CHAPTER - IV
MERCHANTS AND MERCHANDISE IN COASTAL ANDHRA

(A Study of Commercial Transactions)

This chapter attempts to describe the mercantile activities on the Coromandel Coast in general and coastal Andhra in particular during the seventeenth century. While doing so we have discussed the nature of merchants, the different caste groups to which they belonged, the relations between the merchant class and the state, the type of trade that was carried out through these coastal Andhra ports and type of taxation system, the relations between local merchants and European merchants.¹

In the beginning it were the Hindus who dominated the entire commercial world of Coromandel, overseas, and coastal Andhra trading

¹ The European discovery of the commercial world of Asia in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries not only revealed the potentials of the direct trade with Europe but also brought to light the existence of a wide spread seaborne traffic in merchandize and men between it's various ports and geographical regions. K.N. Chaudhuri. Trading world of Asia and the East India Company. 1660-1760. p. 191
Merchants occupied the third place in a four class hierarchy, subordinate to Brahmans and rulers performing hereditary occupations of trading and money lending. But the evidence on precolonial commerce negates this view and shows that Indian state had evolved a system to accommodate the pre-dominance of political power in the hands of an elite with the pragmatic necessity to foster commerce. Earlier, the activity of commerce was carried on independently of rulers. Golkonda rulers maintained good commercial relations with the neighbouring rulers and with foreign countries in West Asia, Europe and South East Asia. With the non-interference of administration in commerce and merchants autonomy, the commerce seems to have expanded. Maritime and merchandise operated in a natural domain and were not the concern of the state. Indian rulers did not seek to impose regulations on merchants to curtail in anyway the

2 J.N. Sarkar: "India's merchantships' and their shippers in the red sea water" Journal of Indian History. 1949, p 56  
freedom to depart from and enter the states territories. But in the very recent historical literature the evidence on the activities of the merchants in the pre colonial state, merchants are given a more central role and instead of being segregated and distinct political and economic functions are seen to overlap at many point. The modes-operendi of merchants differed widely in the various parts of India, depending on the diverse political and administrative situations in which they operated.

Trade in coastal Andhra was carried out by merchants mainly from the communities of Chettis or Sethis, bania or Vanika, Komati and also some other communities mainly concentrated around weaving villages. Among the Hindu merchants Telugu speaking people

5 Merchants were favoured with certain customs privileges in those places where the European company had secured such privileges from the native powers. In the large fortified towns like Madras and Nagapatnam these privileges were quite extensive. It also gave them some status in relation to the native administration which respected and sometimes feared the influence and power of the European companies S. Arasuratnam. "Indian Merchants and their trading methods", IESHR, Vol. III, No.1, 1966, p. 89.

6 The general picture of merchant community and commercial organization which the records of the trading companies bring to light for this period of Indian history is one of a long established and highly skilled tradition which had adjusted to and learnt to live with chronic political instability. W.H. Moreland. India at the death of Akbar. pp. 229-30.
dominated the north of the **Palar** river and to the south as far as Nagapatnam. The vanika or vanik was called bania by the Europeans. Banias were most enterprising traders and amassed great wealth during the period of our study. In contemporary European records, they are described as the greedy persons. Komattis also called as Vaisyai, were the most important caste group because of their settlements along the coast and where largely engaged in commerce and handicraft production. They acted mainly as brokers and suppliers from the producing villages to coastal ports in the textile trade. They travelled far and wide from their Andhra homelands south wards upto Nagapatnam and the Tanjore kingdom. Besides being brokers and suppliers of textiles, they traded in food stuffs. The another important caste group was that of the berichettis. Many wealthy and large scale ship owners, brokers and whole-salers came from this caste. Komattis dominated in coastal trading whole sailing, retailing and banking

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activities.\textsuperscript{10} They had opposition from the beri merchants of Tamil districts who also claimed to be Vaisyas.

They were skillful traders and dominated all along the coast right up to the port of Nagapatnam. They were suppliers of textiles from the centres of production to the ports of Nizampatnam and Nellore on the Andhra coast. Among their other commercial activities building of ships exporting goods to other countries trading in food stuffs were more important. Because of their wealth and status they became leaders of the valangai or right hand faction. The Balanja or Banajiga or Baliga merchants were other merchant communities who played an effective role in the distribution of goods. They were many sub-castes among the Banajigas, who specialized in trading in different items. 1) Dasa banajigas, Elebanajigas or Totabanajigas (betel growers) 2) Dudi banajigas (Cotton traders) 3) Gajula banajigas (glass bangle traders) 4) Puvvula banajigas (flower sellers) 5) Nayudu,

\textsuperscript{10} They were termed as Komattis, these were generally the merchants who by themselves or their servants, traveled into the country gathering up calicoes from the weavers and other commodities, which they sell again in greater parcels in the port towns to merchant strangers taking their commodities in barter or at price.

