CHAPTER VI

Textile Production, Organisation and Trade in the Seventeenth Century

The seventeenth century marks the most complex phase in the position of the indigenous textile industry and the fortunes of the weavers. At the opening of the century only the Portuguese had a sphere of influence in South India but by the second decade of the century both the Dutch and the English had entered the commercial fray and the Portuguese power had begun to wane. The keen European competition for Indian textiles acted as a spur to the industry. Anything the weavers produced was bought up by the rival companies at any price and the weavers bargained from a position of strength. But all the while they were the unconscious victims of an insidious corrosion into their independence. A series of intermediaries stood between the weavers and the ultimate buyers of their cloth - the companies. The weavers began to work on the basis of advances and they worked according to set musters, to "the perfection of a pattern". Along with these developments in the organisation of textile production, the overall picture had also changed by the last decades of the seventeenth

century. While it was the Dutch who had dominated the first half of the century, the English had definitely emerged as the main commercial power in the South by the end of it.

The Portuguese had been the first European nation to get a foothold into India by displacing the Arabs. They held Goa, Diu, Cochin on the Malabar Coast and Nagapattinam and San Thome on the Coromandel coast. The commercial interest of the Portuguese was essentially concerned with the export of pepper and spices from Cochin in the Malabar coast and the East Coast to Europe, and Coromandel textiles were used as the principal article of barter in the spice trade of the Malay Archipelago. The Dutch acted as their distributors for the spices. However, in 1580, when Portugal passed into the hands of Spain, all cordial relations with the Dutch ceased. The Dutch utilised the situation created by the defeat of the Armada to fit out expeditions on their own. In 1605, the Dutch pinnace 'Delft' anchored at Masulipatnam and established a factory there under the leadership of Pieter Yassoox Ryloff. Settlements were also established at Nizamapatnam, Tegnapatnam or Devensmapattinam (Fort St. David) and Pulicat (Fort Geldria). By 1600, the English East Indies Company had been established. In 1611, the 'Globe' brought

2 For general books giving a historical account of the rise and fall of these European Companies see the bibliography at the end of this thesis.
the first English traders to Nizamapatnam and Masulipatnam and in 1610 entered into a partnership with the Dutch at Pulicat. By the 1620's the alliance between the English and the Dutch had broken down due to mutual suspicion.

From Pulicat the English moved on to Armagao (1626) and Madras (1640). By the 1620's the Danes had also secured trading rights from the Nayak of Tanjavur and had established settlements at Tranquebar. Thus the struggle for a commercial empire in South India in the seventeenth century, was mainly among these powers, the French having entered the scene rather late, i.e., only in the eighteenth century.

Location of Textile Centres - Factors behind Weavers' Mobility

Several considerations influenced the establishment of textile and trade centres in the seventeenth century. Availability of raw material and cheap labour was still a primary consideration and these meant the continuation of traditional weaving centres. In fact the establishment of a factory was geared to the demands of the specific types of cloth required and the locality where they would be available. The printed chintz and betelles of Masulipatnam

and the painted calicoes of Santhome (Mylapur) Pulicat and Saidpet\textsuperscript{4} (in Chennapatnam or Madras) were the basic reasons for the establishment of factories in these regions. In the consultation of 1677, the Agent and Council take credit for their fact that their factory at Madspollam was "so well sited" since it "lies among the weavers." All the traditional weaving centres were cotton producing tracts\textsuperscript{5} and also the places where the best dyes were available.

Localisation based on textile specialisation, however, constituted a very limited sphere of operation. In such a case the parameters of trade were bound to be narrow. Such localisation by itself could only meet the demands of a

\textsuperscript{4} Barboss, op.cit. Vol.\textit{II}, p.153; Linschoten, op.cit. Vol.\textit{I}, p.91; Methwold in Relations, op.cit. p.4; Thevnot, op.cit p.146 and p.57. He says the painted calicoes of San Thome were much finer than the ones of Masulipatnam or any other region.

\textsuperscript{5} The places surrounding Masulipatnam Chirala, Belagavi, Guntur, Ellur and others are famous for their cotton production. Bijapur, Dharwar and Kolhapur are also black soil regions. Tirunelveli, Tanjore, Coimbatore and certain parts of Chingleput are red ferralsogenous (loamy) soil regions, producing mostly short staple varieties of cotton. For a survey of cotton producing areas in the South see Watt: \textit{A Dictionary of Commercial Products of India} (London, 1908). A specialised survey of the cotton tracts in the Bombay Presidency is to be found in F. Fletcher's article "The Improvement of Cotton in Bombay Presidency (with map). \textit{The Agricultural Journal of India}, Vol.\textit{I}, No.\text{IV}, 1906. Also see Gramme, G.A., \textit{The Cultivation of Cotton in India}, \textit{Agricultural Journal} Vol.\textit{III}, No.\text{II}, 1908. For South Coromandel refer to \textit{The Economic Atlas of the Madras State}, (New Delhi, 1962), p.103. The cotton growing regions are briefly discussed in Chap.\textit{II} of this thesis.
limited internal market through the medium of local fairs etc. But the East India companies were concentrating on the export trade in textiles and were hence concerned with the problem of distances and transport which would determine the profitability of their trade in textiles. Hence the establishment of textile centres and factories had to be determined by the distance between the weaving centres and the points of shipments as well as the actual cost of shipping from the Coromandel coast to the Malay archipelago, England and Europe. Of the variables, which determined the establishment of centres, transport was the most important. This seems evident from the fact that all the European factories were established on the coast. Even though Madurai was an ancient area of textile weaving, no attempt was made to establish a factory there. While some, like Masulipatnam or San Thome (Kylapur), were also conveniently traditional textile centres, places like Vishakapatnam (Waltair) were chosen purely from the point of


7 See 'Introduction' Suur&. The antiquity of Madurai as a textile centre is evident from the references in the Manimekalai. The Arthysastra, etc.
view of shipment and cotton from Masulipatnam and sometimes Tegnapatnam (Fort St. David) was imported into Vishakapatnam to meet the textile requirements of the weavers in Vishakapatnam. While the Dutch at least had some direct dealing with the weavers in the interior regions, the English depended almost entirely on merchant middlemen and brokers to bring the products from the interior to the factories. It was much later that some attempt was made to buy direct from the weaving centres in order to eliminate the middlemen who inflated the prices and took large cuts.

Apart from these factors, the establishment of factories also depended on elements of chance. For instance, the English established a factory at Armagon for the only reason that the traditional centres in the area were closed to them, Pulicat being held by the Dutch and San Thome by the Portuguese.

The most striking feature of the Coromandel weaver was his mobility. The only prerequisite for the weaver to settle down in a place seems to have been the availability of shady trees. One of the reasons put forward for the mobility of the Coromandel weaver is that wheeled traffic

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8 Letters, 14th March, 1696, pp.16, p.22. Also p.25 - all cotton at Madapollam and Masulipatnam to be sent to Vizag.


10 Easter, 13th Oct. 1653, p.239
was absent in the South in contrast to Gujarat and Bengal. This is, however, a misconception and South Indian inscriptions refer to the transportation of cotton, yarn and cloth apart from salt, pepper and other commodities, in carts. The tendency towards migration could be the result of unsettled political conditions like political oppression or foreign invasions. Thus in the Consultation of 28th Sep. 1675, it is stated that Madanna's forces had captured the English Company's merchants and the weavers had fled to Chengy. Famine and scarcity of food also led to the migration of weavers. The weavers migrated not only under conditions of stress but as a mark of protest.

12 A clear instance is a 16th Century inscription from Piranmalai, Ramnud dt. (S.I.I., Vol.VIII, No.442. Also S.I.I., Vol.XVI, No.52 etc.) Later references to wheeled traffic are to be found in Caesar Fredric, Purchas, His Pilgrims, op.cit. p.130 and elsewhere. It would thus be incorrect to assume that only pack-bullock were used.
14 Diary and Consultations, 1672-78, 28th Sep.1675, p.73
15 Letters 13 Sep.1688, p.52, Diary and Consultations, 11th June 1694, 21st Nov.1694 etc.
against high taxation etc. Their mobility helped them to improve their bargaining power as shown by their frequent defections – from the English to the Dutch or the Moors etc.

As Orme commented there was hardly a village or town on the Coromandel Coast where at least a few families of weavers could not be found. This raised one serious problem for the Companies involved in textile trade. The weaving centres were too many and too far flung for them to maintain administrative personnel in these regions. Hence except where the factories were established at the textile centres itself, the Companies could operate only through intermediaries. It was to minimise their dependence on the merchants that the East Indias Company began to encourage the weavers and workers to settle in the vicinity of forts and factories.

The English Company wrote in its general letter to the Fort St. George dated 15th Dec. 1676, "We find the Dutch have their

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16 Talloys Wheeler, Early Records of British India, (Delhi, 1972 pp. 78-79. "The weavers when disgusted have lighted lamps in their houses and remove to some other part of the country, so that whole towns are deserted in a night".

17 Diary and Consultations, 28th Sep. 1675, p. 74

18 Foster, 9th Jan., 1666, pp. 130-1

19 Foster, 19th April, 1636, Ibid., 1st Oct. 1632, Dispatches 16th April 1697
dyers and painters on the coast and we know no reason why we may not have our business as well as they ..."20. They were offered inducements like paddy at cheap rates, lowering of customs and taxes,21 higher wages, etc. That this policy was very successful is proved by the records which refer to the migration of weavers and washers to the Portuguese,22 English,23 and Dutch24 settlements. In a letter from the English factors at Pulicost to the Company in 1622, they write "Many weavers and painters have voluntarily offered to follow the English wherever they go"25. In 1634 when the English began negotiating with the Kolconda rulers for a settlement at Mallavol (near Masulipatnam) the weavers and others immediately began to settle there and the population "doubled itself in magnitude, so fast do the poor people flock hither from the Moorish tyranny."26

20 Dispatches, 15th December 1676, p.45
21 In 1640 there were about 900 families in black town. The professionals were all granted freedom from taxes for a period of 30 years -- Srinivasachari, History of the City of Madras (Madras 1939), p.94
22 In a petition presented to the Governor of Fort St. George the Portuguese inhabitants of Madraspatnam reminded the English that the earliest settlements of weavers and painters in the region had been made under Portuguese command. Diary and Consultations, Jan.1679, p.166
23 Foster, Vol.V, 12th Sep.1631; Dispatches, 36 Aug.1698
24 Dispatches, 15th Feb.1888
25 Foster, Vol.II, 6th Nov.1622, p.105
26 Foster, Vol.IV, 1634, p.48. These statements of the English factors cannot however be taken at their face value in view of the strong bias of the writers.
ORGANIZATION OF TEXTILE PRODUCTION

Problems of Procurement

The task of mobilising the textiles of South India to meet the growing external demand was a formidable one. At the opening of the seventeenth century the importance of textiles was confined to its role as the principal barter in the spice trade, a trade that the Portuguese had more or less taken over from the Arabs and indigenous traders. With the Dutch the trade in textiles emerged in its own right and became the 'left arm of the Dutch' subordinate only to the trade in pepper. The Coromandel textiles began to play a major role in the triangular slave trade of India, West Africa and the plantations in America. By the middle of the seventeenth century when the English East India company began making its bid for commercial monopoly, the markets in the spice islands had become glutted and increasingly the attention of the Company was

27 Portuguese take over of the triangular trade from the 'Moors' (a generic term which included the Arabs, Khurasanis, and the Deccanis) is referred to by many of the travellers of their period, Barbosa, op.cit. Vol.II pp.77 and passim. Caesar Fredrick in Purchas, op.cit, Vol.X p.109 ff, also describes the Portuguese trade with the Moluccas. This take over was however, far from absolute because the Portuguese Cartas system was far from effective (Pyrard, op.cit, Pt.I, P.294 ff). For a detailed discussion see Chap.IV pp.11-12 and ff of this thesis.


29 See K.N. Chaudhuri, op.cit., p.277

30 The glut in the Eastern markets and the consequent fall in prices is repeatedly referred to by Peter Floris, a Dutch merchant. Floris, op.cit, pp.41-42 and passim.
drawn towards the export of fine and coarse Coromandel goods to England and to Europe, thus setting into motion the calico craze.31 In 1664, the total quantity of calico imported by the English company stood at well over a quarter of a million pieces and their value accounted for 73 per cent of the entire trade of the company.32

Textile production during the seventeenth century shows a gradual but significant shift from localisation of industry based on specialisation in textile varieties to an ever increasing adjustment to consumer demands and especially the export market. The Portuguese did not interfere in the production process but merely used the specialised product of South Coromandel, the painted calicoes, as an item of barter in the spice trade with the Malay Archipelago. Even here the nature of the markets did affect the production variety. Peter Floris emphasises the particularity of the Eastern markets. "But a great oversight hath been committed in the bespeaking of the pattas, dragons, sallalos etc. for they have all of them a little narrower white edge and the upright (i.e. proper) Malay cloth must be without it ... I had never believed it, that so small a fault could cause so great an abatement in price."

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32 K.N. Chaudhuri, *op.cit.*, p.282
33 Peter Floris, *op.cit.*, p.71
With the Dutch and even more so, with the English, there is a direct impact on the kind of cloth woven. The production of long cloth in the seventeenth century is a clear illustration of the point. In fact there is reference to an massive alteration of looms in Wooriar Pollam (Udayar Palseyam in Tiruchirapalli district) to meet the demand of the English East India Company for a specific variety of long cloth and Sallamporees.34 Similarly, the Company caused 300 looms" to be altered to a better sort" at Fort St. David for the weaving of sallamporees.35 Very often, the number of Puñjama (warp threads) were increased or decreased to weave cloth suitable to the export market.36 In the Consultation of 1672, Cessa Verma (Kasi Virena), the chief merchant of the English East India Company claimed that the Puñjama of the looms at Madras had been altered from 4 to 10 per cent for the weaving of longcloth, sallamporees, Morees, and percalles.37 But production did not always adjust itself to consumer demands. Thus in September 1673, the factors at Tongqueen wrote to the Agent and Council in Bengal, "it will be impossible to persuade the people to imitate any new fancies of plain or striped silks since we and the Dutch could never yet prevail

34 Letters from Fort St. George (hereafter Letters), 18th August 1696, p.87 and 30th Sept.1696, p.90
35 Letters, 30th Nov.1696, p.106
36 Diary and Consultations, 28th Sep.1675 p.73
37 Ibid, 14th June, 1672, p.6
with them to alter the breadth and length of their pelages though we spared no change or labour to effect it." The production here was geared to the traditional Japanese market. 38

The problem before the European Companies arose out of the fact that a large volume of textiles was demanded in markets with tastes and requirements very different from each other. The printed calico of the South Coromandel, the tape chindes and the Sarassas were the only cloth vendible in the Malay Archipelago and the particularism of the Eastern markets was a great head-sache to the Companies. 39 The tape chindes and coarse blue Sallamoreas were the varieties that were in demand in West Africa and spelt the hedge of slavery for the blacks. 40 The consumption pattern in England was a changing one, 41 from a demand for calico for curtains and coverlets to a demand for betelles as fashion wear 42 and calicoes as utility items of clothing. 43

The trading and organizational conditions in India were very different from trading in the familiar European environment. Overwhelming problems existed at every level. The

38 Dispatches, 27th Sept. 1684, p. 130
39 Floris, op. cit. p. 71
41 Discussed in detailed under consumption pattern later on in this thesis.
42 Dispatches, 23rd March 1686-87, p. 43 para 16
43 Ibid, 9th Oct 1682 p. 15
directors of the East Indus Company were faced with the
task of framing policy decisions in a situation where the
time and distance between the markets and the areas of
production sometimes tended to reduce all normal measures
of commercial risks into meaningless calculations. The
position of the Company itself was not impregnable but
subject to political changes as can be seen by the
sudden sanction of the operation of rival companies in
the East due to the royal proclamation of Charles II
permitting the establishment of other Companies and
breaking the monopoly of the East Indus Company. The
East Indus Company was not only limited by the political
shifts at home but constantly hampered by the turbulent
political changes and wars in India. The Mughal-Morath
wars caused rampage and mass desertion of villages,
pushed up the prices of cotton and made the procurement
of cloth virtually impossible.

