

Block

6

EARLY MODERN CITIES

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BLOCK 6 EARLY MODERN CITIES

The Eighteenth century (1700-1800) is an important epoch in Indian history signifying complex political, social and economic changes woven around the narratives of conflict. The period while on one hand witnessed the decline of centralised Mughal Empire, on the other is associated with the rise of aspiring rulers in regional states who eventually succumbed to the self-aggrandising policy of East India Company. This interregnum between decline of the Mughal Empire and beginning of the Colonial rule witnessed the economic and cultural dynamism of regional polities (**Unit 31**). In seventeenth century, the Mughal Empire had established itself as a centralised entity by surpassing regional conflicts and fostering a composite ruling class often drawn from varied ethnic backgrounds. A century later, many state systems emerged, some under their aegis, others outside of it and all of them generated regionally specific changes.

The European mercantilist expansion by mid-eighteenth century is marked by many politico-economic and social changes (**Unit 28**). The trading outposts established by them led to the emergence of a number of ‘port cities’. Europeans directed the trade entirely towards the coastal towns, hampering the domestic and local trade and thus upsetting the arteries of small towns. The political successes of the English East India Company in 1757 and 1764 completely altered the economics of the country ‘where once flowed bullion’ in exchange of finished products, now India was gradually pushed towards being the exporter of raw material. The ‘Plassey plunder’, ‘ransacking of the treasury of Murshidabad’ and ‘direct access into the state finances’ adversely affected Indian trade and crafts transforming Indian fortunes – Indian industries suffered, artisans were ruined, towns declined and in the years to come even the cultural flavour of the country altered sharply. While there emerged typical European towns with segregation of indigenous population – Cochin, Goa, Hugli, Calcutta, Bombay, Madras; the traditional flourishing centres like Surat, Dacca and Murshidabad declined. The deep impact of Gothic architecture changed the cityscape. However, with the exception of Cochin, though other towns did start showing strong European presence, there was no sharp segregation of European and Indian quarters within the city, a feature that emerges sharply during the nineteenth century (**Units 29 and 30**).

By the turn of the century while almost all prominent Indian states got subsumed within the British hegemony and the cities declined as a result of lack of patronage; in the eighteenth century provincial capital towns did flourish under the aegis of provincial rulers. Among provincial capital towns Lucknow was the city par excellence. The efflorescence of the rich courtly culture of Lucknow in the eighteenth century can be gauged from its vibrant commercial engagements and the quaint architectural heritage, which is ubiquitous in the city even today. The Nawabs of Awadh played a significant role in forging a specific culture in the region. The transfer of the capital from Faizabad to Lucknow in 1775 soon turned the city into a prominent administrative, commercial and cultural hub. The palace complex became the focus of diplomatic, governmental, judicial, financial, and military functions. The Shia rulers of Awadh successfully mapped their cultural and religious ideology on the city, which in turn amenably adapted to it and continues to carry forth the rich legacy even today (**Unit 32**).

UNIT 28 CAPITALISM, COLONIALISM AND CITIES IN EARLY MODERN INDIA*

Structure

- 28.1 Introduction
- 28.2 Colonialism, Capitalism and Urbanisation
- 28.3 Cities in Early Modern India
- 28.4 European Merchant Companies and the Cities in Kachchh-Gujarat Region
 - 28.4.1 Mandvi
 - 28.4.2 Mundra
- 28.5 Summary
- 28.6 Exercises
- 28.7 References

28.1 INTRODUCTION

Capitalism is an economic system, where the means of production and distribution are privately owned, development is proportionate to 'accumulation and reinvestment of profits' that are gained in a *non-restricted/free* market. As a social system it is based on the principle of *individual rights* in contrast to earlier economic system i.e. feudalism. Its salient feature has been the purchase of 'labour for money wages' whereas under feudalism 'labour was obtained directly through custom, duty or command'.

Historiography of capitalism suggests that capitalism developed as a mode of production first in Europe and then in expansion from there to the rest of the world. The genesis of capitalism lay in the contradictions of earlier mode of production i.e. feudalism. In Europe the extraction of surplus revenue from lands (tilled by the serfs) of the feudal lords generated tensions and protests which basically undermined the feudal system. With the rise of ideas of renaissance, humanism and individualism, the legitimacy of the lords and serf relationship was further undermined. The rise of trade under merchant capitalism provided impetus for geographical discoveries and brought traders to the shores of Asia and Africa. Armed with the mercantilist motto of 'gold, glory, and God' these traders established huge trade networks which brought precious bullion to their European homeland which became the basis of capitalist accumulation.

In the wake of profits generated by this trade, the new developments in technology e.g. steam engine, etc. created new networks of communication enterprise and invention and innovation in Europe. This paved the ground for industrial revolution. Now large numbers of manufacturing units were set up in towns where depeasantised labour came in from the countryside to congregate in the cities. This capital-labour relationship was to create the basis of further development of what was called the capitalist mode of production in Europe.

As capitalism developed, it sought new markets for its manufactured products and new sources of raw materials for making these products. It is in this context the earlier network of merchant capitalism was capitalised upon and the new lands discovered by

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it were converted into sources of raw materials and markets for the European manufactured products. Here the quest for markets was accompanied by conquest of new lands which were turned into colonies. These colonies were actually structured into an exploitative economic relationship with the European powers and were ruthlessly ruled for these economic ends.

European capitalism then developed to create new cities which became manufacturing hubs where labour and capital were concentrated. These European urban centres then enjoyed prosperity due to accumulated surplus and its investments, relative political freedom and vibrancy in ideas as a result of network and exchanges from distant lands and mobile population. Reason and Rationality started replacing the old order. Now, "State itself was no longer seen as gift from God, but hard earned 'product of man', a 'social contract' where individual emerged as a beneficiary". French Revolution [1789] by invoking "*liberty, equality, fraternity*" furthered reconstruction, challenges and reformation. In due course of time this became a global phenomenon and is traceable since the nineteenth century.

In the present Unit we would largely be focussing on the impact of colonialism and capitalism in the eighteenth century on Indian economy in general and towns in particular. Here, we would take up cities which emerged in Saurashtra and Kathiawar region in the eighteenth century. The cities like Surat which faced a deep impact of capitalism and colonialism is not discussed here, for Surat is dealt in detail in **Unit 29** of the present **Block**. Similarly, new towns like Bombay, Calcutta and Madras emerged in the seventeenth-eighteenth centuries which again are discussed in **Unit 34, Block 7** and **Unit 40, Block 8**.

28.2 COLONIALISM, CAPITALISM AND URBANISATION

In India the emergence of capitalism is evinced discretely from 19th century (A. Mukherjee-December, 2010:73-82). However according to few scholars it remained present even before the establishment of English East India Company's rule (Chatterjee-1996; Subramanian, 1987; Datta, 2000). To understand Capitalism in Indian scenario during the second half of the 18th century one needs to revisit pre-capital and pre-industrial Europe, as the conditions and environs created there largely influenced Indian sub-regions leading to shift in the economic models.

Capitalism in India

Early modern in Indian History is characterised by the presence of European Commercial Companies who attempted establishment of imperial rule over the indigenous rulers: Successor States of Mughal Empire and Independent Principalities. British obtained success through systematic removal of other European competitors (Portuguese, Dutch and French) in the spaces where core economic activity existed and capital generation as optimum potential.

As far as nature of economy of the urban centres is concerned one comes across three phases on which the functionality of an urban settlement got constructed and defined:

Merchant Capital [1757-1813]: Merchant capitalism entered in India through East India Company. It has connections with 'mercantilist' phase and was discernible by 'direct plunder and the EIC's monopoly trade function' through the 'investment of surplus revenues' in the purchase of local finished goods for export to England and Europe [P. J. Stern 2011; 373-75 & S. Sen 1998; 138-45].

Industrial Capital [1813-1858]: This phase remained marked by ‘free trader industrial capitalist exploitation’. During these years pattern of trade underwent transition which was *discrete* and was significantly influenced by England’s industrial revolution. The pockets of India under control of British got converted rapidly into ‘market for British textiles and a great source for raw materials’ (for instance in directly administered districts by British in Gujarat). It has been aptly stated by Karl Marx for British possessions in India: ‘homeland of cotton was inundated with cotton’ and ‘traditional handicrafts were thrown out of gear’.

It was in this phase that India got transformed to *subordinate trading partner, as a market to be exploited, and as a dependent colony to supply raw materials and food stuffs*.

Finance Capital [1890s till independence]: During this phase, finance-imperialism began to entrench itself through the managing agency firms, export-import firms, exchange banks, and some export of capital. British consolidated their position by introduction of Railways (1853), Post and Telegraph (1853), and Banking System (Avadh Commercial Bank-1881). In this phase they also encouraged the indigenous principalities with whom they had engagements and alliances. Case of Baroda, Bansda, Dharampur, Rajkot, Bhavnagar, Jamnagar in Gujarat are some classic examples.

India in the eighteenth century got drenched in this web of capitalism and colonialism deeply and observed both continuity and change.

The establishment of the British rule brought fundamental economic transition in India, transforming agriculture from subsistence to commercial with the introduction of cultivation of variety of commercial crops such as tobacco, groundnuts, indigo, jute, tea, coffee, opium etc. and gradual mechanised industrialisation of the economy (British Bengal, Gujarat and Maharashtra). The industrial boom in Britain countered Indian traditional exports in cotton and silk in the face of the competition of the Manchester goods by the turn of the eighteenth century. The battle of Plassey (1757) turned India from the exporter of commodities and importer of bullion to mere commodity exporter to pay tribute and thus finance British China trade of silk and tea and later to provide sustenance to the British industries in the form of export of raw cotton. Cotton piece goods exports from Calcutta reduced drastically from average 9353 bales to 768 bales in 1801-1805. At the same time raw cotton exports from Calcutta increased from 1554 bales in 1801-1805 to 10,136 bales in 1811-1815. Another impact of the export of cotton and silk from Calcutta as tribute to Europe and China was, while earlier Calcutta cotton and silk was being supplied to rest of India, specially Gujarat, now it almost dried up; this adversely affected the fortunes of the city merchants, financiers and artisans alike. This could be well seen in the decline of the houses of the merchant financiers, Jagatseths of Murshidabad. At the same time Chintz was barred to be exported to England instead was transported to Africa to finance the trans-Atlantic slave trade. It all resulted in drying up of the silver influx from the west. This tribute (drain) to England in 1801 formed almost 38.57 per cent of total tributes flowing to England which amounted to 18 per cent of Britain’s capital formation in 1801. Ghulam Husain Khan Tabatabai laments at the condition of artisans: ‘the time has come for them [artisans] to take to beggary or exile from home: Many have left home and some, for love of their native-place, have reconciled themselves to grief and hopelessness... It is a matter of wonder and only by the grace of God that so many of the artisans of this country are still alive...’ (Habib, 2013: Chapter 2). The development of transport and foreign trade was the ultimate result of such economic transition which paved the way for new systems in urbanisation of India (Railways and Oceanic trade).

While discussing the genesis of Industrial capitalism Marx highlights the process of colonial exploitation and impact of capitalism on India “ how both turned out to be the symbols of extreme exploitation and brought the downfall of the traditional system. He argues that through tea monopoly as well as the monopoly of Salt and the China trade (opium), ‘The employes [the East India Company] themselves fixed the prices and plundered the unhappy Hindus’ (Engels, 1887: 534). ‘The colonies secured a market for the budding manufacturers, and, through the monopoly of the market, an increased accumulation. The treasure captured outside Europe by undisguised looting... floated back to the mother country and were turned into capital’ (Engels, 1887: 535).

The colonial exploitation created new processes of urbanisation and new urban forms. Coastal cities were favoured so that requisite raw material to subsist British industries could be exported and manufactured industrial goods could be imported cheaply. Thus the process of urbanisation and creation of cities in colonial India can be described as a breaking of the continuum of the medieval times.

This discontinuity took shape as a result of exogenous forces: investments by Europeans, creation of new infrastructure and adoption of new techniques of production and modes of exchanges.

Thus new urban centres/settlements got established through policy decisions of a foreign government or pull and push factors under local circumstances. *This brought in not only a different physical form but also new social values and culture.* The urban milieu underwent transition. This process also brought in social mobility in great way in colonial India.

28.3 CITIES IN EARLY MODERN INDIA

Death of Mughal emperor Aurangzeb in 1707 A. D. was marked by gloomy state of affairs due to political uncertainty and emergence of regional powers. This continued unabated for a long- period and evidenced sluggish growth.

Towns and cities in first quarter of the 18th century have been noted for concentration of people (from royalty-nobility to commoners), economic and cultural dynamism, erection of large size public and private structures (gardens, *hauz* and water tanks, mosques, temples, tombs, colleges, *bazaars* and *caravanserais*) with royal and administrative magnificence, regular demand for artisans produce, regular grain markets, availability of dwellers who were able to provide skilled and semi-skilled services, financial institutions, standing army and fortification with gateways.

This process of human settlers’ management underwent transition from the second quarter of the 18th century as a result of political and commercial realignments leading to emergence and growth of provincial capitals: Lucknow, Hyderabad, Seringapatam, Poona (Pune), Nagpur, Baroda (Vadodara) and Tanjore (Thanjavur) and in neighbourhood towns the on one hand and rise of cosmopolitan sites due to presence of European Commercial Companies: Goa, Daman, Diu, Pudduchery, Mahe, Mandvi, Mundra, Bhuj, Okha, Bhavnagar, Jamnagar, etc. on the other hand.

These new establishments have ample space for adjusting merchants, bankers, traders, administrators, artisans, intellectuals, performers and other migrating population from Mughal territories and local potentates, towns and cities for military assignments and other related requirements. It is important to note that local notables and officials associated with Mughal establishments in North India or Western India also used this opportunity to create new urban establishments as the *qasbah*, *ganj*, *purs*, *baldah*,

Bandar and *bara*. One can always see the case of Poona under Peshwas, Baroda under Gaekwads, Jamnagar and Bhavnagar under Rajput rulers in Saurashtra, Mandvi, Mundra, Bhuj and Anjar under Kachchh Jadeja rulers. Similar instances are visible in Rajasthan and Maharashtra.

Oceanic and Sea-borne trade received impetus as a result of advances in industrial revolution encompassing the Atlantic and Indian Ocean networks. European Commercial Companies had base since Mughals times: the Portuguese in Panaji/Panjim in 1510, the Dutch in Masaulipatnam in 1605, the British in Madras in 1639 and the French in Pondicherry in 1673. They did not hesitate in exploring the new establishments when found that they were losing ground in the previous ones. For instance Surat was not only replaced by Bombay but several other *bandars* and *baras* too in Saurashtra and Kachchh. Coastal towns and hinterlands shared Surat's function in the transition period under principalities which by now were part of powerful sea-based European and non-European empires (Kachchh & Zanzibar).

One must keep in mind that the impact of political decentralisation varied. In some places **there was renewed economic activity where as other faced economic decline.**

In fact forces of international trade, mercantilism and capitalism played key role in defining the nature of society. When Britain acquired political control in 1757 & 1764; the trade of the English East India Company expanded, colonial port-cities such as Madras, Calcutta and Bombay rapidly got identified as the 'new economic capitals' with symbols of colonial administration and political power (see Units 34, 40). People with different occupational abilities flocked to these colonial cities and by 1800; they were the foremost in terms of population. Suburbs in their neighbourhood were dynamic sites as rural population frequently moved towards the European town/quarter for employment. In 1901 there was an increase of 7.3 per cent in the urban population compared to an increase of only 2.4 per cent in the total population. Madras had population of 4 lacs, and migrated persons were mainly from the adjoining areas. One-third of Calcutta's population was local whereas the rest two-third migrated from Bihar, Uttar Pradesh and other regions. Bombay followed the same pattern from Gujarat and Maharashtra. It can be observed that the first quarter of nineteenth century evidenced emergence of Cosmopolitanism which was in presidency towns and beyond (for details see Units 29, 30, 31).

The impact of colonialism and capitalism in the early and the late eighteenth century thus varied vis-i-vis there were regional variations as well – some regions initially got a boost as a result of colonial commercial enterprises (particularly the small towns in the Kachchh region); while some established flourishing towns sharply declined (Surat) and some new towns emerged – Bombay, Calcutta.

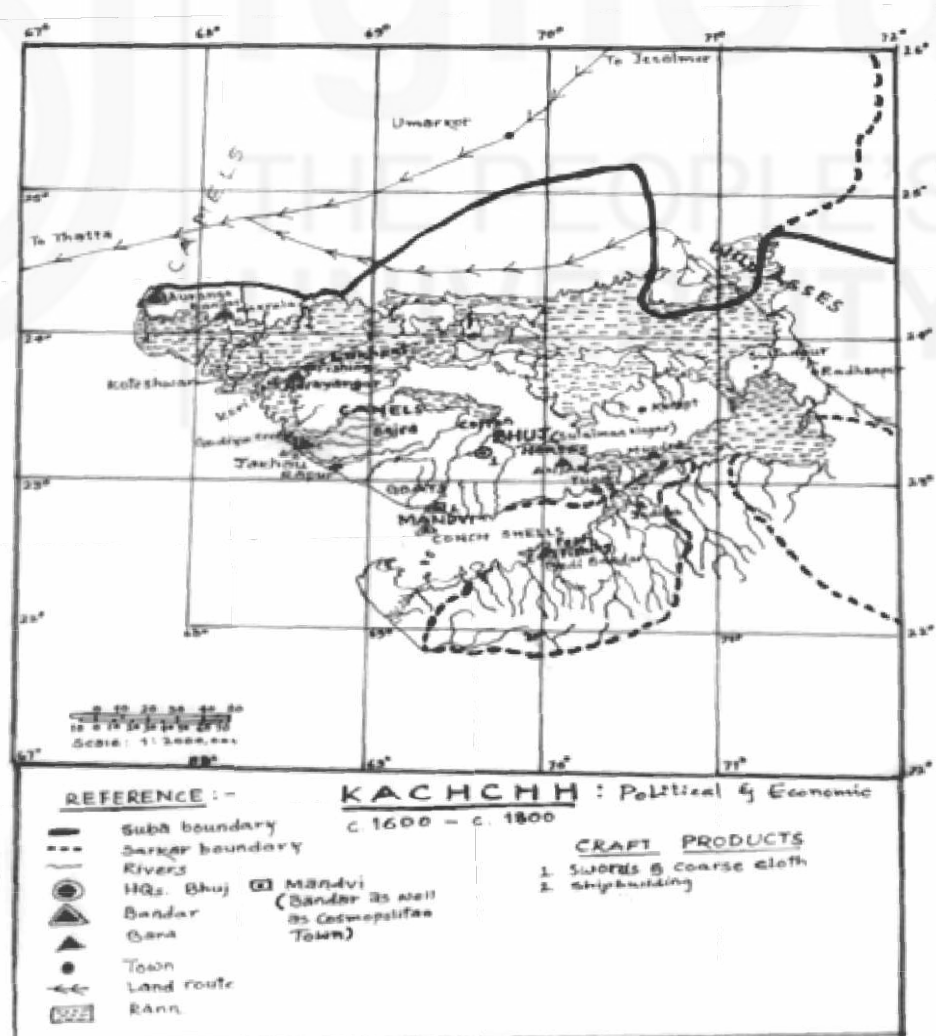
28.4 EUROPEAN MERCHANT COMPANIES AND THE CITIES IN THE KACHCHH-GUJARAT REGION

Largely the cities gradually succumbed to the exploitative nature of the colonial policies, the story of Kuchchh was a bit different. There were as many as eleven coastal ports flourished in the Kachchh-Gujarat region during seventeenth-eighteenth centuries variously addressed as *Bandar*, or *Bara*.

Table 1: Coastal Settlements in Kachchh c.1500-c.1800

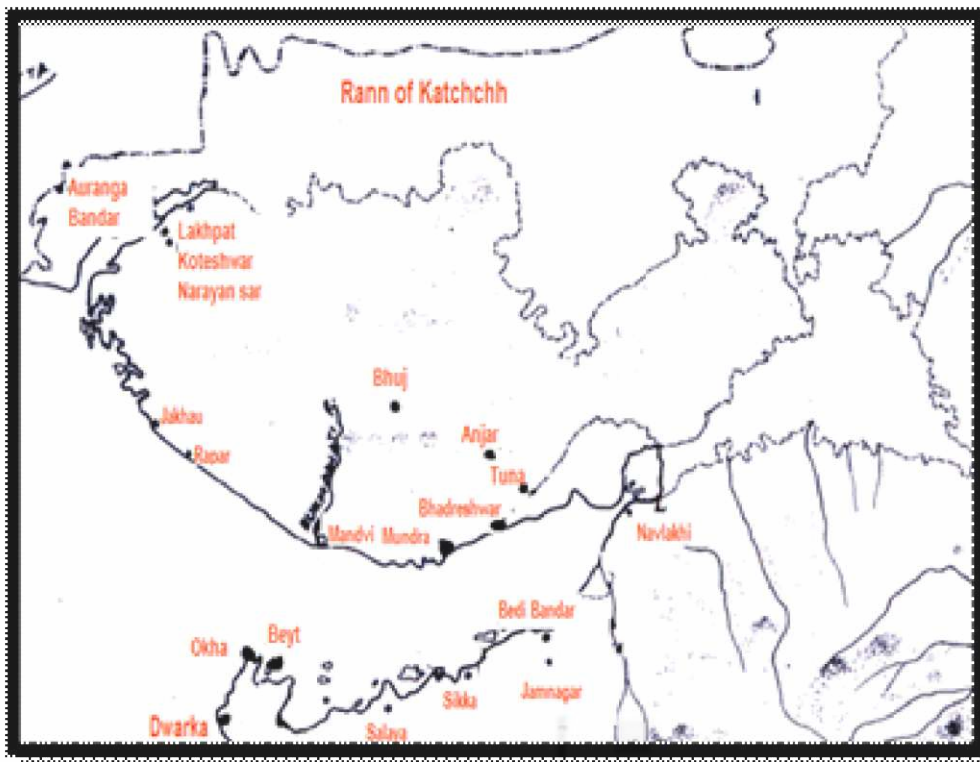
KACHCHH/ <i>Sarkar Sulaiman Nagar</i>	Status
1. Bedi bandar	<i>bandar</i> ; Hamilton refers it as 'Baet' Bandar
2. Anjar	<i>Bandar</i>
3. Mandvi	<i>Bandar</i> , established in c. 1581
4. Mundra	<i>bara</i> , established in c. 1763; later emerged as <i>Bandar</i>
5. Khubaria 6. Narayansar 7. Duma 8. Tuna 9. Saglo	<i>Bara</i>
10. Auranga bandar	<i>bandar</i> , established in c.1651
11. Karakala	<i>Bandar</i>

Source: Irfan Habib, *An Atlas of the Mughal Empire*, Delhi, 1985, Sheets 5A & B and 7A & B along with notes, pp. 14-16 & 21-26 and Jean Deloche, 'Geographical Consideration of the Location of Ancient Seaports in India', *Indian Economic and Social History Review*, Vol. 20, 1983, pp.39-48.



