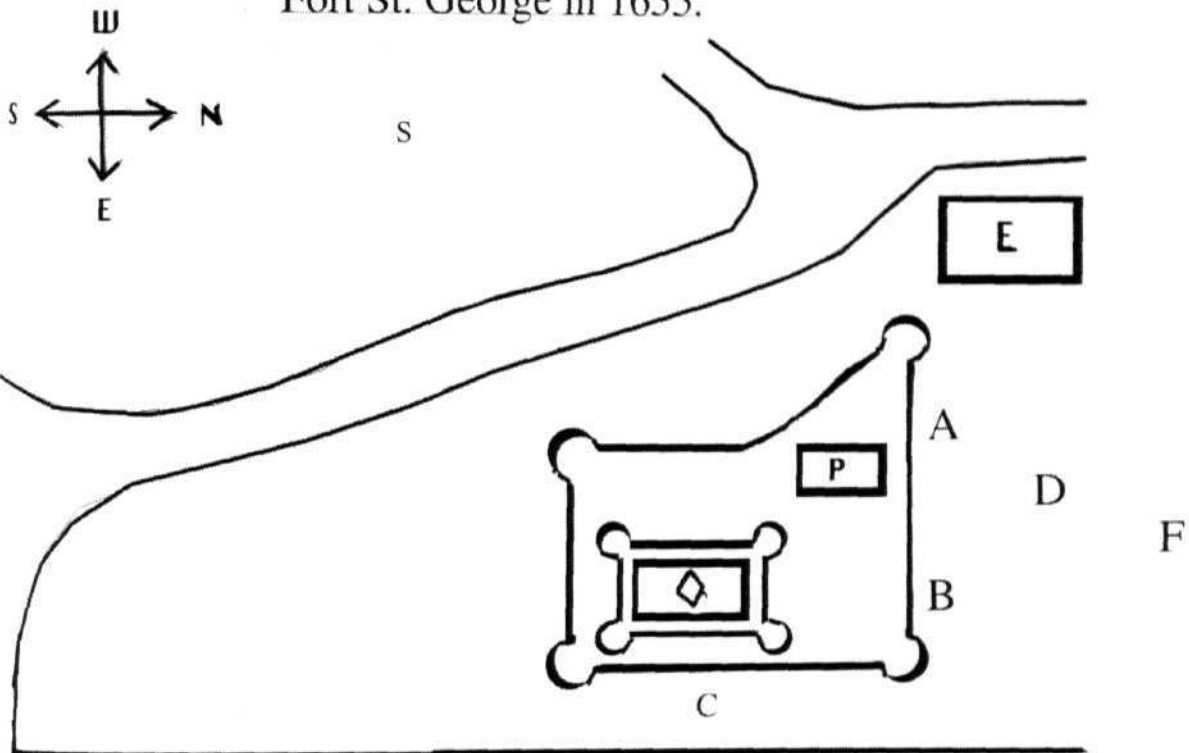
¹²⁷ *EFI, New Series, 1678-79, pp. 24-25.*

¹²⁸ *RFSG, Diary and Consultation Book, 1679-80.*

¹²⁹ *RFSG, Diary and Consultation Book, 1680-81. pp.36-37.*

Schematic Diagrams of Fort St. George.

Fort St. George in 1655.



SEA.

A: Chaltry gate
B: Middle gate
C: Sea gate

D: Open space
E: Burial ground
F: Black Town

P: Capuchian clergy quarters and
Burial ground

Khan, revenues along with proposed imposition of *havaladar* was demanded and finally during the tenure of Lingappa it involved apart from other things, trade as well. The problems for the English company increased, for, in 1700's Daud Khan imposed a blockade on the town and demanded more rents from the town in the wake of growing revenues.¹³⁰

Core and Periphery: The origin of Colonial pattern 1640-1710

Bruce Watson, writing on European fortifications is of the opinion that the need for fortifications arose; from two aspects. That armed trading was profitable as long as the costs of fortifications can be kept at minimum, and as long as it can overpower the Indian elites who interfered in the European structure of trade. While surely the formulations of Bruce Watson concurs with the development of fortifications as an economic necessity, studies have neglected the spatial growth of these fortifications which would help in understanding the growth of colonial pattern of trade and settlements.¹³²

¹³⁰ See, for Daud Khan's blockade of 1701-1702, *RFSG, Diary and Consultation Book*, 1701, pp. 14,61-62 and H.D.Love, *Vestiges*, Vol. II, pp. 16-18. However, this was general blockade which included Masulipatnam and Petapoli as well. The English had to pay Rs, 30,000 to Daud Khan.

* The words core and periphery are used to designate the twin settlements of Fort St. George and the Indian town which came to be called as black town, if one traces the history of these settlements, there is no doubt that the plan of Madraspatnam was designed to meet its core sector, trade, which centred in Fort St. George. The combined settlements of fort St George, Indian town and the acquired territories came to be called as Madraspatnam.

¹³¹ Bruce Watson, 'Fortifications and the 'Idea' of force', pp. 71-73.

¹³² Susan J. Lewandowski's article is an exception to this neglect, but her interest is the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. See, 'Changing form and Function in Madurai and Madras', pp.200-203.

This section will concentrate on the growth of Madrasapatnam and establishes that the spatial growth of the town inherently carried colonial features which developed over a period of time into a grid colonial pattern. Logically, one must necessarily start from the 'core' of the settlement, namely Fort St. George. The site, Francis Day chose to construct the fort was a small fishing village surrounded by a township called Madrasapatnam.¹³³

The first plan of the fort was oblong in shape with a bastion at each angle, which extended 108 yards from the north to south and 100 yards from east to west. The factory house with the Governors office was at the centre of the fort.¹³⁴ This formed the inner core of the fort and over a period of time, a number of changes were made to this section, depending on the threats faced by the company from inland administration. For example as the first finances came to Fort St. George, the fort bastions were constructed in a span of four years.¹³⁵ With the bastions came the first garrison which was designed to accommodate 100 men. Initially, the president and Council at Surat and even directors at London, were sceptical about the money sunk in fort St. George. Apart from the company directors, even the factors at Fort St. George felt that the :

¹³³ There is a clear cut distinction between Fort St. George and the town outside it. All the cowles given by Sri Ranga Raya, Neknam Khan and Daud Khan clearly demarcate the Fort and town into two distinct areas. See for the history of the division of fort and town, H.D.Love, *Vestiges*, Vol. 1, p. 81-85.

¹³⁴ H.D.Love, *Vestiges*, Vol. 1, p. 28., and *Dagh Register*, 1641-42, p. 266. Compare the initial plan with the John Fryers description, which says that the fort was an oblong structure. See. H.D.Love, *Vestiges*, Vol. II.

¹³⁵ The first bastion was erected in 1640 on which the company expended 375 lbs and the second bastion came up in 1641, the third in 1642 and the fourth in 1644 at the rate of 4150lbs.