44 Dispatches, 8th July 1688 pp. 19-20 and 10th July 1688 p. 22
Also see Foster 1665-67 p. 124. Winter changed sides from
a staunch Republican to a staunch Royalist and accusing
Foxcroft the newly appointed Governor to Fort St. George
of disloyalty to the Crown, captured power. See pp 123-23 ff.
The Dispatches, 1688 refer to the effect of the Glorious
Revolution on the factors in India.
Diaries and Consultations, 1672, 78, pp. 73. Also see
Foster, Sep. 28, 1649, pp 215-16.
45 The Letters from Fort St. George, 16 Oct. 1689, p. 63 refers
to the attack in Vizag and killing of their Agent Stables.
46 Diary and Consultations, 18th April 1672, p. 4, p. 6 etc.
47 Foster, 1658, p. 257 ff.
One of the major consequences of the long distance separating the consuming areas from producing ones was a perpetual disequilibrium between company policy and its implementation in Indis, between the demand and supply of textiles. The 'factory' system and the creation of fortified settlements was devised as a solution to the problem of long distance operation in production centres. But the system failed to solve all the problems since the area of the factors' initiative was very ambiguous. This problem can be seen in the instructions recording the establishment and withdrawal of factories and the factors' response to it. While the Directors insisted on the settlement of a factory at Priyaon,\(^48\) the factors at Fort St. George established one at Bencoolen\(^49\) and this ultimately proved an excellent choice.\(^50\) Similarly after establishing a factory at Armagon (1636) and dissolving the one at Masulipatnam the Directors began demanding withdrawal on the ground that cheaper cloth could be obtained from the Tanjore region.\(^51\) But the dissolution of a factory was not an easy matter and the factors took great pains to

\(^{48}\) Dispatches, 1686-92, p.19 para 7

\(^{49}\) The factors were repeatedly blamed for establishing factories at Bencoolen and Indranura which were referred to slightly as "health resorts". Dispatches 9th April 1637, p.60 and ff. Also Dispatches, letter from Tonqueen, p.122

\(^{50}\) Dispatches, 11th Sept 1689, p.173. The Court of Directors urged "The retention of Bencoolen is most vital for securing and retaining the pepper trade from the Dutch".

\(^{51}\) Foster, 28th Oct 1629, p.357-8
persuade the Company to let them continue. Another instance was that of Masulipatnam where the Directors in times of political turmoil ordered a withdrawal but not only did this fail to reduce overhead costs but involved double expense with resumption of trade in the region. This disequilibrium between policy and implementation was reflected even more sharply in the demand and supply of textiles. Six months elapsed between the sending of the Company's orders to Fort St. George and the receiving of the orders. But the market was a highly fluctuating one with the result that a variety in fashion the year before would go out of fashion the next year when the invoiced goods would be ultimately dispatched, registering a sharp loss at the auctions. Thus at the sales in London, the gingham No.33 which had been popular and hence ordered in great quantities, were sold at 24sh 6d per piece which cost in India 3-3½ pagodas per piece. But the factors at Fort

52 Foster, 31st Jan.1636, p.161 ff. The Factors claimed that Armagaon provided a good substitute for the paintings from Masulipatnam

53 Foster, 6th Feb.1636, pp 280 ff. - That Armagaon at Tanjore would be a good alternative for Masulipatnam which was unsafe due to Govt. oppression, famine etc. Also see Dispatches London, 12 Aug.1635, p.164 & Ibid 26 Aug 1635 p.65

54 Dispatches, London 22 April, 1681 'Note this for a constant and general rule that ... you change the fashion and flower as much as you can every year, for English ladies and they say the French and other Europeans will give twice as much for a new thing not seen in Europe before though worse than they will give, for a better .. of the same fashion worn the former year"

55 Diary and Consultations, 23rd Dec. 1678, pp.149-50
St. George were seldom able to implement the company's orders to stop the consignment of a variety that had gone out of demand. Thus the court of Directors write on 11th September 1686: "You sending us so many Betelies after we forbid them is to the Company's damage above 10,000 pounds sterling... we cannot understand there is any virtue wherein you say these... were remains of contracts made to the Southward in President Gyfford's time... it seems absurd to conceive we should be obliged to receive any goods two years after the time of delivery expired." 56 Thus on the one hand while certain categories of cloth would remain unsold at the London warehouse 57 there would on the other hand always be shortfalls of varieties 58 for which there was a sudden demand. This was because too great a time gap existed between the Directors' orders, the receipt of these communications at Fort St. George and the contracting of the weavers by the merchant middlemen through the brokers by which time it would be too late to change the cloth on the loom.

'Non-economic oppression' by the local rulers and governors was an ever-present problem to the East India Companies. This was especially so at Masulipatnam, where first the Dutch and then the English faced recurring

56 Dispatches, 11th Sep.1686, p.174
57 Dispatches, 29th Dec.1685, p.173. Parclettes, Betelies and Carpets and certain varieties of chintz are forbidden since more than 50,000 pieces of each lie on the hands of the company.
58 Dispatches, 12th Dec.1677, a detailed list of shortfalls in Gingham, Senoes etc. are given.
situations of the same kind. Thus in 1609, the governor of Masulipatnam Pylappa wanted gratis payment from the Dutch which was turned down. Annoyed with this attitude both Pylappa and Narsiga, the governor of Petapoli, asked the Dutch for the payment of 2000 pagodas as stamp duty (Chapa Dala) in violation of the treaty concluded by Von Soldt. The Dutch tried to avoid the tax by bribing Mir Jurula, the Chancellor with costly presents like 1½ candy sandalwood and 30 huge mirrors. In spite of this the Dutch envoys were detained at Masulipatnam and while they were exempt from stamp duty at Petapoli, they had to make payment at Masulipatnam. The only person to benefit from the entire proceedings was Mir Jurula who got 35,000 Pagodas as presents from all parties concerned.\(^59\) The English faced similar problems at Masulipatnam\(^60\) as well as Madras\(^61\) and elsewhere\(^62\). The Dutch and the English tried to get around this problem by a systematic procedure of giving Peshkash down the line, from the king and his governors to the accountants, and writers as well as clerks.\(^63\)

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60 Foster, Nov.12, 1693, p.317 ff. Also Sep.26,1692, p.280-81 gives a detailed list of the Governor's atrocities.

61 Diary and Consultations, Sep.1678. Poddala Lingappa, the representative of Golconda in the Madras region threatened to impede trade unless 200 Pagodas were added to his annual Peshkas. Also see Foster, Oct.9, 1647, p.186 for the famous incident of Mirumula and the giving of guns to him as Peshkash by the Company.

62 Foster, Nov.6, 1693 The garner of Pulicat Chennara Naysaka's attempts to squeeze the Company.

63 Diary and Consultancy, 25th Feb 1693 p.58 Also 14th June 1694, p.56 etc.
The Question of Finances

The entire task of the procurement of textiles in India — whether to the Malay Archipelago, to England and Western Europe or West and North Africa revolved around one theme — finances. As Bavington the English Agent at Rajpur factory picturesquely put it, "Intention (to trade) without a stock of money is like an adjective without a substantive which cannot stand." Purchasing power could be acquired by: (A) vending of European goods in India; (B) by bringing in precious metals; (C) by borrowing in the Indian markets from the local merchants etc. or (D) by participating in the carrying trade, i.e., raise funds for the purchase of coromandel textiles by participating in the Asiatic trade. In the course of the seventeenth century all these methods were tried by the companies with varying degrees of success.

There was indeed an attempt especially on the part of the English East India Company to sell broad cloth, scarlettes, rasses, Aurora and other types of woollens as also lead, copper tin, vermilion, Mum, quicksilver, and iron in the Indian market. But the attempt met with very marginal success. There was no demand for the European goods in the

64 Foster, 4th July 1660, p.370
65 Dispatches, 24th Dec. 1675, p.25, para 52. Some of these products like vermilion, quicksilver, etc. came through Mocha and the Red Sea. (refer Chap.IV under Foreign Trade).
Indian market except perhaps for lead and the English woollens were unsuited to the Indian climate. Thus in spite of the repeated urgings of the Company to check the outflow of bullion by the sale of broadcloth, the goods either remained unsold or were given out in large quantities as Peshkashes to earn the goodwill of merchants and local officials. Similarly sometimes the local merchants like kasse verons (Kasi Virans) reciprocated by taking off unsaleable goods simply to put themselves in the position of deserving the Companies favour (i.e. exclusive trade contract). The English, however, seem to have succeeded in getting off their hands at least some part of the broadcloth in exchange for fine piece goods. Even this attempt to sell their products was not made by the Dutch who dealt entirely in liquid capital. Thus in the seventeenth century

66 Letters, 12th Jan.1665. The letter, however, states that coral was in demand. Also refer Letters, 5th Feb.1696, p.3 "English cloth still not selling. Our dependence is wholly on the silver for paying off our debts and carrying on the coast investments."

67 Dispatches, 22nd April 1681, p.60 para 35

68 Foster, 6th Feb.1661, p.57, Also cf. Letters, Feb.19th, 1696, p.13 etc.

69 Diary and Consultations, 14th Sep.1676, Broadcloth given as Peshkash to Kadosha, Akkenna, Poddala Lingspons, etc.


71 Diary and Consultations, 20th Oct.1674, Broadcloth in part payment of fine Parcalles, moorses, and ginghams.

72 Ibid, 29th Sep.1674. Virans, Veneaty Marasin, Pedda Venkatadry Chinna Venkatadry and all the other of the Hon. company's merchants demanded upward revision of price on the ground that they had agreed to take English broadcloth in part payment while the Dutch dealt entirely in liquid capital.
the balance of trade was entirely in favour of South India. The marginal proportion of European goods to the bullion invested in the textile trade demonstrates this fact.73

The history of the export of South Indian textiles to England and Europe and the Eastern coast should be viewed primarily in the light of the transfer of Spanish West Indies silver to Asia via Europe and the Pacific.74

73 Figures giving the pattern of investment are not steadily available but the general trend can be gleaned. In 1627 it is said that 300,000 risls of eight (£50,000) were invested in Masulipatnam saltpetre, cotton yarn and cloth and that on the whole 300,000 risls (75,000 £) were invested in the entire coast. In 1663, the cargo of the ship East India Merchant consisted of 15,207 pounds in silver, 7,822 pounds in gold and 5,306 pounds in merchandise (lead, vermillion, copper, quicksilver, broadcloth, coral, slum, brimstone). A detailed breakup is available in the Dispatches of 24th Dec.1675. The total overall stock in goods to the Coromandel Coast was to the value of £140,832 and in terms of bullion £135,167. Of these, the total of 5 shirs carried roughly 55 chests of silver and 15 chests of gold. Also see Dispatches, 4th Aug.1676. £11,913:11:6 were in terms of goods for Fort and Masulipatnam and £92,534:18:6 in terms of bullion. For the breakup of the value of goods refer Foster, 6th March 1665, p.108. The Greyhound carried gold bars to the value of £13,746, broadcloth to the value of £3,616, lead to the tune of £1,535, quicksilver amounting to £2,329, vermillion equal to £1,160 and brimstone worth £126. Incidentally, the figures show that investments more than doubled in the course of 50 years.

Approximately, one-third of the silver production of America reached Asia during the sixteenth-seventeenth centuries. Carreri in 1695 estimated the total shipment of silver to Asia via Mokha and Aleppo around the cape of Good Hope at 1.5 million. While the English secured their supply from Spanish America the Dutch had exclusive access to Japanese silver. Apart from the non-saleability of European goods etc one main reason for the outflow of bullion from England and Netherlands was the varying ratio of gold and silver in these places and in South India. The dominant form of currency in the Coromandel coast was the gold Pogoda and hence naturally silver in proportion to gold was valued higher there by about 40 per cent. While in Europe the ratio of silver to gold was roughly 15 to 1 in Asia it stood between 9 and 12, never rising above that. Thus the risks of eight

75 Furber, _op. cit._ p.232
76 K.V. Chaudhuri, _op. cit._ p.165
77 Furber, _op. cit._ p.232. Also see Peter Floris, _op. cit._ p.64
78 Thomas Prior, Observations on Coins in General with some proposals for regulating the value of coin in Ireland (1720) printed in J.H. McCulloch, _A select Collection of Scarce and valuable tracts on money_ (London 1856) p.300 cited in K.V. Chaudhuri, _op. cit._ p.158
79 Holden Furber, _Rival Empires in the Orient, op. cit._ p.232
were the main form of currency brought by the English and the Dutch to trade in India. But the fact that the Coromandel economy rested on the gold Pagodas created the overwhelming problem that the risals of eight were not acceptable in the market. The English Company itself defined the situation in 1627 on the Coromandel coast, "where only gold doth pass in payments, especially unto those weavers for commodities ... silver is great loss and the risal hardly yielding four shillings six pence⁸⁰ most commonly less or it is only as merchandise to carry to Pegu where gold will pass at seven shillings and at that price purchase a gold to make great profit on the coast of Coromandel."⁸¹ The letter says that gold was gathered from Java, Sumatra, Borneo and Pegu.⁸² On the gingle coast (i.e. Golconda) however, by 1680, the situation began to favour the British when with the Mughal annexation of the region, an all out attempt began to be made to change over to the Mughal silver rupee.⁸³ The scarcity of silver made its value very high and the English

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⁸⁰ Floris, op.cit. p.73, Gives the value of risal of eight as four shillings, six pence or two and a half Dutch guilders or two Indian rupees. But by 1680, the value of risal of eight had gone up to 8 shillings - Dispatches, 30th June 1680, p.10

⁸¹ Foster, July 18, 1627, p.191

⁸² Ibid. What the Dutch did was to sell cloves, nuts and rice in Coromandel for gold and then change it for textiles

Foster, Nov.12, 1653, p.338

⁸³ J.W. Richards, Mughal Administration in Golconda, (Oxford 1975) pp.135-7 gives an excellent account of the problems created by the gold standard for the Company and the official change to silver as medium for payment of tax etc., accruing to the benefit of the Dutch and the English.
Company made a tidy profit selling its silver to the mint.  
Later on, they began to coin their own money with considerable success.  

