CHAPTER- III

South India and the Persian Gulf during the 18th Century

Two migrations at different points of time have immensely affected the course of the development of Indian civilization. They were at first the Aryan migration and later the Turkish migration. There is no disagreement whatever among scholars regarding the abiding influence they bore on the formation of Indian society and polity. These migrations resulted in creating pan Indian politics; be it the Mauryan polity, the Khalji-Tughluq polity or the Mughal polity; all of them were pan Indian in character. Their migrations began from the Caspian Sea and central Asian Steppes; crossing the mountain passes in the North West they made their way into the Punjab and over a period of centuries spread over the Indo-Gangetic delta and their pressure percolated into the Deccan and South India as well. But here details of this aspect of Indian history is not needed and it is also outside the scope of the present study.

Here we are concerned basically with the advent of the Europeans and especially the British in India and the subsequent conquest and subjugation of the Indian subcontinent which in recent years has come to be designated as South Asia. There is, however, a basic difference in the Aryan and Turkish migrations on the one hand and the advent of the Europeans or the British in India. The Aryans and the Turks over a period of time got intermixed with indigenous population and became a part of the country. But the Europeans or the British never considered India as their home; it was just a colony to subserve the needs of the ‘mother country’ or ‘the Home country’. Although the period of their governance they remained a separate race and refused to get mixed up with the indigenous stock. When the time came to leave the country, they left
lock, stock and barrel. In the following pages an attempt has been made to analyse the advent of the Europeans; specially the British, the method and the regions of their expansion and the limits beyond which they could not go whatever their military superiority or strength, might have been.

Unlike the arrival of all other peoples into the Indian subcontinent, the advent of the British was altogether from a different side namely, the Sea. The early eighteenth century witnessed the rise of British power in South India.\(^1\) The three Carnatic wars fought for the control of South India gave the British an upper hand to consolidate their position in the Cauvery valley. Through the Coromandel Coast, the British moved to deltaic Bengal and consolidated their hold there and took a left turn along the Ganges and reached the Punjab. The whole of the Indo-Gangetic region came under their suzerainty by the middle of the nineteenth century. Their attempt to further push the frontiers of the British Empire in India into Afghanistan was a great debacle they suffered and exhibited the limits of their capacity to expand.\(^2\) To put it in a more sensible way, it showed the Geographical limitations which administrators in India had to confront; the extent to which they could march and subjugate and the limitations beyond which they could not. Whatever efforts the British administrators in India made to consolidate their hold in Afghanistan and to construct a wall to prevent the Russian intrusion, real or imaginary was indeed, a futile exercise which brought defiance to the British and antagonized the Afghan tribesmen against British policy.

The British subjugation of South India and consolidation of British power in the Cauvery valley has historical linkages to the British control

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1 Innes, A.D., History of the British India, Methuen and Company, London 1902. p.41
of the Persian Gulf region in the eighteenth century. During this period, the Bosporus and the Dardanelles remained the main arteries through which the Ottoman Empire with its capital at Constantinople headed by the Sultan-Caliph could be controlled. By controlling the land route, they would reach Basra and the Persian Gulf. This was not a very serious problem for them. Persia was a strong power up to the seventeenth century and during the eighteenth century it declined to the advantage of the European powers. The strong presence of the British and the French, to reach the Persian Gulf through Basra was not a very serious obstacle to them. The presence of the British and the French at Constantinople prevented Russia from gaining entry into the Aegean and the Mediterranean Seas. Hence, Czarist-Russia made a concerted effort to reach the Gulf region through Persia which had declined during the eighteenth century. It was a colonial mission of both Britain and France to prevent Czarist–Russia from entering into the Gulf Region. Hence one could notice their efforts to keep Persian Gulf out of Russian reach. The establishment of British hegemony over Oman and constant help to Arab tribal Sheiks to create Sheikdoms of their own sometimes autonomous other times semi-autonomous of Ottomans Turkey could be noticed during this period. Colonial conquest of the kind that happened in India, did not occur in the Persian Gulf; but the British, through diplomacy and arm twisting succeeded in establishing their political supremacy in the region where by some kind of British hegemony came to be established

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3 Ravinder Kumar, India and the Persian Gulf Region 1858-1907, Asia Publishing House, Bombay 1965, Introduction, p.3
over the Gulf region which secured the expansion of colonial interests in the rest of Asia, much more in India.6

Presently an analysis of this aspect as to how essential was the Persian Gulf region to Britain to conquer, subjugate and control South India is attempted here. In the second part of the eighteenth century, South India more or less was represented by Haider Ali and Tipu Sultan who in their own way understood the beginnings of British colonial machinations and rose up to challenge the colonial might.

The eighteenth century, in India could be divided into pre-British first half and the later British half. Contemporary historiography the Indian, as well as the British link up the entire century with causality and process of the decline of the Mughal Empire. One of the historians of the eighteenth century Indian history lamented that “the eighteenth century in Indian history was unfortunate in that it was sandwiched between the political glory of the Great Mughals and humiliations of colonial rule”.7

On the ground, that theory was based on explanations posting a personal deterioration in the quality of the kings and their nobles of harem influence and of unproven increase of luxury in the eighteenth century court. It began with the accession of imbecile kings and degenerate nobles who were powerless to keep together the sprawling Indian Mughal Empire. Historians have described the eighteenth Century as the Dark Age of Indian History.8 Indian rulers knew nothing about the modern methods of administration unlike Europe under enlightened leadership. Indian leaders were also fighting among themselves making room for the foreigners who were superior to them in diplomacy, state-craft and

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7 Muzaffar Alam, The Crisis of Empire in Mughal North India, Oxford University Publishers, N, Delhi 1986, p.9
8 Ishwari Prasad, India in the 18th Century, Cheugh Publications, Allahabad, India, 1973, p. vi
military organization. The lack of potential for social and economic transformation in such sterile state domination made the eighteenth century ultimately prove to colonial stronghold over trade outlets to the Indian ocean and bays on the either side of the peninsula, and they were finally replaced by an authoritarian and absolutist colonial imperialism. South India is not an exception to this hard reality.  

In Persia, the eighteenth century was a nation of constant change and unrest. It was in fact, a century of revolutions which has been comprehensively interpreted and analyzed by various historians. The Persian effort to assert authority ended with the death of Nadir Shah in 1747. Afterwards, it was left to the petty states of the Arabian shore to contest amongst themselves for primacy in the Gulf waters. There was anarchy and piracy which ultimately induced the British to establish control over the Persian Gulf.

Historical and cultural relationship, that existed between the Persian Gulf and South India date back to the Christian era. Indo-Arab relations are perhaps older than any other international contact. Even before the rise of Islam, the Arabs had established relationship with India particularly with South India. The people of Arabia could not grow any food crops in their hot sandy climate, which nature had bestowed upon them. It came as a blessing in disguise to develop their interest both in inland and overseas trade for their livelihood. By about the fifteenth century the Arabs lost their importance in the Indian Ocean. The successive repression and economic blockade by the European trading companies and their own deficiencies pushed back the Arabs from the

11. Nilakantasastri K.A., Foreign Notices Southern India, University of Madras, 1939, p.20
12. Sushma Gupta, Indian and Iran through the ages, in the quarterly review of Historical studies, Vol, XXIII, No-1, Calcutta, 1983-84, Pp.33-36,
Oceanic trade arena. First it was the Portuguese and followed by the Dutch, the French and the English. This unprecedented European challenge at the sea to two ancient states, cultures, tradition and civilizations led to the formation of a unique strategic alliance between South India and the Persian Gulf. In this first known Asian solidarity Alliance in the modern period, Egyptian, Turks and Indians came together to contain the formidable Portuguese challenge at sea. The combined fleet defeated the squadron commanded by Dom Lourenco’s father Francisco d Almeida, son of the Portuguese Viceroy in 1508. But after a short period, the Portuguese won over Indians at Calicut; then European forces started plying on Indian waters. The superiority was due to the fact that the Europeans possessed large number of sophisticated ships with powerful guns.

