

**TRADE AND TRADING COMMUNITIES OF GUJARAT
(C 1750 — 1800)**

Dissertation submitted to Jawaharlal Nehru University
in partial fulfilment of the requirements for
the award of the Degree of
MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY

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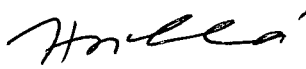


DECLARATION

Certified that the dissertation entitled
"Trade & Trade Communities of Gujarat : 1750-1800"
submitted by Ms. Meera Patnaik is in fulfilment of
eight credits out of the twenty six credits for
the degree of Master of Philosophy of this
University. This dissertation has not been
previously submitted for any other degree of
this University and is her own work.

We recommend that this dissertation be
placed before the Examiners for evaluation.


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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I would like to express my deep gratitude to Dr. Satish Chandra for the guidance given in the supervision of this dissertation. My sincere thanks are also extended to Dr. Dilbagh Singh for the advice often given to me.

I would also like to extend my thanks to the staffs of Maharashtra Public Records Office, Bombay, the National Archives and the Central Secretariat, Delhi and Jawaharlal Nehru University Library for their ungrudging assistance.

I am alone responsible for the ideas & views expressed in the dissertation.

- MIRA PATNAIK

C O N T E N T S

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

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INTRODUCTION

In a historical study, its scope must be clearly defined as regards the span of time that it would cover and the territorial area to which the study would be confined. I have delimited the period of study from 1759 (the begining of the dyarchic era in Surat) to 1800, when Surat came theoritically under the control of the British. The discussion in this paper would be confined to a study of the trade and trading communities of Surat. The time period of is fixed more for the purpose of analysis. The objective of this paper is to attempt a re-evaluation of the role of the mercantile communities of Surat for this period.

The justification for undertaking the study of this specific region within the confines of this time period lies in the fact that a) most studies of Gujarat's economic history conclude between 1730-1750. The view of some historians being that the region did not merit attention after that time,¹ (b) Secondly, despite the fact that the mercantile community were a significant group in the urban structure and carried on an extensive trade over the centuries, there is hardly any attention paid to analysing the position of this strata vis a vis

1: Ashin Das Gupta, Indian Merchants and the Decline of Surat 1700-1750. Weisbaden, Steiner, 1978.

the state and the society.

The period between 1750-1800 has been viewed from the perspective of economic decline, the decline of the Mughal empire and the political turmoils of the eighteenth century, having been held largely responsible for the decline of Gujarat's trade. Critics of the eighteenth century are of the opinion that Surat as a trade centre was on the decline during this period and there was a slump in the overseas trade. The satellization of Bombay by Surat has been equated with sharp downward trends in the economy.

While questioning some of the generally accepted assumptions on the eighteenth century, an attempt has been made through a study of the activities of Surat's mercantile class to see whether the economy of Surat was in a state of decline, the nature of decline, if any, and subsequently whether the deurbanisation of Surat was under way.

For the purposes of study this paper will be divided into several chapters each dealing with separate yet relevant points of interest.

The first chapter is an attempt at examining the changes in the political system with the breakdown of the Mughal structure. Various issues would be examined here. They are :

- a) the inability of the centre to control the provincial governors and its consequences.
- b) the efforts of the provincial governor to meet the Maratha menace. The focus here would be to see whether there was a capable local noble who was able to establish himself in Gujarat as a defacto independent ruler like the Nizam in Hyderabad or Murshid Quli Khan in Bengal and use this power to keep the Maratha at bay or, did they enter into various compromises that were detrimental to their own interests.
- c) Was Gujarat under the rule of one Maratha chief or did Gujarat become a bone of contention between the rival Maratha Sardars. Other aspects of study in this chapter would be the attempts of the English to enter into the politics of the region and, the significance to Surat of the rise of Bombay as a commercial centre.

The criteria for the well being of a large commercial centre like Surat would be the presence of a large urban population and an active trading community. The aim of this second chapter is to examine (a) Whether there

was an urban decline; (b) the spheres and scope of activities of the Surat mercantile class; (c) the changing composition of the latter; did the mercantile community appear as a defeated group or were they able to adjust to the changing situation. These issues would be examined at relevant points.

The next chapter is an analysis of the structure and volume of the trade of Surat. This would necessitate not only the volumes of business generated in foreign trade but also as far as available, evidence pertaining to inland trade. Further, the trading activities of the Surat merchants should be studied (a) in relation to their commercial activities with the English and European Companies, (b) trade carried out independently, in order to assess whether this period was marred by commercial disruption or whether trade was being maintained.

In the fourth chapter, the questions would be not only one of dealing with the volumes of trade and routes but also the role of the commercial people in their individual and collective capacity vis-a-vis the state, the administration and the society. In such an analysis socio-economic aspects would tend to converge.

SOURCES

In the early eighteenth century, Surat consultations assumed to some extent the form of diaries. These diaries comprised primarily of copies of correspondence issued and recieved. In these diaries, there is a great mass of records connected with Surat. The relevance of these diaries as a source of trade and commerce lies in the statistical data which can be computed to analyse and interpret various trends in trade. There is considerable information on the commercial transactions of the Surat mercantile community vis-a-vis the English company. But, the nature of the records are somewhat limited in the light that they shed on the independant trading activities of the Surat merchants. From this source we are unable to acquire any substantial information on inland trade. Further, as the references are primarily devoted to mercantile interests, they throw only sporadic light on the nature and composition of the trading communities. Their references to social and cultural matters are made unconsciously in so far as they affected for better or for worse, the success of the trade. So, information has to be pieced together. This is a laborious task and never satisfactory until supplemented by information from the Indian sides, i.e. from the records of the Indian families. The further draw-back lies in

that these sources have not yet been listed. Hence, as long as Indian sources are not tapped, our understanding is bound to be partial. However, sufficient information is available in them to enable us to present an outline, though not all questions can be answered in depth.

MOCHA FACTORY RECORDS NO. 76 - 1750-1795

This record as available in the Maharashtra Public Records office is a meagre collection of papers, undecipherable in places. But, its importance lies in that it enables us to get information about the Gujarati merchants trading overseas. This record provides us with important shipping lists. A list obtained contains not only the name of the ship and the destination but, the name of the owner and the cargoes to be carried. This gives us an indication of the nature of the Surat merchants overseas activities. Though the lists do not note the social composition of the various merchants, the names available are in general, sufficient to prove the point.

James Forbes, the author of Oriental Memoirs was in Bombay in 1765. He accompanied the British mission sent to Gujarat. In 1780, he became collector of Dabhoi.

William Milburn, the author of Oriental Commerce, was also actively employed in the sea service of the Company and in Commercial pursuits immediately connected with Gujarat. We may perhaps presume that their accounts were reliable as they would have in their official capacity access to data.

Some of the arguements and conclusions drawn would contain some shortcomings which I am aware of. But, I hope to draw the attention to the unsolved problems pertaining to this study.

HISTORICAL INTRODUCTION

The fall of the Sayyid brothers and the political upheaval at Delhi brought changes in Gujarat, Subedar Ajit Singh Rathor, the nominee of the Sayyids had to make way for Haider Quli Khan who was appointed as the Subedar of Gujarat in 1721. With his appointment, there ensued the civil contests for power among rival Mughal nobles for the next quarter of a century. The ensuing provincial politics determined the political behaviour of many of the nobles posted in the Subhas who became military adventurers and attempted to carve out semi-independent principalities or riyasats from the Mughal empire. To this situation were added, the problems caused by the Maratha incursions, the subsequent mughal-maratha conflicts in this region and the civil war between rival maratha chieftains.

A brief survey of eighteenth century politics would be relevant to our study in order to see whether changes in the political power structure had any impact on the trade and economy of the region.

After Haider Quli's assumption of the governorship of Gujarat, he "began to assume the airs of an independent prince. He usurped the jagirs assigned to imperial nobles."¹

1. Satish Chandra, Parties and Politics at the Mughal Court, 1707-1740, p.172, 1759.

This act would undoubtedly alienate him from a section of the nobles. But, he dared to do this because he enjoyed the secret support of the emperor. Nizam-ul-Mulk who aspired for the governorship of the Subah of Gujarat, brought to the notice of the emperor, the high-handed behaviour of Haider Quli Khan. Haider Quli had some thoughts of establishing himself as an independent ruler in Gujarat but 'unable to find support in any quarter' left for Delhi. A distinct feature of the politics in this province was that each time the success of the new governor was in each case, contested by the retired officer. Haider Quli, Hamid Khan, Sarbuland Khan, then Abhai Singh attempted to establish themselves as the de-facto rulers. The provincial nobility faction ridden as it was, did not lag behind in displaying internal rivalry and strife.¹ And, they tried to retain and perpetuate the delegated power and position and riyasats were carved out of the Mughal empire by Mughal nobles and officials. These rights though not legally sanctioned were virtually recognized. Theoretically, they did not disassociate themselves from the Mughal empire but, in effect, the areas where the emperor could exercise authority effectively was diminishing. The process of conversion of official position into Zamindaris reached its water-mark in 1731. Tegh Begh Khan who held previously no post in the

1. Ibid. p.186-188.

imperial administration emerged from the political melee instigated by Mulla Md. Ali as a practically independent ruler.¹

The local subedars unable to hope for any help from the centre as the latter was involved in its factional quarrels, sought in turn the assistance of the Marathas who were hovering over the subah. For instance, Hamid Khan had no intention of leaving his office and, in defiance of the Central government secured the help of the Maratha leaders as allies and with their help he defeated and killed Shiyat Khan and his brother Ibrahim Quli Khan and Rustam Ali Khan.² As a consequence of this, the Marathas got a footing and became a constant internal factor in the provincial affairs and began to collect part of the revenue annually through the province of Gujarat. While the Marathas appear as the principal allies of Hamid Khan, the Mirat mentions, "some of Ahemdabad's residents who abhorred Shiyat Khan's guidance (government) instigated their own men to side with Hamid Khan."³ The use of the phrase, "their own men"

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1. Mirat-i-Ahmadi - A persian History of Gujarat. English Translation. Gaekwad's Oriental Series by M.F. Lokhandwalla, 1965. p.495.
 2. Ibid, p.419, 427.
 3. Ibid, p.416

may perhaps be interpreted as men owing allegiance to a Zamindar or a noble. This is however mere speculation. Another fact that emerges is that Hamid Khan no longer enjoyed the confidence of the central Government. This is evident from the fact that Bahadur Dilawar Jung granted "one crore of rupees for the expulsion of Hamid Khan and the chastisement of the Dekhanis by Sarbuland Kham."¹ Though the latter ostensibly marched to Surat for the establishment of order, he removed the Faujidars and Amils appointed by Hamid Khan from many places and "siezed all the parganas assigned in jagirs to nobles and courtiers."² Sarbuland Khan was in turn unable to check the Marathas and accepted their claims to chauth and sardeshmukhi of the subah. The annals of the time are very confusing. Alliances and counter-alliances seemed to be a regular feature in the political set-up - "Pillaji Rao was in alliance with a Md. General Rustam Ali Khan but the strength of these alliances was severally tested when.... Pillaji Rao turned his guns upon his ally. Similar references abound in our sources. It was in turn, the ambition for power among the local nobles at Ahmadabad, at Surat and other places in the region that made them feel little scruples about entering into temporary and

1. Ibid, p.436

2. Satish Chandra, op.cit., p.186.

shifting alliances with their enemies, a situation of which, the Marathas took full advantage.