Moreland. \textit{Relations. op.cit.} p. 16.
Jidipalli 6) Jidipalli  balija 7) Rajamahendra balija (belonging to Nellore Cuddapah and Anantapur). There were two other important Telugu castes known as the Devangulu and sale, who were mainly weaving castes. The Devanga weavers continued to be important in Andhra and Karnataka regions.\textsuperscript{11} The Devangulu were spread over wide area but concentrated mainly in the districts of Visakhapatnam, and Godavari, Krishna and Guntur districts.\textsuperscript{12} There were many sub-castes among the sales known as padamasales, Karmasales and Pattusales who were specialized in weaving of silk fabrics. Salavaru seems to indicate that the Telugu sales but since they are referred as to ancient inhabitants and they were probably the Saliyar the earliest weaving community to be mentioned in Chola inscriptions.\textsuperscript{13} There were other weaving castes such as Tokatas, perikas etc. Brokers played a very significant role in the negotiations of the weaving caste. We find some of these brokers in the Golkonda region after getting good profits, they left for lower markets or ports to trade on their own as a

\textsuperscript{11} Vijayaramaswamy, Textile Trade, p.150.  
\textsuperscript{13} Vijayaramaswamy, op.cit. p. 151.
whole sale merchants. The merchants of Surat, Masulipatnam and Nizampatnam engaged in sending ship to various overseas markets.\textsuperscript{14}

The merchant community in Andhra Coast also included Muslim merchants known as Coromandel moors in European records. The moors of Golkonda were in adventurous and enterprising people and even prior to the arrival of European merchants they had commercial contacts with many countries of the India and the Pacific ocean stretching from east Africa in the west to the Philippines in the east. Their ships used to sail for Bengal Queda, Arakan, Pegu, Tennaserin, Achin, Priaman and Perak etc.\textsuperscript{15} They were also known as Golkonda muslims predominantly Persian in character with a mix of Arabs, Turks and Pathans. The Golkonda muslims were mainly overseas ship traders. They participated in oceanic voyages and distant coastal routes.\textsuperscript{16} They were urban based community mostly settled in Masulipatnam, Nizampatnam and in some of the smaller ports like Bimlipatnam and Nellore area. As a result of their diplomatic relations

\textsuperscript{15} S.A. Alam. \textit{Masulipatnam: A Metropolitan Port,} p. 177.
\textsuperscript{16} Arasaratnam, \textit{Indian Merchants, op.cit.} p. 88.
and influence they could become intermediaries between the rulers of Golkonda and the rulers of other countries which had good commercial relations with Golkonda Sultans.¹⁷

They were mainly overseas traders and active participants in coastal and oceanic trade. They operated their trade mainly in Masulipatnam, Nizampatnam, Vizagapatnam and Bimlipatnam. They enjoyed political patronage from the rulers of Golkonda and influenced the relations between the rulers of Golkonda and the other rulers of the states of Asia.¹⁸

The other commercial community in our study period known as Armenians carried out the commercial activities throughout the Andhra coast. They dominated shipping and oceanic trade as far as Manila in the East and Persian gulf and Red sea in the west. They entered into contact with the English at Madras in 1688 after the fall

¹⁷ S. Arasaratnam, Merchants, Companies, p.218
¹⁸ Coromandel muslins of diverse origins were a growing force in the trade of the coast in the period. Their growth was particularly concentrated in the overseas trading sector. After a century of Golkonda rule they had become domiciled in the
of Qutb Shahi Kingdom in Golkonda travelled freely in the ships belonging to the company. The type of trade and commerce and categories of merchants during Qutb Shahis regime, included overseas and coastal trading, wholesaling, retailing, brokerage banking, and shroffing. It were the Golkonda muslims who mainly did overseas ship trading and participated in oceanic voyages and distant coastal rulers. The Armenians were the foreign setts of Masulipatnam who developed their trade in Masulipatnam, Santhome and porto novo and emerged as important ship owners of the Andhra coast. The Golkonda muslims increased their trade, because freedom of trade in the ports was given to them by the Sultan of Golkonda through granting of Golden Farman in 1632.

Another new merchant group emerged with the growth of trade and commerce, they were grain dealers, merchants who began to act as money lenders and shroffs. Later they contributed for the development of rich peasant economy. Even the rulers also became merchants during eastern Andhra districts and where referred to as Golkonda muslims. S. Arasaratnam. Maritime India. Op.Cit. 205.
the mid seventeenth century. For example Mir jumla, the Governor of Golkonda was a ship owner and exporter to many regions of the Indian ocean by monopolizing the Dutch company imports in Masulipatnam by using political authority. Merchants among the politicians utilized their political influence to monopolize the trade in particular commodities, in different degrees. Other than Mir Jumla, Viranna and Timmanna were the chief merchants of the time who were the major suppliers of textiles to the English on monopolizing the English imports like woolen, lead and copper. Mir Jumla concluded an agreement with the companies agent and supplied textiles to be exported to Persia. The profits of the voyage were shared between the company and Mir Jumla. Mir Jumla represented English interests in Golkonda and secured many favours for them from administration. He secured favourable farman in 1676 AD from the King of Golkonda. The Indian merchants who were the middlemen to European trade during seventeenth century with their

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understanding with the Europeans, became monopolizers, both in export and import trade. They were allowed to import grain, betel and other food items duty free from the Dutch. The joint stock associations of merchants became popular in Masulipatnam, Draksharamam, Palakollu and Madapollam. Coastal Andhra merchants of joint stock associations wanted to trade with the English and other foreign companies. The merchants of Coromandel coast spread out all along the coast. The Muslim traders who came from west Asia and local Muslim merchants had trading relations with Hind merchants. The joint stocks were not only stood for the purchase of textiles but also responsible for sailing of European imports like woolens, lead, copper, zinc, quick silver, brimstone and coral had to accept. The Merchants who were humble and obedient to the English in the trading system became very close to the English and they got benefitted in the process.