The Dutch, at least in the early part of the seventeenth century had much more liquid capital at their disposal than the English.  It was this which facilitated their direct dealing with the weavers since they could mobilise resources faster and buy things cheaper at the source.  

The English on the other hand sought to overcome their financial limitations by borrowing heavily from the local merchants. They were indebted to many of the great merchants.

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84 For eg. Foster, 13th Nov 1669, p.243. The factors reduced the rial of eight into rupees at 2 shillings and 3 pence and then into Pagodes at 3½ rupees a piece. This works out to less than 2 rupees a Pagode!  

85 Dispatches, 7th Jan.1687, pp.33-36 ff. The Company got royal permission to coin silver rupees and decided to imitate the Mughal rupee as closely as possible and make presents of it to the King of Golconda so that it may become circulating currency. The Dispatches 16th April 1697 says "Since yours rupees go current encourage the mint and keep all coins to full weight and fineness."  

86 Mills, the factor at Pulicat wrote to Beteris in 1699, "The Dutch in their glory laugh in their sleeves at our present misery. The English investment is not in the tenth degree comparable to theirs." Foster, Vol.II, XXXII. Also, Diary and Consultations, 18th April 1672, p.4. Also 14th June 1672 p.6 etc. "The great sums given out by the Dutch ...(Pagodes 300 million?) ... we having been able to furnish them with only pagodes 7500 in all."  

87 Foster, Oct.29, 1672, pp.357-8. The factors lamented that while for want of liquid capital they were forced to barter commodities for cloth and "must of necessity yield to their price and take such sorts as they would give us, the weavers ... crave licence from their Naik to trade with the Dutch to procure ready monies ..." The Farama of 1605 given by the king of Golconda orders that all weavers employed by the Dutch with Dutch money in their hands should not be interfered with in their work. The traveller Terpstra, Vol.I, p.66 refers to the Dutch dealing directly with the weavers in Masulipatnam (The Farama as well as Terpstra's consent
like Uttamamoda, Mir Jumla, Viranna and Timannna and others. Of Uttamamoda, the Chief merchant at Pulicat the factors wrote, "Last year he gave us credit for a 1000 risls till the arrival of their ships and now promises still greater service". 88 It was because they had borrowed 16,000 risls from Mir Jumla that the Company had to give him brass cannon as Peshkash to make him forego interest. 89 Timanna and Viranna made use of the Company's indebtedness to them to secure an exclusive contract for cloth and have a major say in the affairs of Fort St. George. 90 The dire financial straits of the English is shown by the fact that they even borrowed from the Dutch. 91

The carrying of freight goods 92 and participation in the country trade was another source of raising money for the purchase of textiles. The Dutch country trade was however, much greater than that of the English during the early part of the Century. As early as 1621, the Dutch

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88 Foster, Vol.II, p.154
89 Foster, 9th Oct. 1647, p.166
90 Foster, 27th Aug.1662, p.167. The Company borrowed 90,000 risls from Timanna. For other examples of borrowing from Viranns etc. see Diary and Consultations 14th Sep 1676, p.100 14th June, 1672, p.6 etc.
91 Foster, 20th Aug. 1662, p.348. Henry and Bix at Armagason to President and Council at Bentar. "If no supply comes this year we will be forced again to borrow from the Dutch... necessity hath no law".
92 Foster, 25th Oct.1632, p.48, Moorish goods carried as freight 12th Sep 1660, p.41, also 10th Dec.1663, p.272 and Passim.
company had sixty-seven ships in the intra-Asian trade while the English company had only twenty-five. In 1630, the English had believed that if they could finance country voyages between India and Persia, each voyage would yield around £ 6,000. But the greatest problem for the English was the fact that the official privilege of the carrying of freight goods was very often used by the factors and even their wives to indulge in private trading. This ultimately caused them to give up the policy of raising finances from the carrying of freight goods.

Apart from raising funds for the textile trade, the East India companies also had to maintain their factories in the Coromandel coast and this entailed considerable expense as the repeated quibbling over expenses in the Dispatches, (from England) Letters (from Fort St. George) and the Diary and Consultations of the various factories show. The companies

\[93\] Holden Furber, op.cit p.270
\[94\] Foster, 21 Oct.1632, p.240
\[95\] The Diary of William Hodges, (ed) Henry Yule (London 1886-99) Vol.11 p.1111-1112. Also Foster, 12th Sep 1660 p.41 says that the Marigold had left behind most of the Company's goods carried from Madras to Meccasser because of the amount of freight goods she carried. "This your sending of freight goods in our ships we conclude is not consistent with our profit and much to our disadvantage and serves principally for the colouring of that exorbitancy of private trade which hath a long time been and is still practiced among you, selling your own goods and returning their proceeds on the ship and leaving ours to await a further market".
sought to maintain themselves in India by obtaining
farmers from the rulers getting lands rent free or at
a very normal rent and obtaining complete jurisdiction over
these regions. San Thome, Pulicat, Fort St. George,
Cuddalore and Porto Novo were all obtained on these terms.
Thus the English paid a rent of 1200 Pagodas to Calcutta
but collected from the area the ground rent, customs and
other taxes on the inhabitants. The Company formed

96 Diary and Consultations, 3rd June 1672, p.76. The Company
sought the towns of Trevottore, Esmore and San Thome free
of rent from the king of Calcutta. The anxiety for the
possession of San Thome is expressed because of the fact
that while Verenna paid only Pagoda 1200 for it, it was
worth a minimum of 5000 Pagodas. Diary and Consultations,
26th Feb.1686, p.58 registers the royal farmers granting
the towns free of rent. The details of the farmers are to
be found in Letters 26th Feb.1678, pp.13-14, Dispatches
12th Dec.1677, p.135, Pars 35 - Plan to rent Madappallam
and Tiravassaram. Also see Cuddalore - Porto Novo Consulta-
tion, 33rd Feb.1672.

97 Diary and Consultations, 29th Feb.1689, p.57

98 Dispatches, 29th Sep 1697, p.54 says that if any inhabitant
of Madras failed to pay the ground rent by the due date,
25 per cent additional charge to be levied. William
Hodges appointed collector of ground rent. Also see
Dispatches 29th Jan. 1698 - Extra troops sent to
Fort St. George to coerce payment of ground rent arrears.

99 Diary and Consultations Jan.1688, p.16. Five per cent
levied on all goods imported into or exported out of Fort
St. George. Dispatches, 14th Aug. 1688, p.49 goods landed
without customs to be forfeited, fifty per cent to go to
the company and fifty to the informer and prosecutor.

100 This was probably a duty on professions since Dispatches
16th April 1667 p.17, refers to the inconvenience attending
the collection of scavengers' duty. Dispatches, 2nd Jan.
1691-2 also refers to the levying of a quit rent on houses.
Foster 16 Dec.1663, p.367, refers to an attempt to levying
a tax on the inhabitants for the maintenance of the British
troops, a measure similar to the British policy in the
American colonies in 1775. The inhabitants did not always
accept these exactions without protest. Refer for instance
Foster, 4th April 1664, p.262
out the sale of various commodities like betel leaves, provisions, liquor and rubies. The Company also stored paddy and sold them in times of need to the inhabitants with considerable profit to the Company.

System of Advances and the Role of Middlemen

The companies based their purchase of textiles on a system of advances to the weavers with specified musters "to work to the perfection of a pattern". But at the height of European competition in South India, the English and the Dutch were buying in an open market, purchasing cloth at any price. There were several inter-linked reasons why the companies chose to adopt a system of advances rather than direct payment. One was, of course, the wide dispersal of the Coromandel weavers which made direct purchase of goods almost

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102 Ibid, 20th Feb.1693, p.43
103 Ibid, 2nd Nov.1693, p.151-2
104 Ibid, 2nd Nov.1693, p.156
106 Terpstra's comment quoted in Poonen on cit. p.329. The Dutch Governor at Fort Geldris (Pulicat) lamented in 1656 that the Company found itself buying low quality cloth at increasingly high prices because the weavers raised the price-cited in J. Brennig on cit. pp 90-91.
impossible. It was also undoubtedly true that in many cases the poverty of the weavers was such that they could not work without advances. But this was by no means a uniform phenomenon. There was considerable stratification among the weavers and there were many who were economically quite prosperous and emerged as merchants or master-weavers in their own right. However, even in dealing with them the system of advances was adopted because at a time of keen European competition the giving of an advance was one way of making the contract binding and ensuring that the cloth was not sold to some other company for higher profit. But as


108 Ibid, 22nd June 1693, p.100 Simon Holcroft's paper - the weavers were so poor and indigent that they could not fix their looms without their cooly being advanced to them. Also refer Longhorne's statement, p.161.

109 There are numerous instances in the Diary and Consultations of Fort St. George of weavers who had become master-weavers and also emerged as merchants. E.g. 5th Nov.1694 p.121 - the reference to two private "merchants weavers" who deprived the company of their cloth by getting control of the weavers and making them produce the Menilbo sort of cloth. Also, Ibid, Nov.19, 1694 etc. Earlier references to master weavers are to be found in Mater, Pg 223. This aspect is discussed later on in this chapter.

110 Diary and Consultations, 28th Sep.1675, p.74. Kazi Viranna's statement that if at least half of the payment was not made to the weavers in advance, the Dutch would run away with the whole bargain.
has been already been made clear, in the first part of
the seventeenth-century cloth was still sometimes purchased
directly and at high competitive prices. The great demand
for the salampores and betelles of varying sizes and
textures commonly called 'guines cloth' is a typical example
of this.

The advance to the weavers was made not directly by
the company but through a level of intermediaries, beginning
with the chief merchant with a number of merchants under his
command, to the esby (also written Esib) or 'braminy', i.e.,
broker, and the dhupsh (interpreter) who was also invariably
a shahi. This was rendered necessary by the fact that
the textile industry was highly specialised with a complex
division of labour where the weaving, bleaching, dyeing and
printing of cloth were done by separate professional artists.

It is said that the system operative in the Companys'
textile organisation was that of dhn or advances very
different from the putting out system. That it only
involved cash advances unlike the verlag system under which

111 Ibid, 27th September 1674, p.27 refers to the twenty six
Chief merchants and many others under them. For references
to esby 'braminy' see Letters, 27th Sept. 1672, p.12,
etc. Ibid, 16th May 1693 refers to dhupsh and Pessin. The
level of intermediaries are discussed in detail later on
in this chapter.

112 The records refer to washeries or 'bleachers' as distinct from
the weavers. (Coster, 1st Oct. 1653, p.280 etc.) and weavers
as distinct from the painters (Refer to Coster, 1st March 1654
p.236-7 "Charges against the Brahmins by the painters,
weavers and C. inhabiting Chennapatnam."

113 K.N. Chaudhuri, op.cit. p.29
the merchant advanced not liquid capital but the actual raw materials. But in the context of the South Indian situation, one sometimes finds both types of advances. While cash advance was sometimes made because the weaver was seldom able to put a piece upon the loom without the money beforehand 114 (Langhorne), it was for the same reason that it was safer to make an advance of yarn 115 since in times of scarcity the weavers very often used inferior thread. 116 There are sometimes cases especially under famine conditions when the weavers worked for the Company for an advance not only of money but of rice and paddy. 117 But there is no doubt that by and large it was only cash advances that were made to the weavers and they directly purchased their yarn from the market.

Another problem closely linked with advances to weavers was that of quality control as standardisation of the product.

Thus the Company emphasised on every occasion that the factory

114 Langhorne's statement quoted by K.V. Chaudhuri, op.cit. p.257
115 Diary and Consultations, 17th Aug.1688 p.122; Letters, 26th Dec.1691, p.116
116 Ibid, 28th Sep.1676, p.73. The Company could not afford to turn down the cloth on the ground that it did not come up to the standard since the weavers would immediately take it to the Dutch - Foster, 28th Oct.1696, p.357-8, etc.

The merchants working for the Dutch also sometimes supplied yarn to the weavers - Colonial - Archives (K.R.) 1664, 26th April 1684, fol.1533 cited in Brennic op.cit p.676

117 Foster, Vol.IV, 1st March 1654, p.568. The Brahmin decla-
ration that the chief merchant Sehsdri had been given twenty garse of rice to be given to the pointers and weavers but he had given only two and sold the rest. c.f. Diary and Consultations, 19th Nov.1694, p.136, direct contract with the weavers where along with each advance three garse of paddy was also given to each caste.
should "bring the calicoes to perfection according to
directions formerly given as to length, breadth and
thickness..."118 Two masters of every sort of goods con-
tracted for had to be maintained under seal. When the calicoes
were brought in by the merchants they were to be compared
with the masters in the presence of the Agent, the chief ware-
housekeepers and some of the factors and on the basis of this
check the merchants would be paid the price contracted for,
and if the cloth was not to specification they would be paid
a lower price.119 On the ground that the weavers' products
did not match the muster the Company always slashed the price.
For instance, the checking the delivery of cloth contracted
for on the 7th August 1673, the Moores invoiced at Pagodas
30 per corga which highest muster the warehousekeeper reported
fell short of the quality were now invoiced at Pagodas 35½ and
what fell short of the second grade was priced at Pagodas 32
and so on.120

This system, however, did not succeed because the
merchants refused to undertake any work if the cloth prices
were thus deliberately lowered.121

118 Dispatches, 34th Dec.1675, p.23. Also Letters, 9th
May 1686, p.27
119 Diary and Consultations, 29th Sep.1674, p.27
120 Ibid., 15th May 1674, p.56
121 Ibid., 28th Sep.1674, p.27-8; Also 28th Sep 1675 p.73
17th July 1677, p.121. In fact the merchants threatened
that if their long cloth was not accepted they must also
decline the English broadcloth which was being exchanged
in those ports for fine calico.
The companies made the advance to the weavers through middlemen. These ranged from Chief merchants, powerful men like Virena and Thimanna from whom the Company borrowed to finance its investments,\(^{123}\) to petty merchants who were eventually drawn into the joint stock system.\(^{193}\)

The Dutch on the other hand throughout placed greater reliance on individual merchants like Kelaya Ghatthy though they also began to employ the joint stock technique from the second half of the seventeenth century.