The agreement entered into with Chimanji on 23rd March, 1730 with Sarbuland Khan was objected to by Trimbak Rao Senapati as this cause was aimed at Pilaji Gaikwad who from Songarh commanded the principal route from the Deccan into Gujarat and exercise great influence over the Bhils and Kolis of the country, Senapati Trimbak Rao was jealous of the Peshwa. He also opposed the policy of the Peswa of keeping the jagirs of Maratha chiefs under the joint ownership of atleast two. Finally, the issue was settled by a battle. In 1731 A.D., the Peswa and the Senapati fought against each other at Dabhai. The Peswa won the battle while Trimbak Rao was killed. Thereafter, the position of the Peshwa became foremost among the ministers of the Chhatrapati. The state of Maratha affairs in gujarat was in a dis-ordered state with rival maratha chieftains trying to exact maximum amount of chauth.

As regards Sarbuland Khan, repeated "complaints against him were received by his Majesty in respect of illegal exactions such as Biwarrah, fines, capture and

ransom money from the ryots and common folk."¹ Sarbuland Khan too attempted to offer Abhay Singh resistance but was forcibly ejected.

Further visible indication of the declining power and influence exercised by the centre is evident from the fact that though Momin Khan had been appointed by the emperor as successor to Abhay Singh, he had to enter into an alliance with Rangoji to help him oust the former. And, Momin Khan in turn granted to the Gaikwad, half the revenues of the entire subah of Gujarat, excepting only the city of Ahmedabad, the home pargana and the port of Cambay. It is beyond the scope of this chapter to attempt to trace the various stages in the Maratha conquest of Gujarat which occurred in 3 phases. The first phase comprised of their demand for chauth and sardesmukhi. Next was the demand for cessation of territory and the final phase was the process of out-right annexation. The conquest of Gujarat by the Marathas was mainly the work of 2 families, the Dabhades and their assistance the Gaikwads. The civil strife among rival Mughal nobles gave the Marathas further opportunities to consolidate their position by taking sides.

1. Mirat, op.cit., p.470

In 1751, the Peshwa made a division of Gujarat with the Gaikwad and completely wiped out the influence of Dabhade Senapati.

The picture that emerges from a study of the history of the Marathas is that the Maratha chiefs were disunited. Baji Rao while extending his conquest had entrusted the collection of the Maratha dues from the conquered provinces to some of his able officers. These were Ranoji Sindhia, Malahar Rao Holkar and Pilaji Gaekwar. The first two were appointed in Malwa and the Gaikwad in Gujarat. Before long, these chiefs set themselves up as almost independent princes owing only a nominal allegiance to the Peshwa. It can be concluded that among the Maratha chiefs, their personal gain was of primary consideration which made the re-establishment of a centralized administration impossible.

However, the Maratha conquest did not bring about a fundamental transformation of the coast's political life. The Marathas tried to exercise their supremacy along the coast and seas, in the form of granting passes to traders and vessels in return for monetary payment. For the merchants of Gujarat this was no novelty.

As regards the state of affairs at Surat, the government of the castle in Surat was in the hands of the Sidae, who due to the relaxed attitude of the centre, "exercised power to the oppression of the Nawab and the inhabitants of the city, intimidating the whole place to a great degree, the trading part of it especially."¹ A representation from the chief of Surat made to the Mughal emperor on behalf of the Honourable East India Company states that "the eyes of the whole town were cast on us as the only persons of force, sufficient to save the city from the calamities it then felt....though we are not desirous of taking or governing cities and subsequently, "if the English did take part in politics, it was to save from ruin so great a city as Surat."²

Spencer, captain of the factory at Surat "with the renowned Faris Caun came and turned out Sidae Ahmed." And, the extract of a copy of a royal order to the English at Surat stated that "you may take care of the Majesty's castle and take the preservation of the trade of these seas particularly upon you, so that the inhabitants of Surat may carry on their business."³

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1. G.W. Forrestt, Selections from the Letters, Despatches & other State papers. HOME Series Vol. II, P. 95. 1887.
 2. K.N. Chaudri, "Reflections on the town and country in Mughal India", P. 89, Modern Asian Studies, Vol. 12, 1978.
 3. G.W. Forrestt, op. cit., P. 105

When the English acquired the command of Surat castle, they gained a complete ascendancy over the Nawabs of Surat, who were rulers in name only. At Surat, dual government existed. The company was keeper of the Nawab's castle and was responsible for order in the city, but the Nawab had his own administration and his own officials. Theoretically, the nature of the surat government was autocratic but, big merchants, shroffs and chiefs of foreign establishments had so much power, prestige and position that the Nawab had to give due weight to their views. This was reflected in the fact that it was not possible to secure an imperial sanad for Nawabship from the Mughal empire without their approval.

With a certain degree of authority vested in them by the Mughals, the English tried to further emphasise the importance of Bombay as a commercial centre by establishing it as a protective port. Whether the conditions of political security prevailing in Bombay and incentives provided by them, resulted in a decline of the scope and spheres of activity of the Surat merchants will be traced at relevant points in this study.

Thus, between 1707-1748, the patterns of power had changed with regional powers coming to the fore.

This preliminary identification of eighteenth century politics in the subah would be the background to our study which aims primarily at examining whether the changes in the political power structure had any impact on the trade and economy of the region.

COMMERCIAL ORGANIZATION

During the early part of this period (1759-80) Surat is described as "gay, prosperous and one of the principal cities of India."¹ Parsons in 1777 states that "he had never seen so populous a city as Surat."² Dr. Hove's visiting the city in September 1788, described it as inhabited by different tribes of Gentoos, who are the first and richest merchants and also a great number of Mughals, Arabs, Parsis, Jews, Armenians and Portuguese."³ The picture that emerges from these descriptions is perhaps one of a vibrant economy. However, such assertion cannot be accepted at face value unless corroborated by further evidence.

There are widely varying estimates of the population of Surat. A. Hamilton estimated the population at 200,000 at the beginning of the Eighteenth Century. In 1763, the Europeans estimated

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1. J. Forbes, Oriental Memoirs : Narrative of 17 years residence in India, p.243. 1834.
 2. A. Parsons, Travels in Asia and Africa, p.250, 1808.
 3. Hove's Tours - Selections from the Records of the Bombay Government, No.XVI, New Series, p.176. 1885.

the population of the city at about a million souls. In 1774, Stavorinus mentioned 5,00,00 as being not an entirely improbable estimate of Surat's population.¹ Parsons estimated the population at 800,000.² In 1796-97 some English officers at Surat and a former member of the court of Directors who had a direct knowledge of the city gave an estimate of 300,000 inhabitants.³ And according to the author of the 1816 census,⁴ the population was actually around 150,000 souls.

These are widely varying estimates of the population of Surat and to draw any conclusions based on these figures might be erroneous as these estimates are varying and some of them are probably based on conclusions reached by information received from unknown informants.

Hence, it would be essential to seek alternative evidence to confirm the impression that there was no drop in the urban population in Surat. Rather that,

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1. Gujarat State Gazeeter, Surat District, Rev.ed., p.163, 1962.
 2. A Parsons, op.cit., p.251.
 3. Factory Record Surat/73 p.429
 4. Gazeteer of the Bombay Presidency, Gujarat, Surat and Broach, Vol.II. p.301, 1879.

after the final capture of Ahmedavad in 1757 Surat¹ gained an important increase in her population. Though the percentage of population inhabiting Surat may have increased, the significance of internal migration should not be overlooked. According to Forbes, "many weavers of silk goods and embroiders as well as other artisans had emigrated from the Maratha occupied Gujarat to Surat so the productive capacity of the city was² enhanced.

Parsons, referring to the piece goods of Surat, writes that the brocades of Surat were the best of their kind, very beautiful.....³ From this we could infer that the artisans that migrated were gainfully employed. This would also reflect that in Surat the demand for luxurious piece goods was in quantities sizeable enough to warrant the absorption of the additional artisans. As late as 1797 people were said to be still resorting daily from Surat to Cambay⁴.

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1. Surat Dist. Gazeteer, Rev.ed. of Vol. II.p.160.1962.
 2. J. Forbes, Cp.cit. Vol.I. p.58.
 3. A. Parsons, op.cit., p.261
 4. Surat District Gazeteer, Vol. II. p.160

The inference that these people were not maintaining themselves by periodic labour or scavenging can be borne out by an important piece of evidence.¹

Further a petition signed by some principal merchants of Surat mention that, "we have under us 5,000 men in trades."² This index shows that the links of Surat with the countryside was extensive. Thus, Surat's population instead of being on the decline seemed to be offset by the weavers of brocade, other artisans and the multitude of agents employed in the process of production of piece goods. And, the influx of skilled workers and artisans from Ahemadabad led Surat to probably becoming increasingly an industrial centre of some importance.

An important index of the economic well being of Surat would be the presence of an active entrepreneurial class. The focus of our analysis is on the native trading communities and their sphere and scope of activity.

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1. Surat Factory Diary. part II., p.367, 1800.
Letter from Cambay to the Surat Chief - "a variety of piece goods have been during the present years been augmented to the extent of 2 lakhs of Rupees and shall promise to be considerably increased every year...These increases being inputed to the Surat contractor employing his own and very able agents.
 4. S.F.D. p. 132. 1800.