Map 1: Political & Economic Map of Gujarat c. 1600-1800

Map by Adhya Bharati Saxena



Map 2: Nineteenth Century Ports in the Gulf of Kachchh
Map by Adhya Bharati Saxena



Mandvi-Kachchh: A View of Coast from the Site of Local Mosque in early 19th Century

A critical survey of the above mentioned references in table 1 and map suggests that Gujarat held an imperious array in the inter-continental trade especially as a transit trade zone; supplied sundry types of cloths and items like gold and silk ware, copper ware, iron ware, wood-work, embroidery work, silk weaving stuff, shield-making and painting, oil-pressing, bracelet-making, tanning, basket-making, shoe-making, candle, matches and confectionaries.

In post-seventeenth century trade relations of the Gujarat ports with the rest of the world underwent tremendous change as a result of colonial environment; capital generation and investment patterns. New exchanges and markets which operated on the principle of colonial domination with the essential objectives of direct administration and intensive exploitation of resources led to procurement of raw material below its value and

manufactured goods were sold at prices higher than their value either in deliberately created markets or the existing markets.

In other words, the trade in Indian Ocean as stated earlier was east oriented, observed elimination of large shipping merchants of India and their ships being replaced by small vessels and diverse merchant communities, who indulged into trade of road steads in bulky commodities and ship-building.

This ‘coastal trade’ gained currency in the 18th century where Europeans were not interested and kept limited to ‘high trade’ of the Indian Ocean. Remarkable aspect in this direction was the attempt by the indigenous rulers in Saurashtra and Kachchh in creation of city-states and capital towns (Spodek, 1973:23-275; Spodek, 1974, 448-70; McLeod, 2004: 1-41); traders’ empire/colony (Alpers, 1976: 22-44) by control of a commodity supply to and from and managing finances to craftsmen in the sub-region so that the ingenuity survives.

The Kachchh province under study has the coastline of 200 miles and enjoyed inimitable position due to its location and socio-political formation process; and the zing its ports generated in the trade history of Western Indian Ocean help us understand the phenomenon that evolved in urbanisation. Its twin middle size towns: Mandvi “a ship-building centre, and Mundra in its twin role of a port and inland town continued with marked features of cosmopolitan and traditional urban settlement in the changed political environment under the Jadejas of Kachchh, their relations with the European Merchant Companies and Omani Commercial Empire.

28.4.1 Mandvi

Based on Factory records, Sailor’s Directories (English and Dutch) and travellers’ accounts (Rushbrook Williams, Alexander Burnes, M. Postan, Milburns) a profile of Kachchh Mandvi and Mundra is constructed here.

Mandvi (corruption of *mandi*) means ‘the mart’, referred to as *Maska Mandvi* after the *qasba* *Maska* in its vicinity and *Raipur/Rayan bandar* in the native, Dutch and British accounts. It has been the junction of two famous trade routes: the maritime *spice-trade* route and the *desert-camel caravan* route. James Todd refers to its ancient legacy which has been confirmed by Pulin Vasa in *Nani Rayan: The Mystery Unveiled* (2007):

Present day Mandvi is located and 3 miles south-east of Bhuj... Outside the city walls is situated the *Salaya* area stretching to the shore on the west of Rukmavati. It was laid down with the efforts of Topan Seth, a *bhatia* and patron Rao Khengarji I (1548-1585) in c.1581. A sandstone vaishnav temple *Sundarvar* bears testimony to the laying of the town... *Kajivali* and *Jama Masjid*/mosque and two places of significance for seafarers: the *Asarmata* *mandir* and *Pir Tamasa*. It is also reported that Mandvi has worn the onslaughts of pirates but successful in establishing itself as a place of considerable trade in due course of time.

Surendra Gopal refers to the Gwadar pirates’ activities on the coast of Kachchh during 1655-60 and this adversely affected sea trade of Gujarat. Since c.1581 till c. 1741 much cannot be stated concretely about Mandvi in the absence of evidences except for the time of Rao Lakhpat (1741-60) who built a large flat roofed three storied mansion in c. 1741 which was used as a palace by the successive generation. This mansion was later used as a rest house by the British officials in the second half of nineteenth century and now being used as Girl’s High School. The make up of this mansion was done by Ramsingh Malam, an architect and artisan, shipwrecker in Europe; brought up in Holland, and on his return to Kachchh improvised the structures at Bhuj, Mandvi, Anjar and elsewhere. This mansion is referred as palace in style, built of white stone in European fashion and adorned with dancing girls, tigers, and roistering Dutch knaves, each holding a bottle and glass. This mansion was the favorite residence of Maharao Khengarji III till 1942.



Vijay Vilas Palace, Mandvi

Photograph by Rajlondon01, December, 2009

Source: https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/a/a9/Vijay_Vilas_-_2009.JPG



Gate to Enter in Market in Mandvi Port Town [Photograph by Adhya Bharati Saxena]



Entry Gate to Port Mandvi [Photograph by Adhya Bharati Saxena]

Early Modern Cities



Shipbuilding Activity at Mandvi
Photograph by Adhya Bharati Saxena



Serai at Port Mandvi [It is now being used as warehouse. It is just opposite the Port.]
Photograph by Adhya Bharati Saxena

Rushbrook William further reports of Ram Singh's reception by Rao Lakhpat at Mandvi; and Mandvi, a 'prosperous city had attitude for skills'. Due to Rao's patronage a workshop was started at Mandvi palace where the best *kachchhi* craftsmen in gold and silver gathered and learnt art of enamelling. Ram Singh was sent to Europe twice in order to perfect his knowledge in glass making and iron founding. Later there emerged a glass factory near Mandvi due to suitable sand and gradually Kachchh also emerged as the hub of production of clocks and watches.

It was with Rao Godji (1760-1778), that Mandvi saw the rise as a middle size town. He constructed palace on the model of Dutch factory, a dockyard and personally supervised the building of his own ships (Tod, 1839: 452). In his time a three decked vessel named 'Victory' was constructed at Mandvi and commanded entirely by *Kachchhis* sailed safely to England and back to the Malabar Coast. James Tod for 1833 records, 'even now there are between two and three hundred vessels in the *Khary* and roadstead, one of them three masted, belonging to the prince of Cutch'.

A peep into James Tod's narration and Dutch factory records suggest that Rao Lakhpatji and Godji were definitely under some Dutch influence since the times of Ramsingh Malam. The buildings of contemporary period bear testimony to it. Further we evidence the attempts of collaboration with Dutch factors for opening of Dutch factory, subordinate to that of Surat by Rao Lakhpatji in 1750s. The probable reason for this collaboration was the maximisation of revenue through custom duty on the part of Rao and for Dutch 'the glamour of Mandvi'.

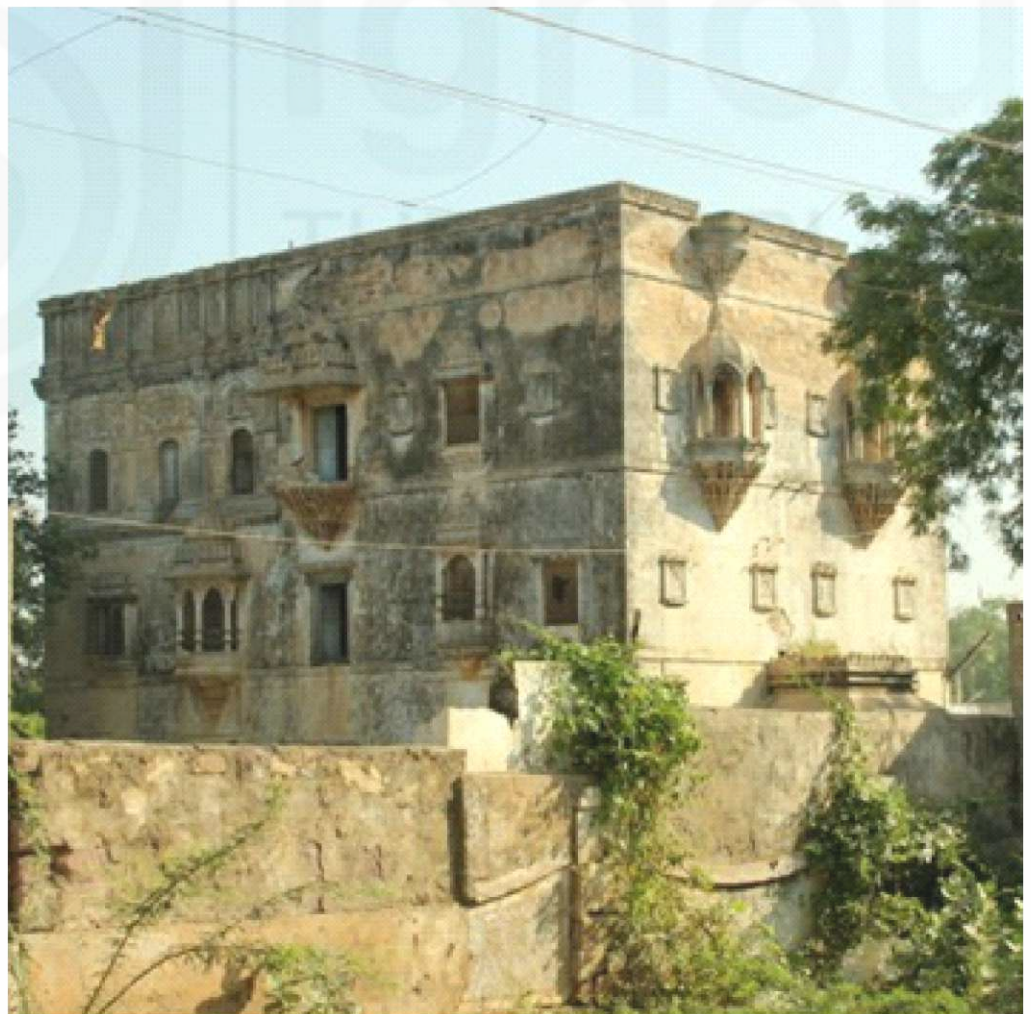
When the Dutch arrived at Mandvi in 1750 they found the ports of the Gulf of Kachchh, particularly Mandvi, visited by merchant-ships from different directions, affluent local merchants engaged in local and overseas commerce, and a fertile interior. The ports were well connected with the interior through a network of river and land routes. Mandvi was the prominent port and being close to Bhuj, the administrative center of Kachchh, it was much frequented by merchants from Anjar, Tuna, Mundra, Tiku *bandar*, Auranga *bandar*, and Lakhpat *bandar* on the northern rim and Bedi *bandar*, Jhakau, and Salaya on the southern rim. These coastal towns were small but actively contributed to coastal trade.

Some of the fiscal influences are listed here: Dutch acquired *Gujarati* cotton and textile in return of south-east Asian spices and sugar; Japanese copper, Malaccan tin, Siamese *sappan* wood, iron, quick-silver. During the period of crisis these produce found outlet in Kachchh on the pretext of price and cost advantages, proximity of Sind and benefits of a large market in Kachchh. Letters of correspondence between Rao and Dutch officials indicate the trade terms, sufficient reasons for the establishment of factory, sale of commodities and purchase of cotton and textile. Ghulam A. Nadiri based on these letters computed profits for Mandvi, which were about 165% initially. The amount was substantial and enhanced trade activities not only in Mandvi but also to the ports of Anjar, Mundra and other towns in Kachchh. Mandvi however, served as principal point in 'to and fro' movement between Kachchh and Surat. Cotton collected from Kachchh was exported to Bengal and China and textiles to Batavia, Dutch republic and European markets in a modest way. Besides, cotton and textile commodities exported by Dutch included alum, salomonic, borax, *puchuck*, *cowaries*, tortoise shells, and potash. *Puchuck* was sent in large quantity to Japan and some parts of south-east Asia as well.

By the end of 1763 this happy honeymoon of trading by Dutch in Mandvi and other ports of Kachchh disappeared as a result of political uncertainty in Kachchh and Sind. So was the Dutch influence.

In 1780 there were some 400 vessels at Mandvi which belonged to the merchants of this place. Mandvi is recorded to be the town of merchants and not of rulers however some interventions by the rulers and upsurges are recorded in the eighteenth century.

Mandvi remained under Ramji Khavas (1778), threw off its allegiance to the central authority. Two years later (1780) Ramji Khavas was, on paying tribute, allowed to keep the town as per the wishes of the merchants. Again refusing to pay tribute, the town was with the merchants. However, during the regime of Rao Prithiraj (1786-1801) it was made over to Fateh Muhammad. Soon after it passed to his rival Hansraj, who, in 1809, entered into an engagement with the British providing among other terms, that an English agent with a guard of forty men should be stationed at Mandvi. It was under Fateh Muhammad that Mandvi, Lakhpat, Anjar and Mundra received confidence despite political uncertainty (Nadiri, 2009: 92-96). Two name figures most; first, Fateh Muhammad in political realm and the second Seth Sundar Shivji Saudagar in the commercial world. Shivji Saudagar was originally a horse dealer from Gundiyali near Mandvi, had extensive business transaction in present Sind, Gujarat, Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh and Malabar. He maintained good relations with British in post 1809-period and served as the British agent elsewhere on one hand and lent the financial help to princely state rulers in crisis. He was known for philanthropy as well in Kachchh and Kathiawar. The last quarter of the eighteenth and the first quarter of the nineteenth century evidenced enormous development in Mandvi.



Fateh Muhammad's House in Bhuj
Photograph by Adhya Bharati Saxena

The year 1818 records it as **Madi/Madai** and strongly fortified with canons, houses were constructed of mats and bamboos; considerable commerce with the British

settlement “Bombay, agents from Bombay settled at Mandvi; trading relations in Persian Gulf and chief export item reported to be cotton as stated for earlier period. Throughout 19th century Mandvi retained its dynamism as evident in the writings of nineteenth century records:

Macmurdo, 1818

- 50,000 inhabitants-15,000 *Bhattias*, 10,000 *Vanias*, 5,000 *Brahmins*. 5,000 *Lohanas* and 20,000 others.
- Trade connection with Bombay, Arabia and the Malabar Coast.
- Export: cotton, cotton silk, *mashru*, coarse piece goods, alum and butter (clarified ghee); Import: dates, coconut, grain and timber from Daman and Malabar coast; bullion from Mocha and ivory, rhinoceros's horn and hide from African coast.

Alexander Burnes, February 1827

- 50, 000 souls and houses numbered 10,000. *Banias* as usual were the dominant caste.
- Trade volume was of 250 vessels and connect was with Zanzibar, Arabia, Muscat, Sind and Bombay.
- Export: cotton and butter/*ghee*; Import: firewood and grass “Kathiawad; rice and salt-peter-Sind ; sugar, European and Chinese goods- Bombay; wood, pepper and rice- Malabar; and sulphur, dates and honey- Arabia.
- Mandvi a principal port of India
- The pilots/*mu'allim* were better equipped in science of sailing as a result of training tradition from the times of Ramsingh Malam.

Alexander Burnes, 1835

- Vessel named *Veerasel* sailed from Mandvi in 1835 with a weight of 30 *tons* commanded by a muslim pilot and on board a crew of eight muslim and three hindu men towards East Africa.

James Todd, January 1833

- ‘fortified, remained prosperous due to sea trade: merchants and traders’.
- 200 vessels which belonged to *kachchhi* traders.
- *Gosains* of Mandvi had their trading branches in Pali and Benaras.
- It had more than 50 *shroffs*/bankers that owned big residential places. The yearly revenue from house tax was Rs. 50,000.
- Mandvi had trade links as far as Arab and African ports but it was mostly taking place in the Persian Gulf.
- Trade towards Arab comprised of cotton in round well pressed bales, coarse cotton cloth, sugar, oil and butter/*ghee*.
- Imports: lead, green, grass, copper, cardamoms, pepper, ginger, bamboos, teakwood, musk, *kasturi*, ochres, dyes and drugs – Malabar; areca-nut, rice, coconut, dates dry and fresh, silks – Arab and Persian coast; and spices, rhinoceros hides and ivory – Africa.

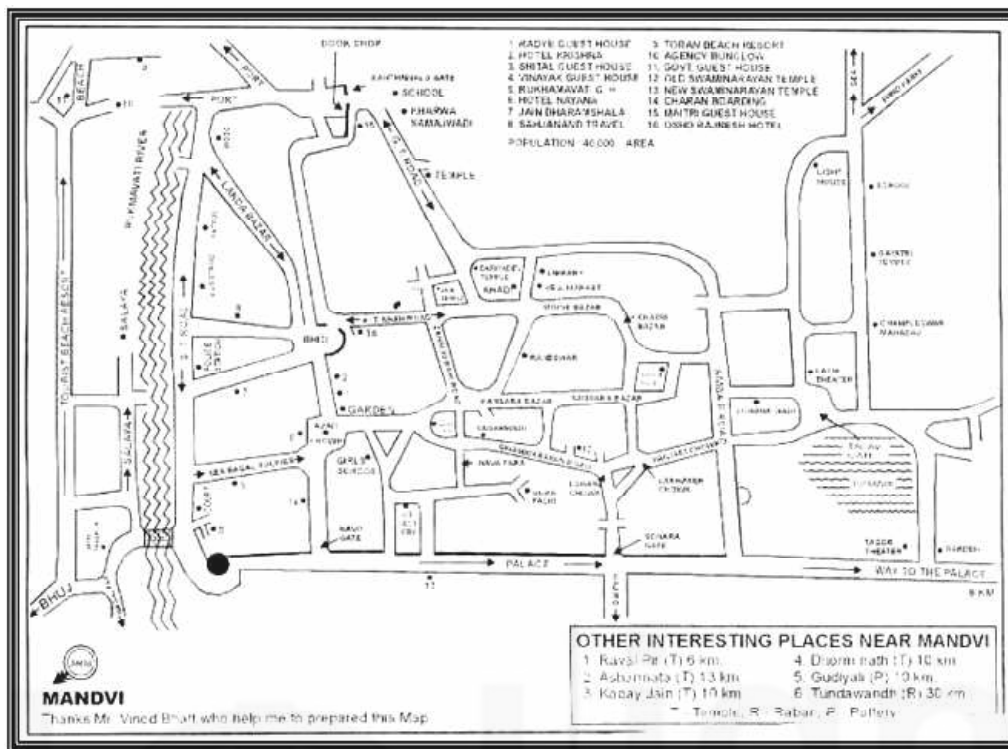
- Ethiopians and Arabs presence recorded along with travellers from Delhi, Peshawar, Multan, and Sind who were accompanied by their ladies and were probably moving for *hajj* to Mecca.

M. Postan and Hamilton, post 1850s

- “outside the town-wall refers to two suburbs: trading quarter or new *sarai*, stretching to the shore on the west of the Buhki, and the old *sarai* or seafaring quarter on tolerably high ground on the river Rukmavati’s eastern bank”.
- “town had square form and was surrounded by a strong well built wall about 26 feet high, 3-4 feet broad, and 2,740 yards round. It was strengthened by 25 bastions, varying in height from 34 to 4 feet, the largest of them at the south-west serving as a light house, showing a small fixed light, of the fourth order, at 83 feet above high water level, visible in all weathers at a distance from 9 to 10 miles. There were three gates and two wickets”.
- About 20 boats sailed every year to Africa.
- *Taylor’s Sailing Directory*: in trading season between Octobers to May a few Arab boats with Arab crew and others owned by *Kachchhis* and accompanied by *Kachchhi* crew traversed between Mandvi and the African Coast (Zanzibar).
- Other notable aspect of the Mandvi port was the Suvali fleet, which used to come from Zanzibar.
- Export: cotton cloth, cotton and brass in wire and rod. There were 20 sorts of black cloth distinguished chiefly from the number of threads in the warp. The 12 chief kinds were *bisota*, *bili*, *ismail*, *poatah*, *tanjree*, *kes*, *chavari*, *bujita*, *panchpati*, *bohorah*, *rabavi*, *sabai* and *kikuri*. Cloth was the chief article; the leading varieties being *pankoras*, unbleached cotton cloth from Marwar; *kaniki*, a coarse Marwar cloth dyed black in Mandvi, *barani*, a Mandvi made *sail* cloth; and the grand article of export *siakapda*, (black cloth) made at Mandvi from English thread and dyed with indigo.
- In 1855 had 8000 to 9000 houses. Popular for ship-building.
- In 1873, 22 vessels of from 17 to 204 *tons*/50-600 *khandis* were built the fleet of Mandvi boats numbered 24 ranging from 17 to 178 *tons*/ 50-500 *khandis*.
- In 1875, 27 have been built; there were 1,358 arrivals and 1,920 departures.
- Exports: cotton, wool, alum, butter, garlic and black cloth; the imports, worth about four times as much as the exports, were grain, groceries, oilman’s stores, cloth, pepper, ivory, iron and brass and copper wares.
- Besides the local coasting trade Mandvi had trade connections with Karachi, Bombay, Malabar Coast, and Calcutta and out of India with the Persian Gulf, Aden and Zanzibar.
- Arrival of steamers in 1872-73. It became a place of call for a regular line.

Certain market streets *kansara bazaar*, *sangara bazaar*, *khatri bazaar* and *mochi bazaar* have been in existence since its hey days; so are the buildings like light house, agency bungalow, British cemetery to the east of town, old palace constructed by Ramsingh Malam and residential areas like *lohanavadi*, *kharwa samajvadi* and *sagarvadi*. The city was well fed by water as we can see Topansar lake and numerous

gardens within palace courtyards and beyond. There were gates to enter the city which however survive in dilapidated state. These are Kanthawalo, Navo and Sonara gates.



