CHAPTER — III

ASPECTS OF TRADE

AND

URBAN CENTRES
CHAPTER - III

ASPECTS OF TRADE AND URBAN CENTRES

The economy of South Kanara was predominantly agricultural and craft production was its another pillar. It was because of the agrarian surplus that trade started in the agrarian goods like rice and pepper. Different parts of Indian subcontinent specialised in the production of different commodities - both agrarian as well as non-agrarian. Trade emerged with the exchange of these goods. In the context of the Chola state, K. R. Hall argued that even in an agrarian society trade seemed to arise naturally as a result of geographic dispersal of the products of the soil, due to their different requirements of temperature, humidity, soil quality, etc. Only certain areas of Indian subcontinent produced spices, pepper and this necessitated trade to articulate their distribution to non-producing areas. Similarly arecanuts and betel leaves, items seemingly used throughout the subcontinent even in early times were products of a palm tree that required a specific habitat. Thus, according to Hall, although ancient Indian society was essentially agrarian, historical sources present evidence that within this society trade flourished. The arguments of Hall are applicable to the context of South Kanara during the period under study.

In the inscriptions we find reference to the Settis who are mentioned as landlords. Settis also formed one of the important categories of traders in the region. Thus some of the traders emerged from the class of landlords. In ancient India there was the emergence of grahapati traders who were actually the
householders or the owners of land. The surplus production in agrarian goods facilitated these people to involve in trade. Naturally there was interaction with the outside region.

There was the migration of traders from neighbouring regions to South Kanara and they were called *horahinavaru* (outsiders). Some of the traders belonged to the Brahmanical religion and some others belonged to Jainism. They gave donations to the temple in terms of land grants and money donations. Gradually there was a need for the establishment of systematic rules and regulations to facilitate smooth trade of the goods and also to protect their own interests. The traders formed trade guilds which protected their interests and also decided cases of conflict between them.

During this period South Kanara was ruled by Alupa, Hoysala, Vijayanagara and Keladi rulers. The rulers realised the importance of encouraging traders because trade brought considerable revenue to the Government. They also encouraged agriculture which fetched land revenue to the state and agriculture provided the basis for trade in South Kanara. Both kings and traders were responsible for the establishment of urban centres. These urban centres emerged because of politico-administrative factors like headquarters of the rulers, economic factors like trade and religious factors. The kings also encouraged the construction of number of temples and they granted lands to these temples. By this they tried to establish their authority in their territories.

In South Kanara there was the emergence of important urban centres like Mangalore, Buntwal, Barkur, Basrur, Karkala, Mudabidre, Venur, Baindoor,
Gangolli, etc. Some of these centres like Mangalore, Buntwal, Barkur, Basrur, Baindoor and Gangolli were coastal towns, while the centres like Karkal, Mudabidre and Venur were interior towns and were well-known for the existence of Jainism. In all these centres we find the Hindu temples.

**Tolls, Customs and Transit Duties:**

There existed trade transactions between the ghat regions and the low lying plains on the Western coast. The state collected tolls in the strategic places where the goods arrived. The tolls formed an important source of revenue for the state. An inscription of the Alupa king Vijayaditya Maravarman belonging to 9th century A.D. mentions that the king confirmed the tolls due to the city of Pombuccha together with the city of Udayapura. The goods were taxed in the following manner:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Tax</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2 bags of grain</td>
<td>1½ baskets of grain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 malave of cotton</td>
<td>16 pala of cotton</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 load of areca nuts</td>
<td>300 nuts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 load of pepper</td>
<td>16 pala of pepper.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Another Alupa inscription of Vijayaditya belonging to 9th century A.D. mentions that the king confirmed the gift of one half of the tolls to the city of Pombuccha together with the city of Udayapura.4

The state also imposed taxes on shops. An inscription belonging to A.D. 1536 from Koteswara refers to sales or commercial tax collected from shops (angadi in Kannada means shop) amounting to one hundred and thirty six
The studies made in this field revealed that there were taxes on temporary stalls erected in the markets known as *adikasu*. There are also references to sales tax levied on branded cattle. There were taxes on the sale of fish, and on the sale of sheep, horse and bullocks.

The state collected taxes on goods in transit, which entered the cities and towns by both road and waterways. There was also a custom duty levied on the transactions of goods within the state as well as on goods exported from and imported into the state. The volume of trade facilitated the state to impose maximum taxes on trade and traders and extract as much amount as it liked. The tolls collected on the entry of the goods into a region and at the gates of cities varied from place to place. The rate of taxation depended upon the inflow and outflow of goods. The quantum of goods traded determined both the amount of revenue collected and the nature and extent of the trade with which it was linked.

Here one has to make a distinction between the situation before the emergence of Vijayanagara empire and the scenario after the establishment of Vijayanagara empire. It was the establishment of Vijayanagara empire which gave a great boost to the trade since the state took active interest in protecting the interests of traders. The unification of empire under one uniform system made the transit of goods from place to place more easier.

During the Vijayanagara period, the petty coastal principalities were allowed to extract land revenue while the empire concentrated on collection of the customs of ports and tolls on the highways connecting the ports to imperial
city of Vijayanagara. Even in these, the imperial interest was limited to ensuring that the commercial links to the seaboard were not harmed. 7

The sources refer to two types of custom duties: (i) on the movement of goods from one region to the other within the Vijayanagara state, and (ii) on goods which were either exported from or imported into the Vijayanagara state. 8 There were two important methods of collection of transit and custom duties. One method was leasing out the work of collecting the custom duties, and the other was of the state collecting the dues directly through a network of officials. 9 The Basrur inscription belonging to A.D. 1465 refers to senabhova attending the ports to collect the taxes from loaded ships leaving the port of Basrur. 10

The Karkala inscription dated Saka year 1256 mentions the tax collected on items like salt, pepper, ginger, paddy, rice, etc. 11 The copper plate inscription of Tolara belonging to Saka 1358 registers gift of certain tolls made by Mahapradhana Annappa Odeya to Tolahara Sankara Nayaka, who was administering Yelare, in return for which the latter was to build a math attached to the temple of Hattara Narayanadeva at Barkur and feed therein six Brahmans. 12 An inscription dated A.D. 1444 mentions that the Nakharas and Settis of Dharmapattana agreed to pay to the temple of Mahadeva a portion of toll-revenue raised in the village. 13 A copy of the inscription dated Saka year 1371 mentions that 240 katigadyanas was collected as custom duty at Yanavali river region in Mangalore raja. 14

An inscription belonging to A.D. 1606 mentions that due to the
order of Venkatappa Nayaka all the Mahanad Settis who loaded goods by both roads to places east and north and to the interior gave a sasana granting for the Siva services of the math one visa on the stock as follows: “throughout the kingdom ruled by Venkatappa Nayaka above the Ghats, on all local roads, for all animals, at the rate of one visa for each animal, we agree to give as dharma, visa by visa, in all the thanas.”15 The inscription specifies the following thanas: Ikkeri, Sagara, Kumbhasi, Pombucha, Agumbe, Bidirur, Belare, Kalasa and Kiga, etc.16

The Sirur copper plate inscription belonging to A.D. 1610 gives certain interesting details. The inscription states that Keladi Venkatappa Nayaka conferred on Keriya Sankanna Senabhova alias Narana the office of sthalasenabhovike. He was authorised to collect custom duties on agrarian products coming from five simes, namely, Ulanadu, Hemmaranadu, Bidaranadu, Baiduru and Haligere. The inscription mentions the existence of sunkathanes in these five simes.17 A copper plate inscription belonging to A.D.1642 also gives details regarding the custom duties. This was a grant for the Mahattu math built near the Araga pethe of Bhuvanagiridurga by Durga Timmanna. It mentions the freedom from bullock tax as follows: “in the kingdom which we are ruling above the Ghats, in the tanes below Aneyaghata, 10 pack bullocks-except tassels, silk, arecanut, pepper and coco-nut kernels-laden with bamboo baskets, grain, rice, paddy, ragi, salt, jaggery, oil, ghee and such articles, you may from time to time bring, and not selling them outside, store them as a fund for the six darsana.”18

The Siddhapur copper plate inscription belonging to Saka 1692 records
a gift of customs duties on all articles of merchandise passing through the nadu. This gift was made by the Chief, the Mahanadu, Settis, etc. An inscription belonging to Saka 1698 mentions the existence of sunkathane at Kanjodu, Sullia.

The Halasnadu kadata dated A.D. 1752 refers to sunkathanes at Haladi, Kerladi, Biduru, Kolluru, etc. The Sringeri kadatas mention some of the places where there was the collection of custom duties. They mention Hosangadi, Narasipura, Someshwara, Karkala, Mudabidre, Subrahmanya, Kumble, Manjeshwara, Ullala, Kodeyala (Mangalore), Panamburu, Mulike, Hejemadi, Kapu, Kattupadi, Kalyanapura, Barkur, Savada, Gulvadi, Basrur, Talamar, Hemmadi, Nayakanakatte, Bayiruru, Bhatkal, Sirali, Honnavar, Gerasope, Chandavara, Midaje, Maruru, Kolluru, etc.

