

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

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Company on the Coromandel coast 1639-1724**

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 The main intention of his study, apart from collating source materials hitherto unpublished, was to trace the history of the English enterprise in India and in turn assist the later British colonial administrators of the nineteenth century in the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

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

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

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

<sup>2</sup> H.D.Love, *Vestiges*, Vol. I, p. 3.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

<sup>10</sup> Ibid. pp. 71-72.

<sup>11</sup> Bruce, *Annals*, Vol. I, p. 269.

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

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

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

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

<sup>12</sup> Ibid, pp. 359-360.

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

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

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

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

<sup>14</sup> H.D. Love, *Vestiges, Vol I*, p.25.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*

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

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

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

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

<sup>23</sup> S. Araratnam, *Merchants, Companies and Commerce*, p. 55.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid* p. 56.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid*.

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

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

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

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>27</sup> H.D.Love, *Vestiges*, Vol. I. p. 83.

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

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

Apart from the above mentioned immediate hinterland, the political expansion of Qutb Shahi kingdom into Coromandel plains through Karnatic led to the integration of Rayalaseema into coastal areas which formed the distant hinterland of Pulicat and Madrasapatnam. The political aggrandizement of Qutb Shahis was started during the reign of Ibrahim Qutb shah in the preceding century. A closer study on the nature of the political expansion of Qutb Shahis under Ibrahim Qutb Shah reveals that the thrust of political expansion had strong economic motives as it was consciously directed toward the coastal plains, initially the Krishna and Godavari deltas and later the central Coromandel. In coastal Andhra, i.e., northern Coromandel, Ibrahim's campaigns were more or less successful and was instrumental in getting large coastal tracts of Masulipatnam, Rajamundry and Peddapalli directly under his control. For most of the seventeenth century, the warrior lineage's of Telangana and coastal Andhra remained loyal to Qutb Shahis till the Mughals seized in 1687.<sup>30</sup> In fact as J. F. Richard's proposes, the success of Golconda regime in coastal Andhra rested on the collaboration of chiefs who were merely drawn into state

<sup>29</sup> *ibid.*

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*

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

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

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

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

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.* Vol. I, p. 304.

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

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

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

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

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

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

<sup>37</sup> *Gandikota Kaifiyat*.

Chennapatnam.<sup>38</sup> A contemporary English letter describes Mir Jumla's campaign as:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

#### Trade, Merchants and Economy of Madrasapatnam 1640-1710

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

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

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

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

<sup>45</sup> Bruce Watson, 'Fortifications and the 'idea' of force', p. 73.

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

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

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

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

*Shipping list 1661: (Country trade)*

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

\* Ships for England carrying European goods.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

<sup>54</sup> See, H.D.Love, *Vestiges*, Vol. II, p. 154

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

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

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

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

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

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

<sup>59</sup> S. Arasaratnam, *Merchants Companies and Commerce*, p. 215

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

<sup>63</sup> Joseph Brenig, 'Chief Merchants and the European Enclaves', p. 326.

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

<sup>65</sup> see, S. Arasaratnam, *Merchants, Companies and Commerce*, p. 228.

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

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

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

concessions on *rahadari* from Neknam Khan, the Golconda governor of Poonamalle.<sup>66</sup>

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

<sup>71</sup> Ibid.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

<sup>75</sup> *RFSG, Public consultations*, 1685-86, p. 162.

<sup>76</sup> It may be noted that the chief merchants settled only those weavers who belonged to their respective caste groups. This gave scope for the prominent merchants to meddle with the company whenever his position as chief merchant was threatened. In fact, it is noted that the main background for numerous caste disputes in Madrasapatnam can be attributed to the manipulations of chief merchants to gain access to the position.

<sup>77</sup> *RFSG Public Department, Diary and Consultation*, 1696/97 p. 37,39.

<sup>78</sup> *Ibid.*

chief merchant helped the latter considerably especially in situations where his position was dictated by his capacity to increase the investments but to successfully manipulate the caste divisions on which his position depended. For instance, in 1711, the English reported that the reason for the caste disputes at Madrasapatnam was due to the altering of the old method of advancing money and contracts.<sup>79</sup> In fact Serappa's position as a chief merchant was inextricably depended on the support of the right hand caste weavers who settled at Madrasapatnam.

In the period under study, one finds a marked difference between the weavers of the hinterland and those settled at Madrasapatnam. While the former definitely had more freedom, the weavers in these enclaves more or less worked as company employees. Most of the cloth produced or dyed within the vicinity of Madrasapatnam was procured by the company through their respective chief merchants, and as Arasaratnam opines, were slowly being reduced to wage workers. For example, in 1680, the washermen and painters came into the employment of the company through the chief merchant, drawing wages per piece of cloth.

*Daily wages to washers at Fort St. George: (1706)*

Corge of long cloth	36 Fanams for each piece of cloth
Corge of Sallem pores	16 Fanams for each piece of cloth
Moores	10
Fine Moores	12
New cloths	3
Ginghams Corge	10

Source: *RSFG, Diary and Consultations 1706*, p.24.

<sup>79</sup> *RSFG, Despatches to England, 1701-1711, 1707*, p. 80.

The washermen and painters formed into joint stock company with their own share holders in the same year.<sup>80</sup>

A closer scrutiny of the contemporary English documentation reveals that in spite of the company's desire to bring weavers into the town, there were few specialist artisans actually residing in the town. The revenue statistics of 1706 collected regarding the construction of black town wall clearly indicates that the number of specialist weavers was considerably small when compared to merchants.<sup>81</sup>

The weavers resided mainly in the acquired pettah's of Sttangudu, Ambattur, Egmore etc. where the Indian populations were residing. The residential areas of the weavers was based on the grid pattern based on caste divisions of right hand and left hands. Thus, Western petta, Peddanaik petta, was given to the right hands while the Bridge gate street, and Muthial petta was occupied by the left hands. The weavers who broadly followed the right and left hand divisions, too concurred to this pattern of settlement. But as the weaving population grew, new inhabitants were allowed to reside in Triplicane, Egmore, Pursewakam etc.<sup>82</sup>

Apart from trade, Madrasapatnam was able to expand its economy by virtue of the grant given to them By Sri Ranga Raya in 1646. This allowed the company to have exclusive privileges with

<sup>80</sup> 1. Narso: Owned two parts of the share (The rest of the washermen mentioned below owned one part each) 2. Sina Varupu Narasiah 3. Bandara Raggaiyah 4. Piduri Jaggam 5. Salepu Muthyalu 6. Casi Vardhaiyya 7. Rajakundi Akkaiah 8. Damaramadugu Ayyanna 9. Kandaveetu Papaiah 10. Gannagaiyya 11. Sanampudi Ayyanna 12. Kolakula Yagganna *RSFG, Diary and Consultation Book*, 1680.

<sup>81</sup>

<sup>82</sup> H.D. Love, *Vestiges*, Vol. II, pp. 25-28.

minting rights and collection various duties such as customs and revenues from adjacent areas. The company realised the importance of revenues which were to be used for the expansion town outside the confines of Fort St. George. The collection of revenues from the indigenous population and economy was a significant feature of the fortifications in the European logic of trade. In most of these fortifications revenues became by products of trade. The revenues of the town was directly connected to the ability of the company to acquire neighbouring villages and towns such as Trivetore, Egmore, Pursewakam, Sattangudi, etc. directly under its jurisdiction. The acquisition of villages resulted in the growth of population at Madrasapatnam.

The principle revenues of Madrasapatnam came from customs, which included anchorage duties, tonnage, customs on grain (*ad valorem*), land and choultry. These apart, the revenues came from quit rents, house rents, rents from industries, ruby brokerage, and fanning of the areas and tax on sale of slaves.<sup>83</sup> In 1649, the company took stock of revenues which amounted to 15,000 *livres*<sup>84</sup> However, the company had to face a bitter criticism in 1649 as the expenditure far exceeded over the revenue.

Initially, the Board of Directors at London were highly sceptical about the nature the revenues as they thought that it would increase the liability of the company. Already, the company

<sup>83</sup> The customs duties were 3% on export and import, Land and choultry was 37.. authorized brokerage, 1% quit ad volerem, 3/32 on Christians and 5/32 on genttoos and Muslims. Anchorage duties differed on the capacity of the ship and tonnage. The average anchorage collected was 3 to 9 *pagodas*, tonnage i Re per tonn while the custom on grain was 5% and ruby brokerage 2/12 %. see, H.D.Love, *Vestiges*, Vol. I, p. 135, 512-513.

<sup>84</sup> H.D.Love, *Vestiges*, Vol I, p. 27.

pulled up Francis Day for investing on the fortifications at Madrasapatnam with private money.<sup>85</sup> However over a period of time the company at London realised the importance of revenue on the ground :

enough to cultivate for the sustenance of fort and a body of people as we have at fort St., George and the city of Madrasapatnam that we might in time create as good revenue from thence as the Dutch at Batavia..."<sup>86</sup>

The seventeenth century English documentation is silent on the nature of revenues except for the proposed collection of the quit rents and other minor cesses. But as one moves into the eighteenth century, the documentation more or less fell into place as far as the revenues of the town was concerned. In 1718 the sea customs amounted to 28,349 pagodas, land customs to 5608 while the coinage fetched the English 5297 pagodas. Within the sea customs, anchorage and tonnage became a major source of revenue for the English company. For example, the anchorage duties depended on

<sup>85</sup> *O.C.*, 1784,1644 cited in H.D.Love, *Vestiges*, Vol. 1, 52-53.