Mandvi Layout Plan, Kutch: People and their Handicrafts

P. J. Jethi, Curator Aina Mahal, Bhuj-Kachchh

Thus this extensive survey on the Mandvi port potentiality suggests that since its inception shipyard housed almost 250 to 400 vessels of all kinds. The city remained a busy spot with cosmopolitan attitude as per the climatic situation; residences of permanent sort or temporary construction as per the status of residents emerged and collapsed; traders, artisans and others made Mandvi dynamic in all aspects.

28.4.2 Mundra

Mundra stands on gulf of Kachchh about 29 miles south-east of Bhuj, halfway between Mandvi on the west and Anjar on the east. It is recorded as a fortified town with good masonry structures which is the indication of prosperity of the place in its hey days. During the medieval centuries it was a well known port as recorded by *Ain-i-Akbari*, *Mirat-i-Sikandari*, *Arabic History of Gujarat*, and *Mirat-i-Ahmadi*; while MacMurdo, James Burns etc. speak high of it for nineteenth century. It was fortified in 1728 by Devkaran Seth and remained politically important under Fateh Mohammed and contemporary rulers of Kachchh and Kathiawar. It remained part of coastal trade and could not reach in prominence to that of Mandvi but its importance is highly fetched. Mundra maintained trade relations with Kathiawar, Cambay, Surat and Bombay. Its export included cotton, castor seeds, pulse, wool and dyed cloth and imports comprised of metal, timber, grain, dates, grocery and piece-goods. The old port was abandoned in 1954 and the new got located in Navnil creek. This old port site is interesting in terms of antiquity: godown, transit sheds, temple and *dargah*. Like Mandvi it evidenced some industrialisation in late nineteenth century leading to cotton-ginning and salt manufacture. In its vicinity is another ancient *bandar* named Bhadreshar. Great part of Mundra's masonry is reported from Bhadreshar which is located at a distance of twelve miles to the north-east.

28.5 SUMMARY

This Unit attempts in understanding of capitalism in European and Indian contexts during the first half of the 18th century. It traces the role of European Commercial Companies and Indigenous Principalities in the growth and sustenance of towns and cities. It also takes up the case of regional polities where urban settlements of all sizes emerged for varied kinds of reasons. The sub-region under study is Kachchh and Saurashtra in Gujarat which is less addressed in urban studies.

By providing details on Kachchh-Mandvi an attempt is made to understand the growth of middle size towns along the coast in the second half of the 18th century through global connect. Mandvi and Mundra under investigation became part of global economic system despite the presence of colonisers and continued with their acquired status throughout the 19th century as well. These two middle size coastal towns during their zenith evinced cosmopolitanism, entry of new techniques in production and mechanism of banking through inter-continental and inter-local mobility. Both sites are also represented by concentration of merchant communities and accumulation of wealth which later spread in the sub-region evenly.

28.6 EXERCISES

- 1) Discuss impact of capitalism and colonisation in first half of 18th century in western India.
- 2) Comment upon the growth and sustenance of middle size towns in the 18th century western India.
- 3) Spell out salient features of coastal towns which served the politico-economic purposes of indigenous principalities.
- 4) Comment upon the responses of merchants and trading communities towards the process of urbanisation in regional polities.

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UNIT 29 PORT CITIES: SIXTEENTH TO EIGHTEENTH CENTURIES*

Structure

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29.1 INTRODUCTION

Cities are the spatial manifestations of deeper societal processes that emerge from multiple levels of activities connected with production, exchange and power exercise. In the past urban space was often intentionally charged with meaning by the status and

¹ Prof. Pius Malekandathil, Centre for Historical Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi (Sections on Cochin and Goa). This is a modified version of the 'City in Space and Metaphor: A Study on the Port-City of Goa, 1510-1700' of the book, Pius Malekandathil, (2013) *The Mughals, The Portuguese and The Indian Ocean: Changing Imageries of Maritime India* (New Delhi: Primus Books) which was first appeared in *Studies in History*, vol.25,1, 2009, pp.13-38. We acknowledge with thanks Primus Books for letting us use Chapter 3 from the above mentioned book. The Section on Cochin is again a modified version of the paper presented by Pius Malekandathil at the Vasco da Gama Institute of Historical Research, Cochin, 2009. Ms. Sohinee Basak, Centre for Historical Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU), New Delhi (Sections on Surat and Hugli).

power groups for the purpose of facilitating and perpetuating their control and hegemony over others. This process took a decisive turn in the early colonial and colonial port-towns, which the European political actors made increasing use of not only for extracting those products that were not available in Europe but also for furthering their political control over the region. In fact, the most important requirement of colonisation was a port, with the help of which the early European powers and the later colonizers used to penetrate into the production centres as well as the neighbouring economies and to exercise control over the process of extraction as well as distribution. They used to modify and re-structure the port activities of shipping, exchange and navigation with a view to serving their politico-economic purposes in the region. In the course of these processes, cities were made to emerge in and around the principal port-settlements of India in a way that would ultimately facilitate their activities of creation and expropriation of surplus, besides ensuring their continued domination of the region.

The present Unit intends to discuss how did various groups, particularly the dominant groups inscribe into the cityscape of the port towns and how did they transfer larger meaning of power into its urban space by resorting to architectural processes as a language of domination.

29.2 SURAT

In this Section we will discuss Surat, one of the most important urban centres of medieval Gujarat. It will also look into the causes which led to the decline of one of most important port city of the Mughals of the 16th -17th centuries.

29.2.1 Origin and Growth of Surat

Situated at the bank of the river Tapti *Surat* came into focus around 10th century under the Chalukyan kingdom. Surat was situated in a fertile region with different agricultural and commercial crops being grown, encouraging trade and commerce of the region. The trade of Surat came to be of some significance during the time between the 10th and the 12th centuries. Some of the Arab travellers of the 10th century mention it as Surbaya. The development of Surat as a port for the international trade depended very much on the political situation of the region, as it was situated near to the much more developed port of Cambay. The Gujarat kingdom of the later Solanki period developed it as an additional port to Cambay to draw the resources of the Deccan. But this trade seems to have been subsidiary to that of Cambay. When Mahmud Begada included Tapti valley in his powerful Gujarat kingdom, Surat got considerable amount of economic stimulation in the early part of the 16th century. Although Cambay was the most important port of Gujarat, yet Surat always maintained its position as a supplementary economic door of Gujarat. But the decline of Rander proved to be a blessing for Surat, as the enterprising population of Surat was able to rebuild the commercial edifice of Surat, unlike Rander which was lost to oblivion (Janaki, 1974: 11, 26-29). With the cession of Diu to the Portuguese in 1535 and the failure of the siege of the city in 1538, the control of Diu went into the hands of the Portuguese. This led to the rise of Surat, as an alternative port of the Portuguese in Gujarat and was fortified.

29.2.2 Surat Under the Mughals

The siltation of Cambay and the presence of the Portuguese in Diu and Daman, further helped in the rise of Surat. But prosperity of Surat was a gift of the Mughals. By the time the Mughals conquered Surat in 1573, it was the most important outlet for the vast hinterland of North India and northern Deccan. Surat was made by the Mughals the port of embarkation for the Hajj pilgrimage. This made Surat earn the title of *Bandar-*

i Mubarak (the blessed port). Under the Mughals Surat was connected with the continental land routes and the Gangetic *Doab*. It connected the ports of Bengal and Gujarat thus giving a major fillip to the trade and commerce of the country. The conquest of Khandesh in 1601 and its annexation to the Mughal empire further contributed to the enhancement of the importance of the port. It opened an alternative safer and cheaper route to Agra through Burhanpur, Malwa and Gwalior, compared to the route through Bhroach, Cambay, Ahmadabad and Ajmer.

Administration of Surat under the Mughals

Mughals recognised Surat as a unit somewhat distinct from the rest of the province. The administrative jurisdiction over the city and its dependent *mahals* (or *parganas*, territorial units for revenue collection purposes) was delegated to a *mutasaddi* (governor) and a *qiladar* (commander of the castle), both appointed by the Mughal Emperor. The former was responsible for the collection of revenue and general administration while the latter exercised control over the military affairs and was responsible for the defence of the city. The provincial governors with their administrative headquarters at Ahmadabad had no formal superior authority over the *qiladar* of Surat. The *hakim* or the local governor took care of revenue collection in and around the port city of Surat largely through the mediation of local elites who were given the position of revenue farmers (*mustajiran*) (Subrahmanyam, 2011: 52). In 1594, the *sarkar* of Surat contributed four per cent of the total revenues of the *suba* of Ahmadabad (Martin, 1990: 4). There was a gradual transformation of the imperial family and ruling elite into artful maritime merchants (Flores, 2011: 56).

Trade and Commerce

Along with the stability of North India under the Mughals, the prosperity of Surat is also indebted to the liberation of the Persian trade under the Safavids and resurgence of commerce in the Red Sea under the Ottomans (Das Gupta, 1994: 4). The port also acted as an entrepot connecting the southeast Asian ports of Sumatra and Java with the West Asian ports of Mokha, Jeddah and Basra. The Red Sea route was the most important for the Gujarati traders, especially for Surat. The competition in this route was felt between the Gujaratis and the Europeans between 1620 and 1630 and must have intensified after the famines of Gujarat, when the supply of goods for export was cut off for sometimes. Substantial amount of trade was carried on between India, Iran, and Turan from Surat. A large amount of trade used to take place among Surat, Malabar, Bengal, Golkonda, Masulipatnam and with the Gangetic *Doab* in the second half of the 17th century.

29.2.3 Composition of the Urban Society

Surat, a coastal port city, was inhabited by the most enterprising trading community of Gujarat – the *bantias*, which embraces both Hindus (Marwaris and Khatris) and Jain merchant communities. The Portuguese, French, Dutch and the English, often employed Parsees as chief broker amidst stiff competition from the *bantias*. They formed one of the most entrepreneurial group (better mercantile segment) of Gujarat. The Muslim merchants were generally the ship-owning merchants of Gujarat. The Muslims were divided into different sects of which the Bohras and the Chellabies were economically well-off. The most famous among the Bohra merchants of Surat was Abdul Ghafur who headed the *jamayat* (the social organisation) of the Bohras.

The Europeans and Surat

The advent of the European trade in the seventeenth century was an event of major

commercial and urban importance for Surat. The English infused close to £10 million in goods and cash. The English naval strength was also a source of income for the Surat establishment. The Dutch with their monopolistic control over the spice producing areas of southeast Asia proved to be one of the most decisive European competitors of the English. In 1634, the Dutch decided to close all their Asian factories except Surat and Batavia. The Dutch had cordial as well as conflict ridden relationship with the Mughals as well as the Indian merchant community.

29.2.4 Urbanisation of Surat

The urban centre of Surat grew vertically more than horizontally. The city was fortified, but the distance between two bastions, out of its three, was not uniform, making the defense of the city weak. The ditch around the fort was deep but not very broad. The fort stationed approximately 200 Mughal troops. Thomas Herbert, who visited the city of Surat in 1627, says that the town was enclosed by a mud wall. After the first attack on Surat by the Marathas, the Mughal emperor Aurangzeb had ordered a strong wall of ten feet thick and ten feet high to be built. This wall was called *Sheherpanah* or “The Safety of the City” and took fifteen years to be completed. John Fryer who visited the city in 1674, claimed that seven hundred men had been assigned at this period for construction of the walls. But even then this wall was often criticised to be not strong enough. In 1717, Farrukhsiyar ordered an extensive wall around the city and this was known as *Alampanah* or the outer wall and the earlier wall was now known as the inner wall. The wall had three chief gates with one leading to Variav and Cambay, one to Burhanpur and the other one to Navasari.

Two different kinds of localities evolved within Surat. Like most of the urban centres of India, important buildings such as the castle, the custom house, the mint and the *darbar* formed the core of the city. Around the central core, ‘settlements’ developed. Each aristocratic Muslim noble had a small residential sector known as *pura*. In the centre of the *pura* was the residence of the noble surrounded by the simple houses of his retainers, soldiers, artisans, service class, petty traders and a local mosque (Pramar, 2005: 32). Occasionally the founder of the *pura* would draw to his local bazaar mercantile establishments which would bring in income. Between the walls well laid out gardens were maintained by both Hindu and Muslim residents of the city. The people of the city generally lived according to their caste and profession, with the lowest caste residing at one end of the city. There were several mosques around the city, along the local mosques of the *pura*. The most important one was situated at the eastern gate.

Among the public works of Surat one of the most famous was Gopi Talao or Gopi Tank. It was an artificial tank which had been widely discussed in the writings of the contemporary foreign travellers. It was nearly a mile in length. Gopi Talao had “eight entrances for people and cattle which go downwards with walls, turrets and very fair pavement of great stones. In the middle of all stands a house.” The passage from where the water came out was walled on all sides and was vaulted and supported with pillars. The government had also constructed *hammams* for baths for the common people. Class distinction was prevalent in the usage of these *hammams* and the one for poor were free.

The Mughal mansions were mostly built of stones and the houses of wealthy merchants were built with bricks and had gardens around them. The majority of townsmen, however, lived in houses made of bamboo and roofed with palm leaves. The city was very congested and lacked sewerage. An epidemic had spread in the city in 1680s, the effects of which can be seen in the 18th century as well. Surat continuously expanded over the centuries, with the expansion of trade and commerce. As European factories

were set up in Surat, artisans and weavers from the adjacent regions often migrated in the city, thus leading to the rise of suburbs of the urban centre.

By the 18th century, the population of the city had increased exponentially. The city was facing water crisis. The city was often not cleaned and there was water logging during the rainy season, resulting in unhealthy conditions of living.

29.2.5 Decline of Surat in the 18th Century

The decline of Surat's prosperity cannot be attributed to a single factor. A series of factors, not only at indigenous level but also in international scenario led to the decline of Surat.

Factors of the Decline of Surat

One of the most important reason being the simultaneous weakening and collapse of three powers of Asia – the Safavids, the Ottomans and the Mughals. The trade and commerce of Surat declined with the downfall of the Safavids and the civil war in the Red Sea. The Civil war of Yemen was further detrimental to the trade and commerce of the region. The economy of Surat was heavily dependent on the trade between the West Asia and Gujarat. With the decline of economy in the Persian Gulf and Red Sea, the economy of Surat also got affected.

Moreover, the Mughal empire started declining after Aurangzeb's death in 1707. Under the Later Mughals, the stability of the empire was shaken. There was a breakdown of law and order in Surat's hinterland. With the weakening of the central administration under the Later Mughals more and more principalities started declaring their autonomy from the Mughal empire and considerable anarchy followed in the hinterland. Surat was isolated from the distant areas of its hinterland like Agra, Lahore and Banaras,. With the decline of the Mughal nobility the trade in luxury items also experienced a downfall. With the decline of the Mughals, the administrative system devised by the Mughals also collapsed. This affected the flow of the city revenues. In order to fulfill their revenue requirements the city administrators started levying excess dues on the merchants. Though the *suba* of Gujarat did not face the challenges of the decline of the Mughal empire immediately, by the second half of the 18th century, very little traces of the Mughals remained in the city.

The most serious challenge faced by Surat was from the Marathas. In his continuous strikes against the Mughals, Shivaji attacked Surat in 1644. According to the contemporary sources, the city was unable to prevent the sudden attack on it by Shivaji. The Maratha leader left the city in ruins and shambles. He had plundered around two and half millions of rupees, gold, silver, pearls, rubies, diamonds, rubies and other precious stones from the houses of the rich merchants and traders. The Mughal emperor Aurangzeb was furious at the incapability of the Mughal governor in defending the city and ordered to fortify the city. As a token of appreciation for the courage shown by the Europeans in defending the city, he remitted a part of the custom duties for them (Gokhale, 1979: 25). As discussed earlier, the wall built by Aurangzeb was not strong enough to withstand an attack. The Marathas sacked Surat again in 1670. The Marathas plundered houses and *sarais*, burnt down half of the town and retreated after two days carrying enormous amount of wealth. Streynsham Master, an English stationed at Surat, claimed, 'No sooner Sevagy was gone but the poor people of Surat fell on plundering what was left, in so much that there was not a house, great or small... which was not ransacked.' The French stationed at Surat made peace with them, but the English and the Dutch, defended themselves against the Maratha hostilities (Gokhale, 1979: 25).

The Maratha plunders of the city of Surat and their occupation of the Athavisi or 28 *parganas* made the Muslim administration in Surat faced extreme financial crisis from the 1730s. The city Governors, unsure of their tenures, perfected the art of plunder of the city merchants whose rebellion in 1730-32 resulted in the Governor's dismissal (Subrahmaniam, 1985: 210). During these crucial years, the Bania community led by Seth Laldas decided to involve the English Council at Surat in the protest movement of the city merchants led by Mulla Mohammed Ali.

The growth of Bombay also proved detrimental to the recovery of Surat's economy. Till 1673, the ships from Europe mostly anchored in Surat. With the shift of English headquarter to Bombay in 1687, the chief seat of English trade was shifted to Bombay. The crisis of Surat, decline of the law and order and the Mughal presence all contributed to the shifting of the trade. Moreover, the port of Surat was also silting and Bombay with its natural harbour presented the better alternative location for the trade and commerce. Moreover, Bombay under the British, offered political stability.

Rise of the City of Nawabs

By the early decades of the 18th century the illustrious city of Surat, earlier a key metropolis and the main port of the Mughal empire, fell upon hard times. As the Maratha armies marched in Surat, it became more or less independent. Under the ruthless sway of Nawab Tegh Beg Khan (1733-1746), the city survived as an important centre for trade, in spite of the dislocation brought about by the political troubles that affected not only its hinterland but also its traditional networks with the markets in the Middle East. After Tegh Beg Khan's death his elder surviving brother, Azaret Khan, assumed the Nawabship. Azaret shared his power with his brother Safdar Khan. With the death of Azaret Khan, without a male heir, the latter succeeded the Nawabship. Meah Atchund, the Bakhshi (the military paymaster and head of the troops) and the son-in law of Azaret Khan hatched a plot of conspiracy. As a result, on 23 November 1747, Meah took the castle by surprise and staked his claim to the city. Thus Meah Atchund started a period of civil strife that could only be concluded twelve years later.

The war started by Meah Atchund became more complex than the clash between two rival factions of the local Mughal nobility as other forces joined in, including the Europeans, the English and the Dutch who took the opportunity of the civil war to extend their influence either through mediation or by active military support to one or another of the warring parties (Torri, 1991: 260). Another actor of the civil war was the Marathas and the Gaikwads. The Marathas who were looking for an opportune moment to play an active role in the administration of the city were able to find some stakes in the ongoing struggle, as they were often called for their support.

The most important social group, the merchants, played a very important role in the civil war of Surat. By 1740, the Surat Banias realised that they were left with three options before them. Either they support the local Muslim administration which had lost all its power, secondly the English East India Company authorities with their headquarters at Bombay who seemed to entertain ideas of acquiring political authority in the city. Thirdly, there was the Dutch East India Company in Surat which also had vague and undefined political ambitions of strengthening their position and stabilising their trade. The growing control of the English East India Company over the city's trade to the Gulf region made them rivals of Muslim ship-owning merchants of the city, who held the major share of Indian shipping. The Chellabis were the important ship-owning merchants of Surat who started losing substantial profits in the west Asia trade. Thus the Muslim shipping community was against the rule of Surat passing into the hands of the English. However, the city's Bania preferred to strengthen their association with the

English East India Company. Moreover, some of the prominent Parsee merchants, supported the prominence of the Dutch in Surat (Subrahmaniam, 1985: 210).

The English blockade of Surat in 1734 on minor pretext came as a shock to the Surat merchants. The growing English trade between Persian Gulf and the Red Sea, which had always been the traditional trading route of the Gujarati merchants, further reduced the trade between West Asia and the Indian merchants. The most affected mercantile community was the Bohras. Abdul Ghafur one of the most successful trading magnet of the contemporary period had the ability to incite a mob but also had the power to control and minimise disruption and violence caused by the mob. The ship-owning Bohras could not compete with the English shipping. At the beginning of the 18th century the Bohras led the struggle against the Europeans but were not able to sustain it by the mid 18th century. The Chellabies too showed resistance to the English at Surat. The role of the mercantile community in the public affairs is insignificant by the second half of the 18th century. In the civil war which engulfed Surat after the death of Tegh Beg Khan the leading merchants of Surat took no part. They deposited their valuable commodities with the Dutch for safe-keeping. The problem of physical security now engrossed many merchants and several among them began to seek protection under the English and the Dutch.

29.2.6 Surat in the Second Half of the 18th Century

The two principal events which changed the course of Surat's history was the Castle Revolution of 1759 and the Surat Riots in 1795. The first changed the social and administrative structure of the urban centre and the Riots, was the final nail in the coffin of the Surat's endangered prosperity.

Castle Revolution

The political crisis after the death of Nawab Safdar Khan's death in 1758 intensified. With the succession becoming major issue of contention and the luring Maratha peril, the *shroffs* of the city came out in open and around 20-21 January 1758, they urged the English East India Company to seize the Castle and to become the *qiladar* of Surat, preventing it from going into further political crisis. In return the *shroffs* promised to support English in their campaign. The English was not sure of getting involved directly in Surat's political disputes and in March 1758, Ali Nawas Khan became the Nawab, and Sidi Mas'ud the *qiladar*. The ruling administration soon lost control over Surat. With Meah Atchund succeeding to the throne and unable to control the declining situation, the English Council of Bombay decided to take over the administration of the city. The English wrote to the Nawab, the principal officers, the house of Chellaby, the Maratha and the inhabitants of Surat, explaining them, that they had been forced to take up the charge of Surat to prevent further deterioration of the city. On March 3, the English went into an arrangement with the Nawab, wherein he retained his position. The gates of the Castle opened on 4th March 1759 and the Castle fell to the English. The English secured the rights of the castle and the right of determination of appointments and dismissals. These arrangements were sanctioned by the Mughals by an official *farman* of November 1759. The wealthy merchants of Surat, with political influence, were divided in their support towards the English. The eminent among them were Salah Chellabi, Mulla Fakharuddin, Jaganath Laldas and Muncherjee Cursetjee played important role in the civil war. The Marathas stationed outside the gates of the city did not try to impede on the English and the city population appeared to have taken the news unemotionally (Subrahmanian, 1996: 96).

