Chapter: One
Introduction

The seed of the ambitious ruler, King Dom Joan II (1485-1495) of Portugal was harvested by his successor Dom Manuel II (1496-1521), as they had been the first European nation to get a foothold in India by displacing the traditional Arab merchants. The coming of Portuguese into the Indian Ocean completely changed the pattern of peaceful trading system into a violent competent maritime one. After they landed at Calicut on 20\textsuperscript{th} May 1498 the Portuguese began to concentrate to build an empire by capturing the important trading posts in the Indian Ocean, the trading posts were later turned into fort. These were Mozambique, Hormuz, Diu, Daman, Bombay, Goa, Cochin, Ceylon, Nagapatam, San Thome, Malacca and Macao. The commercial interest of the Portuguese was essentially concerned with the export of pepper and spices from Cochin in the Malabar Coast and the Malay Archipelago, and Coromandel textiles were used as the principal article of exchange in the spice trade. However, in 1580 when Portugal came under the hands of Spanish Habsburgs, all cordial relations with the Dutch ceased. The Dutch utilized the situation created by the defeat of the Great Armada to send out expedition in the vast eastern ocean. In 1605 the Dutch pinnace 'Delft' anchored at Masulipatnam and established a factory there under Yassacx Eyloff. Soon as the Dutch landed at Masulipatnam, the Portuguese empire had begun to wane in the Indian Ocean. The Dutch settlements came up at Nizamapatnam, Devanampatnam, (Tegnapatnam) and Pulicat.

The fear of the Dutch domination of the spice trade in Europe led a group of London merchants to apply to the Crown for a monopoly charter for the East India trade. The request was granted and on 31\textsuperscript{st} December 1600, was born the ‘Company of Merchants of London trading into the East Indies.’ The Charter was granted for “the Honour of our Nation, the Wealth of our People, the Increase of
Our Navigation, and the Advancement of lawful traffic” and invested the company with the exclusive monopoly of trade to the East Indies, and provided for its management: a Governor and twenty-four members. Full powers were given to the freemen to meet as often as necessary to ‘make reasonable laws, constitutions, Orders, and ordinances, necessary and convenient for the good administration of the Company.'\(^1\) The English Company in 1610 accepted the offer of two Dutchmen, Peter Floris and Lucas Antheunis, to set out expedition to the Coast of Coromandel, the two Dutchmen’s proposal was not only offered an opportunity to establish a factory at Masulipatnam for supplying the Company’s factory with the Coromandel cloths, but also with the prospect of employing its trading capital in the country trade for three years before returning to England. The commercial ability of Floris and Antheunis and the wisdom of the English Company’s decision to accept their plans were proved when the *Globe*, which sailed in 1611, returned in 1615 with a rich cargo after trading successfully on the Coromandel Coast and in Siam.\(^2\)

The relation with the Dutchmen came to more and more experiment when the Dutch East India Company came out with a proposal that the English East India Company enter into a union with it by creating a common stock, which could also be used for the common benefit in trade and defense in the East Indies. The proposal was strongly resisted by the English Company at home and disregarded by their servants in the east. However, with the king’s concern the agreement was signed on 7th July 1619.\(^3\)

The so called Treaty of Defence signed in 1619 had freed the English in the Far East from active hostilities with the Dutch, and had given them a right to take shelter in the Dutch fortress and a share in the trade; but these benefits had been accompanied by financial obligations which, in the weak state of their finances, proved far too heavy to bear. They were to pay one third of the fort and

---

\(^1\) Khan, S. A., *The East India Trade in the XI\textsuperscript{th} Century*, p. 2.


garrison charges in the Moluccas, Bandas and Ambonia, and one-half at Pulicat; and were in addition to maintain ten ships to cruise against the Spaniards and Portuguese.\(^4\) Therefore, the agreement did not run for long as it affected the very basis of the role of merchant’s capital. Finally, before the treaty was revoked on 9\(^{th}\) March 1623, the Chief factor of the English East India Company at Amboina, Gabriel Tomnson; nine other Englishmen, ten Japanese mercenaries, and the Portuguese overseer of the slaves were beheaded at the command of Dutch Governor Van Speult.\(^5\) The reason for the instance was that one Japanese who was arrested on February 23\(^{rd}\) 1623 on suspicion of spying, had confessed that a plot was made whereby the English factors, aided by the Japanese soldiers, were to kill Van Speult and siege Fort Victoria as soon as English ship appeared in the roadstead.\(^6\)

After this event the English Company servants moved away from Pulicat and searched new places and finally landed at Armagoan in 1626. Nevertheless, this place too was not up to satisfactory. Moreover, it was very close to the Dutch settlement of Pulicat, where the weaving castes were threatened if they cooperate with the English.\(^7\) They again began to search for a better place and finally landed at Madras in 1639, where the local nayak invited them to build a fort and made many other promised.\(^8\) Therefore, the Dutch dominated the first half of the seventeenth century, the English had later emerged as the main commercial power in the Coromandel Coast with many reason.

**Feature of the Coromandel Coast**

The Coromandel Coast continued to become an important as commercial center since the ancient period. It became more prominent with the coming of Europeans, where textiles played a major role in the maritime trade. The trade of Coromandel

\(^4\) E.F.I., 1622-1623, pp. xxxv-vi.

\(^5\) Om Prakash (ed), *The Dutch Factories in India*, p. 72.


\(^7\) E.F.I., 1624-1626, p. 128.