"expenditure for which you annually pay so much charges for no other purpose than the security of our persons...for me their the greatest strength, whatever we can make, can anyway offend the moors should they be our enemy,.... can stop or prevent either relief or provisions from coming near us"¹³⁶

Despite this scepticism expressed, there is no doubt that the importance of Fort St. George became clear during the Golconda phase. In 1653, an inner fort was constructed and Thomas Ivie started the building of a mud fort which included the European quarter and as well as Indian sections. The walls were extended upto the sea front with new gates; Armenian gate on the western side and China Bazaar gate on the south western side. This whole structure came to be designated as Christian town. Between the years 1640 - 1666, the English undertook massive construction of the fort and by 1680's, Christian town more or less took the present form.¹³⁸ The information regarding the white town was given in the proposal to collect taxes on houses. According to the proposal the fortified town comprised of:

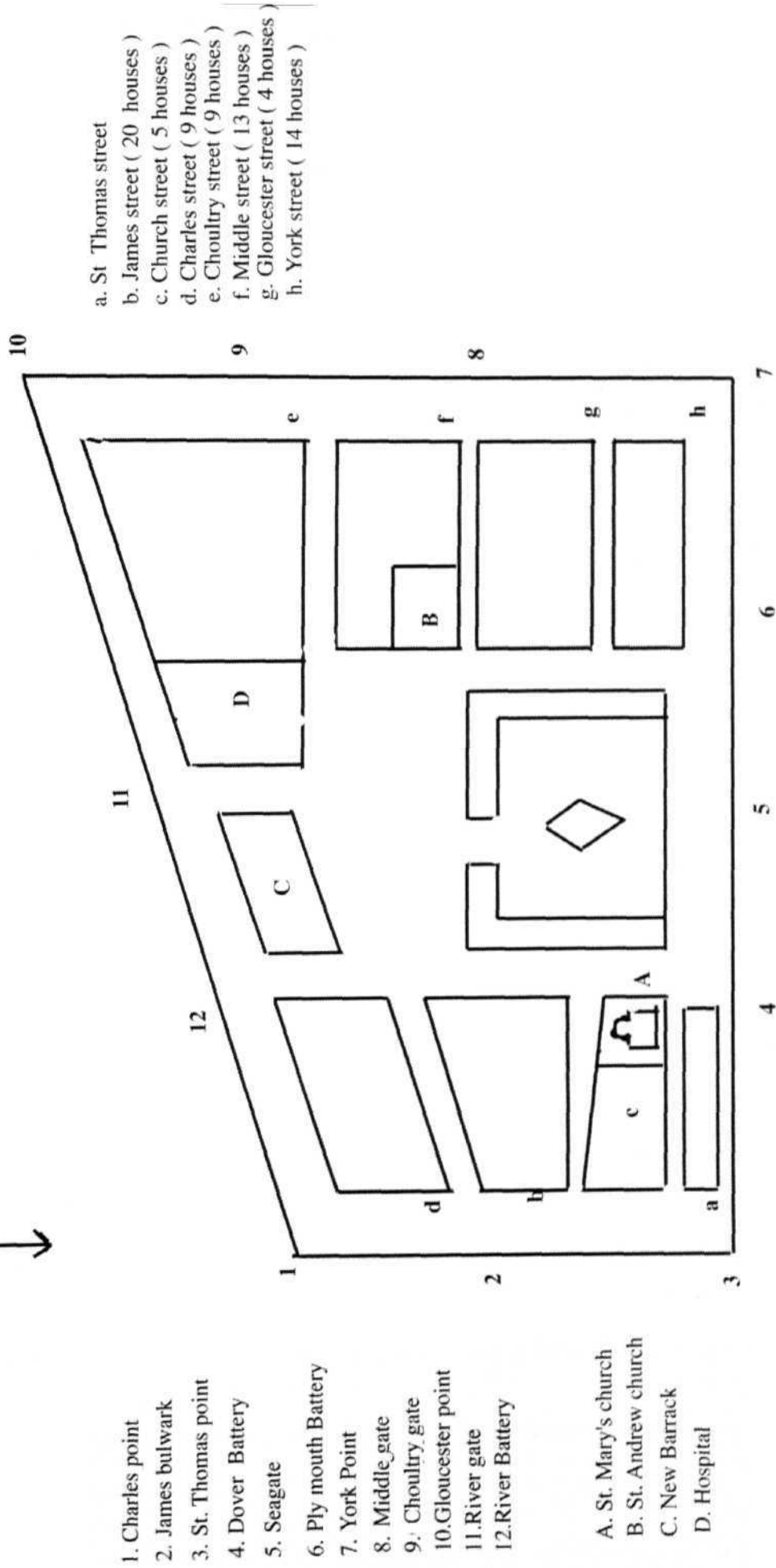
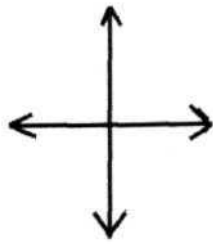
¹³⁶ H.D.Love, *Vestiges*, Vol. 1, p. 279.

¹³⁷ *Ibid.*

¹³⁸ William Langhorn extended the fort to St.Thome Point and Round point. See diagram I.

Fort St. George 1687

W



Inner Fort: The English Point, Scotch point, French point, Irish point.

Houses where taxes to be collected: St.Thomas Street, Clarkes street, choultry street, Middle street, Closter street, and York street.

A closer study of the expansion of the fortification reveals that it was expanded on the northern side and was planned systematically to ward off threats from incursions from northern side. The inner fort accommodated the most influential and wealthiest of the population which included, apart from the Governor and factors, the Portuguese, Eurasian and other European nationalities.¹³⁹ Initially the white town catered to both Christian and non Christian populations, but as the population of the town grew, we have instances of people, especially Christians settling in the adjacent black town.

To understand the development of early colonial pattern at Madrasapatnam, one has to necessarily study the black town and its relation to Fort St. George. Black town had two important components in the period under study. Firstly it provided the economic base for English trade on which the prosperity of white town depended. In the black town various Indian populations connected to trade came to settle who served the company in different capacities. The main resident groups included komatis, chettis, Portuguese, Armenians, weavers, oilmen, carpenters, native soldiery, fisher men, boatmen etc.¹⁴⁰ Among them the most important groups who came into direct contact with the company

¹³⁹ See Susan J. Lawendowski, 'Changing form and Function in Madurai and Madras', p.200.

¹⁴⁰ See Foot note no. 97

were the komatis, chettis, Portuguese and Armenians. Though the company did not interfere in their traditional customs and life styles, a closer examination reveals that the company evolved social controls on the populations residing at Madrasapatnam. Thus, the company retained the head men, Accountants (canicopolys), Talliars (watch men) and constable(*Peddanaik*) etc. but for the effective functioning of English administration. However, these offices became crucial to the company as it was through these indigenous administrators that the company achieved dominance over other sections of population. These people acted as main source of information on indigenous laws and customs on which the company was able to introduce its own laws at Madrasapatnam.¹⁴¹ Though the black town apparently had varied ethnic and cultural heterogeneity, the town as it evolved was divided into neatly demarcated blocks divided on caste and racial segregation. The caste pattern in the black town evolved out of the numerous caste disputes between the right hand and left hand castes which became endemic throughout the history of Madrasapatnam.