<sup>86</sup> *RFSG*, Public Department, *Despatches from England*, Vol. 5,1683-84, p. 166.

the tonnage of the ship; Rs. 1 was levied on each ton.<sup>87</sup> In 1685 the revenues of Madrasapatnam aggregated to 70,000 pag.<sup>88</sup>

The acquisition of neighbouring territories beyond Fort St. George, further expanded the revenues of the town. Now the company was able to collect revenues from renting of territories, and other farms such as arrack, betel leaves, tobacco, land and choultries, custom on grain and on slaves. The revenues from the territories of San Thome and Triplicane during Kasi Viranna amounted to 1200 pagodas. In 1687, Chinna Venkatadri farmed the town of San Thome and its adjacent paddy farms for 400 pagodas to be paid in three installments which the company decided to take it with an expected profit of 4300 pagodas. Egmore, Pursewakam, and Tondiarpet which were farmed through to Serappa fetched 1300 pagodas. In 1704, the above farms were given to Kalavay chittee and Venkata chittee at the amount of 1750 pagodas. In 1707, Shah Alam, the Mughal emperor gave a grant for Trivetore, Nungambakam, Vasalpada, Catawakah, and Satanagudu, which were rented at the rate of 1500 pagodas per annum.

The industries of Madrasapatnam though small fetched substantial revenues for the company. In 1700, the company's

<sup>87</sup> Anchorage duties at Madrasapatnam:

Europe ships	200 tonnes upwards	9 pag
	under 200	6
	100 or up	5
	less than 100	3
Country ships	sloops and ketches	2
	Great boats	1
	small boats	1/2

see, *RFSG, Diary and Consultation Book*, 1693, p. 20

<sup>88</sup> H.D.Love, *Vestiges*, Vol. I, p. 135 and Vol. II, 81-82. and Lockyer's Account in 1702 estimated the customs revenues at 30,000 *pagodas* and the land customs at 4000 *pagodas*.

<sup>89</sup> *RFSG*, Public Consultations, Vol. 12,13,1687 p. 28-29., and *Ibid*, Vol II, p. 22.

arrack farms were rented to Peter Des Pommare for 3400 pagodas, while the distillation was done by Gurruvappa. The betel farms and tobacco fetched the company 8000 pagodas.<sup>90</sup> In 1714 the list of farms and revenues fetched 90,812 pagodas under various heads.

Anchorage	9 pagodas on Europe ships of 200 tonnes and above 6 pagodas less than that.
Tonnage	Rs 1 per ton
Customs on grain	50% advalorem
Ruby brokerage	2 1/2 upon value sold
Slaves	8 fanams

Source: *Despatches To England*, 1714, p. 32

In 1718-20 the estimated revenues from the farms for the company came from the following heads:

Farms:	
Betel and Toddy	7000
Arrack and wine	4000
Egmore and towns	1785 (old towns)
Duty on grain	820
Fishing	50
Town brokerage	800
Rent on paddy fields	710
Toddy farms	500
Trivetore and towns	1200
Collected by Choultry	
Gardens between Mannuci and 4 brothers	40
shroffs duty	332
Old garden	120
Quit rent	2161
scavengers	947
Total	20495 pagodas

Source: H.D. Love, *Vestiges*, 1718-1720, Vol. II, p. 180

<sup>90</sup> *Ibid*, Vol. II, p. 43.

The company tried to impose taxes on the houses to increase the revenues which was called quit rent. Streynsham Master, the governor of Madrasapatnam (1675-1682), initiated the demand for ground rent from the inhabitants and to levy tax on conservancy of the town. But it caused discontent amongst the Indian inhabitants and the move was opposed by komatis and Chetties. The company resolved to lift the proposal for quit rent but was reimposed in 1686. The company divided the quit rent under two heads. The quit rent was not to exceed 6 fanams and was imposed on the size of the house. The levying of quit rent in 1686 more or less legitimized the imposition of tax not only on the house but paved way for the English company to impose similar taxes on different residing populations during the tenure of Thomas Pitt.

By and large the company revenues averaged at 100,030 pagodas per annum. In the decades between 1680-1700, the directors at London were pushing the factors at Madrasapatnam on

<sup>91</sup> *RFSG, Diary and Consultation book, 1686, p. 4-6, Despatches from England, 1686, p. 13 and H.D.Love, Vestiges, Vol. I, 442-443, 512.*

Quit rent Revenues for the year 1688:

Name of the street	Amount
Middle street	17:18
Choultry Street	14:18
Choultry Alley	8:18
Glochestor street	4:18
York street	12:27
York Lane	7:18
Clarkes street	11:18
James Street	15:9
James alley	5:9
Thomas Street	20:9
St. Thomas lane	2:9
Church street	4:9

*RFSG, Diary and consultation book, 1688, pp. 121-123.*

<sup>92</sup> See, for details H.D.Love, *Vestiges, Vol. II, p.11.*

the need for revenues often comparing the revenues the Dutch were able to obtain at Batavia.

" The Dutch raise a revenue of 140,000 lbs, per annum at Batavia. It is only the trade and population of the place that give opportunity to the governors to create revenue and not by conquest... but the trade and the number of people by what means so ever acquired, is the cause of the revenue.... regarding the Dutch at Pulicat, they can never make revenue unless they could give liberty for trade and free shipping as wee do which they never can..."<sup>93</sup>

Population of the city was a major determining factor for the collection of revenues at Madrasapatnam. Though, the initial settlers were the English and some Portuguese who came from San Thome, the expansion of population between 1660-1700 became a crucial factor in the processes of urbanisation of Madrasapatnam. Like most of other port towns of pre-modern Asia, the paucity of sources limits us of any systematic study of the population movement in Madrasapatnam. However, the need for revenues for the company, fortunately left a fairly good deal of documentation on the population of Madrasapatnam.

John Fryer was the first traveller to document the population at Madrasapatnam. According to him, in 1682, the European population was 1300 with 300 English men and 1000 Portuguese.<sup>94</sup> During the tenure of William Gryfford, the European population consisted of 41 company merchants, 30 freemen, and 3 women and

<sup>93</sup> RFSG, Despatches from England, 1686, p. 53.

<sup>94</sup> John Fryer, *An Account of East Indies*, cited in H.D.Love, *Vestiges*, Vol. I, p.283.

by 1700 the European population increased substantially to 2000.<sup>95</sup> The main information on the overall population of Madrasapatnam came from two main sources. In 1692, on the insistence of the company at London, the factors collected the census of the town from the year of its founding to 1691,

year	Population	Source from which taken
1639	7000	rough estimate deduced from deaths
1646	19000	
1648	15000	the reduction in the population can be accounted for the cyclone
1670	40,000	Thomas Bowrey
1673	33,000	
1674	50,000	William Langhorn
1681	2,00,000	
1685	3,00,000	Letter book, vol. IX
1691	4,00,000	The sudden increase in can be accounted due to the changing political situation in the hinterland.

The next major source on the population of Madrasapatnam came from the proposed collection of money from the native inhabitants in 1706 by Thomas Pitt to construct a wall around black town. The money was collected on the caste wise basis and was levied each individual house hold. According to the revenue statistics, the population was divided under 30 caste heads. The total amount collected amounted to 11053 pagodas.<sup>96</sup> However,

<sup>95</sup> H.D.Love, *Vestiges*, Vol. 1, p. 485.

<sup>96</sup> The revenue collected according to the castes is as follows: Portuguese-3300, Armenians-600, Chittee-2000, Moorme.n-300 Komatis-800, Vellomwaru-200, Balijas-350, Oilmen-400, Shopkeepers-] 00, Brick makers-400, goldsmiths-500, gujaratis-500, Weavers-20, Canic.opolys.-300, puliwar-18, Weavers-100, Chulia-

from the records it is not clear on how the company assessed the money to be collection each household.

By the end of the seventeenth century, Madrasapatnam had a substantial population residing within its jurisdiction. The major question then, is how did Madrasapatnam sustain such a huge population in the period under study ? One possible answer and surely a major cause for the success of English company in the second half of the seventeenth century was the effective management of grain markets. As we have seen in our earlier chapters, grain was emerging as the most important commodity of trade in the later decades of the seventeenth century.<sup>97</sup> There was a steady growth in the prices of paddy and grain in the northern Coromandel which was the main exporting zone to southern coastal strips. Madrasapatnam which was the main consumption centre, therefore had to constantly look and monitor grain which came from three sources: Gingelly, southern and northern Coromandel and its own hinterland. According to a contemporary estimate the consumption of Madrasapatnam in 1719 was 4000 garse of rice per annum priced at 80 pagodas per garse which totalled to 3,20,000 pagodas.<sup>98</sup>

The period between 1682-1720 witnessed violent fluctuation in the prices of grain and Madrasapatnam became the main deficit

150, Waswhermen-100, Shepards-70, Fishermen-10, Bamboo cooleys-10, Barbers-20, Toonapas-50, Grass cutters- 25, Toddy-180, Sattigaru-200, pot makers-100, Mukhwas-100, Brahmins-100 and Cattamarans-40 which amounted to 11053 pagodas, See, h.D.Love, *Vestiges*, Vol li, p.11 and *RFSG, Diary and Consultation Books 1706*, p. 23.

<sup>97</sup> On the Rice trade See, S.Arasaratnam, *The rice Trade in Eastern India'*, *passim*. and Joseph Brenning, *The Textile Trade in the seventeenth century*, pp. 193-225

<sup>98</sup> *RFSG, Despatches from England*, 1719, p. 1.

town on the coast. Therefore, Madrasapatnam necessarily depended on the import of rice. In 1693 for instance, Narasulla Ballu, the grain merchant from northern coast requested for a *cowle* for a free liberty of selling their grain as buyers and sellers without limiting the price and said that the *havaladar* of San Thome and Pulicat had lowered their customs to 2 1/2 % and 3% respectively. He came to Madrasapatnam with 30 boats along with other merchants from northern Coromandel.<sup>99</sup>

Within the town, the company was involved in streamlining the prices of grain which came either from the sea or land. The prices of grain at Madrasapatnam fluctuated between 60-80 per garse, but during the times of crisis such as wars in the inland or during the blockades, the price shot up to 100 pagodas per garse.<sup>100</sup> The company therefore had to maintain a buffer stock for times of exigency and did not hesitate using violence against the hoarders or against the administration.<sup>101</sup> The company also offered many incentives to traders such as the liberty to carry 1 1/2 to their house to be disposed off at the free will while the rest would go to the bank shall.<sup>102</sup> In 1687, the company banned the private selling of grain and any such act was severely punishable. For example, a chitty caste member was fined 100 pagodas for selling grain privately by small measures 'at a dearer rate'. Through the privilege of grants given to the company by various inland

<sup>99</sup> *RFSG, Diary and Consultation Book*, 1693, pp. 165-166.