\(^8\) E.F.I., 1637-1641, p. xxxviii.
was carried out from a number of ports along the coast. The major ports of outlet for trade from the north-south direction were: Masulipatnam, Petapuli (Nazampatnam), Kistnapatnam, Armagoan, Pulicat, Madras, San Thome, Pondicherry, Devanampatnam (Tegenapatnam), Cuddalore, Porto Novo, Tranquebar, Karikal and Nagapatnam. Each of these ports had weaving villages in its hinterland and this export of textiles alone was enough to sustain the trade. The markets for Coromandel textiles spread over a wide region of Asia: Burmese and Thai kingdoms, Sultanate of the Malay Archipelago, north and east of Sumatra, Java, Moluccas, the Persian Gulf and Arabian Peninsula. Besides, the oceanic trade, there was considerable coastal trade northwards up to Orrisa and Bengal, southwards to Sri Lanka and westwards to Malabar and Gujarat.

The Indian merchants had been trading the Coromandel textiles into Southeast Asian markets. The textile also came from Gujarat and Bengal but those of Coromandel were generally most desired in the Southeast markets. The colour, prints and design had been adapted to suit the tastes of these markets, and even their names signified the geographical areas to which they were directed. The other exported items from the Coromandel were rice to Acheen and Malacca, and sometimes to Makassar. These items came from the Godavari delta and from Tanjore, the two Coromandel regions where surplus rice was produced. Iron and steel were also exported from the northern and central regions to both island and mainland Southeast Asia. Tobacco, grown in different parts of Coromandel, was exported to Acheen, but the largest qualities were sent to Burma and Siam. Indigo was exported to both island and mainland Southeast Asia, diamonds from the Golconda mines was also exported.

The imported items into the Coromandel took a greater variety. Spices from the Moluccas: nutmeg, cloves and mace were imported. Pepper also came from Acheen, where it was cheap and abundant but again not in great quality for Coromandel as it was generally supplied both by sea and land from Malabar. Tin was main imported commodity and came from all over the Southeast Asian
regions from Acheen, Sumatra, Bantam, Java, Johore, Perak, Kedah, Burma and Siam and even from China. Another bulk commodity that was traded with great profit was elephant. Elephants were bought from Acheen, Bantam, Johore, Perak, Kedah, Tenasserim, Syriam, Pegu and Arakan, where it was available in abundance and cheap. Over the years Coromandel shippers had developed special expertise in the loading, unloading and care of these elephants on the long voyage. It appears that the major market for elephant was Bengal, but the rulers of Golconda, Bijapur and Tanjore emerged in the seventeenth century as the main buyers of these animals. Horses were also imported from Pegu but considered inferior, still then there was regular ships carrying horses. Among the imported items, the most valuable was bullion, gold and silver, mainly in the form of 'specie and gold dust.' Most of these Southeast Asian coins of silver and gold were transported to Coromandel to be coined for larger uses.

Political situation in the mainland
The beginning of the seventeenth century saw a rapid disintegration of Vijayanagar Empire. By the 1640s the Vijayanagar imperial family lived as pensioners of the ruler of Golconda in the old family estate of Anegunda. With the losing authority of a king, a number of nayak became independent rulers, first in Madura and Tanjore, later in Mysore and Ikkeri, and finally in Ginji. 9 The Qutab Shahi of Golconda Empire then expanded from Srikakulam to the east till Masulipatnam, to the south of Coromandel. Further southward expansion brought them up to the Palar River, about twenty miles south of Madras, and gave them control of very important and productive villages in the Kanchipuram, Chingleput and Poonamale district. It also gave them important inland strongholds of Chandragiri, Vellore and Ginji, which brought under their jurisdiction a further extent of sea coast, including the ports of San Thome and made the landlords to the European settlements of Pulicat and Fort St. George.

9 Sewell, Robert, A Forgotten Empire, chapters xvi and xvii.
In the immediate neighbour of Golconda was Bijapur the Adil Shahi Empire, which was not capable like Golconda, but shared many similarities. Bijapur and Golconda divided the coastal territories between themselves, with Palar River as the dividing line. Bijapur took the lands south of the Palar up to the frontiers of Tanjore. This gave Bijapur control over seaports to the south of Saraspatnam, including Devanampatnam, Cuddalore, Porto Novo and Pundicherry.\(^\text{10}\)

In the mid seventeenth century the Bijapur and Golconda were some of the kingdoms where many traders came from far place to trade for its prosperity. The Golconda which inherited the trading system that had existed for centuries had reaped the benefits of the seventeenth century boom in Asian trade in the Indian Ocean. It had strong links with the Safavid Persian Empire because of their Shia religious roots. Persian and Armenian merchants from Persian Gulf ports flocked to its port of Masulipatnam and into the interior parts to trade. This Persian relation strengthened the existing strong trade ties with Southeast Asia, western India, Bengal and Ceylon.

In 1636, the Mughal Empire Shah Jahan conducted a treaty with Golconda and Bijapur by which the latter accepted the Mughal suzerainty in their respective kingdoms. This made the Golconda attention diverted to the consolidation of her eastern territories. In these territories the rulers followed pragmatic policies of administration by giving into the hands of tributary Rajas on condition of annual payments to the center.\(^\text{11}\) Where as, in Bijapur it did not have such stability from the very beginning. It had to contest with many principalities of \textit{nayaks} rulers of Mysore, Madura, Tanjore and Ramnad. The Bijapur invaders tried to establish tributary relationship with the military chiefs of conquered territories, but these lasted only as long as the Bijapur militia could enforce them. However, the main threat to Bijapur control over its Caranatic came from the Marathas. Shivaji, after

\(^{10}\) Varma, D. C., \textit{History of Bijapur}, chapter vi-viii.

his treaty with Abul Hassan, the Golconda ruler, felt free in 1677 to attack Bijapur. He marched through Cuddappah to Vellore and Ginji, which he also stormed and seized. He appointed his half brother, Santahi, as Governor of Caranatic. In the expansion towards southern region, his brother Ekoji, captured Tanjore and established a Maratha dynasty there, displacing the old ruling family. Shivaji’s brother-in-law, Hariji, became Governor of Ginji. Hariji soon made himself a maharaja and extended effective control of territory from the Palar to the Coleroon Rivers.12