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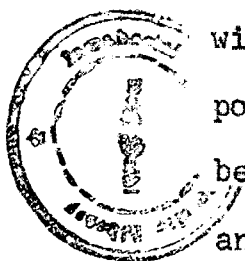
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Although we do not know the precise size of the native trading population, a certain estimate of its size, strength and status is possible from a series of petitions.¹ 'Surats merchants were not a homogenous group either in terms of its inner structure or in relation to the economy.' This remark is amply borne out in the pages of our sources. The entrepreneurial structure included merchants both big and small. These were the men who participated in overseas trade with their own ships and these were the wholesalers who having access to major currents of the trade were less specialised.² Then there were the nonshipping sectors of merchants and there were the traditional rich merchant bankers and shroffs.³ The small merchants differ from the larger ones in that not only did the former deal in specific commodities, but also that they traded on borrowed capital and depended on contractual advances⁴ and hence their credit worthiness

1. Ibid.
2. Stavorinus describes him "as the owner of several ships and one of the principal merchants of the city."
3. SFD p.1777-80, and SFD. p.89, 1798. Calendar of Persian Correspondence ed. A.I. Tirmizi p. X.X.V. 1794-95" Among the richer and prosperous financiers mention must be made of the Jagat Seths of Bengal and Arjunji Nathji's of Gujarat."
4. SFD. Part.I, 1761-63 p.142. "Dadabhoj thonachkal offers to contract for candy. Advance him 2,000 Rs. in part and balance when the whole is delivered."

was often subject to scrutiny¹. These merchants can be studied in their individual and collective capacity, the latter which found its expression through the formation of the guild.

The position of the shipping sector of Surat's mercantile community during the dyrchic era has been the subject of much debate and would therefore first merit our attention.

Scattered data is available on the shipping activities of the merchants of Surat. We have only one list of shipping compiled at Mocha for the season of May 1795 which records ownership of vessels by Surat's Merchants, as well as cargoes and destinations.

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1. SFD. p.150, 1778 - "reference to curribhoy the company shroff not having as yet given security, called before board,... he offers to mortagage his house and estate which he says is worth 30,000."

SHIPS	OWNERS	FROM	TO	CARGO
Cader Bucher	Ruston	Surat	Mocha &	Surat pc.goods
Grabsnow	Jasoo	"	Judda	
Merry Ketch	Rutton Anty	"	"	Pc.goods, cotton tobacco, rice sugar, etc.
A. Snow	M.Fakroodeen	"	Judda	Pc. goods
Ship Tez soobhaney	Chellaby	"	Mocha	Pc.goods, tobacco
A Grabsnow	Nanabhoy Bisaw	"	Judda	"
A ship	Nabob of Surat	"	Mocha & Judda	pc. goods, cotton, tobacco, sugar
Ship Fez cadry	Tae Chellaby	"	"	pc. goods, rice etc.
Ship Boodam	Ibrahim Mulna Ally	"	Mocha	pc. goods

3. Mocha Factory Records No.76, p.129, 1795

Another list available records only the name of the vessel and the destination and is not very informative.

SHIP	FROM	TO
Tatty Rasool Ketch	Surat	Judda
Nabob of Surat's Ketch	"	Mafsoova
Cawder Bux Rustom	"	Jeddah
Saery Savay Grab	"	Jeddah
Derria Dawlat Ketch	"	Mocha & Jeddah
Ship Fereo	"	"
Tutty Salem	"	Mocha

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Further according to Parsons, the ships which belong to the natives of Surat had English colours and Captains.² Though such an assertion may not be totally accurate, any effort to compile any final

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1. Ibid, p.65 - 9th May, 1795.
 2. A. Parsons, op.cit., p.261

statistics on the basis of these evidences may lead to erroneous conclusions regarding the position of Surat's ship-owning sector.

Nonetheless, an attempt has been made to examine the state of the various ship-owning communities and present a tentative hypothesis on their scope and spheres of activity.

A monopoly was created by Thomas Hodge the English Chief at Surat, and a ship owner too, on trade to the Gulph of Persia and Red Sea, in 17 whereby, only those Surat ships hired by the English shippers and chartered by him to those merchants who wished to send their goods to the Red Sea and the Persian Gulf were allowed to proceed there.¹ While such a monopoly could not perhaps put a total ban on the movement of Indian owned ships,² there would undoubtedly have been a drop in the number of merchants freighting their

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1. M. Torri, "In the deep blue sea : Surat and its merchant class during the Dyarchic Era(1759-1800), p. 272 Indian Economic and Social History Review. No.304, Vol. XIX, 1982.
 2. There were still reference to Moorships plying in this region during this period. See SFD No.15, Part II. p.203, 1760 'Arrived a Moorship from Bussora. Ibid. p.308 - Sailed a Moorship for Bussora SFD No.16 Part-I March, 1762 - arrived a Moor Ship from Bussora.

goods on the Indian owned ship. According to Holden Furber, after 1740's, the chellabie's were increasingly carrying freight no longer made up of their own goods. Hence such a monopoly would have adversely affected the activities of some shippers. But from the fact that it was on a complaint by the Indian ship owners to the Court of Directors that the latter took action favourable to the native shipping sector¹, we can perhaps infer that the extent of their trade would still be of considerable magnitude. This latter point can also be deduced from a mafi granted to Abdul Qadir Satta chellabie in August 1762². From the list of the Chellabie's

1. M. Torri, op.cit., p.275 - In 1775 the court of Directors enacted a set of regulations which stipulated that "all merchants whatever whether, Mahomettans, Gentoos, Parsees, English or others, shall be permitted to put up their ships for freight for the Gult of Persia and the Red Sea, ...for we are determined to prevent the operation of all undue influence on the part of the Governor of Bombay and the chief of Surat or any other person."
2. SFD. Part.I. p.216. 1761-63.
Translation of a mauphy granted to Abdul Qadir Satta Chellabie.
"His majesty grants Abdul Qadir, a name Ibdul Tuzar /or great merchant' son of deceased Ahmad Chellabie a mafi of 25,000Rs. being for customs on a lakh rupees of goods in his trade which they are freely to enjoy. You are directed to discount the above mentioned sum out of the amount of the customs every year, that they may be enabled to make more trade and increase the customs.

Shipping activities available for the latter part of the period¹, it appears that most of the voyages are between Surat and the Red Sea. Thus though Chellabie could not compare with Abdul Ghaffar, he appears during this period, as a substantial ship owner carrying out independent overseas activities. By 1796, however, a minute prepared by the Surat Chief mentions that the ships generally known as the property of Tai Chellabi, as a matter of fact, were jointly owned by him and Sidi Mufta, "the Nabab's slave and manager in the durbar". This implied that Chellabie's fortunes suffered a slide by this point of time.

1. LIST OF CHELLABIE'S SHIPS.

- (i) SFD Part II. p.279, 1777 - Sailed 2 ships of chellabie for Mocha. (ii) SFD - 7th April 1780 Sailed to the S-wards a ship of Chellabie.
- (iii) Holden Furber : op.cit., in 1779-80 one of Chellabie's ships returned from Moo to Surat with 3 lakhs of Rupees in gold, 4 lakhs in silver, 1 lakh in pearls, 200 maunds in ivory and ten bales of alndas. In the same season another ship unloaded 5 lakhs of gold and silver rupees in Bonbay.
- (iv) SFD. p.31.1798 arrived from S.ward a ship under challeby's colours. (v) SFD p.131, 18th March - Sailed S-wards a ship under chellabie's colours.
- (vi) MFR No.76,129 - Shipowner Chellabie sailed from Surat to Mocha with a cargo of piece goods.
- (vii) Tae Chellaby - sailed from Surat to Mocha with piece goods, rice etc. (viii) G.W.Forrestt. ed; Selections from the Letters, Despatches and other state papers preserved in the Bombay Sectt. Vol.II p. 247, 1887 - "On 3rd May, 1782 - Letter from Chief of Surat - "We had a terrible hurricane, which has not only destroyed two ships of Salla Chellaby..."".

Mulna Fakroodin belonging to the Bohra community appears as a considerable ship owner. The shipping list at Mocha for the season of 1795 mentions two ships belonging to the Bohras plying to Mocha and Judda carrying Surat piece goods. In 1795, the chief factor at Surat remarked that the chief part of the trade to the Gulph of Mocha is carried on by these Bohras who are numerous and rich.¹

A great anomaly present in these lists is in the fact that ownership are not accurately listed. Throughout our records we come across references to 'Moorship'² which apart from indicating that they belonged to Muslims are not informative on the families involved. Hence, though we have only two references of the ships belonging to the Bohras, on the basis of the remarks made by the chief at Surat we may presume perhaps that more than two ships plied in the course of this period.

The Parsis community in variance with their activities in the previous century, appear as substantial shipowners who carried out trading activities overseas in a variety of goods. There

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1. FRS/73 p.275
 2. SFD Part-I p.1759-61 Arrived a Moorship from Bengal
See also SFD No.15 Part-II, p.203.
SFD Part-I 1762
SFD p.281, 1777-88

is the reference to Rutton Anty owing the Merry Ketch, sailing from Surat to Mocha and Judda carrying piece goods, cotton, tobacco, rice and sugar.¹

James Forbes also confirm that 'many of the principal merchants and owners of ships at Bombay and Surat were Parsees.' this community has thus definitely widened their spheres of activity and they emerge in the pages of our sources as considerable merchants and shipowners and money landers.² The Hindus as ship owners had been relegated to an obscure position by Ashim Das Gupta in the first half of the eighteenth century. However, during our period of study, we have two reference to Hindu shipowners.³ The fact that they kept armed boats would be suggestive of the value of their cargoes and the frequency of trips and wealth of their clan.

1, MFR, No.76, p.129.

2. SFD. Part-I p.216, 1761-63 - There also appears the translation of a mafi granted to Manchurjee Valad Cursetjee Parsee 'that curset a Parsi Merchant trading in the place pays a great sum of money to the Sircar, for customs...and hence that a mafi' for customs should be given to him.

3. FRS/77 P.609-10 - Purbooram Assaram owner of 'Ketch' was plundered in 1798 of '20 bags of dollars, 3 bags of gold, on way back from Mocha.
FRS/79. p.215 - Purbooram Assarma Possessed Armed Boats.

Thus while the scope of operations of the Surat merchants has been attempted, there would be limitations, as there are no regular shipping lists of outgoing and incoming vessels and hence the operations of a ship owner would not be accurately known. Given the limitations however, without claiming any finality of view, we may presume that the trade to the Gulph and Red Sea by the Indian Shippers was not as modest or inadequate as has sometimes been assumed.