The English accusation of territories did not increase after the Castle Revolution, but it

came as a clear manifestation of the changes in the traditional power and trading structure of the region. The wealthy merchants of Surat played a very important role in the usurpation of power. The stability of social order thus achieved was thought to help in the revival of the city. But the merchants failed to create a strong social power, the reason being they too were divided by the 18th century.

Collapse of the Social Order and the Riot of 1795

The violent protests from the Muslim section of Surat, especially from the Muslim traders, led to the Surat riots of 1795. With the passing over of the administration of Surat into the hands of the English and the Banias, there was often a systematic alienation of the Muslim population in Surat. The abolition of the office of the *Naib* in 1777, which in effect meant disbanding the police force that maintained order in the suburbs, had further disastrous consequences. All restraints on movements of foreigners, on carrying arms were removed. Fakirs – poor, needy and turbulent – took up residence in the slums/suburbs of the city. Notable among them was a group of Bengali Fakirs who attached themselves to the local mosques and instigated communal feelings among the city's poor Muslim population. The immigrant fakirs had their own leader – the Mukaddam – who was not amenable to the administration, as the Nawab himself confessed in 1795. Street fight became clear and it was evident that the city's law and order was on the brink of extinction. In 1788, an insignificant quarrel between two Parsees and a Muslim assumed serious proportions, with the Syeds giving it religious colour and the lower echelons of Muslim administration taking up the cause of the Muslims against the Parsees without ascertaining the rights of the matter. The suppression of the riot did not put an end to the antagonism that the city's Muslim population felt (Subrahmanian, 1985: 227).

The immediate cause of the riot that took place on August 1795 was, when a Muslim was caught attempting to break into wealthy banker Adit Ram Bhat's residence at the Kelapeeth Chaklo. Adit Ram Bhat had well-established connections with the Gaekwad, with the *Durbar* and with the English Council at Surat. The thief was caught red handed and Bhat took the matter to the *Durbar*. On August 5, 1795, a section of the Muslim community had assembled near the mosque, the reason for the rally was to express their outrage at the detention of the thief in the *Durbar*. Associates of Muhammed Reza Bengalee, the accused, got in touch with the city's Syeds and the called for vengeance. The Bhandarees, a weaving caste, seem to have been the first to be mobilised, and by the evening a vengeful crowd had gathered. The crowd found a leader in Syed Shurfuddin, who presided over the mosque in Rampura.

The years of discontent and alienation of the Muslims, was spurred by religious extremism, leading to the disintegration of Surat's cosmopolitan society. The Banias were threatened with loot and plunder. The Kelapeeth Chaklo was the worst hit from the riots. Houses were broken and shops were burned down. The English were able to control the riots by noon. The city wore a desolate look in the afternoon. As a mark of protest, the shopkeepers pulled down their shutters, putting a stop to all commercial transactions till the assurance from the English came for their safety and security. The Nawab, under the English pressure, removed the Boongars and the Habsis from the administration and judiciary of Surat, for their active participation in the Surat riots. The most decisive impact of the riots was to further enhance the movement of capital and trade to Bombay from Surat as the migration of artisans and the merchants which had started around 1780s gathered momentum.

Continuation of Trading Network

Though towards the end of the eighteenth century Surat was on the decline, trade was

still important at Surat. The Zanzibar trade in ivory was financed by the Gujarati banias. Half of their imports at Zanzibar in 1811 consisted of cloth from Kutch and Surat. From 1750 to about 1790, the shipping of Surat focussed on exports of Gujarat cotton to China. Another strand of trading network which survived was the trade between Surat and Lisbon. Goa re-exported almost 55 per cent of the products received from Surat to the world market. In 1750 the total volume of capital employed by the Portugal in the Surat trade was Rs. 10,000 but increased to Rs. 637,090.21 in 1781-89 (Pinto, 1995: 221). Surat exported to Goa annually goods valued at 250,000 pound sterling or almost 1,000,000,000 *reis* from 1816 to 1819, of which over 90 per cent of these products were cotton goods, along with raw cotton, coffee, cloves, pepper and opium (Bauss, 1997: 281). The amount of trade might not be substantial, its importance lied in the fact that it earned Surat bullion from the Luso-Brazilian areas.

29.3 COCHIN

The city of Cochin evolved out of a chain of socio-economic processes that took place in and around the triangular land-space that extended from the water channel westward up to the seashore. Let us see the various social mechanisms and politico-economic processes by which Cochin was made to evolve from a fishing village into a power-centre and a city.

29.3.1 Emergence of Cochin as a Port and a Political Capital

The emergence of the estuary of Cochin is attributed to the geo-physical changes caused by the great flood in Periyar in 1341 CE. While the floodwaters that moved through the northern branch of the river Periyar silted up the harbour of Cranganore, the heavy flow of floodwaters through the southern branches of the river opened up a passage from the lagoon into the sea, bringing into existence the harbour of Cochin. The term Cochin is said to have been derived from *Kochazhi* (*Kochu Azhi* or small estuary), which was used to refer to the newly formed estuary that stood different from the *Valiya Azhi* (Cranganore) (Menon, 1966: 58-62).

The *Paradesi* Jews appears to have migrated from Cranganore and other parts of Kerala to Cochin immediately after the emergence of Cochin in 1341. These migrant Jews, on reaching the newly emerged estuary, set up a market-place, which eventually came to be known as Kochangadi (small bazaar) because of its being small when compared to the extensive market of Cranganore and in 1345 they built a synagogue over Kochangadi synagogue (Koder, 1986: 138-140).

On seeing the prospects for the accumulation of trade surplus in Cochin, the chief of the Perumpadappu svarupam, who had his headquarters in the agrarian belt of Vanneri started moving down to south, first to Mahodayapuram (Cranganore), and later to Cochin, where he established his royal residence around 1405 (Menon, 1967: 173-4; Thampuran, 1989: 6).

The locus of the political power was initially Calvethy, where the palace of the king was located. Mouth of Calvethy served the purpose of the port. However the core area of economic activities of Cochin in the fifteenth century stretched from the mouth of Calvethy to Mattancherry. As a result a wide variety of traders including the Kelings, the Chetties, the Nazaranis, the Jewish and the Muslim traders started congregating around the palace area, with the Chetties, Goldsmiths, Konkans and Muslims occupying Amaravathi area. The urban unit that thus emerged in Calvethy with a chain of native mercantile settlements in and around the port area and around the king's residence eventually came to be called the city of Cochin.

Meanwhile, a second wave of Jewish migration to Cochin took place in the second half of the fifteenth century. Initially these Jews settled down for a period of fifty years in a place called *Sinhora Savod'e* (*Senhora Soude*, a place-name later given by the Portuguese and presently known as Saudi) about half a league (almost two kilometers) away from Cochin. It was only by 1521-1523 that these white Jews finally shifted their residence completely from *Sinhora Savode* to Cochin. Concomitantly a considerable number of black Jews also reached Cochin from Cranganore and other parts of Kerala by the latter part of the fifteenth century, where the king of Cochin, who was eagerly looking for enterprising commercial partners to develop his port, took these Jewish merchants under his special patronage, a privilege which the Jews enjoyed all through the years to come. It seems that it was for the use of these Jews that the Thekkumbhagam synagogue was built in 1489 in Cochin.

29.3.2 From Fluidity to Solidification of Power: Cities as the Transforming Venue

In the process of localising power and giving permanence to the Lusitanian power exercising devices in India, preference was given to the cities of Cochin and Goa and it was into their urban space that Portuguese power was first inscribed. Consequently these cities turned out to be the fundamental political units of the *Estado*, where urban lay out was initially done giving priority and visibility to power exercising institutions. In Cochin the fortress occupied the core position in the early period, followed by the factory, the weighing place of pepper, the Franciscan monastery and the hospital in the subordinate ranks. The Portuguese city of Cochin known as *Cochin de baixo* evolved around the fort of Manuel (initially erected in 1503) keeping itself distinct and separate from the already existing native Cochin or *Cochin de Cima* (Mattancherry). The European part of the city of Cochin became the political headquarters of the *Estado* until 1530, when it was shifted to Goa.

By mid-1540s a considerable portion of trade surplus of the *casados* was transferred for beautifying their habitation and also for building magnificent churches or civic structures of Goa and Cochin, evidently with the logic of making the power and prestige of the Portuguese state visible and impressive. The parish church of Cochin, which had palm thatching till 1540, was modified and restructured to match with the change. The nucleus of Madre Deus College started eventually soaring to the heights of three storeys, though its final completion took place much later. In all these structures we find the attempts of the city-dwellers to articulate visually the wealth of the state and consequently its power to the local rulers and their collaborators in an awe-evoking manner.

29.3.3 Establishment of the City of Santa Cruz of Cochin

The area comprising the Portuguese settlement in Cochin was raised to the status of a city by the king of Portugal, Dom John III, by a royal charter issued on 12 March 1527 (Mathew and Ahmad, 1990: 1-3). With the establishment of a city in Cochin by a royal charter, it was given a unique status in the structure of *Estado da India*. It was to be administered not only by a captain but also by a municipal council with members elected from the married citizens of the Portuguese city of Cochin (Subrahmaniam, 1990: 142). In 1525 there were 2,220 Portuguese men in Cochin in the military service. But they did not have representation in the municipal council. Only the married Portuguese male citizens enjoyed voting right and representation (Pearson, 1981: 52-3). In 1527 there were 160 Portuguese married citizens in the city of Santa Cruz of Cochin, while the unmarried ones engaged in the military service numbered about 840.

The urban space of Cochin acted as shock-absorbing device for the Lusitanians who

fled from the cities of Portugal during the famines of 1521, 1522 and outbreak of the great pestilences of 1524 as well as 1530-1. As a result the residents of the city of Cochin swelled from 1530 onwards. During this period many New Christians (*Cristãos novos* or those who were converted to Christianity from Judaism) also started fleeing from Portugal to Cochin, which was then considered to be a liberal urban unit in Portuguese India. The vast commercial opportunities that Cochin offered as the prime centre for official crown trade and the private trade of the Portuguese *casados*, seem to have been an added reason for them to migrate to the city of Santa Cruz (Malekandathil, 2001: 166). Consequently the number of married residents in the Portuguese city of Cochin increased to 300 in 1542. By 1546, there were 570 Portuguese residents in Cochin, out of whom 343 were married settlers, whose number slowly rose to 500 by 1551. These new migrants started engaging in trade, particularly with the ports of Bay of Bengal and South East Asia and the *casados* of Cochin used to bag huge profits by actively involving themselves in the trade of Cochin-Bengal-Malacca-Coromandel-Malacca and Cochin-Malacca routes. Out of these various types of commodities, a major chunk was taken to China and Japan and a considerable share of return cargo was also transported to Cochin for further distribution in Cambay and Ormuz, and the rest was transshipped to Lisbon (Malekandathil, 2001). Consequent to the active participation of the *casados* of Cochin in intra-Asian trade, their settlement in Cochin turned out to be a centre of sizeable wealth-accumulation. Nevertheless, by allowing the new comers to settle down in the Portuguese city of Cochin, the Portuguese state managed to overcome, to a certain extent, the problem of chronic paucity of manpower, and to convert them into its citizens.

29.3.4 Peopling of the City and the Making of Citizens for the *Estado*

Though the nucleus of a Portuguese state structure had appeared in Cochin as early as 1505, in the initial phase the emerging state comprised mostly of officials of trade or soldiers engaged in the service of the crown. It in fact appeared to be a state devoid of actual citizens. Afonso de Albuquerque, who realised the intensity of the problem emerging from the deficiency in civil population supportive of the state, tried to solve it by giving permission to many soldiers, the vital apparatus of a state, to forego their profession and get married to Indian women. This was for the purpose of achieving a longer goal of realising sufficient demographic strength and thus ensuring a generation supportive of Portuguese dominance (Panikkar, 1929: 84). These Portuguese married people became the nucleus of the civil population of the *Estado*. For the sustenance of the married Portuguese citizens Albuquerque allotted petty trade, and permitted them to set up shops and manufacturing units including shoe making, baking and tailoring.

Many Portuguese *casado* traders preferred to have their habitat in this city and the number of the Portuguese houses that were eventually set up rose to 300 in 1517. The *casados* began to bag huge profits by actively involving in the Goa/Cochin-Bengal-Malacca-Coromandel-Malacca-Goa/Cochin and Goa/Cochin- Malacca-South East Asian routes, particularly after the termination of crown trade in Malacca and Moluccas. The *Estado da India* tried to incorporate these trade networks and webs of social relations within the frames of its politico-economic structure through a process of strategic planning, which commenced with the conferring of urban status on Goa in 1518 and on Cochin in 1527. The Municipal councils of both Goa and Cochin and the numerous legislations produced by them were utilised as devices for standardising and thus controlling the socio-economic behaviour of the urban dwellers and for consolidating the diverse social spaces into the political frame of the *Estado*.

The administration of the city affairs passed into the hands of urban elite, through the mechanism of city council elected from the Portuguese married settlers. The hold over Municipal offices, supported by the legislative powers of the city council, enabled them to ensure legitimacy, continuity and stability to the private trading networks that they had developed over decades. This is evidently seen in the eventual replacement of the patrolling fleet, which was earlier introduced on the Malabar coast with a view to preventing diversion of spices to the Red Sea-Mediterranean route, by a municipal navy of Cochin to suit the needs of its private traders. Eventually the Municipality of Cochin bagged the right to appoint the captain-in-chief of the patrolling fleet, evidently to protect the private interests of its city-dwellers (Mathew and Ahmad, 1990: 70).

29.3.5 City and the Imperial Defense Strategy

The Portuguese state considered the cities of Goa and Cochin as the source of the authority needed to retain its possessions and started increasingly banking upon them, both their men and material, for defending the empire against the background of expansion of the Ottoman State into the rim of Indian Ocean. Against this background of the ubiquitous presence of the Ottomans in the visible vicinity of Portuguese possessions, the crown and its officials started increasingly using Cochin and Goa for defending the *Estado* from Ottoman attacks. Attempts were made to mobilize large material and human resources from these cities, when the Ottomans laid siege on Diu in 1546. The city-dwellers of Goa and Cochin who had fought in the war of 1546 to defend Diu were rewarded by granting commercial voyages, in most cases, to Bengal or Malacca or Ormuz.

By this mechanism of rewarding with commercial voyages, the cities were more and more integrated into the defense-strategy of the *Estado* as its essential component. Thus later when Malacca was sieged, wealth and men from Cochin were increasingly mobilised and utilized to lift the siege. Thus in 1587 on the requests from the *Estado* authorities, the Municipal council of Cochin contributed an amount of 13,560 *xerafins* for the relief of Malacca. This reveals the extent to which the cities were made to get involved and integrated with the defense strategy of the *Estado* possessions.

However, with the increasing dependence on the urban dwellers of Cochin and Goa for its defence and sustenance, the *Estado* had to make several commercial concessions to keep the urban elites to the tune of the state. Several navigational channels kept by the crown rather monopolistically were liberalised and handed over to the private traders. The crown began to rent out voyages to South East Asia from 1570 onwards (Thomaz, 1984: 77). Meanwhile, the state also banked upon the capital and commercial expertise of the city-dwellers of Cochin to make spices available in Portugal by entering into contract with the city of Cochin for dispatching regular *navetas* to Lisbon in the second quarter of the seventeenth century.

29.3.6 Spatialisation and the Integration of Cochin with the State

The spatialisation process in Cochin began to take a course favouring more the interests of their private traders than those of the crown, as is evident from the shift seen in the core area of urbanisation from politically and administratively significant structures to commercially important streets or structures. Thus for example the core area of city life in Cochin turned out to be the street-space named *Rua Direita* (Straight Road), which was occupied on both sides by goldsmiths, the rich, and the better merchants and craftsmen, while each class of artisans and traders stayed together in localities. In Cochin

the street called *Rua Direita*, where the principal buildings of Cochin including bishop's house, municipal chamber, *Misericordia*, Dominican monastery etc., were located, developed into the hub of city-life. A great portion of the wealth bagged by the *casados* by way of private trade went to the construction works of huge and magnificent civil and ecclesiastical buildings of Cochin. In this process wealth was made to be transferred into impressive and power-denoting permanent structures through the visual media of architecture and monumental buildings like the houses of the Dominicans, the Augustinians and the three-storeyed magnificent Jesuit College known as Madre Deus College of Cochin (Malekandathil, 2001: 75,91-96, 110-111).

As distanced away from the Portuguese power centre of Goa, Cochin's urban lay-out and concerns were greatly decided by the private interests of the *casados*. We find a tendency among the private traders to keep the water-side of the city wall of Cochin open for enabling frequent movement of their vessels and commodities. In spite of the repeated orders of the crown to repair the city-wall and to strengthen the fortification, the water-side of the city was deliberately kept unattended to for facilitating the trading endeavours of *casados*, a development in which local concerns took precedence over more distant ones and the private interests gaining upper hand over state interests. The state could not fortify it and keep the city in the way it wanted, because of the relative distance from Goa, the power centre.

However the city of Cochin experienced a mass exodus of inhabitants, leading to a drastic reduction in their urban demographic strength from the second decade of the seventeenth century onwards. It started with the increasing diversion of spices through the *ghat* route to the Coromandel ports like Nagapattanam, Mylapore, Masulipatanam and Pulicate, following the tensions between the Portuguese authorities and the spice-producing St. Thomas Christians of the hinterland since the synod of Diamper (1599) (Malekandathil, 2000). Consequently supply of pepper in Cochin got increasingly diminished following which the vessels of *Carreira da India* also stopped coming to Cochin for taking spices for Portugal from 1611 onwards (Malekandathil, 2001: 254). With the increasing flow of spices from the hinterland to Coromandel coast through the *ghat*-route, there commenced a mass exodus of *casados* from 1612 onwards from Cochin to Nagapattanam, Mylapore and other parts of eastern coast to take advantage of the changed situation. Some of them even moved to Bengal, Pegu and Ceylon. Following these developments and particularly with the increasing exodus of the *casados*, the demographic strength of Cochin got reduced almost to one-third and consequently the city lost vibrancy of its trade (Malekandathil, 2000: 145-6).

29.3.7 Formation of *Cochim de Baixo* and *Cochim de Cima*

With the increasing urbanisation process taking place in the Portuguese settlement of Cochin and with its elevation to the status of a city, the Portuguese city came to be called lower Cochin (*Cochim de Baixo*) and it stood distinct and different from the native city of Cochin that came to be also called upper Cochin (*Cochim de Cima*). The habitat of the indigenous merchants, royal palace, Pazhayannur temple etc., were located in the native city of Cochin (Mattancherry), while all the Lusitanian institutions were located in the Portuguese city of Cochin (officially known as the city of Santa Cruz of Cochin) (Malekandathil, 2001: 74-75).

From 1540s onwards, a lot of intense building processes took place in both the native and the Portuguese parts of the city of Cochin. In Mattancherry with the increasing inflow of Jews, who came from Cranganore under the leadership of Joseph Azar in 1524 the size of the Jewish colony got increased (Koder, 1986: 138). Eventually they started building a synagogue called the *Kadavumbhagam* synagogue (1539-1550),

for which some of the New Christians living in the Portuguese city of Cochin like Jacome de Olivares liberally donated funds. The frequent interactions in relation to commerce and ritual practices between the Jews of Mattancherry and the New Christians of the Portuguese city made many of the latter revive Judaism and despise Christianity, which finally led to the establishment of Inquisition in the Portuguese city of Cochin in 1557 (almost three years before the establishment of Inquisition in Goa 1560) for correcting the so-called “mistakes” and Judaizing practices among the New Christians (Malekandathil, 2001: 97-99; Malekandathil, 2002: 246-250).

In the Portuguese city, we see that the parish church of Cochin, which had palm thatching till 1541, was modified and restructured with tile-roofing so as to match with the economic improvements that the settlers of Cochin had achieved by this time. Other important institutions that had taken shape around the Portuguese fortress of Cochin were the hospital, the church of St. Bartholomew, the *misericordia* (established in Cochin in 1527) and the city-municipal hall. Meanwhile the arrival of St. Francis Xavier to Cochin in 1542 and his subsequent visit to the city made it the centre of Jesuit activities in the south. On the request of the city-dwellers of Cochin, St. Francis Xavier converted the existing *Madre de Deus* church into a college, which under the name of *Madre de Deus* College eventually started soaring to the heights of three storeys, though its final completion took place much later.

The core area of urban life in the Portuguese city of Cochin revolved around *Rua Direita* (Straight Street), where the principal buildings of Cochin including municipal chamber, *Misericordia*, the principal church, hospital etc., were located (Malekandathil, 2001: 75,110-111). *Rua Direita* was the busiest street in Cochin, where silk, diamonds and other luxury items were sold. Jacome de Olivares, a New Christian who came from Setubal (Portugal) put up his commercial center in *Rua Direita* and began to sell pitch, porcelain as well as *pau-da China*. Manuel Rodrigues another New Christian of the city, established a business house near this street to sell silk, clothes, carpets and other commodities. Leonor Caldeira, a woman from the same New Christian group, also developed her commercial establishments by the side of *Rua Direita*. Simão Nunes, the son of Leonor Caldeira following the family tradition of trade established a commercial center near the same *Rua Direita* for trading in corals, camphor and other items. When the Dominicans came to Cochin in 1551 to erect a house, they chose the site near *Rua Direita*. The Dominican house was located on the side of *Rua de São Domingos* and adjacent to the *Sapateiros* (Malekandathil, 2001: 75,110-111). However, the most important ecclesiastical institutions established near *Rua Direita* were the cathedral church and the bishop’s house, which appeared in Cochin with the erection of the diocese of Cochin as a saffragan diocese of Goa in 1558 by the papal bull *Pro Excellenti*. In fact, many of these magnificent urban structures and ecclesiastical institutions, besides multiple civil structures, evoking awe and impression were set up in Cochin during this period with the help of trade surplus of the *casados*. From mid-1540s onwards, a considerable portion of wealth of the *casados* of Cochin was transferred for beautifying their city and erecting monumental edifices, by which process the city-dwellers of Cochin attempted to articulate visually the wealth of the state and consequently its power to the local rulers and their collaborators in an awe-evoking manner (Malekandathil, 2006: 8-9).