However, both this kingdom did not remain independent for long. Ali II (1657-72) was refused to be recognized as lawful king of Bijapur by Shah Jahan and ordered Aurangzeb to march against Bijapur. But the life of the dynasty was prolonged for a few years by Aurangzeb’s return to the north to fight the battle of succession at Samugarh. Ali II was succeeded by Sikander, the last of the Adil Shahi dynasty. Shivaji was crowned as Chhatrapati at Raigarh in 1674, while in 1681, Aurangzeb moved to the Deccan never to return, Bijapur was annexed on 12 September 1686. Bijapur as an independent kingdom thus ceased to exist. In Golconda, on Abdullah’s death (1672) the question of succession arose since the king had no son, and the throne was passed to his son-in-law, Abul Hassan, surnamed Tana Shah. A deep rift occurred between Abul Hassan and Emperor Aurangzeb, who himself arrived in the Deccan in 1682. Events now took a quicker pace. The Mughals occupied the capital in October 1685 and the king had to seek refuge in the Golconda fort. With the fall of Bijapur in September 1686 there was nothing to keep the Mughals back. Golconda was occupied in February 1687 and in September the citadel opened its gates.13 The Qutb Shahi king was sent to Daulatabad as a prisoner and the last Bahmani succession state became a part of the Mughal Empire.

After these two kingdoms exit there left Mughals and Marathas to fight for supremacy in the southern coast. The last decade of seventeenth century was Mughals century so; the Mughal had an upper hand in these conflicts. The Maratha king, Rama Raja could not hold for long from the Mughals offensive, soon he fled in the Deccan and took refuge in the forts of Gingi. There now took place an eight-year period of conflict in the lowlands between Kanchipuram and the Coleroon River. The Mughals laid siege to Ginji but could not reduce this stronghold for many years. The Mughals sieged territory but were constantly harassed by Maratha armies, which, however, could not hold territory. Ginji finally fell to the Mughals in January 1698, and Mughal authority was established up to the frontiers of Tanjore.

Geographical setting of Coromandel
The term Coromandel is derived from Chola ‘mandalam’. The first recorded mention of the word is in an inscription of the 11th century; and the term continued to be in use even during the 16th century. Coromandel, thus was a creation of the medieval period. Geographically, it is difficult to define an accurate boundary for the use of the term due to its changing usage. In fact the question of regional boundary is a complex one, considering that boundary evolves with historical changes and political necessities. It applied to the eastern coast of India and had come to embrace a wider geographical area than that for which it was originally used. For contemporary visitors of the seventeenth century to the area, the Coromandel Coast was the wide expanse of India’s eastern coast from Point Calimere, where the coastline takes a sharp northerly drift, to near the 20°N latitude or the port of Ganjam. It was divided into two parts, the north and the

14 D&CB., 1698, p. 4.
15 S. Jeyaseela Stephen, Coromandel Coast and its Hinterland; Economy: Social and Political System, (A.D. 1500-1600), (Manohar), New Delhi, 1997, p. 23.
south, with the Godavari River being the center line between the two. By the
seventeenth century usage, the term embraced the coastlines of the modern states
of Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh and the southern tip of Orrisa. Contemporary
visitors to the area looked upon the entire coast as forming one trading region,
with common patterns of trade, common characteristic of seafaring and a broadly
similar hinterland. However, it is generally agreed that Coromandel ranges from
the part of the coast lying to the south of the Godavari River and extends as far as
Negapattinam or even to the island of Manar.17

The starting point of Coromandel Coast beginning Masulipatnam, situated
on the lat. 16°9' N, long. 81°10' E, was one of the first ports where European
established factory's and operate their trading business from early seventeenth
century. It is also one of the ports where most travelers describe in their accounts.
Masulipatnam was considered among the richest and busiest ports in the early
seventeenth century because of the establishment of the Qutb Shahi dynasty of
Golconda, where royal court had patronized the trade. It was also due to this
influence that it had political and trade linkage both in the western and eastern
port. In the east, it had direct sailing to Bengal, Arakan, Pegu, Tennaserim, Malya
coast, Acheen and Bantam. In the west were, Mocha, Muskat, Barsa, Bandar
Abbas. It had also trade with Malabar, Ceylon and Maldives and almost all the
western coast of India. The shipping of Masulipatnam were dominated by the
wealthy Golconda royalty and nobility who had their investment in ship building
at Narsapore. Most of the ships were owned by the generals, viceroyys, officials
and governors of the port of Masulipatnam, among them the most powerful and
celebrated was Mohamed Said, or better known as Mir Jumla, who owned ten
ships and traded with Arakan, Pegu, Tenasserim, Persia, Mokha, Maldives and
Macassar.18 Telugu merchants were another prominent group who owned ships
and were active in the trade across the Bay of Bengal and in the coastal trade of

17 S. Arasartnam, Merchants, Companies and Commerce on the Coromandel Coast, 1650-1740, pp. 7-9. see
also Jeyaseela Stephen, Coromandel Coast and its Hinterland, (A.D. 1500-1600), pp. 23-29.
18 E.F.I., 1651-1654, p. 12.
north and south. The Europeans had also traded in substantial manner in this sector, especially, the Dutch, the English, and later the French and the Danish. With the annexation of the kingdom of Golconda by the Mughals in 1688, Masulipatnam lost its political advantages and its special access to the rich market hinterland was also altogether lost.