The origin of the right hand and left hand castes goes back to twelfth and fourteenth centuries, their distinction and their subsequent conflicts, however, seems to have been a recent

¹⁴¹ For the information on English civil and criminal laws, see, Elliotts Standing orders, 1663-1724 in Public Department, Sundries, 1700 p. 58-59. It may be noted that the English desired to introduce European laws in Madrasapatnam ever since they founded the town. In fact one of the major requests of the English to Sri Ranga Raya was the permission to have English laws in the town. The English were instrumental in getting permission to introduce English laws through various cowles given by Ranga Raya, Abdullah Qutb Shah and Shah Alam. See, *RFSG, Diary and Consultation Book* for the years, 1678,1682,1701 and 1707.

phenomenon. Most of the merchants and artisans though belonged to various sub castes but came under two broader caste divisions. Most of the artisans were attached to respective chief merchants belonging to the same caste denomination. Chief merchants who also headed these castes manipulated the cleavages for consolidation of their position. Thus, as Madrasapatnam grew, schisms between caste groups became evident and time and again took the form of conflicts within the city.¹⁴² In fact, in 1707, the English reported on the origin of a dispute that it was because of the infringement of one caste on the other for exclusive rights for trade. The actual cause, the English wrote " was due to altering of the old method of contracts and advancing money, and that Serappa and Timmana cant be head merchants, unless drive out the heads of other castes which shall care by the present left hands"¹⁴³ That the chief merchants were manipulating the weavers and other artisans is clear from the English documentation of the period. The immediate causes for these disputes did not vary much. They originated either in the supposed encroachment of the rival caste groups in the pettahs, taking processions in the streets or on the privileges they enjoyed in the temples of Madrasapatnam.

The company used these caste disputes to its advantage. The company encouraged schisms amongst the caste groups to dislodge 'recalcitrant' chief merchants from their

¹⁴² For the moving of weavers into Madrasapatnam during the time of Kasi Viranna, Chinna Venktadri and Serappa, See, *RFSG, Diary and Consultation Book*, 1672-78,1682,1686 and 1712.

¹⁴³ *RFSG, Despatches to England.*, 1701-1711,1707, p. 80.

¹⁴⁴ See, the caste disputes of 1652 and 1707 as the indicators for the immediate causes and their features. H.D. Love, *Vestiges*, Vol. I, pp.129-130, 144-146 and Vol. II, pp. 26-28 and *Public consultations*, Vol XIX, 1692.

positions and appoint a person belonging to a rival caste in the former's position. Normally, the company had only one option in dealing with actual ritoing at Madrasapatnam: in order to restore normalcy, the company segregated the black town on the lines followed in the white town into separate compartments (streets) and imposed fines on the people who violated this pattern. Thus, Pedanaik petta predominantly had right hand people while the Muthailpet was dominated by left hands. The segregation was also extended to the fringes of white town where the Indian population lived, namely Bridge Gate street and Western Petta¹⁴⁵

The next important feature of the black town was its spatial growth which cushioned the core of the company in times of exigency such as wars and troubles with the inland powers. The black town lay on the northern side of fort St. George and expanded towards the west and southern side of the fort thus cushioned the core from threats which came from these directions. Significantly, the inland military operations moved from either northern axis (Qutb shahi and the Mughals, for instance) or from the west axis (Bijapur). In 1702, Thomas Pitt decided to construct a fort wall around the black town which was completed with the help of the money collected by the indigenous population. The length of the black town wall was 1500 Sq. yards in length and was 17 ft in thick, and was constructed with bricks and a regular garrison was established.¹⁴⁶ The completion of black town wall in 1707 surely strengthened the fortification of Madrasapatnam and enhanced the

¹⁴⁵ *Ibid.* In 1707, the company asked the residents to vacate Bridge gate street and Western petta to the left hands and the right hands be given Peddanaik peta.

¹⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 7-8.

prestige of the English company on the coast. Even the Dutch commented at the 'awe' created by the English at Madrasapatnam and by the beginning of the eighteenth century, Fort St. George and the combined town of Madrasapatnam became an example for other fortifications in Asia.¹⁴⁷

Apart from the main fortified part of the town which included both white and black towns, the company acquired many adjacent villages and towns under its jurisdiction which played an important role in the economy of Madrasapatnam. These villages formed the immediate hinterland of Madrasapatnam.

Unlike the construction of fortification which was solely the discretion of the company, the acquiring of villages needed sanction from the inland powers. Initially, the company initially took these villages on farming basis. Triplicane and San Thome were the first to be farmed through their chief merchants. Kasi Viranna, Chinna Venkatadri and Serappa farmed the towns of San Thome and Triplicane on regular basis, but the company retained the power to dislodge them whenever it desired.

The first major attempt to acquire adjacent areas directly under the company came during the tenure of Streynsham Master (1675-1680). In 1678, the Governor applied to the king of Golconda for a grant of the areas of San Thome, Tivetore, and Egmore situated in south, north and west of the fort in perpetuity.

¹⁴⁷ Bencolenof the island of Sumatra, where the English started a fortification in 1688 was planned on the lines of Fort St. George. The company regularly sent plans of Fort St. George to Bencoleen and vice versa, the fort was named York fort.

¹⁴⁸ The company do not seem to have followed a regular pattern regarding these acquisitions. Triplicane was the first to be farmed in 1658, a privilege which was extended to the company by Musa Khan in 1662.

Streynsham Master's decision to acquire or lease them was important, for these towns included many villages which were rich in agriculture, apart from the artisanal production. The towns consisted the following villages: ¹⁴⁹

San Thome:	Pallacawrna, Nammangalam, Oldudar, Nandambawca, Mambalam, Sattivedu to be taken for 1500 pagodas
Trivetore:	Sattanwagdo, Chedyam, Cuppam, Tandore, Yerradalcherry, Enroor and Catiwaca for 900 pagodas
Egmore:	Porsowaca, pudapawaca, Vepery, keepuwaca, Cettipetta, Omancaje, Lumbamwaca, Roshanaa, Buduru, and Agaram for 670 pagodas

In 1692, the company revived its request to take Tandore, Fursewakam and Egmore for 300 pagodas on rent free basis, which was granted in the following year, after getting a sanction from the emperor. ¹⁵⁰ By 1710 the company had brought many villages adjacent to Madrasapatnam under its jurisdiction. In 1708, Thomas Pitt sent a delegation to Sadatullah Khan the Mughal Faujdar to get Trivetore, Sattangodu, Catawaca, Vezellwarro and Lingambaca, which was readily granted. ¹⁵¹

All these loosely acquired towns around Madrasapatnam formed the immediate hinterland of the town, They also demarcated the territorial jurisdiction of the Madrasapatnam on the coast. These

¹⁴⁹ H.D.Love *Vestiges*, Vol. 1, p. 410 and RFSG, *letters from Fort St., George*, 1679, pp. 13-14,21.

¹⁵⁰ *Ibid*, Vol. I, p. 517.

¹⁵¹ H.D.Love, *Vestiges*, Vol. II, p. 154.

Madrasapatnam on the coast. These villages and towns proved highly profitable to the company as it was able to sub lease them to merchants or to local populations. Most of the consuming articles such as grain, tobacco, betel, toddy came from these villages.