The domination of the chief merchant meant not the domination of one man but the domination of a family and in fact the succeeding generations of that family. In this context a speech of Chibu Yele from the Diary and Consultations records of Fort St. George dated 5th November 1688\(^{124}\) is worth quoting: "The merchants and inhabitants have generally a respect for the families of Virena and VenkatesDry for which reason the men of those families are most capable of maintenance of good government among the inhabitants and on the other hand most capable of mischief if so inclined."

He goes on to say that they reserved to themselves the right of succession to the position of intermediaries.

Timappa the son of Pedda VenkatesDry claimed this right not

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123 *Diary and Consultations*, 14th June 1672, p.6 etc.

124 *Diary and Consultations*, 5th Nov. 1688, p.122
only for himself but also for Moods Verona (Virene) the adopted son of Kasi Virene and Drugguna the son of Chirne Venkatesdry "who according to their rules are to succeed one another in the chief merchantship and their children after them by turn and therefore those men and their children are to possess the first rank next to the chief merchant absent as present." 125 In the factories of the English East India Company the system of chief merchants continued right till 1680 when Streynsham Master formed the first joint stock of merchants in 1682 126 but even this continued to be dominated by the chief merchants as shown by the statement of Elihu Yale.

The Company's reasons for the employment of merchant middlemen is best laid forth in the Pulicat factors examination in 1666: 127 "...the merchants... have to be responsible for the money advanced through them to the receivers and painters which often times pays them with a farewell. If we had to deal with them direct at the years end, when we expected to be invested of our goods, we should undoubtedly come short of our quantity, besides undergo a hazard of their running away where there was no hope for us to find them out or recover their monies." The underwriting of

125 Ibid
127 Foster, 30th Sep.1682, p.104 & Thomas Miles and John Milward of Pulicat to the Rappolestern Factors.
responsibility by merchants solved the problem of bad debts which was a major hazard for the Company.\[^{128}\] Delivery of the cloth on time was also the duty of the merchants\[^{128}\] and since a delay could mean the loss of market in view of tight European competition, every late delivery was penalised by a reduction of 50 per cent in the payment.\[^{130}\] The problem of purchase of textiles in a competition market was overcome rather late in the seventeenth century by getting the cloth stamped while still on the loom.\[^{131}\] A very important aspect of the function of middlemen was to ensure quality control and standardisation of the product,\[^{132}\] but this was a problem the Company continued to wrestle with for a long time.\[^{133}\] West Virginia in

\[^{128}\] In 1664 the President Selby and Greenhill quarrelled over the question of who was to make good the bad debts left by some weavers and printers - *Letter*, 15th Feb 1664, p.246. Once the merchants undertook the responsibility for bad debts the Company was greatly relieved - *Diary and Consultations*, 10th Feb 1677, n.23; * Ibid*, May 1678, n.74, etc.

\[^{129}\] The *Diaries of Strovinham Masters*, on cit. *Contract with the Musiligno men merchants*, 26th March, 1678, p.144. Also *Diary and Consultations*, May 1678, n.74, etc.

\[^{130}\] *Dispatches*, 7th Jan. 1687, p.99, para 14. Either 50 per cent loss was to be paid or a fine was to be imposed.


\[^{132}\] Instructions as to the observation of the weavers is to be found in all the Company's instructions. *Letters*, 9th May 1688, p.37. "You always keep exactly the same colour and sort of cloth" - This aspect is dealt with on p.67 of this thesis.

\[^{133}\] *Dispatches*, 7th March 1677, p.77 and 16th Sep 1680, p.24, para 67. *Diary and Consultations*, 29 Sep 1676, p.73 etc. The problem was a chronic one: in 1787, Malinee Krinsone, one of the Company's merchants explained that "from long experience he knew it was impossible to get two pieces exactly alike from different weavers and that in fact, the same weaver was incapable of producing two identical pieces
his statement before the Agent and Council at Fort St. George said that to ensure better supervision over the weavers for the purpose of quality control and strict accordance with musters he had "to send out five of his own men into each place, being eighteen in number, each with their own circuits plus several others sub-divided with orders to look after the business better and remedy what was wrong."134 The risk of reduction in quality was also borne entirely by the merchants and after a thorough process of sorting of the goods in the Company's warehouse according to their muster, the merchants were paid proportionately less if the cloth did not measure up to the standard.135

Thus the merchants performed a crucial role in the textile organisation of the period. In a region like the Coromandel coast where the weavers were widely scattered the merchants and other intermediaries were needed to purchase the cloth and act as links between the weavers and the company. They minimised the Companies' risks by taking on bad debts136 and also ensured quality control.137 Moreover in the case of fine textiles the merchants did not even demand advances from the Company but on the contrary loaned vast sums to them.138 In the case of the English East India Company, the merchants even took the broadcloth of England in exchange which were

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134 *Diaries and Consultations*, 28th Sep. 1675, p. 74
135 *Ibid.* 26th Sep. 1674, pp. 77-8, 28th Sep. 1675, p. 73 etc
138 *Ibid.* 14th Sep. 1676, p. 100. Kesi Vizanee complained that...
otherwise unsellable.130

The system of intermediaries was by no means a simple
three-tier one of the company - merchant - weaver but was
much more complex consisting of several levels of intermediaries.131
There were chief merchants for each region assisted by smaller
merchants. In 1654, Timmra the chief merchant at Fort St.
George was paid a salary of 6 Pesodas per month which was
considered princely.132 Below them were the buy or brokers
(a profession of long standing) each region having one or more
head brokers assisted by subordinate brokers.142 The salary of
the head broker was 1 per cent on coarse cloth and 1½ per cent
on fine cloth.143 Sometimes the office of buy or interpreter
was also held by the brokers but most often it was a distinct
profession. The salary of an interpreter at Bangaolens towards
the close of the seventeenth century was 10 dollars per
mensum.145

130 The Company had borrowed a sum of 6000 Pesodas which had not
been returned for 13 years. The share of Malay's chattel in
the financial investments of the Dutch is very revealing -
in 1632 the Company invested 52,000 Pesodas in textiles out
of which Malay's lent 28,000 Pesodas-Koloniel Archief 5th Aug
1632, Folio 506-547, quoted in J. Wijnings, op. cit. p.56

132 Problems relating to the renting of broad cloth is referred
to repeatedly - Foster, 12th Jan. 1666, Letters, 5th Feb. 1666,
p.9 etc. This aspect is dealt with in p.17 of this chapter.

133 cf. J. J. Seiser's article on 'The Role of Brokers in
His identification of the levels of intermediaries is
somewhat simplistic.

134 Foster, 1st March 1666, p.538
135 Diary and Consultations, Feb. 1668, p.48
137 Foster, 1st March 1666, p.138
140 Diary and Consultations, 28th Feb. 1668, p.49 A dollar was
reckoned at 4 shillings 6 pence at this time.
The records also refer very often to 'braminy' who acted as go-between like Vīra Raghavayya in 1670's or Chandrasekharaiyyan in the 1680's over the settlement of factories at Cuddalore and Porto Nova. His income seems to have ranged from 4-10 Pagodas a month. These brahmins may have combined the office of broker and interpreter. Frequent reference is also found to an intermediary who is alternately referred to as Vakil and Mulla. The term mulla must have come because most of them seem to have been Muslims. The duty of the vakil was to point out the implications of any company policy on native laws and customs etc. The term 'measurer' occurs in the charges drawn up by the painters and weavers of Chennapatnam on 1st March 1654.

146. Letters, 1st March 1679, p.12
147. Cuddalore and Porto Novo Consultations, 26th February 1681, etc.
149. Diary and Consultations, 1st March 1694, p.14
150. Ibid, 26th March 1694, p.27. Also, the Diaries of Streynsham Master, op.cit. Vol.II, p.152
151. Emaun Cooly, Coji (Quazi ?) Abnuce etc.
152. Diary and Consultations, 26th March 1694, p.24
They said that Ivy appointed a 'measurer' but the bramins persuaded him to surrender his cowle (charter) and exacted four times as such duty on cloth. 153

It was perhaps their indispensability to the entire textile organisation that led the chief merchants to usurp powers and to abuse their position. Malaya Chetty was one of the most powerful merchants of his time. He is referred to as the king's agent in one record 154 in another he is said to have concerted with the Dutch to damage English trade. 155 It was said of the Brahmins Venkata and Kannappa during the regime of Greenhill that they held the offices of dubash, Governor of the block town and that of chief Taliār or watchman. 156 When Baker was Agent, Reverend William Issacs reported to the Company in England that the Agent had no knowledge and no say since everything was being done by Beri Timanna. 157 He also stated that the entire available rice was captured by him so that the weavers increased the price of cloth. 158 Winter the next Agent wrote in his letter that Timanna could not be dispensed

153. Foster, 1st March 1654, p.242
154. Foster, 9th Oct. 1647, p.165
155. Foster, 18th Oct. 1626, p.131, Ibid. 28th Oct. 1629, p.358, etc.
156. Ibid, Charges against the Brahmans by the weavers and bainters of Chennapatnam, 1st March 1654, p.238
157. O.C. 2856 A, dated 1661 cited in Foster, p.58
158. Ibid.
with because the merchants and weavers functioned only
at his bidding. Viranna exercised equal power as
Timanna's partner. During the height of European
competition, the chief merchants also used defection as
a very effective weapon of bargain. It was all these
problems which led the East India companies to establish a
joint stock of merchants. In its instructions to Joseph
Cochran for settling a factory in Tanjavur the Company
said ... "by dealing with inferior komatis you shall
better understand the market and know how to bargain with
Malaya with more certainty." As the Agent
Streynsham Master, who first brought joint stocks into
operation in 1680 found out, one could snatch the
initiative from the merchants and gain better terms by
encouraging competition among merchant groups for the
position of intermediaries. In the contract signed

159. Diary and Consultations, 14th June 1672, p.6 ff.  
Some of the merchants like Malaya chetty owned
their own ships - J. Brenning, op.cit., p.57.  
Also, Foster, 20th Dec. 1659, p.274 refers to
3 ships of the Company's brokers.

160 Malaya Chetty for instance was sought by the
English to be their chief merchant while he
enjoyed an identical position under the Dutch.  
(Foster, 27th March, 1624, p.9; Ibid, 13th Oct.
1626, p.131). Also refer to the weavers protest
dated 1st March 1654 in Foster, p.237, where the
Bramins are accused of selling cloth to the
Dutch secretly. Also refer Dispatches, 4th Aug.
1676, p.44 - Viranna sought after by both the
French and the Dutch.

161. Foster, 27th March 1624, p.9. This is one of the
earliest suggestions for the formation of a joint
stock. Also see 5th Jan. 1630 of the Dispatches
p.25, para 71. Ibid, July 22, 1681, p.60, para 36.
with the Masulipatnam merchants in 1679, the entire investment was divided into 84 shares held mainly by 11 chief merchants who were responsible for those working under them. At Vishakapatnam it was 100 shares divided among 10 principal merchants.

Operation of Indigenous Merchant Groups

The existence of a powerful network of middlemen for the procurement of Coromandel textiles, master-minded by the East India Company, does not, however, rule out the independent operation of either merchants or weavers. The weavers still sometimes worked at their own risk and sold their cloth in the local fairs. Streynsham Master, the Governor of Fort St. George in the 1680's refers to the sale of textiles at the local fair at Yentapollam (Baptala Taluq, Krishna district). The more prosperous among the independent weavers even emerged as master-weavers and participated in the export trade competing on an equal footing with the East India Company.

163. Ibid, 10th March, 1679, pp. 146-47
164. Letters, 10th July 1688, p 39 The Cuddalore and Porto Novo Consultations dated May 1682 gives the break up of the shares as 45% divided among nine chief merchants plus others out of which 25% was held by Pedda Venkatadry and Kasi Viranna, the other merchants holding 24% per merchant or merchants. Refer to Chap. III of J. Brennig's book, op. cit. for an account of the Dutch joint stock companies.
The independent merchants and merchant guilds also continued to figure, although marginally in the textile market. The powerful merchant guilds of the earlier centuries did not altogether die out but survived even into the seventeenth century. The evidence for their operation is, however, extremely limited because there are very few inscriptions pertaining to this period and the company records make but the vaguest of references to them. The Āyiravar Nagarattār, a powerful medieval guild, is said to have made a grant of Maganmai (religious toll) on their merchandise to the Arunāchalēśvara temple at Chengama in Tiruvaṉāmalai (North Arcot district) in 1691.167 The Ayyavōle which was functioning as a highly successful guild, dealing in textiles among other things even during the 12th century168a is found to be continuing to trade in cloth even during the whole of the seventeenth century. An

165. The Diaries of Streynsham Master, op.cit., Vol.II, p.135 refers to the sale of textiles at the fair in Yentapollam (Saptala Taluq, Krishna dt.)

166. Diary and Consultation, 15th Oct. 1694, pp.121-122


168a. For the functioning of the Ayyavōle in the Chola period, see Chap.II. supra
inscription from Narayanyavanam (Chittoor district in Andhra) dated 1620 records the gift of tolls on various articles of merchandise such as cloth, pepper and jaggery by the chiefs of the mercantile corporation of Ayyavole. Their survival well into the 1680's is proved by a very important epigraphical record from Lepakshi (Anantapur district also in Andhra). The record mentions Akkanna and Madanna as the best of Brahmins and the chief officers of the king of Golconda and states that the lords of the Ayyavole both Paradesa (i.e., dealing in foreign trade) and svadesa (dealing in indigenous trade) led by their chief Prithir-chetti Rayani Bhaskaranna in consultation with the local caste guilds, among them the tantuvayins (weavers), vastra-bhedakas (cloth-dyers) and vastra-rakshakas (tailors?) fixed certain rates on pack-bullocks, looms, etc. as maganmai (religious toll) for the benefit of the god Nanjundesvara of Lepakshi.

Other indigenous merchant groups that continue to find mention in the seventeenth century are the Klings and the Choolias. The Diary and Consultation of 1686 refers to the arrival of the ship of a 'Chooliar' from Achin to the Madras port. In 1687, the English East India Company hired ships from some 'Choolar' merchants.

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168b. S.I.I., Vol.XVI, No.315
169. A.R.E., C. p. 18 of 1917
170. Diary and Consultation, 26th March 1686, p.29
The Kling and Choolia merchants, however, lost the prosperity they seem to have enjoyed in the fifteenth-sixteenth centuries. While Tome Pires and others refer to them as wealthy merchant communities, a contrary picture of them in the seventeenth century is presented in the account of Peter Floris. "The Tsulias and Calynders... bringeth a corge or less of diverse sorts, running with this through all the country, giving the goods so cheap that it is to be admired at, only to receive a copan (7d) for to buy rice for their bellies."  

Competition from the Moorish merchants continues to find mention in the Company records. The keen competition posed by them in the spice islands is referred to by the Dutch merchant Peter Floris. The English East India Company is also said to have carried Moorish goods as freight goods. A dispatch of 24th Dec. 1675 also refers to the competition of the Moorish merchants in the Malay Archipelago. The Red Sea trade especially with Persia and the Gombrooms was, even around the 1630's, dominated by the Moors.  