22 The unique quality of English and Dutch trade with Asia as conducted through joint stock companies sprang from the attempt to impose a centralized and bureaucratically directed system of exchange and distribution on markets that were traditionally decentralized, fragmented and oriented towards individual efforts. K.N. Chaudhuri, Trading World, op.cit, p. 131.(23) M.N. Pearson & Asin Das Gupta, India and the Indian Ocean, p. 146
There were many major and minor castes who participated in the trading world of this period. Kommattis, Chettiar, Naidu and some other castes were the main mercantile classes dominated the trade in south India. The merchants of Coromandel coast spread all along the coast. These joint stock companies did both purchase of textiles and also selling of European imports like woolens, lead, copper and zinc etc.

To categorize these merchants, first category belonged to sea borne traders who were ship owners and operated on coast. Their primary activity was long distant and coastal trade. Their operations differed widely in scale, for example Mir Kamaluddin of Masulipatnam who owned fleets of vessels. The second category of overseas merchants were those who did not own ships but hired space in ships of others to transport goods which were to be sold in overseas markets. The bulk of the Indians of the seventeenth century belong to this category. The third category of overseas merchant were princes, the other members of the royal family, administrative and nobles who

took to trading in the course of seventeenth century. The rulers of Golkonda themselves were participating in commercial activities in the Coastal trade of Andhra. Golkonda kings had their own fleet of ships, Tavernier says that a large vessel belonging to the King of Golkonda which goes every year to Persia Laden with muslins and coloured Calicoes the flowered decoration of which is all done by hand which makes them more beautiful and more expensive than when it is printed.²⁵

There were other diverse groups of merchants operating in the ports and hinterland of maritime India. They were specialized in specific commodities dealt in mix of them. These merchants had agents in all hinterland merchants to dispose of imports. They were bulk buyers of spices, copper, tin, lead, zinc and other minerals imported by Europeans. These merchant activities included mainly the export trade. They purchased in weaving villages and sold to exporters the export and import commodities.²⁶ They dominated in large parts.

²⁶ The production for the market was organised mainly on the basis of contracts between merchants and weavers, specifying the quality to be supplied, the price and
Other category were middlemen and brokers servicing overseas traders. They work largely on advances from the large merchants housed them to accumulate goods in small lots for exports.\textsuperscript{27} They also serviced the import trade by finding buyers again in small lots. They were itinerant, travelling some distance into the hinterland to producing villages and market towns. Their major area of operation was textile trade and they had close links with weaving villages where they doled out advances to many weavers. Their number increased enormously in the seventeenth century in and around European port settlements. Another category of merchants were financiers, shroffs, dealers in exchange and the minting of specie. It is to be noted that these categories by no means mutually exclusive and one person could combine the other.

States attitude and policies towards improvement of trade and commerce was an important aspect to discuss because it is the state that

\textsuperscript{27} The artisan may own his few simple tools and even a certain amount of working capital, but he is not able to market his products without the help of middlemen. In such circumstances it becomes easy for traders and merchants to acquire control over the production process and its profits. K.N. Chaudhuri. \textit{Trading World}, p. 5.
placed major role in any activity. In particular Qutb Shahi rulers adopted a clear cut commercial policy promote trade and to develop the economy. The sultans of Golkonda encouraged trade by granting *farman* and by giving exemptions to the traders who came from various *countries*. It is to be noted that Qutb Shahis had adopted oppressive yet devised nation system to increase wealth of the state. Towards this task Governors of the regions were given powers to impose taxes. At the sea ports, however, as throughout the country the personality of the local officers counted for very much the more so that the customs seem to have been commonly let on contract to the highest bidder. They adopted different type of taxes and different type of mercantile practices. On Andhra coast land they adopted mainly two types of taxes. One was custom duty on import and export trade, second was local tax that was to be collected by regional authorities. Custom duty was one of the chief sources of revenue in coastal

28 In the time of Sultan Mohammad Qutb shah the seas were patrolled as far of as the Island of Sacotra which is nearly 2000 sea miles from Masulipatnam. This patrolling by Qutb Shahi naval units was effective and they guaranteed the safety of all foreign shippings. H.K Sherwani, "The reign of Abdulla Qutb Shah", II, *Journal of Indian History*, p.678.