The above details indicate that the transit and custom duties were important sources of revenue for the state. Some of the prominent merchants and trade guilds were also involved in the collection of custom duties. Sometimes the kings and merchants granted a part of the tax to the temples which served the purpose of obtaining religious glory. The traders did not try to avoid the tax when they knew that the tax collected would go to serve the religious purpose.

Pietro Della Valle, the Italian traveller who visited South Kanara noted details about tolls. He stated that, “Having passed by Banghel we entered into the greater Northern River, in which on the left hand is a place where passage-boats laden with Merchandize pay a Toll to the Ministers of Venkatapa Naieka, to whom the circumjacent Region is subject”. It seems that the Keladi
rulers had appointed certain officials who were in charge of collection of tolls.

The fact that taxes were collected in certain places is also indicated by the study of place names and the traditions related to certain places. There are place names like Sunkadakatte and Ukkudada Katte. There is reference in the tradition about Buntwala sunka.24

The Koti Chennaya paddana mentions about the toll gate.25 It informs us that Dere, the toll-taker, saw Koti and Chennaya from a distance, and came down from his verandah and ran away, but they waited for Dere till his return. They saw him coming from a distance, and started onwards and said: “Who is that going along? Is he a Sanbhog? A son of a Jaina Setti? Is he a Baraga, the son of a Bant?”

“No matter who you are, you must pay the daily toll at Banga’s verandah”, said Dere.

“Why do you ask toll, Dere? Have we loads on our heads, Dere? ...” asked they.

“The toll is for your dagger of steel, which you have on”, said Dere.

Thus the local Chieftains had appointed officials to collect custom dues. The officer in charge of collection of tax as far as possible tried to extract dues from all sections in the society.

South Kanara had fertile agrarian fields which facilitated increased production of crops. This surplus production led to the growth of trade in agrarian products. South Kanara was known for the production of agrarian commodities like rice, coconut, areca nut, cashew nut, pepper and other crops. Industrial or craft products like sugar, jaggery, wooden and metal tools, cloth,
coir, salt, oil, etc. were produced. Some of the craft products, particularly cloth was imported from places like Surat, Bombay and Cuddapah and up ghat regions of Karnataka. The agrarian products may be classified into food products and commercial products. Different varieties of rice, ragi, jowar, vegetables and fruits came under the first category. Sugar-cane, coconut, areca nut, cashew nut, pepper, cardamom and forest products belonged to the second category.  

In South Kanara rice was an important food product. But due to the surplus production and the volume of its trade, it became a commercial product. According to Duarte Barbosa, the varieties of rice that were grown in this region were Girasal, Acal, Quavages and Pachary. White rice was consumed by rich classes and red and black by the poor classes. However we know that in Malabar and Kanara coast red and black rice was consumed both by rich and poor classes. In the Kanara coast white rice was mostly consumed by the brahmans. Thus nature of rice consumption went not through class lines but through caste lines.

There was a growing interest among the rulers to promote agriculture and to increase the production of agrarian commodities. For, they knew that it would bring more revenue to the Government from the agricultural sector. They realised that surplus agricultural products facilitated trade and trade in turn brought revenue to the state. The Nayaks of Keladi encouraged coconut cultivation whenever rice crops failed. A copper plate dated A.D. 1681 from the village Kodladi states that the rice cultivated lands in the places of Padukone and Gangolli incurred nashita (loss) and to overcome the loss, the ruler of Keladi,
Chennammaji encouraged the cultivation of coconut on the grazy sandy lands and on the sea shore in these places. It is important to note that these coastal areas were best suited for coconut cultivation. Similarly other agrarian products like sugar-cane, ginger, chilli, banana and cashew nuts were cultivated and forest products like medicinal plants, cardamom, cinnamom, etc. were available on both sides of Sahyadri. These products brought considerable income to the state. The copper plate inscription of Rani Shankaradevi Ajila belonging to A.D.1720 mentions the cultivation of arecanut. Areca nut was a conspicuous cash crop of South Kanara during this period. In order to get more income from agriculture the state constructed canals and thereby provided irrigational facilities. Increased cultivation of agrarian products helped the state to obtain more tax.

**Trade Centres:**

After the 10th century A.D. Barkur emerged as an important trade centre in coastal Karnataka. Its importance was such that the Western Ghats came to be called *Barakamura Ghatta* (Barkur Ghat). The Barkur Ghat passed through the western boundary of Hoysala empire. It had all conveniences to develop as a centre of trade and commerce with a very deep river touching the town. The easy access to the sea helped Barkur to establish commercial contact with the outside world. Barkur got supplies, both for foreign trade as well as for local consumption, from the upghat regions. It acted as a trans-shipment port and entrepot trade port. Entrepot trade port meant that the port received goods from other trade centres of different directions and the same cargo was exported to other regions. Usually the trade centres of Karnataka depended on the ports on
western coast to export their goods to far away trade centres.

When compared with Udyavar, Barkur was located in a very convenient place and the latter had connections with the upghat region. This communication was possible through the Hosangadi Ghat. During the summer it was not a difficult job to cross the Varahi river. If they wanted to go through Agumbe Ghat there was no need for them to cross the river. Kokkarne and Chara slowly developed as trade centres and these places also could be very easily approached from Barkur. For all these, Udyavar was not so convenient. Udyavar had to face the problem of floods and this adversely affected the transport and communication network particularly during the monsoon. Barkur was situated in an elevated place and could not be visited by floods. Thus the strategic geographical location of Barkur cannot be ignored in its emergence as a political and trading centre during the Alupa Period. The port of Barkur was very close to the town. This could help not only trade and commerce but also political contacts and defence. Basrur and Hattiyangadi could be reached either by water or land route. By the 12th century Udyavar lost its commercial importance. Thus the Alupas in 12th century shifted their capital from Udyavar to Barkur.32

Barkur, Basrur and Mangalore were the major trade centres. As early as 10th century there existed trade in Barkur. *Jamiu-T-Tawarikh* of Rashid-u-Din mentioned Fakanur as one of the cities on the Western coast. Fakanur is identified as Barkur. From this it may not be wrong to say that Barkur was a flourishing town in the tenth century and it was well known to the Muslim traders.33 During the Vijayanagara times there was a tremendous increase in the
commercial activity at Barkur. The port and the provincial capital was visited by foreign ships and ships from Malabar and they took cargoes of husked rice. Great stores of it were taken to Ormuz, Aden, Cannanore and Calicut and bartered for copper, coconut and molasses. Pepper was also exported from here. Merchants were engaged not only in export of articles produced locally, but also in the re-export of commodities which were imported from Ceylon and other countries. Articles like aloes and tabashir were also exported. 34

Ibn Batuta who visited India during the early part of 14th century has left his account about trade in Barkur. He described Fakanur (Barkur) as a large town on an inlet and here he found a large quantity of sugar-canes which were unexcelled in the rest of India. The Chief of the Muslim community at Fakanur was called Basadaw. He possessed about thirty warships, commanded by a Muslim called Lula, who was an evildoer and a pirate and a robber of merchants. Ibn Batuta said: “When we anchored, the Sultan sent his son to us to stay on board the ship as a hostage. We went on shore to visit him and he treated us with utmost hospitality for three nights, as a mark of respect for the Sultan of India and also from a desire to make some profit by trading with the personnel of our vessels. It is a custom of theirs that every ship that passes by a town must needs anchor at it and give a present to the ruler. 35 This they call the “right of bandar”. If anyone omits to do this, they sail out in pursuit of him, bring him into the port by force, double the tax on him, and prevent him proceeding on his journey as they wish.” 36 Batuta also mentioned about the existence of sea pirates near Barkur. 37 The above description shows that the state took active interest in trade
in Barkur and by 14th century Barkur had emerged as an important port town.

A copper plate inscription of A.D. 1390 discovered in Humcha Jain math mentions the presence of outside traders in South Kanara. It states that when Ajasahu, son of Bhojasahu came to Barkur as a trader, he gave a gift probably to Parshwanatha basadi of Mudukeri. But Sahu was not a surname found in coastal Karnataka. In this inscription there is also reference to one Agarwal family. We know that Agarwal was not a surname that could be associated with South Kanara and it could be from North India. This inscription gives a clue to the sea route of Ajasahu. He started his sea voyage from Malaya, passed through Kambhuja, crossed over the islands and finally landed in the coastal town of Barkur. He settled there after his long sea voyage. Further, the inscription enables us to know that two local people, Mahamuda and Marakala took interest in the sea voyage.

Barkur during the course of time began to have connections with the upghat regions. Santara connections during 11th century A.D. and Tolaha activities here during 12th century A.D. contributed to the development of commercial contact with upghat regions. Expansion of Hoysala authority to Barkur and conversion of Barkur into a provincial capital of Vijayanagara empire went a long way in the growth of commercial contact with the upghat regions. The guilds which regulated the market to some extent in Barkur sent the goods imported from other countries to upghat regions and brought the goods of upghat regions to Barkur. They carried on their business in various commodities. Inscriptional evidences from Barkur province show that there was import of bulls
of good variety from above the ghats. From this fact we may say that bullocks were imported into the coastal town of Basrur and other areas in South Kanara from above the Western Ghats. These bullocks were of good quality and were used in the transport of goods, that is, for pulling the bullock carts, in extracting sugar-cane juice and oil in the traditional mills, and also in ploughing the fields. This trade continued for a long period in the history of the region.