There is ample evidence of non ship owning merchants trading overseas. Individual Indian merchants frequently freighted Company's ships for particular voyages.¹ This can be supported by other evidence too. Hodge' got signatures of 58 Indian non-shipowning merchants trading to Bussorah, Judda and Mocha and belonging to each of the several Surat trading communities...² We can infer that these merchants

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1. SFD. p.203, 1756-57 - "The Grab Charlotte was freighted by the bania Girdello.
 2. In his dispute with the Court of Directors over the issue of the monopoly in shipping, Mr. Hodge got the signatures of 58 non ship owning merchants claiming that they freighted the ships out of their own interest.

were carrying out trade of sizeable proportions for their signatures to hold significance before the Court of Directors. Thus while we have no evidence of the size of their transactions but the fact that only a limited no. of merchants came forward to contract with the Company¹ would imply that they i.e., the Indian merchants had other outlets of activity. And, the fact that they possessed considerable wealth and carried out considerable trading activities could be inferred from a minute written by the Surat factor². The purchase of pearls would imply that the merchants were probably carrying them to various inland cities to meet the requirements of the new ruling elite. The mafi granted to several merchants of the place would also indicate the extent of the independent trade handled by them. There are no figures or statistics available on the amount of inter regional trade carried out by

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1. SFD. p.52. 1742-43 - letter to Surat from Bombay - This last season, there were only 2 competitors for the investment and from what we hear, not more than one bidden for the ensuing year.
 2. SFD. p.386, 1777-1780 - 'The Tartar snow touched first at Surat on passage from Bussora it is probable that the Pearl was landed there. Though it does not appear that any part of the produce has been brought to the Honourable Company's credit.

these merchants hence, we have depended on other sources to strengthen certain views. According to Bayly, 'the Benaras commercial cases include a number of references to Gujarati merchants moving between Surat and Benaras and Mirzapur¹ and in lieu of the fact that Benaras, Mirzapur and Ghazipur controlled the South-West and North-East routes' which met at Delhi and Agra earlier, we may assume that the trade was considerable. The bills of exchange made on various places inland would also be suggestive of transactions of considerable proportions.

Further, the increasing importance of Bombay port would not necessarily be a negative point for the merchants of Surat who were perhaps resilient enough to adjust to the shifting position by extending their network to Bombay.²

There are other factors too which indicate that the merchants were in a strong position. For

1. C.R. Bayly, Rulers, Townsmen and Bazaars, 1770-1800 p.465, 1983.

2. Bombay City Gazetteer of Bombay City and Island Vol. I., p.1909.

"Among the most important articles exported from Bombay during the Eighteenth Century were Surat piece goods - of various dimensions and qualities manufactured at Broach, Jamboosar and other Gujarat Centres."

instance, the custom house duties unpaid by the merchants on the May 1792 amounted to upward of one lakh rupees and, the extract of a letter from the Custom Master in 5th February 1793 states that 'merchants when convened allege that they have not disposed of their goods and no similar article has been sold by others.' And, no exertion on the part of the custom master could obviate this difficulty.¹

Further it was on the representation of several principal merchants of the city to the chief in consequence of the aauth having exceeded its usual rate, that the system of aauth was abolished². And, a letter to the judge and magistrate of Surat, by the Surat chief also requests that before he renews this mode for raising money by credit or transfer, that he consult the general settlement of the commercial part of the inhabitants.³

Thus, although we have no figures or statistics available to determine whether the trade conducted by this strata of merchants registered any upward or

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1. SFD. p.46, 1793-94
 2. SFD. p.26, 1796.
 3. SFD. part IV, p.128, 1800.

downward trend, from the instances cited above we can gather that the strength and status of this strata of the mercantile class was considerable.

By the end of the eighteenth century a petition drafted by Hindu merchants in 1795 refers to 'a city filled with shroffs and merchants of large property, who were mostly Hindoos.'

In the seventeenth century, the Hindus outnumbered the Muslims as merchant traders and shroofs or currency bankers and accountants in Surat. This shows continuity in the position of Hindu merchants. The muslim merchants of the city though comprising numerically of a smaller proportion of the mercantile community made up by their social and economic importance. Milburn refers to "Some Bohra merchants who carry on a great trade with Guzzerat and other places to the Northward."¹

1. W. Milburn, Oriental Commerce containing a geographical description of the principal places in the East Indies, China and Japan with their produce, manufactures and trade. p. 174, 1813.

The position of the Parsi community can be deduced from the fact that their signatures are on important petitions which are given due importance and by the fact that individual merchants in the parsi community have been beneficiaries of mafis.¹

Another strata of the mercantile community comprised of the sundry piece goods merchants who functioned independently as traders and suppliers to private European merchants.

This category of merchants frequently came into conflict with those smaller merchants or brokers who entered into contract with the chief and council of the English Company and other European Companies for the whole investment.

The sundry piece goods merchants were apparently 'always trading in piece goods' and were providing a certain quantity of piece goods and disposing of the same to the Portuguese, Dutch and French. In a petition to the Surat chief, they complained that Nagar Curson who was employed as contractor to provide the Honourable Company's

1. SFD, p. 218, 1761-63.

investment of piece goods, "certainly makes after our trade."¹ "We have for this reason lifted up our hands on trading here no more and all the piece goods we are trying to fetch comes out from different other places as Broach, Bownagar and Jamboosar." They felt that the broker should endeavour to know his commitments without giving any trouble to the free merchants of the city."² From the petition, we can infer that these merchants were not intimidated by the Company's brokers and, despite the fact that the Company tried to use political pressure on them to dissuade them from selling other Europeans,³ very large quantities of piece goods had been imported and exported by the Dutch, Portuguese and the Country merchants during the course of this season.

The signatories of the petition reflect that the merchants belonged to each of the several Surat business communities.⁴

1. SFD. part III. p.547, 1800.

2. Ibid. p.548.

3. SFD No.21 Part I. 1777-80 - p.137.

On the arrival of an Austrian Ship at Surat commanded by Bolts from making an investment of cotton or any other kind of goods at Surat and you will likewise make use of the Nabole's influence with the inhabitants and others under his authority.

4. SFD. p.47, 1800.

Fryer visiting Surat in the seventeenth century, regarded the brokers as a 'species of vermin, but, he admitted that without these 'neither you nor the natives themselves shall do you any business.'" Holden Furber also admits that these were the people on whom the Company really depended for carrying on trade.' His analysis of the Dutch Company Records, reveal a list of 33 local brokers or businessmen. From 33, everything really depended on 11 of these, others were lesser dealers and ensurers. Similar gradations would perhaps be visible with the brokers employed by the English chief at Surat.

A letter from the Council at Bombay specifically stipulated that the contractors should have no connections with the government during the contract.¹ While a relatively limited number of merchants came forward to contract with the company, there still remained

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1. SFD. No.63 p.59. 1742-43. Letter from Company to Surat Monackjee Nassarjee - your broker interfering in the present affairs we have with the Government... his correspondence with the Custom Master of this place, that he would do the utmost to serve them.'

competition among the merchants to contract with the Company.¹ Though profit was the main motive of the commercial interest, 'the name of the Company's broker gives him a credit respectability and a number of privileges which are far better than any salary. Jagganth Lolldas appears as the principal broker for the English Company who apart from contracting to deliver piece goods², is also employed in procuring the sums of money³ and is also used as a middle-man in negotiations between the Company and the ruling echelons.

The brokers were at liberty to make their proposals for any one sortment of piece goods and, some of the articles being large, one or more merchants were allowed to join together and any deficiency in the quantity of piece goods, or cotton available at Surat were made up by procuring from places as Cambay, Broach or Baroda.

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1. SFD No.16. part II. p.442. 1763. The proposals made by Naraindas Jagganth for contract of the investment 'as not only the cheapest but in other respects, the most advantageous for our Honourable Masters.
 2. SFD. No. 15. part. II. p.275 - J. Lolldas accepts and contracts to deliver goods to the amount of 2 lakhs or more within 8 months.
 3. Ibid. - 'Jagganath is employed in procuring the sums of money.

Though there are frequent references to contracts being entered into by the Honourable Company with those merchants the latter could effectively bargain with the Company¹. In providing the cotton investment the merchants dealing with cotton were shrewd enough to realize that time was on their side and that the Company would have to yield if it did not want to lose the investment.

As regards the relationship of the broker with the weavers, it appears that the merchant-broker's control over actual production was very limited. And, while the weaver frequently complained that goods could not be brought in as fast as they ought for want of the contractor making the proper advances,² the brokers declared the necessity of watching over the conduct of weavers, lest they, tempted by offers of ready money do not dispose off a second time the cloth to the Portuguese.³ Thus though the traditional Indian

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1. SFD. No.16. Part.I.p.196. 1761-63 - 'the prices of candy being higher than the last, it was proposed to them to wait for our answer, till we could hear from the Presidency, but as they would by and means consent to that... and these are the best and in short, the only terms to be obtained, it is agreed that they be accepted.'
 2. SFD. No.15, part.II p.198
 3. SFD, p.17, 1798

system of advance payments and contracts remained the rule with the artisans, the comments made by the brokers show that competition was considerable and that the weaver did not feel obliged to remain tied to the contract.

Arunji Nathji Travadi appears as one of the principal bankers of the company who operated on a large scale. Besides Arjunji Nathji there were many institutions of the Surat merchants forwarding letters of credit their Indian branches. While it is not possible to compute the amount annually lent out by the Surat merchants to diverse parties, through the Surat factory, Diaries, a few figures are given to indicate the amount of the company's debts to the indigenous merchants in Surat under specific dates.

1780 - 16th Sept.

1 bill drawn by A. Nathjee on A. Nathjee at Surat	46,000
1 - do -	53,000
1778 - 2 bills drawn on A. Nathjee	75,000
2 bills " Assaram Jaggeevandas	15,000
1763 bill drawn on Mandurjee Bernjee	100,000
1 bill drawn by Gopaldas Hari kishandas	100,000

SFD.1798 have agreed with Arjunjee Nathjee to grant him bills for 1 lakh monthly for Surat.

1798 Gopaldas agreement with chief for Bills on Bengal for 4 lakhs 1798 another agreement with Gopaldas for 2 lakhs on condition that bills should be drawn payable from Banaras instead of Calcutta.