Andhra. Sea customs were collected at Masulipatnam and at other ports. These taxes were either collected by royal officers or contractors. The local Governors, Zamindars and Polegars collected other specific imports with or without the states permission. Governors during Golkonda period imposed toll percent tax on exports from Masulipatnam and Nizampatnam as a stamping and brokerage duty. The Qutb Shahi officials levied duties on import and export were comparatively low and there was a further relaxation in favour of certain European companies. They favoured the Dutch nation most favourably. During the reign of Mohammad Qutb Shah the ships entering and leaving the port of Nagapatum paid only 2% ad-veloram duty on entry and the same amount on exit. While the Dutch controlled port of Pulicat hey had to pay this amount in addition to fifteen pagodas per ship as anchorage duty. At Nizampatnam which was governed by Hindu governor of Golkonda who had farmed it, the amount charged was 3.5% ad veloram duty on arrival and the same on departure, besides the tax called chappa dalali’ or stamping and brokerage which amounted to 11%.

These taxes were levied on foreign merchants only and the Muslims and Hindus (Moors and Gentus) could trade freely although even they had to make some presents to the Governor. The tax on exports and imports through the sea ports was fixed at 2.5% to 3% ad-veloram in all the ports of the coast. The Sultan of Golkonda permitted the Dutch to trade freely at Nizampatnam and reduced the customs duty from 12% to 4%. At Masulipatnam the rates of customs were the highest in this region at 4%.31 With the Qutb Shahi rulers the Dutch, the English concluded various agreements where by they got the freedom to trade and also concessions on import and export taxes.32 At ports an naval centres anchorage duty was charged on all ships. The rate of the duty at some of the ports was not known exactly. The anchorage duty was 100 pagodas per ship at Masulipatnam. All European ships over 200 tons paid 9 pagados and those under 100 tons paid six pagodas. The English, unlike, the Dutch were quite

32 The VOC got of good start over the EIC on the Coromandel trade but its hold there was seriously shaken by the wars in and around Golkonda during the last
successful in dealing with the Golkonda authorities though at times, the privileges were obtained by making expensive gifts. Land customs and choultry customs were other kinds of customs that are imposed on goods that passed through these ports. The goods that came into the ports were also taxed and if the goods were re-exported by sea they paid only one import duty at the ports and governments sometimes levied these duties or reduced them to a minimum. Measuring and weighing duties, land customs and choultry customs and *sunkam* duties at the town gate. Transit dues were various revenue collections for Qutb Shahis.

Regarding commercial activities, maritime trade in Coastal Andhra benefited from the liberal regime that all Andhra rulers permitted along the coast and the autonomy they gave to the communities that dwelt there during seventeenth century. It enabled quarter of the seventeenth century, at a period when the English surpassed the Dutch in their capital resources. C.R Boxer. *The Dutch seaborne empire*, p. 200. Seema Singh, *Op.cit.* p 405.


34 In the seventeenth century merchants acquired further levers of political influence as economic activity expanded and as merchants were called upon to assist the state in other ways. The farming out of the revenues by auction to maximize their wealth.
the merchants of the coast to establish their own *modes-operandi* with the territorial regime. But this autonomy did not lead to an attempt to integrate the Andhra coast totally into the administration of the state. No major urban centres, market towns, military camps or pilgrimage centres grew along the Andhra coast. No substantial military power was located in or near the Andhra coast. The Andhra coast continued as an area through which profit was channeled to the interior. Maritime Andhra was throughout the seventeenth century a defenseless source of wealth to the state.

Maritime zones were defended by provincial and district administrators, received imperial attention only in serious times of crisis. One major observation is that the commercial activity of the seventeenth century made no substantial difference to the lives of the ordinary people of the Andhra coast. It is seen from the fact that throughout the century there was a no marked movement of population from the *hinter-land* to the port towns. The growth of population in these towns did not match the expansion of commerce. It is difficult to determine to what extent there was a free labour market in these again brought the merchants in as revenue farmers and speculators. S. *Arasaratnam.*
areas. It is significant to note that there was no marked migration of weavers from interior villages to the coast.

The rise of kingdom of Golkonda in the Andhra coast and hinterland made Machilipatnam and from Nizampatnam to Nellore an important regional entrepots. The sea ports that flourished during this period played a major role for the development of markets for the imports. Machilipatnam trade with Burma, Bengal, Malaya and Sumatra grew. It is to be noted that the intrusion of Islamic power that is Muslim settlers into Andhra Coast effected the activities of Telugu chettis and we see more of them moving towards southern Coromandel and competing with Tamil chettis in their traditional preserves. The Hindu merchants of Golkonda did not have power and influence they had enjoyed under Vijayanagar rulers. They lost their old revenue terms they had for generations. On the other hand Golkonda muslim

Maritime India., p. 177.
36 Metholds description does, however, suggest that domestic consumption of cloth must have gone up, although this would apply predominantly to the north Coromandel where the Muslim influence was very strong. Vijaya Ramaswamy. Textiles and Weavers, p. 128.
merchants extended their influence over the Hindus and penetrated southwards from Masulipatnam to Nellore and beyond.\(^\text{37}\) Actually the increase of trade took place with the granting of *Golden farman* in 1632 by the Sultan of Golkonda, which give freedom of trade in the Ports.\(^\text{38}\)

There is a need to discuss the internal trade and external trade that was carried through the ports of Coastal Andhra during the period of our study. It is to be noted that trade and industry like textiles, diamond and steel, wood carving flourished during the 17th century and even supplied articles the local as well as foreign markets. The policies of Golkonda rulers to maintain good commercial relations with the neighboring rulers as well as foreign countries in west Asia, Europe and south East Asia were an important feature for the growth of the trade in coastal Andhra.