The foreign traders who visited Mangalore gave a description of the trade in Mangalore. Ibn Batuta referred to Mangalore as Manjarur. According to him Mangalore was a large town on the inlet called ad-Dumb, which was the largest inlet on the Malabar coast. This town was visited by merchants from Fars and Yemen and they took pepper and ginger in large quantity. The Sultan of Mangalore was Rama Daw. Batuta further stated that there was a colony of about four thousand Muslims in Mangalore. They lived in a suburb alongside the town. Conflicts frequently broke out between Muslims and the townspeople. But the Sultan made peace between them because he needed merchants. Batuta observed that they refused to land until the Sultan sent his son. When they went to meet the Sultan they were treated with great consideration. According to Duarte Barbosa in Mangalore there existed both Muslims and Hindus. Many ships took from Mangalore black rice which was better than the white one. The rice was taken to Malabar and it was quite cheap in Mangalore. Further Barbosa said that rice was taken in cargoes of Muslims to Aden. He stated that pepper available in Mangalore was of a higher quality. The above references to Mangalore suggest that by 14th – 15th centuries Mangalore had emerged as an important trade centre.
where rice and pepper were available. This predominant position of Mangalore continued in the later period also.

**Traders and Trade Network:**

The traders participated in both inland and sea trade. This led to contact with outside regions. Inscriptions in other districts of Karnataka mention about the traders of South Kanara. An inscription belonging to A.D.1412 (belonging to Sorab) mentions the lord of ships (*navigada prabhu*), Mangaluru Naga Gauda's son Setti Gauda. This indicates the trade contact between the coastal region and an inland town above the ghats. Besides it also bears testimony to the coastal and overseas trade during the period, for Setti Gauda is referred to as lord of ships and ships were required only for sea trade.

A Hoysala inscription gives interesting detail about the existence of traders of South Kanara in other regions. The inscription belonging to A.D.1278 while mentioning about the various imposts paid to the Turukas mentions that Tulu-Maleyalas pay 32 ga and 5 pa. The Mudubidre inscription of Devaraya II (dateless) alludes to the grant of one kolaga of paddy on every bullock load coming into the town of Basrur.

A Vijayanagara inscription discovered in Belur and dated Saka year 1304 is of great interest to us. The significance of the inscription lies in the fact that it mentions the varieties of goods that were found in the trade of South Kanara and also there is reference to the different trade guilds of Karnataka and the relations between these trade guilds. The relevant part of the inscription runs thus:

"Rejoicing in the protection of Harihara the farmers and the merchants resolved to pay
him certain taxes. In the Saka year 1304 the five hundred virasasanas of the Jambudvipa, situated on the southern direction of the Bharatakhanda in the world...; protectors of the righteous customs of the salumule-bananju sect; the birth place of ubhayananaadesis of the celebrated capitals of emperors and kings; the fan-palm of their warehouse (sitalamalige); worshippers of the divine and illustrious lotus feet of the gods Ganesvara and Gavaresvara; all the halavu, the nakhara-parivara, mummuri-danda, all the receivers of dues and the 300 Billa dependants of their guard (kalghahu), together with holiyajanguli of Vijayanagari, Hastinavati, Dorasamudra, Gutti, Penugundi, Adavani, Udayagiri, Chandragiri, Muluvayi, Kachi, Padevidu, Chandurangapattana, Mangaluru, Barakuru, Honnovura, Chandhavura, Araga, Chandragutti, Annigere, Huligere, Nidugallu, Chimatanakallu, Tariyakallu and such other towns of established fairs-..., Maddeya-dannayaka being the officer of Superintendence of the customs of our Fifty-six countries,- we confer upon him the mayoralty of the earth, and grant him one svamya...”.

The Keladi inscriptions give details about the goods that were traded in South Kanara. An inscription belonging to A.D.1641 from Tirthahalli, mentions the freedom from the bullock tax given by Virabhadra Nayaka for the Mahattu math built by Durga Timmanna. The inscription mentions the following: “in the kingdom that we are ruling, in the tanes above the ghats, for the matha, 5 bullocks,-except tassels, silk, arecanut, pepper, cocoanut kernels and wood,-laden with bamboo baskets, grain, rice, paddy, ragi, salt, jaggory, oil, ghee and other such articles.” Another inscription dated A.D.1673 refers to a grant given by Chennammaji for the Mahattu math of Jeni on the road from Bidarur to Kumbasi. This record states the following: “Freedom from tolls on 5 bullocks for the above matha - except arecanut, pepper, tassels, silk, cocoa-nut kernels, wood and such
other goods for gain-laden with rice, paddy, ragi, oil, ghee, fruit, jaggory, rattan and such articles, on registering the colour and age of the bullocks in the customs thanes below the Ghats in the Ikkeri-hobli".\(^5\)

Another inscription belonging to A.D.1711 mentions a grant for the Mahattu math by Basavappa Nayaka as follows: "We remit the toll on 25 bullocks - except arecanut, pepper, tassels, silk, wood and other goods for gain-laden with rice, paddy, ragi, salt, acid, rattan, grain, oil, ghi, pulse, jaggory, fruit, cutch, cocoa-nut kernels, cloths, iron, dates, tobacco, asafoetida, cumin seed, mustard, fenugreek, onion, garlic turmeric, ginger and other such articles- on the colour and ages of bullocks being registered in the customs thanes in Durga, Ikkeri and the hobalis below the Ghats".\(^5\) Thus these inscriptions give a list of items that were traded between South Kanara and the ghat region.\(^5\) However, they do not tell anything about the places of production, value, quantity and nature of exchange of these goods.

In the Chola domain, nagaram commercial centres provided the setting for market-oriented exchange of goods and services. Such centres had streets of permanent shops where exchanges were continuously transacted.\(^5\) In the case of South Kanara too we come across the angadi and other commercial terms. Two inscriptions dated Saka 1371 mention nakhara of Baindur with the existence of angadi.\(^5\) It is evident from these inscriptions that Baindur was a commercial centre during the fourteenth century itself.

Kenneth R. Hall has made a study of the relations between the local market and the itinerant trade in the context of the Chola period. He says that the
nagaram towns functioned as points of redistribution where certain commodities of foreign origin were made available for the local nādu's consumption. The local economic networks in turn were serviced by itinerant trade groups who specialised in exotic commodities ranging from gems to elephants. The itinerants depended upon an assortment of relationships beyond the coastal ports to support their commercial activities. Their local presence may be characterised as of three types: (i) itinerant merchants inhabited a specified and permanent quarter of a commercial centre; (ii) itinerant merchants occasionally visited a community and were thus rightfully described as part-time residents; (iii) itinerant merchant organisations incorporated local merchants into their membership as the local merchant became the itinerant organisation's local trade representative.  

In South Kanara too one can identify the relations between the local trader and the itinerant trader. There are references in the inscriptions to the itinerant traders making grants to the temple and while doing so they took the consent of local trade guilds and other important assemblies of the locality. In South Kanara some of the traders belonged to Hinduism. Among them the Gowda Sarasvats were prominent. They had their contacts with Goa. There existed historical and cultural relations between South Kanara and Goa. In both places similar traditions regarding the establishment of brahman settlements by Parashurama exist. The Kadambas of Goa were a branch of the Kadambas of Karnataka. The Sarasvat traders of Goa had trade contacts with South Kanara. When the Portuguese came to Goa in the 16th century and later pursued the policy of religious conversion, some of the Sarasvats migrated to South Kanara and
settled in this region permanently. They invested their money in land and other commercial enterprises in South Kanara and made land and money grants to the temples. For instance, the Gangolli inscription belonging to A.D.1662 mentions that Bhadrappa Nayaka endowed *umbali* land in the Gangolli village of Muguvina *sime* to Narayana Mallya who hailed from the Gove *rajya* in Jayavarni *grama*. Narayana Mallya installed Venkataramana deity in the Gangolli village and the temple is called Mallera *matha*. This helped them to gain popularity among the local populace and they were well versed in the local language, namely, Kannada and they have left records in Kannada as found in the Goa Archives and the Mhamai House records.