It is not easy to state what the normal rate of exchange is the normal rate can be picked out more by the absence of unfavourable reactions,¹ and, the rate of premium that was charged for the freshly minted coins, would reflect the commercial for money supply.

Because of the fact that a large number of local mints operated, coning was not centralized and this gave rise to that class of money changers known as the shroffs. These shroffs wielded considerable power, That the shroffs used to misuse their power can be observed from several petitions and complaints to the chief at Surat who remarked that 'there has of late been great arouse among the shroffs regarding the currency of rupees and that 'they were refusing to receive from the merchants and subjects, payments in Rupees which they pretend are bad and should bear a discount, whereas the Rupees tendered were good and current². This problem of

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1. SFD. p.186, 1762 - Bills Granted are at an unfavourable rate of Exchange.
 2. SFD, p.146, 1800.

multiciplicity of money was a constant feature of this period. To counter this abuse, the magistrate of Surat issued a notice of the effect "that the Surat chekar Sikah that is the old and new Rupees of the Surat mint be rendered current throughout the city with the exception specified in the said agreement, i.e. copper rupees,..."

Complaints were made to the chief about abuses among the shroffs in respect of ahunth or exchange of money. The shaoffs increased the ahunth to 10 to 12% 'such increase and decrease left in the management of the great shroffs, who have, much influence, power and advantage' was of being a great impediment to trade.¹ The chief wanted to find some of the principal shroffs of the city because of the increase of about to 12% which is of utmost detriment to trade in general and to prevent any further abuses, 'a number of brokers were required to report in writing of the rate of value settled for the evening to check any alteration or detecting any fraud.

It was perhaps the awareness of the importance of Surat's position as a money-market which led the chief at Surat to constantly keep a check on the shroffs.

1, SFD 1800 part II p.132.

A question which often arises in such an analysis would be that was there a shortage of currency in the second quarter of the eighteenth century. According to M. Torri - the Surat bankers had enough liquid capital to satisfy most of the needs of the English merchants, and from the Bombay government consultation in 1771 it appears that 'the chief reason of the scarcity of specie in Surat is owing to their mint having for sometime been shut up.' However, interest rates being low would be one of the major indicators of the well-being of trade and the economy and the interest rates of 9% considering the times was moderate.

The traders who were used to political and other uncertainties, generally found means to cope with the situation sometimes by shifting from one route to another. Alternate routes developed by way of Benaras, Mirzapur & Ghazipur which controlled the South-West and North-East routes.¹

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1. 1) SFD.1759-61 part I.p.128 - merchants are willing to accept bills on Fort William at rate of 112 Surati for 100 new Muradabad being a very advantageous exchange. ii) SFD No.16. Part-I. 1761-63. Lett. to Bengal From Surat-'The merchants request that money may be made good at Kasimbazar ...if you However can do it, it will help the shroffs to accept bills in future. iii) SFD May 1800 p.98 - reference to goods from Bengal imported at Surat under certificate and afterward, re-exported by land or by sea. iv) SFD.1798 - agreement with Gopaldas Manohardas for payment of 2 lakhs on condition that bills should be drawn payable on Benaras.

Thus, there appears no major organizational or structural change in the mercantile community during this period. The picture that emerges is one of considerable commercial activity and does not suggest an atmosphere of decline into which the city is considered to have fallen into.

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STRUCTURE AND VOLUME OF TRADE

In an analysis of the structure and volume of trade, we have taken up for our purposes of study, primarily two items which constituted the principal items of export from Surat, i.e. piece goods and cotton. The piece goods trade had always been of prime concern to the mercantile community of Surat and to the English company as it had comprised a considerable bulk of their overseas trade. For this period too, an assessment of the volumes of demand of the piece goods trade would be a reliable determinant of Surat's market behaviour. There were other miscellaneous items of trade but, an increase or decrease of these individual items would have a negligible effect on the economy. A cursory survey of the inland trade handled by Surat merchants has also been attempted in order to try and present an outline of the extent of the trading activities of the Surat merchants.

Textiles

An attempt at identifying the numerous varieties of piece goods¹ reveal that it was cotton piece goods which were the dominant items in the company's export

1. See Appendix I.

to fetch piece goods from different places as Broach,
 Bownagar and Jamboosar.¹ Surat also merited considerable
 importance as a manufacturing centre.²

These piece goods of various dimensions and
 qualities were during this period in great demand in
 Europe,³ in the Arabian and Persian Gulf and also in
 demand by Bristol and Liverpool merchants for the slave
 trade to Africa⁴ while the different grades of cotton
 piece goods generally numerically surpass other piece
 goods, 'the finer sorts of Guzzerat goods such as are
 usually brought to this port were in demand till as late
 as 1805.⁵

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1. SFD, p. 547, 1800
 2. W. Milburn, Oriental Commerce Containing a Geographical Description of the Principal Places in the East Indies, China and Japan with their Produce, Manufactures and Trade.
pp. 124-1813.
 3. SFD, p. 80, 1777-80 and Pamela Nightingale, Trade and Empire in Western India, 1784-1806, p.145, 1970.
 4. P. Nightingale, ibid and W.Irvine, Later Mughals,
1971.
 5. W. Milburn, op.cit., p. 125

list as compared to silk or other mixed varieties. The sources of supply were many. The contractors received goods made at Broach, Gandhavi, Navsari and Baroda.¹ Other sources of supply were Bulsar and Rander towns, where there were many manufacturers who produced coarse dooties, baftas and gingham.² Tapseilles and other variety of piece goods woven in Cambay³ and Ahmedabad⁴ were much in demand by slave traders. A petition from sundry piece goods merchants states that, 'at a considerable expense we have been resolved to extend to trade in Maratha countries and we are trying

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1. SFD, p. 331. 1793-94
 2. G.W. Forrestt, Selections from State Papers, Home Series, Vol. I, part I, pp. 434-38. 1887.
 3. SFD, p. 367, 1800. See SFD, p. 29, 1798;
SFD, p. 178, 1777-80.
 4. SFD, p. 117, 1759-61.

The procurement of piece goods was by contracting each investment out to different bidders. The methods being of notifying the quantity of each species of goods required for which, 'all are at liberty to make their proposals for any one sortment, and some articles being large one or more merchant may be considered.¹ There were merchants of sufficient credit who came forward to contract for the investment individually. 'Edalji Dadah² is to provide piece goods to the amount of Rs.2,16,973.04. As late as 1800, a remark by the English factor states that "there were accordingly merchants of sufficient credit who came forward for this purpose." (i.e. of securing a contract for investment of piece goods).³ In 1794, an agreement was signed between Bomanjee Manchurjee of Surat and the Honourable United Company, which provides several sorts of piece goods to the value of 2 lakhs.⁴

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1. SFD, p. 48, 1756-57 - "Contract with Nassuranjee Bomanjee, Monackjee Bomanjee, Sorabjee Manchurjee and Dadabhoy Monackjee to deliver the whole quantity of goods therein specified, the value being at 3,86,173.9.
 2. SFD, p. 222, 1777-80.
 3. SFD, p. 547, 1800.
 4. SFD, p. 47, 1794.

The supply conditions in this trade were smooth enough for securing an extensive trade in piece goods. This is corroborated by the company factors who are of the opinion that 'the reason for not having completed the investment are in general frivolous, nothing new has happened at Cambay 'the very large quantities of piece goods that have been exported by the Dutch, Portugues and Country Merchants during the course of this season, plainly prove that troubles in the country have not affected the trade in piece goods, in the manner he has represented,¹ and that procuring piece goods would depend more on the contractor employing his own and able agents.² The board felt rather that delays 'were due to the contractors not making the necessary advances to the weavers and washermen.³ On the basis of invoices drawn for the season of 1791-92, it would appear that the supply of piece goods were moving quite regularly throughout the year.

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1. SFD, p.276, 1777-80.
 2. SFD, p.547, 1800
 3. SFD, p.247, 1777-80.

27th Sep 1791	30,7973
5th Nov 1791	22,935
17th Jan 1792	41,076
8th Feb 1792	14,950
Total	109,7583

Similar patterns appear for other years too. There were repeated demands for cotton and other piece goods comprising of items such as Neccanees large (Surat) Tapseilles (Surat) Byrampaut, Longees, Brawls, Chelloes and chintz of various ground and pattern.¹ The nature of the orders placed were relatively similar to the standard investment of 1800², though, there were variations in the number

1. SFD, p.337, 1793-94.

2. SFD, p.69, 1759, p.89, 1761, SFD, p.11, 1794.
See Appendix - II

of corges¹ ordered of each variety from year to year. Further, while sometimes the sources give a detailed break-up of the investments required², often the sources merely mention 'several sorts of piece goods.

For the quarter of the eighteenth century, we have a comparative list of the number and values of bales of piece goods provided for the company at Surat for the period of May 1776 - 30th April 1793. The list given was prepared by John Griffith at Surat in 1793.³ (List on next page),

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1. Col. Sir H. Yule and A.C. Burnell, ed. Hobson Jobson a glossary of Anglo-Indian Colloquial Terms and Phrases of Amalogious Origin, 1886. p.197 - Corge is a mercantile term for 'a score'. The word is in use among the trading Arabs and others as well as in India. Every corge consists of 20 pieces. The corge is a great quantity.
 2. SFD, p.120, 1800.
 3. SFD, p.11, 1794

Period				Bales	Price
May	1776	-	Apr 30th 1777	606.3	16,96,873.90
"	1777	-	" 1778	685.7	21,58,341.30
"	1778	-	" 1779	364.1	1,03,089.31
"	1779	-	" 1780	660.6	18,94,673.60
"	1780	-	" 1781	600.7	15,94,403.59
"	1782	-	" 1783	209.0	50,297.00
"	1783	-	" 1784	114.0	11,972.00
"	1784	-	" 1785	292.0	78,302.00
"	1785	-	" 1786	-	-
"	1786	-	" 1787	1127.2	28,79,723.25
"	1787	-	" 1788	719.3	2,01,348.20
"	1788	-	" 1789	-	-
"	1789	-	" 1790	487.8	1,40,353.33
"	1790	-	" 1791	587.1	15,80,783.40
"	1791	-	" 1792	373.3	1,09,758.30
"	1792	-	" 1793	967.3	2,88,169.20

While figures speak for themselves, it appears on the basis of the limited data acquired, that the yearly turnover on piece goods was being maintained. The wide discrepancies in price being accorded to the variety of textiles. Figures are available of the values of textiles

exported by the other European Company's, which indicate that great quantities of piece goods were being brought up by them for export. See Table below:

1st Aug 1791 to Feb 1792	Dutch	37,74,362.80
"	English Co.	4,09,758.3
"	French	15,804.3
"	Portuguese	97,307.0

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It appears from these figures that in this season, the Dutch controlled 94% of the market share, the East India Company cornering only 3%, the French 0.5% and the Portuguese only 2.5%². The sale figures for other European Companies for the preceding or following years have not been acquired, if we base our reports on circumstantial evidence, it would appear that the European companies were always a serious threat to the

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1. SFD, p. 338, 1793-94.
 2. The percentage handled by the indigenous Surat merchants have not been taken into account due to lack of data.

