Introduction
CHAPTER. I

INTRODUCTION

1.1. GEOGRAPHICAL CONTRIBUTION TO URBANIZATION.

This thesis is on the ‘Urbanization of Pondicherry during the French colonial rule from 1673 to 1816.’ It attempts to trace the nature, the course and features of Urbanization of Pondicherry in the chosen period. The Geography and morphology of Pondicherry contributed to the French settlement and subsequent developments. Pondicherry was located on the middle of the Coromandal coast. In the seventeenth century usage, the term Coromandal coast comprised the coastline of the modern states of Tamil Nadu, Telugu Desam and Southern tip of Orissa. Pondicherry was situated on Latitude 11° 56’N and Longitude 79° 50’E. It was situated to the North of Cuddalore, West of Bay of Bengal, South of Tindivanam and East of Gingi.

Pondicherry was known even before the French settled here. It shared a part of some considerable trade long before it was ceded to the French in 1673. It was the home-port of the Coromandal shipping for several decades. The port had a hinterland of good markets and fabric producing centers near by. The French built a fort and opposite a port, where ships anchored. Like Madras, Pondicherry, after its cession to the French, used hinterland villages into an economic dependence and began its development as Port-town and Fort-city. The nature of the land was suitable for agriculture and settlement. This region was a flat land irrigated by River Gingi and Ponniyar and other streams forming two main drainage basins. River Gingi traversed diagonally from Northwest to Southeast. Ponniyar formed the southern border. They were deep enough to admit small boats and hence were used for transport and contributed to urbanization.

Pondicherry region consisted of four geographical zones. The coastal zone comprised dunes including saline areas of clayey nature. The second zone was made up of two plateau called the Pondicherry plateau and Tiruvakarai plateau composed of sand stones. The upper layers were made up of red ferralitic soil. Plains lay between these two plateaus. They were favourable for agriculture. Marshy low lands were also in the plain.
The flat alluvial soil, which formed the rest of Pondicherry region favoured agriculture, which fed the urban population.

Pondicherry and its surrounding villages lay on the basin of Gingi River, which was also called Varahanadhi and Sankaraparani. Ariyankuppam River in the north and Chunnambu Ar or Kilinjalar in the south, were its tributaries, which enter the sea on the north and south of Veerampattinam respectively. They flow only during the rainy and flood season. Ponniyar called ‘Thenpennai’ flows into The Bay of Bengal about 4 km. North of Cuddalore. Kuduvaiyar, which is a branch of Ponniyar, merges with Chunnambu Ar. near Tirukkanji. These rivers were useful for navigation and irrigation, and hence to the urbanization of Pondicherry. The Malattar, the tributary of Ponniyar, feeds the villages of Nettappakkam and Ariyankuppam.

The ground water of Pondicherry was abundant and was used by sinking wells. The ground water at Muttira Palayam, Ellupillai Chavadi and Muthialpettai, stored in Cuddalore-sand stones, was tapped in tube-wells. The main dry crops were Bajra (Kambu), groundnut, gingelly, cashewnut etc. The main wet crops were Rice, Ragi, Sugarcane, Bananas and Betel vine. Some of the mammals of Pondicherry were wild Boar, Mouse Deer, Spotter deer, Four-homed Antelope, Indian Hare, Mountain Gazelle, Bonnet Monkey etc. Pondicherry was famous for fishing, which offered food and occupation to the people.

Pondicherry experienced a hot and tropical maritime type climate. A small daily range of temperature, humid weather and moderate rainfall characterized it. It was favourable for cloth production. There was no much clear difference of seasons. However, March to June may be taken as summer. The months of October and November constitute the main northeast monsoon season. The period from December to February is relatively cool. These geographical features of Pondicherry influenced the French settlement, its development and led to the emergence of Pondicherry town.

Danes had their settlement in Pondicherry before the French arrived. Then the Danes had gone. The business of cloth, which was developed by their care, fell. Nevertheless, Pondicherry survived, because of its geographical situation. It was at the intersection of the route, which ran along the coast and which went from Gingi to the sea. The house left by the Danes offered the Europeans a comfortable shelter. ¹.
Pondicherry had several advantages. Pondicherry was relatively easy to defend; the sea at the East, the Ariyankuppam River on the South, and the sand dunes on the North were of natural obstacles to the invaders. This place had appreciable commercial advantages. The red hills were on the west of Pondicherry. Seen from a distance, it gave a useful point of reference to the ships, which entered the mouth of Ariyankuppam and which offered shelter. The coolies were so skillful to load and unload the goods. They brought back to land the abundant fishing. Their thatched huts were on the banks of the river. There were hard working weavers. Their industry was favoured by the cotton industry. The indigo industry, which was used for dyeing, flourished wonderfully in the surrounding. The heat of the land and the plentiful availability of water were necessary for the white washing of the textile fabric. The numerous ponds assured the indispensable water. With these advantages, Pondicherry was a desirable place for settlement.

The climate of Pondicherry was regular and healthy. It did not have extreme contrasts as that of Delhi. The water was abundant and pure. It was one of the best water in South India. The big epidemics were practically unknown. However, sometimes the people had to resist the cyclones, the inundations, the famine and the diseases. They were not so violent. The people faced it, most often, without much rescue measures and without money. The epidemic would last from March to October. The cool season brought the cyclones with it. During the 17th century, there were at least ten cyclones. There were sickness like cholera, chicken pox, leprosy, and fevers. These were some of the diseases mostly spread here. Pondicherry was in these aspects difficult to live.

The location of Pondicherry was favourable in other ways. It was sheltered for nine months in the year from the monsoon. A little river, Oupar, which borders Pondicherry, falling into the sea, was navigable for flat-bottomed boats. Hence, it was superior settlement to any other place on the Coromandal coast.

However, there is also a different view about the location of Pondicherry. The lands were high. The vessels immersed just half in water. The launches could approach the land except with in a fire short distance. It was difficult to get access on the seaside and open on the side of the land. These were pointed out as inconveniences in the location of Pondicherry. Yet, some other authors give contradictory view. They explain the choice of Pondicherry as the establishment pertaining to a harbour three centuries ago. It was
believed that then, there had been better conditions of relief and hydrograph. It had made the roadstead a harbour, naturally protected. It should have modified, in the interval of a geologic disorder. However, it seems that nothing had changed there, since the epoch of Governor François Martin. The commercial activity was great at that time. The political reasons joined with it and it was explaining the choice of the site. 