<sup>100</sup> *RFSG, Diary and Consultation Book*, 1703, pp. 10-14.

<sup>101</sup> The grain prices shot up on the eve of the Mughal conquest of Golconda. See, *RFSG, Diary and Consultation Book*, 1681, p. 16 and 1687, p. 136.

<sup>102</sup> *Ibid.*

powers, the administration of Madrasapatnam was able to confiscate grain in and around Madrasapatnam.<sup>103</sup>

Apart from the stringent regulations on passing of grain into Madrasapatnam, the company particularly paid attention to the near hinterland such as Triplicane, San Thome, and Condore which produced and marketed rice in large quantities. From at least the later decades of the seventeenth century, the company regularly maintained country sloops and ketches for procurement of grain from the inland riverine systems. In 1715, the company advised factors to employ special ships with flat bottoms with 5 or 6 factors continually at different ports of call for freighting the grain to Madrasapatnam.<sup>104</sup> By the last decades of the seventeenth century then, Madrasapatnam was able to implement a kind of social security net for its inhabitants which was the main reason for influx of population into the town.

#### Indian administration and Madrasapatnam Economy: Zone of Conflict 1650-1712

The rise and development of trade and settlement at Madrasapatnam with exclusive privileges was bound to lead to a confrontation with the local administration, who actually saw the growth of Madrasapatnam as an infringement into their revenues.

<sup>103</sup> Sometimes the severity of scarcity was so much that the weavers were ready to sell cloth in exchange for paddy, See, 1. Jangamma Setty 2. Managama Setty 3. Venkatdri Setty 4. Guruliga setty 5. Veeranna 6. Swamialavar's petition to the company Source: *RSFG, Diary and Consultations*, 1694.

<sup>104</sup> As early as 1658, English built a paddy granary with the money given by Beri Timmana and Kasi Viranna. H.D. Love, *Vestiges*, Vol. I, p.383, *Despatches from England*, 1715, p. 47.

Recent scholarship has argued on the inevitability of conflict between the Asians and Europeans not only on the sea front **but** also in the inland. In other words, the European enclaves with their inherent strength of expansion were threatening the traditional linkages in the hinterland on which the local administration sustained. Sanjay Subrahmanyam has characterised the relations between Asians and Europeans as an 'age of contained conflict. While Sanjay Subrahmanyam and other scholars like Bruce Watson, K.N. Chaudhuri all agree in varying degrees that conflict was part of the larger dynamics of external commerce, their works concentrated on the competitive Indo-European mercantile conflicts in the open seas.<sup>105</sup> The study of conflicts between local administration and company trade and settlement is important because they differed markedly with the those in the high sea trade.

Unlike, the conflicts in the sea which were borne out of the European mercantilism *vis a vis* Indian mercantile aspirations, conflicts in the European enclaves stuck at the supposed intervention of the European companies into the arena which according to the contemporary state logic, belonged to the local administration. Interestingly, these conflicts focused their attention at the basic patterns of economy such as production and distribution of commodity trade to the European enclaves. Significantly, these conflicts were grounded in reality, in the processes of European penetration into the regional economic

<sup>105</sup> see, Sanjay Subrahmanyam, *The Political Economy of Commerce*, pp. 252-298 and Bruce Watson, 'Fortification and the 'Idea' of force,' pp. 73.

systems, such as the local appropriation of revenue, tax farming, collection of customs and cesses etc. which officially were the prerogative of local administration. It may be noted that these conflicts were more regional and sometimes even local, as they were restricted to individual settlements where European commerce had taken a central position. At the same time, these conflicts reflected the aspirations of internal administration to enter into the world of commercialisation and in the process reap economic benefits from the company trade.

Conflicts between local administration and the European companies at Madrasapatnam fell into three basic patterns. Firstly, they were aimed at breaking the monopoly of the company trade secondly, aimed at intervention of company revenues and thirdly, to interfere into the basic structure of company trade as agents of state. In order to understand the relations better, we will take profiles of three such regional administrators namely, Mir Jumla, Neknam Khan and Podela Lingappa, who all claimed high stakes in the trade of Madrasapatnam. Here, it might be significant to add that the careers of these persons was based not in the European structure of trade but in the hinterland.

The regional administrators controlled a vast resource bases in the frontier zone of Karnatic through their intervention in the local economy before they finally encountered the English company at Madrasapatnam. With the exception of Mirjumla, who cannot be termed as regional administrator, the careers of Neknam Khan and Podela Lingappa were more localised and had had fewer pretensions of controlling the sea -borne trade. However, the

campaign of Mir Jumla to paved way to these persons to enhance their careers on the coast.<sup>106</sup>

The English company basically feared Golconda administration which was supposedly rapacious and extortionist, a view which was long held by the contemporary European documentation and supported, at the face value, even by the modern scholarship as well.<sup>107</sup> The company logic which was based on armed defenses against the local elite and to put them in awe on sea and land, immediately necessitated the erection of defenses at Madrasapatnam on the eve of Mir Jumla's campaign in Karnatic. Surely, by the second half of the seventeenth century, the use of force with discretion against the local elite was a well recognised fact, both officially or otherwise, within the constitution of European companies.<sup>108</sup> On the Indian front, the rise of fortifications were basically viewed as interventions into the traditional sources of revenue, and hence thought it mandatory that the revenues so earned in Madrasapatnam should logically go to

<sup>106</sup> Mir Jumla clearly is an exception because of the length and breadth of his activities in the coastal economics. Unlike the other two whose careers were more local, and even perhaps agrarian based, Mir Jumla's operations involved a whole range of activities both in the hinterland and in the oceanic commerce.

<sup>107</sup> See, in particular the writings of W.H. Moreland, *From Akbar to Aurangzeb*, New Delhi, 1972.( Reprint), and Tan Raychaudhari, *Jan company in Coromandel*, Hague, 1968.

<sup>108</sup> Force was necessary and was primarily used against the competitive European companies, in the case of the English against the Dutch and the Portuguese, but as the companies trade grew in the coasts, it became mandatory for them to use 'discreetly' against the local mercantile elements for better profitability of trade. However, with the rise of fortifications and their subsequent expansion of the revenues, collected from the indigenous groups, force was necessarily used against the local elite, for the latter saw these fortifications with suspicion.

them. This was bound to create conflicts which often took the form of blockading the port of Madrasapatnam.<sup>1109</sup>

Mir Jumla's Karnatic interest spanned from 1647-1658, i.e. till his defection to the Mughal side in 1656. Mir Jumla's grievance against the English at Madrasapatnam was due to the seizure of his ship in 1653, which snow balled into a major crisis in 1650's between the company and Mir Jumla.<sup>110</sup> The problem was further compounded in 1656 when Mir Jumla alleged the company of supporting the Vijayanagara King, during his absence in Karnatic.

However, the actual reason for the Mir Jumla - English conflict in 1656 was based on his policy to strengthen his financial resources by procuring his share of customs and duties, on having commercial relations with the company merchants and endeavoring to gain control over production and consumption at Madrasapatnam.<sup>112</sup> According to the grant given by Sri Ranga Raya, "the town rent was half the cutomes paid by strangers" and it was not until 1658, during the tenure of Thomas Ivie, that a regular composition was made for a fixed amount of 380 pagodas per

<sup>109</sup> Blockading of the port towns was a common feature in the seventeenth century. We have numerous instances of local elite blockading the ports. See, *EFI*, Series, 1622-23, pp. 234,279, *EFI 1630-33*, *EFI*, New Series, Vol II, on the blockade of San Thome.

<sup>110</sup> On the impact of Mir Jumla's campaign, the English reported that he sends a revenue of 200,000 *pagodas* to the King and collected 400,000 *pagodas* from the Vijayanaara king. On the seizure of Mir Jumla's vessel the English reported that the seizure was in retaliation against the extraction of local governors- Bala Rao and Sayyid Ibrahim. H.D.Love, *Vestiges*, Vol. I, pp. 165-166.

<sup>111</sup> Mir Jumla returned to and retired to Gandikota after his initial success in Karnatic. In his absence, the Vijayanagara king made Konara Chetty, his general and reasserted his position. Mir Jumla was aided by tupaki Krishna Naik, a merchant of the Coromandel. Konara Chetty, was a powerful merchant on the Coromandel and was closely associated with ruling house of Vijayanagara. H.D.Love, *Vestiges*, Vol. 1,168-169.

<sup>112</sup> HD Love, *Vestiges*, Vol. I p-265-267.

annum.<sup>113</sup> Mir Jumla wanted to appoint an officer at Madrasapatnam so as to check the growing revenues of Madrasapatnam and intended to take a share in them. After blockading the town for six months in 1658, the English and Mir Jumla agreed on terms according to which the company had to pay a fixed sum of 380 pagodas per annum to Golconda. At the end of Mir Jumla-English affair, one might wonder about the actual gains of Mir Jumla at Madrasapatnam.

The next major problem to the company came with the appointment of Neknam Khan as the governor of Poonamalle in 1663, after the death of Sayyid Mir Jaffir. Before his appointment as Governor of Arcot, Neknam Khan had earlier served in Cuddapah and Gandikota. Like his predecessor, Mir Jumla, Neknam Khan was a Persian by origin and came into limelight because of the patronage extended to him by Abdullah Qutb Shah. Before joining the Golconda service, Neknam Khan was an official in the court of Shah Abbas of Iran, and later on migrated to Golconda. Popularly known as Raza Quli, he took the title of Neknam Khan from Abdullah Qutb Shah and was appointed as the governor of the newly integrated administrative unit of Cuddapah and Arcot regions. He took many regions of Jummulamadugu, Kamalapuram, Chennuru, Cuddapah, and a few places of Gurramkonda which were given in farm to his subordinates and the local chiefs.<sup>114</sup> He was instrumental granting lands to *agraharas* and other *inam* rights to the local religious centres in Cuddapah district. He constructed

<sup>113</sup> Ibid, *Vestiges*, Vol. I, p. 71.