\(^\text{37}\) The Indian merchants, both Moors and Chettis, offered stiff competition to the Europeans in what has been termed 'inter-Asiatic' or 'country trade', i.e. both the Red sea trade as well as the trade with the spice islands *Ibid.* p. 133.

Following account gives the picture of exports and imports and the development of markets during the period of our study. The major item in export trade was textiles or manufactured cloth which the produce of handloom weavers of the Andhra coast. Indian varieties of textiles have always won the admiration of the outside world and Indonesian archipelago. All foreign visitors to India paid glowing tributes to the fineness and delicacy. It formed about 1/10 of the total exports. The extensive markets and the diversity in demands encourage the export of the textiles. The goods brought from the hinterland and were exported to many countries. The east coast was dotted with ports from where textiles were exported to Europe and East Indies. Masulipatnam was the most important of these. Srikakulam was noted for Muslin export while Rajahmundry produced fine cloth. Masulipatnam was the centre Kalemenda cloth i.e. Cloth painted with Qalam or fine pen, while the Dutch factory at Pulicat manufactured

39 The Dutch in competition with the English also provided the impetus for a great increase in the manufacture and production of Indian textiles, which now found a market not only in Asia and East Africa but in West Africa, Europe and even America. The increased volume of Production was not, however, accompanied by any significant changes in the techniques of manufacture. T. Raychaudhuri. Jan Company in Coromandel, 1605-1690, A study in the interrelations of
cloth painted fine-textured or plain. There was much demand for Indian-made cloth by the English, the Danes and Moors. The ports on the eastern coast especially through the port of Masulipatnam, required the merchants to have direct contact with the weavers some times through the brokers to get the goods according to the requirements of regional markets. The trade in textiles operated in two directions (1) bilateral trade from the ports of Masulipatnam and others to the markets to Achin, Malacca and etc. Which in return imported into India many of the products (2) textiles were exported to Mediterranean regions through Red sea and Persian gulf and also to Western India to exchange for the spices of Malaccas were sent to the Mediterranean and the West Asian markets. The second pattern became popular among the European traders, Dying, Painting and printing of textiles in beautiful designs and colours especially these varieties of cotton cloth like long cloth, sari cloth, Golkonda Beeteleaves, ercollaes, attejaes, duugarees, psarempores and moris were the speciality of the Coromandel textiles

40 William Foster. EFI, 1651-54, p. 251.
that were exported. These three varieties constituted gigantic volume of export. Weaving and leaching, dying and painting were practiced in all centres but some of them were more important than other for particular specialities. Thus the dyes obtainable in the northern centres Masulipatnam and Petapolee were superior to those found farther south.

The salempores were reputed to be produced in Nellore district and also round about Masulipatnam. Mori was also own in the district of Nellore. Masulipatnam, Nizampatnam and Narsapore were famous for the production of printed cloth. Guinea cloth made of cotton thread which was dyed in bright colours and its Dutch modification was exported to South East Asia and also to Africa and

42 However, our interst lies in the fact that the Europeans did not bring their own techniques in the textile craft to India, at any rate during the first half of the seventeenth century. In fact, Europeans did not posses any superior technology in this field during this period. Ashanjan Qaisar The Indian response to European technology and culture. 1498-1707, p. 83.
43 Peter Floris, His Voyages to the East Indies in the Globe, 1611-1615, p. XX
also southeast Asian countries, it was available in Bimlipatnam and surrounding areas. Painted' cloth was the main article of trade on the east coast. Initially the Europeans had dealt in coarse cloth, cotton yarn and indigo. Later many commodities were added, spices, lead, quick silver, porcelain and broad cloth. But it were the paintings that were the pride of manufacture. The principle centres were Masulipatnam, Palacole and Petapolee, now called Nizampatnam. 46

Next item of articles which were exported were known as allegias which were cotton fabrics are cotton mixed with silk are with gold threads worked into colour combinations red and white or blue and white. These were exported mainly to West Asia, Bandar Abbas and Mocca and later to the European countries. They were known near Masulipatnam, Palakollu and Draksharamam areas. The other item which was exported was Chiavovis which were a light and thin white cotton cloth knotted with silk of different colours which were blended in Masulipatnam and Palakollu. The other two varieties which were exported from Masulipatnam to the Malay states were known as cassa

Putah and Cassamera which means cloth in white and red colours in Malay origin.

The other item was sasthrakundis or sacegundis which was a cotton cloth made of a thread before weaving and produced in Masulipatnam. It is a Sanskrit name traced from the Sanskrit word sahasra grandhi which means thousand knots. Sukatoons was another material which was exported to Burma and Persia and it was own in around Bimlipatnam. This was a material which used to be very heavy cotton cloth being used for palking and also as blankets. Romals were small cotton or silk pieces used as hand kerchiefs were produced in and around Nizampatnam.  