1.2. COLONIAL CITY THEORIES AND PONDICHERY.

The social scientists have put forth several colonial city theories. The city theories throw light on the contributors and consequences of the process of urbanization. They describe urbanization in different contexts and in different times. They may be applied to the study of urbanization of Pondicherry with necessary modifications, according to the social structure, cultural background, economic standard, religious formation and political system of Pondicherry. The administrative, judicial and welfare measures taken by the colonial rulers directly or indirectly contributed to the development of the colonial town such as Pondicherry. The colonial city theories can be used as a parameter to study urbanization of Pondicherry. Nevertheless, those theories are subjected to test and modification. Let us discuss some of the theories of urbanization in the context of Pondicherry.

Robert Ross' view that cities were superfluous to the purposes of colonists is applicable to Pondicherry. The Europeans founded empires outside their own continent. They were primarily concerned with extracting those products, which they could not acquire within Europe. Those goods were largely agricultural, and grown most often in a climate not found in Europe. The major exports were manufactures in general. However, they were made in the countryside, rather than in the towns, as in Pondicherry before 1800. The weavers' fabrics, for example, were not then manufactured in the towns only. They were ordered, fabricated, gathered and then exported. (See chapter ‘Cloth trade and Urbanization’)

From the point of view of the colonists, the cities were, in some respects, unavoidable, because, they were parasites on the rural producers. The urban centers competed with the colonists in the process of surplus extraction. The city population lived on rural agricultural production without contributing in the process of cultivation.
Anthony D. King shares this view too. However, some social scientists feel that a town alone cannot survive for centuries without contributing to the process of cultivation of its neighbourhood. Pondicherry town lived on the agricultural surplus of its surrounding villages.

The colonists were unable to do without cities. The requirements of colonization demanded many urban functions. One of those functions was the need for a port, to allow the export of colonial wares and the import of goods from Europe or from other parts of the non-European world, in the country trade. That trade naturally necessitated the various services associated with it, for example finance. Then, as the colonies, such as Pondicherry, were established, government centers and garrisons became necessary. Those in their turn increased the density of urban life, as numerous suppliers, retailers, and artisans arrived to serve such institutions. Max Weber’s view that the presence of a city fortification and city army are essential factors of fully developed urban center, was applicable to Pondicherry.

An analysis of the city life of a colony is generally a most valuable approach for the study of its urban history. Above all, the transformation of the city from a small fishing settlement and the subsequent urbanization process during colonial rule becomes part of the study.

To study a city, is at the same time to study the society, which is situated in it. The city was a part of the colonial society. It was linked socially to all other parts of the country. That linkage determined the very nature of society. The city was the very essence of colonial life. Moreover, many of the major tensions of the relations were imposed by colonialism.¹⁰

Max Weber considers that the urban center tends to break down and to complicate caste structure. It is subject to reconsideration. As far as Pondicherry is concerned, the social structure is based on the caste system. The urban development of Pondicherry did not complicate the social structure, in spite of some changes that took place in the attitude of a section people of Pondicherry. (See chapter on ‘Urbanization and Social change’)

Pondicherry gained its importance both because of its favorable location and of the colonizer’s organized effort for monopoly of trade and control of power. François Martin was very much pleased with the location of Pondicherry. He came to power in
Pondicherry in 1686 as Director General and remained in charge till December 1706. The French company made efforts to maintain its monopoly of trade, control of power through Superior Council and acquire ownership of land by decrees. The Superior Council was the highest governing body of the French settlement. It was first formed in September 1702 with François Martin as President and other nominated counselors. They also dispensed justice. (See chapter on ‘Administration and Urbanization’)

Marshal argues that the growth of European trade merely led to the intensification of the old activities of foodstuff production and textile manufacturing. It did not bring any major changes in the methods or relations of production. This is applicable not only to Calcutta, but to Pondicherry as well. Here the poor weavers, agriculturists, artisans and merchants, who were still in the control of many constraints of life, depended on the rich. They provided the capital for European enterprise. Tobacco farming and tax farming gave a notable profit to those merchants.¹¹

Anthony D. King’s view that the city is a social product is subject to test. It is impossible to understand any aspect of Pondicherry, whether economic, social, physical, or spatial, without reference to the economy, society, and culture, of which it is a part.¹² Harvey opines that Urbanization is economic growth and capital accumulation. These processes are global in their dimension.

In two senses, all cities can be described as ‘Colonial’. At the local level, the colonial powers that form the colony, organize their hinterland and subsist on the surplus that rural center provides. At the global level, the existing cities organize the surplus both of their own society as well as that of others. The local relationship of town to country then becomes the metropolis-Colony connection on a world scale. The French power in Pondicherry maintained a trade network, not only with the Indian villages but also with centers like China, Achin, Siam, Manila, and Isles of France. It harvested the surplus in the villages of its hinterland. Then it not only used them but also appropriated them for itself (metropolis) and for other countries of the world. ¹³ (see ‘Cloth trade and Urbanization’)

In general, not specific to Pondicherry, Urbanization could be viewed as, one of opposition between city/town and country/village- the latter as producer and the former
as parasite and exploiter. On the other hand, it could be perceived as complementary in
terms of functions- the village is the producer and the town/city the market / consumer. If
towns / cities did not exist the agricultural producers would not be able to sell their
surplus. Moreover, it is wrong to view town / city and country as unities. Each was
differentiated in terms of caste, class, gender etc. For example, property owners in the
village exploited the groups especially the poor.

The colonial City, which has a port and fort, also has a mercantile stereotype. The
colonial cities were parasitical and extractive, created by Colonizers to serve them.\textsuperscript{14} It
may be preferable, to speak of a city in a colonized society or territory, than a colonial
city. This is close to Marxian perception.

The following are the features of a colonial city, such as Pondicherry, as described by
G. Blandier. They are as follows.\textsuperscript{15}

1. There is the dominance by a foreign minority, racially or ethnically different from
indigenous population. The French minority ruled the natives of Pondicherry.

2. There is the linking of radically different civilizations in some form of relationship.
In Pondicherry, the cultural polarization process happened. There were Creoles (people
born of the French and Portuguese) and French speaking Tamils in Pondicherry.

