

CHAPTER VI.

CONCLUSION.

The foregoing study shows that the colonial town served several purposes for the imperial power. There were three distinct phases in its emergence in India. Initially the Portuguese had set-up their factory at one of the ports of the Nizamshahis, which had functioned under the umbrella of concessions and protections given by the local ruler. The displacement of the traditional horse trade from Chaul to Goa led the Nizamshah, who desired to acquire horses from the Portuguese, to offer a place to them for constructing their fortress at Chaul. The transformation of the factory into a fortress, from a commercial center to a military settlement, was thus the result of the naval supremacy of the colonial power. The naval power was used against the local parties for achieving the imperial objectives. These two factors occurred during the second and third decades of the sixteenth century. With the beginning of the fourth decade the area around the fortress began to be occupied by the Portuguese families. The area came to be known as the *bandel*. When the control of the local ruler on this area was eliminated by the Portuguese an increasing number of families were tempted to settle down at Chaul. In this way the *bandel* expanded considerably and developed into a town. Various ecclesiastical institutions sprang up to cater to the religious needs of the settlers. The Municipal Council was introduced to look after its civic administration. What we find here is the emergence of the Portuguese town of Chaul

and its growth as an international market place within a short span of half a century.

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE COLONIAL TOWN OF CHAUL

By the fifth decade of the sixteenth century the colonial power had placed trans-oceanic trade at Chaul. It extended certain concessions as well as exemptions to its residents in the urban tax structure with a view to attract merchants from other parts to come and settle in Chaul. These privileges were extended to ameliorate their economic stand^{ard} at the initial stages. But in the long-run these measures ^{aimed} at increasing the revenues. First, the Portuguese started collecting the tolls and weighing charges and then proposed to introduce customs duties. But the residents of Chaul had taken repugnance to the proposal and

tried to evade the payment of customs duties. Therefore, the State had imposed prohibition on the residents of Chaul to carry on trade with Mossambique directly from their own port. This greatly affected their trade. But when the settlers agreed to pay the customs duties, the Mossambique trade got revived.

Numerous *rendas* or non-agricultural cesses were farmed out to the highest bidders. The farmers of taxes were armed with exceptional power and authority. This only meant extracting revenue from the town without administrative and public responsibility. By remittⁿing a part of the biddiⁿ amount in advance to the authority, the *rendeiro* of highest bidder for the sale of tobacco, for instance, had acquired

powers to regulate supply and prices of tobacco. He even deployed armed guards to protect his monopoly rights given by the Portuguese.

The major part of the income derived from this town was used to maintain military and ecclesiastical establishments. The balance was remitted to the royal exchequer which in turn invested in its commercial enterprises. In the second half of the seventeenth century, when the Portuguese trade in India suffered on account of other European powers, the revenue extracted from Chaul was sufficient to maintain two imperial devices, *vis*, the military and religious set-ups, at that place.

The fortification around the town proper provided the effective command over the urban population and it also saved the town of being attacked by the native forces. The expenditure on the maintenance of the fortification was recovered from the locals, by way of imposing one per cent tax upon the merchants and tax-farmers. This was in addition to the customs duties and the bidding amount. This fortified settlement also served to protect the merchants and their trade, as they were the instruments of colonial power for acquiring the revenues.

Its situation at the strategic point helped the Portuguese not only to restrain the spice traffic to the ports on Red Sea but also provided them with a lucrative market for spices of low qualities. This helped them to raise finances for their trade ventures within Asia itself. During the

seventeenth century when the Portuguese had concentrated their attention on the trade between India and Mossambique, Chaul provided profitable market for gold, ivory and other items of Afro-Asian origin. In order to procure these items the merchants brought textiles and tobacco from Gujarat. The latter were required by the Portuguese for their trade with Mossambique. In short, organisation of the Portuguese trade in India helped to develop Chaul as an international port-town of transit nature, which in ^{town} ~~town~~ served to proliferate the financial resources of the colonial power.