These centres were famous for various manufacturing materials like cotton, muslin, chintz. The textiles from various parts of the regions of the kingdom were brought to Masulipatnam. The small villages produced various kinds of textiles such as bettiles, sarangs, salumpores, unbleached bettiles and so on and so forth supplied to the

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48 R.C. Majudar. The classical accounts of India, p. 307.
town of Masulipatnam. Fine muslin was manufactured at Masulipatnam and Srikakulam and it can be compared with Dacca muslin. The production of cloth and other manufactures gave rise to some urban development. The industrial towns, commercial villages comeup and developed as main trading centres Coastal Andhra. Rajamundry became famous for a fine quality of cloth, such as bettiles (muslin), salemopores bordered calico, which were the best calicoes in the markets. Weaving, bleaching, dying and printing were practiced both in the northern and southern centres on the Andhra coast. Masulipatnam and Armagaon were superior for the dyes and dyed pieces cloth were ordinarily brought by merchants there.49 Kalamkari a famous cloth was a product of Masulipatnam painted with Qalam or fine pen was exported to the European markets. Cotton yarn also plain and dyed became an item of export. The commercial interaction between the weavers and the merchants and the advancement of cash by the Europeans benefiting both the weavers and the Indian merchants helped in increasing the export of textile trade. The Indian

merchants working for the English Company and the weavers scattered in different villages and market towns of the hinterland continued to be in a relatively advantageous position. Rather the benefits of the flourishing textile industry and the export trade occurred as much to the European trading companies as to weavers and native merchants. A substantial chunk of the incomes and profits thus derived remained in the hinterland to the benefit of its inhabitants.\(^{50}\)

In addition to the textiles animal skins particularly Rhinoceros and leopard were exported from Masulipatnam. These were available in Palakollu and these were exported by the Dutch to Batavia and to Japan. Leather items procured in Draksharamam and Palakollu were exported to other countries. Saltpetre was another item, exported to European and west Asia, it was founded the mouth of river Krishna was the port of Nizampatnam.\(^{51}\) Krishna delta was well supplied with the principal dyes for indigo was grown in the neighbourhood and Petapolee itself was noted for the high quality of its Indian madder

\(^{50}\) **Indu Banga**, *op. cit.* p. 69.

or chayroot. It was used in the manufacture of the gun powder. Iron and steel found in the Golkonda region was brought to the coast and was exported to Pegu, Tennaserin, Arakan, Arabia and Persia. As trade and commerce increased, silk and ivory were added to the exports. The coastal Andhra iron mines were in Vetapalem near Nizampatnam, Nirmal and Indore which were situated in the north of Golkonda were the centres of iron and steel industry. The diamonds found in Golkonda and Bijapur kingdoms were exported to the south east Asia. Tobacco was exported from Masulipatnam to the main land of South East Asia and to Arabia. Redwood found in the Godavari delta was exported to Mocca. Red dye that was extracted from lac and used for painting calico came from the hinterland of Nizampatnam were exported to from here. Drugs and Cassamba were exported to Burma

52 W.H. Moreland, From Akbar to Aurangzeb, p. 33. See, also, Om Prakash, DFI, 56-64
54 Contemporary records provide us, by and alrge with detailed accounts of mining, but only about two sectors, salt and diamond. Ahsan Jan Qaisar Indian response p. 78. This town was known for the manufacture of large quantities of muslins during the first century after christ. R C. Majudar. The classical accounts of India p. 307
This town was known for the manufacture of large quantities of muslins during the first century after christ. R..C. Majudar. The classical accounts of India p. 307.
and to the West Asian countries. Slaves had also became a part of export trade and became a market for south east Asia. It was due to me expansion of European settlements on the coast.\textsuperscript{56} Hundreds of slaves were exported from Nizampatnam and Masulipatnam to Batavia between 1640 AD to 1660AD.

During the Qutb Shahi period not only the exports but also many items were imported in order to meet the requirements of the internal trade as well as needs of the people. Major import categories were spices and pepper because there was a great demand for them for the weather as the food ingredients. The different items imported were nut meg, cloves, sandlewood, eagle wood, mace, pepper, gold from Siam coarse porcelain etc. cardamons, cinnamon from Sumatra Malacca and Ceylon.\textsuperscript{57} These were used for medicinal purposes also pepper was imported from Burma and Thailand. Another largest single commodity of import was metals like tin, copper, lead and zinc. Lead

\textsuperscript{56} From the important ports of Coromandel coast in Godavari district like Madappolam and Narasapur, the exports included cotton, timber and involved in the activities of slave trade Richard Allen A Short Introduction to the Industry and Politics of South East Asia, p 34 (57) K.S. Mathew. "Masulipatnam and the maritime trade of India during the seventeenth century", APHC, p. 81, also see, Om Prakash.. Op.cit. pp 39, 65, 98-99..
Another category of imports were aromatic goods such as sandalwood and sample wood which were imported from Java, Malaya and Thailand. Machilipatnam was the main centre of import of Persian and Arabian goods. Natural gum, dama, lac, perfumes were imported from South East Asia, Achch, China, West Asian countries respectively. Coconuts, coir, cashew nuts, carpets, brocade, dye foods, wines and dye roots were imported from Achch, Kedah, Perac, Thailand, Ceylon, Persia and Ugbekistan respectively. Masulipatnam was the major port where the elephants were its embarked and then taken in to hinterland, Porcelain Was an important item from China.