Force was an important component of mercantile logic in the seventeenth century. Madrasapatnam relied heavily on this logic both on land and sea. As suggested earlier, if the armed shipping was used against the competitive companies and other indigenous traders, in inland it was meant to use against local administration. The shipping of Madrasapatnam necessarily came with a contingent of arms and ammunition, thus making the town a major redistributive centre for arms to be sent to other country destinations.

Armed Shipping of Madrasapatnam : 1672

	Tonnes	Guns	Squadron
London	500	40	Admiral
Marsenberg	560	44	
Bombain	400	40	
Unity	350	34	Vice Admiral
President	500	42	
Ann	550	36	
East India merchant	400	36	
Sampson	460	40	Rare Admiral
Caesar	560	46	
Antelope	460	36	

Source: H.D. Love, *Vestiges*, I, p. 359.

Armed shipping became a major investment for company in the second half of the seventeenth century. The fact that the companies cannot anchor armed ships in the free ports such as Masulipatnam which were governed directly by Indian

states, made the companies to use these fortifications as main bases for armed shipping. Within the fortification, the English were constantly engaging in the enlargement of garrisons for defense purposes. However, as our profiles have shown, there is no evidence to show that the company ever used force against local administration, but for defense purposes. The first garrison of 1640 had 100 peons and by 1673, it expanded to 241- infantry, 14 -artillery and 163- Portuguese militia and was divided into four companies for inner fort and the Christian town.¹⁵²

The company expanded garrison's considerably during the conquest of by Golconda forces.¹⁵³ During the same period and also subsequently, the garrison at Madrasapatnam extended along the white town ramparts and later on to the black town as well.¹⁵⁴

In fact the company maintained as many as 100 peons exclusively posted in the black town and in other neighbouring areas. The garrison of Madrasapatnam was gloriously recorded by the company documentation in the early eighteenth century. It was used to commodities from the immediate hinterland which fell within the jurisdiction of the company and also to curb the 'native' insolence such as caste disputes which not only took violent forms but also led to, sometimes, to the fleeing of the weavers and artisans from the town.

¹⁵² H.D.Love, *Vestiges*, Vol. 1, p372.

¹⁵³ *Ibid.* p. 475.

¹⁵⁴ The main garrison points of the white town were Charles point, James bulwark, St.Thomas Point, Dorar Battery, Sea gate, Plymouth battery, York Point, Middle gate, chouldtry gate, Glester point, River gate, and River Battery. Public Consultation, Vol. XIV, 1687/88. the black town garrison included New point, Bridge foot gae, Egmore guard, Balchitee, Kalastri Chitti, Back guard, Middle gate, Mudpoint, Clarks gate, the garden guard, Sunca Rama Choultry, Gangavaram, and Badradri. H.D.Love, *Vestiges*, Vol. II, p. 160.

By the end of the seventeenth century, Madrasapatnam more or less completed the minimum requirements for the process of urbanisation which depended on the English east India company's effective management/ maneuverability/ as the case maybe, to dominate the trade in the period under study. The company was able to chalk out its own 'political dominion' at which depended on its adaptability *vis a vis* the hinterland cannot be ignored. Added to this was the willingness of the company to provide economic space to free merchants and other indigenous aspirants to trade, proved, in the long run very beneficial to the company. Initially when the company worked on the fortification at Madrasapatnam, the point of reference to the English were the Dutch settlements of Batavia and Pulicat. But as the successive events proved, the Dutch Pulicat declined, due to, as the English company has reported 'due to their inability to allow free trade' is largely true.

Conclusion

By the beginning of the eighteenth century, Coromandel coast underwent a significant transformation on account of Mughal expansion into the Deccan. The unitary nature of Coromandel which was achieved by the Sultanate of Golconda during the seventeenth century witnessed break up into neatly demarcated zones of control by the local powers. A study of the port cities of Masulipatnam, Vizagapatnam and Madrasapatnam reveals that impact of Mughal expansion was not similar all along the coast. Intra- regional differences became pronounced in the last decades of the seventeenth century. However, it must be stressed that political fragmentation of the late seventeenth century did not necessarily lead to a general decline of Coromandel *per se*, but on the other hand showed realignment of socio, economic and political forces at the local level. The articulation of various regional dynamics which became the harbingers of change in the post-Mughal phase of Indian history.

Arasarathanam has identified the whole of Coromandel coast (starting from Ganjam to Point Calimere) as an unitary system of trade in the seventeenth century. According to him, the coherence of Coromandel coast is based, among other things, in the nature of commodities traded, the destinations of trade, the communities and categories of people who traded in them, the administrative systems which impacted on trade, the fiscal system, the monetary system and finally the nature of political formations in the

seventeenth century.¹ However, critics like Joseph Brenning and Sanjay Subrahmanyam, have argued that Coromandel as unitary system is unwieldy due to inter-regional differences within the coast.² A closer study of the northern and central Coromandel, which included Andhra and Madrasapatnam, reveals a certain degree of unitary features in the seventeenth century. The expansion and the successful consolidation of the Sultanate of Golconda in the northern and central was the chief factor for the integration of the eastern sea-board during the seventeenth century.

The successful campaigns of Ibrahim Qutb shah (1530-1580) and Abdullah Qutb Shah (1626-1672) into the northern and central Coromandel respectively led to a considerable integration of this region into one macro unit. The state adopted two distinct strategies; In the northern plains of Krishna and Godavari, the state consciously followed and depended on the collaboration with the traditional chiefs and *Zamindars*, while on the coast of Madrasapatnam it adopted a policy of a total liquidation of Vijayanagara and other warrior *Palegadu* lineage's of Velugoti, Damerla, and Matli's and brought the region directly under the administrative apparatus.

The imposition of administrative apparatus from above and allowing the traditional elite with considerable fiscal autonomy at the local level brought the production economy close to international trade which centered around the ports of

¹ S. Arasaratnam, *Merchants, Companies and Commerce on the Coromandel coast 765-2724*, New Delhi, 1986. and 'Coromandel revisited: Problems and issued in Indian Maritime history', *IESHR*, 26,1,1989,pp. 101-110.

² See, Joseph Brenning, 'Book Review', *IESHR*, XXIV, 2, pp. 221-24. and Sanjay Subrahmanyam, 'Book Review', *MAS*, 22,1,pp. 179-88.

Masulipatnam (1634-1724), Vizagapatnam (1682-1724) and Madrasapatnam (1639-1712). The existence of hierarchy of markets starting from the village, *qasbas* (*palems* in Andhra), redistributive and local consumption centres such as Kondapalli, Nandigama, jammulamadugu, Bobbili, Rajam etc. determined the continental trade in south India. The integration of peasant production with that of markets which catered to domestic and export was achieved by the intermediate layer which existed between the state and the rich producing economy of Coromandel.³ Apart from the well established networks of markets and centres of trade, the integration of frontier, especially the areas of Gingelly and Karnatic became crucial for the export oriented economy on the coast.