In the native city of Cochin too lot of construction works took place during this period. The most important one was the royal palace (now known as Mattancherry palace) that was built by the Portuguese at their own expense in 1555 and given to the king of Cochin at a time when tensions fomented between the two on the plunder of Palluruthi temple (the family temple of the Palluruthi *tavazhi*) by the Portuguese and on the issue

of converting his subjects to Christianity (Schurhammer, 1973: 306). It seems that by constructing a beautiful palace at Mattancherry for the king of Cochin, the Portuguese not only succeeded in patching up the tensed situation but also managed in a most acceptable way to keep him away from the core area of the port in Calvethy, where his earlier residence had stood. By this the Portuguese ensured that the native city would move reasonably away from the Portuguese settlement stretching from Calvethy to the sea-shore. The king of Cochin wanted to develop a mercantile town around his palace. The chief of Perumpadappu svarupam, who had earlier taken under his patronage the Castilian Jews expelled from Spain in 1512 and the Jewish traders from Cranganore following the Muslim attacks in 1524 (Koder, 1986: 138), was known as a philosemitic ruler. In 1566 he gave land adjacent to his palace to many Jews who had migrated to Mattancherry during the period between 1565 and 1566 (Menon, 1929: 519). On this land a synagogue (which later came to be called *paradesi* synagogue) was erected in 1568 through the efforts of Samuel Castile, David Belila, Efraim Sala, and Joseph Levi (Mandelbaum, 1939: 430, 433, 435) and this eventually became the nuclei for the principal Jewish settlement in Cochin. This in course of time became the nucleus of the native city of Cochin, with its hub of activities in Mattancherry.

With the drastic fall in the demographic strength experienced in Cochin because of the exodus of Cochinites to Coromandel ports following the dwindling of pepper trade in Cochin since the Diamper synod, channels for the flow of wealth got drained in both the cities, consequently their splendour and magnificence. By 1650 what remained in Cochin were almost dead buildings rather than living citizens, who could give vitality and vigour to such structures when the winds of attacks came from the Dutch. With the fall of Cochin a bulk of commercial space which was held together by the commercial networks of Cochin and out of which the state derived a great amount of strength, got completely cut off from the *Estado*.

29.4 GOA

The port-city of Goa (present day Old Goa), which was developed by the Portuguese as their power centre in Asia during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, stands out as a unique model of Lusitanian urban construct in Asia. The existing port-town of Goa was re-structured and re-formulated by the Portuguese through a chain of spatial and metaphorical articulations for the purpose of addressing the multiple needs of their state.

29.4.1 Emergence of the Port of Goa

By the end of the first millennium and beginning of the second millennium CE, Gopakapattanam (known after the arrival of Portuguese as Goa Velha), located on the banks of river Zuari, was the major port in Goa, where the Kadamba rulers of southern Konkan had based their political headquarters. Not later, a small maritime exchange centre known as the port of Ela, out of which the Portuguese colonial city of Goa later evolved, seems to have appeared on the banks of river Mandovi as a satellite port feeding Gopakapattanam. Though both these ports were then located on the banks of two different river systems (Zuari and Mandovi), they were mutually connected by waterways and land routes, whose remnants, now known as “Kadamba road”, are still visible. Later in 1369 the Vijayanagara rulers conquered this region, consequent to which the port of Ela and the neighbouring island of Diwar began to get increasing prominence.

Nevertheless, a wide variety of reasons including the silting of the port of Gopakapattanam,

the proximity of Ela to timber-yielding Ponda forests ensuring regular supply of timber for shipbuilding activities, the closeness of the new port to the heartland of the Vijayanagara empire etc., also seem to have acted as other supportive factors that contributed to the emergence of Ela as the principal port of southern Konkan. Its prosperity depended very much upon the wealth coming from trade in horses brought from Arabia for meeting the war needs of Vijayanagara kingdom. By this time the name of Ela seems to have got changed into Juwa-Sindabur, as referred to by Ibn Majid in the fifteenth century. Eventually the place name “Juwa” or Goa got clung to the port of Ela replacing all other connotations that it had earlier. On the eve of Portuguese arrival, the port of Ela was evidently referred to as Goa.

29.4.2 A Portuguese City in the Process of Making

The Portuguese captured the port city of Goa from the Bijapuris in 1510 along with the entire island encircled by the river-systems of Zuari on the one side and Mandovi on the other side. Immediately after the capturing of the port city what the Portuguese did was to erase the existing native urban structures, as a part of the strategy to de-link memories about the past and to wipe away all traceable visual remnants of the old regime. In its stead a new town was made to evolve with new memories and fresh logic. One of the first steps that Afonso Albuquerque took after the conquest of Goa was to create a new social base in the city by making the category of city-dwellers to evolve out of the exclusive white Portuguese soldiers. For this, he gave permission to many Portuguese soldiers, the vital apparatus of a state, to forego their profession and to get married to Indian women, particularly widowed Muslim women and made them settle down in the city. In 1512 there were 200 Portuguese *casados* (married settlers) in Goa, who formed the major chunk of civil population of the *Estado da India*. In the process of their transformation from moving soldiers into permanent city-dwellers was also involved a radical change in their economic activities as well, in which sustenance (of soldiers) by allowance from state was replaced by sustenance of the citizens by their entrepreneurial skills and initiatives. In fact even Afonso Albuquerque was concerned about the means of livelihood for the Portuguese *casados* (married Portuguese citizens) of the city, who were deprived of state allowances with their marriage and he found small-scale trade to be a feasible alternative. Hence he allowed the married city-dwellers to conduct petty trade, and also to set up shops as well as manufacturing units including shoe-making, baking and tailoring in the city of Goa for the purpose of their sustenance.

However the first generation of city-dwellers of Goa got larger opportunities for engaging in long-distance trade only during the post-Albuquerquean period, particularly after the arrival of Lopo Soares de Albergia as governor in India in 1515. The chief commercial activities of the city-dwellers of Goa were linked with the major routes of commodity-circulation in the eastern space of Indian Ocean like the Goa-Bengal-Malacca-Goa, Goa-Coromandel-Malacca-Goa and Goa-Malacca-South East Asian routes. From the Indonesian Archipelago, the Portuguese *casado* traders used to bring sophisticated spices like nutmeg, mace and cloves in large bulk to Goa in their vessels, out of which a major share moved further to Lisbon for circulation in Europe. In turn, the crown encouraged this trade of the Portuguese private traders, as it reduced very much crown's concern and burden about the procurement of cargo.

The above mentioned case indicates how the early colonial state made use of the city dwellers of Goa for mobilising resources and for procuring cargo needed for its European commercial activities. As the city-dwellers of Goa became increasingly important for the sustenance of the state trade, a construction process of city space and urban demography befitting this goal became inevitable. Increase in the white urban population

in Goa was an important concern of the state, which was followed by the expansion of the spatial segments suiting the needs of the urban elite and the intentions of the penetrating state. In this process the city space of Goa was enlarged as to absorb a large number of people who fled from the mother country to India following the recurring famines and frequent outbreak of famines and pestilences in Portugal from 1520s onwards. As the city of Goa ensured an European urban milieu and ample opportunities for a decent living by participation in trade, it turned out to be a shock-absorbing device for the Lusitanians moving out of Portugal during the famines of 1521, 1522 and the great pestilences of 1524 as well as 1530-1. Following this migratory trend, there appeared a radical change in the structure and composition of the urban population of Goa. The number of Portuguese city-dwellers in Goa increased to 1000 in 1529; by mid-1540s the demographic strength of the city of Goa rose to 4600 out of whom 1600 were married Portuguese city-dwellers and 3000 were Portuguese soldiers. In fact by allowing the migrants from Portugal to settle down in the port-city of Goa, the Portuguese state not only managed to overcome, to a certain extent, the problem of chronic paucity of manpower; but also ensured sufficient number of Portuguese people in the city of Goa as to make it evolve as an exclusively Lusitanian urban centre, suiting its position as power centre.

Corresponding to these socio-economic developments, there appeared a chain of spatial processes, causing a Lusitanian city to evolve in the form of semi-circular rings around the port, but with the dynamics emanating from it. The initial edifices that appeared in the evolving city included, besides the clustered houses of the *casados*, the church of St. Catherine erected in 1510 after the conquest of the land, the Franciscan monastery, the hospital and the school, which were meant for catering to the needs of the growing urban population. The old palace of the “Sabaio” converted into the Governor’s palace became the central institution in the city. With the eventual increase in population, Goa was raised to the status of a city in 1518 by the royal charter issued by king Manuel I of Portugal.

The weight of the Portuguese power was also inscribed into the urban space of Goa in an impressive way through architectural and institutional formats. Initially, the visibility of the Portuguese power was made perceptible by converting the old palace of “Sabaio” (the old palace of Bijapuri sultan) into the Governor’s palace, causing it to emerge as the core centre of the city. With the shifting of the political headquarters of the *Estado da India* from Cochin to Goa in 1530, this palace became the permanent residence for the Portuguese viceroys. The position of being the power centre of the Portuguese in Asia necessitated the restructuring and re-definition of the city of Goa befitting its political importance. Attempts were being repeatedly made from 1540s onwards to articulate meanings of power into the urban space through architectural devices that in turn were meant to evoke great amount of awe and impression among the indigenous people.

29.4.3 Spatial Processes, Urban Elite and Homogenisation

The spatial processes and the programme of construction works in the urban unit of Goa took a decisive turn from 1540s onwards when a considerable share of the trade surplus of the *casados* was transferred for beautifying their habitation and also for building magnificent churches or civic structures in the city space of Goa, evidently with the logic of making the power and prestige of the Portuguese state visible and impressive. It was a time, when the Portuguese increasingly resorted to visual forms of architecture for stamping domination and for asserting their hegemonic position. Consequently there was about 14 relatively bigger churches in and around the city of Goa by 1548, most of which, however, were erected after 1540.

The process of spatialisation in the city of Goa received complex meanings with the establishment of different ecclesiastical institutions and establishments that necessitated new definitions of authority and control. The creation of the bishopric of Goa in 1534 with resident bishops from 1538 onwards helped to get the moral and spiritual power concentrated in the city augmenting the spheres of domination. The bishop's house and the cathedral church were constructed closer to the residence of the viceroy, as a part of the larger strategy to keep both the spiritual and temporal power centres closer and to make them converge at convenient points for greater assertions. The Jesuits who came to Goa in 1542 under the leadership of St. Francis Xavier occupied the northern part of the city where they erected São Paulo College. However, the Franciscans (1517) and the Dominicans (1548) occupied the prime areas of the city, while the Augustinians who came to Goa only in 1572 had to have their monastic structures on the slopes of the mount farther away from the port area (Xavier, 1988: 103). They became the major devices for creating various institutions, rules and regulations regarding Catholicism in the city space.

It was during the period between 1550 and 1620, which coincided with the phase of intensified private trade of the city-dwellers of Goa, that most of the magnificent edifices and churches of this city were being constructed, like the cathedral church (1562-1619), the Francis Assisi church (1602), Bom Jesus Basilica (1594-1605), the monastery of the Dominicans, the Augustinian monastery and church (1597-1602). A large number of tomb-stones of the wealthy *casado* traders and *fidalgos* belonging to this period and seen on the floors of the churches of Goa speak loudly of their involvement in the building process or maintenance of these institutions and edifices in the city. The Franciscan college of St. Bonaventure, the Jesuit college of St. Paul, the Augustinian college of the People, the Royal Hospital, grand edifice of the Inquisition, the Municipal House, the House of Misericordia and the Palace of the Viceroy protruded into the sky as symbols of dominion and as language for political assertion. In all these structures were evidently seen the attempts of the state and the city-dwellers to articulate visually their wealth and to convey architecturally the meanings of power of the Portuguese state in an impressive and awe-evoking manner to their neighbours and politico-economic collaborators.

However, in the evolving scenario of Goa, the core area of urbanisation eventually got shifted from the politically and administratively important structures to the commercially important streets or spaces. By 1570s the core area of city life in Goa turned out to be the street-space named *Rua Direita* (Straight Street), which was occupied on both sides by lapidaries, goldsmiths, the rich, and the better merchants and craftsmen, while each class of artisans and traders stayed together in localities. Entrance to the city from the port was made possible through the city gate called "arch of the viceroys", on entering which one was led either to the right to the Archbishop's house which was the seat of spiritual power or to the left to the residence of the viceroy, which was the base of the temporal power, with the street in between earmarked as *Rua Direita*, where the hectic trading activities took place. As in Lisbon, *Rua Direita* was made to become the commercial nodal centre of the city of Goa. According to Barreto de Resende, there were 3500 Portuguese houses in the city of Goa, out of which 800 were made of stone and lime. They had beautiful windows and balconies, and were covered with tiles, with alluring frontage and bordering the street in beautiful symmetry.

The evolution of the social space in the city of Goa took a significant turn with the increasing attempts to do away with its pluralism and elements of heterogeneity. The difference in customs, traditions and practices were made to disappear in the name of religion and in their turn Portuguese practices including Lusitanian food culture, dress

culture and entertainment culture were introduced from 1560s onwards. A large number of legislations made in the five Goan Provincial Councils held during the period between 1567 and 1606, which forbade the Christian settlers of Goa from resorting to indigenous customs like singing of *voivo*, using of *bindi*, retaining of Hindu names, cooking of rice without salt, wearing of saree or *dhoti*, planting of *tulsi*, attending Hindu weddings etc., suspecting their non-Christian origins, turned out to be principal devices for homogenizing the behavioural pattern of the urban-dwellers of Goa. Laws were passed as to make it compulsory for all the people in Goa to wear European dress instead of indigenous dress including saree, to use spoon and fork instead of eating with hands and emulate Portuguese food habits. Later in 1684 Portuguese was introduced as the compulsory language that every Goan should learn and clearance of Portuguese language test became mandatory for getting permission to perform any social and religious function including marriage (Malekandathil, 2002: 4-5). The introduction of Portuguese food and dress habits as well as language system brought about a great amount of homogeneity and standardisation in matters related to urban behaviour in Goa.

The administration of the city affairs passed into the hands of the urban elite, through the mechanism of city council with members elected from the Portuguese married settlers. The merchant elites and the status groups used to get themselves elected as the representatives of the urban-dwellers of Goa to the municipal council, where they decided on all matters related to urban cleanliness, sanitation, property-acquisition and space management, food-supply and hoarding, management of welfare institutions like *misericordia*, local trade, law and order within the city, matters affecting morality of the city-dwellers etc. This in turn provided immense opportunities and possibilities for the urban elites to translate their desires as well as aspirations into the process of urban legislations (Malekandathil, 2009: 13-14). However, the Portuguese state managed to keep the city-space of Goa integrally incorporated within the colonial frames and functions of the state through the medium of commercial privileges lavishly bestowed upon the urban elites.

29.4.4 Construction of Metaphors and the Political Uses of the Urban Imageries

By the beginning of the seventeenth century new metaphors and imageries were begun to be woven around the urban space of Goa as to have a magnified perception of the city, transcending the very limits of time, space and its geography. Pride-evoking epithets and metaphorical usages like *Goa Dourada* (Golden Goa), “Rome of the East”¹ etc., were fabricated and circulated in the process of elevating the city from the boundaries of time and space to the heights of concepts and ideas, which were capable of constantly conveying the image of superiority and domination. Several proverbs like “whoever hath seen Goa need not see Lisbon” were fabricated and circulated as to boost among the city-dwellers a sense of the greatness of the city of Goa and to keep them attached to its urban space. The metaphorical usage of *Goa Dourada* or Golden Goa evidently refers to its affluence and fabulous wealth, with the help of which the majestic and beautiful churches and the elegant civil structures of the city were constructed and decorated in glittering golden colours. However the metaphor was increasingly used at a time when there was shrinking of wealth and dwindling of trade following large-scale emigration of people from the city of Goa with recurring pestilences as well as epidemics and frequent attacks from the Dutch.

¹ John Fryer calls Goa “Rome in India”. According to him “The City is a Rome in India, both for Absoluteness and Fabric”.

In fact the city of Goa experienced a phenomenon of mass exodus of inhabitants, leading to a drastic reduction in its urban demographic strength, from the second decade of the seventeenth century onwards. With the increasing water pollution, because of the porous nature of the soil, there were recurring outbreak of pestilences and epidemics making the city uninhabitable and during the period between 1604 and 1634 about 25,000 Portuguese soldiers died in the Royal Hospital of Goa. The plague that broke out in the city in 1625 was extremely severe, from which the citizens found it extremely difficult to recover. Though in 1580 the number of Christians in the city of Goa was 60,000 and there were as many as 20,000 Hindus by the end of the sixteenth century, the city population decreased considerably by seventeenth century. This is indicated to a great extent by the fact that the city had only about 3000 houses in 1620, which according to Francisco Bethencourt (2005: 115-116) represented a maximum number of only 45,000 people.² In 1639 a serious epidemic struck Goa, laying low Viceroy Pedro da Silva himself. In the midst of recurring epidemics, many city-dwellers began to flee away from the city of Goa en bloc to safer trading centers, some of which were located in the Bay of Bengal and in the peripheral zones of the empire. The power centre of Goa appeared to be running short of enough people for its sustenance. The situation became worse with the frequent attacks on the city and its neighbourhood by the Dutch, which eventually turned out to be annual blockades during the period between 1637 and 1644. With the urban population increasingly deserting the city, attempts were being made even to shift the base of Portuguese power of India from the city of Goa to Mormugão, where a fort was already built in 1624 to counter the attacks of the Dutch. On 3rd December 1687, Fr. Inacio do Rosario wrote that a major part of the city of Goa then remained deserted and abandoned.

In the changed situation, a new social base was increasingly shaped in the power centre. It was followed by the loosening of the clench of cultural homogenisation that the Portuguese maintained in the city with the help of religion and more heterogeneous elements including Bania, Konkani and Jewish merchants began to control the strategic transactions of both the money and commodity markets in the city. The major actors in this development were the Gowda Saraswat Brahmins who began to emerge as the most significant trading segment and economically powerful group in the city of Goa. During this period we find many Saraswat Brahmins and the banias coming to the city and settling down as traders, bankers and revenue farmers. Mangoji Sinay from Salcete took up the right of customs collection on tobacco, silk and cotton being brought to the city, while Vitula Naique was the *rendeiro* for the collection of customs duty charged at *Passo de Santiago*, which was the main ford between Goa and the mainland. Krishna Sinay and Nana Chati were other prominent *rendeiros* or tax-farmers in the city in 1640s who were also the leading bankers of the city.

It was at this juncture of mass exodus of Portuguese residents from the city of Goa, and the increasing flow of Saraswat Brahmins and banias to the city as bankers and tax-farmers that there evolved the strategy to increasingly use highly fascinating urban concepts like “Golden Goa” and “Rome of the East” (of course immensely inflated imageries, but churned from the historical processes of the sixteenth century), as to dissuade the residents from fleeing away from the city of Goa, which also happened to be the power centre for the Portuguese state. With the repeated use of the concept of “Golden Goa”, the bygone days with splendour and glory of the city of Goa were made to remain afresh in the memory of the Portuguese residents, instilling in them a sense of pride. These metaphors were ascribed to Goa as a part of the strategy to project

² Pearson (1987:134) says that the population in the city of Goa had declined to 20,000 by late in the century.

before the Portuguese *casados* the value and significance of being residents of the city and to make them as much attached to it as possible.

The image of the city of Goa as the “Rome of the East” was fabricated against the background of its being the ecclesiastical capital of Asia with the provincial headquarters of different Religious Congregations and the seat of Archbishop located in the city. The entire process took a decisive turn with the increasing pilgrimages being organised to the mortal remains of St. Francis Xavier preserved in the Jesuit House of Goa after his beatification in 1619 and canonization in 1622. In fact the incorrupt physical body of St. Francis Xavier, who died near China in 1552, was brought to Goa in 1554. With the circulation of stories about his miracle in different parts of Asia, particularly after his canonisation in 1622, believers in large numbers started flocking to his mortal remains, during the first weeks of December, seeking his intercession and miraculous interventions. Consequently pilgrimages were repeatedly organised, with state as the sponsor or facilitator, to the mortal remains of St. Francis Xavier kept at Bom Jesus Basilica, making the people move towards the centre, more as a religious ceremony, but eventually converting it into a political device to keep the scattered and dispersed Portuguese residents of different Lusitanian enclaves of Asia move towards the power centre, ensuring the process of integration and cohesion necessitated for the uninterrupted flow of resources from their far off settlements to the power centre.

By assigning the epithet like “Defender of the East” to the saint, the residents were made to believe that as long as the mortal remains of St. Francis Xavier were preserved in the city, the saint would protect the residents from all external attacks including the ones from the Bijapuris, the Dutch and the Marathas and keep the city invincible and undefeatable. There was a general belief among the city-dwellers of the seventeenth century that the Marathas, inspite of their severe attacks in 1683, failed to conquer Goa because of the presence of the body of Francis Xavier in the city. Concomitantly king Pedro II of Portugal officially declared Francis Xavier to be the “Defender of the East” in 1699. Thus the major concern of the state in coining the metaphors was to dissuade the Portuguese citizens from going away from the city and to get them integrated with the core area of power as its social base. However, the metaphors and the imageries woven around the city of Goa also provided the required amount of sensitisation needed for keeping the urbanity of the place vibrantly alive and attractive, despite the dwindling demographic phenomena and the consequent vicissitudes.

29.5 HUGLI/HOOGLY

The port city of Hugli/Hoogly was another Portuguese settlement on the east coast. However, unlike Goa, where the Portuguese continued to remain strong till their final evacuation in 1962, Portuguese fortunes at Hugli often dwindled as a result of Mughal, British and the Dutch interventions.

29.5.1 Rise and Growth of Hugli

The year of the foundation of the port of Hugli is often debated. The siltation of the river channels in Satgaon, shifted the trading network to Hugli around 1560s. According to Rev. Long the Portuguese got Bandel in 1538 and built a fort there in 1599. Portuguese captain Pedro Tavares came to Bengal and established a Portuguese settlement in Hugli after 1580 (Campos, 1998: 54). Hugli became the chief centre of the Portuguese commercial activities in Bengal. According to the contemporary writer Friar Sebastian Manrique the port’s foundation stone was laid by the Portuguese traders who would build large *golas* or store houses. Initially the Portuguese traders came for five to six months but they gradually extended their stay and after few years, Hugli was founded.