172. Refer to the participation of the Klingis and the Choolias in textile trade under Chap. IV of this thesis.  
173. Peter Floris, op.cit., p.70  
174. Ibid., pp.41-42  
176. Dispatches, 24th Dec. 1675, p.29  
177. Foster, Thomas Joyce and Nathaniel Wyche at Masulipatnam to the Company, 25th Oct. 1634, p.48
Companies posed by the independent Moorish merchants, the king of Golconda also sought to clamp down a monopoly on Masulipatnam cloth. Among the noblemen of the period participating in trade was Mir Jumla. In 1651 he owned ten ships which sailed to "Pegu, Tenasserim, Achin, Arrakkan, Persia, Bengala, Mokha, Maldives and Maccassar." 179

The Weavers and the Company

Besides the system of advances intermediaries and the operation of independent, indigenous merchants, the textile market, to a very limited extent, was governed by direct relations between the weavers and the Company.

Even though intermediaries were indispensable, even though intermediaries were indispensable to textile trade and organisation, the East India companies chafed under the burden of having to pay a much higher price for the cloth which passed through the hands of several levels of intermediaries. 180 A positive experiment to deal with the weavers was made by Revington, Agent at Rajapur factory in the Deccan. A letter of 4th Oct. 1659 refers to a plan

178. Ibid. 31st Jan. 1636, p.161

179. Ibid., 17th Jan. 1651, p.12. Reference to other merchants like Malaya Chetty (who also acted as intermediary for Dutch and sometimes the English) and Mir Kamaluddin participating independently in trade is referred to in Van Leur's book, op. cit. p.203, p.57 etc.

180. Foster, 11th July 1665, p.116, Dispatches, 11th Sept. 1689, p.171
for removing Kolhapur factory up to Lakshmīśvar, Hubli etc. for the cheaper provisions of cloth, cotton yarn. 181 "You complain", they wrote to Andrews at Surat, "of our going to Hubli because it is a charge into the Company. We answer we go nowhere but it is to the Company's profit, and go where our business lies and not trust the Baniyars." 182 Of course earlier Greenhill and Gurney had employed weavers who had failed to fulfill the company's contract in their own business. 183 But this contact was not so much with the 'cooly' 184 weavers as with the 'chief' 185 weavers or the master-weavers. 186 On 16th Nov. 1694, the English Company signed a contract with the Salawar weavers for unbleached net cloths and the amount of 207 Pagaodas was impressed to the chief weaver. 187 A similar contract for striped bettilles was made with the Jānrawar caste from Kavēripākkam (originally from Karnataka). 188 Some master-weavers emerged as

181. Ibid, 4th Oct. 1659, p.239
182. Ibid.
183. Foster, Brahmin's Declaration against Greenhill, 4th April 1654, p.265.
184. Ibid, 1st March 1654, p.238
185. Ibid.
187. Diary and Consultation, 19th Nov. 1694, p.130-131
188. Ibid. on 20th December, 1694, a similar contract was made with another master-weaver - Ponnambalam, Ibid, p.143
independent merchants competing with the East India Company. Thus in the consultation on 5th Nov. 1693,\(^{189}\) the factors lamented that the company's merchants had been outwitted by two "merchant-weavers" Namashavāy and Bussaporte who gathered to them all the weavers of that part of the country, so that the company's merchants could not get their goods till their business was done and all the looms were changed to the Manilha sort of cloth. These two weavers were, however, brought into the English company's fold by being appointed as Chief merchants.\(^{190}\) In another instance, among the chief merchants acting for the Company at Masulipatnam in 1680 was Chila Sevappa (literally cloth dyer) Kunna-kundala Chengama.\(^{191}\) The master-weavers had a dual role to play in the set up of the textile organisation. While on the one hand they represented the company's interest, they also on the other hand represented the weavers, and when the weavers pushed too far, they led the weavers' opposition to the company as Kalatri the "Chief painter" did in 1662.\(^{192}\) The process of differentiation among the weavers and the existence of master-weavers repudiates the notion that

\(^{189}\) Ibid, 15th Oct. 1694, pp.121-22.

\(^{190}\) Ibid, 5th Nov. 1694, p.123. Refers to the appointment of Namashavāy, Bussappa, Forpactum and Ramakrishna, all master-weavers as chief merchants.

\(^{191}\) Streynsham Master, \textit{op.cit.}, Vol.II, p.147

\(^{192}\) Foster, 16th Nov. 1662, p.175
in seventeenth-eighteenth century India, it was only 
Path two of the Marxist pattern of capitalist development 
that was taking place. 193

The position of the weavers in the economy especially 
vis-a-vis the East India company has to be judged in terms 
of the cost structure, the market price of cloth and the 
wages, paid to the weavers. The information on the price 
of cotton, yarn, dyes plus the cost of bleaching etc. is 
so scattered and disparate that it does not really provide 
a proper idea of the cost structure. Moreover, the 
interacting effects of the various components of costs is 
too complex to be analysed properly - for instance, the 
effect of the price of foodgrains on the price of cloth. 
While Oxenden commented from Surat in 1663 that the prices 
of cotton goods vary according to the scarcity or abundance 
of crops, 194 it was conversely believed that when grain 
was dearer the cloth actually became cheaper because the 
weavers worked twice as hard in order to earn more and 
compensate for the dearness of provisions. 195 It seems 
more correct to assume that the price of cloth did not 
fluctuate because the merchants were already tied to fixed

193. Morris Dobb, Studies in the Development of Capitalism 
report on The Origins of the Modern Indian Business 
Class' (New York, 1959) also expresses a similar 
opinion.

194. Quoted in K.N. Chaudhuri, op.cit. p.265. Also 
Foster, the Statement of Reverend William Issacs in 
1661, p.58 and Ibid, 9th Oct. 1647, p.166, etc.
contract prices and hence the increase in costs was met by cutting down the weavers' price, resulting ultimately in the emigration of weavers and shortfalls in supplies. This short-sighted policy was due to the injunctions of the directors in England, although the factors themselves were aware of its implications. In 1672-73, when the price of cotton was 15 Pagados per candy, it is stated that earlier (1659) it had been 9 Pagodas per candy and paddy was being sold at 5-6 Pagodas per candy, and at Masulipatnam at 2 Pagodas per candy, the price of unbleached Sallampores was 12-14 Pagodas per corge (i.e., 20 pieces). From 1673 to 1681, the price of Sallampores registered very mild fluctuation remaining more or less constant at 14 Pagodas per corge with the paddy


197. Due to competition in the European market the Company demanded cloth better and cheaper by at least 20 per cent - Dispatches, 4th Aug.1676, and Passim.

198. Diary and Consultation, 18th April 1672, p.4, p.6, A candy is roughly 480 pounds.

199. Ibid.

price fluctuating between 5 Pagodas to 6\frac{1}{4} Pagodas per garce.\textsuperscript{203} Even in March 1693 paddy was being sold at 25 marcals per Pagoda\textsuperscript{204} and the price of Sallampores ranged from 10 Pagodas 25 panams\textsuperscript{205} per corge to 14 Pagodas per corge; but in late 1693 and 1694, the price of paddy increased to between 13-14 Marcals per Pagoda\textsuperscript{206} and by November 1694 it was 7 marcals\textsuperscript{207} per Pagoda and the weavers had begun to leave the Madras region and move Southwards in search of cheaper paddy.\textsuperscript{208} Inspite of such serious conditions the price of Sallampores continued to be constant leading to protests by the merchants.\textsuperscript{209}

prices in the seventeenth century at uneven intervals of time is given in Chap.VII of this thesis.

\textsuperscript{201.} Diary and Consultation, 29th Sep. 1674, p.28
\textsuperscript{202.} Ibid, 21st July 1676, p.96, 5th Aug. 1678, p.94 etc.
\textsuperscript{203.} Ibid, 23rd Dec. 1678, Letters to Fort St. George, 13th March, 1688
\textsuperscript{204.} Ibid, 18th March 1683
\textsuperscript{205.} Ibid, 23rd March 1693
\textsuperscript{206.} Ibid, 19th Nov. 1694, p.130
\textsuperscript{207.} Ibid, 25th Nov. 1694, p.133
\textsuperscript{208.} Ibid, 21st Nov. 1694, p.134

\textsuperscript{209.} The rigid enforcing of the Company musters and the consequent lowering of prices in times of scarcity and famine was a major grievance of the merchants (Diary and Consultations), 29th Sept. 1674, p.27). The merchants threatened that if their cloth was not accepted they would no longer undertake the exchange of the unsaleable English broadcloth (Diary and Consultations, 17th July, 1677, p.121.)
It is also very difficult to form an idea of the wages of the weavers during the period. According to the impressions gathered by Methwold, an ordinary master-workman earned around 3 d per day, i.e., roughly Rs.3½ per month.210 The Dutch paid a weaver 3½ panams for his labour211 in producing an ordinary guinea cloth. Since a weaver can weave between 3-3½ yards on a day, he may be roughly said to produce about 26 pieces of guinea cloth in a year212, i.e., his wages must have been approximately 9 Pagodas a year or around 3 rupees a month. In 1737-38, the monthly wage of Rs.5 demanded by the Bombay weavers was considered a high figure, as other workers were paid much less.213 John Taylor, the commercial resident in Dacca at the end of the eighteenth century estimated a master weaver's income as Rs.47 out of which 3-3½ rupees was to be paid to the weaver.214 This of course does not

210. Methwold in Relations, op.cit. p.27. While only a brief survey is made here of the nature of the weavers' wages during this period a more detailed analysis of their incomes in relation to the other social groups and in terms of prevailing paddy and cloth prices, is to be found under the discussion on the standard of the weavers in Chap. VII of this thesis.

211. K.A. 1267, 18th April 1652, Fol.2066 quoted in J. Brennig op.cit. p.263

212. J. Brennig (Ibid) estimates that the weaver produced 1,379 yards or the equivalent of 36 pieces of guinea cloth. This estimate is too high and one does not know how he arrived at it.

213. K.N. Chaudhuri, op.cit., p.268

mean that wages remained steady over a hundred years because the figure given in the Dutch record pertains to the 1650s when the market was expanding and competition was keen, while the 18th century evidence pertains to a time when the demand for Dacca cloth had greatly declined.

The wages paid to the weavers does not really indicate their acute poverty or total subjection because in the seventeenth century they were still in a strong bargaining position, vis-a-vis the East India Companies. In 1629, the Company lamented that they had to pay whatever price was demanded for their cloth by the weavers irrespective of the quality because otherwise they would defect to the Dutch. In the quarrels between Greenhill and the chief merchants, Venkata and Kannappa, the weavers and painters of Fort St. George, figured prominently by using their weapons of defection and enmass desertion. In the 1660s the weavers of the town of Dacheron (a few miles away from Masulipatnam) and Tegnapatam (Fort St. David) fought the association of local merchants who infringed upon the economic interests of the artisans.

215. Foster, 1st March 1654, p.240
217. Foster, 1st March 1654, p.240. Also see Diary and Consultations, 16th July 1694, p.73 etc. for other instances of defection.
Textile Technology

It is an undisputed fact that in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries India was the major exporter of textiles to England and Europe as well as to other parts of the world. It was only in the early nineteenth century that the industrial revolution in Britain drastically altered India's position. Inspite of the fact that for more than 500 years India was an exporter of textiles economic historians have tended to attribute this to wage differentials\(^{219}\) rather than a competent technology. But actual technological data proves that in the various aspects of the textile industry - preparation of the yarn and thread, dyeing and weaving, the indigenous technology was superior to that of Europe. Some of the finest variety of textiles were being produced on the Indian patterned looms even during the fifteenth century\(^ {220}\) and possibly the technique was known earlier in the twelfth century\(^ {221}\) itself. In 1679, the English Agent Streynsham Master observed at Ellur the weaving of Persian carpets on vertical looms with coloured woollen weft threads woven in accordance with patterns set on

\(^{219}\) This constituted the favourite argument of many of the contemporaries. As the author of an anonymous tract puts it "as much labour may be had there for two pence as in England for a shilling" - Chapter II, pp.556-559 ff in McCulloch (ed.) Early English Tracts on Commerce, op.cit. The writings of Thomas Mun and others in the same Collection contain similar ideas.

\(^{220}\) T.T., Vol.IV, No.112

It is possible that the description pertains to a draw loom. The tie and dye technique which produced the bandhani and patola sarees was known in India since the twelfth century. The Indians employed excellent dyeing techniques and their vegetable dyes like Indigo and chay produced such fast colours that they were being exported to England. However, in silk material the Indian dyers were unable to produce certain colours so that silk dyers and throwsters had to be brought in from England to instruct the Indian weavers. Some flax dressers and linen drappers from England were also settled in India to teach the natives their techniques.


224. Mansollasa, op. cit., pp. 28-39 verse 28. Aspects of technology have been discussed in Chapters two and four of this thesis. I have also attempted to analyse in detail the various aspects of textile technology in an article 'Notes on Textile Technology in Medieval South India', T.E.S.H.R., 1980 (forthcoming).

225. Export of indigo from Fort St. David and Masulipatnam is referred to in the Company records. Foster, 10th Nov. 1656, p. 103, Dispatches, 26th Aug. 1698, p. 45, p. 55 etc. Also of red wood - Ibid, 26th Jan. 1698 p. 42, Ibid, 8th Feb. 1681, p. 73 - red saunders also known as Calliatore wood. The Company also imported 'Chay' (red dye) and attempted to learn its use - Foster, 12th Sep. 1631, p. 109, para 54.

226. Diary and Consultation, 18th Feb. 1675, p. 40. Silk weavers and throwsters sent for the service of the Company in Cassamabar. Also Dispatches, 5th Jan. 1681, p. 28, para 28 - appointment of two silk dyers at Fort St. George for dyeing in black and other colours. Also Ibid, 23rd March 1687, p. 40, etc. However, the dyers were not of much service and had to be sent back to England - Dispatches, 15th Feb. 1688, p. 167.
Indian thread especially when spun by the hand spindle was very strong and durable and was exported into England for the benefit of the linen industry.\textsuperscript{227} With technological skill was combined the prevalence of low wages.\textsuperscript{228} In fact, the two went together.\textsuperscript{229} As the Directors of the Company wrote to the Agent and Council in Bengal, "we have always found any new commodity dearer by almost half the first than it is after your workmen are 'well-practised in the making of it'.\textsuperscript{230} It was the low labour costs prevailing in India combined with the excellence of the textile that led to the massive exports to England and the firm faith of the contemporary thinkers that Indian calico was more valuable than English bullion.\textsuperscript{231}

\textsuperscript{227} Dispatches, 2nd April 1683, p.27, Ibid, 9th June 1686, p.24, para 33, etc.