South of Masulipatnam is the port and town of Petapuli. It was a quite place of trade and traffic, situated close to a cluster of weaving villages nearby. From the end of the seventeenth century the port was called Nizampatnam. When Streynsham Master visited this port in 1677, it was not that prosperous town, he saw that "The towne is much decayed, many houses were empty, ruined and forsaken." 19 He also observed several ships of 50 to 100 tons were in the river. But Bowrey who visited a little earlier describe it as "a very pleasant and healthy place, and very well populated by the Gentues, of whom many are very wealthy. The English and Dutch have a factory in the towne, but very few Factors reside here, not above 2 or 3 who provide goods according to order from the Governor of Fort St. George or Chief of Metchlipatam. Very considerable quantities of these following commodities are here wrought and sold to Foreign Merchants vizt. Longcloth, Murrees, Salampores, Lungees, Painted Callicos of divers sorts, salt peter, iron, steele which is brought downs from the high land over this place which is called Montapolee." 20 It was a port with a considerable country trade, besides providing goods for export for the oceanic trade.

South of Petapuli is the port of Kistnapatnam, it was also the chief port for the inland district administrative and market town of Nellore and was situated on the left bank of the Vuptheru river. About fifteen miles south of Kistnapatnam is the port of 'Arumugam or Armagaon' as described by the European travelers, also situated on a river, and a port of some significance in the seventeenth century. The advantage of Armagoan was the good anchorage for ships near the entrance of the

river where large European ships used to anchor regularly. It was an important place for the export of textiles which were made in neighboring inland villages. The English had an early settlement at Armagoan in 1626; it didn’t help much due to constant rivalry with the Dutch whose factory was situated in nearby at Pulicat.21

About forty miles south of Armagoan was the port of Pulicat on lat 13°26' N, and long. 80°20' E. It had no natural harbour as the coast was shallow with a dangerous reef offshore, where the large ships were instructed to avoid in a possible way. Bowrey’s description was not very satisfactory: “theirs is a more safe and commodious place for landeinge and dischargeinge Goods, having a very good river that cometh close to the towne side, but the barre is not very good, noe better then for boats of 20, 30, or 40, tunns, all this coast indeed wantinge nothinge but some good harbours for shippinge.”22 Pulicat was an important port of Indian shipping dating back well before the seventeenth century, featuring prominently in the trade to South East Asia. Duarte Barbosa who visited Coromandel Coast in the early sixteenth century wrote highly on the port town of Pulicat: “It has a very fair sea-heaven wither resort ships of the Moors in great numbers conveying goods of diver’s kinds.”23 Its hinterland had several villages engaged in handloom manufacture, and Pulicat was the port of outlet for these goods. When the Dutch secured considerable rights and privileges from the Golconda rulers, they were able to dominate the trade in the region. They erected a fort called Fort Geldria at Pulicat and later designated as Chief Factory for the Coromandel Coast where three factory, Petapuli, Masulipatnam and Tirupaliyur were subordinated to it.24 There were villages all around Pulicat, some of which were ceded to the Dutch. They brought these entire villages together and developed them into a substantial port-town. Under the Dutch, Pulicat was drawn into the Dutch-Asian trading

21 E.F.I., 1624-1626, p. 128.
22 Sir, Temple. R. C (ed), A Geographical Account of Countries Round the Bay of Bengal, 1669 to 1679, by Thomas Bowrey, p. 53.
24 Om Prakesh, (ed), The Dutch Factories in India, 1617-1623, pp. 6-7.
system and established close shipping links with important centers of trade such as Malacca, Ceylon, Batavia and Malabar.

About twenty-five miles south of Pulicat is Fort St. George or Madras, situated on lat. 13°5' N, long, 80°18' E. Fort St. George was founded when the English East India Company were desperate to escape from the difficulties like famine, disturbance from local rulers as well as the contending behaviour of the Dutch. First they came to Masulipatnam in 1611 and established a factory but had to abandon because they were not satisfied in their procurement of goods. In 1626, they had founded a factory at Armagon about forty miles north of Pulicat near the Dutch Company’s headquarters on the Coromandel Coast, but it did not help much because the Dutch threatened the weaving caste with reprisals if they dealt with the English.25 The English return again at Masulipatnam in 1632 but it doesn’t make any help as Masulipatnam witness one of the worst famine.26 The English begin to realize to shift permanently to further south. While searching for a better place the English received invitation from Damarla Venkatappa the powerful nayak whose rule stretching from Pulicat to San Thome, and show the place called Madraspatnam, the English were very satisfied and agreed to establish their fort permanently. Thus, the first stone of Fort St. George was laid on March 1, 1640.

Within a year, the settlement at Madras had grown to seventy or eighty houses to entice the nearby inhabitants. Proclamation was made “that for the terme of thirty years only noe custome of things to be eaten, dranke, or worn should be taken of any of the town dwellers.”27 Fort St. George had been established within a short period of time right after the downfall of the great Hindu Vijaynagar Empire. In the mid-1640s, the Muslim powers of Bijapur in the west and Golconda in the east conquered and divided the Vijaynagar Empire. In 1646 Golconda took control north of Madraspatam, later Tanjore and Madurai acknowledged the suzerainty of

25 E.F.I., 1624-1626, p. 128.
26 E.F.I., 1630-1633, p. 268.
27 E.F.I., 1637-1641, p. xlii.
Golconda. Gingi fall to Bijapur in 1649. When the disturbance began in the 1640s, the English at Fort St. George were better placed than they would have been at Armagon where the *nayak* is all in the hands of the Moors. 28 This port played a major role for the English shipping and more importantly it served as center of networks for the English commerce in the east. There were regular sailing to the west coast ports of Malabar, to Bombay and Surat and beyond to the Red sea and Persian Gulf ports. In the east it is connected to all major trading ports from Bengal to Burmese port of Arakan, Pegu, Tenasserim, beyond that the most important were Acheen, Bencoolen, Malacca, Junk Ceylon, Kedah, Manila, Macau and Canton.