An introduction of Municipal administration after the European model was another characteristic of the Portuguese colonial rule in Chaul. The responsibilities of civic administration of a colonial town were given exclusively to the white settlers. Both the military and ecclesiastical bodies at local level were involved by colonial power to keep check on each other. In the struggle between the Jesuits and the Municipal Councillors on the issue of finance of the town, the Captian who was the head of the military administration of the town, remained neutral. All the three bodies of local administration often made complaints against each other to the Crown. The Crown tactfully favoured one or the other contending party in different circumstances and thereby tried to maintain the balance of power in the town.

SOCIO-ECONOMIC LIFE IN THE TOWN OF CHAUL

The idea of promoting mixed marriages between the Portuguese and the native women was to build a race of mixed blood,

loyal to Portugal, speaking Portuguese, adopting Portuguese manners and customs and at the same time having affinities with local people. Christianity being the State religion, the followers of other religions were left without socio-cultural liberties, so as to attract them to the new faith. This was aimed at building up an urban milieu favourable to the colonial power. But liberty in trade and commerce was extended to all. At least in this respect men of all religions were treated at par with their Christian counterparts and enjoyed the privileges of being the residents of the Portuguese town.

The *tenças* or annuities were granted to the descendents of the deceased Christian soldiers and to those who had retired to Chaul after active service in preserviⁿg the interest of Portuguese Crown in the East. The properties of the urbanites without legal heirs were inherited by the State and the Church was given the responsibility of distributing them among the Christian poor. To avoid their properties being lapsed, the heirless non-Christians of the town used to make their wills in which they donated considerable amount to their religious institutions. Whatever their social status or financial capacity, the natives were never permitted to participate in the local civic administration and even the representatives of the workers in the Municipal Council were exclusively the white settlers.

The common interest of Municipal Councillors and urbanites in commerce and other auxiliaries of trade led to the

formation of class consciousness against the unpropitious economic measures of the colonial power and the atrocities of the State officials at town level. Many a times, the urbanites extended monetary and material help to the State for maintaining the armadas, the mechanism of the colonial power that also served to protect their trade against attacks of the pirates. But when an appeal was made by the state to contribute financially towards its commercial ventures, they exhibited no interest. They had become suspicious of the intention of the Crown.

The Portuguese administration in the town was responsible for the emergence of middle class, comprising various professionals. The urbanites needed the help of the Public Notaries for preparing affidavits of different nature. To handle the judicial cases a group of Solicitors had also emerged. The state officials who had retired from service and settled in the town also took up these professions. These two professions were exclusively followed by the white settlers. They had obvious advantage of the knowledge of Portuguese language and laws. The occupation of medicine was followed by both the white and native settlers, but the aspirant had to satisfy the concerned Portuguese authority at Goà by his knowledge in the field.

The Portuguese had followed the practice of farming out various taxes and majority of the tax-farmers were the Hindus, particularly the *Vanias* of Gujarat. They were the residents of the town of Chaul who followed the mercantile

professions, and it was possible for them to pay 1/3 of the total bidding amount in advance to the Portuguese. In this way they had started accumulating capital which was re-invested in their commercial enterprises, under the protection of the colonial power. Thus, this system gave impetus to the growth of the merchants' capital.

IMPACT OF COLONIAL TOWN ON NEIGHBOURING AREAS

The development of this town in the territory of the Nizamshahis helped the Portuguese to restrain the maritime trade of the locals. This so happened as the trade of both Upper and Lower towns of Chaul was conducted at the common port which was controlled by the Portuguese. From 1570 onwards when relaxation of monopoly control on the spice trade was introduced by the Portuguese, an arrangement was made to stop their flow to the town of Upper Chaul. Even the Portuguese were prohibiting the Governor of Nizamshahi's Upper Chaul to take possession of horses that were disembarked at their port of Chaul.¹ The orchards and houses under the Nizamshahis' jurisdiction were destroyed and set afire by the Portuguese several^a times.² The Portuguese had troubled the rayats under the Nizamshahis so much that led to their migration to the interior parts of Deccan. During the first decade of the seventeenth century, the Portuguese had plundered the town of Upper Chaul thrice

1. *C A D*, letter no.38

2. *Ibid*, letter nos.12,14,18,20 and 21.

and murdered few urbanites during the fourth time.³ To get rid on the unpropitious commercial atmosphere caused by the insecurity and control of the port by the Portuguese, some of the merchants of Upper Chaul migrated to the port-town of Dabhol and the rest came to settle in the town of Chaul and accepted the Portuguese sovereignty.⁴ The cause of later development was also due to the privileges given by the colonial power to the residents of Chaul.

