CONCLUSION

The macro-region of Coromandel and Southeast Asia was a colossal and integrated world of its own. The sea was the one which integrated this world. The wide circulation of the varieties of cloth procured by the 'klings' from the Coromandel in the nooks and corners of Southeast Asia was the basic ingredient of this maritime network. From the mussoolas and catamarans of the Coromandel coast to junks, lancharas and prohus of insular Southeast Asia-all of them catered to this bustling trade network. Navigation with monsoon was another feature though in the 'age of sail' it was the dominant factor for undertaking a journey through the Indian Ocean. So, this was the world which the Portuguese tried to monopolize in the sixteenth century and for which they had to witness immense competition in the succeeding hundred years.

Malacca was the choke-point of the bustling commercial network of the region. Sailing on their huge ships called carracks across the Indian Ocean, the Portuguese had understood its importance soon on their arrival to this entrepôt. Malacca was hence conquered by the soldiers of the Estado in 1511 A.D. From here, the Portuguese traced the various veins of trade which were soon bound to come within the ambit of their control. The official as well as the unofficial presence of the Portuguese in these domains helped them to control the reins of the commerce. While the Portuguese had official settlements at Malacca, Ternate and Timor, the unofficial ones were Macasser, Ambon, Banda, Tidore. The story on the Coromandel coast was entirely different. The Portuguese there had an informal presence which is why modern historians like Winius have attributed as the 'shadow empire' of Goa. Though historians have noted the presence of official and unofficial settlements, but it is difficult to compartmentalize. There were instances when the officials of Goa tried to bring areas outside the Estado's

1 Newitt, Routledge, 2005
dominance under their control. An early example of this can be seen on the Coromandel coast with the introduction of the concession system for all overseas voyages. In the case of Southeast Asia, one also comes across this fact in the Lesser Sunda islands, Macasser etc, where the Estado used the Fathers of the Dominican order and Society of Jesus to make their presence felt indirectly.²

Thus in the first four decades of the 16th century, their main concentration of the Portuguese was in Southeast Asia with Coromandel also gaining attention along with. The Iberians were introduced by the expatriate trading community that is the keling merchants from the Coromandel at Malacca, to the trade of the archipelago as well as to that of Coromandel. In the second half of the 16th century, there were changes that have been termed by Thomaz as the ‘second wind’. An important element of this process was the concession system through which the Portuguese tried to monopolize the network of trade across Bay of Bengal. So by 1571, there were some 40 ports or trading posts from Sofala and Nagasaki, in Indonesia, and as far as Moluccas.

The dawn of the seventeenth century is marked by a new element as far as the ventures conducted by the European states of the time are concerned. This was the founding of the joint stock companies- Verenigde Oostindische Compagnie (the United Dutch East India Company or VOC) in Holland and the English East India Company in England. Their predecessors in the sea borne activities, Spain and Portugal respectively had expanded on entirely different lines. The Portuguese overseas endeavours were driven by the initiatives taken by the Crown under the name of the Estado da India. On the other hand, in Spain it was important to channelize the surplus of soldiers. So the Crown initiated the soldiers in the maritime expansion. Due to the

² For the Lesser Sunda Islands refer, Documentos Remetidos da India ou Livros das monções. And for the Jesuits refer, Jacobs, Hubert, Documenta Malcensia, Vol I, Institutum Historicum Societatis Iesu, 1974. and also Vol II, 1984
different motives and expansionary zeal, the companies came to dominate the commercial world of Asia. Thus as observed in the contemporary Portuguese documents, travel accounts and the Company records of the English company, it also marks the end of the sole monopoly of the *Estado da Índia* in the East.

There were two basic institutions that were characteristic of the Portuguese seaborne empire and which helped to weld its disparate settlements together. These were the town council (Senado da Camara) and the charitable brotherhoods and lay confraternities, the most important of which was the Holy House of Mercy (Santa Casa da Misericórdia). Of these, the *Misericórdias* and not to forget the bishoprics, have imparted vital roles in the *Estado da Índia* since the early days of Portugal’s quest for overseas expansion. These entities though spiritual in nature, latently lend a hand to the *Estado* in order to facilitate latter’s governance. They became the funding agencies whenever the need arose. In the seventeenth century, this feature became more noticeable. The changing state of affairs in the *Estado da Índia* is vividly revealed through the contemporary documents.

It is a known fact that between the years 1600 and 1640, the *Estado da Índia* was governed wholly through the Casa da India at Lisbon. Though during these years Portugal was under the subjection of Spanish kingdom, nevertheless, the interests of Portugal and Portuguese officials dominated. Pyrard, whose sojourn to India is remembered through his encyclopaedic work, noted that- ‘*All the ships of the Armadas are equipped at the expense of the King of Portugal, for they never speak there of Spain or the Spaniards but of Portugal, Goa and the Indies only.*’ So if this attitude of the Portuguese in the early seventeenth century is considered, then it might explain the borrowings of the *Estado* from the *Misericórdia* and bishopric. But on the other hand the arduous work of Matos

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3 Gray, Albert (ed), The Voyage of François Pyrard of Laval to the East Indies, the Maldives, the Moluccas and Brazil. The Hakluyt Society, London, Vol.I, 1887, pp 438-39
reflects the funds that were sent from Lisbon and the expenditure made. Thus, in
the light of the above discussion, one can clearly adjunct the fact that the
Estado was undergoing an existential crisis. In order to overcome it, loans
were taken from the Misericórdias and bishoprics, which became a concern
with time. Besides, questions were raised about the functioning of these
institutions.