<sup>114</sup> *Neknampeta Kaiḥiyat*, and *Gandikota Kaiḥiyat*

Neknambad, which is now part of Cuddapah town. By way of direct supervision in the production economy, Neknam Khan was able to extend his activities to the coast. He streamlined the administration of Karnatic by instituting the office of *havalदार* for Gandikota area.<sup>115</sup> The appointment of *havalदars* under him was the turning point in his career. Through these *havalदars*, he expanded into interior of Gandikota and brought new areas under cultivation. In 1663 he was elevated to the position of *Seerlaskar* for the combined regions of Cuddapah and Poonamalle which brought him to coast. On his arrival the English wrote " the new nabob, is within one league of us with an army of about 40,000 men and we are in a treaty with him concerning the rent of the place"<sup>116</sup>

Immediately after his appointment as the subedar of Karnatic - Arcot region, Neknam Khan demanded for the rise in town rent from 380 pagodas to 1200 pagodas on the ground that the revenues of Madrasapatnam increased since its founding in 1639. The dispute arose over the successive *cowls* given to the English, since their founding of the town which provided that half of the customs received on goods should be paid over to the inland governments which was called town rent. In 1663, Neknam Khan not only demanded the whole of customs but also claimed to establish *ahavalदार* to check the receipts of customs at Madrasapatnam on regular basis.<sup>118</sup> The initial reaction of the English was to construct fortifications and secure the town against any eventuality. Edward

<sup>115</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>116</sup> *O.C. No.*, 2893, 1663, cited in H.D.Love, *Vestiges*, Vol. I, pp.213-216.

<sup>117</sup> *Letter Book*, Vol. HI, 1664 .and *EFI*, New Series, 1670-77, 1671 /72 pp. 36-37.

<sup>118</sup> H.D.Love, *Vestiges*, Vol. I, p.266.

any eventuality. Edward Winter, the governor of Madrasapatnam, delayed the demand of Neknam Khan on the pretext that he referred the matter to England. The issue was put in abeyance by the English but in 1670, the relations between the Nawab and the English got so strained that Neknam Khan ordered for a blockade of the town. In the mean time, Neknam Khan cancelled the farm of Triplicane which was given to the company and took it directly under his control. In 1670, William Foxcorft, who succeeded Edward Winter as the Governor of Madrasapatnam finally agreed to pay a sum of 1200 pagodas henceforth as the town rent. Neknam Khan after his initial success over the English, now demanded for the arrears for the last 10 years which amounted to 11000 pagodas. In 1672, the English agreed to pay the arrears in addition of 1200 pagodas for renting of Triplicane.<sup>120</sup> The sudden change in the attitude of the company in complying the demands of Neknam Khan was its realisation that the local administration was justified in asking for enhancement of rent proportionately to the revenue of the town and to conceal the actual revenues of the town:

<sup>119</sup> *Factory Records*, Fort St. George, Vol. XXVI, 12 July, 1672. cited in H.D.Love, *Vestiges*, Vol. 1, p. 350.

<sup>120</sup> *RFSG, Diary and Consultation Book*, 1672-78, p. 3-5.

"That the revenues of the town may not be known to the moors as they desire, it is thought good that the accounts thereof and specially of the customs upon the goods be kept in English and the Brahmins are not to keep any books or accounts."

However, after claiming the rent, Neknam Khan died and was succeeded by Musa Khan in 1672. Till 1682, there was a quick succession of administrators in the Karnatic region. In the period between 1670-1684, the Kingdom of Golconda witnessed sweeping political transformation largely due to intervention of Madanna in provincial administration through Brahmin intermediaries. Surely the days of Persian elite was on the wane and the power at provincial level tilted towards Brahmin administrators. The first thing Madanna did after his appointment as prime minister was to remove Sayyid Mir Jaffar and Musa Khan from Masulipatnam and Karnatic respectively and appoint Polepally Yenganna and Podela Lingappa as governors .<sup>122</sup>

Unlike Mir Jumla and Neknam Khan, Podela Lingappa rose from humble origins and was considered as the most dreaded Governors of Poonamalle region. He was a Niyogi Brahmin who started his career as *havaladar* of Gandikota under Neknam Khan. Lingappa was a case of a small time administrator who rose to the rank of Governor of Arcot along with Polepalle Yenganna. In the political structure of Golconda, the lower ranks of administration was

<sup>122</sup> The successors of Neknam Khan were Musa Khan, Namdar Khan, Muskmia, Muhammad Ibrahim and Podela lingappa.

was dominated by Niyogi Brahmins. By virtue of the system of revenue farming, these local officials were instrumental in farming small areas under them and played a crucial role between the state and the production economy. When Madanna became the prime minister of Golconda, many of these Niyogi Brahmins were elevated to high positions, especially in the Karnatic region. During his tenure as Governor of Gandikota, Lingappa constituted it as a major paraganas with 25 villages. In 1682, Lingappa was elevated to the position of *Subedar* and managed the combined revenues of Chera, Cuddapah and Conjeevaram. He was given an additional Jagir of Triplicane which was then included into the *Jama Caumil*.<sup>123</sup>

The career of Lingappa on the Coromandel coast was more adventurous than his predecessor, Neknam Khan. He was actively involved in grain production and trade which was brought from the Karnatic to Coromandel. As suggested earlier, grain which became an important item of trade in this period, was actively conducted by these local officials. Lingappa wanted to push his grain in the town market of Madrasapatnam. He stocked his grain at Vepery and Egmore, the suburbs of Madrasapatnam, and issued a decree that no grain from other sources should be admitted into Madrasapatnam.<sup>124</sup> He also took possession of San Thome from Kasi Viranna on the ground that he rented Karnatic at 2 lakh pagodas, "that Madrasapatnam and Palliacat people keep up the price of paddy there by which other people sayeth, are hindered

123 on the career of Podela Lingappa in Karnatic see, *Gandikota Kaifiyat*, and *Sugumanchi Palle Kaifiyat*

<sup>124</sup> H. D.Love, *Vestiges*, Vol. 1, p. 412.

from fetching out of his country".<sup>125</sup> The English replied that the company will not comply to the demands of Lingappa saying that "the English are free people and have government of the town which produces great summes of money, formerly Nawab Neknam Khan let him have the yearly yields of several thousands"<sup>126</sup>

The problem was compounded when the company arrested Chinna Venkatadri who petitioned to the King which immediately led to the blockade of the town which lasted for more than two years.<sup>127</sup>

During the period of embargo (1678-81), Lingappa wrote a letter to Kasi Viranna that the paddy be sold in the market of Madrasapatnam at the rate of 10: calums for a pagoda. The Governor replied that grain market was free and the current price being 12 calums, paddy will be sold at a fixed price only.<sup>128</sup> The embargo continued till 1681 upon all goods and provisions coming to Madrasapatnam, and Lingappa decided to take Triplicane as well which was then rented by Venkatadri. The embargo was lifted in 1681 after Venkatapathi brought a *cowle* from the court which reconfirmed the old customs at Madrasapatnam.

A study on the nature of these blockades on Madrasapatnam, one can see a systematic development of rupture between local administration and the English company. First, it was only the rent which mattered, but during the tenure of Neknam Khan, revenues along with proposed imposition of *havaladar* was demanded and

<sup>125</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>126</sup> *RFSG, Diary and Consultation Book, 1672-78, p. 78,90.*

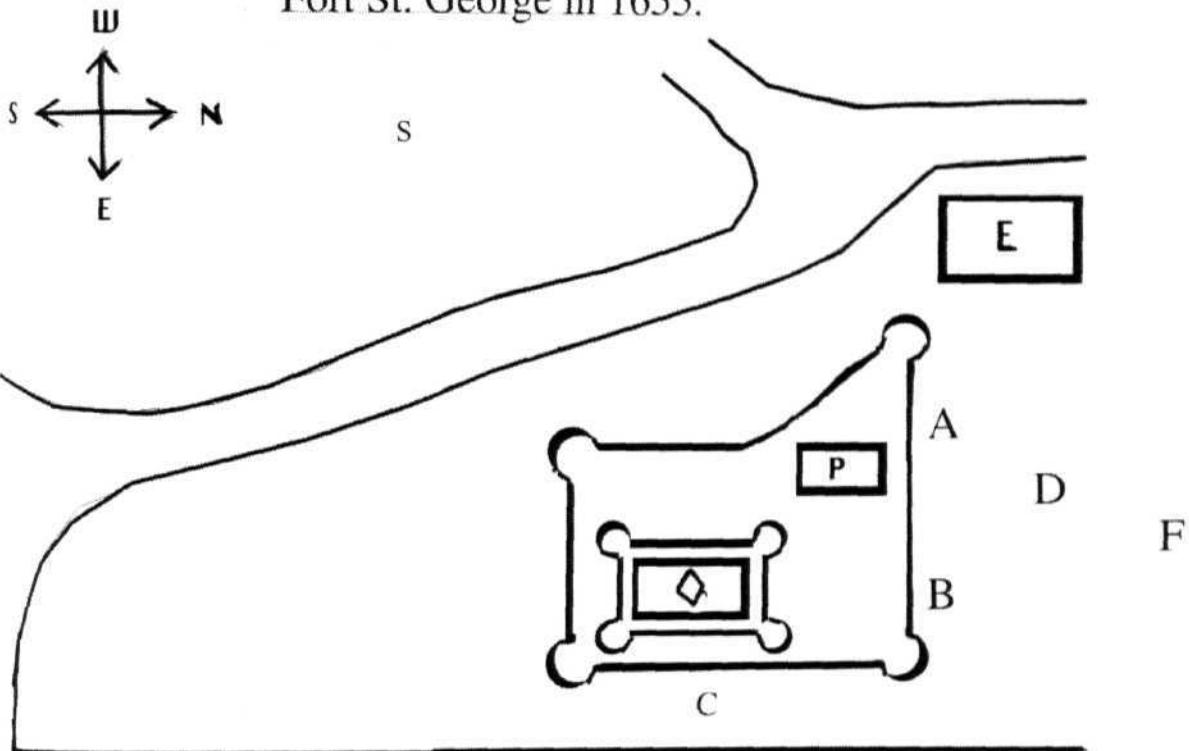
<sup>127</sup> *EFI, New Series, 1678-79, pp. 24-25.*

<sup>128</sup> *RFSG, Diary and Consultation Book, 1679-80.*

<sup>129</sup> *RFSG, Diary and Consultation Book, 1680-81. pp.36-37.*

Schematic Diagrams of Fort St. Georgy.