3. There is the imposition of an industrial society on to a non-industrialized one. This
of course, applies to Pondicherry only from the early 19\textsuperscript{th} Century. This sort of
imposition did not happen in the period of our study.

4. There is an antagonistic relationship, where the colonized people were treated as
subjects and instruments of Colonial power. To substantiate this theory, there were
several instances. The arrest of the Mahanattars, the abolition of the celebration of the
Hindu festivals on Sundays, forced procurement of natives’ lands and arbitrary taxation
are a few instances.

Accordingly, these were apparently the unique features of Pondicherry.

1. Power-economic, social and political- was principally in the hands of a non-
indigenous minority, the rights of the colonised were either nil or very restricted. Only a
selected few like the Dubashes Kanagaraya Mudaliar, Ananda Ranga Pillai and
Thiruvengadam Pillai were privileged to use the palanquin, sword, etc. and meet the
governor, to some extent, whenever they pleased. However, they were subordinates to the
governors who employed them. Ranga Pillai was subordinate to Dupleix.

2. This minority was superior in terms of military and economic resources and as a
result, in social organization. This minority, being the minority in an alien land, had to be
well knit to stand strong against the native majority. So they had to be socially well
organized. Nevertheless, at the same time one should not perceive that all the colonizers
and the colonized as two opposed categories. The rich and the influential sections of the
colonized, namely Christian Vellalas and Hindu upper castes, for example Pillais and
Mudaliars collaborated with the colonial rules. In fact, colonial rule for over 200 years
would not have been possible but for the collaboration of these sections.

3. The colonized majority were racially or ethnically, culturally and religiously
different from the colonists, who were culturally European and by religion
Christian. 

Under the typology of European colonial city, Pondicherry comes under the first
group, where an indigenous settlement already existed. The other category was that
where there were no previous settlements. In this type, the site and accommodation were
incorporated into a new planned settlement as in Batavia.

The Colonial city initiated new economic, political and culture process. Subsequently
the structural reorganization of the colonial society took place. It included the
reorientation of trade and transport. It restructured the urban hierarchy. It founded a new
type of town. New jobs and new concept of fortification emerged. The nature of the basis
of political power changed. It promoted cultural change-in religion, education, and
language. It led to cultural nationalism.

The economy was redirected to a metropolitan and world system. It developed labour
supply and market. As a result of that, the colonial city and country were affected. Hence,
there was agricultural decline and migration. This resulted in tensions between the rulers
and the ruled, between religions and between tradition and change. There were changes
of customs, change of ideology, emergence of class distinctions.

During colonization, the Catholic Church adapted to a new religious ideology. That
ideology legitimized the colonization as an institution. The church had several religious
orders. They established schools, convents, churches, and hospitals in the colonies as instruments of colonization and as social control.\textsuperscript{18}

The intention of colonization was primarily trade. Depending on the degree of the power of the government and the activities of other powers in the region, the settlement resulted in a considerable port and fort.

The economic functions of Pondicherry were related to the type of resources, which were exploited or traded. Some of the resources were spices, Cotton fabrics, cheap labour, the expertise, the use of intermediaries and slaves. In turn, this was altered to the nature of labour power available and employed.

Cultural pluralism was an important characteristic of colonial Pondicherry. Indeed social pluralism was also important. That was dependent on caste, birth, and religion of the colonizers and the natives. The fact of class was also important\textsuperscript{19} However, the idea about the impact of race was old and at times misleading.

A further distinctive demographic characteristic of Pondicherry, as far as the colonial community was concerned, was the relative absence of European women. This led to the creation of 'mixed race population'. There was provision for the recreational activities and clubs. The presence of male troops caused high rates of venereal disease. This led to the legislation and the special provision of hospitals and dispensaries.\textsuperscript{20}

1.3 DEFINITION OF A CITY.

Janet Roebuck opines that urban settlements are commonly classified as either cities or towns. In fact, neither term has a clear definition that can be applied to all places at all times. In the United States, the census definition of a town is a settlement with twenty five hundred people; in Canada a town must have a thousand people, in Greece ten thousands, in Sweden and Denmark a settlement of only two hundred qualified as a town. Population density, number of buildings, total value of trade, and other statistical yardsticks are rather useless for forming general definition.\textsuperscript{21} However, they are important criteria.

Cities may be defined in terms of their functions. A city could be described as a major manufacturing or trading centre. A town could be described as a minor manufacturing or trading centre. However, many settlements would resist this pattern of
Las Vegas and Nevada, manufactures little but empty pockets. According to this definition, they could not qualify as a city. Nevertheless, a tiny trading post on an Indian island might qualify as a town. The extent of the area of influence of an urban settlement might provide a more reasonable basis for definition.

Towns could be defined as urban settlements that have a local impact, while cities have regional or international significance. Here the terms "Local", "Regional" and "International" are rather relative. A workable definition could be: "Towns are urban settlements that are smaller than the cities of their time, cities are urban settlements that are generally recognized by contemporaries as the largest and most important settlements."

1.4. THE INTERDISCIPLINARY NATURE OF URBAN STUDIES

Urban history is a study of towns and cities. It comprises buildings, roads and public service structure and systems. The term also includes some elements of infrastructure, architecture, and planning, because, urban settlements have economic cultural and political functions. Hence, urban history includes some economic, cultural, and political history. Cities and towns house many individuals and groups. Urban history must therefore incorporate social history. Since philosophy and social theory have sometime affected urban history, it occasionally overlaps history of ideas. Urban history transcends the boundaries of many conventional historical elements.

H.J.Dyos opines, "The study of urban history must mean not merely the study of individual communities, fixed more or less in time and space- what might be called the urban aspect of local history; but the investigation of altogether broader historical processes of particular communities."

To understand a general theory of a city is useful. A great range of variables is involved in the theory of a city. Hence, a detailed study becomes necessary. Oscar Handlin and John Burchard view that it is easy to relate large phenomena, such as the growth of population and the rise of centralized power as the break up of traditional family. However, one will learn the causal factors among them, only when he understands interaction among them. This individual approach is against the general type of the historical process of Urbanism.
A comparison may give better understanding of the concept. Pre-industrial cities, whether in medieval Europe, traditional China, India, or elsewhere resemble one another closely in their structure or form. The pre-industrial city had domination in the feudal, lease, or tax harvesting system. It is different from the rural community.