The decline of Mughal power, the Mughal-Maratha conflicts and the intervention of the French and the British in local conflicts were primarily responsible for the downfall of the Mughal Empire in the Indian sub-continent. The Marathas, the Sikhs, the Jats, the Zamindards and the Rajputs challenged the imperial rule of the Mughals. The vulnerability of the Mughals to the Maratha plunder led merchants and bankers to migrate to safer places. The richest merchants and bankers also gained a stake in the new political order in 1760s. The English and the Dutch trading companies further established themselves in coastal enclaves during the seventeenth century. The British colonial rule gained an upper hand over other Europeans mainly because of its enlightened leadership, scientific progress, advanced diplomacy and

15. Sushma Gupta, Indian and Iran through the ages, P364-5.
military supremacy. It was the culmination of long term transitions in trade, finance, society and culture that offered the British the very resources they needed to exercise greater control over Indian subcontinent. The regional states of the eighteenth century were left in a state of flux and friction internally.\(^{18}\)

The revival of Turkey’s aggression in the mid-seventeenth century had a decisive impact on the stability of the Ottoman Empire. The Hapsburg army beat the Ottomans at St.Gotthard in 1664 and subsequently.\(^{19}\) The Ottomans were forced to make peace with the Austrians. The Ottoman Empire was also affected by the European powers on account of the Treaty of Karlowitz against Austria in 1699.\(^ {20}\) The Ottomans had to organize a huge polyglot empire in the seventeenth century comprising 25 and 30 million people of many diverse races and creeds. The Ottoman Empire was a mixture of widely different institutions and cultures even though Constantinople had remained an important centre of administration. Muslims were allowed to practice their own religion and were also utilized well for the progress of the Empire. The pressure upon the empire from Europe prevented it from taking any advantage of the downfall of Iran. The Ottoman Empire was also affected by British colonialism since the Sultans of eighteenth Century were weak rulers. They lacked the strength to meet the vicissitudes confronting the empire. The Sultans never had the opportunity to learn the art of state craft. The wars with Russia and Austria caused the downfall of the Ottomans. Peace with Russia and Austria freed the Ottomans to regain their possessions lost to Venice at

\(^{20}\) Ibid, p.243
Karlowitz in 1699. The structure of the empire was becoming more and more difficult to consolidate; the Ottoman Empire in the later eighteenth century had remained or reverted to a medieval state, with a medieval mentality and a medieval economy. It was clear that from about 1760 onwards the ramshackle treaty of capitulations (1740 AD), and by treaty of Kuchuk Kainarji (1763 AD) Russia had extorted great concessions from the Ottoman Empire. Treaty of Ainali Kavak (1779 AD), peace of Jassy with Russia (1792 AD), it was weakened. War-weariness, lack of money and the hostility of Karim Khan, one short lived despot who occupied the Persian throne in the eighteenth century. The rise of Napoleon was primarily responsible for the downfall of the Ottoman Empire in general, and the disintegration of West Asia in particular. Many Sultans of the eighteenth century could not accomplish the task of reforms since they were not fully equipped with the necessary vision and administrative skill.

Shah Abbas, the prominent ruler of Persia sought to turn the European presence to his own advantage in the struggle with the Ottoman Empire. In 1622, Shah Abbas managed to persuade the English to cooperate with his land forces in expelling the Portuguese from their base on the island of Hormuz. There was also a considerable exchange of embassies between Persia and Europe. The Safavid Empire witnessed the age of discovery and diplomatic expansion in Europe. The high level of material and cultural prosperity attained by the Safavid Empire led many Europeans to actively wreck the Safavid Empire. The incompetence

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22. S.N. Fisher, The Middle East, P.248
23. Ibid, P. 250
24. Ibid, p.252
26. Fisher S.N, The Middle East, P.254
of subsequent Shahs, economic crisis, administrative problems, the Afghan invasion and rivalries between the Turks and the Iranians were mainly responsible for the decline of the Safavid Empire in the eighteenth century.  

In the eighteenth century many new powers emerged on the political scene of southern India. The Marathas became prominent under the leadership of Peshawa and they took about the whole of southern India under their sway. However, the state of Mysore and Hyderabad though afraid of the Marathas pretended to be independent. It was Kilich Khan who founded an independent state in Hyderabad and Haider Ali setup an independent state in Mysore. Consequently both Hyderabad and Mysore were forced to enter into a tough struggle against the Marathas and the British.

The political developments in South India have had a personality of their own. It was a period of great confusion as a result of a clash of three powers in the Indian sub-continent. The Mughals who were on the decline, the Marathas at the Zenith of their power, and the Europeans were just raising their political authority. This clash of interests offered a fine opportunity to ambitious persons to rise quickly to the highest point of power, and play an important role in the politics of the period. While India is one geographical unit, South India is one compact cultural unit primarily known as ‘Dravidian culture’. Several external and internal powers ruled South India during the eighteenth Century. The Portuguese, the Dutch, the French and the English constituted the external forces while the Nizam of Hyderabad, the Marathas, the Nawab of Carnatic, the King of Travancore, the Mysore rulers and others constituted the internal

28. Sushma Gupta, India and Iran through the Ages, P.40
rulers of South India. A look at the history of South India in the eighteenth century is pertinent to the understanding of the interests, positions and postures of principal actors in the region.

In south India one of the most formidable rulers Haider Ali challenged the British hegemony; he was compelled to take a series of bold measures to curb the Europeans in the South. Before his advent Mysore enjoyed the comfortable obscurity of an internal position. Suddenly it got the stimulus of a political frontier. The pressure of the Maratha expansion southward and the clash of arms between the Europeans nations in India created new opportunities; for that was not in harmony with the long accepted trend of Mysore history. This attempt starts the new beginning in the eighteenth century in the form of trade and commerce between South India and the Persian Gulf. Haider Ali and Tipu Sultan were the prominent rulers in South India, who realized the importance of co ordination and a cordial relationship between these regions.\(^{30}\) He who defied the British and refused to become a tributary to the East India Company mainly was considered an enemy to be eliminated.

Mysore was ruled by the Wodeyars from the fifteenth century. Chikkadevaraja Wodeyar who ruled in the seventeenth century was a conqueror and a good administrator. He acquired Bangalore from Kasim Khan, the Mughal General, and the subsequent years till the close of the seventeenth century engaged himself in settling his affairs with the Ikkeri, Madurai and the Marathas. The price of Mysore’s survival and expansion under the Wodeyars was then compromised and even subordination, on some occasions (Figure-1). By 1700 he reached the zenith of his power and crowned his achievements by sending an embassy to the court of

\(^{30}\) Sultan Muhammed Al-Qasimi, The Myth of Arab Piracy in the Gulf, Routledge 1988, p.27
Aurangzeb. The prestige of Mysore was enhanced. Mysore found the friendship of the Mughals and came to be considered as power to be reckoned with.\textsuperscript{31}

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Chikkadevaraja Wodeyar was succeeded by his son Kanteerava Narasaraja Wodeyar II, but this king was deaf. He was succeeded by his father’s trusted minister Tirumalaingar. Simultaneously with the accession of Narasaraja Wodeyar II, the Kalale family came into prominence; this house had matrimonial relations with the Dalvoys of Mysore, an office which later became so powerful that the Raja was pushed to the background and this was the predicament which Haider Ali cleverly exploited to his gain.

The rule of Narasaraja Wodeyar II was generally quiet but for some local engagements. The successors of Chikkadevaraja Wodeyar were weak and couldn’t manage the kingdom. The Dalvoys became prominent and took control of the administration. It is during this period that Mysore faced one crisis after another. Dalvoy Nanjarajaiah entered the Carnatic region and took up arms against the Nawab of Arcot.\(^{32}\) The war dragged on for several years without producing any tangible result; Dalvoy incurred huge losses during the Carnatic wars the treasury became empty and the government could not make payments to the soldiers. It was during this period of total anarchy that Haider Ali appeared on the scene and tried to save the kingdom and the state of Mysore from a serious crisis.\(^{33}\)

Haider Ali’s descendants had settled in Gulbarga during the reign of Mohammad Ali who proceeded to Kolar. His son Fateh Mohammad joined Nawab Daga Kulikhan of Sira. His son Haider Ali was born in 1721. Haider deprived of advantage of education took to the profession of mercenary at the seige of Devanahally. Haider’s talents as a soldier were highly developed. The Dalvoy of Mysore placed Haider in command of


50 horses and 200 foot men when Mysore force was sent to assist Nasirjang, the son of Nizam ul Mulk. Haider accompanied the force in the confusing struggle. NasirJang’s treasure fell into French hands but Haider was able to seize a portion of it on his return to Mysore. With the wealth thus obtained Haider augmented his troops and began to train them with the help of French deserters.

Two great rivals Haider faced in South India were the Marathas and Nizam of Hyderabad but, after the third battle of Panipat in 1761 the Maratha power collapsed and Haider took advantage of this development and extended his kingdom in the north. Haider realized that he must first build a strong kingdom in order to face his adversaries, namely the Marathas and the British. He was fully conscious of the British intentions and also their methods of acquiring territory. In his view “the English first try to secure a footing in other territories by outward professions of friendship and then gradually they bring them under their full sway.”

Haider was not a mercenary or a plunderer who wanted to amass wealth during the troubled period of eighteenth century. He had a glorious design which differs from the pretty rulers of South India in order to establish a stable and a peaceful state. Haider thought that an all-round expansion was a necessity hence he prepared himself for his grandiose plan of building a vast kingdom in South India. For this purpose he had to eliminate the pretty chieftains and Poligars who had dotted the map of Karnataka.