Four miles south of Fort St. George is the port of San Thome, built by the Portuguese as a fort and town near the village of Mylapore. The port was an open roadstead though the rivulet of Adayar and the backwaters may have provided some facility for small boat traffic. Mylapore was mostly inhabited by the weavers, producing for an export market. When the Portuguese started settling down in Mylapore from 1520s the people of the place felt secure because they could get protection against the pirates who had been constantly harassing the native ships. 29 They further saw in the arrival of the Portuguese the fulfillment of the prophecy made by their ancestors that there would come a time when white people would arrive and give the black man food to eat and clothes to wear and that when the sea approached the house that would be the end of the world. Whether the alleged prophecy came from St. Thomas the Apostle himself or from some ancient people and whether the people of the place believed it or not, it gave an added boost to the morale of the Portuguese who decided to settle down in Mylapur. 30

Once they had established themselves along the Coromandel Coast, one can conjecture that the Portuguese *casados* and fugitive soldiers (who probably took

28 E. F. I., 1642-1645, p. 80.
wives and considered themselves as *casados* as well) opened trading with Bengal and the countries to the east, namely Arakan, Pegu and even Tenasserim (near present day Thailand). Bengal and Coromandel were famous for their cotton clothes of all varieties and grades, while the countries on the eastern side of the bay possessed a climate unfavourable for cotton growing and depended on India to supply them. In return, the *casado* traders from Coromandel could obtain gemstones, silver and spices. Thus, the next logical places for Portuguese settlement were in those areas themselves where they had been doing business, though it is far from certain that all the Portuguese who settled in Bengal had first been in Coromandel. That the Hindu merchants from the same Coromandel region had not completely pre-empted this trade is perhaps explained by the Hindu tendency around 1500 to regard sea voyage as defiling, though there were many exceptions to the rule. At any rate, the *casados* in Coromandel were in the best trading position, and the opening of Bengal to Portuguese residence provided a golden opportunity for those who had not struck permanent roots.\(^{31}\)

In the seventeenth century San Thome no longer enjoyed the prosperity it had enjoyed in the earlier century. First it was attacked and occupied by the Golconda troop's in 1662,\(^ {32}\) and the French again captured it exactly after 11 years. Again from the 30\(^{th}\) July 1672 the force of Golconda attacked, when the siege was prolonged, the fortress was blockaded and attacked both by the combined strength of the Golconda and Dutch until it was starved into capitulation on the 24\(^{th}\) August 1674.\(^ {33}\)

The next important port is Pondicherry situated on lat. 11°56' N, long., 79° 50' E. The French settlement in Pondicherry was founded by Francois Martin in 1674. The Dutch captured this French settlement in 1693, but by the treaty of Byswick (September, 1697) it was restored to the French again. The port had goods markets and manufacturing centers of different kind of textiles in its

---


\(^{32}\) E F I., 1661-1664, p. 146.

hinterland where it sent over to different ports. With the French settlement at Pondicherry attracting the Indian merchants trading in the eastern coast, in some cases French, along with the Indian merchants, operated together. French Company during this period lacked the consistent support of capital, and this prevented French dominance over the trade of Pondicherry. The settlement of Pondicherry, like Madras, absorbed hinterland villages into an economic sphere and began its development as a port-city.

About fifteen miles south of Pondicherry were two port towns, Devanampatnam (also known as Tegenampatnam in most of the contemporary European sources), and Cuddalore, two miles away from it. It was situated at the estuary of the Ponnaiyer River, into which the Paravanar flowed. Cuddalore was a wintering port for the merchant fleet of the area which could shelter inside the river and backwaters in the monsoon seasons. It also many villages in the hinterland which supplied goods like textiles cloth, and there were many rich merchants where it could provided services to the population.

Devanampatnam was two miles to the north of Cuddalore, it was also the capital of the Nayak of Jinji. In 1690 the English bought the old Devanampatnam fort from the dwindle Martha Chief Rama Raja.\(^34\) The English demolished the existing fort and built a new fort as Fort St. David on its place. The merchants had to anchor four miles from the port as the port itself was situated some distance from the shore and goods had to be carried by the boats. The good river network and road access to land markets gave the port a great advantage but later the silting of the river mouth began to cause problem. In spite of this Devanampatnam and Fort St. George continued to grow in the eighteenth century.

About fifteen miles south of Cuddalore is Porto Novo, situated on lat. \(11^\circ 30'\) N, and long. \(79^\circ 45'\) E. It was one of the consistently flourishing port in the Coromandel Coast. The port is known by many names such as Parangi Pettai by

\(^{34}\) D&CB., 1690, pp. 63-65.
Tamils, and Mohamand Bandar during the Bijapur rule and later re-named as Porto Novo by the Portuguese in the sixteenth century. Its strength lies in its coastal trade and the trade with the Eastern Archipelago. It survived the political changes that had taken place in the hinterland because of its pre- eminent position, which convinced succeeding political powers of the wisdom of preserving this port in all its freedom and security. The English and the Dutch Companies had set up factories, which operates to all major ports. The port had a major construction dock that built large and small ships. It also provided to repair the old ships, naval stores, anchors, cordage, and masts. Most of the settlers were from Chulia Muslim trading community where they built an urban metropolis. There was also considerable Hindu community who were part of these settlements.

Going further south another important port to mention is Tranquebar, situated on lat, 11°1' N, long. 79°51' E. This port was ceded to the Danes by the ruler of Tanjore in 1618 where they built a fort called Fort Danesburg. The Danish East India Company’s trade was never substantial as the trading was dominated by the Coromandel merchants, which the Danes acts as facilitated to the merchant shippings by giving protection. Most of the trading routes were in the eastern coast of the Malay Archipelago. Alexander Hamilton who visited this port by the end of the seventeenth century described it as having a strong fort, ‘the sea washing one half of its walls,’ but he saw a very different pictures that the Danes colony was miserably poor and that in 1684, the Danes were ‘so distress with poverty’, that they pawned three bastions of their Fort to the Dutch for money to buy Provisions. Alluding to a later period, he proceeds to say “they drive an inconsiderable trade either to or from Europe or in India, for what they have to live by this the hire that they freight their ships for to Atcheen, Malacca and Johore, and sometimes, but rarely to Persia, by which they keep up the name of a Company.”