The initial manifestation of the change was a rapid growth in urban population. Many officials carried on the expanded volume of government functions and business. They brought with them their families. Moreover, many colonizers found it necessary to live close to the persons in power. Ancillary administrative, religious, trade, educational and service institutions moved in the same direction.

According to Henri Pirenne, a locality must act as a center of distribution of wealth. Without a market, one could not speak of a city. Pondicherry served as the center of procurement and distribution of agricultural and non-agricultural products. Hence, it complies with the pre-condition specified by Henri Pirenne to become an urban center. In India, as well as in Pondicherry, the temple was surely an important landmark of a city’s landscape because of the predominant Hindu population. Several important temples were built during Chola period (9th / 10th Centuries A.D.). Then those temples became the nucleus for the emergence of urban centers.

It was often stated that a set of walls, or an ‘Episcopal See’ or the presence of a Count, or Royal Charter of incorporation was necessary and sufficient condition for a city to be a city. The Catholic religious head of the Capuchins and the Jesuits were here and the Episcopal See was ordained here in the 19th Century. The French East India Company was founded with the Royal Charter 1 September 1664. Moreover, the construction of the fort and the ramparts promoted the status of Pondicherry to become a town. Division of labour and growing productivity follows the increase of the density of population in a town. There was growth of population in Pondicherry and there was division of labour in cloth production and minting coins.

Urbanization represents social changes. Mobility of population, interrelationships between population, social tensions, trends in social organization, and population structure and behaviour are discussed in this work. (see chapter social changes and urbanization)

1.5. RURAL URBAN CONTINUUM.
The rural and urban models are simply frameworks. The people move from the rural to the urban situation. Frequently they carry the values and characteristics of the rural situation to the urban situation. Such people can influence and are also influenced in the interaction. This process completely changes the characteristics of the rural and urban models. Pondicherry had a floating population that came from the neighbouring villages and towns. A lot of them settled here for various socio-economic reasons. Those people were the vehicles of rural values and characteristics. They changed the urban landscape and then got changed in the process.

1.6. MODEL COLONIAL CITY

Colonial Cities were characterized by a political and social structure, which was hierarchical. The colonial administration was alien from those people, whom it administered. There was nearly no entry from the indigenous groups into the higher ranks of the administration till 19th Century with a few exceptions. In the Pondicherry administration, there were Dubashes, Nayanars, and Tamil members of Superior Council, who tried Tamils’ cases. The choultry authorities were also from the indigenous groups. A choultry is a French court where the civil and criminal cases were tried and justice was dispensed. Choultries also meant chatrams. Among the businesspersons, there were both company’s merchants and private merchants, who were mostly the native people. The colonial city had two groups of communities. Each group carried on its own pattern of life, as in the ‘White Town’ and ‘Black Town’. The hierarchy of the rulers was so arranged between civil person and military person alternatively to avoid dispute among them. The posts of officials from top were: The Governor, Commandant of the troops, The Deputy of the Commerce, The Major, The Counsellors, The Merchants, The Captains, The Engineer, Sub-Merchants, Lieutants and Clerks. There was the predominantly European white town and predominantly Hindu and Tamil Black Town. Besides these, there were Muslims, who were merchants or fishermen in Pondicherry. Indian Dubashes Messengers and chobdars in the 18th century represented the colonial administration. (see chapter ‘Urbanization and Social change’)

Pondicherry largely concentrated on commerce. Therefore, it had an occupational structure, which was characterized by a marked development of the tertiary sector.
Although it became an important, commercial, administrative, educational, and political center, it seldom attracted rural migrants for these reasons. A city is a human settlement. The inhabitants there cannot produce adequately, all the food they need, for keeping them alive, within the city limits. This feature is common to cities.\textsuperscript{35} Cities sought security by surrounding themselves with walls. They could be even the traditional walls. In that period, the inhabitants of the city could not feed themselves entirely from the food grains, which they produced, within the limits of their city's fortified area.\textsuperscript{36}

If this definition is accepted, it follows that a city exists having an external source of food supply of an agricultural hinterland. It is productive enough to provide a surplus of food beyond the requirements of the local food producing rural population. This means that no city ever has been economically self-contained. Every city was linked by effective means of transportation, with a food surplus producing agricultural area. In order to induce the producers to deliver their surplus food, the city's inhabitants offered the agricultural producers the rate, which was recognized by both parties. The only commodities that town people offered to rural food producers were manufactures and service--commercial, legal, religious, medical, military protection and, in some cases, also administrative. Sometimes administration is forced upon their rural neighbours against their will. Above all, it bought the raw material for its manufactures. These will include potter's clay for crockery, fibers for textiles, and other household items, which were sold in shops.\textsuperscript{37}

Pondicherry survived thanks to the supply of agricultural products of its hinterland, which extended unto Salem, Karaikal, Tranquebar, and even Bengal. Pondicherry was connected with its hinterland with the network of mud roads, on which the carts plied. Boats and catamarans were also used. However, there were instances where rain and robbers affected the speed and safety of the transport. In fixing the price of paddy or rice, the administrators in Pondicherry tried to manipulate it in their favour. Dupleix, the French governor in Pondicherry, during the harvest season, ordered the rate at which paddy had to be sold in the market of Pondicherry. Mostly, they did not succeed. The rural producers found a market for their products in Pondicherry. The rural population did not profit from the urban legal and medical services. Even the military protection failed
in most of the occasions especially in the second half of the 18th Century for want of adequate defence strength. (See topic Fort and Urbanization)

Every city before the present age of mechanization has been, among other things, a holy city in some degree. Before the out-break and spread of industrial Revolution, no city or place has ever been a commercial, an industrial, a political, a military or a religious city exclusively. Cities could be classified as predominantly religious or political before the industrial revolution e.g. Kashi and Pataliputra. The pre-industrial cities have functioned primarily as political and religious centers. The bureaucratic structure of the political and religious institutions was a potent integrating and stabilizing force. The city, as the head quarters for the political, educational, religious and other "controlling" institutions of a society, generated sweeping changes in life movements of the people.