After equipping himself with a well trained army he set out to eliminate the local chieftains who had neither the capacity nor vision to provide a stable administration. Fortunately for him the conditions were favourable to advance and subdue the surrounding Poligars. As his

expansion continued he came across some strong rulers who were settled in impregnable forts or strategic centres. On such occasions he took the help of some of the allies like the Poligars of Chitradurga and began to conquer the Paleputts in the southern, eastern and northern parts of Mysore. He therefore undertook an expedition; he first annexed Hoskote, Doddaballapura and Sira. He was able to occupy Madakasera, Penugonda and surrounding regions which belonged to Murari Rao of Gutty. Then he was able to conquer Neelagal and other places. Haider’s great achievement was the conquest of Bedanur. He captured the treasure of the kingdom, which had about one crore Varaha. After this conquest he was able to conquer Chitradurga also.

Haider now turned towards Malabar. He conquered that province and built a fort at Palghat. This conquest gave an opportunity to Haider to understand the value of trade with western countries. He now understood that instead of depending upon the land revenue only he should explore returns from other directions, he was convinced that overseas trade was the great need of the hour; for this purpose he required control over the coastal areas in the West. As a result he was able to extend his sway from Honnavar up to Kerala on the West coast.

Haider Ali was a soldier of fortune. He inherited neither a kingdom nor a strong of army of his own in the beginning. But taking advantage of the weakness of the Maharaja and decline of the Dalvoys he became a ruler. Very soon he was able to gather a sizable army of his own. The army which was meant for defensive purpose began to grow in size and strength and Haider was emboldened to take up annexations. As

mentioned earlier Haider marched rapidly overcoming some of the small states and occupying the areas belonging to the Marathas. Then Haider was able to expand his kingdom in the north. His activities alarmed the Marathas. The creation of a vast Mysore Kingdom obviously created tension among many of the ruling dynasties in Southern India. As a result Haider had to encounter some of the great powers like the Marathas and the Nizam of Hyderabad and others. When his territories were threatened Haider was forced to provide suitable defence mechanism to his territories thus. Haider Ali who was always in the battlefield began to devote his attention towards the defence of his country which included strengthening and safeguarding the forts, castles, trade centres and harbours.

The next logical task for Haider was the development of Sea power. About 1763 Haider took earnest interest in the sea trade. He invited the merchants of different communities to come and settle in the ports of Mangalore, Honnavar and Karwar. Further he intended to expand sea trade. He had to compete with advanced naval power like the Portuguese and the British in the middle of eighteenth century in western coasts of South India. The changes were the expansion of sea trade, the close contact between the land and sea trade led to increased sea trading activities. Haider Ali built a small naval unit during the Malabar invasion. His fleet played a major role along with the land force. At this time he had 80 vessels, 13 top sail ships several Manchus of war materials and provisions. Haider utilized the services of the Mappilas

40. Hyder Kaifiat,Folio .105 ,Oriental Manuscript Library ,Madras.
41. R.C.Temple, Austria’s Commercial Venture In India, The Indian Antiquary,Vol.XLVII,1918,P.13
for his Maritime adventures. He was increasing his maritime power. In 1767 the Bombay East India Company, squadron’s expedition against the sea ports of Mysore destroyed part of her fleet and Honnavar and Mangalore were captured. Again a new fleet was built and Raghoji Angri son of Tulaji Angria admiral of the Maratha fleet was chosen. Bhatkal harbour developed into a great naval arsenal and dockyard. Haider planned to establish and build up a strong navy with the help of the Dutch by 1778. He planned to construct naval bases and to provide them with necessary accommodation for building and preserving the most powerful fleet in Asia. The project work also included fortification for the defence of the ports. He was able to get 83 mast ships carrying 28 to 40 pieces of Artillery. When naval centres established along the west coast the British realized the threat of his scheme. They had already fallen a prey into Haider Ali, for they were already beginning to suffer from want of everything and the supply of provisions by sea had been cut off by the vessels of Haider Ali. In 1781 they immediately came forward and destroyed almost all his marine centres and workshops.

Haider’s untimely death created a serious crisis in Mysore. Haider died in the battle field fighting the British but, had established a strong kingdom and equipped it with an invincible defence system. However, Tipu continued the war his father had began, but, the second Anglo-Mysore war ended in 1784 by the treaty of Mangalore. This was a great setback to the British and provoked them to take suitable steps to defeat Tipu Sultan.

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43. Sinha, Haider Ali, P. 145
44. Sec. and Pol. Department Diary No. 16, 29 Dec. 1775, PP. 444-47, MSA
45. Richard Herberth, Navy in India 1763-83, P. 30
46. Sec. and Pol. Department Diary No. 24, 2 Jan. 1781, PP. 9-12, MSA
47. MAR-1930, P. 101
Tipu at the same time was also determined to build a vast army and a good naval power to fight the British. He was more ambitious and aggressive than his father. Tipu was aware of his weakness and turned to approach various Indian princes for help.\textsuperscript{48} Though he tried to form an alliance against British with the Marathas the Nizam he continued his efforts to form various alliances he sent embassies to countries like Afghanistan, Turkey, Mauritius and France. At the same time he developed several plans to build a strong navy to challenge the British in the field of naval power.\textsuperscript{49} Tipu’s greatest ambition was to get help from Napoleon of France to defeat the British in India, but he was not able to succeed in this plan due to the internal turmoil in France and Europe.

Among all the Indian princes of the time, Haider Ali and Tipu Sultan in Mysore appeared on the scene, and played a dominant role until the superior western military strength reduced them all, an insignificant state of Mysore turned into a mighty power of the Deccan. They elevated a small state of Mysore to the rank of an important power, and brought it into contact with the bigger world. The fall of the Deccan states of Golconda and Bijapur led to the extension of Mughal Empire to the borders of Mysore.\textsuperscript{50} With the rise of Haider Ali, to power in 1760, the politics of South India underwent a dramatic change. In the conflict between the French and English for the mastery of the South India, Haider played a dominant role ever since the Carnatic Wars of 1750-55. This was the starting point of the inveterate hostility that continued between the English and Mysore until the overthrow of Tipu Sultan.

In 1773 the Danes Company succeeded in getting a very large order for arms and ammunitions from local powers including Haider Ali.

\textsuperscript{48} Sec. and Pol. Department Diary No.38, June-Dec.1788,PP.358-359,MSA
\textsuperscript{49} Nikhiles Guha. Pre-British State System in South India, Mysore 1761-1799,Calcutta,p.164
\textsuperscript{50} Hayavadana Rao C., Mysore Gazetteer ,Vol-II,p.2478-80
The English came in the way of the Danes economically and otherwise. By about 1795 the Danes were very active in the new port at Allepey. A large portion of Danish territory was washed away by the sea in 1755. The last quarter of the Eighteenth Century provided the Danes Company with its best returns. During the war in 1781, the English captured the Dutch factories all along the coast, including Porto Novo. The Dutch entered into an agreement with Haider Ali against the English and obtained from him the cession of Nagore as settlement.\(^{51}\) The Dutch once again came to the limelight in politics during the Mysore making inroads into Malabar. In 1789 Tipu renewed the attack on Travancore Lines, but did not achieve any success. He had to withdraw owing to the English attack on his capital at Srirangapatna. English supremacy in Malabar became a reality during the third Mysore war between the English and Tipu in 1792. The Dutch possessed only the fort of Cochin and a few acres of land at Quilon. However, in 1795 even these tiny possessions were taken over by the English thereby sealing the fate of the Dutch in South India.\(^{52}\)

By the middle of the eighteenth century, the English-French relations were marred by hostility and confrontation. Haider Ali had played a major role ever since the Carnatic Wars of 1750-55 between the French and the English for the mastery of the South. In 1755, Bussy, a French General in India got an opportunity to maintain French influence in the Deccan. The French Government resolved to attack the English settlements in India but failed to win the confidence of Indian allies and French subordinates in 1756. Mysore was also the ally of the French who worked against British.

\(^{52}\).Panikkar,K.M History of Kerala, The Annamalai University, Annamalai, Tamilnadu, 1958, p.267
Haider Ali’s cordial relation with the French was always a bone of contention with the English. The French had to surrender Mahe and its dependencies to the English under the changed political circumstances in 1761. From 1763 on words the decline of the French was very rapid. They were defeated on all the seas and their position in India grew weaker and weaker. However, they secured necessary clauses in the Tellicherry and Mahe agreements and safeguarded their commercial interests. According to the Treaty of Paris of 1763, the French were to be put in possession of the places that they held earlier in India. In 1765, the French flag was hoisted by Plusquelle which marked their comeback in South India. The French were fully pre-occupied with strengthening their defence in South India. They completed the construction of Mahe fort and warehouses for goods and stores in 1769.