The number of the Portuguese settlers in Hugli was 7000 in 1632 and they contributed 100,000 *tangas* or rupees as custom duties to the Mughals (Campos, 1998: 56; Malekandathil, 2013: 187). The Bengal textile and weaving industry contributed substantially to the Portuguese private trade. It received a fillip with the implementation of Brazilian policy of Liberation of trade. Moreover, the weavers and spinners were sent from Bengal to Brazil when the Portuguese tried to introduce textile weaving and dyeing in Brazil (Malekandathil, 2010: 192-193).

Generally speaking all the Portuguese commercial settlements of Bengal were principally the results of private ventures. In fact the captain of Carreira de Bengal carried with them a fluid state with powers of diplomats and ambassador of the central power of Goa (Malekandathil, 2010: 178). The distance between Goa and Bengal, led to the rise of a more or less autonomous Portuguese enclaves around Bengal. Ralph Fitch who visited Hoogly in 1588 found the whole town in the hands of the Portuguese. The *Ain-i Akbari* states that in 1596-97 the *sarkar* of Satgaon had two ports both under the Portuguese at a distance of half a *kos* from each other and Hugli was more important among the two (Campos, 1998: 55). The Portuguese did not confine themselves to the banks of the river but extended part of the Bengal trade into their hands. Apart from Hugly, Satgaon, Chittgaon, the other settlements of the Portuguese were Banja Dacca and Hijili among others. In 1580, about the same year when the settlement was established, the Portuguese influence was so well established that according to *Akbarnama*, Mirza Najaf Khan, Akbar's *faujdar* at Satgaon being defeated by the king of Orissa near Solimabad/Sulaimanabad fled to the Portuguese governor Captain Pedro Tavares at Hugly for protection.

29.5.2 Trading Network of Hugli

The Portuguese settlement in Hugly flourished to prosperity in a very short span of time. As Father Cabral says Hugly became the common emporium of the vessels of India, China, Malacca and Manilla. In the east Portuguese settlement grew up in various parts of Bengal. Hijli, Sripur, Dacca, Chandikan, Katrabhu and numerous places in the Midnapore, Dacca, Jessore, Barisal and Noakhali districts became the scenes of intense commercial activities (Raychaudhuri, 1969: 95). The exports from Bengal comprised mainly textiles and agricultural products. Saltpetre was an important item of export from Bengal. Bengal was also known for its production and export of sugar. The imports into Bengal from Melaka included Borneo camphor, pepper, Moluccan spices, sandalwood, Chinese porcelain and silk, as well as metals. Bengal had a very prosperous trading network with Gujarat and Coromandel, China, Sri Lanka, Maldives and Malabar. From Sri Lanka, Bengal imported cinnamon, Cauri shells from Maldives and Malabar pepper. The trade of salt was a monopoly of the Portuguese. The Portuguese introduced in Bengal many new agri-horticultural products like the pineapple and cashew-nuts. Before 1632 when the Portuguese were practically driven away by the Mughals about 100 Portuguese ships used to ply to Malay and other parts of India (Orissa, Bengal, Patna, Agra, etc.) through the Hugli river. The volume of trade carried on by non Portuguese shipping was hardly considerable.

29.5.3 Urbanisation of Hugli

The urbanisation of Hugli can be contributed to the initial steps taken by the Portuguese in this regard. Ralph Fitch (1588-1591) who visited Hugli in 1588 makes no mention of a Portuguese fort and Linschoten (1598) states that the Portuguese had no government in Hugli and there was no fort. Manrique (1629-1643) and Cabral pointed out that the absence of a fort led to the failure of the settlement to defend themselves. The Rev. Long remarks that in 1599 the Portuguese erected a fort of a square form flanked by

four bastions surrounded by a ditch on three sides and on the fourth by the Hugli. This statement rests on no evidence. However, there is not much evidence to show the presence of a fort in Hugli (Campos, 1998: 58). Forts were the basis of Portuguese settlements in the Indian Ocean, but in Bengal the Portuguese did not construct a fort in the important settlements of Hugli or Chittagong, as the maintenance was not cost effective. Moreover, the Portuguese structures were built of bricks in Bengal unlike most of their stone structures of western India. Khafi Khan recorded that the Portuguese constructed substantial buildings which they fortified with cannon, muskets and other weapons. 'It seems likely that the Mughals had constructed a fort after 1670 since during the revolt of Sobha Singh at the end of the seventeenth century the rebels had occupied the fort of Hugli' (Ray, 2015: 447). John Marshall (c. 1670) also reports that Hugli was a very big town and even it appropriated parts of old Satgaon thus confirming its further growth towards the southern bank of the Saraswati river towards west (Ray, 2015: 447). Thomas Bowrey mentions that 'the city was not the same everywhere. Some of the areas were beautiful where the rich merchants resided... There was a big market... but there were other markets spread all over the city. In these markets not only the cotton textiles but other kinds of goods were also sold' (Ray, 2015: 456). However, the most graphic account of the city was provided by the French traveller L'Estra (1672):

The city, situated on the bank of the river, had a good air and climate. Everything was available and the food was very cheap. The land around was well cultivated and fertile. Nearby was a forest with orange and other fruits which were pleasant to eat. Sugar was available in plenty. There were so many domestic animals that their number easily exceeded twenty thousand. For this reason milk, butter, cheese, etc., were available in plenty in the villages and towns around Hugli. Big chickens were sold in the market. In the nearby forest monkeys, deer, rabbits, and even roaming elephants could be seen (Ray, 2015: 460).

With the growing commercial and political power, the rise in the power of missionaries and Jesuits was also witnessed. Churches and colleges were established in Hijli, Banja, Hugli, Bandel, Chittagong and other Portuguese centres (Raychaudhuri, 1969: 95). At Hugli they established an alm-house, the *Casa da Misericordia*, the first of its kind in Bengal. They also constructed the first hospital, according to the modern sense of the term. They started missionary schools and had sent the Bengali students to the Jesuits college at Goa.

Nicolo Manucci who visited Hugli in the second half of the 17th century, claimed that the Portuguese wanted to erect a church with brick and stone but was unable to do so, because of the Mughal resistance. The church thus constructed had a thatched roof. The presence of proselitising can also be seen, but these were not met with any local resistance (Raychaudhuri, 1969: 95). The Augustinians of Goa elected a provincial *commissario* to look after the ecclesiastical matters of Bengal, thus linking the Bengal Portuguese with the power centre of Goa (Malekandathil, 2010: 188).

The city presented a cosmopolitan look infested by foreigners and foreign companies, (British, Dutch, Portuguese) apart from the indigenous population and rich Indian merchants. The European enclaves were stationed in a 'separate segment under a loose administrative structure' (Ray, 2015: 458). The French traveller L'Estra (1672) was surprised to see that the Dutch Director of Hugli lived like a king and amassed huge wealth. Mughals had their *faujdar*, *qazi*, a *kotwal* and other subordinate officials stationed at Hugli though the provincial capital centre was Dhaka from where largely the administration was run. However, 'the *raison d'être* of the city was its commercial life which was completely and even... independently dominated by the mercantile

community of both the Indian and the foreign merchants' (Ray, 2015: 459). The bottom ranks were consisted of the artisans, porters, boatmen, petty shopkeepers etc. who were scattered all over the city. L'Estra praises the excellence of Muslim weavers' filigree and superior quality muslin and Turkish carpets here. L'Estra also informs that the rich maintained a number of slaves and used to sell them like horses in the market. A slave girl could be bought for concubinage or as maid servant as low as 30 sols (equivalent to a rupee) (Ray, 2015: 461).

29.5.4 Political Shift

By the time the Portuguese trade was firmly established in Bengal, the Portuguese power was set to decline in other parts of the Indian Ocean. Within Bengal adverse political environment had set in. In 1607, the Arakan king massacred the Portuguese settlement at Dianga. Soon after the massacre, the King of Chandikan treacherously killed Carvalho and started persecution of Christians (Raychaudhuri, 1969: 97). In 1616, the Portuguese' short lived reign was ended by the Magh King, which brought in a severe blow to the Portuguese administration in Bengal.

The Mughal attack on Hugli in 1632, opened the doors of Hugli for the other European nations. The Mughal Emperor Shahjahan after being unsuccessful in capturing Chittagong, took possession of Hugli. The Portuguese piracy along with the Arakanese, caused severe loss of trade for the merchants and the customs for Mughals. Moreover, the presence of the Portuguese in the riverine channels of Bhagirathi caused a loss of trade for the Mughlas. This led to the Mughal capture of Hugli.

After the Mughal conquest, the Portuguese lost all their political power in Hugli. The Mughals shifted their custom house from Satgaon to Hugli, thus, also destroying the financial power of the Portuguese. The Dutch managed to obtain a *kaul* from the *fauzdar* of Pipli acting in the name of the Nawab of Orissa. This document permitted the Dutch company to trade in the areas under the jurisdiction of Nawab subject to payment of once over toll of 3% of foods procured in the area. The Dutch interest in Bengal trade can be traced back to the Japanese demands of Indian textiles. The Dutch established their first factory at Chinsura, a few miles off the Portuguese settlement of Hugli. By the end of Mughal Emperor Jahangirs' reign the Dutch had made inroads into the trade of Bengal.

Until the foundation of Fort William in Calcutta in 1800, Hugli was headquarter of the English trade in Bengal. In 1720, the English trade at Hugli was booming. Though by 18th century, the fulcrum of the English trade had shifted to Bombay, trade at Hugli continued to thrive. The trade was mostly carried on by the private merchants of the English and the Dutch, as it was done by the Portuguese, in the 17th century. With the political power gained in the battle of Plassey in 1757, followed by the English victory at Buxar and the grant of Dewani in 1765 the port of Kolkata began to rise under the aegis of the English East India Company. The control of the hinterland went to the hands of the English East India Company. There was a shift of trade from Hugli to the port of Calcutta. The Portuguese of Bengal were slowly incorporated within the English population of Bengal. The prosperity of Hugli continued till the first half of the 18th century. Alexander Hamilton claimed that nearly 60 ships came to Hugli. Though the tonnage of the ships were not known, it is generally assumed that the tonnage of the ships were not more than 600 tone given the depth of the water.

German priest Joseph Tieffenthaler when visited the city fifteen years after the battle of Plassey found the city in a dilapidated state. 'He described the ruins of beautiful houses, mansions and palaces which suggested the past splendor and prosperity of the port and

the city of Hugli...even the Portuguese had left the city...the fort of Hugli was built on the old style of architecture and was now totally abandoned. There was no garrison there' (Ray, 2015: 462-463). However, the port of Hugli thrived under the private traders. The strategic location, contacting the Bay of Bengal and the riverine routes of the Bhagirathi helped it in gaining an access of a huge hinterland. Hugli rose into prominence under the Portuguese, but continued to thrive under the Dutch and the English. As English official Wilson had noted the English prosperity in Bengal is indebted to the prosperity of Hugli and its markets. With the establishment of Fort William, the trade got shifted to Calcutta, from Hugli. The trading network of Hugli survived through that of Calcutta.

29.6 SUMMARY

The physical formatting of a city was done not by accidents; but by definite purposes and logic that its dominant groups intend to inscribe into its space. The Portuguese, who developed Cochin and Goa as their seat in Asia, transferred a large set of meanings of power into its urban space by resorting to architectural process as a language of domination. Wealth accumulated by *casado* traders and urban elites was made to get diverted to the erection of elegant and magnificent edifices and structures in the city that would evoke awe and impression on the onlookers on a scale and proportion corresponding to the weight of power and hegemony that the Portuguese wielded. Thus the cities of Cochin and Goa explain a wide varieties of logical processes and mechanisms by which the *Estado da India* got shaped and re-shaped as it advanced over the years. The port-city of Goa, that evolved out of the Bijapuri port of Ela, was shaped by a continuous process of spatialisation and coining of metaphors and imageries suited for realising the designs of the early colonial state. However, Surat's fortunes dwindled with the Mughals. It owed prominence to the rise of the Mughal power and declined as the empire disintegrated; though shifting of major commercial activities to Bombay also contributed to its waning power. Similar was the case with Hugli – soon after the *diwani* rights (1765) Calcutta began to rise practically sealing the fate of Hugli to the port of Calcutta.

29.7 EXERCISES

- 1) Can the *baniyas* be held responsible for the decline of Surat in 18th century?
- 2) Examine the growth of the city of Surat in the 17th-18th centuries. What was the pattern of urban social order of Surat?
- 3) Discuss the contribution of Indian and European merchants in the rise and growth of the city of Surat.
- 4) Trace the decline of Surat in the 18th century.
- 5) Trace the emergence of Cochin as a port and a political capital.
- 6) How far did the city of Cochin serve in fulfilling the interests of Lusitanian power?
- 7) What plan the Portuguese state envisaged while trying to people the city of Cochin? How did the Portuguese state use city of Cochin in their larger defense strategy?
- 8) Look into the meanings of dual urbanity by analysing the spatial patterns of *Cochin de Baxio* and *Cochin de Cima*.
- 9) Critically examine the emergence of Goa as an important Portuguese port-town.

- 10) How were the metaphors and imageries used to imagine and define a sense of urbanity in the seventeenth century Goa? How far did it influence the process of constructing a distinctive urban imagery for Goa?
- 11) Trace the emergence of Hugli as an important Portuguese port town. What circumstances led to its decline?

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UNIT 30 CITIES IN THE 18TH CENTURY-1*

Structure

- 30.1 Introduction
- 30.2 Dacca
 - 30.2.1 Early Developments
 - 30.2.2 The Seventeenth Century Developments
 - 30.2.3 The Eighteenth Century Dacca
- 30.3 Patna
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- 30.8 References

30.1 INTRODUCTION

A reassessment of the 18th century, earlier posed as the 'Dark Age', has been one of the most significant developments in South Asian history. In the light of this re-evaluation, the decline of imperial Mughal authority is no longer a conceptually adequate marker to explain developments in different parts of the subcontinent. Indeed, many of the Indian towns emerged around the seats of Mughal government and the Mughal patronage led to the expansion of many Indian towns. However, as scholars like C.A. Bayly, P.J. Marshall and Kumkum Chatterjee have highlighted, eighteenth century was a period of fluidity, one that witnessed marked developments, continuities and re-adjustments in regional centers.

This Unit focuses on the nature of this transformation in four Indian towns – Dacca, Patna, Ahmadabad and Bangalore – that stood as prominent manufacturing centers during the 18th century. The Unit traces the traditional importance of these towns as manufacturers of specialised goods, their growth with Mughal patronage and the elasticity and adjustments of their order during the pre-colonial (upto 1750s) and the beginning of colonial era (1750s) over the course of the 18th century.

30.2 DACCA

Dacca, now officially known as Dhaka and currently the capital city and a district and division of Bangladesh, was a prominent manufacturing town of India in the 18th century. The town has a long history of evolution. In 1905, Bengal was partitioned into two zones by the British and upon this partition, from 1905-1911, Dacca became the capital of the province of East Bengal. Prior to the formation of Bangladesh as an independent country in 1971, from 1947-1971, Bangladesh formed the East zone of Pakistan and before the partition of India in 1947, Dacca was a part of the province of Bengal in India.

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30.2.1 Early Developments

Dacca is located on the north banks of the river Buri Ganga, a tributary of the river Dhalswari. The city is said to have derived its name from the Dhak tree (*Butea Frandosa*) which grew densely in the region in former times. However, according to a popular legend, Dacca received its name after an idol of Goddess Durga was found concealed in its jungles.

According to the excavations at Wari-Bateswar of Dacca region, the history of Dacca can be traced back to the Mauryan era when the site seems to have functioned as a prominent commercial centre of textiles. Roman historian Pliny (d. 113 CE) also noted the presence of Dacca's textiles in the Mediterranean trade as early as 73 CE. (Milburn, 1813: 229). Similarly, records from the seventh century CE reveal that the region served as a flourishing market centre under the dominion of the Buddhist Kingdom of Kamarupa. (Chakrabarti, 2013: 163) The commercial viability of the region continued under the successive rule of the Pala and the Sena Kings, the Delhi Sultanate, the independent sultans of Bengal and the rulers of various local dynasties.

Dacca was particularly famous for its silk and fine cotton known as muslin. The word 'muslin' is said to have been derived and received popularity from the 13th century travelogue, *The Travels of Marco Polo* of the Venetian traveller Marco Polo who used the term to describe the famous cotton trade in the region of Mosul, Iraq. The Bengali term for Muslin is 'Mul Mul'. Muslin produced in Dacca was unrivalled in its beauty and its fine texture rendered it as a popular product for trade and a favourite with the wealthy and the elite class.

Woven out of Air! Process of Muslin Production

The production process for Dacca Muslin was very unique. The cotton plant for producing muslin, known as *phuti karpas* (*Gossypium arboreum* var. *neglecta*) was unique to the area and only grew in a tract of land that was twelve miles southeast of Dacca, along the banks of the Meghna River. Its fibres were the silkiest of all. To obtain the fibre, the seeds of the plant were carefully selected, dried in the sun and then sealed in earthen pots filled with clarified butter (*ghee*). These pots were hung from the ceiling over the kitchen fire to keep them moderately warm after which a special small-sized bamboo bow (*dhunkar*) was used in a particular fashion mostly by women- for want of a lighter touch- to strum the pots and upon the touch of the bow, the lightest fleece from the cotton separated from the heavier fibres and rose into the air. These delicate and lightest fibres were spun in intensely humid conditions, usually by young women, most likely because the work required soft and supple fingers, to make the finest muslin. The total number of implements used in forming the finest of Dhaka muslin amounted to 126. Younger women with soft and supple fingers were considered to be the best spinners of the fine material. Owing to their fine texture and distinct method of production, Dacca muslin were popularly said to have been woven out of air!

Source: Taylor, 1851: 165-169,173-175.

30.2.2 The Seventeenth Century Developments

While Dacca's importance as a producer of textiles, specifically the muslin, was established since the early times, the evolution of the town as a major urban and trade centre primarily began under the dominion of the Mughal dynasty. The Mughals conquered Bengal in 1574 under the military leadership of Munim Khan and upon this victory, Dacca was converted into a *thana* or military outpost, on the far eastern frontier of the Mughal territory. The status as a Mughal *thana* set the initial stage for the growth of the city as it brought with it an influx of Mughal officials into it. However, in the initial phase, Mughal imperial authority remained precarious in the region and as a result, in 1584, Dacca's *thanadar* (military administrator) was captured and imprisoned by a

local Bengali Muslim chieftain named Isa Khan. In the face of such ongoing contests in the region, Mughal *mansabdar* Raja Man Singh directed his attention to Dacca, making it as the centre of his military operations in the east, and between 1599 and 1603, Man Singh was successful in reducing a large part of the contesting forces in the region. Despite that, the attacks by the Afghan chieftains did not cease throughout the reign of Mughal Emperor Akbar (r. 1556-1605) and it was only in the reign of his successor, Jahangir (r. 1605-27) that the Mughals were successful in establishing a regular and firm administration in Dacca, as in the rest of Bengal.

The credit for establishing a firm Mughal control in the seventeenth century in Dacca is primarily owed to the efforts of Jahangir's able military commander and foster brother, Ala al-Din Islam Khan, who, over the course of 1608-1609, subdued the rebellious chieftains on both sides of the Ganges-Padma river system and in 1612 made Dacca as the capital of the *suba* (province) Bangla of the Mughal Empire (Gommans, 2002: 179). The decision to choose Dacca was based on its historical importance because since the mid-fifteenth century, Dacca had served as a military outpost of Muslim settlers (Eaton, 1993: 149). Once announced as the capital, the town was embellished with new palaces, new forts, new roads and canals and Dacca was officially renamed after the reigning Mughal Emperor as 'Jahangirnagar', although the royal name did not gain much prominence over its popular traditional name.

Dacca witnessed significant growth not only under the command of Islam Khan who governed the city only briefly, dying in office in 1613 but the town witnessed steady economic growth even under the supervision of Islam's succeeding eight *subahdars*. There was however a short period of halt in the position of Dacca as when in 1641, Mughal Emperor Shahjahan (1616-61) appointed Prince Shuja (1639-59) as the *subahdar* (governor) of Bengal the latter preferred to shift the capital from Dacca to Rajmahal. This shift lasted for about two decades because after the war of succession among the sons of Shahjahan, Shuja fled to Arakan (Burma), and the next *subahdar* of Bengal, Mir Jumla (tenure 1660-1663) again made Dacca the headquarters in 1660.

Despite the period of interlude in its status as a capital, from the seventeenth to the early eighteenth century, the Mughal authority in Dacca led the transformation of the vast stretches of eastern delta into arable land while simultaneously resulting in the integration of diverse masses into its social and bureaucratic fabric. This development is most apparent from the account of Fray Sebastiao Manrique who visited Dacca in 1640 and described it as a "Gangetic emporium," with a population of over two hundred thousand (Manrique, Vol. 1: 45). Manrique was particularly impressed with the wealth of the city about which he wrote:

Many strange nations, resort to this city on account of its vast trade and commerce in a great variety of commodities, which are produced in profusion in the rich and fertile lands of this region. These have raised the city to an eminence of wealth which is actually stupefying, especially when one sees and considers the large quantities of money which lie principally in the houses of the Cataris [Khatri], in such quantities indeed that, being difficult to count, it is usual commonly to be weighed (Manrique, Vol. 1: 44).

Moreover, a comparison of Manrique's account with that of Mirza Nathan's early seventeenth century *Baharistan* reveals that over the course of thirty years (from 1610-1640) Dacca had expanded to almost double its initial geographical area. (Ray, 2015: 481). This growth was however concentrated in the middle portion of the city and was furthered only during the reign of Aurangzeb (1658-1707) when the town was extended towards the north. To fix its northern boundary at that time, the then *subahdar* Mir Jumla constructed a gateway which was later called the Ramna Darwaja and is now popular by the name of the Dhaka Gate.