Pondicherry in the colonial era, except for short periods, was the capital of the French Empire in India. Since it was the political head quarters, subsequently, it became the commercial head quarter as well. Nevertheless, it was not able to maintain its political or commercial supremacy over the English, in the second half of the 18th Century. There were several temples here. They were not just the places of worship, but also the cementing force of the Hindus. They displayed their religious unity on several occasions. The church here included the Europeans and some converted Tamils. It was supported by the French administration. This new community emerged as a new force. This converted Christians never could mix freely with the European Christians. This force frequently destabilized the normal religious and economic life of the Tamils. The French administration offered educational and medical services to the Europeans only. Changes in life patterns crept in the life of the native elites.

1.7. URBANISM AND ITS UNIFORMITIES

In different respects, urban ways of life were influenced by the ecology and geography of cities. Their ways of the life were also influenced by their history. Other influences would be the climate and natural resources in the hinterlands of the town.
Differences in ecology, geography, history, climate, and natural resources, in different combinations, made for differences between urban places regarding their work, structure, organization and ways of life. 41

In pre-industrial India, administration, defence, trade, commerce, and religion represented the key urbanizing elements and gave rise to settlements. Shahjahanbad or Old Delhi, Ahmadabad and Hyderabad came up due to administration, Cittorgarh, Daulatabad, and Bidar due to defence, Jaunpur, Fatehpur, and Surat due to trade and commerce, and Amritsar, Ajmer, Tirupati and Puri due to religion and temple. 42 In Pondicherry, administration, defence, trade, and commerce were the key urbanizing elements and they gave rise to more settlements

During the later colonial period, the transport factor, particularly the railways, became an important urbanizing element. It stimulated the growth of many ‘mandli’ (market) towns, such as Hapur, Bhatinda and Vijayawada. The defence factor, which led to the growth of military cantonments, remained an important urbanizing force, until the end of the colonial rule. 43 In the early colonial period of the 18th century, in Pondicherry, bullock-carts, boats and catamarans were used to transport goods to the market. The French military personnel were lodged in the military barracks and in the fort. In the colonial period, the defence factor gave rise to cantonment towns such as Secunderabad cantonment near Hyderabad, Kampti near Nagpur and Mhou near Indore. Nevertheless, such a twin settlement did not emerge in the case of Pondicherry.

The spread of canal irrigation and the growth of rail net work combined to give rise to a large number of market towns in the canal irrigated areas of Punjab, Western Uttarpradesh, the Krishna, Godavary and Cauvery Deltas. 44 These attributes did not contribute much for the rise of Pondicherry. However, River Gingi and Ouapar were used for navigation and they irrigated the neighbourhood of the town.

Charles H. Cooly tried to account for the location of cities. In the past, cities were located by proximity to a religious establishment or fort. Some cities have at all times been located by political considerations. 45 The fort of Pondicherry, which defended the people, was one of the causes for attracting settlements of people from neighbouring places. But, it did not defend successfully in 1761 and later, because when the English
defeated the French and captured Pondicherry in 1761, they demolished the town almost completely. The French did not have a fort for defence later.

When there is also a change of power, with the possibility of temporary storage, the center grows by leaps and bounds with stevedores, warehouse room, importers, exporters, merchants, money changers, accountants, secondary services personnel and many other forms and types. In the case of Pondicherry, whenever the English defeated the French and occupied Pondicherry, though there were the above-mentioned facilities, the English saw that the material infrastructure of the town was destroyed. At one stage, in 1761, the English destroyed even all the churches here, sparing only the five temples. They did not spare the fort and the governor house. The English saw to it that the French did not use the buildings to store food, clothes and ammunitions. Change of power here meant destruction or stagnation.

In a secondary economic sense, the city grows not only because of the revolution in transportation, finance, production and commerce, but also because of the lure of high wages and the inducement of more varied development opportunities. Among the political causes of the city growth Adna Weber listed the influence of:

1. Legislation promoting freedom of trade.
2. Legislation promoting freedom of migration.
3. Centralized administration with its location of persons in the civic centers, and
4. Free forms of land tenure, which were politically defended in the city.

In Pondicherry, there was not a revolution in transportation as such. Nevertheless, there was an increase in the mobilization of funds and the production of textile goods. Consequently, increased activities of commerce were prevalent. Pondicherry offered employment opportunities of non-agricultural nature to the people. The weavers, the bullock-cart owners, the artisans, and the coolies demanded higher pay and got it, because job opportunities were more and the workers were less in the first half of the 18th century. To increase and improve the production of textile fabrics, the administration promoted weavers settlements. In the period of Governor Dupleix, the French Government passed a Decree to compel the businesspersons and weavers of Madras to migrate and settle down in Pondicherry.
As far as trade was concerned, the French company retained the monopoly, though the company merchants and private merchants shared the trade activities. Regarding the administration, the vital power was vested with the Governor, who was supported by the members of the superior council, who resided in Pondicherry. The mode of land tenure was systematized by the French rule. It was the continuation of the traditional pattern of lease, which prevailed during the period of the monarchs. Laws enacted by the Superior Council legitimized the ownership and the transfer of ownership of properties of the natives and the French by official registration.

The city itself is treated in the literature as the “cause” of moral decline because of the emergence of the new heterogenic society, which upholds new values. The nature of the natives of Pondicherry did not basically suffer a moral decline. However, there were stray instances of favoritism, bribery, misuse of power, coercion, looting, cheating, stealing etc. Madam Dupleix instigated some anti-social and anti-religious activities. Pondicherry of the later period of Governor Dupleix started experiencing extensive valuelessness and lawlessness due to the couvert dealings of Mrs.Dupleix. (see chapter ‘Adminitration and urbanization’)

The Urbanization of cities normally seen to be steady and regular. However, it was not always the same with all the cities. It can be different, as it happened in the case of fortress cities established by the Romans in German lands. The Romans had established a system of fortress cities in German lands along the natural transportation routes, which were represented by the Rhine and Danube rivers. These vanished with the fall of Roman empire. With the revival of trade in the late Middle Ages, these Roman settlements revived, with the developments in art, science and literature. The religious wars, however, resulted in unbelievable devastation and impoverishment of the cities through the German lands. The Thirty Years War left some cities with only a quarter of their former personnel and precisely the most civic types liquidated. Meanwhile, the opening of the new hemisphere on the East reoriented trade. Though civic life was annihilated, city life began to revive again in Germany in the 18th Century. Similarly, the history of urbanization of Pondicherry was unique. It developed steady, regular, comprehensive urban process almost up to the middle of the 18th Century. It was battered intermittently from 1761 by the British military onslaught, whose influence lasted till the end of the 18th
Century and it weakened the factors of urbanization. From 1816, when Pondicherry was finally restored to the French, it resumed the process of urbanization, when its urban life began to revive.