The English recognized their rights to fortifications and trade in South India. In the middle of the eighteenth century witnessed a joining of two thriving commercial worlds, that of India and that of Western Europe, India and England, as part of the Early Modern world, had already been simultaneously shaped by an interconnected trading system. Far from juxtaposing a progressive Europe with a declining traditional India ripe for conquest finds the key to the European penetration of India precisely in its accessibility and its flourishing economy The British East India Company. It was committed to securing its Indian interests all costs. Control of the seas, in an era in which export trade brought the greatest profit, gave English an edge over all rivals for India. The demand for pepper inevitably moved the English and French companies to compete with each other. King Martanda Varma of the

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State of Travancore strengthened the bondage with the English who were the dominant colonial power of South India.\textsuperscript{55}

Kerala was a resourceful country with many natural harbours that became the centre of world contact. Obviously Haider Ali was eager to establish control over the Malabar area. The Raja of Palghat, Komi Achan, in his desperation appealed to Haider Ali, then \textit{Faujdar} of Dindigal, for military help when the Zamorian was marching against him. Accordingly Haider Ali sent a force to assist the Palghat Raja. But Zamorian fled and promised to pay a war indemnity of twelve lakhs of rupees.\textsuperscript{56} But he failed to pay the same to Haider Ali, so he determined to invade Malabar, which all long had been his plan. Ali Raja of Cannanore and the prince regent of the Kolathanadu invited him to interfere in the affairs of Kolathanadu kingdom; both considered the English an enemy. Both parties were in fact balancing the interests at stake.\textsuperscript{57} Ali Raja met Haider Ali in 1766 and requested him to take up the Thampan’s cause against the Regent. Haider Ali had the ambition to subjugate the whole west coast in order to strengthen his position by providing him with the facilities of the western ports.\textsuperscript{58} In 1766 Haider marched with his army into Northern Kerala and conquered the kingdom of Kolathanadu, Kottayam, Kadathanadu and Kurumbanadu one after the other and reached the gate of Calicut, the capital of Zamorian. In 1768, the King of Calicut, Raja Manavikrama submitted himself before Haider, who gave him back his kingdom and demanded a tribute of four lakhs of

\textsuperscript{57} M.M.D.L.T. History of Hyder Ali Khan, P.93
\textsuperscript{58}..Panikkar, K.M, \textit{History of Kerala}, p.326
rupees towards the expenses of his army. Raja Manavikrama committed suicide since his conscience did not permit him to surrender out rightly.\(^{59}\)

Haider Ali further moved towards Kadathanad where the Kadathanad Nayars decided to put up strenuous resistance. He met with very little organized resistance afterwards and captured Calicut. He was in a better position to capture Cochin and Travancore. The Raja of Cochin became a feudatory of Mysore while the Ramaraja of Travancore resisted the moves of Haider Ali. He completed the conquest of Kerala up to the boundaries of Cochin since the Malabar kingdoms had no horses and other military resources.\(^{60}\) Thus the attempt of Haider Ali to conquer Kerala was a great success. This was an important acquisition for him. “As it gave him a long coast and made him a sea power.”\(^{61}\) From 1775 Haider changed his policy in Kerala and utilized the Kerala princes as his agents for government. After his conquest of the Malabar kingdoms and the submission of Cochin, only Travancore remained outside the Mysorean political orbit. The Raja of Travancore was animated by a generous desire to help the refugees against Mysore. After the death of Haider Ali, the Raja of Travancore continued to assist the Malabar chieftains against Mysore.\(^{62}\)

In 1773 the French King took charge of the Government of Mahe. From 1777, the French intensified their propaganda in several courts. The last attempt of the French to re-establish their ascendancy was made in 1778. In 1778, the French surrendered Pondicherry to the English. Mahe was the only centre which was controlled by the French. The French also established good rapport with Haider Ali, the ruler of Mysore and

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\(^{59}\) M.M.D.L.T, History of Hyder Ali Khan, p. 111  
\(^{60}\) K.M. Panikkar, History of Kerala, pp. 326-27  
\(^{62}\) A.P. Ibrahim Kunju, Relation between Travancore and Mysore in the 18\(^{th}\) Century., in Irfan Habib, (ed), Confronting and colonialism, p. 81
strengthened military relations. In 1779, a European detachment arrived at Mahe from Mauritius intended for service under Haider. A clash of arms subsequently between the English and French in India began.

A powerful confederacy of Indian powers was formed in 1780 to remove the English from India. If the French had preserved their old ascendancy in India, they would have profited by the league formed against the English possessions in India. Piveron de Morlet laid greater emphasis on an alliance with Haider. S.P.Sen cites the following extract about the French and Haider alliance in the verse of Piveron de Morlet, “In the brilliant situation in which Haider Ali Khan stands, master to-day of nearly the whole kingdom of the Carnatic and at the head of an army considered formidable in this country….I do not see any prince of India alliance with whom could be more suitable to us”. The French were also supported by Prince Ravi Varma of the Zamorin’s family. Haider Ali also wanted his tributaries to help the French in South India. Haider Ali was personally interested in the safely and retention of Mahe by the French because the French supplied military stores to Haider Ali who had a comprehensive plan to evict the English from the Malabar Coast. In 1779, the British took over Mahe which marked the exit of the French from South India. The French gradually occupied Fort St. George without any resistance on the part of the English.

Tipu was able to consolidate his position after the death of Haider Ali in 1782. The Kerala rulers and Zamindars of Kerala coast became the allies of Tipu Sultan in 1784 (Figure-2). The Bombay Government had prevailed upon Tipu to include the Raja of Travancore as the ally of the

63. Sec. and Pol. Dept Diaries No.21, 31/Dec/1779,p.641, Maharashtra State Archives, Bombay
65. K.M.Panikkar, History of Kerala, p.344
Company in the Treaty of Mangalore which was signed on March 11, 1784. Tipu was greatly regarded as a ruler with better talents and humanity; Tipu took into his own hands the question of changing the entire structure of Kerala society. The Kerala Princes, allies and enemies alike felt the presence of Tipu Sultan in the region. He issued orders for the reorganization of the provinces, separating the fiscal, civil and military arrangements. A permanent army of occupation was maintained in Kerala to overawe the population and to suppress any possible revolt.

Figure-2

Tipu rightly believed that the activities of the Raja of Travancore were a menace to the security of his possessions in Malabar. The Raja of Travancore purchased the two Dutch forts of Cranganore and Ayakkotta in order to strengthen his position. But these came under Tipu’s possession, so Tipu decided to force the Raja of Travancore whose troops failed to contain the march of Tipu. The Mysore forces occupied the Cranganore fort and razed the Travancore Lines to the ground. It had been built by the Raja to oppose the Mysore attack. This incident inspired the English to declare war against Mysore in May 1790. Tipu was defeated in this war and sued for peace with the English. Under the provisions of the treaty of Srirangapatna (March 18th 1792) Malabar was ceded to the English East India Company by the Sultan.

The last struggle for supremacy by the French was ended by the Treaty of Versailles in 1783. The French possession of Mahe in 1792 did not pose any serious threat to the British politically and otherwise. Tipu Sultan was greatly disappointed and was embittered by the conduct of the French during the second Anglo-Mysore War. The French authorities tried to convince Tipu Sultan and assured him of future French support to drive out the English from India. But Tipu did not come forward with any positive response. The French became active in mediating peace between Tipu and the Marathas in South India. The French failed to win over the Nizam and the Marathas. Mysore State and the French shared good relations and this had a far reaching impact on the politics of the time.

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67 Sec.and Pol.Diary No.43,Jan-Aug 1792,PP.310-11,MSA,
68 Secret Consultations No.12,dt.September 25.1789,Tamilnadu State Archives.
70 Political Consultations No.4,dt March 10.1790,TSA
The French were the first to play the game of converting a commercial company into a political power especially in South India. The affairs of the French and English breaking out of the first war in 1744 and the final overthrow of Lally at Pondicherry by Coote in 1761. The French factory in Mahe had been reduced to commercial interests rather than any political prestige or power. The French were almost reduced in India to the position of store-keepers or merchants by the end of 18th Century since the military strength of the English was superior to them.