Thus exports and imports formed a crucial aspect of coastal trade in the Qutb Shahi period the continuous expansion of import trade was due to the expanding demands of the then ruling class in spite of the heavy exports the balance of trade was favourable to the state, because the cost of imports did not exceed the value of exports.

In addition to exports and imports interregional trade was also formed an important aspect of inland trade. According to the Tavernier rice, floor, butter, milk, beans and other vegetables, sugar sweet meets
from England, broad cloth from France horse from Uzbekistan, Arabia, Persia and Ethiopia, dried fruit from Bhukhara and Persia, Cowries and ambergris from Maldives porcelain from China, pearls from Tuticorn and Bahrain cloves and cinnamon from Ceylon were on the port folio of imports. Ships laden with articles like quick silver, vermilion, gold and silver ingots, iron, cannon and articles meant for presents came principally from the west. Salt Petre, which was demand for the manufacture of gun powder, was imported from Bengal.\textsuperscript{58}

Tin was imported from south Asian countries, Copper from Japan. Copper was imported to make implements, utensils and minting of coins. Precious metals like gold and silver were also imported to build up metal industry. A large quantity of gold was brought from Achch and west Sumatran ports of Pegu and Palembang. Gold and silver bars were imported from Europe ship laden with gold and silver mainly came from Europe and also from the Malay Archipelago, China, Japan and other neighbouring countries and Ceylon and Bahrain pearls were imported.

\textsuperscript{58} H.K. Sherwani, \textit{History of the Qutb Shahi Dynasty}. p. 478.
were available in the villages in abundance, which were on sale imported articles which were also on sale though they were expensive.\textsuperscript{59}

The interregional trade comprised of food stuffs and textiles. Rice was exported from surplus areas too deficit areas very large scale. A kind of grape called Anab-I-Shahi or royal grape was developed under Qutb Shahis. Mangoes were sent from Bengal. \textsuperscript{60} Thus interregional trade was an exchange of food stuffs and wide range of textile products.

Trade routes are to be discussed when analysing the trade and commerce in any period. As far as Qutb Shahis concerned there are valuable sources to know about the trade routes. By their accounts we get a fairly good idea about the net work of roads connecting the different industrial centres. Ports and markets facilitating both internal and external trade. The sources were corroborated by journals and letters of officials of factories in coastal Andhra. The data in the letters and journals of the officials of the factories, which were

\textsuperscript{59} The achievement of an extra ordinarily high degree of market dependence is suggested by bits of evidence like the poor peasants of the rice growing reverine systems of southern coast depended for a large part of its raw material on Maharashtra and Berar. D.A. Washbrook. Progress and problems - South Asian economic and social history, \textit{C-1720-1860}MAS, 22 (1), 1988 pp. 57-96 cited in Om Prakash. 77K? New Cambridge Industry of India, II. 5, p. 156.

\textsuperscript{60} H.K. Sherwani. The Reign of Abdulla Qutb Shah-I, p. 457.
interspersed along the eastern coast or what came to be called the Golkonda Coast over many volumes of records and are supported by the dairies and letters of many eminent travellers such as Tavernier, Bernier and Thevenot some of whom give a fairly detailed description of the routes covered by them.\textsuperscript{61} The trunk roads enabled trade on a large scale. Roads from Surat to Hyderabad, Hyderabad to Machilipatnam,\textsuperscript{62} Hyderabad to Madras via Gandikota road from Vijayawada to Madras,\textsuperscript{63} Masulipatnam to Srikakulam, Hyderabad to Tamallakota diamond mines were the important roads that were developed.\textsuperscript{64}

Bullock carts constituted the important mode of transport to transport goods from one region to another and also between one port to another on land.\textsuperscript{65} Even water transport with the ports was also used as mode of transport as a part of the interregional trade to transport the goods like food grains, salt and salt petre. Sea routes were

\textsuperscript{63} \textit{Ibid}. p.204.

used by merchants from the port of Nizampatnam also from other ports. To other countries were the sea route to Africa and Europe, sea route to Persia and Arabia, sea route to Far east, sea route to Africa and Europe from the port of Masulipatnam was either through the Persian gulf route or by the red sea route. The sea route to Persia and Arabia from the port of Nizampatnam went to Port Harmaz and Bandar Abbas. The sea route to Far east or south east Asian countries was from the port of Masulipatnam across the Bay of Bengal following customary line to Achin and then to Bantam, Batavia and from there to Bornia and then to China and Japan. Thus the sea routes from the ports of Masulipatnam, Bimlipatnam, Nizampatnam and other ports went to all parts of the world, connecting the eastern coast with the other parts of the world, resulting into promotion of commerce during Qutb Shahi regime.