The 1630’s were so tumultuous that even men like Conde de Linhares
who were thought to be saviors could hardly improve the state of affairs. In
December 1637, Peter Mundy on his way from Macao to Malacca noted the
fear psychosis that the Portuguese had of the Dutch.⁴ There were 140 men
who were either of Portuguese origin or mesticoes who boarded Mundy’s ship
for Malacca, Cochin, Goa etc and they confessed that they did not sail in their
vessels for fear of the Dutch. The Portuguese overseas enterprise had
essentially started crumbling in the third decade of the seventeenth century.
The loss of the important fortresses of the Estado like Syriam, Hormuz and
finally Malacca in 1641 point to the slow decadence the Estado had been
undergoing. Malacca had been under the Estado’s domination since 1511 and
it succumbed only in 1641 to the Dutch hands. Defending a port for more than
a century can be ascribed as Portuguese’s attempt at survival in desolated
circumstances. The Portuguese were aware of the presence of their European
counterparts as well as of the hatred of indigenous polities. Nevertheless the

⁴Temple, R.C. (edt) The Voyage of Peter Mundy in Europe and Asia,1608-1667,Vol III, Part II,
The Hakluyt Society,1919, pp317-318 . Mundy noted that: “Beeing as before mentioned
Driven off the shoare with all that wee had att Macao by the Portugalls, As also outt of the
Country by the Chinois, leaving beehinde us in their hands att Cantan a good Cavidall, The
Catherine Dispeeded For India and the little Anne (beeing Much deffective) sold unto the
Spaniards afforesaid. The Dragon and Sunne sett saille From our First rode within 3 leagues off
Macao. The Former had aboard off her Nere 140 Portugalls, Mestizos[half-breeds], Servaunnts,
etts., with an unknowne treasure, All come without the knowledge and Consent off the Captaine
Generall (except some Churchmen and one Don Goncalo el Silvera with his retinue, who had his
licence), beeing bound For sundry parts, as Mallacca, Cochin, Goa, etts., And durst not, as they
Confesse themselves, goe on their owne vessels For Fear off the Hollander.”
endurance of the Estado for a continued existence in this phase of existential crisis barely ceased.

In 1657-1658, when Friar Domingo Navarrete was making his onward journey from Macasser to Macao, an Englishman pointed a rudimentary fact about the Portuguese decline. He held that: "You Portuguese Gentlemen have order'd your Empire very poorly, for you have only taken care to build a Nest in one place, and another in another place, which divides your Force and so secures nothing." 5 Navarette's compatriot was accurate. The Portuguese had in around one hundred and fifty years brought under their domination all the choke-points of the Indian Ocean commerce from Sofala to Nagasaki. With so many disparate settlements, there had to be an effective machinery as well as man-power to administer effectively. The paucity of funds, the type of vessels which were part of the carreira da Índia, the presence of the formal as well as informal settlements and the loose governance of the Estado did contribute towards the Portuguese retreat.

The decline of the settlements of the Estado da India on the Coromandel Coast and Southeast Asia was an important development that gradually led to the establishment of the Dutch hegemony in Indonesia and the English one on the Coromandel Coast. In the period prior to the capture of Malacca by the Dutch, Syriam, Hormuz and Pulicat had already slipped out of the hands of the Portuguese. It was in the 1630’s that the decline gained momentum from where there was no looking back. In spite of the measures that the Portuguese Crown had taken, nothing seemed to bear a consequence. Perhaps the very structure of the Estado da Índia was responsible for this decline. The Anglo-Portuguese agreement can be counted among the very few positive aspects to the 1630’s from the Portuguese viewpoint, relieving them

5 Cummin, JS, Vol I, 1961, p125
of the burden of having to combat at least one adversary. Dom Miguel de Noronha, Conde de Linhares, who was the Viceroy between the years 1629 and 1635 made attempts to stall the Portuguese retreat but to no avail!

In the macro-region of this theme, Dutch encroachments were reflected in the ruthless sequence of the captures of Portuguese forts in India and Asia and the Moluccas, whereas the English focussed on Portuguese holdings around the Indian Ocean and Persian Gulf. The chronology tells the story of losses to the Dutch; 1605, Spice Islands; 1641, Malacca; 1656, Colombo; 1658, Ceylon; 1660, Nagapattinam; 1662, Cranganore and Cochin. Macassar which had become the abode of refuge for the fleeing Portuguese from Malacca in 1641 also was forced by the Dutch to surrender though in 1667. Despite the fact that Macassar was never a part of the formal Estado da Índia, it had become a key commercial centre of the Portuguese commerce after the fall of Malacca. On the Coromandel coast, Nagapattinum was taken by the Dutch forces in 1658 which made the Portuguese inhabitants to flee to other places. The Dutch forced the old Portuguese settlement of São Tomé to surrender in 1662 which made its casados to take refuge in nearby Madras. Thus the Portuguese diaspora in both the official and unofficial settlements moved to other places when the Dutch took over their respective settlements. With the siege of São Tomé, the retreat of the Portuguese in Coromandel-Southeast Asia macro-region was complete. The English on being ousted from insular Southeast Asia started concentrating greatly on the Coromandel. They grew so strong after 1670’s that they out rivaled the Dutch. Hence the Dutch were confined to Southeast Asia where they had carved nearly most of the archipelago for themselves. Of all the settlements that were under the Portuguese occupation were merely five in number. These were: Goa, Diu, Daman, Macao and Tidore. Though the Portuguese presence in Asia was limited only to these fortresses, nonetheless their legacy continued.