The studies conducted by James Heitzman on South India have shown that in the Tamil region the expansion of local temples occurred alongside the growth of commercial networks focussed on the mercantile communities (*nagaram*) scattered amid the numerous agrarian zones. The early *nagaram* were the heart of small scale exchange networks in some basic commodities, manufactured articles and luxury goods, which penetrated even to the village level. Temple rituals demanded a wide assortment of food stuffs and precious goods, many of which required the services of merchants for procurement and artisans or specialised workers for fabrication into elaborate offerings and cult objects. Specialists in commerce and manufacturing lived alongside the Brahman ritual specialists, the cultivating groups and the agricultural labourers congregated in large number around the lands of the religious institutions. As in the Tamil region and other parts of South India, in South Kanara too the traders were
required to render certain services. They contributed to the emergence of towns in different localities through the exchange of agrarian and craft products. They also gave land grants and administered them. Thus trade was the basic prerequisite for urbanisation in certain areas. Scholars like Champakalakshmi have tried to highlight the role of royal power in the process of urbanisation, particularly in the administrative centres. But the royalty was not in a position to extend this process to the different parts of the empire and that too the peripheral regions. This work was left to the mercantile and agricultural communities of the locality. In this area also we find close collaboration between the agrarian and trading communities of South Kanara. Because both these communities produced commodities which were sold in the local markets. Similarly the role played by the traders of South Kanara in the emergence of temple-based or religion-based urban centres was considerable. Almost all the major towns of the region such as Mangalore, Barkur, Basrur, Baindur, Gangolli and Karkala gave shelter to traders trading in different goods, agricultural and non-agricultural. People of the locality sold and purchased the items as required by them. The devotees who visited the temples or basadis or maths constituted another major group of customers at the temple-based towns. Besides the annual festivals in the various religious institutions provided opportunities for the exchange of a large variety of goods in considerable quantities in the jatres. In these jatres one could see not only the permanent shops but also a large number of temporary shops selling goods, eatables and musical instruments and play items.

Scholars like Meera Abraham have tried to discuss the role of
South India in the international trade. It is said that fourteenth century was a time when finally a ‘world system’ came into being that integrated all five sections of old world trade: south west, south, south east, east Asia, plus the Mediterranean. The ports of western coast of India had contacts with other ports of the world particularly the Arabian and Chinese. The Arab and Chinese traders used to visit the ports of both western and eastern coast. Thus when the Portuguese and other Europeans came to South India they did not do anything to seriously alter the already existing international trade but they only participated in it and augmented the volume of goods that were traded. Here we find a continuity in the international trade.

Our sources speak about the connections between the foreign traders and ports of the Western coast. Meera Abraham has analysed this kind of relations. It is said that in A.D.1282 the Chinese envoy arrived in Quilon. The Syrian Christian community in Quilon at that time still had trading interests. The head of the Christians accompanied the return mission from Quilon, as well as a representative of a neighbouring principality, perhaps Mangalore, another centre reputed for its fine pepper, as was Quilon. This fact reveals the Chinese trade contacts with the Western coast of India and the interest of Chinese merchants in pepper trade.

The Yuan missions to Kollam on the west coast of India reveal interesting details relevant for our study. They indicate that there was a change in commodity demand and that new trade realities emerged which made the west coast of South India increasingly important commercially from the thirteenth
century onwards. The west coast of India was drawn into more important trade relationships with West Asia and Egypt and through these regions with the European west. The trade between west coast of South India and Persian gulf, Yeminite coast and the Red Sea ports commenced much earlier, as found in the Islamic sources, but more precise information is available in the documents of the Cairo Geniza. 61

Towards the end of twelfth century, European merchants were prohibited entry into the Red Sea. This protectionist move favoured the rapid development of the Egyptian corporate association of traders known as the Karimi. The main commodity of trade that the Karimi dealt in were pepper and spices. Pepper was sold to the Venetians at Alexandria. 62

Two Judeo-Arabic documents on India trade (twelfth century) indicate that out of the four important ship owners, who were plying their ships between Mangalore and Aden, except perhaps one called Nambiyar, all others were Muslims. 63 The Jewish records on Indian trade reveal that merchant ships went from Mangalore to Aden via Diu on the coast of Saurashtra where local produce was collected. 64 This subject is also analysed by S.D. Goitein. The following details presented in his work are relevant in this context: 65

"A representative of merchants in the capital of Egypt, stuck in Broach, north of Bombay, after having been captured by Pirates, is invited by his brother-in-law in Mangalore, to join him in his own ship on the way back to Aden. This document belonged to c. 1145. The writer of this letter, Mahruz ("protected by God") b. Jacob, was a nakhoda, or shipowner, who commuted in his own boat between Aden and India. Occasionally we find him in the capital of Egypt, where his sister
was married to the recipient of this letter, Judah b. Joseph ha-Kohen, representative of the merchants there. Judah's own sister was married to Madmun, representative of the merchants in Aden. The letter says the following: In (Your) Name O Merciful "Your hand shall be lifted upon your adversaries, and all your enemies shall be cut off" I am writing to you.... I wish to inform you my lord, that I had previously written you at Tana. Meanwhile the accompanying boat of the ship arrived, and its soldiers told us that the ship in which your excellency my lord travelled was taken by pirates, and I was very sad about this. But afterwards I praised God and thanked him, when I heard that your life was saved. .... I would indeed like to mention my lord, that your servant had a large shipment in the boat of Fofali ("Betel-nut merchant"), then God ordained what happened (i.e. everything was lost).... Your servant thought that your honour my lord was in Tana, and I had previously sent letters to the nakhoda Tinbu, advising him to pay my lord 21 mithqals (Egyptian dinars) Afterwards, however, my lord the Sheikh Abu 'I-Qasim Ibn Qattan (dealer in cotton) came to Mangalore. I enquired about you and he told me that your excellency was in broach. In all circumstances, please come quickly to Mangalore and do not tarry, for I am waiting here in Mangalore and-if God wills-we shall embark on our way home as soon as possible. It is better for you to travel from Mangalore with me than to travel in the ships of foreign people. Please remember that there is no difference between us, my money is yours, it is just the same. The boats start presently from your place, from Kanbayat, and from Tana; please set out immediately so that you reach Mangalore with the vessels which, God willing, will soon be arriving in Malibarat (Malabar), Kayakannur and Mangalore. If my lord you need any gold, please take it on my account from the nakhoda Tinbu (a Hindu), for he is staying in Tana and between him and me there are bonds of inseparable friendship and brotherhood. You would
certainly like to know, my lord, that a sum in favour of your excellency remained with me on account of the silk. With it I bought twelve and sixteen large [bahars] pepper for you, and I dispatch this for you under God's protection from Mangalore with the "Blessed" ship—may God ordain her safety. Nor do I need to urge you again to come to Mangalore."

The above record gives information on merchants trading with betel nut and cotton at Mangalore. It throws light on the movement of ships from Aden to Mangalore. The foreign traders might have married native women. It is stated that Abraham Yiju married a slave girl Ashu in 1132 A.D. Thus we may say that these Jewish traders bolstered their economic position by arranged family bonds.

The contemporary literature also reflects the presence of foreign traders and their influence on Indian culture. Ratnakaravarni's *Bharatesha Vaibhava*, written during the 16th century, mentions Arabic, Parsee and Turkish words. For instance there is reference to words like *pauju* (Arabic, army), *gulama* (Arabic, slave), *nangalla* (Parsee, anchor), *teji* (Arabic, horse), *jambukhana* (Parsee, carpet) and *tupaki* (Turkish, rifle). Ratnakaravarni referred to Muslims as *gaddada turukaru* (bearded Turks). He referred to Ormuz as *Huramunzi*. In his work he also mentioned Mecca. This shows that by 16th century the impact of foreign traders was well noticed in the society.

Folk version popular in Basrur region indicates that the Chinese merchants visited the coastal towns from Cranganore to Goa. The accounts of Abdul Razzaq give us information about the existence of a considerable West Asian trading community at Vijayanagara and in the ports of the West coast which Vijayanagara kings always tried to control.
The sources give information about the existence of Arab traders who later got indigenised and settled in Mangalore. The Muslim Mapillas belong to this category. The Arab sources indicate that the Arab traders were aware of the trade centres like Basrur, Barkur, Bekal, Kasaragod, Mangalore and Shirur. Yaqut said that from the Malabar region pepper was exported. According to him the famous cities of Malabar were Manjarur and Fakanur. Damishqui mentioned that Manibar adjoined Hunnur. It was also named as the country of pepper. There were many cities and the chief of them was Faknur. Yaqut referred to the gulf of Fufal (identified with Bekal) while Damishqui said that the city of Fufal occupied a big area and that there were within it diving places for small pearls.