The siege of Arcot in 1751 by the English is a memorable episode in Indian history since it enriched the stature of Robert Clive. By the end of 1752, the French had lost their possessions except Jinji and Pondicherry in South India. The Treaty of Pondicherry in 1755 facilitated their possession of Masulipattana by the English. The Marathas supported the English and advanced into the Nizam’s country. The English had established their supremacy after the battle of Plassy in 1757. The Treaty of Paris of 1763 enabled the French to continue to hold the possession of the places which they had held in India at the beginning of 1749. The State ruled by Muhammad Ali is known as Carnatic in the history of South India. The Mughals had annexed the territory located in South India in the seventeenth century and named it as Carnatic. Another state by the name Sera also came under the Mughal Sultanate in 1711. Governors were appointed by the Delhi High Command in order to look after the States and facilitate better administration. This territory is now known as Arcot, which is located in the present day Tamil Nadu. In 1743, Anwaruddin took over the Sultanate of Arcot by dethroning the

72. Ibid, p.71
rulers of the family, but he was killed in 1749 and his son Muhammad Ali fled to Trichnapalli.\textsuperscript{73}

The political instability in South India became worse following the rivalry between the \textit{Navayets} and \textit{Wallajahs} over the Nawabship of Arcot. Muhammad Ali, a member of the Wallajah family became the Nawab of Arcot in 1752 with the help of Chikka Krishnaraja Wodeyar\textsuperscript{74} and the English East India Company at Fort St. George by killing Chanda Saheb, the then existing \textit{Nawab} of Arcot.\textsuperscript{75} He conceded a big chunk of territory under his control to the British with the fond hope of getting assistance from them. Consequently, the British established their government properly in this area due to the weaknesses of Muhammad Ali. The British also prevailed upon the Delhi High Command and got Muhammad Ali appointed as the Nawab of Carnatic. Meanwhile, Chand Sahab was killed and Muhammad Ali gained absolute control over Arcot. This made him a military ally of the British for all times to come.

Muhammad Ali supported the British indirectly in the battles held between the British and the rulers of Mysore. The refusal of Muhammad Ali to surrender the promised area of Tiruchirapalli province to Mysore became a turning point in the future relations of between Mysore and the Carnatic regions. In 1760, Haider Ali, the \textit{Faujdar} of Chikka Krishnaraja Wodeyar at Dindugul entered into an alliance with a difference at Pondicherry and attacked Muhammad Ali’s territory.\textsuperscript{76} However, Muhammad Ali was assisted by the English and defeated the Mysore troops and conquered the taluk of Karur and the district of Dindukkal from Mysore rulers.\textsuperscript{77} Nawab Muhammad Ali died in 1795, just four

\textsuperscript{73} Wilks, Historical Sketches of Mysore, Vol-I, p.289
\textsuperscript{75} Wilks, Historical Sketches of Mysore, Vol-I, p.331
\textsuperscript{76} Wilks, Historical Sketches of Mysore, Vol-I, p.462
\textsuperscript{77} Manual of the Administration of the Madras Presidency,Vol.I,p.177(History)
years before the martyrdom of Tipu Sultan. The British had promised to make him the ruler of Mysore and obtained his support in the battles against Tipu Sultan. Muhammad Ali could not gain any political control and advantage of power by conspiring against the Muslim rulers. Soon after the fall of Srirangapatna, the British found some letter of correspondence between Mohammed Ali and his son Umad ul Umara with Tipu Sultan. On the allegation of this correspondence the English utilized this opportunity and subsequently the Carnatic province was subjugated to British rule in 1801.

By 1769, the French had lost their economic and political supremacy in South India due to the superior organization of the English company and the patriotic efforts made by the leaders of the East India English Company. By 1770, the French company became bankrupt and English East India Company grew in stature economically and politically. The English gained an upper hand in the First Anglo-Maratha War (1775-82) and the Governor-General-in-Council was empowered to superintend the affairs of the other two Presidencies of Bombay and Madras.

The Treaty at Purandhar in 1776 encouraged the English authorities to interfere in Maratha affairs.\(^78\) The complications of the Company increased tremendously by the setting up of a confederacy made up of the Marathas, Haider Ali, the Nizam and the Bhonsle of Nagpur in 1780.\(^79\) Governor-General Hastings took firm action on both diplomatic and military fronts. Subsequently, the Nizam of Hyderabad, Gaikwad of Baroda and Bhonsle of Nagpur changed their side in favour of the Company. The English captured Ahmedabad in 1780 after defeating the Maratha leader Mahadji Sindhia. The last struggle for


\(^{79}\) Fort William India House Correspondence, Vol-VIII, 1777-81, NAI-1981. P.14
supremacy of the French was finished by the Treaty of Versailles in 1783 which caused severe setback to the French since the organization of the English Company and military strength was superior to the French.

The Second Mysore War paved the way for declaration of the rulers of Kerala as the friends and allies of Tipu after the Treaty of Mangalore (1784). In 1787, Lord Cornwallis could not enter into an offensive and defensive alliance with the Marathas because of the Pitt’s India Act. But Tipu’s attack on one of the allies of the company set him free to organise a confederacy against Tipu. He wanted to get the assistance of the Indian princes, in order that “the war should be speedily terminated not only on the point of view of the company’s finances but also in order to preclude the coming of help from France.” In 1789, the English, the Nizam and the Marathas formed a coalition to combat Tipu’s expansionism in South India. The Treaty of Srirangapatna of 1792 freed the Kerala coast from the control of Tipu Sultan. The Third Anglo-Mysore War (1792) was responsible for handing over the possessions of Tipu in Malabar including Alangad, Parur and Kannathunad to the English. The Third Anglo-Mysore War (1790-92) in which both the Marathas and the Nizam were allies of the British against Tipu Sultan of Mysore witnessed the victory of the English and loss of territories and financial resources on the part of Tipu. The revenue of the territory ceded was estimated at Rs.1,18,50,294 and each share amounted to Rs.39,50,000. The company got Malabar and Coorg on west of Mysore, on the south Dindugal with the surrounding districts and on the east,

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80. Ibrahim Kunju.A.P., Relation between Travancore and Mysore in the 18th Cent., in Irfan Habib, (ed), Confronting and colonialism, p.81
81. Secret Consultations, No.1 dt March 3.1790
Baramahal. The general result was that the English had cut off the Tipu Sultan of Mysore from approach to the sea on the west coast.\textsuperscript{84}

The policy of imperial expansion reached its climax in 1790s. The Treaty signed between Travancore and the English East India Company in 1795 provided for the defence of Travancore by the Company against all foreign aggressions.\textsuperscript{85} In 1798, the Company assumed responsibility for the defence of the territories and the Nizam was made a permanent subordinate of the British. The procurement of the Carnatic, Mysore and Maratha territories made the English masters of large tracts of land in the Deccan. The transformation of the British Empire in India into the British empire of India under Lord Wellesley started from South India by 1800. The English crushed Tipu, tamed the Nizam of Hyderabad and shattered the political supremacy and military prowess of the Marathas in South India.

The Nizam supported the British in three out of the four battles against Mysore and caused the downfall of Tipu. He was unable to maintain his position by playing the three adversaries the English, the Marathas and the new rulers of Mysore against each other. The Nizam established a firm alliance with the English and became their tributary.\textsuperscript{86} After the death of Tipu, the British wiped away the remaining self-independence of the Nizam in 1800. Finally, Nizam died in 1803. Politically speaking, the Nizam of Hyderabad did not make his presence felt in South India. The Nizam was neither a formidable ruler nor a worthy patriot in letter and spirit. He was indeed a puppet in the hands of English rulers.

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{84} Political consultations, No. 3 dt April 27, 1792. TSA
\item \textsuperscript{85} Michel H Fisher (ed), The Politics of British Annexation of India, 1757-1857, OUP, New Delhi, 1999, P. 157
\item \textsuperscript{86} Ibid, p. X
\end{itemize}
The Marathas were the allies of the British in the first and the third battles among the four battles fought between Mysore and the British in South India. The death of Peshwa Madhava Rao in 1772, the wars of succession for the office of Peshwa and rivalries among the Maratha chiefs weakened the Marathas in general. Their internal conflicts and pre-occupations with self-aggrandizement were taken advantage of by their greedy and powerful neighbours in South India in the Eighteenth Century.

The Mysore State was indeed an unsettled State in the middle of the eighteenth century. Chikka Krishna Raja was a puppet in the hands of the two brothers Devaraja, his commander-in-chief, and Nanja Raja, his finance minister.\(^{87}\) The ambition of Nanja Raja had led him to futile military adventures in the Carnatic which made the State of Mysore financially bankrupt and politically unstable. The kingdom of Mysore was also threatened by the Marathas and the Nizam. All these conditions paved the way for the rise of Haider Ali who had extraordinary abilities and leadership qualities. He tried to build a strong navy, and in order to promote trade and commerce,\(^{88}\) he entered into relations with the rulers of Oman and Persia and established a factory at Muscat.