\textsuperscript{228} Ibid, 27th Oct. 1683, para 66, para 2, Ibid, 30th Sep. 1684, p.100, para 42 establishes a connection between the low price of rice and a low wage.

\textsuperscript{229} Palsaert's account translated by Moreland and Geyl as Jahangir's India (Cambridge 1825), p.60.

\textsuperscript{230} Dispatches, 27th Aug. 1688, p.148

Foreign Trade in Textiles

The trade in South India in the seventeenth century can be studied in terms of very specific phases. Effective Portuguese trade and competition with other powers virtually came to an end by the second decade of the century.\(^{232}\) This was followed by a period of collaboration and rivalry between the Dutch and the English with the Dutch having the upper hand in view of their better financial position. The second half of the century saw the English attempting to emerge in a dominant position and their textile imports into England reached its peak around 1680. The struggle between the Dutch and the English for commercial supremacy was accompanied by a parallel struggle on the part of both the companies to suppress the 'Moors'\(^{233}\) and also the private traders and interlopers, an attempt that was not

232. It is said that the Portuguese empire collapsed under its own weight. The decline of Portuguese power in Europe was a primary reason for the waning of its power in India but to this were added powerful factors like the English-Dutch competition, the hated system of cartazas and, in general, the nature of Portuguese control in India. The best idea of the decline of Portuguese may be gained by studying the number of ships leaving Lisbon for Goa: 1500-49, 451; 1549-99, 264; 1600-1650, 265; 1651-1700, 106. The Portuguese received their greatest blow from their loss of Malecoca in 1641, Ceylon in 1656 and Cochin in 1663 (Holden Furber, op.cit., p.27)

233. The term 'Moors' as already stated was a generic term which included the Arabs, the Deccanis, the Khurasanis, and even the Turks.
wholly successful. The final decades of the century witnessed the growing protest in England against the Indian calico imports and the first of the bans on Indian goods was imposed around 1700 though this was far from being effective in checking the flow of Indian calicoes into England. In fact, the English government confessed in 1719 that "there are more calicoes worn in England that pay no duty than what are painted and worn here that do pay duty." 234

First Phase - Nature of the Market, International Competition and New Directions of Trade in Textiles.

Almost till the end of the 1640's Coromandel textiles figured in European trade only as an item of barter in the spice trade 235 and in the slave trade in West Africa 236 though some tentative attempts were being


235. Discussed in great detail in Chapter IV of this thesis.

236. This trade began around 1630's and the term for Indian calico 'Guinea' in fact comes from the Guinea Coast of equitorial Africa where most of the slaves were purchased. Irwin in Irwin and Schwartz (ed.) Studies in Textile History, op.cit. p.12
The Direction of East India Trade in the Seventeenth Century

Canaries
Cape Verde Is.
St. Helena
St. Augustine's Bay
Table Bay
Comoro Is.
Madagascar
Mauritius

London
Canary Is.
Persia
Orma
Combroun
Zask
Kishin
Mokha
Sokatra
Goa
Surat
Ceylon
Achir
Sumatra
Java
Bantam
Macassar
made to find a market for them in England. At this time, Calicoes were in demand only as table cloths, coverlets, napkins wall hangings etc. and this limited demand was being met by the Surat factory. In 1623, King James I is said to have asked two Directors of the Company 'what vent they had for the great masse of Calicoes that come yearle', whereupon they replied that 'much of it is very useful and vendes in England, whereby the prices of Lawnes238 cambrics239 and other linen cloth are brought down.240

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237. A tentative effort was made to send Coromandel textiles to England 1621 when a few samples of plain cotton cloth were sent as more capable of replacing French and Holland linen. In a letter written by the Council at Batavia to the Company dated 14th Dec. 1623, they say that the great qualities of 'long calico' sent yearly by the Dutch from Masulipatnam gave them the idea of sending some fine calicoe to England but note with regret that it did not sell well (-- Foster, Vol.II, p.336. Also 6th March, 1622, p.56.)


239. Cambrics from Cambrai. Ibid. It is clear that Indian calico did not substitute for English products but imported linen.

However, the Indian calicoes had very limited appeal in England. It was from 1630 onwards that Indian calicoes especially the coarser varieties of long cloth and sallampores and the tapaes began to play an important role in the triangular track between India, West Africa and the West Indies with cloth again as the principal item of barter for the slaves.241

From late 1640's and the 1650's the Indian calicoes began to find a market in England and Europe and by 1680 the 'calico craze' was well on its way and the repeated promulgations against its importation in 1700, 1721, etc. could not do much to check it.242 In 1658, the English East India Company exported to England from Madras 84,000 pieces comprising of long cloth (50,000), Sallampores (20,000) and others including muslin (14,000). In 1659, the Company specified over 90,000 standard pieces, viz., long cloth 50,000, Sallampores 30,000 and other varieties 11,000. A standing order was also given to provide roughly 100,000 pieces for future years.243 The Dutch export of textiles had begun in the 1620's itself. In the 1630's fabrics

241. In this context refer to f.n. 40 of this Chapter.


accounted for about 43 per cent of the total value of Dutch exports from India to Europe.\textsuperscript{244} The bulk of them were sent by the Dutch to South East Asia where they made a profit of 125 per cent.\textsuperscript{245} In Persia they made 50-80 per cent profit and in Europe, 65 to 160 per cent profit on textiles.

The competition among the rival nations was perhaps at its height in the first two decades of the seventeenth century when the Moors, the Portuguese, the Dutch, the Danes and the English were all in the commercial fray for the spice trading, whereby Coromandel cloth was sold in the East India and spices sold at great profit in Europe.\textsuperscript{246} This rivalry created a situation where anything the weavers made were bought up and the prices went up\textsuperscript{247} while the sellers markets became glutted causing a fall in prices.\textsuperscript{248} A letter from the agent and

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{244} Cited in A.I. Chicherov, \textit{Economic Development of India between 16th to 18th centuries}, (Moscow,1971) p.115.
  \item \textsuperscript{245} In 1686, the Dutch exported to South-East Asia, Coromandel goods to the value of 1,168,000 florins which netted them 500 per cent profit. (S.P. Sen, 'Indian Textiles in South East Asian Trade in the 17th Century', \textit{Journal of the South East Asian History}, Singapore, Vol.3, 1962).
  \item \textsuperscript{246} Foster, 14th Dec., 1623, p.336, 6th March 1622, p.66, \textit{Dispatches}, 24th Dec. 1675. p.29 says that at Bantam "the Danes and the Moors and others sold goods 20 per cent cheaper than them spoiling the English market for these goods which the English bought dear and made no profit upon."
\end{itemize}
Council at Batavia to the English East India Company in 1626 laments at the obstruction of their purchase of textiles at Pondicherry by the Danes and at Masulipatnam by the Dutch.\textsuperscript{249} The situation in the spice islands is best described by Peter Floris, a Dutch merchant,\textsuperscript{250} whose writing in 1612 says that at Patani (an entrepot for trade) four years ago there was "such a vent in them that it seemed the world had not clothings enough to provide this place as was needful, ... and that now it is so overcloyed ... But the cause why the same lyeth now so underfoot is this - that the Portugals bring the same quality of clothing in Malaccaas heretofore they have done, hereupon followed the Hollanders, who have not only filled Bantam and Java but also all the islands.

\textsuperscript{247} Pitt the Agent at Fort Geldria stated in 1659 that the Dutch had to buy low quality cloth at increasingly higher prices because the weavers raised the price. (India Office Mackenzie Collections, pp.141, cited in Brennig, op.cit.p.90)

\textsuperscript{248} Commenting on the state of the market in 1605, Pyrard says: "What formerly cost the Portuguese one sol, now costs them four or five and even when they were brought in safety to Portugal, they were obliged to get rid of them at a lesser price than they were wont! to do and in fact it was as much as they could do to get it sold at all because the Hollanders sell at lower prices still and do their business with much greater dispatch" (Pyrard de Laval, op.cit., Vol.II, pt. 1, p.203) Also Peter Floris, op.cit., pp.41-42 and Passim. In fact Floris finding that he could not make 5 per cent profit on spices, and cotton cloth, likewise, out of request, decided to invest his money partly in Siam and partly in goods for England. (Ibid, p.79)

\textsuperscript{249} Foster, 6th Feb. 1621, p.119
of Molucca, so that they (i.e., Portuguese) have no utterance at Malacca (the Portuguese entrepot of spice trade). Besides this, there may be some ships of the Moors which trade for Tenasserim and provide Siam; besides this two Portugal and a Moorish ship have found out a new haven this last year called Tarang and this year arrived a Gujarati ship and another from Nagapatnam at Keda bringing the lawns overland and so over filled it that no man ever saw the like; and to all these we come with 200 packs, the rumour whereof being sufficient to cause the price not to rise these ten years... Floris says that where four years ago he had made 300 to 400 per cent profit now he could not make 5 per cent. Floris has referred here to the stiff competition posed by the Asian merchants both Moors and Chettis in the Asian trade. The continuance of indigenous merchant guilds in textile trade is evident from the seventeenth

250. Pieter Willmemsz served the Dutch East India Company from 1603 to 1608 and it was when he was caught indulging in private trade by the Company that he changed his name to Peter Floris and took part in the Voyage of Globe (a ship of the English East India Company) in 1615.

251. Peter Floris, op.cit., pp.41-42

252. Ibid.

253. Ibid.
century inscriptions. Evidence for the functioning of the 'Choolia' merchants comes in the Company records although the 'Kling' merchants seem to have lost the prosperity they enjoyed in the earlier century. The 'Moors' or Muslim merchants including the Deccanis, Khurasanis, Arabs, etc. competed with the East India companies in both the Red Sea trade and the trade with the spice islands. But the exact extent of the participation of Asian merchants is difficult to gauge in view of the absence of quantitative data.

254. A.R.E., C.P. 8 of 1952-53, S.I.I., Vol.XVI, No.315 A.R.E., C.P. 18 of 1917. See pp.40 ff of this Chapter under the section where the operation of Asian merchants in the cloth market has been discussed.

255. Diary and Consultation, 25th March 1686, p.29 and Letters, 20th March 1687, p.7 etc.

256. Peter Floris, op.cit., p.70. The Klings are referred to as cloth peddlers, who tried to eke out a living.


258. The Historian Van Leur has argued that the share of Asian merchants in Coromandel trade was a sizeable one. According to his figures, in 1620, the tonnage of ships in the oriental waters averaged between 12 to 14,000 while the Chinese and Siamese shipping amounted to 18,000 tons and Coromandel native shipping around 10,000 tons. He also quotes Dutch sources to show how Malaya Chetty as well as Mir Kamaluddin carried on extensive trade in their own vessels. Interestingly, Malaya was also an intermediary for the Dutch. Indonesian Trade and Society, Essays in Asian Social and Economic History, (Hague, 1955), pp. 234-35, 242, 203-204, etc. See also Tapan Raychowdhry, op.cit., Passim.
Trade had reached a bottleneck and the situation could have only one solution - new directions of trade. The European companies were in search of new varieties of cloth and new directions of trade and the silk trade between China and Japan suggested strong possibilities. Apart from the restricted privileges accorded to Portuguese settlement at Macao, the Chinese seaboard was closed to foreigners and consequently Chinese silk so much in demand in Japan could be purchased only on neutral territory. No Japanese vessel could directly enter Chinese ports; a single Portuguese ship came annually to Japan from Macao carrying Canton silk.259 Both the Dutch and the English hoped to obtain a share of this lucrative trade in the Gulf of Siam. In July 1612, the Dutch sent a consignment of silk and silk wares from Patani to Japan, and six months later silk and other Chinese goods were being sent to Japan from Siam also.260 But the silk trade did not develop, probably because the other neutral entrepots were more convenient for both Chinese and Japanese.261 It is noteworthy that when a parallel situation that is glut in textiles occurred in the European market in the 1680's, the possibility of trade with Japan in Bengal silk was again mooted.262

259. Peter Floris, op.cit., p.64. Macao is a place on the Peju river.
260. Ibid, p.73
261. Ibid. p.74 - See also the introduction to the Voyage of Peter Floris to the East Indies by W.H. Moreland XXIII, XXV.
262. Dispatches, 11th Sep. 1689, p.175
There were efforts to develop the trade via the Red Sea especially the trade with Persia and Gombroon.\(^ {263}\)

In 1634, the English company decided to invest 20,000 pounds, in gold either coin or bullion for trade with Persia. They could invest triple that sum "for we are to deal only in fine goods such as in four or five months' time may be procured to an enormous amount, witness the abundance of rich bales that are yearly bought by the Moors, etc. about Golconda and transported on your ships for Gombroon".\(^ {264}\) The English Company also decided to invest 10,000 pounds in textiles for Gombroon raising 5,000 pounds from the transportation of freight goods.\(^ {265}\) The trade with Persia was, however, systematically hindered by the Mughal administration at Golconda which claimed monopoly of fine goods at Masulipatnam and the king ordered that the weavers should work only for the government.\(^ {266}\) The Dutch as an alternative secured their paintings from Pulicat and Pondicherry while the English set up their factory at Armagaon.\(^ {267}\) But the markets at Basra and Gombroon were again ruined by competition between the Dutch and the English. The Agent and Council at Gombroon wrote to the President and Council at Surat in 1647 "The markets here are very bad and likely to be worse a Dutch ship is daily expected

\(^{263}\) Old name for place on the Persian Gulf now known as Bandar - Abbas - Hobson-Jobson, p.384.

\(^{264}\) Foster, Thomas Joyce and Nathaniel Wyche at Masulipatnam to the Company, 25th Oct. 1634, p.48
from Masulipatnam. There is no demand for long cloth - the so called guldars\textsuperscript{268} are found to be but niguls\textsuperscript{269} which are but half so long as the Guldars and so more suitable for Basra. The Cheleus (sallalo) are so bad that there is no offer for them and the brown sallampores are too coarse to tempt buyers.\textsuperscript{270} Another important outlet for the Coromandel textiles was provided by the trivangular slave trade. The West African market demanded textiles very similar to that of tape sarassas, the blue sallamporees, etc. Another direction of trade which was, however, by no means new, was the export for Masulipatnam textiles, its muslins and printed chintz to Naccasar (modern Celebes\textsuperscript{island}).\textsuperscript{271}

\textsuperscript{265} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{266} Foster, President Willoughby and Council at Bantam to the Company, 31st Jan. 1636, p.161

\textsuperscript{267} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{268} Flowered, embroidered or brocaded cloth very popular in Turkey.

\textsuperscript{269} Half the usual length of broad cloth since \textit{nim} in Persian means half.

