Conclusion

The most important thing is the Coromandel Coast had been incorporated in the world of the Indian Ocean maritime trade as one of the exclusive Coast on its nature in the production of textiles. I did not mean that it's not important before seventeenth century. But by the coming of the European Companies it become exclusive coast as when the European came for spices they came to know that Coromandel textiles were the major sources of exchanges in the commodities. Due to this, European companies entered into fierce competition, among them, the English East India Company is also one of the major companies who came here to invest in extensive way. As the English Company investment grew, so did their settlement and their potential to wield power to defend their interests. The large hinterland power based (Vijayanagar, Golconda) in Coromandel were able to keep the English Company in their place, but when these were annexed to the Mughal Empire the English were given slowly a freedom of action in the hinterland of their settlements. The land concession by the Mughal rulers enabled the English Company to expand and consolidate their settlements, and to launch them on the path to growth as port cities in the Coromandel Coast.

The beginning of the seventeenth century saw a rapid disintegration of Vijayanagar Empire. In 1642 the Vijayanagar kingdom erupt a civil war after the death of Rajah Venkata III, the new successor Sri Ranga III, was refused to recognize by some of the nayaks, which saw the rapid losing authority of the Arividu dynasty. With the losing authority of a king a number of nayak become independent rulers, first in Madura and Tanjore, later in Mysore and Ikkeri, and finally in Ginji, and all were expanding their power base and dominions at the expanse of each other. The expansionist policies of Bijapur and Golconda added new players to the political game. New configurations and alliances evolved from time to time, when the Vijayanagar king (or aspirant to the throne) would ally himself with the Bijapur or Golconda forces to defeat the external aggressor or
counter the internal threat of rebellious feudatory nayaks. More usually, the external threat of invasion by the Muslim states united the nayak kingdoms in a common cause of Hindu survival. Nevertheless, by the middle of the seventeenth century, the empire of Vijayanagar was reduced to the status of a glorious chapter in the pages of Indian history.

The Qutab Shahi of Golconda was main beneficiaries of this Vijayanagar disintegration, first the heartlands of the empire were conquered by Golconda, and then its southern and south-western were conquered by the rulers of Bijapur. However, both this kingdom did not remained independent for long. Bijapur was annexed on 12 September 1686 by the Mughal, and the same with the Golconda, it was conquered in February 1687 and in September the citadel opened its gates. The Qutb Shahi king was sent to Daulatabad as a prisoner and the last Bahmani succession state become a part of the Mughal Empire.

After these two kingdoms exit there left Mughal’s and Maratha’s to fight for supremacy in the southern coast. The last decade of seventeenth century saw as Mughal’s century, as the Mughal finally conquered these two Shia kingdom, which was planned from the mid-seventeenth century, finally succeeded in the last second of the century. Same fate happen to the Maratha’s, harried by the Mughal pressure in the north; the Maratha king Rama Raja fled in the Deccan and took refuge in the forts of Gingi. There now took place an eight-year period of conflict in the lowlands between Kanchipuram and the Coleroon River. The Mughals laid siege to Ginji but could not reduce this stronghold for many years. The Mughals sieged territory but were constantly harassed by Marathas armies, which, however, could not hold territory. Ginji finally fell to the Mughals in January 1698, and Mughals authority was established up to the frontiers of Tanjore. Out of the ashes this conflict the Mughals emerged victorious, but just at this point the disintegration of the Mughals at the epicenter began. With the declining of the Mughal power, witness one of the worst political instability in the region, and here
the English ports become the sanctuaries for the merchant classes, which they played a major role the expansion of trade along with the English company.

In the expansion of trade the Coromandel merchants and English Company developed mutually advantageous relationships. The English cannot operate alone with the rapid demand increased of Coromandel textiles in Europe and Southeast Asia. This cooperation increased the Coromandel merchants in their accumulation of wealth. The Coromandel merchants were also looking for an opportunity to expand and influence within the society. This could be fulfill only in the English port cities (as their port was largely built on commerce), since in traditional hierarchy the links with the rural economy always assigned the dominant status to the land owing castes. In the English port cities it is economic factor and not caste factor in determining their social status. Therefore, it is a chance to achieve their long standing desired in the society. Sadly, we do not see any rich merchants emerged or textiles baron in the Coromandel Coast.

In the English Company trade there also a growth of free merchant’s private enterprise trading in the various ports of Southeast Asia. The trade between Coromandel and Southeast Asia was one of most lucrative trade for both the Company servants and for free merchants trading on their own. It was illegal in the seventeenth century but it become more open in the eighteenth century as the Company developed parallel and interlocking systems of institutional trade and permitted private trade. When this happened Coromandel become a major center of this trade, and financial institutions and partnership contract came into being. Many free merchants benefit as well as Company servants, given one example, Richard Horden, a company servant who arrived in 1702 and posted at Vizagapatnam as a third factor and his salary begins at 15 pounds. But, after eight years in services with promotion he was able to owned six ships; Anna, Francis, Jambee, Kent, Herritta and Cornelia. Thus, Madras became a place where quick fortunes could be made by commissions, kick-back and corrupt dealings using administrative and judicial positions, than by speculation in commerce.
In the expansion of the English Company in Coromandel one of the contribution for its success was due to the absorption of the Portuguese and their descendants of mixed breed *mezticos* in the English organization. They were century ahead compare with the English but in the seventeenth century their power decline and knowing all the trading activities and linguist in the coast, which is very vital for the establishment, were quickly recognized the utility by the English Company. This turn out to be mutual collaboration and partnership for the growth of trade and commerce as well as security for the various forts. Their indispensable service enlisting in the English troops were the matter of survival for the English threat from European rivals and from hinterland rulers. They rendered their services not only in Fort St. George, but also in various ports of Coromandel Coast and also in Bencoolen, Fort Marlborough.