The weaving activity, on which the trade of trade depended, was concentrated in Krishna-Godavari delta and the coast of Madrasapatnam with Masulipatnam and Kanchipuram as the main epicentres. The trans-Godavari, Gingelly and Madrasapatnam coasts were dominated by numerous ruling clans called as *Zamindars* and tributary rajas or by *Palegadu* elements, the latter who owed their allegiance to Vijayanagara. The recourse to revenue farming by the state altered the relations between the state and the civil society. The state adopted revenue farming as an alternative to direct appointment of official administrative apparatus and to appropriate the maximum of surplus from provinces. By allowing revenue farming at various levels of economy, the state paved way

³ See, Sanjay Subrahmanyam, 'Aspects of State formation in south and South East Asia, IESHR', and for the heirarchy of markets as an useful analysis see, William Skinner, 'Marketing and Social Structure in China', *JAS*, Vol. XXIV, Nos. 1964-65, pp. 3-43.

for individual entrepreneurship within its economic fold. Further more, the state created a political and administrative space for these entrepreneurs within the functioning of the 'formal' state system.

Revenue farmers included small time renters, medium farmers and the great merchant lords who brought the farms in open auction, and those who directly negotiated with state. Even the *Zamindars* who had access to ports were involved in revenue farming which had its impact both on the local economy and International trade as well. The compulsions of paying the stipulated amount of money to central treasury necessitated revenue farmers to directly intervene in the production process and other allied activities, either individually or through sub-letting, led to intense commercialisation on the Coromandel coast. Though it has been argued that revenue farming was a feature of coastal plains where the profitability was high, we however, have evidence to show that it was prevalent in the frontier where the economy depended mostly on agriculture. The expansion of Golconda into Karnatic region was an outcome of the campaigns of Mir Jumla and the subsequent role played by Golconda administrators such as Neknam Khan, Podela Lingappa. All these people were involved in farming revenues, notably from the local diamond industries and to some extent in sub letting agricultural lands as well.

The rise of Masulipatnam in the seventeenth century was due to the consolidation of Golconda in Krishna and Godavari deltas. As noticed in the chapter on Masulipatnam, the state consciously collaborated with Persian mercantile group by giving them preferential rights in matters of trade. Though, Masulipatnam

was part of *Khalisa*, the state adopted the system of sub-letting its hinterland and port city to revenue farmers who were called Governors. Thus, the decentralized nature of provincial administration in the ports attracted a large number of entrepreneur's to Masulipatnam. The port attracted many urban communities, especially the Persians and European private traders who dominated the trade at Masulipatnam at different periods in the seventeenth century. If collaborating with Persian mercantile group proved advantageous to the state, the local economy of the northern Coromandel was dominated by Hindu merchants who established close ties with the local elite such as the *Zamindars* of Peddapuram, Mogalteru, Palakollu, etc. The relationship between traditional elite and Hindu merchants, which was more indirect, benefited mutually at the local level. For instance, both of them reaped the benefits of already burgeoning commercial economy which catered to continental trade centered around the port of Masulipatnam. Further, the growth of European commerce brought the Hindu merchants closer to company trade which no doubt pushed the local elite into trade. The companies consolidated their position through their establishment of internal factories on the northern Coromandel at Draksharamam, Peddapuram , Palakollu, Viravasaram etc.

The economy of Masuliptnam has to been analysed at two levels. 1) Golconda state and the decentralization of its provincial administration through revenue farmers and 2) At the local level which was dominated by Hindu merchants whose participation in

trade led to intense commercialisation of the economy which in turn brought European commerce into central picture.

The Mughal liquidation of Golconda in 1687 radically altered the existing relationships between the state, Indian and European merchants, and the local elite. The complementary nature of state and commerce was threatened by the Mughal invasion. The Mughals disrupted, for the first time, the regional coherence of northern Coromandel which was assiduously developed by Golconda in the preceding years. But did the Mughal intervention directly lead to the decline of trade at ? It is argued in the preceding chapters that decline of Masulipatnam must be placed within specific context of developments at the sub-regional level in which the Mughal expansion was only incidental. It is the contention of this thesis that Coromandel coast of showed divergent developments in the port towns taken as our case studies.

The Mughal conquest led to a series of revolts against the Imperial expansion on the northern Coromandel. One major outcome of the war was the consolidation of power by the *raju* and *Velama* clans and *Zamindars* in Godavari, Vizagapatnam and Vizinagaram deltas. The Mughal conquest had contradictory impact on the Coromandel ports of Masulipatnam and Vizagapatnam. For instance, at Masulipatnam, the Mughal expansion led a direct to break down of the hinterland of Masulipatnam (especially the east Godavari) which resulted in the rise of smaller ports such as Divi, and Ingeram. These ports which earlier served Masulipatnam as feeder points came out the metropolitan 'port complex' and became independent in their own

right which in turn had adverse impact on Masulipatnam. In the last quarter of the seventeenth century, the political situation on the northern Coromandel was such that only small but definite hinterlands survived which must be placed within the context of local politics *vis-a vis* Mughal aggrandizement. That the local elite in the process of consolidating their power took recourse to expansion of agrarian and non-agrarian sectors consciously developed ports which were part of their small territorial jurisdictions. For instance, Appa Row who developed Divi as an independent port started directly sending grain to southern Coromandel ports of Madrasapatnam which had adverse impact on Masulipatnam.⁴ By the end of the seventeenth century, Masulipatnam had lost its vast hinterland of east Godavari to the newly rising ports of Ingeram and Vizagapatnam which accelerated its decline in the eighteenth century.

Thus, if the decline of Masulipatnam was due to break up of its 'core' hinterland and its port complex, the rise of Vizagapatnam into a major port during the same period was precisely due to collapse of Mughal imperial administrative structure on the Gingelly and Vizianagaram in the last decade of the seventeenth century. Vizagapatnam which grew as an English fortification, witnessed growth due to emerging tripartite relationship between tributary *raju* and *velama* clans, the Mughal *faujdar*s and the English East India company. The hazy nature of Mughal controls led to consolidation of power by the tributary chiefs in the present

⁴ *RFSG, Diary and Consultation Book*, 1712, p. 24 and *RFSG, Letters to Subordinate Factories*, 1714, p. 43.

Vizianagaram and Vizagapatnam districts. Notable families of Pusapatis, Jeypore, Mogalteru and Bobbili brought vast tracts of land under agriculture which in turn led to the cheapness of grain.

The war situation compelled these local potentate's to introduce both long term and short term measures within their respective localities. In long term, the chiefs, especially those who commanded prestige amongst the lesser political entities, intervened in the local grain and textile markets by providing necessary infrastructural facilities such as forming of *Canjas* and *palems* at Rajam, Bobbili, Kaumili, Walteroo etc. which was transformed into export trade at Vizagapatnam. During the Mughal phase, the transformation of tributary chiefs into aggressive politico-military entrepreneurs through their direct intervention in local markets was a major determining factor in the growth of Vizagapatnam. The constant wars between the Mughals and the chiefs made the latter to depend on the English East India company which in turn emerged as a major financier local levels of political control. Finance was provided by the company for a return of safe passage of goods and concessions such as farming neighbouring villages, exemption from local cess and taxation etc. which led to cheapness of textiles at Vizagapatnam. It was noticed that local merchants mediated between the warring chiefs and the company. Constant wars between the Mughals and tributary chiefs in turn brought Madras pagodas to Vizagapatnam- an early indication of monetisation of the local economy.⁵

⁵ In the context of late seventeenth century, no other port imported Madras pagodas as Vizagapatnam did. In fact, the English factors at Fort. St.George asked

There is no doubt that the Mughal imperial structure collapsed on the northern Coromandel. Significant to us is the transformation of the Mughal *faujdari* system. The intra- *faujdari* conflicts became endemic on the northern Coromandel which meant a deviance from Mughal official norms. At the local level the Mughal *faujders* were involved in enhancing their individual careers often feeding on the weakening of imperial system. The careers of Rustom Dil Khan, Fakirullah Khan, Asad Khan etc. showed a tendency of collaborating with local officials such as *deshmukh*'s and other petty officers and with local potentates as well. This was intended not to strengthen the imperial system as much as to enhance their individual careers.