\textsuperscript{270} Foster, 4th March 1647, p.109

\textsuperscript{271} Foster, 28th Oct. 1629, pp.357-8
The first indications of the existence of an European market for Coromandel cloth comes in 1647 when the President Ivy at Fort St. George wrote to the Company that they would "rejoice to learn that, the Persian and Bantam markets having been fully stocked with coast clothing, a quantity has at last found its way to England and there yielded contentable profit."\(^{272}\) The beginning of the direct export of Coromandel textiles to England and Europe also marks the start of a new phase where the English and the Dutch were virtually the sole competitors in the field. In 1650, the English East India Company wrote to the President and Council at Surat that the Calicoes which sold in the European market were of the Coromandel making, "who are more preferred before anie of the Surat clothing, because they fit best for France and other foreign lands."\(^{273}\) Cloth began to be bought in marginal quantities for sale not only in England but for re-export to Africa. Thus the Company placing the order\(^{274}\) for 8,000 pieces of fine long cloth at the rate of one pagoda per piece wrote to the Council at Madras that if the Guinea factors should advise that fine paintings would sell there a suitable quantity should be dispatched to England for that purpose and that in any case at least 150 to 200 pieces would be welcome for sale in England.

\(^{272}\) Ibid., 9th Oct. 1647, p.163-4, etc.
\(^{273}\) Ibid, 13th Feb. 1650, p.297
\(^{274}\) Ibid., 10th Nov. 1661, p.156
Second Phase: The Dutch-English Competition and the Varying Nature of the Textile Market

The English - Dutch competition for the European market was already under way. The English company writing to its factors says "The Hollands East India Company have lately had a court of sales and we find that they have sold long cloth at near 4 pounds per piece, and Sallamporees at 40 shillings per piece and Moorees, Percales and other fine cloth at greater prices. We, therefore, desire that you send us a proportion of each of these sorts..." 275

The enormous profit made by these companies can be seen by the fact that even around 1677 they were purchasing the fine sallamporees at 1.35 pagodas, 276 per piece, i.e., half a pound and long cloth around the same price. Inspite of the transportation charges, etc, the Companies must have made a clear profit of 300-500 per cent. There was an enormous growth in the volume of textile exports to Europe by both the companies. In 1642, the Dutch had shipped between 8,000 and 10,000 pieces of Guinea cloth from Coromandel to Holland. In 1682, 40 years later, 23,500 pieces of Guinea cloth were shipped from Masulipatnam to Holland together with an additional 40,000 pieces from various factories in Coromandel. 277

275. Ibid, p.158
276. Dispatches, 12th Dec. 1677, p.135, A Pagoda at that time was reckoned at 8 shillings.
Similarly the English company's export of Coromandel textiles to London totalled 18,225 pieces in 1638-39. In 1664, the total quantities of Callicoes imported by the English company stood at well over a quarter of a million pieces and their value accounted for 73 per cent of the entire trade of the Company. In two decades, i.e., by 1684, the Calicoes exported to England by the English Company stood at more than a million and a half pieces and the relative share of textiles to total output had also increased to 83 per cent.

The market for textiles in Europe unlike that of the spice islands was a constantly changing one. Initially, several forms of Callicoes, like percalles, moores, sallamporees, and long cloth were in demand but only as table cloths, coverlets curtains, etc. Later, around the 1660's the Coromandel textiles began to substitute for the linen imports from Europe and the terminology of European linen began to be applied to Indian textiles like 'Calico lawns' and 'Hollands'. A letter from

278. Moreland, Akbar to Aurangzeb, op. cit., p.129
279. K.N. Chaudhuri, The Trading World of Asia, op. cit. p.282. Also refer to the list of orders by the Company. (see table)
280. See Letters Received by the East India Company from its servants in the East (London, 1896), 30th Aug. 1609, p.29 and Passim. Also, Foster, 14th Dec. 1623, p.107 etc. In fact, the demand for bed covers and curtains continued right till 1680 - Dispatches, 14th Aug. 1683, p.49
the company in 1680 to the Fort St. George states ..
"there is nothing so difficult but may be effected where
the material silk and midwife labour are so cheap as
with you .. encourage the ingenious and first imitators
of staple commodities, of the usual production of Italy
and France which, pick our pockets while they come from
thence, but would fill his Majesties and subjects
purses if we could buy them from India.282

But Indian calicoes did not merely act as a
substitute for imported linen and they were rapidly
gaining currency in England and Europe in their right.
By 1687 the Company reported that they could send
Calico ".. exceed their former orders therein as also
chintz broad of all sorts, whereof some to be grave and
cloth colours with the greatest variety they could invent,
they being become the wear of ladies of the highest
quality, which they wear on the outside of gowns and
manteaus, lined with velvet and cloth of gold".283 The
demand for calico was more than doubled by the fact that
the fashions in high circles changed very rapidly. As
the company put it "Note this for a constant and general
rule ... that you change the fashions and flower as
much as you can every year, for English ladies and they
say the French and the Europeans will give twice as much

282. Dispatches, 22nd April 1681, p.49.
283. Dispatches, 22nd March, 1687, p.43, para 16.
for a new thing not seen in Europe before though worse, than they will give for a better of the same fashion worn the former year". 284

Calico became utility items for all classes when instead of being merely worn on the outside its possibility as a soft and light inner garment began to be realised. This started off the demand for calico shifts, izzarees, diapers and also calico stockings. 285 In 1682 the Company placing an order for 200,000 shifts at Fort St. George specified that some should be of the coarsest cloth, i.e., strong blue cloth (sallamporees) or ordinary white for seamen and ordinary people, others white middling for citizens and middle sort of people and some fine enough for ladies and gentlewomen. Some were to be wrought on the breasts and in the sleeves and collars with needle work, "the price here will sufficiently pay for the work and cost there where labour and art are so cheap". 286

The table on the following page will give an idea of the rate of increase in the export of Coromandel textiles and also the fluctuating nature of the demand for various varieties of cloth.

284. Ibid., May 1681, p.7

285. Ibid., 26th Jan. 1688, etc. The orders for these are to be found in all the list of the cloth varieties ordered by the company. These were only from the Golconda region and were not available at Fort. St. George - See 1683, 1690, 1698 lists.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Textile Varieties**</th>
<th>1675</th>
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<th>1677</th>
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** Figures were not available for the years omitted. In fact between 1688 and 1690 very few orders were placed and between 1690 and 1693 no orders were placed. For notes on this table refer to appendix.
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<td>13 in a 4-5 pieces piece per pegoda</td>
<td>17-35 pieces per pegoda</td>
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Note: The table lists various textile varieties along with their respective prices and quantities. The entries include a mix of fixed prices and ranges, with some indicating specific units like pieces per pegoda or pieces per pagoda.
Notes on Table II

1. The lists sometimes give the entire range of the prices of long cloth altogether. In this and in the subsequent figures, 47 Pagodas applies only to long cloth fine and not to long cloth brown.

2. The price of long cloth fine is high in comparison to previous years.

3. The price of Warangal bettelles is higher in comparison to previous years.

4. Long cloth brown purchased at Porto Novo only 17 Pagodas per corge.

5. The price of bettelles seems to have been reduced. The 1678 list makes an upward revision from 37-40 Pagodas to 39-42.5 Pagodas. But in 1680 the Company seems to have gone back to the old price of 37-40 Pagodas.

6. After 1683, one more order for cummums in 1684 for 20,000 pieces and then no more orders.

7. At Masulipatnam during the time of famine (1690) the price of ordinary long cloth was increased to 40 Pagodas per corge. This is one of the few instances where the company price for cloth went up as a result of famine.
8. The long cloth brown was purchased at Conimere where the prices were much cheaper than at Madras or Kasulipatnam.

9. The nature of the orders for striped neckcloths provides a clear illustration of the problem faced by the English East India Company with regard to procurement. After huge orders from 1679 to 1681 there are no further orders till 1686 and from 1686 no further orders till 1690. This clearly demonstrates the situation of glut in the market occasioned by the excessive import of one variety of cloth and the problem of coordination between supply and demand (refer pp. 15-16 ff of Chapter VI).

10. Shifts figure for the first time in the Company lists in 1690.

11. The price eventually paid by the Company was much less, on the ground that the cloth did not match the company musters. The price was reduced from 39 to 35.5 Pagodas.

12. The list represents only Kasulipatnam musters.

13. The list represents only Fort St. George musters.

14. The Diary and Consultation of 18th June 1700, p. 42, records the thorough dissatisfaction of the merchants with the fixing of prices according to musters on the pretext of which all contract prices were greatly reduced. See especially the reduction in the case of fine moorees and fine jinghams.
The gradual decline in the profit from the textile trade was due to three major factors - (1) the European competition which glutted the market and caused fall in price; (2) the problem of interlopers or private traders which right from the beginning was a great hazard before the companies and a problem that vexed every Agent and every Governor in charge of a factory; (3) the lobbying against the importation of Indian calicoes into England leading to the ban in 1701 followed by another in 1720.

The aim of the rival companies was to "overbuy and under-sell" each other. This resulted in the company warehouses getting overstocked, glut in the market and decline in prices. This situation occurred in 1672-73, 1675-76, and throughout the eighties.

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287. Foster, 10th Dec. 1663, p.279. The letter from the Agent and Council of Fort St. George to the company complains that after virtually monopolising the spice trade the Dutch were now trying to capture the cloth market by overbuying and underselling the English. The English retaliated in kind as is clear from the Despatches, 10th March 1682, p.76.


290. Despatches, 8th June 1676, p.32

Private Traders and Interlopers

While on the one hand European competition ruined the prospects of profit, on the other hand, the interlopers and private traders constituted the enemies within. Every agent in every factory complains about the private traders poaching on company trade and destroying the market for their goods by selling the same goods before hand. The private traders vitiated the entire policy of country trading. But what is most interesting is that the same agents and factors who at the official level had to grapple with the problem of private trading were themselves not free from the sins of private trade - Greenhill, Chambers, Winter, Streynsham Master, Pitt.

292. Foster, 2nd Aug. 1633, pp.309-10, 27th Dec. 1655, p.40. The factors were buying not only on their own account but also on behalf of the private traders, making good profits by way of brokerage. Another letter dated 10th Nov. 1656, p.102, complains that the private ships touched at all considerable points buying up all sorts of cloth enhancing the price of these manufacturers and ruining the company's trade. Also see Dispatches, 4th Aug. 1676, p.44 and Passim.

293. Greenhill and Chambers writing to their Surat colleagues complained that the trade in India would never improve because of the interlopers. (Foster, 7th July 1656, p.100) But Greenhill himself amassed his entire fortune at private trade - Ibid, Text of Brahmin's Declaration, April 4, 1654, p.263, also 27th Dec. 1655, p.40 and Passim.

294. Foster, 27th Dec. 1655, p.40. Also refer to President Baker as having indulged in private trade.

295. Ibid., 7th Dec. 1659, pp. 266-7
Mohun, Mainwaring 298 to mention only some names all left India under a cloud of dishonour caused by their private ventures. The situation in the Dutch company was equally chronic. 299 The East India Company adopted very stringent measures to check the interlopers. The accounts of goods imported for the company and those dispatched in each were to be examined to determine the real owners. 300 The commanders of ships were to forfeit 40 pounds for any

296. Ibid, 5th Jan. 1681, p.19. According to Easter, Job Charnock at Fort William was also a notorious private trader.

297. See The Diary of William Hodges, 3 Vols. (London, 1886-88) Vol. III is replete with references to the interloping voyages of Thomas Pitt. His last voyage as interloper was on the Seymour in 1695, but on the 26th Nov. 1697, he was made President of Fort St. George. Since then he vigorously suppressed all private trade.

298. Dispatches, 4th Aug. 1676, Also see the letter written by Richard Mohun to the company 22nd Jan. 1676 indicting Mainwaring. He also exposes Charterlin and gives figures to show his share in the private ventures undertaken by Mohun, p.65-69, ff.

299. A hilarious instance is given in the Dagh Register 1631-34, p.76, 102, 200, where the Agents seem to have played musical chairs over the question of private trade. In May 1632, Arent Gardenijas, replaced Isbrandszoom at Hasulipatnam since he was dismissed for indulging in private trade. In September of the same year, David Peterszoon superseded Gardenijas precisely on the same ground. But in June 1633, of the following year, Isbrandszoom was recalled to replace Pieterszoon who was accused of indulging in private trade! Cited by Foster, Vol.1630-33, p.216. Also c.f. The Voyage of Peter Floris originally Peter Williamsz employed by the Dutch Company was caught at private trading and hence changed the name to Peter Floris and joined the Voyage of the 'Globe' in 1615.

300. Foster, 4th April 1654, p.266
private goods they carried from the Bay or the coast. Similarly, all goods of interlopers were to be confiscated and out of this the commanders and seamen who had helped in seizing the ship were to have one-third of the goods. These measures seem to have been successful in checking the menace of interlopers because from 1680 onwards the references to private trading are noticeably few and the company claimed that all interlopers have been effectively suppressed. However, the English East India Company was subsequently to realise that the ending of private trade did not really solve all these problems because with the accession of William the competition of rival companies in the East India trade became wholly legal.

301. Dispatches, 22nd July 1681, p.50
302. Ibid, 30th Nov. 1681, p.69
303. Ibid, 13th Feb. 1685, p.153, 9th June 1686, p.21, Also Letters, 12th Dec. 1688, etc.
304. Ibid, 8th July 1688, pages 19-20, ff.
Third Phase: The Triumph of Protectionist Interests and the Ban on Indian Calico

It was when the English East India Company were beginning to feel restful since they had emerged in a dominant position vis-a-vis the Dutch and the interlopers had been effectively suppressed that the protests began in England against the importation of Indian calicoes. It was widely believed in England that the sale of cotton goods was achieved at the expense of the indigenous wool and silk industries resulting in the displacement of hundreds of weavers. One contemporary pamphlet lamented that due to the unmerciful cargo of Indian cloth, the weavers of Canterbury had to sell their wares at a loss of 30 to 40 per cent. In 1703, it was laid before the House of Commons that between 1697 and 1702 the East India Company imported, 1,053,725 pounds worth of calicoes into England. Another

305. The investments of the Dutch in India and South East Asia amounted between 1660-1710 to 19 million pound sterling, whereas those of the English East India company reached 26 million pounds during the same period - cited in A.I. Chicheroy, op.cit.,p.116.

306. 'The case of several thousand poor of the wool manufacturers ruined by the printed and dyeing of linens in England' - British Museum, 816.m.14(87) cited by Shafaat Ahmed Khan, The East India Trade in the 17th Century in its political and economic aspects (London, 1923) p.286 ff. Several other pamphlets by wool weavers are cited in pp.278-288.

307. Shafaat Ahmed Khan, op.cit. p.279

308. Ibid. p.283. Dr. Davinan's accounts laid before the House of Commons, Jan. 1703.
argument against import of calicoes was the classic mercantilist logic that the import of East India goods meant the drain of bullion from England. 309 The result of this lobbying was the passing of the Act of 1701 prohibiting all Indian printed and painted Calicoes.