DECLINE OF CHAUL AS A CENTER OF TRADE.

The prosperity of this town was largely associated with the trade conducted by its residents, but the mercantile activities of them were at times regulated by the mechanism of the system put into operation by the Portuguese in the Orient. From the very beginning they were active in most lucrative trade of ivory and gold that were brought to India from Mossambique and in return, they exported tobacco and textiles to Mossambique. But form 1687 onwards, tobacco was declared as a monopoly commodity of the Portuguese trade and so textile remained one of the principal merchandise for their trade with Africa. Thereafter they have confined their trade mostly of textiles, gold and ivory between Gujarat and Mossambique. In 1694, the King of Portugal had founded the Portuguese Trading Company and to faciliate its trade, the port of Mossambique was closed down for the private merchants. Moreover, the trade under this

3. Ibid, letter no.21.

4. Ibid.

Company was confined to the Portugues towns of Diu and Daman, while Chaul was kept out of its orbit. The State owned commercial venture required ^{regular} ~~regalr~~ supply of textiles from Gujarat. The Portuguese invited the wealthy merchants of Gujarat in order to acquire textiles and also to dispose off the ivory and gold brought from Mossambique. In this way the town of Chual was prevented from having facilites or trade with Mossambique and its residents deprived of thier avocation as merchants or brokers. This eventually led to their migration to other towns which offered them better opportunities of livelihood.

The placement of trade was the main factor responsible for the emergence and development of any colonial port-town of transit nature. It was the microcosm of the colonial society; it served as a revenue extracting unit, receiving and exporting center for imperial trade; as a military outpost and socio-cultural entrepot between the colonisers and the colonized. The displacement of trade caused its decline as it had neither an agricultural base nor considerable handicraft industries which could provide an alternative to the urbanites who lived solely on long distance trade. Thus the placement and displacement of the trade were the main factors for the emergence, development and finally the decline of the colonial port-towns in medieval India.

APPENDIX III

TABLE OF EQUIVALENCE OF CURRENCIES, WEIGHTS AND MEASURES

A. Coins and their equivalence:

The following coins were in circulation in the town of Chaul during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. All the coins of gold, silver and copper have been reduced into a nominal coin called reis.

name of coin	metal	reis
Bazaruco	Copper	3
Cruzado	Gold	390
Larim	Silver	90
Pardao	Gold	360
Patacao	Silver	360
Tanga	Silver	60
Xerafim	Silver	360

Sources: Subsidios para a Historia India Portuguesa, p. 62:
B N L, Mss. 140, fls. 196v-197v.

B. Weights and their equivalence:

weight	equivalent
Arratel (old weight)	1.2 kilograms.
Arratel (new weight)	0.36 -do-
Bhar	166.3 -do-
Candil	220.32 -do-
Fardo	209.84 -do-
Mão	11.1 -do-
Mark	0.2 kilograms.
312.32 Oitavas	1.00 -do-
39.04 Ounces	1.00 -do-
quintal	52.540 -do-
16 Ounces	1 Arratel.
32 Arratels	1 Arrobs.
4 Arrobas	1 Quintal
1 Quintal=2048 Ounces	128 Arratels

Sources: Subsidios para a Historia India Portuguesa, p. 30:
B N L, Mss. 140, fls. 197v-198v; Mathew, Op. cit. pp. 236-242:
Afzal Ahmed, Op. cit., Appendix VI.

C. Measures and their equivalence:

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measures/unit	equivalent
<i>Braça</i>	6 feet.
<i>Corja</i>	20 pieces,
<i>Covoado</i>	0.66 metre or 18 to 22 inches.
<i>League</i>	5 kilometres.
<i>Palmo</i>	1 inche.

Sources: A.C. de Lacerda, *Diccionario da Lingua Portuguesa*, (Lisboa, 1859); Antonio de Moraes Silva, *Diccionario da Lingua Portuguesa*, (Lisboa, 1891); J.P. Aillaud, *Nova, Diccionario da inslera*, (Lisbon, 1837).