Fort St. George in 1655.



SEA.

A: Chaltry gate  
B: Middle gate  
C: Sea gate

D: Open space  
E: Burial ground  
F: Black Town

P: Capuchian clergy quarters and  
Burial ground

Khan, revenues along with proposed imposition of *havaladar* was demanded and finally during the tenure of Lingappa it involved apart from other things, trade as well. The problems for the English company increased, for, in 1700's Daud Khan imposed a blockade on the town and demanded more rents from the town in the wake of growing revenues.<sup>130</sup>

#### Core and Periphery: The origin of Colonial pattern 1640-1710

Bruce Watson, writing on European fortifications is of the opinion that the need for fortifications arose; from two aspects. That armed trading was profitable as long as the costs of fortifications can be kept at minimum, and as long as it can overpower the Indian elites who interfered in the European structure of trade. While surely the formulations of Bruce Watson concurs with the development of fortifications as an economic necessity, studies have neglected the spatial growth of these fortifications which would help in understanding the growth of colonial pattern of trade and settlements.<sup>132</sup>

<sup>130</sup> See, for Daud Khan's blockade of 1701-1702, *RFSG, Diary and Consultation Book*, 1701, pp. 14,61-62 and H.D.Love, *Vestiges*, Vol. II, pp. 16-18. However, this was general blockade which included Masulipatnam and Petapoli as well. The English had to pay Rs, 30,000 to Daud Khan.

\* The words core and periphery are used to designate the twin settlements of Fort St. George and the Indian town which came to be called as black town, if one traces the history of these settlements, there is no doubt that the plan of Madraspatnam was designed to meet its core sector, trade, which centred in Fort St. George. The combined settlements of fort St George, Indian town and the acquired territories came to be called as Madraspatnam.

<sup>131</sup> Bruce Watson, 'Fortifications and the 'Idea' of force', pp. 71-73.

<sup>132</sup> Susan J. Lewandowski's article is an exception to this neglect, but her interest is the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. See, 'Changing form and Function in Madurai and Madras', pp.200-203.

This section will concentrate on the growth of Madrasapatnam and establishes that the spatial growth of the town inherently carried colonial features which developed over a period of time into a grid colonial pattern. Logically, one must necessarily start from the 'core' of the settlement, namely Fort St. George. The site, Francis Day chose to construct the fort was a small fishing village surrounded by a township called Madrasapatnam.<sup>133</sup>

The first plan of the fort was oblong in shape with a bastion at each angle, which extended 108 yards from the north to south and 100 yards from east to west. The factory house with the Governors office was at the centre of the fort.<sup>134</sup> This formed the inner core of the fort and over a period of time, a number of changes were made to this section, depending on the threats faced by the company from inland administration. For example as the first finances came to Fort St. George, the fort bastions were constructed in a span of four years.<sup>135</sup> With the bastions came the first garrison which was designed to accommodate 100 men. Initially, the president and Council at Surat and even directors at London, were sceptical about the money sunk in fort St. George. Apart from the company directors, even the factors at Fort St. George felt that the :

<sup>133</sup> There is a clear cut distinction between Fort St. George and the town outside it. All the cowles given by Sri Ranga Raya, Neknam Khan and Daud Khan clearly demarcate the Fort and town into two distinct areas. See for the history of the division of fort and town, H.D.Love, *Vestiges*, Vol. 1, p. 81-85.

<sup>134</sup> H.D.Love, *Vestiges*, Vol. 1, p. 28., and *Dagh Register*, 1641-42, p. 266. Compare the initial plan with the John Fryers description, which says that the fort was an oblong structure. See. H.D.Love, *Vestiges*, Vol. II.

<sup>135</sup> The first bastion was erected in 1640 on which the company expended 375 lbs and the second bastion came up in 1641, the third in 1642 and the fourth in 1644 at the rate of 4150lbs.

"expenditure for which you annually pay so much charges for no other purpose than the security of our persons...for me their the greatest strength, whatever we can make, can anyway offend the moors should they be our enemy,.... can stop or prevent either relief or provisions from coming near us"<sup>136</sup>

Despite this scepticism expressed, there is no doubt that the importance of Fort St. George became clear during the Golconda phase. In 1653, an inner fort was constructed and Thomas Ivie started the building of a mud fort which included the European quarter and as well as Indian sections. The walls were extended upto the sea front with new gates; Armenian gate on the western side and China Bazaar gate on the south western side. This whole structure came to be designated as Christian town. Between the years 1640 - 1666, the English undertook massive construction of the fort and by 1680's, Christian town more or less took the present form.<sup>138</sup> The information regarding the white town was given in the proposal to collect taxes on houses. According to the proposal the fortified town comprised of:

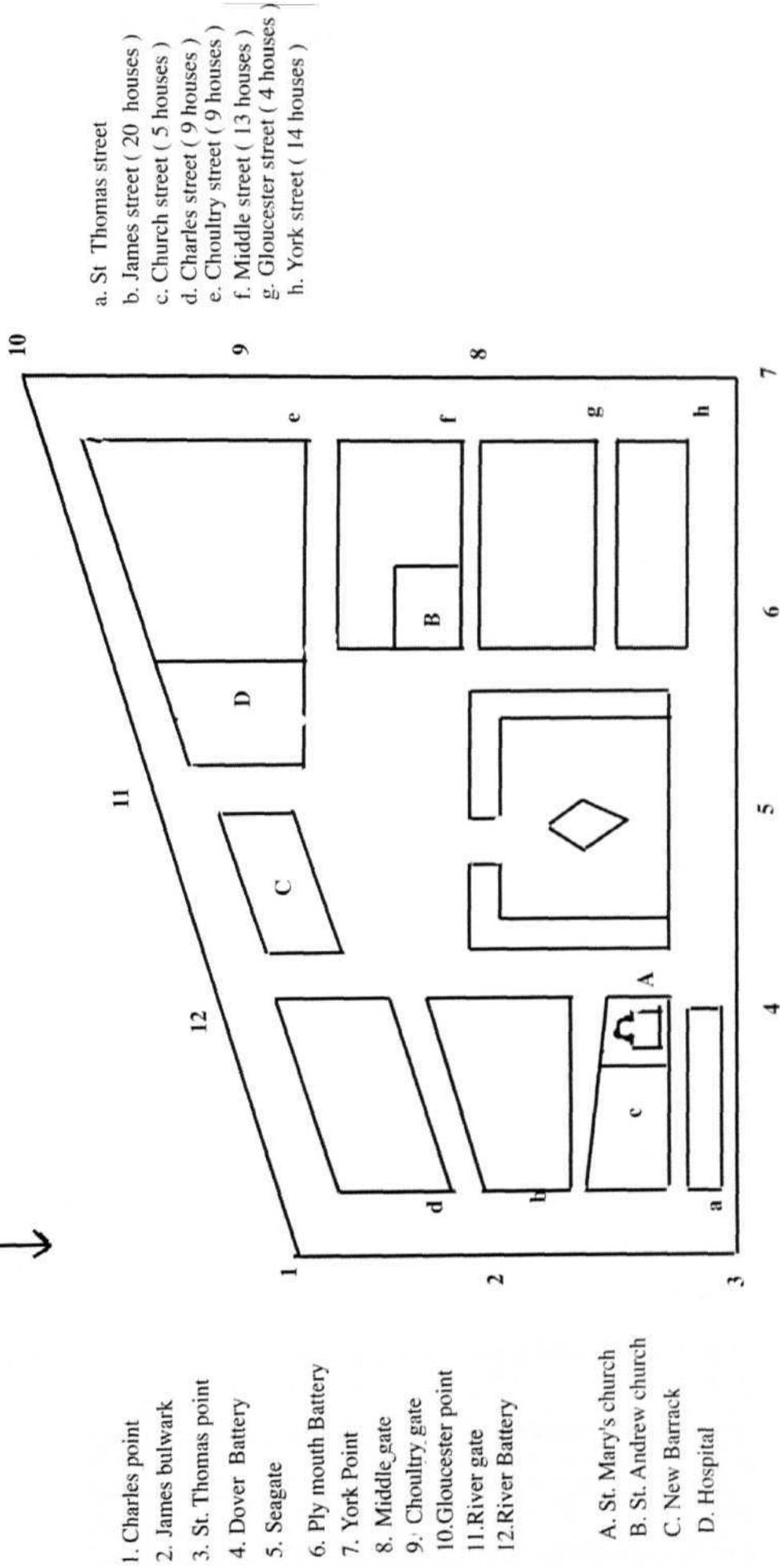
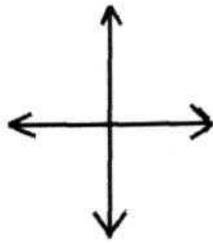
<sup>136</sup> H.D.Love, *Vestiges*, Vol. 1, p. 279.

<sup>137</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>138</sup> William Langhorn extended the fort to St.Thome Point and Round point. See diagram I.