English Company in the acquirement of their piece goods investment. In April 1795 the Court of Directors gave orders that everything should be done to remove the competition of foreign Europeans from the piece goods trade to Surat¹ and to this end ordered that they buy up not only the high quality goods usually exported by them, but also those of a lower quality. Apart from the competition faced by the European buyers, the purchases made by Surat merchants, is reflected in a list of the cargoes taken by Surat merchants independently to Mocha and other parts of the Red Sea in the season of 1795. Practically every merchants cargo included piece goods. Another list available in the Surat factory records given below also gives us an indication of the fact that the Surat merchants were handling the export of piece goods to the Gulphs of Arabia and Persia.

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1. P.N. Nightingale, op.cit., p. 49 - In 1797 the Surat commercial resident stationed sepoy in the streets and over the looms to deter the Portuguese from buying up the piece goods on which the company had advanced money.

	Surat M Merchants	Ships	Pc.goods, cotton yarn, thread	Pc. goods bales
1794-95	"	6	670	53
1795-96	"	6	938	255
1796-97	"	8	822	94
1797-98	"	6	391	101

Thus, it appears that there was a constant demand for the piece goods, which probably prompted the English factors at Surat in 1794 to 'issue the usual notification for recurring proposals for a new investment of the same assortment as the last although they 'had not received any orders from the Honourable Masters at London and the making of so considerable a quantity is unavoidably a work of time'.¹ As great quantities was taken away by the individuals of foreign nations who came with money in their hands. It appears that during this period, the difficulty lay not in finding a market, but in trying to procure goods according to specification as competitive buyers would buy up the piece goods, with no attention to length, breadth, pattern or quality.² Hence, no economic pressure could be brought to bear on the weavers. Instead

1. SFD, p. 297, 1793-94.

2. SFD, p. 341, 1793-94. SFD, p. 36, 1798, AND SFD, p. 118, 1800

there remained the necessity of watching over the conduct of the weavers lest tempted by offers of ready money on the part of the Portuguese, should not scruple to dispose of a second time of the clothes.¹

That the prices increased of the piece goods, due to the rising demand can perhaps be deducted from a complaint of the Company's broker to the factors. They express 'regret at being confined to prices which are comparatively low with the present market rates and which may be the cause of trouble in procuring them.²

As late as 1798, 'the list of piece goods to be fabricated in one year at Cambay was to the value of 1,01,395',³ and simultaneously advertisements were being published in Broach for contracts of piece goods.⁴ In 1800, the standard investment was to the tune of 653217.⁵ Figures available for the year 1805 indicate that Surat piece goods suitable for the Bussorah market were still very much in demand.⁶

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1. SFD, p. 36, 1798.
 2. SFD, p. 118, 1800.
 3. SFD, p. 29, 1798.
 4. ibid, p. 35.
 5. SFD, p. 120, 1800.
 6. See Appendix. III.

A list available gives us some idea of the value of the piece goods. The values of the pc. goods in 1805 were as follows : - sold into the Arabian and Persian Gulf.¹

Broach	-	3,70,443	Sicca Rs.
Cambay	-	1,14,173	
Jamboosad	-	93,676	
Bownaghur	-	38,372	
Ahmedavad	-	4,61,003	

From the availability of these figures and a glance at the investment list for Bussorah, we can make a few observations. Firstly, there still remained the demand for high and low value textiles, and secondly that there appeared no serious decline of any of these principal manufacturing centres. And, there does not appear a slump in demand or erosion of her markets.

1. Walter Hamilton, Description of Hindustan p. 1971.

COTTON:

Another principal item of export from Surat during this period was cotton. The purpose here is not to give a detailed year to year sales figures of cotton but try and examine the general trends rather than in this item of trade.

The cotton merchants of Surat used to export cotton from Broach, Jamboosar, Bownagar and Surat.¹ The erosion of her markets in some areas, namely the Coromandal and Bengal, found a compensatory out-let in China.² Cargoes of cotton also went from Surat to Mocha and Judda³ and Bussora.⁴

The cotton trade was handled by the English Company and other European Companies. By independant Surat merchants and by private merchants who freighted their cotton on Company ships. The procurement of cotton was made by the 500 or so cotton dealers of Surat who paid an annual levy to the Nawab.

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1. SFD, p. 580, 1800
 2. SFD, p. 495, 1800
 3. Mocha Factory Records, p. 129, 1795.
 4. W. Milburn, op.cit., p. 155

A look at the Company's orders for cotton reveal that in the early years of our period of study, the demand for cotton was relatively low. The number of cotton bales demanded for each investment varied between 400 to a 2,000 bales only, averaging generally on the lower side.¹ The commutation Act created a great demand as well as in procurement.² This rising demand for cotton is reflected in a letter from Bombay to Surat where the factor is told to do your utmost to prevent Botts from making any investment of cotton at Surat.

A few figures given for the latter period reveal that the demand in cotton showed a quantum jump of almost five-fold within this short period.

In 1786, the Court of Directors demanded cargoes of raw cotton for 5 ships amounting to 33,000 bales. In 1796 the Court of Directors ordered Bombay to send 15,000 bales of cotton to China. As late as 1800, a

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1. SFD, p. 65, 1757 - 600 bales wanted for Canton.
SFD, p.296, 1759-60 - 400 bales
SFD, p.142, 1763 - 1,000 bales of cotton ordered.
 2. SFD, p. 66 - 15th April 1778 - a boat ladden with 90 bales of cotton belonging to the Honourable Company is sent from Broach.

letter to Surat from Bombay mentions the arrival of ships destined for China. Cotton appeared to be their main requirement. The demand was for 22,500 bales but, the aggregate amount of which, the President felt could not at this advanced season be increased beyond 16,000 bales.¹ This would perhaps reflect the competition for procuring the cotton bales.

An analysis of the price movement of cotton bales confirm the impression that "this article appears to be rising."² The prices of cotton increased from Rs. 88 per candy, to Rs. 130 per candy.³ The tenders for supplying cotton in one given season varied from Rs.124 per candy to Rs. 131/candy.⁴ Due to the increased demand for cotton bales, there was an increasing quantity of seeds in each maund. In 1786, in the supplies of cotton there were 30 to 40 lbs of seed in each 100 lb parcel.⁵ The increasing quantity of seeds in the cotton made the Governor-in-Council at Surat fix the relative values of cotton. The quantity

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1. SFD, p. 495, 1800.
 2. SFD, p. 495, 1800.
 3. SFD, p. 136, 1763.
 4. SFD, p. 67, 1794 - The prices of cotton differed. Goverdandas Bhocandas offered cotton at 131/Candy, Lalldas Brindabandas at 127/Candy. Motiram Bihari-lal at 124/Candy and Sorabjee Jeevanjee at 129/Candy.
 5. P. Nightingale, op.cit., p. 160.

of seeds in each maund was not to exceed $2\frac{1}{2}$ seer at 130/Candy and, in the second variety, the quantity of seeds in each maund was not to exceed $7\frac{1}{2}$ seer at 110/Candy.¹ In 1800, the Governor-in-Council at Surat fixed the valuation of cotton for the season at 120/Candy.²

Thus, an analysis of the trade in cotton, would reveal that the main trend was one of expansion throughout the period. The ability of the merchants to try and out-bid the other in the procurement of a contract does not suggest in any way a defeated position for them. The increased demand for cotton was probably being met by increased acreage under cotton. This is however, mere speculation.

There is not much data available on the volumes of business generated in local trades. The fragmentary evidence available would enable us to present a sketchy outline on inland trade.

1. SFD, p. 48, 1793.

2. SFD, p. 579, 1800.

The enormous credit transactions undertaken between the West and East would imply the transactions of sizeable quantities of goods.¹

Benaras commercial cases include a number of references to Gujarati merchants moving between Surat, Benaras and Mirzapur.² In 1794, Arjunji Nathji decided to settle down at Benaras after appointing someone to carry on the business of the firm on his behalf at Surat and Poona.³ In July 1795, there is available a memorial presented by the bankers, merchants and other inhabitants of Calcutta in which Arjunji Nathji was present where they stated that trade between Calcutta and other parts of the country like Murshidabad, Patna and Benaras were being disturbed by robbers and pirates.⁴ This would imply that Benaras was the cross-road for commercial transactions. The factory records refer to 'goods from Bengal imported at Surat under certificate and afterwards re-exported by sea or land.'⁵

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1. SFD, part-I. p. 1761-63 - Letter to Bengal from Surat that the merchants request that money may be made good at Kasimbazar.
 2. SFD, p. 358, 1798 - Letter from Surat demands that bills should be drawn payable on Benaras.
 2. C.R. Bayly, op.cit., p. 158.
 3. A.I. Tirmizi ed. op.cit., p. XXV.
 4. Ibid, p. 314.
 5. SFD, p. 98, 1800.

While no data is available, it may be assumed that a certain proportion of goods was kept for inland consumption within India.

According to the Gujarat Gazeteer, it appears that the land trade of Surat in the latter part of the Eighteenth century were molasses, sugar and coconuts, sent in return for the Muslims of Broach and the silk and calicoes of Ahmedabad and Patna. Walter Hamilton states that the imports into Surat were pepper, coconuts, cochineal, woollen and bullion¹. While these statements may hold true, there appears hardly any reference to the grain trade which would represent an enormous volume of business. According to Broudel, in India the main supply lines have not yet been worked out. There are scattered references to the grain trade. We have mention of a pass issued 'for the Vanjarrhas or country merchants of Dasgom village by the Marathas, for whom they export manually for the use of their southern forts grain of all kind to the amount of 40,000 Rs.¹ A general statement of the revenues of the castle of Surat in 1759 indicates that the traders from every pargannah had to pay a variety of taxes in the form of duties levied on different commodities. According to it, "every cart of grain that comes from any of the villages to this district² of Surat plays a levy according to the value of the grain."