66 The high sea trade carried on from Pulicat and other Coromandel ports, there was also a fair amount of coastal trade carried on with the Bengal ports in the north, the Srilankan and other port int he south and with ports on the Malabar coast. While the ships from Bengal usually returned from north Coromandel itself, those from the Gingelly coast went further south to supply central Coromandel as far as Pulicat and Santhome. Om Prakash. The New Cambridge history of India, Vol. V, 2. pp. 19-20.
During seventeenth centuries India in general and in coastal Andhra particular, markets concentrated in both villages and towns. Satish Chandra writes that during seventeenth century we find the chain of villages which acted as collecting centres of grain *Mandis* leading up to a bigger *mandi* for a region. These bigger *mandis* holding to the big grain dealers known as *banjaras* in the larger towns. Small town ships known as *Qasbas* came in to existence during this period only. These *Qasbas* were the regional centres for the collection of grain. So also every large sea port had three types of markets. (1) Purely local market (2) wholesale spot market (3) latter's offshoot market, called as forward market. During Golkonda period industrial, agricultural raw material and other commodities were bought at the dealers counter or even directly at the theatre of agricultural or industrial production. Given the principle of free trade to the merchants of all over the world, the local markets in Europe maintained their entreports in the bazars of Surat and Masulipatnam. The Dutch and the English played an important organizing role to market industrial and agricultural products. The local Sahukar and middlemen were also responsible for organizing business financially.
In mid seventeenth century whole sale markets of Masulipatnam supplied 20 ships of large tonnage. But with the advent of Europeans developed the means of transport and developed market centres. With the arrival of the European companies many merchants felt that it was more profitable and less risky to act on behalf of the companies. So they started to act as brokers and suppliers in the textile trade from the villages to the ports. The companies depended on them to pronounce textiles for exports and to sell their home products.

In the wake of the establishment of the settlements of the English company and the increasing demand of supplies there evolved an office of chief merchant held by one or two of the most prominent merchants of the region. Due to the increase in the business he appointed his own men as his assistants and sub-brokers to meet the necessaries of the companies.
The indigenous merchants acted as middlemen between the producers and companies. They served as linguists to overcome the language barrier to a great extent. The indigenous merchants acted also as brokers between the English merchants and the local producers and received commissions or brokerage, and sometimes they became the financiers to the companies. They advanced money to the weavers on behalf of the company.

The indigenous merchants expanded the money market and improved the credit facilities by raising the many for the companies. In fact all the commercial operations in India during the seventeenth century were in the hands of brokers. The major marketing centres developed on the coast to manufacture fine variety of cotton for Masulipatnam, Nizampatnam, Madapollam, Palakollu, Rajahmundry, Srikakulam, Rajahmundry, Nellore and Pulicat became important centres for manufacturing materials like cotton, muslin and chintz. In

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67 Indian merchants were employed as brokers, interpreters, agents, attorneys, writers, money changers, cashiers, intermediate brokers and subcontracting merchants. Asin Das Gupta & M.N. Pearson, India and the Indian Ocean, p. 306.

Nizampatnam and Masulipatnam ship building industry developed. Thus the markets flourished not only due to the availability of raw material and its demands and also due to transport and communication facility that were developed during Qutb Shahi period.

Different ports had different currency, the native coins as well as Mughal rupee were freely in circulation in the kingdom. Given the diamond business in the kingdom and also textile business, there were simple weights and measures. The mining, refining and cutting of diamonds were the most profitable industries in the region. Golkonda was for centuries the only source of large diamonds in the world. By the middle of the seventeenth century there were 23 mines in operation. Several thousands of labourers, artisans craftsmen, contractors, money lenders, merchants and officials were engaged in Golkonda mines. The pit diamond also known as the Regent along with several of the

69 The English also sent in large amount to Masulipatnam especially to procure diamonds Despatches from England1680-82 pp 56-60.
70 The mining of diamonds, particularly in a belt from south of the Krishna to the latitude of Pulicat, exercised great fascination for contemporary observers. The most successful of the mines in the early seventeenth century, Kolluru is said to have provided employment for about 30000 people in that period. Sanjay
largest stones in existence came from this mines. The other items were produced for exports like garnet, amethyst, topaz, aget etc. Textile manufacture was encouraged through the chief ports. There were district price levels during his period of our study. Duties levied on imports and exports were comparatively low and there was a further relaxation.

From all this information it becomes clear that the commerce and trade had tremendous impact on society polity and economy and culture in Coastal Andhra. There was a rapid urbanization because of trade and commerce. Cities and towns became cultural and political centres promoted economic activity and attracted merchants business men and entrepreneurs of native or foreign. Town on the coast became more prosperous and stimulated administrative framework. Politically the rulers are also became merchants and encouraged trade and commerce, foreign rulers, and Indian rulers had to have good commercial policies to encourage the mutual trade. Economically both


Owen C, Kail *The Dutch in India*, p. 33.
indigenous and foreign trade increased with maintaining the balance of trade. Indian local poor artisans got economic support from the foreign merchants given the needs of trade. There was political capitalism implying accumulation of capital in the hands of kings, princes, princesses and ladies of the imperial harem as they were directly engaged in formation of joint stock companies was another economic impact. Traditional traffic and also maritime routes developed and coexisted simultaneously in seventeenth century.