At the beginning of the eighteenth century, local politics became the prime indicators of change on the Coromandel coast. The politics was dictated by the amount of wealth each of the contesting parties managed to garner through direct or indirect intervention in the production economy and by systematically developing links with European companies. In such a schema, it was noticed at Vizagapatnam, that the tributary *rajus* emerged as a powerful force *vis a vis* the Mughal expansion. Lastly, the role of the English company at Vizagapatnam must be situated within this complex weave of political alliances and the political networks in a war ridden economy which instead of throttling trade, led to the consolidation of English commerce at Vizagapatnam.

one factor to closely monitor the situation at Vizagapatnam to provide Madras pagodas. *RFSG, Diary and Consultation Book*, 1718, p. 47.

In both the case studies of Masulipatnam and Vizagapatnam, the role of the English company was only a part of the complex regional dynamics of trade. For instance, at Masulipatnam the company was not able to subdue Indian mercantile operations during the period of our study. However, one cannot brush aside the role of European commerce as peripheral to the economy. At least by the last quarter of the seventeenth century, the English company was instrumental in establishing political and economic links with the local elite and Hindu merchants, perhaps as an indicator of the early penetration of the company trade in India.

A study of the history of Madrasapatnam between 1639-1712 radically differed from the northern ports of Masulipatnam and Vizagapatnam. The town of Madrasapatnam was assiduously developed by the English East India Company after obtaining a grant from the Damerla clan with extra-territorial rights. The port was able to develop a vast hinterland which stretched from the districts of Nellore, Cuddapah, Chittoor, North Arcot and South Arcot districts of Karnatic and central Coromandel.

In the course of the seventeenth century, the town of Madrasapatnam emerged as the main redistributive centre for intra-Asian trade. The revival of oceanic connections with Pegu by Madrasapatnam shipping became crucial to the expanding English commerce on the coast. Euro-Asian trade, on the other hand, was a preserve of private traders who were allowed to freely reside at Madrasapatnam.

The town attracted a population of various nations and denominations. Most of the populations who came to reside in the

town were associated with trading activities which centered around company trade. However, the success of Madrasapatnam system of operation lay in the effective subjugation of Indian chief merchant under the company. The portfolio interests and the flexibility of Indian merchant which was found in the northern Coromandel was effectively eroded in the economy of Madrasapatnam.

The failure of the Indian chief merchant to develop portfolio interests within and outside these European enclaves in the second half of the seventeenth century was the first indicator of the growing strength of company trade and structure on the Coromandel. However, the causes for the transformation of the Indian chief merchant into company merchant cannot solely be attributed to the effective management of English trade at Madrasapatnam. Madanna who took over as the chief revenue officer of Golconda in 1680's, initiated a process of bureaucratization which curtailed the portfolio participation of Indian merchants in trade and politics. This period was dominated by the intervention of Golconda officials directly in the coastal economy, while the Indian merchants of Madrasapatnam acted as mere egibs(ambassadors who regularly passed information between companies and inland administration). In the post Golconda history of Madrasapatnam, we have very few instances of chief merchants holding portfolio interests which was taken over by the company. In the period between 1690-1712 investments of the company steadily rose which was a direct outcome of the subjugation of the Indian chief merchant at Madrasapatnam,

Apart from the effectiveness of Joint stock companies, Madrasapatnam offered yet another major incentive for the English company. Revenues from farming and other sources such as house tax, quit rent, etc. were used for the day to day functioning of the English trade which brought the company from the strict controls from 'Home'. The extension of the company into local revenues became a major reason for the conflicts between the company and inland administration. However, in the long run, these conflicts failed to make any impact on the company trade. The company was successful in maintaining the 'autonomy' given in the grants and cowl's etc.

Any generalizations on the uniform nature of mercantile operations in the period between 1687-1724 would only prove futile. The period witnessed an emergence of complex set of relationships in which regional economy responded variably to trade in different port towns of Coromandel coast. For instance, it witnessed both the rise and decline of Persian merchants, the rise of Hindu-European collaboration, European - Zamindar alliances, etc. all culminated into a space called 'trade' in the seventeenth century. The merchants of Masulipatnam, which included both Persians and Indians, dominated its trade, while the companies were yet to make an impact on the regional economy. There is no doubt that Hindu mercantile operations were limited when compared to Persians; the former preferred working with the companies for their sustenance in trade. In the Vizagapatnam sector, local merchants acted as mediators between the English company and the local potentates thus providing knowledge and capital to the future colonialism. At

Madrasapatnam, on the other hand, trade was solely dictated by company in which the social and political base of Indian merchants were getting marginalised by the second half of the eighteenth century.

APPENDICES

Appendix I

The Golden Firman for trade in the Kingdom of Golconda,
February 26,1634

Contemporary version O.C., 1521:

Firman given and granted wunto the couragious fir(tunate) and worthy Mr. Thomas Joyce, Captain of the English and compaignie of thwat nation, whom of our Royall grace and () favour being confident, maie hereby understand that whereas they, out of great hopes, repaired to our high court and (made request unto us that if it should seems expedient in the eyes(our) Rotyall Majestic, Gods depute of the time, to be gracious and favourable in the negotiation (sic), that so their designes() maie be the better affected and their request accordingly consequential their maie be animated to demonstrate (their) service and best regret on all occasions whatsoever() plentiful increase of the trade of our several ports viz. masulapattanam, Nezamapattanam, Ishnakpattnam, Bimleypattnam, and all ports of India etc., in generall, to which benefit of trade and commerce they will yearly bring from Bandar Abass,the Gulf of Persia, certayne ships and Vesells laden with raritiers and excellent horses, such as have not yet come hence, upon which designe their shipps may set sayle for(sic) ports of Hindoostan unto the said Bandar Abass and thence to proceed to our ports to agument the trade() and dominions. And for toofa(present) or varities with other fine and rich commodities such as wee have desired to be brought us (suchg as they can brinbg from far and neare), such accordingly brought for our(service?). Also in anie thing else which maie conduce to our honour and () Their endeavours will not be wanting to pleasure and () as promised; conditionally that all such goods and horses as them Englishd shalll bring for their companies accompt, the custom and other duties and change of the waigher(?) and portor with other officers of the custom house, and whatsoever