The Carnatic war of succession took place in 1751. Haider Ali took advantage to strategically conclusion and managed to secure two camel loads of gold coins which were safely dispatched to Devanhalli.\(^{89}\) In 1951, Muhammad Ali, Nawab of Arcot had a secret treaty with Mysore which caused severe losses to Mysore. Nanja Raja also endeavoured to enter into a treaty with the English but returned to Mysore in 1755 empty handed. Haider Ali was appointed as Fauijdar of Dindigul by the rulers

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\(^{87}\) Mohibbul Hasan (ed.) Waqai-i-Manazil-i-Rum, P.10
\(^{89}\) C.H. Rao, Mysore Gazetteer, Vol-II, p.2473
of Mysore. There were continued raids on Bangalore and Channapatna by the Marathas, but they withdrew their forces, and Haider Ali returned in triumph to Srirangapatna where he was received by the Chikka Deva Raja of Mysore with full honours and the title of Fatte Haidar Bahadur. Haider continued his extensive conquests of Sira, Chitradurga, and Bedanore and so on. During these operations, Chikka Krishna Raja died in 1766 and his eldest son Nanja Raja succeeded him with immediate effect.

Haider Ali obtained a further assignment of four districts from the Queen of Mysore. The Nawab of Arcot was directed to cease committing hostilities against the State of Mysore by the English. The Royal family of Mysore could not achieve much politically during the 18th Century (1765-1799) in view of their inadequate financial resources, diplomatic relations and military powers.

Haider Ali was appointed as a Faujdar at Dindigul in 1755 by Nanja Raja of Mysore. He became a very powerful man in Mysore after the political retirement of Nanja Raja in 1757. Haider Ali also infused vigor into the administration and improved the financial conditions of Mysore. He also strongly defended Mysore against external attacks and extended its territories. He organized a strong army, established law and order and promoted the economy of the State.

In 1772, Haider Ali recovered the possession which he had lost to Peshwa Madhava Rao and occupied all the Maratha territories south of the Krishan. Haider Ali possessed a strong army, a large kingdom and the friendship of the French. Haider Ali also alienated the Nizam of

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90. Ibid, p.2472
92. Suryanath U Kamath,(compiled),Karnataka State Gazetteer,Part-I,P.321
Hyderabad from the English and made all possible efforts to develop strategic relations with the French who gave him adequate moral and material support.94 Haider Ali could not crush the English in the Second Anglo-Mysore War due to lack of support from the Marathas and the French. However, Haider Ali continued his war against the English and other local adversaries until his death in 1782.

After Haider Ali’s death, Tipu Sultan took over the reigning power and inherited from his father a large kingdom, a vast treasure and a strong military force. He signed the Peace Treaty of Mangalore in 1784 which frustrated the English and increased his prestige.95 The English had suffered humiliating reverses at the hands of Haider Ali and Tipu Sultan. Tipu was rightly regarded as a more formidable force in southern India than either the Nizam or the Marathas. Tipu was a stumbling block in the path of expansion of the English territories in South India. Tipu possessed precious resources such as spices, sandalwood, pine trees, fine ports and so on in the Malabar region.

Tipu declared himself ‘Padishah’ (Sultan) in 1786.96 He put forth his best efforts to extend his influence and territories in South India by negotiating an alliance with the French in order to drive out the English from India. Tipu also tried to strengthen the army in terms of men and materials. His forces had uniforms, an officer corps, insignia, training manuals and an order of battle comparable to any European army of the day. There was universal respect by Tipu’s European opponents for his military organization, training and battle tactics.97

94. Ibid, p.2489
Tipu also knew well the vagaries of armies and the value of a military unit which could retreat without rout. He developed regimental colours, medals and a whole range of honours associated with the European armies of the time. He was an honourable exception since he was able to convert his \textit{watan-based} cavalry leaders into efficient, trained, well rewarded leaders of infantry units. Ranjit Singh’s Punjab and Tipu’s Mysore achieved considerable progress in the adoption of European-style military forces in the eighteenth century. Tipu also built armouries and regular garrisons for the troops to use during monsoons in order to effectively tackle his opponents including the British.\footnote{Brittlebank, Kate, \textit{Curiosities, Conspicuous piety and the Maker of Time: Some Aspects of Kingship in Eighteenth –Century South India, South Asia, Vol.16(2),1993,Pp45-46}} The construction of a navy to vie with that of England was proposed. The absurdity was not perceived of seeking to create a warlike fleet without a commercial navy. An improvement of the fortifications of Srirangapatna was also commenced, and labourers impressed from all parts of the country for the work.

Tipu Sultan next strained every nerve to form a coalition for the expulsion of the English from India. Embassies were despatched at various times to the Ottoman Porte and to the court of Kabul; letters were exchanged with Arabia, Persia and Muscat. Agents employed at Delhi, Oudh, Hyderabad and Poona, the object sought in the two last-named courts being two fold, namely, with the sovereigns themselves, and the seduction of their officers from them. Even the princes of Jodhpur, Jaypur and Kashmir did not escape an invitation to join this mighty coalition. The French in particular were repeatedly applied to. Tipu continuously recruit French officers in his service and artificers of every kind. His desire for foreign alliances and his despatch of embassies to foreign courts had this sole aim in view.
Figure - 3. TIPU SULTAN’S AMBASSADORS TO PARIS, MOHAMMED OSMAN KHAN, 1788.

Courtesy: Musée du Louvre, Paris
Tipu sent an embassy to France to negotiate directly with the French Government \(^99\)\((\text{Figure-3 & 4})\). He also expanded commercial activities in the Persian Gulf in order to mobilize financial resources and improve the economic status of Mysore State. Tipu took greater interest than his father in promoting diplomatic relations and commerce.\(^{100}\) Tipu also maintained a brisk correspondence with various rulers in India and abroad in order to strengthen the Mysore State in particular and build political alliance against the English in general. Tipu also fought against the Nizam and the Marathas who were friendlier with the English.

![Figure- 4. TIPU’S AMBASSADORS AND THEIR ENTOURAGE WALKING IN THE PARK AT St. CLOUD, 1788. Courtesy: Archives, Manufacture Nationale de Sevres](image)

The English resolved to eliminate Tipu since he was their most formidable enemy. Obviously the third Anglo-Mysore War occurred;

\(^{99}\) Mohibbul Hasan, History of Tipu Sultan, P.117
\(^{100}\) Sec and Pol. Dept., Diaries No.34, Sept 1786, Pp.815-16, MSA, Bombay
Tipu was defeated and sued for peace. Tipu entered into a Treaty of Srirangapatna (1792) which made him cede half his dominion, pay a heavy indemnity of over thirty millions and surrender two of his sons as hostages (Figure-5). These added to the material resources at the disposal of the East India Company for future contests against the Indian powers. Tipu was cut off both from the sea and from the passes leading to the Carnatic plain. The Marathas and the Nizam each got a third of the indemnity, besides territory adjacent to their possessions. Tipu was fully aware of the aggressive designs of the new British Governor-General Lord Cornwallis. Therefore, he did not want to test his luck too far and preferred to have a reasonable settlement with the Marathas who were the traditional rivals of Mysore.

Figure- 5. LORD CORNWALLIS RECEIVING TIPU SULTAN’S SONS AS HOSTAGES IN 1791

Courtesy: National Army Museum, London

Figure – 6 Tipu’s Kingdom after 1791

Tipu tried to renew his contest with the English and sent his envoys to Arabia, Constantinople, Kabul, Mauritius, Muscat, Persia and other countries during 1794-98\(^\text{102}\) (Figure-6). Even, the princes of Jodhpur, Jaipur and Kashmir were invited to join the coalition.\(^\text{103}\) The Fourth Anglo-Mysore War became inevitable in 1799 since Tipu declined to sever his connections with the French and make an abject surrender to the English. Tipu fought against the English and embraced a hero’s death with the utmost courage, conviction, and patriotism in war. As a result of the final defeat and death of Tipu, Kanara, Coimbatore, Srirangapatna and some districts in the east were annexed to the Company’s territories

\(^{102}\) Sec and Pol. Dept., Diaries No.34, Sept 1786, Pp.815-16;/ Diary No.35, Jan. 1787/Diary No.43, Jan.1792, MSA, Bombay

\(^{103}\) Sec and Pol. Dept., Diaries No.57, Sept 1797, Pp.1312-21, MSA, Bombay
and Mysore came to be surrounded by British territory on all sides except the north. A child of the old Hindu family of Mysore was made the King of Mysore. Subsequently a subsidiary army was deputed to Mysore,\textsuperscript{104} and Mysore came under the umbrella of the British rule.