Ramna Darwaja, Photo by Prabir Das

Source: <http://www.thedailystar.net/star-weekend/heritage/the-forgotten-history-dhaka-gate-1362220>

Alongside the expansion in its area, Mughal authority also provided impetus to the traditional textile industry of Dacca. The boost to the industry was facilitated by two important factors: one, the growth in the population of the city which included increase in both, a consumer class – primarily including the elites and the Mughal administrative clique – and the workforce – comprising the artisans, manufacturers and other professional groups – who followed the work opportunities created by the influx of a consumer class in Dacca. The second significant factor was the imperial patronage to textiles. In the seventeenth century, the Mughals established several *karkhanas* (workshops) in Dacca to particularly facilitate the production of muslins of varying quality. Such *karkhanas* were supervised by designated royal officers and a special officer titled *Daroga-i-Malbus Khas* was dedicated to meet the needs of the royalty for *malbus khas* which was the finest assortment among the muslin brands. The production of muslins also acquired special sponsorship from Mughal Empress Nur Jahan and the popularity of the fabric rose to such extent, that in the seventeenth century, no gift from ‘Jahangirnagar’ to the emperor and his nobles were deemed worthy without the muslin from Dacca. (Islam, 2008:3)

In addition to meeting the demands of the Imperial court at Delhi and the nobility at Dacca, the demands of other aristocracies of North Indian provinces for muslins were almost entirely catered by Dacca weavers during the seventeenth century and muslin came to be recognised by all contemporary royalties and nobilities with the place name ‘Dacca’ which was always tagged with it. The ‘Dacca’ tag actually enveloped the textiles produced from all the other centres in eastern Bengal as well (such as Sonargaon and Vikrampur) because the products from all such production centres found their way out to the outside world through Dacca – the entrepot of eastern Bengal. In fact, a seemingly significant reason for the Mughal interest in Dacca was its well connectedness with the Padma-Ganges river system and the older seats of Muslim power in the Gaur-Tanda region which made Dacca an ideal port for riverine trade between East and West Bengal, between Bengal and Upper India, and between Bengal and the wider world beyond the bay.

With the opening of the sea lanes in the seventeenth century, Mughal initiatives in Dacca came to coincide with the growth of overseas commercial interests of European powers in the region. An important role in this regard was played by Mughal *subahdar* Shaista Khan (tenure, 1663-1668) who signed several trade treaties with the Europeans and the South East Asians during his *subahdari*, thus providing impetus to foreign trade in the region. As a result, in the seventeenth century, several foreign merchants including those from Arabia, Persia, Armenia, China, Malaya, Java and Sumatra found their way to Dacca and in 1663, the Dutch set up their *kuthi* or trading post at Dacca, in 1669 the English and the French in 1682. By the end of the seventeenth century, Dacca was thus integrated into two cosmopolitan and political economies, the Mughal and the European.

30.2.3 The Eighteenth Century Dacca

The eighteenth century opened with a shift in the political status and stability in Dacca. At that time, one of the sons and grandsons of Bahadur Shah I (1643-1712) and Aurangzeb respectively, Prince Azim us-Shan Bahadur was administrating Dacca as its *subahdar*. While in 1701, Aurangzeb (1618-1707) appointed Muhammad Hadi as the *diwan* (revenue officer) of Bengal. As a *diwan*, Muhammad Hadi was the supreme head of the revenue administration in the province and in 1707 he also received the position of a deputy *subahdar* of Bengal. With his assigned powers, Muhammad Hadi reported certain disruptions in the treasury of Dacca to the Emperor, upon which, he entered into a conflict with Azim us-Shan and owing to the friction between the two, both officers shifted their offices from Dacca – the chief *subahdar* to Patna (see next section for details) and the *diwan* to Maksudabad, which was later renamed as Murshidabad (see Unit 31 for details). Dacca however continued to be the seat of the deputies of the *subahdars* till 1715-16, when Muhammad Hadi, by then conferred with the titular name of Murshid Quli Jafar Khan, was appointed as its chief *subahdar*, the status more popularly called *nazim* during the eighteenth century.

Murshid Quli's ascendancy to the position of *nazim* coincided with the waning of the Mughal imperial authority and around 1717, he assumed power as the first de facto autonomous ruler of Bengal. The autonomous control of independent rulers in Bengal remained so till it came under the British control in 1757. However, from the beginning of his rule, Murshid Quli Khan, governed the province of Bengal from Murshidabad and Dacca came to serve as the seat of *naib-nazim* (deputy *nazim* or deputy *subahdar*). Dacca retained this status till 1843 when the office of *naib-nazim* was ultimately abolished by the British authorities.

The shift in its status as the provincial capital in 18th century put an end to further geographical growth in Dacca. This, however, did not affect the commercial importance of the city, primarily because all European trading companies and private traders kept their investments intact in Dacca. Secondly, even while many master weavers left Dacca for Murshidabad, from where they could be closer to the power base, many weavers chose to stay back since the high quality cotton production was linked to cotton grown in Sonargaon and Vikrampur which lay in proximity to Dacca. Moreover, an important characteristic of the cotton industry in Bengal was that most of the weavers worked as peasants at the same time. So when the transition of 18th century led to the transfer of certain sections of weavers from the city, many of its peasants took to weaving and thereby compensated for the workforce required to meet the expanding foreign demand for textiles from Dacca. Robert Orme, an eighteenth century East India company official and writer, clearly observed this phenomenon as he noted “in the province of Bengal, when at some distance from the high road or a principal town, it is difficult to find a village in which everyman, woman and child is not employed in making a piece of cloth”

(Orme, 1978: 151). Clearly so, despite the migration of a section of weavers, there was still no paucity of textile producers in eighteenth century Dacca.

Third, the money circulation remained in place because even while the house of Jagat Seth, the greatest banking group of India, and other capitalist cotton merchants and exporters moved their headquarters to Murshidabad, the group did not wind up their business in Dacca. Their agents, such as the banking houses of Govinda Das and Ramprasad Sarkar actively continued the banking activities in the erstwhile capital of Bengal.

On the demand side, the precipitate decline of the Great Mughal Empire was more than compensated by, first, the rising foreign demand and second, the orders from successor states and others like Bengal *nawabs*, *nawab wazir* of Oudh etc. who vied with each other to make their courts miniature replicas of the Mughal court. As a result, the demand for fine Bengal textiles did not diminish to any appreciable extent in the eighteenth century. Some idea about the quantum of supply from Dacca can be ascertained from the following report on Dacca's cloth export in 1747 by James Taylor, East India Company's Commercial Resident in Dacca (in 1800):

Table 1: James Taylor's Estimate of the amount of cloth exported from Dacca in 1747

Consumer	Price of the cloth exported (in Arcot rupees) ¹
Imperial household at Delhi Arcot	1,00,000
House of Jagatseth at Murshidabad	1,50,000
Nawab's household at Murshidabad	3,00,000
Turani merchants	1,00,000
Export by Pathan or Afghan merchants	1,50,000
Export by Armenian merchants	5,00,000
Export by Mughal merchants	4,00,000
Export by Hindu merchants	2,00,000
Export by English Company for Europe	3,50,000
English individuals for foreign markets	2,00,000
French Company for Europe	2,50,000
French individuals for foreign markets	50,000
Dutch Company for Europe	1,00,000
Estimated Total Cost	28,50,000

Source: A. Karim, 'An Account of the District of Dacca, Dated 1800', *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Pakistan*, Vol. VII, No. 2, December 1962 (Taylor's report was based on various contemporary official and private papers).

As evident from the above table (Table 1), eighteenth century witnessed the participation of European and Asian merchants in Dacca in great degrees. Their participation in this period actually superseded than ever before. Both, the foreign and Indian merchants at Dacca put up orders for fine muslins and other assortments of textiles, such as *jamdani*, *malmal*, *terrindam*, *tanjib*, *serhadkhana*, *seerbati*, *kasida*, *bafta*, *cossa*, *hummmam*, *gurries* and *doria*. The manufacturers of these assortments were both contractual labourers as well as free sellers in the market. *Dalals* (agent) of foreign merchants bought the textile products from various *haats* (local market) and *bazaars* (market) of Dacca district, especially from the Babur Haat in Narshingdi.

¹ Arcot rupees were coined at Arcot near Fort St. George and at Madras. Approximately 100 Arcot rupees=108 current rupees of Bengal in the 18th century.

Besides textiles, products such as *atar* (perfume), ornamented shields, sticks patterned with gold thread, ornamented *punkas* (fans) made of palm leaves, gold and silver washing bowls were also exported to Delhi in great quantities from Dacca during this century.

Owing to this continuous demand-supply chain, in the eighteenth century, a huge trading and manufacturing society developed in Dacca. Its elements were members of old and new bureaucracies, various segments of the textile society (weavers, spinners, bleachers, washermen, cleaners), foreign mercantile companies, local and foreign merchants, factory owners, landowners, money changers, bankers, masons, carpenters, boatmen, shopkeepers and so on. In 1800, the chief of the English factory, John Taylor estimated the population of Dacca to be nearly two lakh which was the same figure that was provided by Manrique in 1640 (Ray, 2015: 489). Although, it is estimated that during the rule of Shaista Khan (also known as the Golden period of Dacca) the population of Dacca would have increased to around five lakh which would have declined after the transfer of the capital from Dacca to Murshidabad. Despite that, Dacca clearly had a substantial and diverse population in the eighteenth century which was significant in retaining its vibrancy.

A decline in the rank and file of Dacca began from 1765, when the control of Dacca city alongwith eastern Bengal passed on to the East India Company. However, one sector of the economy, viz. the textile, survived and in fact flourished further. To substantiate, we have the report from Mathew Day, the then British Collector of Dacca, who made a survey of the quantum of trade and commerce of Dacca district in 1787 and concluded that in money terms, Dacca had business transactions of about one crore rupees, of which textile sector alone accounted for about sixty to seventy lakhs of rupees (Islam, 1981: 422). Similarly, in the trading season of 1795-96, Bengal exported cotton piecegoods numbering 22,87,479 pieces, the total value of which stood at Sicca Rupees. 20,41,513 of which Dacca cotton textiles of all assortments made the greatest chunk region-wise (Islam, 2008: 8). However, as the textile industry almost entirely depended on the external trade and commerce, the industry began to decline from the opening years of the nineteenth century and eventually succumbed and finally disappeared in the face of British industrial revolution and British colonial rule by 1830s.

30.3 PATNA

The history of Patna, traditionally known as Pataliputra, can be traced back from the 5th century BC when the strategic location of this region-on the southern banks of river Ganga- made it earn the status of the capital of the Magadh Kingdom, then ruled by the Haryanka dynasty. Thereafter, the region continued to retain the status of the capital under the Nanda, Mauryan, Sunga, Gupta and Pala empires. With a rather continuous history as a node of habitation and power, the region witnessed a significant growth in the mid sixteenth century when the Emperor of Sur Empire, Sher Shah (1540-1545) decided to shift Bihar's capital from Biharsharif to the ancient site of Pataliputra in 1545 and strengthened the process of urbanisation there. Following then, in the eighteenth century, the city acquired the name of Azimabad from Aurangzeb's grandson Azim-us-Shan, who, as pointed in the previous section, held the *subahdari* (governorship) of Bihar from 1703 to 1707. In 1733, Mughal Emperor Muhammad Shah (1719-1748) granted the governorship of Bihar to Nawab Shujauddin Mohammed Khan of Bengal and upon this appointment, this Mughal province was merged with the *subah* (province) of Bengal. Bihar became subject to the same political developments as Bengal leading to Patna's centrality in future political and commercial processes. By this time, Azimabad had gained popularity as Patna and Patna as the chief city of Bihar had already emerged as a great entrepôt situated in the middle of a rich and productive hinterland. Actually,

the word Patna is derived from the Sanskrit word Pattan which stands for port and it came into vogue as an indication to the economic significance of the region as a port city.

Patna's location on the great Gangetic artery connecting Northern India to Bengal made it ideal as an 'entrepôt city'. Convenient land routes connected Patna both with the cities of the north and with important centres in Bengal. Kumkum Chatterjee suggests that Patna emerged as an important 'entrepôt city' only after the consolidation of Mughal control over Bengal during the early seventeenth century. This led to an increase in the pace of commercial exchange between Bengal and North India (Chatterjee, 1996: 15). The city served as an outlet for several commodities produced in its hinterland, which were exported to cities and towns in Northern India, Bengal and to several foreign lands. Important export commodities included sugar, opium, cotton cloth and saltpetre. The facilitation of communication with the East also encouraged the European companies, first the Portuguese followed by the Dutch, and then the English to establish themselves at Patna. The European companies' trade in fact played a major role in expanding Patna's commercial importance. Complementing the boom in trade, there also developed a community of bankers offering a range of financial services to facilitate long-distance trade and over the course of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, Patna acquired importance as a major centre of banking along with trade, culture and learning. The city's functions as a center of business and that of government contributed to its expansion and to its prosperity in the seventeenth century.

As a result, by the early eighteenth century, Patna was a bustling city dotted with palaces, havelis, large public buildings and the commercial establishments of merchants. Such prosperity also owed to the efforts of the Nawabs of Bengal who had been ruling the city after its merger with the *suba* Bengal and the onset of the Mughal decline. One distinct aspect of the city's expansion during eighteenth century was however its slow expansion outside its closed walls. While the entry of the British into trading networks led to the development of a wholesale grain market called 'Maruf Gunge' outside the eastern gate in the 1760s. However, major expansion of the city towards the west began after 1772, wherein, after a long drawn clash between the Nawabs and the English, the English Company acquired territorial power in the region and established their seat of government in the western part of the city. This westward expansion led to the development of Bankipore, which was mostly inhabited by the new governing class. Similarly the construction of new public buildings, like the jail and the court, by early decades of eighteenth century in this area, bear testimony to the consolidation of British administration in Bihar.

In the eighteenth century, Patna's cultural life was also further stimulated as the gradual decline of Mughal imperial power at Delhi resulted in a steady outflow of aristocratic families, merchants, poets, soldiers and *sufi* saints to the relatively quieter cities of the East. Patna received a considerable number of such people. Among those that migrated to Patna, were distinguished literary figures like Meer Baqar Hazin, the famous *sufi* poet and saint Ruknuddin Ishq, Mohammad Ali Fidwi and Mohammad Jafar Khan Raghib, amongst others. These North Indian immigrants – the poets, writers and noblemen-reinforced a Persianised, darbar-oriented culture in the city thereby invigorating the Urdu-Persian literary tradition in Patna (Chatterjee, 1996: 18-19). Moreover, the artists who had fled from Delhi also created a local school of painting known as the Patna Kalam. These developments were possible because there were opportunities for help, patronage and relocation in Patna for the émigrés from Delhi and other areas in the North and such a process led to the formation of a significant regional culture and literary tradition in Patna during the eighteenth century.

Simultaneously, Patna's function as a center of business and culture led to the concentration of a large population of artisans, craftsmen, brokers, moneylenders, merchants, bankers, aristocrats and landed chiefs as well as a sizeable group of boatmen, carters and providers of other ancillary services for trade in the city. Large consignments of foodstuff, grain, cloth, salt and other articles moved into the city to sustain the urban population, while the city's role as an entrepôt bolstered the staples of Patna's inter-regional trade, that is, cotton textiles, opium and saltpetre. In his study on *The Artisans in 18th century Eastern India*, Vipul Singh has noted that during much of the eighteenth century, the organisation of production remained craft based and the artisans constituted a substantial section of the population of Patna. The artisans of the city manufactured varied items like textile, leather, sugar and stonework. Aside from these, carpet weaving was another highly rated industry in Patna district. The carpet weavers produced three kinds of carpets here. One was Shatranji that was made entirely of cotton. The second kind was a mixture of wool and cotton while the base of the third was made of cotton and the woollen part was neatly piled over the cotton warp and wool. Similarly, cloth manufacturing was a flourishing activity of eighteenth century Patna and while a majority of cotton weavers were involved in the production of coarse cloth which was used by the masses in general, there were many who manufactured finer cloths that were largely sent in exports. Cloth, along with other indigenously manufactured products, made a lucrative export business from Patna to Europe over the course of the eighteenth, and even in its immediate preceding, century. The commodities that stocked the city's retail market and also constituted the foundations of its export trade were drawn from production zones surrounding the city and also from regions beyond it. The city thus served as a nodal point for an extensive hinterland in the eighteenth century.

Such developments in eighteenth century Patna attracted many a foreign travellers, who have left significant accounts of this city during the period. For example, Louis Laurent de Federabe, Count of Modave, arrived at Patna in October 1774 and noted that the city of Patna had acquired importance due to its excellent commerce and many people came here regularly to purchase goods brought via Ganges. Modave observed that saltpetre and opium formed significant part of the commercial transactions of Patna. According to him, the saltpetre produced in this region was the best in the world while the opium extracted from poppy produced in this region was consumed all over eastern Asia. On the other hand, in his reports on his travels in Bihar from 1809-1813, Francis Buchanan observed that the production of raw cotton in Patna was not significant as most of the requirements of weavers were fulfilled by the import of cotton thread from the north side of the Ganges. He, however, noted that Patna stood as an important centre of cloth manufacture as huge amount of cotton cloth was exported from here (Buchanan Vol. II: 676-77).

Complimenting the aforementioned developments, the narratives of Buchanan, as of other foreign travellers, also go on to suggest that despite the political shift with the departure of the Mughals and the arrival of the English as rulers, Patna did not lose its economic and political viability in the eighteenth century. Actually it began to develop furthermore as a satellite of Calcutta, the first British Indian, which owed primarily to the strategic position of Patna – lying being way between the north and the east. This pattern of development was, however, certainly different from that of Hughli or Murshidabad (see unit 30 and 32 respectively) which declined rapidly after the transfer of power and after Calcutta had assumed the dominant position.

30.4 AHMADABAD

At the time of its annexation to the Mughal Empire, the Sultanate of Gujarat comprised twenty-five *sarkars* or administrative units. In 1573, the boundary of what came to constitute the *suba* of Ahmadabad (Gujarat) was redrawn so that it came to be composed of sixteen *sarkars*. Of the sixteen *sarkars* that constituted Gujarat, nine were brought under the direct administrative control of the Mughal Empire, where the Mughal fiscal system was applied for the collection of revenues. Ahmadabad was one among these. Rest remained in the administrative and fiscal jurisdiction of local chiefs. During seventeenth century European companies like English East India Company and the Dutch East India Company set up their factories in Ahmadabad, which played a crucial role in the procurement of indigo and textiles.

With the collapse of the Mughal central authority in the early eighteenth century, Gujarat also lost its political stability. It also adversely affected commerce along the western coast. The provincial governors began to exercise power independently. Struggle through military force ensued during 1720s for the post of Governorship of Ahmadabad. The unstable political condition in Gujarat encouraged the Marathas to participate in political contests. As a reward for their support, the Marathas got a share in the land revenue. The governors tried to compensate themselves for the loss of revenue surrendered to the Marathas by extracting money from affluent merchants of Ahmadabad. As a consequence, mercantile property in Ahmadabad became highly insecure in the second quarter of the century. In 1753, the Gaekwars took control of Ahmadabad and thus put an end to the hundred and eighty years of Mughal rule in Gujarat. Ahmadabad lost much of its wealth and prosperity because of this. Second quarter of eighteenth century, therefore, saw migration of weavers from Ahmadabad to Surat and other places because of ensuing political crisis.

Once the Marathas established their control over Gujarat after their occupation of Ahmadabad and its *mahals* in the early 1750s, a phase of economic recovery followed. Initiative of the Maratha Peshwa Balaji Baji Rao was crucial in bringing peace in the region. The industrious craftsmen and producers who had formerly deserted the capital city were induced to return. The restoration of productive processes was also facilitated by the emigrants' desperation to return to Ahmadabad since nowhere else they could find a climate as suitable for the production of certain types of cloth as in that city. Much to the wonder of contemporaries, this tendency of Gujarati merchants and artisans to return to their respective cities and places contributed to the revival of the economy and trade in the region. The Peshwa's deputy at Ahmadabad, Shankarji Pandit, persuaded the Dutch authorities to re-establish their factory in the city. Anticipating good prospects of trade and industry, starting in 1754 Dutch factors at Ahmadabad were actively selling their imports and procuring return goods for Batavia and Europe. The textile industry flourished again as demand for its products was consistently strong and emigrant-manufacturers from Ahmadabad and other places appear to have added to its production potential (Nadri, 2009). There was a great surge in the demand of indigo in the 1780s and 1790s.

Gujarat had obtained prominence in Indian Ocean commerce by putting on the market a variety of commodities that were in great demand in Europe and Asia. Indigo, a variety of coarse and fine textiles, raw cotton and cotton-yarn attracted a voluminous oceanic trade. The supply of these commodities depended on processing indigo leaves and raw cotton. The tract of land between Ahmadabad and Surat had black and sandy soil suitable for cotton and indigo cultivation.

Textile manufacturing in Gujarat was geared towards export market. The industry contributed greatly to the region's commerce by catering to the Euro-Asian demand for textiles. A large number of merchants and artisans were associated with this industry. Unlike Bengal and Coromandal, where weaving industry was spread over in the countryside, in Gujarat weaving was urban based. Weavers were concentrated in some major urban centres like Surat, Broach, Ahmadabad, Baroda, and Bhuj in Kachh.

Ahmadabad was an important centre of textile manufacture that employed a large number of weavers, spinners, dyers and others. The varieties of valvets, thick carpets, silk muslins, satin taffetas and printed cloth were manufactured. The production of textiles went through several stages each having its own distinct social dynamism. Dying yarn and cloth was usually done by professional dyers who rendered such services to merchants for money wages. Raw material required for colours were locally-produced indigo and sappanwood imported from South-east Asia. In addition to the dyers, there were people involved in bleaching and painting or printing cloth in different shades and designs.

Since weaving required some training and skill, which was passed down from one generation to the next within families, some caste groups could maintain a dominant position. Weavers were mostly from Khatri caste. Due to large Euro-Asian demand for cotton and textiles, textile manufacturers were in good bargaining position, which contributed to their privileged position. Other than craftsmen, urban centres like Ahmadabad employed large scale wage-labourers. Two important categories of urban labourers were carpenters and bricklayers. Some specialised in ship-building, some had expertise in making furniture, while others were expert in making and mending looms. The pull of the city as a place that offered great employment opportunities attracted large number of people from the surrounding rural areas. Carpenters were mainly Hindus and Parsis whereas those involved in house building and sailing were predominantly Muslims (Nadri, 2009). European companies employed on a long-term basis a master carpenter, a chief bricklayer, and several other men to facilitate construction work.