Martindale opines that destruction of the city does not involve the extinction of the institutions of social life. The view of Martindale is relevant to Pondicherry, which was demolished by the English in 1761. In spite of this, the institutions of social life were not demolished. The continuity of social institutions helped the growth of Pondicherry as an urban center. As long as we identify urbanism with the physical entity of the city, we cannot arrive at an adequate concept of urbanism. Louis Wirth, sharing the view of Simmel, urged that urbanization refers to the cumulative emphasis of the mode of life, which is typical of the city. This is not to be confused with industrialism and modern capitalism. Therefore, urbanism is not merely concerned with material growth, but also concerned with the constantly revised mode of life in a place. Whenever the English captured Pondicherry, they were able to tamper or destroy the physical entity of the town, but not the mode of life of the people of the town. Though the people temporarily fled away from the town and escaped the dangers of death, when they returned, they continued to lead the style of life that they had developed and had been following before their departure. Therefore, the cultural ethnicity of the natives did not seem to have been disturbed.

In Maine’s analysis, the city is a legal structure resting on contract and territory rather than kinship and family. The effect of Maine’s analysis was to bring the relations of kinship and territory into central focus institutionally shifting the attention of urban theory to the evolution of law. This was the starting point for rich additional developments and the consideration of the importance of a whole series of legal or semi-legal phenomena for the development of the city. These include such things as:

1) The importance of charters for the possibility of the city and basis of its law.
2) The role in the appearance of the city of the development of special civic courts and law.
3) The importance for the city of the legal notion of a civic corporation with a legal personality of its own. Pondicherry was considered and written as a big town by the
people, especially by the writers of the court document, who called Pondicherry ‘Maanagaram’, ‘a big town’ in the 18th Century. 52

Pondicherry gained a legal status because of the firman issued to the French on behalf of the Mughul Emperor. The ‘legal personality’ of Pondicherry was then developed, thanks to the various charters of the company and the Royal Charters. The articles of the charters were the directives and guidelines that ran the French government of Pondicherry. Ultimately it became the legal structure by the origin and faithful function of the Superior Council, through which justice was maintained in this urban center. The administration of the French colonial government thus acquired a well-defined legal dimension. Maine claims this dimension as an urban feature.

Maitland’s ‘garrison theory’ may be applicable in the context of militarily protected Pondicherry. Closely parallel with Maitland’s ‘garrison theory’ was “Military” theory of the city advanced by Kentgen in Germany. Towns were regarded as stronghold for emergency purposes, where the inhabitants in the surrounding place could retreat for protection. The Fort Louis of Pondicherry, supported by Bastions and ramparts, served this purpose until the English destroyed it in 1761.

Henry Pirenne maintained that two attributes were necessary to constitute a city. They are: a middleclass population and a communal organization. From this standpoint, the town, which originally had enclosures, where people might seek refuge in time of danger, alone would not make it a city. 53 In Pondicherry, there was the emergence of middle class population, who were the company merchants and the private merchants. There were the Hindu, Muslim, and Catholic communities, which were communal organizations. They displayed their unity when their religious practices were threatened or stopped. Segments of the population sought refuge in time of danger in Pondicherry.

Max Weber was familiar with Simmel’s formulation of a city and he opened his study with the observation that the city is often thought of as a densely settled area of crowded dwelling, forming a colony, so extensive that personal reciprocal acquaintance of the inhabitants is lacking. Pondicherry, in the chosen period, had not grown so dense and extensive to lack intimacy.

There was room in Weber’s theory for attention to mentality in the city. He was able to recognize and account for the appearance, in the city, of most varied social types.
Weber provided for the fact that in the city all sorts of people meet and mingle, often without understanding one another. Slums may be separated from fine residences by a few hundred yards, but while they are geographically close, they may be miles apart in point of view. ‘The cheries’ of Pondicherry where the Harijans or dalits lived were like the islands in the mainland of Pondicherry intellectually, economically, socially, and culturally. The chetties, Pillais, Komutis and Vellalas could be identified as separate groups according to their social and economic composition. The names of the streets of Pondicherry themselves distinguished the social types of people. In Pondicherry, there were people who belonged to various castes and sub-castes. They lived in groups in separate streets. The street names of Pondicherry, such as Chetty Street, Komuty street, Vellala street, Vaisial street, Big and Small Brahmin street, Kosakadai street etc. clearly reveal this fact. (See chapter ‘Urbanization and Social change’)

Pondicherry was the official center of the colonial administration. There were the fortress and market place. Guilds of merchants and castes largely coinciding with professional associations were present. However, they did not seem to enjoy considerable autonomy, especially with respect to their own legal competence and justice. They were not permitted to exercise fully their privileges and rights. The legal wing of the colonial administration questioned the legitimacy of use of their privileges. Nevertheless, the hereditary caste system of Indian society, with its ritualistic segregation of the professions, excluded the emergence of a civic rights and urban community. Though there were numerous castes and sub-castes of traders and artisans, they cannot be taken together and equated with the Occidental burgher strata. It was not possible for the commercial and artisan castes of Pondicherry to unite in form, corresponding to the medieval urban corporations, because castes divisions hindered all inter-caste fraternization. 54 This period was characterized by the conflict between right hand and left hand castes groups. In Pondicherry the Right Hand caste people were those who mainly depended on agriculture and agriculture related activities. They were mostly Vellalas. The other caste people were the artisans, who formed the left hand castes group. Before colonization the Right Hand caste group maintained their superiority which was more or less conceded by the Left Hand caste group. However, during the colonial rule several merchants, traders and artisans came from other places and settled in Pondicherry. They
were rich. They belonged to the Left Hand caste group. Those new comers took the lead and claimed the rights and privileges that were usually enjoyed by the Right Hand caste group only. The Right Hand caste group objected to this change of tradition. Hence, the communal conflicts began in the Tamil society. There was continual rivalry between these castes people. Once, a car procession started the conflict. On another occasion, the right hand castes objected to the use of white horse by the left-hand castes to ride through their streets (see chapter 'Urbanization and Social change')

Powers of the medieval urban community according to Max Weber were as follows:

1) Political autonomy (2) Autonomous Law of the City and its guilds (3) Autocephaly (4) Tax power over the burghers and (5) Market regulation. All the above-referred features of the medieval urban community did not exist in the Colonial rule during Pondicherry. Yet, the administration of the colonists here had the tax fixing power and it took steps to regulate the functions of the market.