Damishqui mentioned Harquilya (Kasaragod) which had a big area. It had under its control about one thousand villages, situated on hilly tracts as well as on the coast. He also mentioned the city of Khurnal (Kumbla) which was a port for the ships of Hind as well as for those who passed by. Damishqui and Abul Fida gave information about Manjarur (Mangalore). Damishqui stated that the city of Manjarur was situated on a river known by the same name, and the river emptied into the sea where there was ebb and low tide. Large quantity of pepper was available here. Abul Fida stated that Manjarur was situated to the east of Sindabur, Hannur and Basrur. It is said that Manjarur is the biggest town in Manibar (Malabar). Damishqui placed Saymur (Shirur) after Faknur in the list of cities of Malabar. According to him Saymur was on the coast, in a wide gulf through which big ships from the gulf of Faknur passed by, both the gulfs had ebb and low tide.
There existed Muslim settlements in South Kanara. It is said that the Muslim colony of Honnavar in North Kanara, which was governed by Jalal-ud-din was the progenitor of the enterprising Muhammadan community in Kanara known as Navayats. The word Navayat means newcomers. On their arrival in India, these refugees took to commerce, and before long came to have the whole of the coastal trade in their hands. They had their settlement in Barkur as described by Ibn Batuta. The menace of the Muslim pirates on the coast of Barkur forced the Hoysala king Vira Ballala III to post his general Ankeya Nayaka there.\(^77\)

The Arab traders maintained regular contacts with the Western coast. The boats of the Arabs used to come to Malabar and other coastal areas of India sometime in July or August and after about four months of business returned in December or January. In those days the voyage used to take about thirty to forty days. So even if the Arab sailors and merchants had any settled home life in Arabia, they were away from their homes for the major part of the year. Thus while they were in India they must have contracted marital unions, temporary or permanent with the Indian women, for there is no evidence to show that they brought along with them their own womenfolk.\(^78\) The folk songs of South Kanara, the *paddanas* like Ali Bhuta Bobbariya give information about the settlements of Arab traders and their matrimonial relations with local women in the regions of Manjesvara, Barkur, Basur and Murudesvara. Some of the Tulu *paddanas* allude to the nature of the Arab trading activities in the coastal towns where they settled down, and carried on brisk trade transactions in rice, pepper,
coir, ginger, etc. in exchange for vessels from China, varieties of silk clothes, dried fruits, fine breeds of horses and large quantities of Persian and European gold. They came into contact with the various guilds like settikaras, elamegalu and nakharas.  

The Navayats of Kanara were found along the coastal strip between the Sharavati river in North Kanara and the Suvarna river in South Kanara. Their settlements were invariably situated either by the seashore mainly at the mouth of rivers or a little interior on the banks of the rivers so that in any case they have an easy access to the sea. In South Kanara they were found in Sirur, Baindoor, Gangolli, Basrur, Kandlur, Hangarkatte, Bengare, Tonse and Malpe.  

Victor S. D' Souza stated that owing to the special facilities that were obtainable at Malabar, the Arab traders first established their colonies there and from there carried on their trade with other convenient places. Enterprising merchants settled down for longer period at places advantageous to their trade. These temporary settlements eventually developed into small colonies. These colonies were patronised by the Muslim merchants who came directly from Arabia and Persia. Some of these settlements like Mangalore and Bhatkal developed later into trading centres and facilitated the process of urbanisation.  

Both Arabic and Indian sources allude to the existence of Indian trade centres in Arabia and vice versa. Ubla near Basra, Mecca, Petre, Baghdad, Oman, Dubai, Sanas, Aden, etc. were the prominent Indian trade centres in the Arab world, whereas Nilesvara, Kasaragod, Kumbla, Mangalore, Manel, Mukka,
Yermal, Muluru, Barkur, Basrur and Bhatkal were the Arab trade centres in coastal Karnataka. The traded commodities of the Arabs in these places were swords, silk, textiles, wood, ginger, spices and various kinds of medicines. Sturrock mentioned the trading communities of South Kanara among whom Mapillas and Navayats were the major groups. The other trading castes were the Banajigas, Balijas, Chettis and Vaisyas. Balijas was the well-known Telugu trading caste and Banajiga was the Kannada form of this name. Trade was also carried on by Gowda Saraswat Brahmins, native Christians, Rajapuris and Vanis. The Vanis had come to South Kanara from Goa and they spoke Konkani language.

The above study shows that in South Kanara there was the emergence of a powerful trading group which participated in the trade both internal and external. As a result there was the establishment of commercial contact with the outside world. The traders were able to earn enormously in the form of profits and they were in a position to wield considerable influence in political, economic and social spheres. They caused the construction of religious monuments and contributed to the urbanisation of the locality.

**Guilds:**

As in other parts of India, in South Kanara also we could see the existence of guilds. Populous trade centres like Barkur, Basrur and Mudabidre had their trade or merchant guilds called nakhara (nakharadavaru), settikara and hanjamana. Among these nakhara can be compared with nagarattar of the Tamil region. According to K. V. Ramesh nakhara is to be understood in the sense of
‘merchant community’ or ‘guild of merchants’ or ‘a mercantile town’. *Settikara* is derived from the word Setti meaning merchant or trader. While *settikara* was the association of native merchants who dealt in indigenous commodities, the *nakhara* was the guild of native merchants who were concerned with overseas trade.\(^8^5\)

*Hanjamana* guild existed and flourished in South Kanara from the days of the Alupas. A record of A.D. 1114 from Barkur says that the *nagara* and *hanjamana* of Barkur were present in the king’s court when he made a grant to Markandesvara temple.\(^8^6\) Indigenous organisations like the *nakhara*, *nakhara-hanjamanas* and the *settikaras* were associated with the Hoysala administration. The Hoysala inscriptions from South Kanara mention *settikaras* in specific number such as *nalvaru settikararu, entu praje settikararu*, a feature which became more common in Vijaynagara inscriptions. The Hoysala inscriptions also mention about the subdivision of *nadu*. This did not figure in the earlier inscriptions. The Hiriyangadi inscription dated A.D. 1334 refers to *nadu* and *nakhara* of Karkal. It also mentions the *halaru* of Karkal and *ubhayanandesigalu*. The *halaru* guild was generally considered to be made up of persons belonging to different professions. The *nanadesis* were active in all regions without limits of the political boundary. There is reference to *ubhayanandesis*. It is suggested that *ubhaya* is to be taken as denoting local (*svadesi*) and foreign (*paradesi*) merchant communities.\(^8^7\)

The Mudabidre inscription refers to *salikeya aruvaru ballalugalu* and *aivaru horahinavaru* (five *ballalas* of *salikey* and five outsiders). According
to Kittel salike means ‘business in a room or shop’. It may be suggested that the salikeya ballalugalu were members of the guild of businessmen, who were considered as citizens of importance. Horahinavaru means outsiders. They were connected with salike but hailed from outside the Tuluva region. It may be that they secured the ballalu traders commodities from outside the Tulu country. A record from Barkur dated A.D. 1335-36 speaks of nakhara-hanjamana of Barkur. The Hoysala queen Kikkayitayi made a grant of the whole revenue from the village Bailur to one person by name Vasudeva Mudali. For this she sought the permission of the general assembly of nakhara-hanjamana of the place.

During the Vijayanagara period we find large number of inscriptions which mention the existence of hanjamanas in various trade centres like Ullal, Basrur and Mangalore. Suryanath Kamath believed that “they were Muslim organisations because clearly there is reference to pallis in the inscriptions”. But palli might also have meant a village and not necessarily the Muslim mosque. According to K.V. Ramesh they were the organisation of the Parsee and Arab traders. Thus we can say they were the guild of the foreign traders who came to South Kanara from Arab countries.

In the Vijayanagara period the importance of hanjamana guild increased due to the emergence of horse trade. The Vijayanagara kings demanded a large number of horses (both dead and alive) from foreign traders. According to K.P.Poonacha and M.V. Viswesvara, with the sole intention of gaining direct control over the region and to centralise the horse trade the Vijayanagara kings established new territorial divisions like Barkur-vishaya, Honnavar-vishaya,
Mangalore *rajya* etc. These places had regular administrative offices established obviously for the effective economic and supervisory control over the trade activities.\(^92\)

The *hanjamana* guilds were also categorised as *ubhaya nanadesis*. They were associated with inland as well as external trade, in the capacity of *vinimaya vartakasangha* (exchange-guilds), with well established colonies. Though epigraphs are silent as to the exact commodities that these people used to handle, we can suggest that they mainly traded in horses. It was quite possible that the *hanjamana* guild enjoyed influence due to the immense fortune accumulated by individual merchants from the trade of horses.\(^93\) Even the local principalities were interested in horse trade. According to *Gomatesvara Charitre*, Virapandya of Karkal procured horses from Vanayaja, Kambhoja and Bahlika.\(^94\)

The Vijayanagara rulers had import war horses from Arabia and such other lands. Therefore, the Vijayanagara inscriptions of South Kanara make frequent references to *hanjamana* and *nakhara-hanjamana* guilds and their activities.\(^95\) Repeated references to these guilds indicate the enhanced importance of horse trade in the Vijayanagara empire. They also reflect the pivotal role played by the *hanjamanas* in the trading activities. *Hanjamanas* were found even in the interior trade centres. For instance a copy of the inscription belonging to the period of Keladi Somashekhar Nayak mentions the existence of *hallaru hanjamanaru* in Sringeri.\(^96\)

In Barkur the guilds participated in the administration of the city. The *settis* formed themselves into guilds called *settikaras*. These guilds dealt in
varieties of commodities of daily consumption and articles of luxury. In Barkur
there is a community called Settigaras. They live in groups in Barkur, Salikeri,
Suratkal, Mangalore and other places. There are eighteen prominent settlements
of this community in South Kanara. B. Vasantha Shetty has suggested that there
is similarity in the names - Settikara and Settigara, and the transformation from
Settikara to Settigara is quite possible.97