The factors leading to the ban on Indian Calico were much more complex than it appeared to the contemporary observers. Was Calico capable of substituting for wool in the English market or did the demand for calico displace the French and Dutch linen imports into England? Was it possible that the threat of competition from Indian calicoes was most felt by the growing linen industry of England? Some of these queries the contemporary thinkers sought to answer in their own way. Sir Josia Child in a tract published in 1697 (the year the Spitalfields silk weavers' riots broke out) remarked "The India goods are so different in their qualities from the product of our country, and the main of our manufacture, that it is absolutely impossible they should ever do them any injury." 310 The argument that the utility of the Indian calicoes lay in cutting down the


import of cambrics lawns and other linen from France and Holland, was used as early as 1664 by Thomas Mun. 311 The argument regarding the drain of bullion from England was reversed by the defenders of the East India trade without shifting from the mercantilist logic. Thus "Money begets trade and trade increaseth money." 312 The bullion was not to be thought of in terms of a drain since the Indian manufacture were purchased very cheaply (because "as much labour or manufacture may be had there for 2 pence as in England for a shilling"), 313 and these were then re-exported to Spain, France, and other European countries bringing into England three times the amount of bullions expended in the East India trade. 314 The further classic arguments in favour of the calicoes trade was that with the increased bullion resulting from the re-export trade,


312. Thomas Mun, 'England's Treasure by Foreign Trade' 1664 in McCulloch Ibid., p.135. This idea is expanded in pp. 131, 135-6 ff.

313. The anonymous tract 'Considerations on the East India Trade' in McCulloch, Ibid., p.1. The argument is developed in Chap. II of the same tract, pp.556-559.

314. Thomas Mun 'England's Treasure by Foreign Trade' in McCulloch, Ibid., p.137
prices of commodities would become cheaper and surplus capital would generate employment opportunities.315

The maximum impact of the import of calicoes should have been on the English linen industry but as late as 1650's the English linen industry was still in its infancy.316 To them the importation of Indian calicoes did not seem a threat at all and in fact they vigorously protested against the attempt by the woollen and silk manufacturers to ban Indian calicoes because the Indian cloth provided employment to hundreds of linen drappers, dyers and printers in England,317 as well as silk throwsters.318 But although the long term impact of the import of the Indian calicoes on the English linen industry seem to have escaped contemporary observation it was nevertheless there. From 1870 onwards the import of raw cotton yarn and thread from the Coromandel coast


318. Thomas Mun 'England's Treasure by Foreign Trade' in McCulloch (ed.) Early English Tracts on Commerce, op.cit. p.132. "In the past 35 years, the winding of raw silk did not employ more than 300. Now it doth set on work above 14,000 souls."
and raw silk from Bengal was steadily increasing. in order to feed the English linen industry. It was perhaps this which later gave the English textile manufacturers the strength to impose curbs on Indian calicoes. The Indian weavers strangely enough seem to have protested against the export of cotton yarn in some rare cases, the Surat weavers being a case in point. They refused to meet the demands of the English company unless the export of raw cotton from the area was immediately stopped.

As things stood in 1700, it was in all probability the protest of certain sections of the woollen and silk manufacturers which brought about the prohibition of 1701 irrespective of the fact that calico could hardly be a perfect substitute for wool. The ban was not particularly effective for the government admitted in 1721, on the eve of the second prohibition act, that 'more calicoes are worn in England that pay no duty than are painted and

319. 100 bales of cotton yarn from the Coromandel coast on 14th Dec. 1675 (Dispatches, p.28). In 1676, 50 bales of cotton yarn and 50 bales of molotetta yarn from the Bay (Ibid, 8th June 1676, p.32). In 1683 and 1684, 150 bales of cotton yarn and 100 bales of linen yarn were exported from the Coromandel coast, (Dispatches, June, 1683, and Nov. 1684) The concentration on the export of cotton yarn from Kolhapur, Masulipatnam, Madras and other regions is repeatedly referred to in the Letters and Dispatches.

320. Foster, 13th April 1630, p.22
worn here that do pay duty..." 321 The export of Indian calicoes and piece goods into England continued right till the 1820's though it never touched the peak achieved in 1680.

A Glossary of the Textile Varieties of South India (Seventeenth Century)

Allegaes
Striped cotton also checks, red and white or blue and white sometimes embllished with gold and silver thread - 16-17 yards by 1.25 yards wide.

Bafta
Plain cotton cloth, average length 15 cubits; either white or dyed.

Bettelles
From Portuguese beatilha 'veiling' - muslin much in demand in Europe as neckcloths. Could be dyed red and sometimes striped or flowered with embroidery 14-15 yds. long, 1.25 yards wide.

Caingaloons
From Malay kain, i.e., cloth and gulung 'rolled'. Pertains to cloth patterned in the loom.

Callowapoos
A kind of flowered chintz, Kaluvayapu, pu meaning flower made at Kalavay village in Atmakur.

Chelas or Chillies
Could be from Telugu 'Chila or sari - cotton cloth both striped and checkered.
Chindes or Tape Chindes

Coarse painted cloth worn in the Malay archipelago as serongs requiring no stitching. Also referred as tape kitchells or tape-sarassas.

Cummums

A particular type of Golconda muslin also known as Cummum bettelles.

Dimities

Probably from Persian Dimyati, a cotton cloth. Calico woven with raised stripes or fancy figures used for bedroom hanging, etc.

Diapers

Plain white 9-10 yards long 2.5 yards wide used for babies napkins. Also with designs for wall hangings, etc.

Dragons

Cheap dyed cotton cloth. Usually described as black and red presumably either striped or checkered.

Dungarees

Plain white, coarse calicoe woven mainly in the Goa region.

Ginghams

Pure cotton cloth woven of dyed yarn, i.e., patterned in the loom, either striped or checkered.
Gobar Gaz

Gobar from the Malay word geber or coarse cloth and gaz is a measurement. Refers to coarse cloth used as sheeting.

Izarees

According to John Irwin the origin of the word is from the telegu or tamil istree or pressed possibly because the cloth had a smooth finish. The cloth was mainly used for the making of drawers and trousers and hence a more likely derivation is from the Tamil 'nizar' which means drawers. Usually 8 yards long and 1 yard wide.

Long cloth

The ordinary staple cotton cloth of the Coromandel coast esteemed for its usual length about 37 yards long and 1.25 yards wide. Exported to England for block printing.

Lungees

Cotton plain or painted cloth similar to the dhoti reaching below the knees very different from Langotee or loin cloth.

Moorees

Superior cotton cloth used as base for chintz making. Generally served as substitute for Holland and French linen. 9-10 yards long and 1 yard 8 inches wide.
Pallamporees

Printed calico or chintz produced at Kasulipatnam and used mainly as covers and coverlets in England.

Pattas

Cheap dyed cotton cloth usually striped worn as waist cloth, varying in style according to the particular local market for which it was intended (for instance, there was patta chara malayu, i.e., patta in Malay style or patta macasser, patta in Maccasser style, etc.

Percalles

High grade plain cotton cloth - the type of calico best suited for cloth printing. Dimensions were about 8 yards in length 1 yard in width.

Rambustans

The term is not listed in any of the glossaries but is found in the list of goods from Conimeer (Tanjore dist.) rambustan is a Malay word and probably like all other cloth produced in this region was an item of barter in the archipelago.

Rumals

Madras handkerchiefs - 0.75 yard square.
Sallampores

Staple cotton cloth produced on the coast ranging from coarse to very fine - either plain white, blue or brown. Usual dimension of 16 yards in length and 1 yard in width.

Sallalo

Inferior muslin dyed either blue and black or just black, average length 2 vadams 5 spans and width of 1 yard.

Sacerguntes

The origin of the word may be from sahasra-granthi (a thousand knots). The material is a sort of spotted muslin probably patterned in the loom, i.e., tie-dyed before weaving.

Saderunches

Coarse quality patterned cloth.

Shatrenji

Coarse striped cotton carpets woven in the Golconda region.

Suffaguzes

Coarse cotton cloth from Persian saf plain or clean and gaz-coarse cotton.
Textile Centres and Textile Specialisation in South India in the Seventeenth Century

Andhra (North Coromandel)

Ellore (in Godavari Dist, very near Masulipatnam)

Karedu (Nellore district, close to Kadapollam)
Ordinary and fine sallamporees, dimities, drapers and ginghams striped, from Golconda to England and Europe.1

Kadapollam
Settled initially by the Dutch and later the English. Longcloth ordinary and fine, sallamporees ordinary and fine, percalles, Warangal betelles, allejaes, ginghams, izarees, rumals and sail cloth. Directed mainly to England and Europe.

Masulipatnam
Settled initially by the Dutch and later the English. The bulk of the textile production of North Coromandel shipped from Masulipatnam. Naglavanich was an important cotton producing area near Masulipatnam. The cloth from the surrounding areas like Buccawapet, Nabhobpet, Joodjur, Gosavidu, Biyavaram, Vipparla and Warangal, brought to

Masulipatnam via Bezawada and shipped from there. Famous for its printed chintz and muslins. Varieties produced - long cloth ordinary and fine, sallamporees ordinary and fine, percalles fine (of petapoli), gingham, izarees, warrangal bettelles, allejaes, çungarees, sail cloth. The weaving here was facilitated by the availability of clay and indigo far superior to that of South Coromandel.

**Nizampatam (Petapoli)**

Dutch settlement. The plain white lawn and the pattas, dragons and the sallalo of Petapoli were bartered for spices in the Eastern markets. Fine cloth, sallamporees, percalles, izarees, allejaes, saderunches, sacercurtes, callowaypoos, rumats, dimities and diapers, directed mainly to England and Europe.

**Pallakollu**

Dutch settlement. Textile varieties same as at Petapoli - famous for blue dyed cloth.

**Viravasaram (Godavari district, about 10 miles from Kadapollam)**

English settlement. The Bhimavaram Taluq where Viravasaram is located is one of the best cotton growing tracts in the region. Produced fine varieties of allejaes, sallamporees, bettellos as also pallamporees, (chintz bed covers). Some of the fine paintings were directed towards the factory at Guinea and the bulk was meant for export to England and the European market.

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Vishakapatnam (Waltair)

English settlement chosen more for its convenience as a centre of trans-shipment rather than for the availability of raw material. In fact, cotton had to be brought in from Kasulipatnam and Madapollam. Vishakapatnam specialised in striped bettelles, ordinary neckcloths, long cloth and sallamporees. The fine bettelles were produced at Kamarravolu in Vishakapatnam district. Vishakapatnam is supposed to be identical with Gingerlu.

Karnataka - North Deccan

Rajapur (On the Bombay Coast)

English settlement. Some of the finest cotton (called Kumta variety) produced in Kolhapur, Belgaum, Dharwar, Hubli, Loni and Lakshmisvar. Produced fine calicoes, baftas, moorees, patkaes or sashes and plenty of coarse cotton cloth called suffaguzes but no dyed cloth was produced. Directed towards Nokha and Persia as well as England.

Kerala (Calabar coast)

Calicut

Portuguese settlement - fine white cloth, painted cloth and patterned tapestry. In fact the word 'calico' comes from 'Calicut' - Directed towards the Red Sea trade.

2. Letters, 14th March, 1696, p.22, p.25
4. Pringle (ed.) Consulation, 1694, p.170
5. Dyeing very bad here unlike in Surat - Foster, 18th Nov. 1659, p.24C.
Tellicherry (North Calicut)

English factory. Produced essentially fine white cloth - also directed towards Red Sea trade.

Anjengo (South of Quilon)

English factory - Produced same variety of cloth as in Calicut and directed towards the same market.

Tamil Nadu (South Coromandel)

Armagao (On the South Coromandel Coast - North of Pulicat)

The factory was established by the English in 1926 - plain white, cotton, chintz, painted cloth or pintado. The manufacture must have started only since 1630 when Francis Day reported that "The place afforded nothing of itself, not so much as a piece of white cloth".7

Cemime (Pt.Colimer or Kunimeedu)

English factory. Produced Sarassas, tape chindas, dragons, chelas, caingalcons, sanadra moorees, rambutans, balechus; Directed towards the Malay Archipelago and the slave trade. Also produced neckcloths, sallampores, and comezaes directed to England.


Fort St. George (Madras)

English Presidency established in 1640. Longcloth ordinary and fine, sallamporees ordinary and fine, percalles, moorees, neckcloths, ginghams, and bettelles. The Golconda or Warangal bettelles were, however, considered to be much better. 8

Fort St. David (Tegnapatam)

Varieties of textiles produced were the same as at Fort St. George. Also produced indigo inferior to that of Lahore, Agra or Ahmedabad. Export of small volume of indigo both from San Thome and Fort St. David. 8

Pulicat (The Fort St. Geolafia of the Dutch, located north of Madras)

First Portuguese and later Dutch possession. Famous for its painted chintz, popular in the Malay Archipelago as tape - sarasah worn as serongs and requiring no stitching. Also pattas (patkas or sashes) - items of barter in the spice islands.

Porto Novo - Cuddalore (South Arcot district)

English settlements established around 1680. Long cloth ordinary and fine, sallamporees ordinary blue and fine, percalles fine, moorees fine and bettelles (used for neckcloths) ginghams and diapers. Trade directed towards England and Europe.

8. Refer Dispatches from England, Passim. In the list of goods required, Warangal bettelles are preferred as being fine and clear.

9. Dispatches, 26th Aug. 1698, p.55, p.60 etc.
Pondicherry (Puducheri)

The English obtained part of their supply of cloth from here though a regular factory was established only by the French. An Ancient textile centre™ famous for all varieties of painted cloth and its peculiar dyeing technique known as marble colouring.™

Sen Thome (Kylapur)

An ancient textile centre and port.™ Portuguese settlement in early seventeenth century. White and painted calicoes, of the same variety as at h radios (Port St. George) and also h radios handkerchiefs, lunneys etc. Painted chintz directed to hollucas, Banda, Amoyna, Java and Sumatra but in the later period, exported also to England and Europe. The Dutch purchased their supplies from here. Inferior variety of indigo and also fine chay and red wood (Brazil wood) available here.

Tirumappuliyur (South Arcot district)

Dutch weaving village very close to Ternapatam producing the same type of cloth.

Tranguebar (Tarangampadi, Tanjore district)

Danish settlement. Same variety of textiles as those produced at Pt. Colimæer (English settlement).

10. See R.E.R. Wheeler, Arikamedu - An Indo-Roman trading Station on the East Coast of India', Ancient India, No.2 July 1646 - especially the reference to dyeing vats.

11. Dispatches, 1681, p.29 etc.

12. See Chapters I and II of this thesis, Supra, for a discussion of Kylapur as a textile centre in the Chola period.
Woodappollam (Udayarpalayam in Trichinopoly district)

Supplied both Dutch and English requirements. Centre was initially oriented to producing Manilha long cloth and sallamporees. The English caused the looms of the weavers to be altered so that long cloth could be produced.13