The Persian Gulf is a land-locked sea extending in a south-easterly direction from Iraq to the straits of Hormuz. The Gulf of Oman lies to its east. The two gulfs constitute a composite geopolitical unit with their histories interwoven into a common pattern. The Gulf of Oman links the Persian Gulf with the seas skirting the western periphery of the Indian subcontinent. The landmasses of Persia and Arabia lie to the north and south of the Persian Gulf. It was a channel of cultural, political and economic relations between the ancient centres of civilization and the outer world from antiquity. In the 12\textsuperscript{th} Century AD, the Persian Gulf was called the ‘Indian Sea’ by Rabbi Benjamin Tudela.\textsuperscript{105} The Arab and Hindu traders had settled in the Persian Gulf which was known for cordial relations between the local rulers and the foreign traders. The geopolitics of the Persian Gulf upto the end of the fifteenth Century had remained the same for centuries according to historical evidence and documents. The Portuguese, the Dutch, the French and the English constituted external forces which exercised control over the Persian Gulf. The Persian effort to assert authority ended with the death of Nadir Shah in 1747.\textsuperscript{106} Thereafter, it was left to the petty states of the Persian Gulf to contest amongst them to gain the primacy of the Gulf waters. A look at the history of the Persian Gulf in the eighteenth century is pertinent to the understanding of the interests, positions and postures of principal actors in the region.

\textsuperscript{104} Aitchison, C.U., Collection of Sannads, Vol-IX, Part-II, 1929, P.240
\textsuperscript{105} Nilakanta Sastri, K.N. Foreign Notices of South India, University of Madras, 2001, P.134
An era of local resistance to European imperialism and its economic hegemony began in AD 1676 with the Zaidi movement in Yemen, during the reign of the Imam al-Mutawakkil. The Ibadi movement also began at Muscat during the era of the Bu Saidiyah in AD 1718, in order to assert the rights of the local people. Muscat emerged as a regional commercial power from AD 1719. The Wahhabi-Saudi movement also began from the heart of the Arabian Peninsula in AD 1744. Nadir Shah made sincere efforts to unify Persia against foreign influence in AD 1747. Kuwait also emerged as a promising commercial center under the leadership of Al Sabah in AD 1752. Qasimis also became a prominent local resistance power in AD 1777. Bahrain became an important commercial center in AD 1783 under the leadership of Al Khalifah. Al Sa’ud also built a strong local resistance movement called Wahhabism, on a regional basis, in AD 1792. Consequently these indigenous nationalist forces in the Persian Gulf and the Arab Peninsula, sustained an organized and protected confrontation with the traditional imperial and paternalistic powers and local interests, in the eighteenth century. The struggle that raged between the Portuguese, the Dutch and the English also paved the way for the relative success of these movements throughout the Eighteenth Century.

Persian Gulf is not a political entity but has three large territorial states, namely, Ottoman Turkey, Persia and Muscat. An attempt has been made here to describe West Asia as it was in the eighteenth Century. The internal political factors which are associated with South India and Persian Gulf relations during Haider Ali and Tipu Sultan are mainly focused in the present study.

107 Ibid, p.90
During the eighteenth century Turkey was still the most prominent and the foremost political power of the Middle East. The Ottoman Sultan had acknowledged the supremacy of the British in the Gulf region mainly due to the conflict of interest between Russian Czars and European colonial forces.\(^{110}\) The British found the Ottoman Empire increasingly irrelevant to their growing commercial interest in the orient via routes around the Horn of Africa. Ottoman advantage with cavalry was not much of an asset when compared to ships owned by small states like Portugal or Venice. The rulers saw rapid drying of capital with the highly lucrative maritime trade carried on by the Europeans with India. Tipu Sultan had greatest respect for the sultan of Turkey. Tipu Sultan to overcome the problem of legitimacy was found to be very fond of developing friendly relations with foreign powers, and this he accomplished through the appointment of trade agents and diplomatic missions.\(^{111}\) He is the only prince of that period who tried to secure foreign assistance for his design of defeating the English. The Ottoman Sultan had received an exploratory mission sent by Tipu Sultan in 1784 since he thought that Ottoman Empire was strong economically. A large diplomatic mission consisting of 900 people was also sent by Tipu Sultan in 1785 to Ottoman Empire which reached the Ottoman Sultan on November 5, 1787. The Sultan accorded permission to Tipu to assume the title of an independent monarch and the right to strike coins and to have the Khutbha read in his name.\(^{112}\) Ottoman Sultan had also agreed upon providing military assistance to Tipu Sultan to contain the British forces in India since he was impressed by the diplomatic initiatives of Tipu which was based on religious consideration. But he could not

\(^{110}\) Arnold. W.T., The Persian Gulf, p.172
\(^{111}\) Secret and Political Department Diaries No.34,Sep.1786 pp.815-16/ Kate Brittlebank, Tipu Sultan’s Search for Legitimacy, Oxford University Press 1995.p.81
\(^{112}\) Qureshi,Ishfaq Husain, Tipu Sultan’s Embassy to Constantinople,1787,in,Irfan Habib (ed.) Confronting Colonialism, , New Delhi ,pp.69-78
provide any military assistance to Tipu Sultan since he was preoccupied with defending his possessions under challenge from the Russians, Austrians and others. He politely, but firmly turned down Tipu’s request for a body of Turkish soldiers to be sent to Mysore to fight against the British.” 113

Ottoman Sultan enjoyed great prestige as the most dominant Muslim power relegating the Mughal Emperor to the background. The political conditions which prevailed in Ottoman Empire favoured mutually beneficial relations between Ottoman and British during the 18th Century. The Ottoman rulers also had an inclination to build trade relations with South India dominated by Tipu. In 1798, the British succeeded in signing a treaty with Muscat,114 which was the first foothold for their colonial administration in the Gulf. The era of Pax Britannica in the Gulf region started firmly under the control of the British and that Tipu’s trade relations with the Gulf suffered a serious setback.115 The Ottoman Sultan-III addressed a letter to Tipu describing the French invasion of Egypt and their plans to conquer Arabia and cautioned Tipu about the possible French domination in his state. Tipu replied to the Caliph professing his loyalty to the Head of the Faithful and sought to renounce friendship with the French.116 The British finally succeeded in establishing their political control over the Gulf mainly due to their military supremacy and economic resources. Ultimately, the Ottoman Empire succumbed to the British military power and became an ally.

114. Ibid. p. 172
115. Ibid. p. 173.
During this period, the Iranian kingdom became virtually powerless. When Afghans invaded and defeated Persia, Afghans ultimately emerged victorious.\textsuperscript{117} The Arab Chief of Oman declared himself independent in the year 1720. He also established a good rapport with the British Company officials. Several conflicts took place between England and France during this period in the region. They invaded Iran, defeated them and established the Safoya Dynasty in 1726. Afghans ruled Iran and controlled Isfahan and Shiraz, the coastal areas of Iran. Ashraf Afghans defeated the Ottoman and included this region into their territory. Nadir Shah came to Iran and ruled till 1747. The British and Karim Khan invaded the Island of Kharg. Certain political differences and natural calamities enabled Karim Khan to subdue the British Company. Iran had severe political difference with Karim Khan and occupied Basra and awarded imprisonment to him in 1775. It was held out gallantly under Sulaiman Agha, the Turkish Mutasallim, until 1776. There was a reinstitution of friendly relations between the British and Karim Khan. Subsequently, that was the position of the British at Basra and Bushire. The Persian finally occupied Basra from Ottoman Empire in 1779.

After the death of Karim Khan in 1779, Mahomed Hussein Khan Kujur emerged as the ruler of Iran. The troubles that ensued in the interior of Persia after the reoccupation of Basra in 1779 left the Gulf uncontrolled. The decline of Persian influence could be dated from that period according to the historians.\textsuperscript{118} Aga Mohamed Khan attained political power after a struggle of eighteen years and was joined by several powerful chiefs in the region in 1788. His ultimate object was to

\textsuperscript{117} W.T.Arnold, The Persian Gulf, P.171
\textsuperscript{118} A.B.Kemball, observations on the past Policy of the British Govt towards the Arab Tribes of the Persian Gulf. Report submitted to Govt on the 18\textsuperscript{th} Oct,1844, P.57, MSA, Bombay
restore a state to tranquillity to Persia. The Governors of Erivan and Shanshah submitted to him in 1795. He enjoyed sovereign power for quite a long time and commanded respect from the people. He went to the extent of punishing the insolent unbelievers of Europe, who had dared to invade the territories of the faithful. He was succeeded by his eldest son Goorgeen Khan (Fath Ali Shah) in 1797 after his murder. The internal state of Persia saw the ultimate downfall of the Empire. British relations with Persia persisted with the establishment of East India Company which saw the political subjugation of Persia during the end of the 18th Century.