# Fort St. George 1687

W



- a. St Thomas street
- b. James street ( 20 houses )
- c. Church street ( 5 houses )
- d. Charles street ( 9 houses )
- e. Choultry street ( 9 houses )
- f. Middle street ( 13 houses )
- g. Gloucester street ( 4 houses )
- h. York street ( 14 houses )

- 1. Charles point
- 2. James bulwark
- 3. St. Thomas point
- 4. Dover Battery
- 5. Seagate
- 6. Ply mouth Battery
- 7. York Point
- 8. Middle gate
- 9. Choultry gate
- 10. Gloucester point
- 11. River gate
- 12. River Battery

- A. St. Mary's church
- B. St. Andrew church
- C. New Barrack
- D. Hospital

Scale is not perfect.

Inner Fort: The English Point, Scotch point, French point, Irish point.

Houses where taxes to be collected: St.Thomas Street, Clarkes street, choultry street, Middle street, Closter street, and York street.

A closer study of the expansion of the fortification reveals that it was expanded on the northern side and was planned systematically to ward off threats from incursions from northern side. The inner fort accommodated the most influential and wealthiest of the population which included, apart from the Governor and factors, the Portuguese, Eurasian and other European nationalities.<sup>139</sup> Initially the white town catered to both Christian and non Christian populations, but as the population of the town grew, we have instances of people, especially Christians settling in the adjacent black town.

To understand the development of early colonial pattern at Madrasapatnam, one has to necessarily study the black town and its relation to Fort St. George. Black town had two important components in the period under study. Firstly it provided the economic base for English trade on which the prosperity of white town depended. In the black town various Indian populations connected to trade came to settle who served the company in different capacities. The main resident groups included komatis, chettis, Portuguese, Armenians, weavers, oilmen, carpenters, native soldiery, fisher men, boatmen etc.<sup>140</sup> Among them the most important groups who came into direct contact with the company

<sup>139</sup> See Susan J. Lawendowski, 'Changing form and Function in Madurai and Madras', p.200.

<sup>140</sup> See Foot note no. 97

were the komatis, chettis, Portuguese and Armenians. Though the company did not interfere in their traditional customs and life styles, a closer examination reveals that the company evolved social controls on the populations residing at Madrasapatnam. Thus, the company retained the head men, Accountants (canicopolys), Talliars (watch men) and constable( *Peddanaik*) etc. but for the effective functioning of English administration. However, these offices became crucial to the company as it was through these indigenous administrators that the company achieved dominance over other sections of population. These people acted as main source of information on indigenous laws and customs on which the company was able to introduce its own laws at Madrasapatnam.<sup>141</sup> Though the black town apparently had varied ethnic and cultural heterogeneity, the town as it evolved was divided into neatly demarcated blocks divided on caste and racial segregation. The caste pattern in the black town evolved out of the numerous caste disputes between the right hand and left hand castes which became endemic throughout the history of Madrasapatnam.

The origin of the right hand and left hand castes goes back to twelfth and fourteenth centuries, their distinction and their subsequent conflicts, however, seems to have been a recent

<sup>141</sup> For the information on English civil and criminal laws, see, Elliotts Standing orders, 1663-1724 in Public Department, Sundries, 1700 p. 58-59. It may be noted that the English desired to introduce European laws in Madrasapatnam ever since they founded the town. In fact one of the major requests of the English to Sri Ranga Raya was the permission to have English laws in the town. The English were instrumental in getting permission to introduce English laws through various cowles given by Ranga Raya, Abdullah Qutb Shah and Shah Alam. See, *RFSG, Diary and Consultation Book* for the years, 1678,1682,1701 and 1707.

phenomenon. Most of the merchants and artisans though belonged to various sub castes but came under two broader caste divisions. Most of the artisans were attached to respective chief merchants belonging to the same caste denomination. Chief merchants who also headed these castes manipulated the cleavages for consolidation of their position. Thus, as Madrasapatnam grew, schisms between caste groups became evident and time and again took the form of conflicts within the city.<sup>142</sup> In fact, in 1707, the English reported on the origin of a dispute that it was because of the infringement of one caste on the other for exclusive rights for trade. The actual cause, the English wrote " was due to altering of the old method of contracts and advancing money, and that Serappa and Timmana cant be head merchants, unless drive out the heads of other castes which shall care by the present left hands"<sup>143</sup> That the chief merchants were manipulating the weavers and other artisans is clear from the English documentation of the period. The immediate causes for these disputes did not vary much. They originated either in the supposed encroachment of the rival caste groups in the pettahs, taking processions in the streets or on the privileges they enjoyed in the temples of Madrasapatnam.

The company used these caste disputes to its advantage. The company encouraged schisms amongst the caste groups to dislodge 'recalcitrant' chief merchants from their

<sup>142</sup> For the moving of weavers into Madrasapatnam during the time of Kasi Viranna, Chinna Venktadri and Serappa, See, *RFSG, Diary and Consultation Book*, 1672-78, 1682, 1686 and 1712.

<sup>143</sup> *RFSG, Despatches to England.*, 1701-1711, 1707, p. 80.

<sup>144</sup> See, the caste disputes of 1652 and 1707 as the indicators for the immediate causes and their features. H.D. Love, *Vestiges*, Vol. I, pp.129-130, 144-146 and Vol. II, pp. 26-28 and *Public consultations*, Vol XIX, 1692.

positions and appoint a person belonging to a rival caste in the former's position. Normally, the company had only one option in dealing with actual rioting at Madrasapatnam: in order to restore normalcy, the company segregated the black town on the lines followed in the white town into separate compartments (streets) and imposed fines on the people who violated this pattern. Thus, Pedanaik petta predominantly had right hand people while the Muthailpet was dominated by left hands. The segregation was also extended to the fringes of white town where the Indian population lived, namely Bridge Gate street and Western Petta<sup>145</sup>

The next important feature of the black town was its spatial growth which cushioned the core of the company in times of exigency such as wars and troubles with the inland powers. The black town lay on the northern side of fort St. George and expanded towards the west and southern side of the fort thus cushioned the core from threats which came from these directions. Significantly, the inland military operations moved from either northern axis (Qutb shahi and the Mughals, for instance) or from the west axis (Bijapur). In 1702, Thomas Pitt decided to construct a fort wall around the black town which was completed with the help of the money collected by the indigenous population. The length of the black town wall was 1500 Sq. yards in length and was 17 ft in thick, and was constructed with bricks and a regular garrison was established.<sup>146</sup> The completion of black town wall in 1707 surely strengthened the fortification of Madrasapatnam and enhanced the

<sup>145</sup> *Ibid.* In 1707, the company asked the residents to vacate Bridge gate street and Western petta to the left hands and the right hands be given Peddanaik peta.

<sup>146</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 7-8.

prestige of the English company on the coast. Even the Dutch commented at the 'awe' created by the English at Madrasapatnam and by the beginning of the eighteenth century, Fort St. George and the combined town of Madrasapatnam became an example for other fortifications in Asia.<sup>147</sup>

Apart from the main fortified part of the town which included both white and black towns, the company acquired many adjacent villages and towns under its jurisdiction which played an important role in the economy of Madrasapatnam. These villages formed the immediate hinterland of Madrasapatnam.

Unlike the construction of fortification which was solely the discretion of the company, the acquiring of villages needed sanction from the inland powers. Initially, the company initially took these villages on farming basis. Triplicane and San Thome were the first to be farmed through their chief merchants. Kasi Viranna, Chinna Venkatadri and Serappa farmed the towns of San Thome and Triplicane on regular basis, but the company retained the power to dislodge them whenever it desired.

The first major attempt to acquire adjacent areas directly under the company came during the tenure of Streynsham Master (1675-1680). In 1678, the Governor applied to the king of Golconda for a grant of the areas of San Thome, Tivetore, and Egmore situated in south, north and west of the fort in perpetuity.

<sup>147</sup> Bencolenof the island of Sumatra, where the English started a fortification in 1688 was planned on the lines of Fort St. George. The company regularly sent plans of Fort St. George to Bencoleen and vice versa, the fort was named York fort.

<sup>148</sup> The company do not seem to have followed a regular pattern regarding these acquisitions. Triplicane was the first to be farmed in 1658, a privilege which was extended to the company by Musa Khan in 1662.

Streynsham Master's decision to acquire or lease them was important, for these towns included many villages which were rich in agriculture, apart from the artisanal production. The towns consisted the following villages: <sup>149</sup>

San Thome:	Pallacawrna, Nammangalam, Oldudar, Nandambawca, Mambalam, Sattivedu to be taken for 1500 pagodas
Trivetore:	Sattanwagdo, Chedyam, Cuppam, Tandore, Yerradalcherry, Enroor and Catiwaca for 900 pagodas
Egmore:	Porsowaca, pudapawaca, Vepery, keepuwaca, Cettipetta, Omancaje, Lumbamwaca, Roshanaa, Buduru, and Agaram for 670 pagodas

In 1692, the company revived its request to take Tandore, Fursewakam and Egmore for 300 pagodas on rent free basis, which was granted in the following year, after getting a sanction from the emperor. <sup>150</sup> By 1710 the company had brought many villages adjacent to Madrasapatnam under its jurisdiction. In 1708, Thomas Pitt sent a delegation to Sadatullah Khan the Mughal Faujdar to get Trivetore, Sattangodu, Catawaca, Vezellwarro and Lingambaca, which was readily granted. <sup>151</sup>

All these loosely acquired towns around Madrasapatnam formed the immediate hinterland of the town, They also demarcated the territorial jurisdiction of the Madrasapatnam on the coast. These

<sup>149</sup> H.D.Love *Vestiges*, Vol. 1, p. 410 and RFSG, *letters from Fort St., George*, 1679, pp. 13-14,21.

<sup>150</sup> *Ibid*, Vol. I, p. 517.

<sup>151</sup> H.D.Love, *Vestiges*, Vol. II, p. 154.