accustomed demands at Metchlepatnmaand Nezam pattnam, and the places (they) , the which are usually paid by other merchants, both in buying and selling, These custom duties and changes etc. we have in our gracious favour remitted unto them, that soe(none) shall enter meddle with the goods etc. of the English upon anie pretence or demand whatsoever; neyther that they maiebee urged (or forced to) sell theri goods One man and soe much to another, onlie if our service require any their coomodities etc. Our offices giving notice thereof unto them unto them, they will afford them principle , for our service. And for that our will and command is out of our princely care for the geerall good and benefit of all our countries and people, we doe ordayne therefore that our present and future governess of armapgie ports, Mesulipattnam and Nizampatnam doe not molest the English for such customs, incoms and duties as other merchants paie, the which *of* our grace and eyeiall favour, we doe remitt unto them, therefore we person shall trouble and molest them concerning the same anie waie at all. Because our subjects have commerce with the English as afore is said. Now for such horses as shall bring to the ports , we will that particular for our service orders shall ee given for their delivery to our substitutes, we shall not prejudice the English in their price but perform with them accordingto their demands, soe as the price we made as to the current. But if wea have no neede of them they waie sell where they please. This article concerning horses, let it duly be observed. Our meaning is that when our service requireith them they be not otherwise disposed off unless they bee presents and committed only to toast and custody, whereby the officrs claim of them maie be voyde; yet howsoever we will and command that particular edvataizament be goven to our court, that our pleasure herein bee duly known and performed. This favours and plriveledges promised or granted on condicion that on all occassions the English have referndce and corresspondene to and with our despotic officers, that if other persons(the inhabitants of the ports) shall prejudice them or have anie differnce or contravarsie with them, the said officers maie compose and decide the same.Concerniong Persian merchants etc. thast shall come in

the English shippes, the said merchants peradventure will (for their own profitable ends) endeavour to have their goods coloured under the name of the English, that so they can pass without paying of duties which are liable unto the which the English shall not protect now gather or mingle any goods at all (to the worth of penny) with their own companies goods, colouring them by name and pretence; which if it any time shall be discovered, all the forementioned favour and privileges shall be void and of none effect; and they shall pay all the duties uttermost, as generally all other merchants. And whereas hitherto the customs, duties and charges which the English have yearly paid hath not exceeded 500 or 600 pagodas therefore in favour and behalfe of the favours of customs etc. they shall be accomplished the some of 800 pagodas for the said customs and duties of the English, but if hereafter the said duties shall exceed the some of 800 pagodas by a new proceeding, it shall not concerne the revenues of the port, nor this officers being doubtful or suspecting difference concerning the mentioned allowance they shall acquaint our councillors and prime officer at court, therewith that with they themselves may decide the difference. Soe that the kings deputies and officers shall not molest or laie claime to the English at all, whom we wish in all () fully to proceede with courage and content, and to deserve () grace and favour to them ward daily to increase and to give () to this our covele () and firman a, and in all occurrences touching our wealth and honour to be diligent in their service.

8th. Wednesday, Ramzan, 1043.

The version of 1670:

Cowle Phirmand of the king underterable, for the valiantundaunted and noble commander Thomas Joiye Captain of the English, and all his people, is this through the kings great favour and courtesie. You must therefore take notice that hee hath been with the king to seeke favour and protection, promising that on ground thereof he will ;performe what the king shall command him, to the benefit and improvement of his ports of Maula, Nisiampatnam, Vivisigiapatnam, Bimli and all others in his

kingdom, and that his shippes shall bring from Persia and other places severall rich commodities to sell in his port of Metchelepatnam and that he will bring great rarities to the said port, also that allships first shall touch at the said port before they go to anyother in the kingdom aftrwards having liberty to goe where they please, that they shall alsostouch at the said port, and whatever petitionn he haththat are for for the kings occation, he will not deny him, the ageement therefore is on these terms.

That any goods whatsoever or horses that are his owne or any of his people under him, the chasrges and cusdtiomes as jaggard(junkan), Ushere(levid on merchandise), Murasdarre(Rahadari), Darwaza(door), Buncca(forest products), Banksoll (port dues) and all other duties weither of ports, where customes are used to take customes or whereever they buy and sell their goods that in buying and selling allso in the duties forementioned and all other the king does gretiously give themfree, gives orders that none shall dmand anything of them, nor when they sell any of their goods to disturb, stop or order them to sell other to one or other. Allso, if the king should send for anything hee hath occation for his own use or expense, they themselves may send it to him immediatlyand niot be obliged to deliver or entrust it to any of his people whatsoever . This is the King's order, that his country may flourish, to all his governors that are at present or those that shall succeed them, in his said ports, in his dominions or on their shippes, that none doe impede them or stop any of their affaires or of their factors or peioples, the king ahaving given all free to their said captaine and command that none shall molest him. Allso whatsoever goods they bring or horses, they are acquaint the king with and what part thereof he hath occasion for, he will and does endorse that they shall have just price paid them for the same;with which if they are not content you are to returne to their goods and give way to their selling wherever they please. Also whatever rarities and goods they send up for the kings no avilda or govenor nonstop, that they themselves must send it up directly with their account. This is the kings order and command, which you must all observe and perform which out of his courtesie

bee hath granted them. Also they are not to joyne or give any assistance to the kings enemies, nor to owne the goodsof others with their to save or defraud the king of his duties. Also in consideration te king has let go his customes and geranted them these priveedges, they are to give the governor of Metchallapatnam the value of 4 or 500 pagodas not raising or abating any of the said somme anytime the Governor should make any pretences or demands on the English upon the said account, let them advise the king of it, and they shall have redorse, the govenor not vbeing to eddle with them or their ffaires and they also are not to concerne ith him, that they may preserve themselves in kings favour, and not loose their honour.

Madras Appendix-II

The fireman granted Mr. Day for Priviledges in Madrasapatnam by the Nague Damela Vintutedra

Firman granted by Demela Vintatedro Nague unto Mr. Francis Day, Chiefe for the English in Armagoan, in behalfe of the Hon'ble company for their tradeing and fortifyeing at Medraspatnam to this effect as followeth:-

Whereas Mr. Faarancis Day, Captain *oi* the English at Armagoan upon greate hopes by reason of our promises often made unto him hath repaide to our port of Medrasapatnam and had personalle conference with us in behalf of the company of that nation, concerning their trade in our territories and freiendly comerce with our subjects; wee, our of our speciall love and favour to the English, I doe grant unto the said captian, or whomsoever shall bee deputed to idgitate the affaires of that companic, by vertue of this fireman, power to direct and order the building of a fort and a castle in or about Medrasp[atnam, as they shall thinke most convenient, the charges whereof untill fully and wholly finished to be defrayed by us but then to bee repaid thereof. And to make full expression of our effection to the English nation, wee doe confirme unto the said Mr. Francis Day, or whatsoever other substitues or agents of that companie full power and autorite to govern and dispose off the government of Medraspatnam for the terme and space of two yeares next insueing affter they shall be seated there and possest of the said fortifications; and for the future by an equall division to receive halfe the custome and renewses of that port.