Sultan of Muscat

Oman occupies the south-eastern corner of Arabia, facing India. It is a maritime state washed on three shores by the sea, and bordered landwards by the sands of Rub’al Khali. In its widest connotation it extends along the south coast of Arabia, and embraces the Province of Dhufar. In the narrowest historical sense it is primarily the coastal strip edging the Gulf of Oman. Racially the population is predominantly Arab, but Persians, Baluchis, Jadgalis, Somalis and Negroes make up a considerable section of the coastal and town populations.119

By 1720, the Omanis had seized some of the Persian Islands in the vicinity of Bandar Abbas. There was Persian invasion and occupation in Oman during 1737-38. But there was expulsion by pursuance by the Omanis in 1744. There was an election of Imam Ahmed-bin-said who provided stable administration after 1744. The Ya’arbuba Imams brought about renaissance in Oman and developed several ports and townships. After the death of Sultan bin Saif II, a civil war broke out over the

selection of his successor. The Persian troops utilized this opportunity and occupied Muttrah and Muscat. In 1744 Ahmad bin Said became the Imam of Muscat by virtue of his outstanding personality and stature. He struggled hard to unite the rival factions after the civil war and made the Omani navy a force to reckon with in the gulf.\textsuperscript{120}

The reign of Ahmed bin Said continued during 1744-83 despite certain aggressive policies and actions of foreign powers. The Imam was able to consolidate his position and build a strong military base in Oman. In 1781, there was the first revolt of Imam’s sons Saif and Sultan which resulted in their political defeat. In 1783, Imam Ahmed died. There were internal political conflicts after his death. His son Said became the Imam in 1783 and was replaced by his son Hamad. Saiyid Hamad – bin – Sa’id ruled Oman during 1784-92 and succeeded in establishing Oman as a stable and prosperous state. He also strove to convert Oman into an independent Sheikhdom. He developed cordial relations with the French in order to contain the growth of British imperialism. There were also economic transactions between the Sultan of Oman and Tipu Sultan in 1790’s. The Mysore political agency was founded at Muscat and the vessels under Mysore colours visited the port every year.

Saiyid Hamad - bin - Sa’id died in 1792 and his uncle Sayyid Sultan bin Ahmed assumed power during the same period(1792-1804). In 1793, the Sultan was invested with the chief authority in Oman and his acquisitions were recognized. The title of Imam was confirmed. After this settlement, the brothers lived in amity and developed Oman as a prosperous state. There were conquests and acquisitions of the Sultan on the Persian coast during 1793-94. There was transfer of revenue and inclusion of some Islands from the Shaikh of the Bani Ma’in to the ruler.

\textsuperscript{120} Lorimer.J.G. Gazetteer of Persian Gulf, Oman, and Central Arabia, Vol.I.Part.I, Calcutta. 1915 P.408
of Oman. In 1797, a conflict of interest occurred between Oman and Persia. The Sultan also waged a war against Bahrain and seized Kharag in 1799. There was political subjugation of Bahrain under the Sultan’s leadership. In 1800, Sultan’s forces made a successful descent upon Bahrain.\footnote{Ibid. pp. 422-23} In the eighteenth century Oman was established as an independent Sultanate amidst several impediments.

**Colonial Powers in the Persian Gulf**

The Persian Gulf was dominated by the Persians, the Arabs, the Turks, the Portuguese, the Dutch and the English. In the second half of the eighteenth century it was divided into a number of independent and semi-independent principalities. On the Arabian coast, the territory from the entrance of the Persian Gulf, Sheikdom called the kingdom of Oman situated. Ormuz was the capital. Indeed one of the most important trade centres of the whole East. Since it was placed on a dry and barren island near the Persian mainland at the entrance of the Persian Gulf. It was ruled by the Saidi dynasty which was founded by Ahmed bin Said, a ship owner and merchant. He strengthens himself by establishing a navy and promoting commerce and giving the country a good administration. During this period, owing to the wise policies of the Saidi rulers, Oman became a prosperous state. In addition, Muscat was a flourishing state and was very an important one in the region. Most of Muscat was with India and more than a half of Indian imports at Basra and Abu Shar and the bulk of these into Bahrain came through Muscat. Among Europeans the first to arrive on its water were the Portuguese themselves and the
acquisition by that nation of a firm footing in the Gulf, in the opening years of the 16th Century.\textsuperscript{122}

The British established their control over the Persian Gulf region, weakening the Arab economic capacities by destroying forts, ships, and boats so on and by subjecting them ultimately to colonial administration. France also lost the Seven Years War between 1756 and 1763. The Wahhabi movement which was launched by Al Sa’ud in AD 1795 moved Sultan Ibn Admad to seek help from the Persians, the Ottomans, and the French.\textsuperscript{123} Persia and the Persian Gulf entered international politics in the second half of the eighteenth Century as an area of conflict between the western powers. Persia and the Persian Gulf had already been an issue of conflict between the Dutch, the Portuguese and the British. At the end of the eighteenth Century Russia invaded Persia and at the same time the French tried to make inroads into the Persian court. The Governor General of India had sent a mission to Persia to forestall any possible designs on the part of Napoleon, who also hoped to take India. The mission concluded a treaty with the Shah of Persia.\textsuperscript{124}

The Governor General of India persuaded the Persian diplomats in Teheran and Muscat to secure the exclusion of French influence from these two countries. Lord Minto, Wellesley’s successor as Governor General, sent Malcolm to Persia for the second time with instructions to prevent the French from occupying a position in the Persian Gulf at the end of the eighteenth century.\textsuperscript{125} Continuous efforts were also made to drive a wedge between Persia and France. The victory of the then advanced capitalist England over backward feudal absolutist France was

\textsuperscript{122}Arnold.W.T. The Persian Gulf, P.10
\textsuperscript{123}Sec and Pol. Dept., Diaries No.74 (1), Jan, 1799, Pp.1141-61, 1762-66, MSA, Bombay/ R.Hughes Thomas(ed), Historical Information connected with Persian Gulf, p.428
\textsuperscript{124}Sec and Pol. Dept., Diaries No.78, May, 1799, Pp.3470-72, MSA, Bombay
\textsuperscript{125}Sec and Pol. Dept., Diaries No.78, May, 1799, Pp.3470-72, MSA, Bombay.
an objective dictate of history. At the turn of the eighteenth century, the main rivals in the struggle for colonial domination in the Persian Gulf were England and France. Napoleon revived the French imperial ambitions in the Persian Gulf and other parts of the world during the 18th Century. The British East India Company took the complete advantage over the Persian Gulf in the Eighteenth Century. The British base in the Persian Gulf was an economic as well as a political necessity. The British easily defeated the Dutch and French in the Persian Gulf.

Bushire became the English headquarters in the Persian Gulf in 1778. These events resulted in strengthening England’s imperial hegemony in the Persian Gulf region. In 1798, the English succeeded in signing a treaty with Muscat, which was the first foothold for the British colonial administration in the Arab Peninsula. That helped them to become politically a dominant and economically prosperous in the Eighteenth Century. The meticulous co-ordination between the activities of the imperial state and the merchants were the major factors which were associated with the ascendancy of the British East India Company in the Gulf region.

**Summary**

The transfer of the economic centre of gravity from the ports of the Arab Peninsula and the Arab East to the trade routes passing around the Cape of Good Hope also brought about increased political and economic fortunes to the English in the eighteenth century.

The history of South India is an integral part of the history of India since South India is a part of India geographically and otherwise. The

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Persian Gulf was subjected to various foreign settlements such as The Portuguese, the Dutch, the French and the English. The Ottoman Empire in Arabia and the Safavid Empire in Persia ruled the roost in the Persian Gulf. The local Arab tribes revolted against the Ottoman and Safavid Empire and established their own principalities in and around the Persian Gulf. The absence of a powerful central administration and unity among the local Arab tribes was mainly responsible for the entry of foreign powers into the Persian Gulf.

As far as South India is concerned, the Portuguese, the Dutch, the French and the English constituted the external forces while the Nizam of Hyderabad, the Marathas, the Nawab of Carnatic, King of Travancore, Mysore rulers and others constituted the internal rulers in the eighteenth century. The Maratha Confederacy, Nizam Ali of Hyderabad and Haider Ali of Mysore State were three principal powers in the south especially during the eighteenth century. Haider offered hegemony to the whole of the South. His plan was to obtain hegemony over all the Southern States and to develop them into a military alliance against the British. He wanted to maintain the status quo: *India for Indians*. The transformation of the British Empire in India into the British empire of India under Lord Wellesley started from South India by 1800. Wellesley designed a strategy for severing all links with Tipu internally and externally. In particular, Wellesley felt that it was of utmost necessity to keep the Marathas and the Nizam at bay from Tipu. After the death of Tipu, the fourth and final battle of Mysore came to an ominous end. General Harris publicly declared that they had conquered India after the death of Tipu, by which an illustrious chapter in the freedom struggle of India came to a close.