Madrasapatnam on the coast. These villages and towns proved highly profitable to the company as it was able to sub lease them to merchants or to local populations. Most of the consuming articles such as grain, tobacco, betel, toddy came from these villages.

Force was an important component of mercantile logic in the seventeenth century. Madrasapatnam relied heavily on this logic both on land and sea. As suggested earlier, if the armed shipping was used against the competitive companies and other indigenous traders, in inland it was meant to use against local administration. The shipping of Madrasapatnam necessarily came with a contingent of arms and ammunition, thus making the town a major redistributive centre for arms to be sent to other country destinations.

*Armed Shipping of Madrasapatnam : 1672*

	Tonnes	Guns	Squadron
London	500	40	Admiral
Marsenberg	560	44	
Bombain	400	40	
Unity	350	34	Vice Admiral
President	500	42	
Ann	550	36	
East India merchant	400	36	
Sampson	460	40	Rare Admiral
Caesar	560	46	
Antelope	460	36	

Source: H.D. Love, *Vestiges*, I, p. 359.

Armed shipping became a major investment for company in the second half of the seventeenth century. The fact that the companies cannot anchor armed ships in the free ports such as Masulipatnam which were governed directly by Indian

states, made the companies to use these fortifications as main bases for armed shipping. Within the fortification, the English were constantly engaging in the enlargement of garrisons for defense purposes. However, as our profiles have shown, there is no evidence to show that the company ever used force against local administration, but for defense purposes. The first garrison of 1640 had 100 peons and by 1673, it expanded to 241- infantry, 14 -artillery and 163- Portuguese militia and was divided into four companies for inner fort and the Christian town.<sup>152</sup>

The company expanded garrison's considerably during the conquest of by Golconda forces.<sup>153</sup> During the same period and also subsequently, the garrison at Madrasapatnam extended along the white town ramparts and later on to the black town as well.<sup>154</sup>

In fact the company maintained as many as 100 peons exclusively posted in the black town and in other neighbouring areas. The garrison of Madrasapatnam was gloriously recorded by the company documentation in the early eighteenth century. It was used to commodities from the immediate hinterland which fell within the jurisdiction of the company and also to curb the 'native' insolence such as caste disputes which not only took violent forms but also led to, sometimes, to the fleeing of the weavers and artisans from the town.

<sup>152</sup> H.D.Love, *Vestiges*, Vol. 1, p372.

<sup>153</sup> *Ibid.* p. 475.

<sup>154</sup> The main garrison points of the white town were Charles point, James bulwark, St.Thomas Point, Dorar Battery, Sea gate, Plymouth battery, York Point, Middle gate, chouldtry gate, Glester point, River gate, and River Battery. Public Consultation, Vol. XIV, 1687/88. the black town garrison included New point, Bridge foot gae, Egmore guard, Balchitee, Kalastri Chitti, Back guard, Middle gate, Mudpoint, Clarks gate, the garden guard, Sunca Rama Choultry, Gangavaram, and Badradri. H.D.Love, *Vestiges*, Vol. II, p. 160.

By the end of the seventeenth century, Madrasapatnam more or less completed the minimum requirements for the process of urbanisation which depended on the English east India company's effective management/ maneuverability/ as the case maybe, to dominate the trade in the period under study. The company was able to chalk out its own 'political dominion' at which depended on its adaptability *vis a vis* the hinterland cannot be ignored. Added to this was the willingness of the company to provide economic space to free merchants and other indigenous aspirants to trade, proved, in the long run very beneficial to the company. Initially when the company worked on the fortification at Madrasapatnam, the point of reference to the English were the Dutch settlements of Batavia and Pulicat. But as the successive events proved, the Dutch Pulicat declined, due to, as the English company has reported 'due to their inability to allow free trade' is largely true.

### Conclusion

By the beginning of the eighteenth century, Coromandel coast underwent a significant transformation on account of Mughal expansion into the Deccan. The unitary nature of Coromandel which was achieved by the Sultanate of Golconda during the seventeenth century witnessed break up into neatly demarcated zones of control by the local powers. A study of the port cities of Masulipatnam, Vizagapatnam and Madrasapatnam reveals that impact of Mughal expansion was not similar all along the coast. Intra- regional differences became pronounced in the last decades of the seventeenth century. However, it must be stressed that political fragmentation of the late seventeenth century did not necessarily lead to a general decline of Coromandel *per se*, but on the other hand showed realignment of socio, economic and political forces at the local level. The articulation of various regional dynamics which became the harbingers of change in the post-Mughal phase of Indian history.

Arasarathanam has identified the whole of Coromandel coast (starting from Ganjam to Point Calimere) as an unitary system of trade in the seventeenth century. According to him, the coherence of Coromandel coast is based, among other things, in the nature of commodities traded, the destinations of trade, the communities and categories of people who traded in them, the administrative systems which impacted on trade, the fiscal system, the monetary system and finally the nature of political formations in the

seventeenth century.<sup>1</sup> However, critics like Joseph Brenning and Sanjay Subrahmanyam, have argued that Coromandel as unitary system is unwieldy due to inter-regional differences within the coast.<sup>2</sup> A closer study of the northern and central Coromandel, which included Andhra and Madrasapatnam, reveals a certain degree of unitary features in the seventeenth century. The expansion and the successful consolidation of the Sultanate of Golconda in the northern and central was the chief factor for the integration of the eastern sea-board during the seventeenth century.

The successful campaigns of Ibrahim Qutb shah (1530-1580) and Abdullah Qutb Shah (1626-1672) into the northern and central Coromandel respectively led to a considerable integration of this region into one macro unit. The state adopted two distinct strategies; In the northern plains of Krishna and Godavari, the state consciously followed and depended on the collaboration with the traditional chiefs and *Zamindars*, while on the coast of Madrasapatnam it adopted a policy of a total liquidation of Vijayanagara and other warrior *Palegadu* lineage's of Velugoti, Damerla, and Matli's and brought the region directly under the administrative apparatus.

The imposition of administrative apparatus from above and allowing the traditional elite with considerable fiscal autonomy at the local level brought the production economy close to international trade which centered around the ports of

<sup>1</sup> S. Arasaratnam, *Merchants, Companies and Commerce on the Coromandel coast 765-2724*, New Delhi, 1986. and 'Coromandel revisited: Problems and issued in Indian Maritime history', *IESHR*, 26,1,1989, pp. 101-110.

<sup>2</sup> See, Joseph Brenning, 'Book Review', *IESHR*, XXIV, 2, pp. 221-24. and Sanjay Subrahmanyam, 'Book Review', *MAS*, 22,1, pp. 179-88.

Masulipatnam (1634-1724), Vizagapatnam (1682-1724) and Madrasapatnam (1639-1712). The existence of hierarchy of markets starting from the village, *qasbas* (*palems* in Andhra), redistributive and local consumption centres such as Kondapalli, Nandigama, jammulamadugu, Bobbili, Rajam etc. determined the continental trade in south India. The integration of peasant production with that of markets which catered to domestic and export was achieved by the intermediate layer which existed between the state and the rich producing economy of Coromandel.<sup>3</sup> Apart from the well established networks of markets and centres of trade, the integration of frontier, especially the areas of Gingelly and Karnatic became crucial for the export oriented economy on the coast.

The weaving activity, on which the trade of trade depended, was concentrated in Krishna-Godavari delta and the coast of Madrasapatnam with Masulipatnam and Kanchipuram as the main epicentres. The trans-Godavari, Gingelly and Madrasapatnam coasts were dominated by numerous ruling clans called as *Zamindars* and tributary rajas or by *Palegadu* elements, the latter who owed their allegiance to Vijayanagara. The recourse to revenue farming by the state altered the relations between the state and the civil society. The state adopted revenue farming as an alternative to direct appointment of official administrative apparatus and to appropriate the maximum of surplus from provinces. By allowing revenue farming at various levels of economy, the state paved way

<sup>3</sup> See, Sanjay Subrahmanyam, 'Aspects of State formation in south and South East Asia, IESHR', and for the heirarchy of markets as an useful analysis see, William Skinner, 'Marketing and Social Structure in China', *JAS*, Vol. XXIV, Nos. 1964-65, pp. 3-43.

for individual entrepreneurship within its economic fold. Further more, the state created a political and administrative space for these entrepreneurs within the functioning of the 'formal' state system.

Revenue farmers included small time renters, medium farmers and the great merchant lords who brought the farms in open auction, and those who directly negotiated with state. Even the *Zamindars* who had access to ports were involved in revenue farming which had its impact both on the local economy and International trade as well. The compulsions of paying the stipulated amount of money to central treasury necessitated revenue farmers to directly intervene in the production process and other allied activities, either individually or through sub-letting, led to intense commercialisation on the Coromandel coast. Though it has been argued that revenue farming was a feature of coastal plains where the profitability was high, we however, have evidence to show that it was prevalent in the frontier where the economy depended mostly on agriculture. The expansion of Golconda into Karnatic region was an outcome of the campaigns of Mir Jumla and the subsequent role played by Golconda administrators such as Neknam Khan, Podela Lingappa. All these people were involved in farming revenues, notably from the local diamond industries and to some extent in sub letting agricultural lands as well.

The rise of Masulipatnam in the seventeenth century was due to the consolidation of Golconda in Krishna and Godavari deltas. As noticed in the chapter on Masulipatnam, the state consciously collaborated with Persian mercantile group by giving them preferential rights in matters of trade. Though, Masulipatnam

was part of *Khalisa*, the state adopted the system of sub-letting its hinterland and port city to revenue farmers who were called Governors. Thus, the decentralized nature of provincial administration in the ports attracted a large number of entrepreneur's to Masulipatnam. The port attracted many urban communities, especially the Persians and European private traders who dominated the trade at Masulipatnam at different periods in the seventeenth century. If collaborating with Persian mercantile group proved advantageous to the state, the local economy of the northern Coromandel was dominated by Hindu merchants who established close ties with the local elite such as the *Zamindars* of Peddapuram, Mogalteru, Palakollu, etc. The relationship between traditional elite and Hindu merchants, which was more indirect, benefited mutually at the local level. For instance, both of them reaped the benefits of already burgeoning commercial economy which catered to continental trade centered around the port of Masulipatnam. Further, the growth of European commerce brought the Hindu merchants closer to company trade which no doubt pushed the local elite into trade. The companies consolidated their position through their establishment of internal factories on the northern Coromandel at Draksharamam, Peddapuram , Palakollu, Viravasaram etc.