Moreover whatsoever goodes or merchandize the English company shall either import or export for as much as concerns the duties and customes of Medraspatnam they shall not only for the prementioned two yeares in which they enjoy the government, but for everafter, bee custome free. Yett if they shall transport or bring any commodities up into, or through my countray then shall they pay halfe the duties that other merchants paye whether they buy

or sell the said commodities either in my dominions or in those of any other nague whatsoever.

Also that the said English company shall pereptually enjoy the priviledges of mintag(e) without payeing dewes or dutyes whatsoever, more then the oridinary wages or hire unto those that shall q uoyne the moneyes.

Iff the English shall acquaint us before they deliver out any moneyes to the merchants, painters, weavers, and C. , which or shall hereafter reside in our prementioned port or territories and take our word for their sufficcency and honest dealeing then doe wee promise, in case those people faile in their performance to make good to the English all sumes of mony as shall remaine on their accounts, or else deliver them their persons, if they shalve found in nay part of teritories

That whatsoever provisions that English shall buey country either for fort or ships, they shall no it be liable to paid any custome and dyties for the same.

And if any shipp or vessell belonging to the English (or to any country whatsoever r which tradeth or shall come to trade at any port) shall by misadventure suffer shipp wreck and bee driven upon any part of my territories they shall have restitution opon demand of whatsoever can be found remaining of the said wrack .

O.C. No. 1690, 22nd July (? August), 1639

Rajah Sri Ranga Grant

In the yeare Parrteewa, the month Cardita, the Moone in the wane, the king over all Kings the holiest, and amongst all cavalliers the greatest, Zree Ranga Raya, the mighty King God, gives this Cowle unto August Thomas Ivie chief Captaine of the English, and the Company of that Nation.

ffor as much as you left Amargon and are come to Zera Renga Rayapatnam my towne, at first but of small esteeme ans have there built a ffort and brought trade to that port;therefore that you may be the better encouraged toi prosecute tge same and

amplifie the towne which bears our name, we do freely release you of all customes or duties uppon whatsoever goods bought or sould, in that place appertaining unto your company. Allsoe wee grant unto your company halfe of all the customes of duties which shall be received at that port, and the rents of the ground about the village of Madraspatnam, as allsoe the Jaccall ground wee give you towards your charges by way of piscash.

Moreover, for the better Manageing your business, wee surrender the government and justice of the towne into your hands ;and if any of your Neighbors of PPundamolee shall injure you, wee promise you our ready assistasnce; and for what procissions shall be brought out of that countrey, wee will that no junnkanbe taken thereon.

If it fortune that any of your companys shippes shall, by accident of weather or otherwise, be driven ashore at that port whatsoever can be saved shall remaine your owne; and the like touching all merchants that trade at that port, if the owner comes to demand it, but if the owner be not to be found, then our officers shall seize the same to our behoofe.

Wee also promise still to retaine the towne in our protection, and not subject it to the government of Pundamolee or any other Nague, and whatsoever Merchandizes of yours that shall pass through the countrey of Pundamolee to pay but halfe custome. In confidence of this our coule you may cheerfully proceed in your affaires, wherin if any of our people shall Molest you, we give you our faith to take your cause into our hands, to doe you right and assist you against them, and that this port and this our Coule may stand firm as long as the Sunn and Moone Endureth.

Zree Rama

Source: Henry Davison Love, *Vestiges of Old Madras, 1640-1800*, Vol, *Indian Records Series*, Delhi 1988, See Chapter V, Rajah Sri Ranga's Grant-War and famine-Differences with St. Thome, pp. 67-68.

Version of Rajah Sri Ranga's Cowle

Translation of a Cowle given by Steeranga Railo to Agent Ivie, dated 15th November 1643.

You have left the place called Armagon, and are come now to one of my new towns called Steeranga Rayapatnam where you are making a Fort and Bulwarks and to your Merchandize and trade; to which purpose I give you this Cowle with the toillowing contents, vist.:-

Touching your Company's merchandize :they shall pay no custom, neither for importing nor exporting any of their goods. And all what shall come in for custom *of* the said Town, the half shall be for your company and the oither half for the Divan. And besides this, I do freely give to the Company the town called Madraspatnam, and all the Ground (that) belongeth to it, at their disposeure; and all the Government and Justice of the said Town shall be excersised by you. And if any persoon should wrong you in any part of my country, or in the said town, in your Merchandize or in any other matters, I shall take care to do Justice and right. Also *no* people belonging to the Governor of Pundamallee, nor of its country, shall come, nor have anything to do in your Town, neither shall you pay any Juncan for what proviosions shall be brought for your fort's use. If any of your ship's be cast ashore, you shall take all the things that shall be saved; and if any other ships belonging to any other strangers sahould (be) cast ashore, if there be no owners for it, then all of them things shall be saved shall be for thew Divan's account, nd besides, the said Town shall never be under the Governmnet of Pundamallee's country, nor shall be given to any other government, but shall remain clear under the Divan. Seeing I have goven you the like Cowle concerning the said town and Merchandize, I shall take care that you shall in no ways be molested by no person; to which you may trust to my faith, and do your Merchandize without any kind of fear

Source: H.D. Love, *Vestiges*, Vol \, *Factory Records*, Miscellenous, vol. ix, p. 70.

Paupah Brahminy's Memorandum

Rajah Sasanum, or Royal Licesense, cut upon a Gold Leaf after the shape of a Cadjan, Granted by Sriranga Royalloo, a Gentue sovereign to the English Company for the perpectual Enjoyments of a Town called Chinapatnam, in consideration of the payment of the rent of Pagodas 1200 Annum into the Royal treasury, and also empowering them to coin Pagodas there with the stamp of the three following imags vitz. China Cassawa Sevanuny and the two goddesses.

The condition of the grant strictly enjoin'd and recommended to take care that all priveledges of Deva Doyam and Bramma Doyam may for ever be maintain'd or allow'd in a regular Manner, and that the place may always be Generally esteem'd and Look'd upon as a Gentue town.

Dimmattu, or strengthening Commission, from Damarla Chenama Naiek, the grand visier of the foresaid sovereign and Lord General of Carnatica, to the English Company, for the purpose before mentioned'.

Source: *Treaties*, vol., vi.p. 71.

Appendix III
Register of Passes given by Agent asnd Council for intra-Asian
and Euro-Asian trade (1679-80)

<i>Ship</i>	<i>Country</i>	<i>Destination</i>
Recovery	English	Persia
Speedwell	Surat	Persia
Antravade	Madras	Bengal
Appearance	Carolina	
St. Mitchell	Manila	Manila
Trivetore	Madras	Manila
Tandore	Madras	Manila
Boat Ramanedha	Madras	Ramanacoda
Boat Sanjeveria	Madras	Gingerlee
Boat Comora	Madras	Gingelee
Boat Cundore	Madras	Achin
REcovery	Madras	from Hugly
Pearle	Madras	from Hugly
Bona Ventura	Madras	from Alchin
Elihu	Madras	from Alchin
Vedavotemy	Madras	Condai
Gopalsuare	Madras	Arrakan
Champoreon	Madras	Jafnapatnam
Vauduwoodity	Madras	Jafnapatnam
Comorah	Madras	Yampan

SourcerRFSG, *Diary and Consultation Book*, 1679-80, p.76.

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