The ten keris of Barkur were represented by halaru and the sixteen
settikaras. The halaru were the councillors of the town responsible for general
administration. The sixteen settikaras of the ten keris were heads of the trade
guilds.98 The gavares were another community of traders who entrenched
themselves in Barkur and Basrur. In Barkur they had set up their own temple
known as Gavaresvara-devalaya, which was granted a gift of charity by one
Annapa Setti.99

Another trade guild of South Kanara was elamegalu. Ballala III’s
inscription of A.D.1336, from Mudukeri in Barkur, mentions the nura-
aivattu(150)elame. His Mudabidre inscription of A.D.1342 refers to nalvaru(4)
elamegalu. The fact that elame was a guild or an association with its own binding
regulations to the members is attested by the reference in many Vijayanagara
inscriptions to the phrase elamege olagadavaru or those who were involved in
elame. The figures 150 or 4 probably pertain to different guilds with the common
name of elame.100 The elame in Venur was connected with number three
hundred and sixty four while in the hattukeri of Barkur it was seven hundred and
seventy.101
The collective work of Jain guilds is depicted in the inscriptions of Mudabidre belonging to Hoysala and Vijayanagara periods. The Hosa basadi (new temple), also called the thousand pillared basadi bears ample testimony to this. Even the basadis here were named after their builders like Settara basadi, Vikarama-Setti basadi, Madiah-Setti basadi, Mahadeva-Setti basadi and Chola-Setti basadi. P.N. Narasimha Murthy opined that there was a kind of competition among the merchants to build large number of basadis. The spirit of competition might have existed among the wealthy merchants who wanted to create memorials to exhibit their socio-economic status. But it was basically the belief in religion that influenced the Jain merchants to construct basadis.

Some scholars have discussed about the significance of donations to the temple. For example, James Hietzman rightly said that the people who could afford to give lavish gifts to religious institutions, and then arrange to engrave the memory of their beneficence, were often members of the most important cultural, political and economic elites in their societies. The driving force behind donations was the concept of legitimisation of authority, whereby gifts to gods or representatives on earth resulted in a transfer of divine sanctity and the merit to the givers. The factor of legitimisation of authority also probably made the Jain merchants of South Kanara to build basadis.

According to K.R.Hall nagaram merchants were often contracted to make certain specified goods and services available to their local temple and community in exchange for house-sites or exemption from certain taxes. Kenneth Hall quotes from George Spencer who suggested that “the redistribution
of royal revenues via gifts to temples was part of a conscious attempt to forge links with the countryside." Numerous grants of tolls, duties and commercial products were made by various nagarams without any evident outside pressure. Nagarams are most conspicuous in their involvement with local temple administration. Temple funds were commonly entrusted to a nagaram for investment. K. R. Hall wrote that it was not strange to find the nagaram, the community's commercial elite, involved in temple finances. The Chola rulers attempted to penetrate the local village political domain by establishing royal control over the hinterland temples. The relations between nagaram and temples that existed during the Chola period seem to have prevailed in South Kanara too. If the nature and magnitude of their functioning were more established and developed in the Chola state, in South Kanara they were less advanced.

Urban Centres:

During this period South Kanara saw the emergence of a few urban centres. Due to the constant political patronage, Barkur emerged as an important urban centre. As a town busy in trade and commerce, Barkur had a developed municipal administration. pattanaswami (lord of town) was an important official in Barkur. The tenth century inscription discovered in Mudukeri refers to pattanaswami for the first time. It is said that pattanaswami constructed a basadi in Mudukeri. Another record of Soyideva Alupendra mentions "pattanaswamiya hadi" (forest of pattanaswami). Whenever the town was administered by different merchant guilds, the pattanaswami was the chief executor. In certain
cities the number of pattanaswami was more than one. He was entrusted with the task of fixing the taxes to be paid by the townsmen. Conduct of fair was one of his main responsibilities.\textsuperscript{108} An inscription from Nagar dated A.D. 1062 speaks of the works of Nokkaiah, the Pattanaswami. Nokkaiah is described as Nakkaramukha-mandana. He is said to have constructed the Pattanaswami-Jinalaya, a tank, and caused to be made a number of images out of five metals.\textsuperscript{109}

Barkur was divided into ten keris or quarters. But it seems that some of the keris were later additions and they might not have existed in the beginning. Probably with the extension and growth of the town it became necessary to add some more regions to the township and came to be considered as separate keris or quarters. Hosakeri or the new keri as the name itself suggests, might be a later addition. This also suggests the growth of the town and the changes that became necessary in its administration.\textsuperscript{110} The Kotekeri inscription belonging to A.D. 1155 provides us the earliest reference to the municipal assembly. This inscription mentions nagarasamuha (administrators of the town).\textsuperscript{111}

B. Vasantha Shetty accepted the suggestion of G.S. Dikshit that the parts of town began as streets but developed into quarters. The name keri was applied not only to a street but also to an area in Barkur. For example, Balegara keri (street of bangle sellers) stretched over an area much beyond a street. Each keri had its own reason for the name that it got. In extent also they differed from one another.\textsuperscript{112}

Kotakeri got its name from the fort. This keri which also included the place now called old Barkur was the old commercial town of Barkur. This
"keri" formed the port area and was an important centre of commercial activity. The weekly fair held now on Fridays seems to be a practice which has been continued from historical times. The fair must have contributed substantially to the growth of commercial activities of Barkur. Balegarakeri had bangle sellers as the chief settlers.

In Patasalakeri the community of weavers was dominant and the name Patasalakeri denotes the settlement of weavers. B. Vasantha Shetty suggested that Manigarakeri was the street of dealers in gems and precious stones. But considering the possible limited demand for such luxury items in a micro region like Barkur it may be suggested that they had connections with the Manigramam, the trade guild of South India, which consisted of itinerant traders from different parts of South India. At the same time we may suggest that the manigaras imported the precious stones and gems from other regions to export the same to those regions where these luxury goods were in great demand. The fact that Barkur was visited by several foreign traders like Arabs supports this suggestion. The importance of this street is indicated by the fact that it was situated in the heart of the town. In Murukeri or Mudukeri there existed three streets. This was a stronghold of businessmen called Settikaras. The existence of Nakharesvara temple here indicates the prominence of Nakhara guild in this keri.

The name Arasikeri suggests that this keri must have been developed either by or in the name of some Queen. Ranganakeri got its name from Ranganna Setti. Vasantha Shetty wrote that the Hosakeri marked the
completion of the keri system and the evolution of good system of municipal administration with ten keres.\textsuperscript{120}

Barkur and Basrur had separate quarters for merchants dealing with different commodities. Though these merchants and trading settlements carried on their work peacefully in cordial atmosphere there were instances of mutual enmity and fight which often made the rulers interfere and settle the matters.\textsuperscript{121}

Basrur was an important trade centre. From middle of twelfth century the importance of Basrur was recognised, for, it was mentioned in an inscription dated 1155 A.D. It was known as Basurepura (town of Basrur) and also as Hosapattana (new town), indicating its new construction. In the middle of fifteenth century this town was known as Dharmapattan. From the middle of fourteenth century onwards, epigraphs refer to urban features of Basrur by mentioning different keres and settlements of different trading communities, namely, halarus, settikaras, nakharas and hanjamanas.\textsuperscript{122} It is said that in Basrur there existed four doors to enter the town, two for those who went by road and two for those who went by river or water transport.\textsuperscript{123} It is said that Basrur was actually a twin town. Mudukeri and Paduvakeri were two important keres which had certain resemblances. In both the keres there existed temples of Siva, Tirumala, Venkataramana and Ramachandra, garadi (gymnasium) and agrahara (Brahman settlement).\textsuperscript{124}

Basrur consisted of various keres like Mandikeri, Vilasakeri, Ravutakeri, etc. Mandi was the place where wholesale trade of goods existed. In Mandikeri there was the arrival of traders and merchandise and there was facility
to store goods in large pots. These *keris* had doors which were closed in the night and opened in the morning. In the Vilasakeri the traders used to relax with the help of perhaps prostitutes and other luxuries like intoxicating drinks, etc.\textsuperscript{125}

The coastal towns had established connections with upghat regions both due to commercial reasons as well as religious factors. The Hattiyangadi record speaks of the remission of half of the taxes on goods on the *nakhara* of Purigere. Both Purigere in Dharwad district and Hattiyangadi were great centres of Jainism. Being very close to the Arabian sea, and situated on the bank of the river Gangolli (Varahi), facing the famous port town of Basrur, Hattiyangadi might have attracted the Jain merchants of Purigere.\textsuperscript{126}

Chara, now an ordinary village near Hebri in Karkal Taluk, was a flourishing commercial centre. This place is even today called *angadi-chara*. One of the inscriptions found in the same village states that two noble merchant brothers, Madanna Setti and Hosabu Setti, caused the construction of *chaityalaya* for Adinatha in A.D. 1432. The inscriptions refer to the existence of administrative bodies like *nudu* and *samasta halaru* and the merchant guilds such as *settikaras* and *nakharas*. This township might have played a significant commercial role as it was situated on the plains just below the Agumbe ghats, and very near to the sacred place of Varanga.\textsuperscript{127}

The chief articles of export from South Kanara were pepper, rice, coconuts, incense, perfumes, dyestuffs, sugarcane, *aloes*, *tabashis*, etc. The articles of import were Chinese silk, metals, pearls, sapphire, camphor, textiles, horses and even elephants. There were officers to regulate this trade and for the
collection of tolls and taxes at ports and ferry points.