The economy of Masuliptnam has to been analysed at two levels. 1) Golconda state and the decentralization of its provincial administration through revenue farmers and 2) At the local level which was dominated by Hindu merchants whose participation in

trade led to intense commercialisation of the economy which in turn brought European commerce into central picture.

The Mughal liquidation of Golconda in 1687 radically altered the existing relationships between the state, Indian and European merchants, and the local elite. The complementary nature of state and commerce was threatened by the Mughal invasion. The Mughals disrupted, for the first time, the regional coherence of northern Coromandel which was assiduously developed by Golconda in the preceding years. But did the Mughal intervention directly lead to the decline of trade at ? It is argued in the preceding chapters that decline of Masulipatnam must be placed within specific context of developments at the sub-regional level in which the Mughal expansion was only incidental. It is the contention of this thesis that Coromandel coast of showed divergent developments in the port towns taken as our case studies.

The Mughal conquest led to a series of revolts against the Imperial expansion on the northern Coromandel. One major outcome of the war was the consolidation of power by the *raju* and *Velama* clans and *Zamindars* in Godavari, Vizagapatnam and Vizinagaram deltas. The Mughal conquest had contradictory impact on the Coromandel ports of Masulipatnam and Vizagapatnam. For instance, at Masulipatnam, the Mughal expansion led a direct to break down of the hinterland of Masulipatnam (especially the east Godavari) which resulted in the rise of smaller ports such as Divi, and Ingeram. These ports which earlier served Masulipatnam as feeder points came out the metropolitan 'port complex' and became independent in their own

right which in turn had adverse impact on Masulipatnam. In the last quarter of the seventeenth century, the political situation on the northern Coromandel was such that only small but definite hinterlands survived which must be placed within the context of local politics *vis-a-vis* Mughal aggrandizement. That the local elite in the process of consolidating their power took recourse to expansion of agrarian and non-agrarian sectors consciously developed ports which were part of their small territorial jurisdictions. For instance, Appa Row who developed Divi as an independent port started directly sending grain to southern Coromandel ports of Madrasapatnam which had adverse impact on Masulipatnam.<sup>4</sup> By the end of the seventeenth century, Masulipatnam had lost its vast hinterland of east Godavari to the newly rising ports of Ingeram and Vizagapatnam which accelerated its decline in the eighteenth century.

Thus, if the decline of Masulipatnam was due to break up of its 'core' hinterland and its port complex, the rise of Vizagapatnam into a major port during the same period was precisely due to collapse of Mughal imperial administrative structure on the Gingelly and Vizianagaram in the last decade of the seventeenth century. Vizagapatnam which grew as an English fortification, witnessed growth due to emerging tripartite relationship between tributary *raju* and *velama* clans, the Mughal *faujdar*s and the English East India company. The hazy nature of Mughal controls led to consolidation of power by the tributary chiefs in the present

<sup>4</sup> *RFSG, Diary and Consultation Book*, 1712, p. 24 and *RFSG, Letters to Subordinate Factories*, 1714, p. 43.

Vizianagaram and Vizagapatnam districts. Notable families of Pusapatis, Jeypore, Mogalteru and Bobbili brought vast tracts of land under agriculture which in turn led to the cheapness of grain.

The war situation compelled these local potentate's to introduce both long term and short term measures within their respective localities. In long term, the chiefs, especially those who commanded prestige amongst the lesser political entities, intervened in the local grain and textile markets by providing necessary infrastructural facilities such as forming of *Canjas* and *palems* at Rajam, Bobbili, Kaumili, Walteroo etc. which was transformed into export trade at Vizagapatnam. During the Mughal phase, the transformation of tributary chiefs into aggressive politico-military entrepreneurs through their direct intervention in local markets was a major determining factor in the growth of Vizagapatnam. The constant wars between the Mughals and the chiefs made the latter to depend on the English East India company which in turn emerged as a major financier local levels of political control. Finance was provided by the company for a return of safe passage of goods and concessions such as farming neighbouring villages, exemption from local cess and taxation etc. which led to cheapness of textiles at Vizagapatnam. It was noticed that local merchants mediated between the warring chiefs and the company. Constant wars between the Mughals and tributary chiefs in turn brought Madras pagodas to Vizagapatnam- an early indication of monetisation of the local economy.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>5</sup> In the context of late seventeenth century, no other port imported Madras pagodas as Vizagapatnam did. In fact, the English factors at Fort. St.George asked

There is no doubt that the Mughal imperial structure collapsed on the northern Coromandel. Significant to us is the transformation of the Mughal *faujdari* system. The intra- *faujdari* conflicts became endemic on the northern Coromandel which meant a deviance from Mughal official norms. At the local level the Mughal *faujdar*s were involved in enhancing their individual careers often feeding on the weakening of imperial system. The careers of Rustom Dil Khan, Fakirullah Khan, Asad Khan etc. showed a tendency of collaborating with local officials such as *deshmukh*'s and other petty officers and with local potentates as well. This was intended not to strengthen the imperial system as much as to enhance their individual careers.

At the beginning of the eighteenth century, local politics became the prime indicators of change on the Coromandel coast. The politics was dictated by the amount of wealth each of the contesting parties managed to garner through direct or indirect intervention in the production economy and by systematically developing links with European companies. In such a schema, it was noticed at Vizagapatnam, that the tributary *rajus* emerged as a powerful force *vis a vis* the Mughal expansion. Lastly, the role of the English company at Vizagapatnam must be situated within this complex weave of political alliances and the political networks in a war ridden economy which instead of throttling trade, led to the consolidation of English commerce at Vizagapatnam.

one factor to closely monitor the situation at Vizagapatnam to provide Madras pagodas. *RFSG, Diary and Consultation Book*, 1718, p. 47.

In both the case studies of Masulipatnam and Vizagapatnam, the role of the English company was only a part of the complex regional dynamics of trade. For instance, at Masulipatnam the company was not able to subdue Indian mercantile operations during the period of our study. However, one cannot brush aside the role of European commerce as peripheral to the economy. At least by the last quarter of the seventeenth century, the English company was instrumental in establishing political and economic links with the local elite and Hindu merchants, perhaps as an indicator of the early penetration of the company trade in India.

A study of the history of Madrasapatnam between 1639-1712 radically differed from the northern ports of Masulipatnam and Vizagapatnam. The town of Madrasapatnam was assiduously developed by the English East India Company after obtaining a grant from the Damerla clan with extra-territorial rights. The port was able to develop a vast hinterland which stretched from the districts of Nellore, Cuddapah, Chittoor, North Arcot and South Arcot districts of Karnatic and central Coromandel.

In the course of the seventeenth century, the town of Madrasapatnam emerged as the main redistributive centre for intra-Asian trade. The revival of oceanic connections with Pegu by Madrasapatnam shipping became crucial to the expanding English commerce on the coast. Euro-Asian trade, on the other hand, was a preserve of private traders who were allowed to freely reside at Madrasapatnam.

The town attracted a population of various nations and denominations. Most of the populations who came to reside in the

town were associated with trading activities which centered around company trade. However, the success of Madrasapatnam system of operation lay in the effective subjugation of Indian chief merchant under the company. The portfolio interests and the flexibility of Indian merchant which was found in the northern Coromandel was effectively eroded in the economy of Madrasapatnam.

The failure of the Indian chief merchant to develop portfolio interests within and outside these European enclaves in the second half of the seventeenth century was the first indicator of the growing strength of company trade and structure on the Coromandel. However, the causes for the transformation of the Indian chief merchant into company merchant cannot solely be attributed to the effective management of English trade at Madrasapatnam. Madanna who took over as the chief revenue officer of Golconda in 1680's, initiated a process of bureaucratization which curtailed the portfolio participation of Indian merchants in trade and politics. This period was dominated by the intervention of Golconda officials directly in the coastal economy, while the Indian merchants of Madrasapatnam acted as mere egibs(ambassadors who regularly passed information between companies and inland administration). In the post Golconda history of Madrasapatnam, we have very few instances of chief merchants holding portfolio interests which was taken over by the company. In the period between 1690-1712 investments of the company steadily rose which was a direct outcome of the subjugation of the Indian chief merchant at Madrasapatnam,

Apart from the effectiveness of Joint stock companies, Madrasapatnam offered yet another major incentive for the English company. Revenues from farming and other sources such as house tax, quit rent, etc. were used for the day to day functioning of the English trade which brought the company from the strict controls from 'Home'. The extension of the company into local revenues became a major reason for the conflicts between the company and inland administration. However, in the long run, these conflicts failed to make any impact on the company trade. The company was successful in maintaining the 'autonomy' given in the grants and cowl's etc.

Any generalizations on the uniform nature of mercantile operations in the period between 1687-1724 would only prove futile. The period witnessed an emergence of complex set of relationships in which regional economy responded variably to trade in different port towns of Coromandel coast. For instance, it witnessed both the rise and decline of Persian merchants, the rise of Hindu -European collaboration, European - Zamindar alliances, etc. all culminated into a space called 'trade' in the seventeenth century. The merchants of Masulipatnam, which included both Persians and Indians, dominated its trade, while the companies were yet to make an impact on the regional economy. There is no doubt that Hindu mercantile operations were limited when compared to Persians; the former preferred working with the companies for their sustenance in trade. In the Vizagapatnam sector, local merchants acted as mediators between the English company and the local potentates thus providing knowledge and capital to the future colonialism. At

Madrasapatnam, on the other hand, trade was solely dictated by company in which the social and political base of Indian merchants were getting marginalised by the second half of the eighteenth century.