About seven miles south of Tranquebar is Karikal. In the sixteenth century it was well flourishing port. Barbosa who visited in early sixteenth century

---

describes that, "great towns of the Heathen and many others with havens on the sea where dwell many moors, native of the land. Its navigation is carried on in certain small craft which they call Champanes in which the moors come to trade there, and carry thither the goods of Cambaya." Certainly not in the seventeenth century, as it was now reduced in importance in the Coromandel Coast. This port town was situated at the mouth of a river, and to its rear ran several branches of the Kaveri, linked up by ancient irrigation channels. Karikal town is on the bank of Arasalar, about a mile inland. The port was an open roadstead. The rivers are barred at the mouths and were navigable only at high water in small flat-bottomed country vessels, but at that time the river on which the port was located was navigable by ships up to 500 tons. It was famous for the export of paddy and rice to Kaveri delta, which was shipped along the coast and to Malabar and Ceylon. It also exported textiles and sea goods.

The last important port downwards to the southern coast is Nagapatnam, situated on lat. 10° 46' N, and long. 79° 50' E. It was for centuries a prominent port of South India. Its major strength being the trade across the Bay of Bengal to South East Asia and beyond. The Portuguese who came in early sixteenth century settled and nurtured this port for many years. In some other ways, Nagapatnam was spontaneously created and nurtured by the casado element in Portuguese Asia. Despite its non-official character, Nagapattinam was one of the most successful centers of Portuguese private trade in the late sixteenth and early half of seventeenth century. In the early 1630s, Conde de Linhares the Viceroy of Goa, repeatedly attempted to persuade the settlers at Nagapatnam to fortify their settlement. His intension was largely to protect them against the Dutch and also from the nayak of Tanjavur. The settlers refused as once Goa acquired a foothold it would not be long before a customs house would be set up in the name of the Iberian Crown. The Viceroy’s warning came true when V.O.Cs under the hand of

belligerent Anthonio Van Diemen planned to hold the Portuguese settlement of Coromandel to ransom. The Dutch demand 50,000 *patacas* (gold coins) in ransom, and landed a force of six hundred men on shore. After prolonged bargaining, the ransom was reduced to a quarter from their previous demand. However, before this money could be gathered, the *nayak* of Tanjavar entered the town from the landside and began skirmish with the Dutch. In the ensuring confusion the Dutch retreated to their ships. Ultimately, the *nayak* handed over the port to the Portuguese again.\(^{37}\) The matter did not end here for the Portuguese settlers at Nagapatnam, as the Dutch were still prowling. Hence to end the Nagapatnam nuisance once for all and for the prosperity of the VOC, a proposal to attack in 1657 was sent to the Council at Batavia. This proposal was turned down but in the following year this decision was considered again. To chalk out their plan a Dutch Squadron arrived off Nagapatnam on 20\(^{th}\) July 1658, and the Portuguese surrendered three days later after a casual fight.\(^{38}\)

The port of Nagapatnam was an open roadstead. The surf was high and broke on the bar formed by the Kadavaiyar River, which flowed into the sea at this point and had a constantly shifting bar. Large ships anchored well out into the sea, and loading and unloading were done by small boats. During the north-east monsoon it was dangerous for the ships to be anchored and usually stay in the open sea. The town was situated to the north of the fort at the mouth of another small river which could take in small boats. Under the Dutch the port handled substantial Dutch trade in textiles, rice and other country produce, and the import of the South East Asian goods.

**Literary review**

It is necessary to review some of the important works which are related to the subject of the theme. One of the earliest works which dealt with the English East


\(^{38}\) E. F. I., 1655-1660, p. 176.
India Companies was, *The English East India Company: The Study of a Early Joint Stock Company*, 1600-1640, (London, 1965) written by K. N. Chaudhuri. He was one of the few pioneers who deal purely on the matters of the English Company in India beginning with the early voyage around the globe. The author attempt to forecast the market trends and its long-term policy in regards to patterns of trade, organization at home, and the trade settlements in Asia. Chaudhuri also point out the impressive status which the East India Company economic gained in national economic life was achieved only with considerable strain and admit many difficulties. Some of the important which he analysis were the disturbing effects of the Cockayne projects, the commercial depression of 1621, the reappearance of the plague in London in 1621, the upheavals in the European currency systems in the early seventeenth century and the accompany maladjustment in English monetary structure, and the outbreaks of wars on the continent. It is a very important book on the evolution of the East India Company.

With the same author which is more detail in the English East India Company is *The Trading world of Asia and the English East India Company*, 1660-1760, (Cambridge, 1978). Chaudhuri gave a detailed and definite account of the trading operation of the English East India Company from 1660 to till 1760. He undertook a complete quantitative analysis of its activities and to build up value of trade, prices of goods, and fluctuations in currency values prices of gold and silver, transport cost and many other variables. The author trace the degree of relationships between different variables and the result of these finding shows that only half of the annual fluctuations in the value of the company’s export and two thirds of those in the volume of imports can be attributed to the influence of the systematic decision variables for a selected period in the eighteenth century. Chaudhuri works are greatly based from the consultations and correspondence from the English records. On the whole, the most important on this book was on the organization of the Indian textile industry. He correctly emphasis on the factors governing the changes in the geographical distribution of the textile
industry and the reason why technical change did not take place in the face of a continuously growing world demand for its output are perfectly placed in detail.