From the beginning of Christian era Mangalore has been described in the indigenous as well as foreign literature as an important trade centre. According to a legend a Durga temple was built in the coastal town of Bappanad (Mulki), about 30 kilometres north of Mangalore. It looked like any other such temple but was unique in one sense. It was built in A.D. 1168 by a prosperous Muslim trader and has since been open to both Muslims and Hindus. The town of Bappanad was named after Bappa Beary. Beary is the local word for a Muslim and it is derived from the word vyavahari which means trader.

Many legends have gained currency regarding the construction of the temple at Bappanad. One of these is that Bappa, a trader from Kerala, was sailing north with his group when his 'dhow' floundered off the Bappanad coast. Goddess Durga appeared before him in a dream and said that his misfortune would end. The trader sailed northward and sold his merchandise at five times their price. The above legend shows that there existed trade relations between Kerala and South Kanara during the 12th century. From this it is also clear that the commercial significance of the settlement was due to the organised trading activities of the Muslim merchants of Arab and Turkish origins.

The above details indicate flourishing trade and commerce in South Kanara. This led to the emergence of trade guilds. The trade guilds apart from their economic role, performed the role of administrators of towns, gave donations to the temples and looked after the property of the temples, and had very close relation with the state. There existed the trade guilds like hanjamana,
nakhar, settikara, elame, halaru, nanadesi and ubhayananadesi.

An inscription belonging to A.D. 1444 mentions that the nakharas and settis of Dharmapattana agreed to pay to the temple of Mahadeva a portion of toll-revenue raised in the village. It was to be used for the repair of gold pinnacle of the temple and the balance, if any, was to be used for the services of god and for no other purpose. The gift was made to expiate the sin committed by them in having murdered two men of their community.\textsuperscript{131} The outside traders who came to South Kanara made land donations. An inscription belonging to Saka year 1281 refers to one Bankarasa from Hubli making grants to Somanatha temple at Barkur.\textsuperscript{132} An inscription belonging to Saka year 1334 mentions Jogi Setti of Arikana Ghatta of Nagamangala who made some grants to the temple.\textsuperscript{133} One inscription from Barkur mentions the relations that existed between Hattukeriya Halaru and Karkal.\textsuperscript{134} Both Barkur and Karkal were Jain centres. The fact that urban culture was developing not only in the core areas like Barkur and Basrur but also in a periphery like Shankaranarayana is proved by the inscription belonging to A.D. 1562 which mentions the existence of angadi or shop in Shankaranarayana.\textsuperscript{135}

Barkur inscription belonging to Saka year 1282 mentions that Naganna Setti gave some donations to the temple. If Naganna Setti was not able to give the promised money, it was the responsibility of Murukeriya Halaru to make Naganna Setti to give money. This implies that Naganna Setti was a member of halaru and before making any grant he was supposed to seek the permission of halaru.\textsuperscript{136} The Barkur inscription of Saka year 1508 mentions manigara keriya
halara gadi (gadi means the boundary), which means that this guild was the owner of some property. An inscription found in the Krishna math of Udupi of Saka year 1359 mentions that the Governor Annappa Odeya attacked Sivalli grama. The trade guilds of Barkur tried to pacify the Brahmans by giving land grants to them.

The Basrur inscription of A.D. 1554 mentions that Timmayya Setti purchased a plot of land and constructed a math. He purchased a brahmadaya land from Anna Udupa and made a gift of the same for the maintenance of the chatra attached to the math. An inscription belonging to Keladi period states that if money was not received from a place called Anegali, then it was the responsibility of the settikaras to pay the money.

The kings also gave grants to the temple. An inscription from Bantwala Muda, Mangalore Taluk, which belongs to A.D. 1364 states that under the orders of the king, Madarasa of Mangalore made a gift of the village Pudugrama, to certain Brahmans. This edict also mentions the nakharadavaru. The presence of nakhara in the royal edict indicates the respect given to the traders while giving the land grant. An inscription belonging to A.D. 1451 mentions that under the orders of Devaraya-Maharaya, Bhanappa-Odeya who was ruling over Barkur-rajya, made a gift of 121 kati-gadyanas out of the siddhaya of Basrur, for the service of god Nakharesvaradeva of the place. God Nakharesvara was the personal deity of the traders of Barkur. By giving grants to this temple the kings were seeking the support of traders. The Basrur inscription of A.D. 1444 mentions that the several settikaras of Paduvakeri in Basrur gave
land grants to Narana-Setti for offerings and service in the temple of Nakharesvara.\(^{143}\)

The traders used to go on pilgrimage. The Basrur inscription dated A.D. 1472 mentions that Duggana-Setti of Paduvakeri at Basrur and his three nephews made a grant of land to Siriappa on the latter’s return from his pilgrimage to Benaras for the worship of the image of god Kasi-Visvanatha which he had brought with him.\(^ {144}\)

The *hanjamanas* paid tax to the state. An inscription belonging to A.D. 1465 records that when Pandarideva Odeya was ruling over Barkur-rajya, he made a gift of gold, which the *Hanjamana* community was paying, for the service of god Mahadeva at Paduvakeri, on the occasion of a lunar eclipse.\(^ {145}\)

Sometimes there occurred conflicts between the traders. The Basrur inscription belonging to A.D. 1455\(^ {146}\) records that an agreement was effected between the settis of the two streets, namely, Paduvakeri and Mudakeri in Basrur. It was regarding the boundaries and the rights of their respective localities, and the paths through which the settis of each locality had to take sheep and arecanut trees to the temple of Devi on occasions of festivals.

The significance of the inscription lies in the amicable settlement made by the people themselves to avoid conflicts on matters regarding property and the religion. It mentions the roads used by *sudeshi* and *paradesi*. Perhaps this points out the existence of indigenous traders and foreign (outside) traders. Whenever dispute arose between the traders, the rulers tried to create a peaceful atmosphere by making traders to sign agreement.
The Barkur inscription belonging to Saka year 1353 mentions that there arose a conflict between traders of Mudukeri and Chaulikeri regarding the trade in sugar. The conflict also resulted from a controversy over the utilisation of crops and other groceries coming from beyond the ghats. Since the controversy had resulted in armed fights, the governor summoned to his court the five halaru of Chaulikeri and the samastahalaru of Murukeri and effected a compromise between the contending groups. They accordingly undertook never again to use violence in settling their differences. This agreement stipulated a separate place for the foreign merchants in the warehouse where they had to store their goods. The inscription mentions the import of goods like rice, wheat, Bengal gram, Phaseolus mungo (uddu), green gram (hesaru), sesamum indicum (ellu), sugar-cane (kabbu), fenugreek (mente), ghee (tuppa) and jaggery (bella).

This record also prescribes certain regulations for the sale of sugar brought by the local and foreign merchants from above the ghats. It states that merchants of Chaulikeri and Murukeri should collectively weigh and store the stock of sugar and that whatever quantity remained unsold should not be taken to Murukeri by the merchants of that part of the city but should remain in the storehouse to be sold in times of demand. This clause was included to maintain the balance in the trade and to control the fluctuation in the price. The right of selling cotton sarees was made the exclusive privilege of merchants of Murukeri.\textsuperscript{147}

An inscription from Chokkadi, Udupi Taluk, belonging to A.D. 1474 mentions about a dispute which arose over certain lands in Vodevuru between the settikaras of hattukeri of Barkur and the nakhara-hanjamanas on the
one side and Nidamburas, Mudilas and six ballalas on the other. It was settled in
the favour of the former. 148

Sometimes there emerged misunderstanding between the trade
guilds and the rulers. The Mangalore inscription belonging to Saka year 1341
informs us that when Timmanna Odeya was ruling Mangaluru rajya, while
hanjamana-nakhara were giving poorva mariyade, Timmanna Odeya became
angry with them and destroyed their villages by sending his army. This news
reached Dannayaka Bayicheddannayaka Odeya who was staying on the other
bank of the river and made arrangements to redress the grievances of the
hanjamana-nakhara by granting them some of the villages in Kodeyala
(Mangalore). Timmanna Odeya discussed this matter with his Pradhani, Bangas,
Chautas, Ajilas and samastha kattale. 149 The Barkur inscription of A.D. 1406
states that injustice was done to hanjamana-nakhara by Mahabaladeva. In order
to redress their grievance king Bukkaraya sent Bachanna of Goa who came to
Barkur rajya and he gave certain land for the purchase of cloth by the trade
guilds. This inscription shows that the kings took personal interest in comforting
the traders. This also indicates the influence that the traders enjoyed with the
kings. 150

In North Kanara also there occurred the misunderstanding
between the Governor and the hanjamana. A serious breach occurred between
the Governor Timmanna Odeya and one Ummara-Marakala, the chief of the
hanjamana of Honnavar. The latter, along with his supporters, retired to
Kasarakodu and appealed to Sangiraya Odeya, the chief of Nagire for help. On
receiving this appeal, Sangiraya dispatched one Kotisvara-nayaka, along with thousand soldiers, to offer protection to Ummara-Marakala and his followers. Thus Ummara -Marakala used the good offices of the chief of Nagire and brought about the cessation of the hostilities that the Governor had against him. This shows that some times there emerged conflicts between the merchants and the state officials during this period. Generally the interest of the traders was well protected.