The Portuguese who trade with various sectors of the country trade routes, both in intra-Asian trade from early sixteenth century become equal partners with the English in the seventeenth century. In this trade both the English Company and the Portuguese benefit from their implicit partnership, the Portuguese amassed huge fortunes under the English flags and the English Company reaped the capitals, knowledge and expertise of the Portuguese diasporas. Thus, Portuguese settlers in Coromandel gradually help in many ways which built the English Empire in vast ocean network.

The English East India Company trade to Burma is very unique as it was initiated from the Madras and not from London Director’s. The Home Director policy in the extension of the Company’s sphere of influence, and the development of the East Indies trade, could be achieved only through factories. However, this did not apply to Burma, the Director’s completely ignored the importance in the Burma Coast and it was only from Madras officials that really want to open a factory as they knew the coming of ships and the goods valuable in their trade. From time to time the Director’s officially declined the request from the Madras to open a factory at Burma but still then without authorization from
London, the Madras Council took the initiative to open a factory, it was because after knowing the importance they disobey the orders from Director’s. The English Company did not have proper settlement in Burma, but the trade routes between Madras and Burma coast is one the largest number of ships operates in the whole of Eastern trade, it meant, collect the largest revenue at port custom house. Therefore, it is one of the most important English ‘country trade’ in Southeast Asia and in the East.

The English trade with the Eastern and Southeast Asian countries was tremendous. Answer, it may be mentioned that the trade to these sectors were mainly carried out through the participation of individual merchants consisted of English free merchants, Portuguese, Armenians, and several sorts of Indian merchants houses. It was due to this that the trades in these sectors were generally considered as ‘country trade’ or ‘private trade’ where many of the English Company servants have also participated. Several ports like Pegu, Tenasserim, Syriam, Mergui, Junk Ceylon, Kedah, Malacca, Johore, Siam, Acheen, Batavia, Banjarmassim, Sukandanna, Manila, Tongking, Macao, Canton, Amoy etc, were some the frequented place for Madras merchants. It was from here that several of the goods ranging from spices, bullion, precious stones, timber, chinaware, sorts of animals, etc were procured for both Indian and European markets.

The exports items to this places were mainly textiles, iron and steel, indigo, tobacco, vermilion, fish skins, leather, etc. Hence, the flourishing ‘country trade’ was mainly possible due to the existence of several eastern and Southeast ports and perhaps the greater part of the Madras revenues as well as the wealth of many of the merchants were reaped from these sector trade.

The success of the English Company has very much link with the politics of the hinterland. It begins with the destruction of Vijayanagar sovereignty over most of the region and consolidations by Golconda Empire. Almost in the middle, the powerful Mughal’s from the north sweeping towards the southern coast, where again bring political changes by annexed the Golconda Empire. The situation
compounded by the challenge of the Marathas to Mughal control of this area. All these factors inflamed the entire Coromandel Coast through the last years of seventeenth century to till early years of the eighteenth century. In the end of these conflicts the Mughals emerged victorious, but at this point they were about to decline in all over their empire. The control of Coromandel by the Mughal’s completely destabilized the economic activity and the relationships between the political ruling class and merchant’s community. These brought much confusion and disarray among the population in the entire coast. During this difficulty the English Company brought a period of integrated regional economic growth, a unitary monetary system, rationalized customs and improved communications in the ocean networks. This brought many opportunities among the merchant, artisan, weavers, etc to integrate into the institution of the Company organization.

The English Company linked up all important trading bases in Coromandel Coast and established a trading base in the Southeast Asia, which enabled the Coromandel merchants to enter into this trade. The English Company ships provided safe freight for their goods and their passes provided a guarantee of safe conduct on the sea. The free merchants alone with the Company’s officials also joined into the wagon where most of the time it was illicit lucrative trade but latter it was open and permitted to trade. The Portuguese who were overthrown by the Dutch also come into this shade and the English were willingly admitting them for security and safety of the English Fort and towns by enlisting into the Company troops. Many of these migrating Portuguese were wealthy merchants and become prominent within the Company organization and they started to operate in the various oversea ports under the English flag. They were especially instrumental in carrying out trade with the Macao, Manila and the Spice Islands where the English have no or little access.

The English Company trade in the Southeast was not very successful because of the Dutch imposing naval domination. It effected because of shutting of important markets to Coromandel exports and, somewhat less so, the closing of
direct access to imports from there. When this embargo was gradually extended, to the Celebes, Java and parts of Sumatra, it shut off the Coromandel merchants and it really hurts English in their procurement of goods. However, it was compensated from the Burmese Coast, where by and large, the largest numbers of ships were sail in these coasts. The goods which can’t be procured at Bencoolen were available in this coast especially at Pegu by through various channels.