The third book Chaudhuri wrote is *Trade and Civilization in the Indian Ocean, and An Economic History from the Rise of Islam to 1750*, (Cambridge, 1985). It is a bit different from his earlier publication and more efforts in terms of the wide geographical area covered and the time extend. Chaudhuri takes the Indian Ocean and the extensive geographical region around it as a unit and covers a whole millennium, which is from the rise of Islam in the seventh century to the middle of the eighteenth century. Chaudhuri’s outstanding contribution is on the changes in the structure and organization of both maritime as well as overland trade in Asia over a very long period. The author divided into two main sections. In the first section he looks towards the evolution of the Asian trade and its increasing unification with Islam and the Arab merchants. Further widening of the trade network and greater participation was introduced by the Venetian and Genoese merchants in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. The increase in the export-oriented trade and specialized production continued in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries since the English, Dutch, and the Portuguese which linked the main distribution areas to London and Amsterdam. The second section is mainly concerned with navigation and changes in techniques through discoveries, development of various methods of ship-building, growth and decline of urban centers, caravan trade, markets and merchants. Caravan trade provided the necessary supplementary impetus to the sea-borne trade throughout this period.

K. N. Chaudhuri works on the English East India Company gives many enlighten but disappoint on the development in the Coromandel Coast. Though, he mentions Coromandel but only at randomly, which didn’t complete the picture of English activities in Coromandel Coast. His efficiency on the English East India Company was noteworthy, but failed to explain the inner logic behind many incidents in Coromandel Coast for which one has to look elsewhere.
The significant general works, which brought more information on the English activities in Coromandel Coast, is *European Commercial Enterprise in Pre-Colonial India: The New Cambridge History of India*, (Cambridge, 1998) written by Om Prakash. The author traces the fortunes of the European trading companies in India over a period of three centuries. Because of its very nature, the study of long-distance commercial enterprise in South Asia is placed in the larger context of the Indian-ocean trade. What is particularly interesting is the argument that in the face of Portuguese competition, Indian merchants evolved successfully in the Bay of Bengal is an alternative network of trade, which is an anti-Portuguese character. This book emphasis more on the political and economic dimension of trade conduct by the Europeans in India. The author brought on the very nature of merchandise carried to Europe, the absence of coercion in their relationship with Indian rulers, and the establishment of factories. On the English East India Company, Prakash finds that from 1740s, there was growing supremacy of the English Company’s, which ultimately played an important role in the eastward trade with China and Malaya.

Important studies relating to the English Company from the Portuguese history in India is the book *Improvising Empire: Portuguese Trade and Settlement in the Bay of Bengal, 1500-1700*, (Delhi, 1990), written by Sanjay Subrahmanyam. Subrahmanyam opened a new range of research in several important ways. His book draws the Bay of Bengal as a distinct and separate sub-region. The author studied various port cities in the Bay of Bengal, from which Portuguese traders operated during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The important Portuguese settlement like, Masulipatnam, Pulicat, San Thome, Porto Novo, Nagapatnam and Malacca, together with their associated trade networks, are each described and analyzed in turn. The relationships between the *Estado da India* with the Portuguese private traders who were settlers in different ports, local Asian rulers, and the Dutch, are also examined, and an informed general picture of Portuguese activity in the region is constructed. The second book wrote by Subrahmanyam

$TH-16695$
that is worth mentioning is *The Political Economy of Commerce: Southern India, 1500-1650*, (Cambridge, 1990). Subrahmanyam studies the overland trade, coastal trade and overseas trade and in respect to challenges from the outside. He deals more on the basis of the south Indian experiences; the question of the use of violence’s in age of contained conflict, the question of the relationship between Asian traders and the political structures of Asia.

In the study of Coromandel Coast Sinnappah Arasartnam brought closer on the theme of the subject. In his book *Merchants, Companies and Commerce on the Coromandel Coast, 1650-1740*, (Delhi, 1986), he focus on the east coast as distinct micro-region within the subcontinent and makes the major assumption that it is both possible and necessary to study the Coromandel region as a separate and major entity. He delineates its geographical and economic boundaries, studies its topography and climate, and identifies its ports and trading outlets. The author describes about the formation of the local joint stock companies of Coromandel merchants that has seen in them an instance of the attempted transfer of a basically European commercial institution into the Asian trading world. He believes that Coromandel’s merchants successfully competed with the Europeans in Asian markets, at least where force was not used to keep them out. He also argues that in the absence of evidence of expanding demand for textiles and spices growing regions of Southeast Asia islands, it must be assumed that the growth of European trade in textiles and spices was at the cost of the existing Asian carried trade. Asian merchants, especially those from Gujarat and Coromandel sought out alternating markets where their advantage in low overhead cost would be selling. But in the second half of the seventeenth century, private European traders had begun to compete in these markets. Arasaratnam brings new evidence of the continuing presence of Hindu shipping into the eighteenth century but the size of these ships and value of the cargoes were partly left out. Arasaratnam’s strength lies in his deep knowledge of southern Coromandel Coast in the eighteenth century.
Arasaratnam's in different book *Maritime India in the Seventeenth century*, (Delhi, 1994), devoted to the core maritime regions with specific attributes that marked them from the hinterland. These regions were Gujarat, Malabar, Coromandel and Bengal all of which fitted into and services at distinct trading systems both in their long-distance economic linkages and in their shorter coastal traffic route. He gives a detailed account of the trade of each in the specified period, which brings us very satisfactorily up to date with the current state of knowledge. The author picks up major general themes relating to the maritime region as a whole, the identity and functions of merchants, and the part played by states. He brings together the current views of the role of merchants and the state in seaborne commerce and attempts a synthesized analysis of these two major players in the commercial economy of maritime trade.

Another book which sought to represent Coromandel as a separate region is *The Trading World of the Tamil Merchant*, (Chennai, 1999), written by Kanakalatha Mukund. It is a well researched and documented book, where the author examines the analytical origins of the theory of merchant capitalism, and also outlines the evolution of trade and institutions in the Tamil country till the medieval period. He also argue the functioning of merchants and trade in the period prior to the establishment of Madras and the early forms of colonial administration. The important part of this book deals with the full bloom of merchant's capitalism in the Coromandel in the context of the interaction of the local merchants with the European companies, where textiles played a major part of trade.