The traders were expected to follow certain rules in society. The traders were a part of balanju. The Alupa inscription of Mangalore (dateless) mentions that if Setti committed a sin or a mistake the punishment was that he was to be excommunicated from the balanju. An inscription from Mudabidre (dateless) mentions about an agreement signed by settikaras, elamegalu, nadu and nakhara according to which they punished those traders who violated balanju niti. Those who violated this rule were made to pay one talesavira honnu.

There are references to the items that were traded and the description of the urbanity of the cities like Mudabidre. An inscription of Saka year 1351 gives some details about Mudabidre. Vamsapura or Venupura (Mudabidre) is described as a place where there existed trade in ratna kanchana chinambara. Chinambara was the silk cloth brought from China. It also refers to Venupura’s Yentupraje Settkararu Nalvaru Elamegolagada Samasta Halaru who gave land as per the instruction of Devaraya Maharaya to Charukirti Panditadevaru for the construction of chaityalaya called Tribhuvana Chudamani.
One inscription of Mudabidre states the patronage given by *halaru settikaras* for the construction of second storey of the Jain monument Tribhuvana Chudamani in Mudabidre.\(^{155}\) Another inscription belonging to Saka year 1373 mentions the name of several Settis who were responsible for the wonderful construction of the *mukhamantapa* of Tribhuvana Chudamani.\(^{156}\) This inscription gives an idea of the social set up of Mudabidre. It is possible that most of these Settis mentioned in the inscription were the landlords belonging to Bunt community but later with the arrival of Jainism they might have been converted into Jainism and they donated for the construction of Jain monuments. They followed the *aliya santana*, the usual practice of inheritance of property from the mother’s side, prevailing among the Bunts of South Kanara. The references to the names of nephews clearly indicate the matrilineal pattern of society. The above inscription mentions certain names like Alva Narana Setti and Kajava Devaru Setti. These names clearly indicate that originally they were Bunts and later they were converted into Jainism. They gave grants to both Jain and Brahmanical temples. The conversion to Jainism was also due to the fact that Jainism was a more suitable religion for the trading community who had to violate the taboos of the brahmanical religion. Jainism did not impose any restriction on crossing the sea and participating in trade. Religion was a binding force for the Jain traders.

Large number of donations were made to Tribhuvana Chudamani. In Saka year 1384 *nalkuru ayimura saviradavaru* of Barkur made land donations to Tribhuvana Chudamani. The *Halaru Settikaras* were entrusted with the responsibility of protecting this grant.\(^{157}\) Another Mudabidre inscription
gives list of people who were responsible for the construction of the third storey of Tribhuvana Chudamani.\(^{158}\)

The traders were given certain privileges. For instance an inscription belonging to Saka year 1500 mentions that with the consent of \textit{settikaras nalvaru elamegolagada samasta halaru} and by the order of Charukirti Panditadevaru, no other houses should be constructed to the east of Mainda's house. Those who committed this mistake should pay 1200 \textit{varahas} to the Chautas of Mudabidre.\(^{159}\)

During the pre-twelfth century period townships were designated \textit{nagara} or \textit{nakhara, pura} and \textit{pattana}. We have references to Udayapura \textit{nakhara} and \textit{Mangalapura-mahanagara}. Some of the early Alupa inscriptions refer to \textit{padinentu pattana} (eighteen towns). K. V. Ramesh opined that this phrase refers to the administrative bodies in the eighteen cities.\(^{160}\)

During the Vijayanagara period, guilds and local assemblies were more frequently entrusted with the task of protecting and administering gifts and grants made to temples. This is indicated in expressions such as \textit{Chaulikeriyalli muvaru settikararu halaru pratipalisuvaru}, (three \textit{settikaras} administer in Chaulikeri), \textit{i dharmada parupatya odetana kotekeriya halaru settikararige} (this grant should be managed and owned by \textit{halaru settikaras} of Kotekeri), etc. which are very often seen in the records of this period.\(^{161}\) Above details show that trades and trade guilds actively participated in the process of construction of temples and maintenance of temple grants. Thus political, economic and religious factors were at work in the process of urbanisation in South Kanara.
Notes and References:


2 *Grahapatis* were the landlords who also participated in long distance trade in ancient India. See Romila Thapar, *From Lineage to State Social Formations in the Mid-First Millennium B.C. in the Ganga Valley*, Delhi, 1990, P. 36.

3 *Epigraphia Indica* Vol. IX, P. 22.


9 *Ibid*.


12 *ARSIE*, 1931-32, No. 3.


15 *Epigraphia Carnatica*, VIII, Sagar, No. 123.
16 Ibid.


18 *Epigraphia Carnatica*, VIII, Tirthahalli, 42.


29 Ibid.
30 Y. Umanath Shenoy, ‘Shasanavondaralli belakige banda ajnata rani Shankaradevi Ajila’ (in Kannada), in, Udayavani, 4-1-98.

31 Indian Antiquary XVI, P. 31.


33 Ibid, P. 313.

34 Ibid, P. 314.

35 This system can be compared with the Portuguese system of issuing cartazes or passports to merchant ships and they were given protection by the Portuguese armada and those did not take Portuguese cartazes were attacked and as a result frequent conflicts arose between the Portuguese and the Muslim sea pirates on the western coast.


37 Ibid, P. 265.


41 Ibid, P. 321.

42 Its importance dwindled in the twentieth century because of development of the modern means of transport, use of machinery in tilling the land and decline of
sugar and jaggery industries.


45 *E.C.*, VIII, Sorab, 467.

46 *E.C.*, N.S., IX, Belur, 181.


48 *E.C.*, N.S., IX, Belur, No. 171. For details of the *muleya svamya* (custom duty), see APPENDIX – I.

49 *E.C.*, VIII, Tirthahalli, No. 49.

50 *Ibid, Tirthahalli*, No. 68.


52 For inscriptions giving similar details see, *Ibid, Tirthahalli* Nos. 84, 89, 92 and 184.


56 K. G. Vasanathamadhava, *Trends in Karnataka Historical Research*,


P. 428.


71 S. Muhammad Husayn Nainar (Ed.), The Knowledge of India Possessed by Arab Geographers Down to the 14th Century A.D. with Special Reference to Southern India, Op. Cit., PP. 33-34. The Arab travellers were under the impression that Kanara was the part of Malabar and therefore they mentioned that Mangalore and Barkur were important trade centres of Malabar.

72 Ibid, P. 37.

73 Ibid, P. 39.

74 Ibid, P. 50.

75 Ibid, P. 61.

76 Ibid, PP. 71-72.


79 K. G. Vasanathamadhava, 'Karnataka’s Trade with the Arab world (c. 9th-18th century A.D.)' Quarterly Review of Historical Studies, Vol. XXXVI, April-Sept 1996, Nos. 1&2, P.30. These guilds will be discussed in the next section.


89 *ARSIE*, 1929-30, No. 528.


107 Ibid, P. 79.


113 Ibid, P. 273.

114 Ibid, P. 274. They were prominent in other urban centres like Basrur, where a merchant belonging to Balegara community made a land grant to a math. See SII,
Vol. IX Part II, No.446.


118 Ibid, P. 278.

119 Ibid, P. 279.

120 Ibid, P. 280.


124 Ibid.

125 Ibid, P. 11


127 Ibid, PP 478-79.


129 Bappanad is a famous religious centre today also.


133 Ibid, No. 310.

134 Ibid, No. 314.


137 Ibid, No. 331.

138 Ibid, No. 296.


140 Ibid, No. 683.

141 Ibid, No. 408.

142 Ibid, No. 456.

143 Ibid, No. 449.

144 Ibid, No. 464.

145 Ibid, No. 459.

146 Ibid, No. 457.

147 Ibid, Vol. VII, No. 309 and 340. No. 309 was found in Murukeri and a copy of the same inscription was found in Chaulikeri.

148 ARSIE 1928-29, No. 502; K.V. Ramesh, A History of South Kanara


150 Ibid, No. 349.


153 Ibid, No. 213.
154 Ibid, No. 196.
155 Ibid, No. 204.
156 Ibid, No. 197.
157 Ibid, No. 198.
158 Ibid, No. 206.
159 Ibid, Nos. 226 and 227.
161 Ibid, P. 305.