1. G.W. Forrestt, ed. op.cit. Vol. II, p.113, 1887.

2. Ibid, p.110

The reference to the 'Mopari or Grain Brokers at the Gulla or Mandav,¹ would definitely indicate that Surat was the store-house for the grain that came from neighbouring districts. While a part of this grain was used for export,² a considerable portion was probably for inland consumption. However, the draw-back lies in that we do not have any figures on the number of pack-over used by the Banjarras in the transport of this item of trade.

From a list of the taxes, it appears that Till or Gingelly oil from Baunagar and other ports that way used to pay some perquisite on every bag to the castle. We also find mention of the oil-makers, the jagree merchants, Tumeric merchants, ghee merchants, coconut and date merchantes and sellers of Hing, opium, tobacco, molasses, soap, hemp and pay and the tax that they had to pay per annum.³ This would suggest that a regular trade was carried on between Surat and its districts. The inland trade would in the absence of contrary evidence suggest an enormous volume of business.

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1. Ibid, p. 116
 2. SFD, p. 321, 1800 - "Reference to the matter of export of grain from Surat to Arabia and to the latter country from Egypt.
MOCHA FACTORY RECORDS No.76, p. 129, 1795.
 3. G.W. Forrestt. ed., Selections, Home Series, Vol.II, p.116.

A review of the general pattern and trend of trade indicates that there was no genuine slump in overseas demand by the erosion of her markets. Neither does there appear any decline in any manufacturing centre. Competition for goods, a pre-requisite for a healthy market existed in Surat. From the evidence obtained from the sources it appears that the rise of Bombay did not have negative implications for the merchants of Surat as the former marketed goods from Surat..

The fragmentary evidences available on inland and local trade indicate that the links of Surat with the countryside was extensive, and that Surat was thriving as a marketing centre.

POSITION OF THE MERCANTILE COMMUNITY

The position and role of the mercantile community in Surat can be gauged in terms of their economic activities and their inter-actions with the state and other stratas of society. In this analysis, socio-economic aspects would tend to converge.

As is evident from their commercial activities in the preceding chapters, Surat was still the commercial capital of Gujarat. In a letter of December 2, 1800, the Calcutta Government informed London of Bombay and Surat's central places on which principally developed extensive trade.¹ Besides the tradesmen, there was a large class of sarafs or financiers, both big and small. Among the richer and prosperous financiers mention may be made of Arjunji Nathji of Gujarat.

By 1790, Arjunji Nathji's Kothi had established itself so well that it could rival with the renowned Kothi of Manohar Das. The Kothi or banking houses of Arjunji like many other firms came to the rescue of the company in the

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1. Fort William - India House Correspondence, Vol. XIII, p. 163, 1796-1800.
 2. A.I. Tirmizi, op. cit., p. XXV

days of financial difficulties. Even the nabob¹ and nobles² were not above taking loans from the merchants. The control by the merchants of an extensive money market, would give them some political coverage. M.N. Pearson has documented this aspect in depth.³ It appears from our sources that this position prevailed through the Eighteenth century too. In 1732, Mulla Ali was the financial support behind the local governor. He had the audacity to build a fort at Attava and try and run a sort of parallel government there. The merchant price Ahmad Chellaby had the capacity and ability to employ 2,000 Arabs and Rumis and strove to overthrow Behram Khan and the merchant price.⁴ That the mercantile community of Surat exercised a considerable degree of influence with the government is evidenced through letters of the Surat factors to the chief in Bombay.⁵

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1. SFD. p.III, p. 482, 1800- "money received from Arjunji Nathji towards liquidation of arrears due to the Nabob's disbanded troops".
 2. IRWINE, op. cit., p. 213
 3. M.N. PEARSON, Merchants and Rulers in Gujarat 1976.
 4. Mirat-I-Ahmadi, pp. 462, 495, 498, 522.
 5. SFD., p.59, 1742-43 Letter to James Hope, the chief Factor from Cambay complaining that Manockjee Navoorji... interfering in the present affairs we have with the government.... also that he corresponds with Nissan... the Governor and Mirza the custom master of this place, giving them assurances that he would do the utmost in his power to serve them. See SFD p.287, 1761-63. They (contractors) should have no connections with the government during the contract". See ' the Chellabie's have too great an interest at present in managing the young scides, as they, please, in their mercantile interest'.

When their mercantile interests were threatened, a segment of the mercantile community who were pro-British, offered to finance the take over by the British of the Surat citadel. Arjunji Nathji financed the military operations of the Nawab. These intensive financial links would enable the mercantile community to exercise an influence with the government to a considerable degree.

While the merchants frequently participated in politics, business success remained the principal source of recognition. For, apart from commercial and financial capital, investment by merchant traders was chiefly in houses and gardens.¹ There is not much evidence of the merchant turning their attention during this period to the acquisition of Zamindaris. Similarly, in the second part of the dyarchic period too, appeared a new Muslim magnate in the Nawab himself, who became active in the trade to the Gulphs in the 1780's. It appears that while they did not challenge each other's role, they occasionally encroached.

From the sources available, it appears that the Mughal ruling circles valued the trader, as revenue from port dues was a significant source of income at Surat. In 1759, the revenue from customs was Rs. 2,56,5000.² Hence,

1. SFD, p. 294, 1759-60.

2. Gazeteer of Surat District, p.128.

within their limited means, they tried to encourage trading activity.¹ The mafi was an administrative grant, an economic privilege granted to many merchants. The reduction of custom duties by the imperial authorities would be a considerable incentive to enhance trade. The mercantile community attached great importance to Government recognition. This was duly accorded to Chellakie by conferring on him 'the title of 'great' or 'Tuzar''. According to Stavorinus, "he was greatly respected by the Nabob." Further, records of a translation of a copy of a deed to a gift of land in 1778 between Maharaces Bhowjee and Gocul Acharjee, have chellabee as a witness.² The mercantile community appear as an integral part of the system. This social acceptance is evident in the invitation to the officers and principal merchants to attend a function at the Durbar.³ Economic prosperity would appear to be a necessary concomitant for a high social status.

But, by and large, the rulers never bothered about the larger interests of the business community. There appeared to be the absence of adequate governmental protection for the Surat merchants. There is the reference

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1. SFD, p. 216 1761-63.
 2. SFD, p. 211, 1798.
 3. SFD, p. 480, 1763.

in our sources to armed boats belonging to the Gujarati Hindus, they had 'no inclination to lend them, 'which possibly means that the proprietors needed them to protect their own trade. Further, on 6th August 1795, rioting broke out in Surat. Muslim mobs attacked the Hindus and plundered property worth 3 to 4 lacs. The Nawab failed to control the mob and he would not give the Hindus money-lenders and shop-keepers any assurances that the rioting would not break out again.¹ The fact that the Nawab abstained from interfering in the internal affairs of the community can perhaps be deducted from the fact that despite the attempts by the company to "make use of the nabob's influence with the inhabitants or others under his authority" to prohibit other European buyers in Surat.² Private competitors continued their purchases. We may assume that the request perhaps went unheeded or that the Nawab had not much of a hold on the merchants in their procurement and sale of goods.

The position of the merchants vis-a-vis the administration appears to be strong. This is inferred from the refusal of the merchants to pay taxes and the

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1. Mirat, op.cit.p. 358
 2. SFD, p. 137, 1777-80

admittance on the part of the custom official that no amount of coercion could obviate this difficulty.¹

The position of the Surat merchant vis-a-vis the English company as envisaged through their commercial activities was not an inferior one. Despite the fact that the English had come to exercise some political authority in Surat, their perpetual dependence on the Surat merchants, brokers and the trader bankers their relationship. The Surat merchants and brokers were, also indispensable to the Company in their transactions with the Durbar.² K.N. Chandri states that in the conflicts between the company and Mughal officials in the seventeenth and Eighteenth centuries, leading Indian merchants undertook to act as intermediaries in settling the disputes. The English valued too the support of a leading merchant like Chellabie as "their weight in town was not inconsiderable."

A letter to the judge and magistrate of Surat written by the Surat factor desires that "before he renews the mode of raising money by credit or transfer, he should consult the general settlement of the

1. SFD, p. 137, 1777-80.

2. SFD, p. 28, 1793-94.

commercial part of the inhabitants.¹ The consultation with the merchants before the renewal indicates the importance attached to the reactions of the mercantile community.

Further evidence is available in our sources, that point to the respect accorded to the merchants. In 1794 when Arjunji Nathji decided to settle down at Benaras, he requested the Governor General to write letters to the chief of Surat to the effect that 'any one of whom he appoints to transact business in Surat in his behalf, should be treated with the same confidence and honour as was intended to him.² On the other side, it was 'Turvady's prompt readiness to facilitate the Honourable Company's money negotiations at the settlement, which the chief had experienced on several occasions, that "led the chief attended by several gentlemen to pay a public visit of ceremony to U. Nathjee"³ I would subscribe to Holden Furber's view that "in the seventeenth and eighteenth century, the social relationships between the Europeans and Asians were to a high degree governèd by mutual

1. SFD, p. 118, 1798

2. A.I. Tirmizi, op.cit., XXV

3. SFD, p. 89, 1798

respect and were certainly less harsh than they subsequently became."¹

With regard to the smaller brokers, the chief had little or no direct contact. However, as far as the broker was concerned, 'the name of the company's broker gives him a credit, respectability and a number of priveleges which are far better than any salary. And, as seen in the preceding chapters, during this period the free merchants of the city who were traders of sundry piece goods still appeared to be in a position to object to any encroachment by the Company's broker in the acquirements of the piece goods.

The mercantile community of Surat it appeared, had not lost their power and influence vis-a-vis the English Company. While this power was sometimes by individuals, more often, the big Baniya Shethiyas (bankers) maintained their power by being the leaders of the town Mahajans which were the guilds for the Vaniya traders and money-lenders. The heads of these mahajans dealt generally with occupational matters. For instance, the abolition of the ahunt was a result of a petition drawn up by the heads of Bengal piece

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1. Holden Furber, John Company At Work. p.336, 1970.
 2. SFD, p. 75, 1798.

goods merchant and some of the principal merchants, of Surat.¹ According to Pearson, 'heads', principal, leading or 'chief' merchant were clearly sheths or patels usually the form.² This is evident in the Mirat where there is reference to the 'leading merchant (Mulla Md. Ali) who was their head and chief.'³ These chief merchants would carry a considerable degree of authority among the mercantile community of Surat, as the ordinary merchants as a rule, worked on the lines set by the men who dominated the markets.