**The nature and use of primary sources materials**

The primary sources employed in this study are primarily analytical and descriptive. The sources used are both published and unpublished available from archives and libraries. The primary sources which I used were mostly from the 'Records of Fort St. George.' This is again divided into five categories, (a) 'Diary
and Consultation Book', (b)'Letters from Fort St. George', (c) 'Letters to St. George', (d) 'Despatches ‘from’ England', and (e) 'Despatches ‘to’ England'. The most important from these records are 'Diary and Consultation Book', these records begin from 1672 to till 1750, from 1672 to 1678 it combined into one book, from 1678 to 1679, 1679 to 1680, and 1680 to 1681 these three books combined into one book each, after these the records were maintaining on yearly basis so the sources were available to till 1750. The proceeding of the Madras Council called Consultations furnishes a comprehensive account of the varied official transactions including the views of the members and their decisions and recorded everyday what’s happening in Madras and surrounding region. It is one of the vital primary sources to reconstruct the history of the past. The records of 'Letters to Fort St. George' were started marinating from 1681 onwards, these records were maintain not on the yearly basics. It complied four or five years into one volume. The records of 'Letters from Fort St. George' were started keeping on the end of the seventeenth century, the date of the records were available from 1693 onwards to till 1740. These records are also same with the Letters, as it complied four or five years into one volume.

Another record that is equally important was ‘Despatches from England,’ which is beginning from 1680 onwards. This record was also same like the others maintain not on the yearly basic. 'Despatches from London to Madras', contain instructions of the Board of Directors to the Madras Council and their letters did or proposed to do. ‘Despatches to England,’ which didn’t maintain on yearly basis, but equally important as the Madras Council dispatch their proceeding. For the early period of our study we rely mainly on the published *The English Factories in India* edited by William Foster *The English Factories in India* (New Series) edited by Charles Fawcett. Besides, the account of several travelers substantiated these voluminous records of Fort St. George Government.
Chapterisation
The first chapter is “Growth and Expansion of Commercial Ports in Coromandel.” This chapter is about the English Company dealing on the renting of the ports and their expansion of trading zones with the three local rulers, firstly with the dwindling Vijayanagar Empire to till 1650, secondly with the Golconda till annexation by the Mughal’s in 1687. The setting up of factory in the coast became one of the major concerns for the English Company as they had to dispose their goods and procure the local products especially the textiles, which can’t be done in a single year where they have to wait the long season.

The second chapter is “Role of Chief Merchants and their Trading Activities under the English East India Company.” In this chapter the role of chief merchants are studied in details. The English were new in the coast, with no knowledge of the language and business method the procurement of commodities in the hinterland will be very difficult without the help of local merchants. Thus, the English Company appoint one local influential merchant who have social status and respect from the local community and most of the time the English rely on them which procuring and disposing their goods.

The third chapter is “The Free Merchants of and their Commercial Activities.” There were many merchants recorded as free merchants in Madras. They were from different nations but majority of them were from British itself. Most of these merchants did trade along with the merchants mostly in the Southeast Asia. They were very rich and influential in the Madras Council where sometimes there decision was taken as final approval. Some of them were like John Affleck, Charles Metcalf, Daniel Chardin etc. Most of them owned ships and trade mostly in the spices islands. The free merchants were mention in the settler’s lists as ‘constants as well as not constant inhabitants.’ The ‘constants inhabitants’ were living with families for long years but where as in the ‘not constants inhabitants’ most of them were seafaring working as captain or various
professions in the ships or went at different ports for the purpose of trading and return in next years.

The fourth chapter is 'Portuguese Assistance to the English East India Company.' Portuguese were a century ahead in the maritime trade and they have settled in Coromandel from sixteen century. With the coming of other European nations the Portuguese were not able to hold their power soon they were taken over by the Dutch Company. The impact reached to almost all over their empire, likewise in Coromandel they were soon absorb by the more powerful English Company where they establish their fort at Madras in 1640. The Portuguese were fully utilized by the English in many ways.

The fifth chapter is 'Coromandel Country Trade with Burma.' This chapter is very unique in the sense that the opening up of trade was taken initiative from Madras and not from London Director's. The English Company trade to Burma really increased the custom revenue. The spices island and Southeast Asia were very important but the ship destine to this places were very few and the largest number of ships went to Burma including Arakan, Pegu and Tenneserim when compare to all that goes in the Southeast Asia. In the Home Director letters it keeps mentioning to send the Burmese good but at the same time it didn’t approve to open a factory. The trade to Burma was carried out illicitly by the Governors of Madras without the approval from the Home Director’s, where the Governor of Fort St. George take direct responsibility and authorize under the plan.

The sixth chapter is 'The English East India Company Trade in the East.' In this chapter the English trade from Coromandel Coast to different ports in the Southeast and East Asia were studied, though it’s very difficult to take out exact amount of 'value and volume' of trade but to understand the reason of all maritime trade in the Southeast and East Asia, it is very necessary to look into it. The English had almost reach all the ports from Araakan, Pegu, Tenasserim, Junk Ceylon, Kedah, Malacca, Johore, Acheen, Padang, Bencoolen, Bantam, Macassar,
Banjarmassim, Sunkadana, Siam, Tongking, Mindanao, Manila, Macao, Canton and Amoy. The commodities of export and import trade to these various ports were also looked into it. The period of recession in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth century and the merge of two rival companies into one as 'United Company of Merchants of England trading to the East Indies,' in 1708 is very important as there was vigorous investment, almost double after unification to till 1723 except in 1718 when the coast witnessed famine in the time of heavy competition. Madras continued to be the essential port in the eighteenth century, which connects with the various ports of South East Asia. Along with Fort St. George at Madras, Fort St. David also emerge as a growing centers of English trade, they were also equally important centers of trading and shipping.