Since ancient times, towns were centers of trade. The rural areas were the producing centers of agricultural raw materials. In fact, when villages became towns or got urbanized, the agricultural land was acquired and used for buildings. This affected agricultural production. Hence, urbanization affected pursuit of agriculture. The town attempted to suppress the rural pursuit of trade and to force the peasants to satisfy their needs in the town. The town forced the peasants to sell their products only in the town.

Pondicherry is not as ancient Indian city, even though there was an Indian settlement before the arrival of the French in 1673. As a Colonial city Pondicherry, is drastically distinguished from neighbouring Tamil towns like Kanchipuram or Chidambaram. Because, these towns were not divided like Pondicherry into White town, where the Europeans lived, and Black town where the Tamils lived. For the same reason, its location, right on the seashore is in sharp contrast with traditional Tamil cities, which were generally built in land. Nagapatnam and Cuddalore were exceptions.

Some colonial settlements in India based on European and non-European (native) segregation into White and Black towns were Pondicherry, Porto Novo, Madras etc. on the Coromandal Coast, Calcutta, Chinsurah and Chademagore in Bengal, and Bombay, Goa, Cochin etc. on the West. They emerged as urban centers of varying importance by the middle of the 18th Century. They had local differences. Yet, they possessed certain
features in common. Each continued the Portuguese tradition of combining port, fort, and factory. Each had well planned "White" town quite clearly demarcated from its native or "Black" counterpart. Their prosperity depended on their success in Asian Trade. 55

The towns have emerged in history with two primary characteristics: first, a high density of population concentrated with in a limited space and secondly, a predominantly non-agricultural, particularly non-cultivating nature of its population. These features-men-space ratio and occupational heterogeneity with their consequential relationships-have formed the primary basis for differentiation between the city and the village. 56

Obviously, Pondicherry urban center emerged from a rural setting. It was a fishing settlement earlier. It acquired an agrarian base in the hinterland. It served a subordinate factor in economic activities, which were generated in the villages. It is the extension of the villages, carrying over the same social unities and attitudes. The 'Peasant urbanities' are no new feature in Indian History. Urban economic activities were an extension of those initiated in the villages.

1.8. METHODOLOGY

Urban history is based on a core of questions, which this study attempts to answer. It tries to be analytical and is based on a conscious hypothesis, a hypothesis which is open to modification, even rejection on retrospect, but which furnishes the starting base for inquiry. This study in urban history has taken urbanization in general and urban center in particular as its focus.

This study would illumine first, the nature of Pondicherry as a town in this region - its institutions, the socio-economical make-up and the ethos of the urban classes. Secondly, it would bring to light the quality and volume of urbanization, which was fostered. Those details should help us to gauge the nature of economy in that region, and the societal and economic stage, at which it existed. This urban setting deeply influenced not only the perception of the commercial classes, but also molded their financial and trading institutions. The interlocked pattern of mores and institutions-residential, occupational, caste and its linkages with the political order- forms the framework. This study tries to investigate the inhibitions and stimulants of the growth of this urban center within this framework.
In this study, we have tried to follow Max Weber's methodology. His procedure is a model of sound theory construction. He successfully reviewed one type of concept of the city after another. They were: a. the economic, the relation of the city to agriculture. b. The political. c. Administrative concept of the city d. the fortress and garrison concepts of the city e. the concept of the city as fusion of fortress and market f. the social and status concept of the city g. the city as a sworn confederacy and h. the city as a body of military competent citizens. We attempted to isolate and retain whatever was correct in each special concept of the city.

To constitute a full urban community the settlement had to represent a relative predominance of trade-commercial relations with the settlement as a whole displaying the following features:

(1) A fortification. (2) a market. (3) A court of its own and at least partially autonomous law. (4) A related form of association, and, (5) At least partial autonomy and autocephaly, thus, also an administration by authorities, in the election of whom the citizens participated. We attempted to trace in this study any or all of these features from sources I consulted.

1.9. FOCUS OF STUDY

Changes, development, and evolution have been happening ever since humanity was born. Everything was new, whenever he leaped one step ahead. Sometimes changes were very slow, that the contemporaries never noticed that step- that change. So also was urbanization, which was obviously a change, which happened in the structure and function of society. For historical reasons, my study of the process of urbanization is limited to the period between 1673 A.D. and 1816 A.D. 1673 A.D. was the landmark in Indian History as well as in the History of Pondicherry, because on that date the French arrived at Pondicherry. During five military confrontations with the English and the Dutch, Pondicherry changed hands. Finally, Pondicherry was returned to the French in 1816. (see chapter ‘Administration and Urbanization’) After that, no battle was fought here. Pondicherry remained in the hands of the French, till it was merged with the union
of India in 1954. Hence, 1816 is another landmark in the History of Pondicherry. Therefore, for the study the period between 1673 and 1816 is the unit of time.

A good number of scholars like, Maritineau, Malleson, Labernadie, Josseline, Paul Kaeppelin, Y.R. Gaebel, Jouveau Dubreuil, S.P.Sen, Rajkumar N.V., Ramasamy.A, Raja P., Velayudanar.M.T., P.L.Samy., Kuppusamy.S., Cyril Antony.F., Nagarvala Erin. N., Dodwell etc., have written about the History of Pondicherry of various periods. However, urbanization, a new dimension of the History of Pondicherry, is not yet analyzed and studied. There are works on urbanization for other areas by scholars such as H.K.Naqvi (great Mughuls), Chandreshekar.S (Madras), Kapakasa K.M., (South Gujarat), Pranabranjan (Serampore), Prakasa Rao (Mysore State), Habib I. M. (Mughal India) Kanniah (Cuddalore) etc.