The merchants of Surat were not one homogenous group representing a singular kind of interest so there were few developments that could threaten the interests of all the groups together when their interests were threatened, they were capable of uniting together. This is evident in the memorial presented by the bankers, merchants and other inhabitants of Calcutta, where Arjungi Mathji too was present. They represented to the Governor-General that trade between one place to another is being disturbed by pirates and ... by the loot and plunder of robbers.'⁴ This memorandum confirms

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1. SFD, p. 75, 1798.
 2. M.N. Pearson, op.cit., p. 125
 3. MIRAT op.cit. p. 457. 359
 4. A.I. Tirmizi, 8d. op.cit., p. 314

that all were willing to work together to ensure healthy market conditions. However, while there was solidarity between the merchants as a whole, it did not rule out business rivalries. This is evident in the monopoly exercised by the Surat chief in the freighting of goods. When Mr. Hodge was challenged by the Indian ship-owning company and subsequently questioned by the Court of Directors in London, he was able to get considerable support from 58 non-shipowning merchants and belonging to each of the several Surat business communities, who claimed that it was their own self-interest that prompted them to load their goods on English ships. These rivalries were not a new feature among the mercantile community.¹

Whether the Nagarsheths funded any religious or charitable institutions would make interesting study. But, we do not have much material on the inter-actions between the mercantile community of Surat in their individual and collective capacity with the general inhabitants of the city. However, we may accept the view that the position of the upper crust of the mercantile community 'was not inconsiderable'. This may perhaps be CORROBORATED by the translation of a Maratha

1. MIRAT op.cit. p. 522

treatise on statecraft. It has a section for bankers and traders, including foreign traders. The translation of which lays down that the prosperity of a kingdom is dependent on the trader banker and his ranking in Indian society as a whole is far from lowly, and in urban society he held a dominant position.¹

Thus, there seems to be no visible change or decoine in the social standards or status of the Mercantile Community during this period.

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1. Edalji Dosabhai, A History of Gujerat from the earliest period to the present time. p. 22. 1968.
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CONCLUSION

To sum up, the de-centralization of the Mughal empire and the emergence of new regional powers between 1707-1748 did not as our evidence shows have as dire a consequence on the trade and economy of Gujarat as has sometimes been assumed. Political uncertainties were not a new feature to the native trading community of Surat who prove amply by the scope and spheres of their commercial activities that, they are resilient enough to adapt to changing situations. Acceptance of political uncertainties can be further evidenced by the fact that during this period despite attempts by the English Company to draw substantial merchants from Surat, hardly any went to Bombay. Though the patterns of power had changed, it did not lead to fundamental or far-reaching changes in the economic structure of Surat.

The new ruling elite too would be aware of the value of fostering trade as revenue derived from customs would be considerable. According to Satish Chandra, the decline of the Mughal nobility did not by and large imply a reduction of the demand

for luxury and superior quality goods, that on the contrary a "wider dispersal of the ruling class would indicate a wider dispersal of the production of such goods."

An important index for a thriving commercial centre is the presence of a large urban population and an active enterprenurial class. As is evident from our sources the de-urbanization of Surat was not under way during this period Surat had as seen a large local population along with a large floating population who appeared to be gainfully employed.

An analysis of the spheres and scope of activity of the mercantile community of Surat it is evident that this community of rich traders and merchant bankers managed to survive and carry on their businesses quite successfully. During this period too, the merchants of Surat do not appear to be displaced by the British traders. There is ample evidence of Surat merchants carrying on commercial activity in relation to the English company and also more important, their independent overseas ventures too. The extent of involvement of the British traders in inland trade has yet to be ascertained. Apart from their trading activities vis-a-vis the British the commercial activities of the Surat merchants vis-a-vis

the Bombay merchants was still considerable. Bombay was still participating in a sub-ordinate capacity, with Surat and West Asia trading actively. It can be stated that during this period there were no major organizational or structural changes and no visible change in the social standards or status of the mercantile community.

From an analysis of the structure and volumes of trade it is clearly evident that volumes of trade were being maintained and there was no serious erosion of her markets. There is also no obvious decline in the manufacturing centres. They appear on the contrary as thriving centres of activity catering to domestic and export markets, it is evident from the foregoing , pages that trade and monetary links were being maintained connecting distant markets. The increasing cotton trade is also evidence of the fact that the over-all increase of acreage under cultivation was not seriously interrupted during this period.

Hence, on the basis of the above evidence, we may conclude that the conomy of Surat during this period was more buoyant than has sometimes been assumed .

Glossary of Textile Terms

It is difficult to find intelligible explanations of the distinctions between the numerous varieties of cloth. A few definitions have been given which have been taken from Hobson-Jobsons and from Irfan Habib's glossary of textile terms.

1. BAFTA

The generic term for the ordinary white cotton cloth of Gujarat was bafta. Bafta is a kind of calico, made especially at Broach. Baftas are broad and narrow.

2. BYRAM - (or byrampart)

Byrams are often a coarse or inferior calico, usually dyed red, blue or black for the Asian market.

3. CALICO

Cotton cloth ordinarily of tolerably fine texture Calicoes were patterned on the loom. They were grouped under the generic term 'Guinea Cloth' or 'Guinea Stuff'. They were mostly striped and

chequered. It is the brightness of their colours that took the Negroes fancy. They are listed under names such as Brails, Buttanees, Capparees, Chelloes, Chirans, Cherconnos, Chuckerees.

4. CHINTZ

Both painted and printed calicoes were called either 'Chintes' or from vernacular 'Chitta' spotted cloth.

5. CHINTZ CADDY

Probably Hindi Khadi - A comparatively cheap plain woven calico commonly used as a cloth for cheap cotton painting.

6. CHELLOES

All cotton, a cheap cotton cloth with red, blue or black stripes patterned in the loom required perhaps mainly for the slave trade.

7. CHADDARS OF W.INDIA

Traditionally a kind of shawl or dupatta exported to the Malaya and Archipelago as chadar pintados (i.e. painted cotton cloth).

8. DHUTTI AND SERYA

These were grades of cheap cotton cloth. DHUTTI was a strong coarse cloth speciality of dholka near Ahmedabad. Seryas were strong cloth both plain and striped woven mainly at Broach and Ahmedabad.

9. GINGHAM

A kind of stuff made from cotton yarn, dyed before being woven. The Indian Ginghams were appropriately sometimes cotton mixed with other material and noted for toughness and texture.

10. NECCAREES .. (NICKAREES)

A cheap striped calico patterned in the loom. Bought mainly for the slave markets and woven at Broach and Baroda.

11. TAPSIELIES

A cheap striped cloth of mixed silk and cotton patterned in the loom. Woven in Cambay, Ahmedabad areas. Much in demand by slave traders.

12. ROMALLS

Thin silk piece goods with hankerchief.

APPENDIX II

SURAT FACTORY DIARY, p.120 14th May 1800

LIST OF GOODS FOR THE STANDARD INVESTMENT 1800

<u>CLASSIFICATION</u>	<u>COGES</u>	<u>PRICE</u>	<u>AMOUNT</u>
Byzatapaut Blue	400	86.0	34,400
Byzatapaut Red	250	94.1	23,562
Chader Myral	250	102	25,580
Arjeetapaut Red	250	107	26,750
Boral Chawders/Brawls	50	31	1,550
Lungees Majer/Brawls	200	36.2	7,300
Byrampaut Blue	2,000	84	16,800
Chelloes Blue	400	99	39,000
Chelloes Red	300	86	25,800
Dutch Chintz	10	46	460.00
"	10	85.2	855.00
"	10	98	950.00
"	10	100.2	1,055
Ohintz of sorts	50	145	7,250
" Andavady	50	108	5,400
" Caddy	50	101	5,050
" Dorguzee	50	102	5,100
" Toffer	50	152	7,600
" Caboolenia	50	60	3,000

<u>CLASSIFICATION</u>	<u>CORGES</u>	<u>PRICE</u>	<u>AMOUNT</u>
Ohintz Gandevi	50	22	4,400
Guinea stuff	1,500	20	30,000
" Chader Midgee	100	31	3,000
Negaunapaut	300	104	4,400
" Chader	100	110	30,000
" Bela Dutch	100	109	3,000
Neccanees Large	750	74	31,200
" Small	150	55.2	8275
" Coarse	250	58	8,700
" Larged red	100	107	26,750
" Small red	50	85	4,250
Majer Neccanees	150	130	19,500
Tapseilles Large	300	82	24,000
" Small	100	57	5,700
Romalls Cullana	25	45	1,125
" Sadah	25	45	1,125
Saloopaut Blue	50	70	3,500
Neccanees Large	100	107	10,700
Gingham Blue	80	62	4,960
Gingham Red	80	73	5,840
Lungees Dutch	100	26	2,600

653217

A true copy

Signed
Nagardas
Cursondas
Nanboocandas

APPENDIX III

SURAT PIECE GOODS IN DEMAND FOR THE BUSSORAH MARKET FOR THE
YEARS 1802 - 1805

<u>QUALITY</u>	<u>NO. OF CORGES</u>
Red shelloes or salloes	20
Red Baftas	20
Humsey Red	16
Humsai Siah Surmai	30
Dooty siah surmai pow do Guz	25
Bafta Siah Guzee	20
Dooty - Light Blue Do Guzee	15
Shellas or Salloes	60
Duty Brodera (Dhoti Baroda)	50
Duty Broach	40
Byram Nousaree (Nausari)	190
Byram Randaree (Rander)	96
Mulmuls Siah, called Setna Guzee dyed at surat a very deep blue	10
<u>OF FINE SURAT PIECE GOODS</u>	
Soosey Hundee Safed	20
Germasoot Guzee	10
" Karmesi Solbisi	3
" Mulherhaune	5
" Mahomet Shia Safeed	2

<u>QUALITY</u>	<u>NO. OF BORGES</u>
Chitauna Elean	1
" yellow or white striped	1
" red and white striped	1
" penge rang kalam areed	4
Bafta bootidar with flowers	10

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