Among places in south India and Coromandel Coast, Pondicherry stands unique in history for the obvious reason that it was the capital of French India. When the French came here, Pondicherry contained some hamlets of fishermen settlements, where fishermen community thrived. By the middle of 17th Century the weavers, Oil Mongers and Temple Priests were thriving well in Pondicherry, which also had a Fort, Port, Trade, and Market. It is interesting to study the reasons- push and pull factors, mutual contribution of the rural and urban areas, alien minority dominance on the indigenous majority, interaction of religious convictions and culture, attitude of the people, labour, social and economic changes, growth of the town, mentality of the people etc.- which were involved in the urbanization of Pondicherry town during the French Colonial rule up to 1816.

1.10. HYPOTHESES.

The main points of Pondicherry’s urban history are those that happened in consequence of the expansion of colonial power. Pondicherry developed from the hamlets of fishermen community and weavers settlements on the Coromandel Coast, to the capital of imperial rule in French India. As a new center of economic activity, it attracted large numbers of immigrants, who gave the urban population its peculiar composition. Immigrants from Madras, Andhra, and Gujarat dominated trade and factory. The Tamils from the neighbouring places provided the necessary labour force, in the
docks, the fort, warehouses, transport, constructions, and weaving centers. The settlement pattern spatially reflected the new economic hierarchy imposed by the colonial order.

The conclusions to be drawn are Pondicherry largely conformed to the theories that propose colonial cities as parasitical and extractive. It was created by European interests and meant to serve them. This is a Marxian/Wallerstein's conclusion and it goes against the functional theory of village as producer of food and raw materials and town as consumer and manufacturer. An exploiter-exploited framework is too simplistic and does not fit the complex reality we are trying to understand and grasp. Both exploiter (city/town) and exploited (village/rural) were highly differentiated in terms of caste, class and strata. The upper/middle strata of rural society, who were producers benefited by selling their produce in urban market center. Moreover, rural migrants such as weavers also benefited through the growth of urban centers. Hence, dichotomous conclusions have only limited validity.

Pondicherry served as a commercial entrepot in the company's Asian trade. It was a strategic base for the political and military penetration of the interior — as the gateway, through which cotton fabrics and other products left the country.

The improvements of transport facilities, the establishment of the revenue structure and the vesting of financial authority in European hands were all geared to fit the role played by Pondicherry in the economic development of Pondicherry.

It has to be conceded, however, that a case history of Pondicherry also illustrates the developmental implications of the imperial connection. The establishments of links with international market and the accumulation of merchant capital enabled indigenous merchants to invest their own capital in various sorts of cloth production. From the beginning of the eighteenth Century cloth goods were more for export. The necessary weavers and artisans came from surrounding villages, where the population found it increasingly difficult to make a living in agriculture.

Pondicherry had a port and fort. It also had a mercantile stereotype. There was development of labour supply and market. In Pondicherry administration, defence, trade, and commerce were the key urbanizing elements. The expansion of trade and marketing, extension of administrative and municipal services stimulated the growth of employment opportunities. At the same time, the need for competent personnel in commercial
establishment as well as government institutions furthered the introduction of modern French education.

The advantage of imperial connection, however, was largely outweighed by the disadvantages of colonial subservience. It seems difficult to deny that Pondicherry as an exporter of cotton piece goods had to import raw cotton. The company and company merchants mostly reaped the benefits of the export, but it did not reach the countryside except in the form of low paid jobs.

The government of Pondicherry and the town’s leading businesspersons were mainly, bent on building the company’s economic prosperity, and the growth of trade and commerce. The cottage industry served the interests of a small elite group, more than it served those of the broader community. There was the well-planned and rich “white” town, which was quite clearly demarcated from its native or “black” counterpart. The white town symbolized political, economic, religious, and racial superiority.

Peasants in Pondicherry region adapted to the urban life with far greater ease than one would have expected judging from comparable evidence of Cuddalore. Nature of family life of the Tamils remained almost stable and not affected by the French culture. However, the emergence of ‘Franço-Indians’ - Creols and Metise- could not be ignored. The extended family ties increased.

Religious tension between the Catholics and the Hindus was a regular feature. Though there were instances of conversion, the Hindus remained ardent in their faith, festivals, and rituals. Caste restrictions and ties were found to be strong, but the administration was invited on some occasion to settle caste disputes. The caste barrier was not broken in the church. According to sources, a wall had been built inside the church to keep the upper caste vellala Christians and Pariah Christian separate. The vellala Christian insisted on the wall. Moreover, the Vellala Christian threatened to boycott, if priests went to homes of Pariah Christians for the last sacrament. The wall that was built in the church to divide people based on caste was later questioned. Subsequently the caste barrier wall was destroyed.

The French company neither developed a country trade of its own nor nourished the country trade of its servants. There was a sufficiently large group of “free merchants”, who were not employed by the company. The use of village remedies and beliefs
persisted. The elite group residences tended to concentrate around the hub of governmental and religious activity, but each community concentrated around the center of its activities.

The process of urbanization which, was positive, steady and fast up to the middle of the 18th Century, was almost negative due to French military confrontations, in the last four decades of the 18th Century. However, the institutions of social life were not destroyed. The continuity of social institutions helped the growth of Pondicherry as an urban center. When Pondicherry was finally restored to the French in 1816, it resumed urbanization, when the urban movement was brought back to life.

1.11. SOURCES CONSULTED

The primary sources used in this thesis are the folders and records preserved in the National Archives of India, Record center- Pondicherry, State Archives of Pondicherry, Tamil Nadu Archives Madras, National Archives of India-New Delhi, Records available in the French Institute-Pondicherry, Gazetteers of Pondicherry, Diaries of Ananda Ranga Pillai (Dubash to Dupleix), Diaries of Veeranayakar, Letters of Ananda Ranga Pillai, Diaries of Thiruvengadam Pillai and Letters of Thiruvengadam Pillai. The inscriptions found in cemeteries at church-grave yards of Pondicherry, the inscriptions found on the foundations stone at Reddiarpalayam-Pondicherry church are used in this research. In addition to the sources mentioned above, pre-independence and contemporary literature related to Pondicherry available in French, English and Tamil books on administration, voyages, letters, Diaries, Urban history, history, economic and cultural history are consulted.
CHAPTER – 1.
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Notes and References.

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