30.5 BANGALORE

The city of "Bangalore" (present Bengaluru) as we know today is the result of the amalgamation of two different settlements a process which Janaki Nair terms as 'a tale of two cities'. The western part or *pete* is an older settlement, whose history goes back to at least five centuries. The development of eastern part was the result of a cantonment which came up after British annexation and came to be known as Bangalore. Therefore, the history of eastern settlement is no more than two centuries. It was only in 1949 that these two distinct spaces were brought together under single municipal administration (Nair, 2005: 26). The city began to acquire shape as a fortified settlement in the sixteenth century and is generally attributed to Telugu warrior chief named Kempegowda. Elements of medieval city life as gathered from the British sources that were collected after the Company takeover of Mysore in 1799 point towards three distinct aspects: the grant to Brahmin *agraraharas*, establishment of large temple complexes, and the construction of tanks. The construction of water tanks was very important during early period of its settlement. Gradually temples developed around water tanks and temples in the old city emerged as important features of urban landscape (Nair, 2005: 29, 33). In 1807, a few years after the British takeover, as many as 44 temples were identified in the four *petes* or quarters of Bengaluru, each patronised by a different manufacturing caste or trade group (Nair, 2005: 34). Similarly, the influence of itinerant *sufis* led to the construction of *dargahs* and Muslim shrines during the seventeenth century. Even

Christianity preceded the British rule. The first missionaries of the Society of Jesus reached Mysore in 1648, and a church was built in 1724-5. Such diverse influences, in the words of Janaki Nair, led to a 'cosmopolitan religious landscape' in Bangalore (Nair, 2005: 35).

By seventeenth century, the city had become an important commercial centre. Traders, merchants and artisans flocked into this city in search for better prospects. The increasing commercial importance of the city and the region led the Mughal emperor Aurangzeb (1658-1707) to send troops to capture the area in 1687. Wodeyars of Mysore supported the Mughals in this campaign. This display of loyalty fetched them the control of this city and its environs for a sum of Rs. 3 lakhs. A Sanskrit chronicle written in 1670 pointed out that there were many commercial streets in this town with an array of shops displaying costly goods (Nair, 2005: 38). Till eighteenth century, it was a flourishing centre of textile production and a major emporium of goods from several parts of the subcontinent. Its fortune suffered severe decline in the nineteenth century. Twentieth century saw a revival and even today it is known for its silk production.

Evidence collected after the British conquest regarding pre-colonial urban landscape suggests that the walled town with its four principal gates, was intersected by two main streets to form numerous *petes* which were identified with the various trades and profession of the inhabitants. British records bore testimony to the centrality of Bangaluru as the commercial and manufacturing capital of Mysore state under Hyder Ali and Tipu Sultan. The city's textiles made their way to Srirangapatnam, Gubbi, Nagar, Chennapatna, and Chitradurga. Although trade with the Marathas, the Nizam of Hyderabad and the Company's territories was forbidden during his time, Tipu did much to attract foreign traders to Mysore. Silk manufactures of Bangalore was in much demand. Development of Bangaluru accelerated the process of urbanisation in the region. Several small towns of Mysore region were dependent on Bangaluru for supplies of raw materials as well as finished goods (Nair, 2005: 40).

Three types of textiles manufacturing systems prevalent in the region can be identified from the writings of travellers like Buchanan, who visited the region in early nineteenth century. The first was the production of superior cotton and silk cloths almost entirely for the royal consumption or export market. Weavers were advanced raw materials by merchants to whom they handed over the finished product. In the second system, weavers of muslin depended on the moneylenders for their advances, and sold most of their goods either to the merchants or at the local market. The third class of weavers belonged to low caste groups who possessed little capital for printing and dyeing, and for better part of the year hired themselves as agricultural labour. Thus, production of cloth was catered to specific caste groups and specific uses (Nair, 2005: 40). Buchanan described the weavers of Bangalore as a 'ingenious class of men' who were capable of making 'very rich, fine, elegant cloths of any kind that may be in demand' (Buchanan, Vol. I: 221). Benjamin Heyne, a visiting medical surgeon identified at least 18 different types of silk, cotton and woollen manufacture in the area. Beside cloth production, textile printing and dyeing, gunny manufacture, and oil pressing were also undertaken. Armament manufacture also flourished in Bangalore under Hyder Ali and Tipu Sultan.

The advent of British rule in the last decade of the eighteenth century had devastating effect on the weaving industry. A process of 'de-industrialisation' unfolded in the city. The number of looms fell from 5,000 in 1805 to about 2,700 in 1850. 'The demand for Bangaluru's sophisticated silk and cotton textiles diminished with the dismantling of the court, and coarser fabrics were often replaced by mill-made cloth' (Nair, 2005: 41).

30.6 SUMMARY

In a century that witnessed the decline of Mughal imperial political order, the traditional manufactures of the towns highlighted in this Unit stood as a significant factor that contributed to their survival, and revival. While the Mughals had set the tone for development in most of the aforementioned towns, such process, despite the regression in certain domains, was continued in the eighteenth century by the collaboration between the locals (rulers, merchants and traders) with the Europeans. In due course, however, the European technologies overran the traditional manufactures taking up not just their market space in the world market but also setting the manufacturing towns on the route to decomposition.

30.7 EXERCISES

- 1) Discuss the factors that contributed to the continued commercial importance of Dacca in the eighteenth century.
- 2) In what ways did the Europeans facilitate the economic survival of Dacca in the eighteenth century?
- 3) Discuss the synthesis of trade and culture in eighteenth century Patna.
- 4) What made Patna an ideal 'entrepot city' during seventeenth and eighteenth century?
- 5) In what ways did the Marathas facilitate the revival of Ahmadabad in the latter half of eighteenth century?
- 6) Discuss the three systems of textile manufacturing prevalent in Bengaluru during seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

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UNIT 31 CITIES IN EIGHTEENTH CENTURY-2*

Structure

- 31.1 Introduction
- 31.2 Murshidabad
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31.1 INTRODUCTION

The emergence of regional states along with their provincial capitals in the eighteenth century ushered a new beginning in the political history of India. Though these states were diverse in terms of their orientation and power base, yet they relied on the 'broad conception of power sharing and a political economy that was geared to greater commercialization and to military contingencies' (Subramanian, 2010: 21). The power was vested in the ownership of land and the emergence of dominant class in the form of rural and revenue intermediaries, including some commercial groups who invested in revenue farming. Historians have attested to the primacy of mercantile class in the emerging economy of eighteenth century. The new regional states exhibited close relations between the 'merchants and the rulers. It paved way for an extended cash nexus, commercialisation and social mobility, and by extension a new sense of power management and governance (Subramanian, 2010: 3).

The provincial capitals of these states exhibited the mobility and aspirations of new and old social groups who apart from being political game changers helped in shaping the cultural milieu of the region. The intermediary groups emerged as the kingmakers and their support or lack of it determined the future of the ruler and the political orientation of the state. A micro study of the provincial capitals will enable us to comprehend the vibrant economic activities and commercial exchanges that took place in these regions.

A typology of Mughal successor states reveal that political decentralisation took shape in the following three distinctive ways (Bose and Jalal, 2004: 42).

- In the first place, the independent kingdoms emerged, where subahdars or provincial governors amalgamated offices kept separate by the Mughals and then asserted independence. Nawab Alivardi Khan of Bengal, Nawab Saadat Khan of Awadh, Nizam Asaf Jah of Hyderabad and the Nawabs of Carnatic enjoyed de facto independence by the 1740s. Some of these regional states were dependent on merchant bankers for their growth, for instance the Jagat Seths in Bengal.

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- Secondly, the warrior or rebel states with a distinct religious and communitarian identity emerged under the Sikhs, Jats and Marathas. These states signified ‘popular movements of peasant insurgency directed in part against the Indo-Muslim aristocracy’ (Bayly, 1998: 21). The Mughal state was unable to bring Punjab completely under centralized control and hence they informally interacted with the local communities. Muzaffar Alam has brought out the growing importance of the intermediaries in challenging the state and interestingly the peasant rebellions in Punjab were often led by the zamindars in areas which enjoyed relative prosperity and not exploitation or decline (Subramanian, 2010: 4).
- The third kind of regional states were compact local kingdoms for instance the Rajput petty states, the Telugu speaking warrior clans and the Mysore state in the South. These states resorted to military fiscalism in their domains achieving varying degrees of success in extracting revenues from trade and production to support an effective and efficient standing army. Mysore under Haider Ali and Tipu Sultan combined elements of warrior state and territorially compact kingdom.

The decline of the centralised Mughal state did not tantamount to absolute decline but led to political decentralisation and to a redistribution of resources among groups that consolidated their assets and asserted political power. Historians like CA Bayly and Andre Wink have brought to attention the support these states enjoyed from both the agrarian and the non-agrarian sector of the economy in establishing their foothold. The intermediary groups (ranging from power holders like the Maratha Deshmukhs to merchants and revenue contractors) enabled the state to reap immense profits. Thus, they straddled between the two worlds of commerce and political participation and handled an ensemble of economic activity, which included revenue farming, private trade, warfare and loans. The regional states in due course of time gained pre-eminence and established provincial capitals to display their newfound power and wealth.

The foremost among the new states were the successor states so called because they were part of the older set up and founded by the erstwhile governors of the Mughal state. These included Bengal with its capital at Murshidabad, Awadh with its capital at Lucknow¹ and Hyderabad.

31.2 MURSHIDABAD

Murshidabad also known as Maxudabad lay on the banks of river Bhagirathi and it became a major port city along the river system of Ganga where goods were transported between Bengal and north India. The city derives its name from Murshid Quli Khan who was sent by the Mughal emperor to Bengal province on deputation. He was a revenue officer initially posted in Dacca and moved out from there in 1703-04. In a decade's time, he became the Nawab Nazim (or Naib Nazim/deputy governor) of Bengal and he officially declared Murshidabad as his capital in 1717. Murshidabad approximately extended between Jiaganj in the north to Cossimbazar (Kasimbazar) in the south. Although the river was the preferred route to and from the city, the great Uttara Path (or the road to the north) which the British renamed as Grand Trunk road, lay south of Murshidabad from where both the former capitals of Patna and Dacca were accessible (Das and Jones, 2013: 14).

¹ In the present Unit we are keeping Lucknow outside the scope of discussion for Unit 32 which exclusively deals with Lucknow.

INDIA in 1795.



Justus Perthes, Gotha.

Provincial Capitals

Source: Charles Joppen, (1907) *Historical Atlas of India* (London: Longmans, Green & Co.); <http://www.columbia.edu/itc/mealac/pritchett/00maplinks/colonial/joppenlate1700s/joppenlate1700s.html>

Emperor Aurangzeb sent Murshid Quli Khan as a *subahdar* (provincial governor) to Bengal with a mandate to collect revenues for the imperial treasury. Murshid Quli revamped the entire administrative system, which stepped up the state's revenue share and brought about a new social coalition. About two fifths of Bengal's revenue was paid by the influential zamindari houses who worked with financiers responsible for remitting the revenue from Bengal to Delhi. Murshid Quli Khan aligned the interests of local powerful elites with the merchant groups eliminating the weak players, like small or middling zamindars or defaulters who eventually lost their lands (Calkins, 1970: 803). From 1717-1726, this policy strengthened the powerful magnate in Bengal giving rise to the house of Jagat Seths. The growing pressure on the zamindars to pay the revenues in time brought bankers and financiers into great demand as they provided securities at every stage of transaction and enjoyed greater prestige at the Murshidabad court (Subramanian, 2010: 24). During the 1730s, the government of Bengal began to look more like 'government by cooperation of the dominant forces' in Bengal, rather than the 'imposition of the rule from outside' (Calkins, 1970: 805). Thus the administrative system in Bengal appears to 'have grown stronger, not weaker after the death of Aurangzeb, where an elite ruling group which was representative of the political realities of the day coalesced and maintained rather high standards of administrative efficiency' (Calkins, 1970: 799). The new arrangements yielded immediate benefits as the state was able to extract a huge surplus from the province where the productivity expanded significantly. The successors of Murshid Quli Khan continued the policy for four decades.

Soon the short-lived Nasiri dynasty came to an end and Alivardi Khan became the Nawab and founder of Afshar dynasty in Murshidabad. He ousted Sarfaraz Khan with the help of the banking house of Jagat Seth. The loss in the battle of Buxar in 1764 sealed the fate of the Nawabs. By 1770, the Nawabs were shorn of their status and reduced as pensioners to the Company. In 1771, Hastings became the governor of Calcutta and he transferred the revenue office and the two courts of civil and criminal justice to Calcutta reducing the significance of Murshidabad (Das and Jones, 2013: 25).

The merchants played a special role in contributing to the commercial, political and social life of the city. The productivity and expansion of Murshidabad was reflected in the increasing bargaining power enjoyed by the weavers and artisans who depended on the operations of bankers like Jagat Seths. These merchants promptly provided service for revenue management and remittances. The Jains were prominent actors in the settlement of Murshidabad and came in two distinct waves of migration. From 1700-1765, the dominant Jain merchants were Jagat Seths and after 1765 came the Rajput Jains (also known as Sheherwali or urban Jains) who claimed descent from the warrior castes.

Manikchand laid the foundation of the city along with the ruler Murshid Quli Khan. He had migrated from Rajasthan to Dhaka in the seventeenth century and from Dhaka to Murshidabad in the eighteenth century (1704). He shared close ties with Murshid Quli Khan and rose to eminence in 1720s. He was the personal banker to the Nawab, who supervised the revenue collection of the treasury, looked after the administration of the Mint and invested in the development of Murshidabad and its environs. The Mughal Emperor Farrukh Siyar bestowed on Manikchand the title of 'Jagat Seth' (Banker to the world) which was later re-conferred on every subsequent head of the family as a hereditary distinction (Rajib Doogar, 2013: 32-33)

As advisors and bankers to the Mughal Empire and the Nizamat of Bengal, the Jagat Seths played an important role in the administration and were in a position to place

trusted agents in key positions. They expanded their network by recruiting members from Jain community only. The banking house started by Manikchand passed to his nephew Fatehchand and further to his grandson Mahtab Rai. It was during Fatehchand's tenure that the house reached the zenith of its power. He died in 1744 and his two sons Mahtab Rai and Swaroopchand played a key role in the Plassey conspiracy (as they sided with Mir Jafar against the Nawab). In the post 1757 scenario, with the transfer of government and financial administration from Murshidabad to Calcutta and the repudiation of some of the Company's debts to the banking house, they suffered overall decline.

Murshidabad attracted the attention of the Europeans primarily due to its flourishing trade in cloth, as it was the hub of production in silk yarn and woven silks. Among the Europeans, initially the Portuguese and Dutch arrived in Murshidabad in the 17th century and settled in Cossimbazar (a port on the Bhagirathi and a centre of European trade situated to the south of Murshidabad). The East India Company, the French and a small group of Armenian merchants, followed their footsteps. By late 19th century, Murshidabad had 12900 acres (5,220 hectares) of land under mulberry cultivation and an estimated 55,000 people employed in silk trade. The East India Company appointed agents known as gomastas on their behalf to deal with the weavers (Jasleen Dhamija, 2013: 74).

Although the city was synonymous with the silk trade, yet its decline began at the end of the eighteenth century itself. The famine of 1770 marked the downturn of Murshidabad as its silk trade suffered a huge setback. It also resulted in a massive depopulation of the city in the decade 1770-80. The second blow to the city was when its administrative functions and staff shifted to Calcutta in 1772 (Das and Jones, 2013: 14). This irreversibly changed the fortunes of the city, which enjoyed growth and prosperity for a rather short-lived period. Nevertheless, in a short span of a century the city became a cultural locus as evident from the architectural contribution of the Mughals, Nawabs, the Jain communities and the colonial regime.

Murshidabad presents a palimpsest of Hindu, Islamic, Jain and British creative impressions in art and architecture. The ideology behind the building activities in the eighteenth century differed from those in the nineteenth century. While the patrons of architecture in the eighteenth century built to celebrate the flowering of a new kingdom (as evident from large houses, religious buildings), the 19th century witnessed an overt process of colonial urbanisation reflected in the construction of administrative and institutional buildings (schools, colleges, courts etc). There was a prolific use of brick particularly, which became a decorative motif in Bengal. Murshidabad emerged as one of the major centres where building crafts like decorative brickwork in lime mortar, terracotta tiles and stucco works thrived and were handed down from generation to generation (Das and Jones, 2013: 70).

During the reign of Emperor Akbar (1556-1605), the city was enclosed with walls. The name of some of the areas within the city are indicative of their occupational functions like the jeweller's quarters (Jahurtali), the ward of the potters (kumarpur), milkmen (Gowkhana), timber yard (kathgola), the firewood market (lakriganj) and goat lane (bakrigali) (Das and Jones, 2013: 14).

The heart of the city is known as Qila Nizamat, where the fort of the Naib Nizams existed in eighteenth century. The Qila was enclosed with three gates – the Dakshin Darwaza (South), the Chowk gate (East) and the Imambara gate (north). There is hardly any trace of old fort in Qila Nizamat as it was demolished and new structures came up in the same area. The nineteenth century monuments like Hazaraduari palace

(1829), the great or Nizamat Imamabara (1847), three mosques, the residential quarters, bungalows and many other buildings like Shafakhana (for sick people) lay within the qila. Murshid Quli Khan built a place known as Chehil Satoon (forty pillars), which had a grand audience hall. However, it was demolished in 1767 by Munni Begum, the widow of Nawab Mir Jafar, who replaced it with a five-domed Chowk Mosque to the South East of the great Imambara. The only surviving structure from Murshid Quli Khan's time is Katra Mosque (1723-24) which as the name suggests lay near a bazaar or Katra. The tomb of Murshid Quli Khan lies adjacent to the mosque.



Katra Mosque, Murshidabad

Photograph by Ansuman Bhattacharya, March, 2012

Source: https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/5/51/Katra_Mosque_-_Murshidabad.jpg

Inside the Dakshin Darwaza, there is an interesting structure known as Murg khana or Chicken House, which was possibly used to keep poultry, though it does not seem to be originally designed for this purpose. Jones has tried to look for other cues to understand this space. There is a reference to a 'silk manufactory' in Viscount Valentia's travelogue to upper Bengal situated in Murshidabad. It was constructed in 1773 and the description was of a large industrial building to process silk. The ground floor contained copper urns, heated by clay stoves and the cocoons were steeped in hot water to loosen the silk thread. There was a warehouse, where the finished silk from the weavers would be stored in bales before being shipped down to Calcutta. Jones speculates that this description befits the Chicken House at Murshidabad with its stalls for heated urns, opening on to central passage, so that the work could be supervised by the foreman walking up and down. The place was subsequently given to a eunuch named Darab Ali Khan who was a faithful servant of the Nawab and hence is also known as 'the Eunuch's house' (Das and Jones, 2013: 46).

The local style Islamic architecture that developed in Murshidabad used bricks for construction and terracotta for ornamentation. Since Bengal was prone to receive heavy rainfall, the mosques that were built did not have large courtyards but had large covered halls, for the use of worshippers during the monsoons. The mosque and tomb of Murshid

Quli khan (1723-24) and his daughter Azimunnissa Begum (1734) fall under this category. Two other noteworthy Islamic complexes are the great or Nizamat Imambara and the Jafarganj cemetery (mostly housed the descendants of Mir Jafar). Enclosed by a high wall, it has distinctive graves in decorative brick and stucco, with several marble tombstones. A low enclosed wall around the graves, a sort of a purdah, distinguishes the women's grave from those of men. While the Nawabs built various structures for the royal families, there was an indifference towards the urban development of the city. In his travel account John Marshall noted that even though Murshidabad was a famous silk centre, it was town made up of 'thatched houses' (Sharma, 2014: 43). Hence, the private dwelling of the rich and the elite stood in stark contrast to the humble dwelling of the common people.

In eighteenth century, many Hindu, Jain temples and akharas were built in Murshidabad. Rani Bhabhani, the zamindar of Rajshahi spent her widowhood in Baranagar, near Murshidabad. She built several temples including the Bhabanisvar Mandir and the four Shiva temples collectively known as Char Bangla. The elites also displayed their wealthy status by building Rajbari, which is usually a grand house, larger than a mansion but smaller than a palace. Raja Debi Singh, a zamindar with a large landed estate lived in a grand mansion in the Qila and later his descendant Raja Kriti Chandra Singha Bahadur built the famous Nashipur Rajbari (1865), north east of the Qila.

The Jagat Seths were staunch Jains and befitting their status, acted as true leaders of the Jain community in Bengal, Bihar and Orissa. Manikchand built a Jain temple on the outskirts of Murshidabad. They obtained revenue free lands from the Mughal Emperor surrounding Mount Pareshnath and sponsored tirthas or religious pilgrimages to the place. The earthquake of 1897 destroyed their temples and palaces. Much of the Jagat Seth's house was destroyed during this earthquake. Only its vestiges remain in the form of a two storeyed house, a garden seat bearing the Jagat Seth coat of arms – a crescent moon, the star which was the mark for Murshidabad, and the two bees, the universal symbol of industry and efficiency (Das and Jones, 2013: 50-51). Later, other Jain communities also built temples at Jiaganj Azimganj, Kathgola complex and Mahimapur.

Some Europeans also contributed to the buildings in Murshidabad. Robert Port who became a resident at Murshidabad in 1784, built a house in Afzalbag (almost 6 km away from the city. Afzalbag was the site of an old powder magazine and lay to the north of Murshidabad. The paintings of the Residency attest to a magnificent classical Grecian Villa, with a columned façade facing the river. Many other officials of the East India Company also built their houses near Murshidabad. Anstruther was an army officer who retired from the Bengal cavalry in 1794 built 'Felicity Hall', which matched in its style and elegance to European buildings (Das and Jones, 2013: 45). Colonel Duncan McLeod of Bengal Engineers in 1829 designed one of the most prominent palace known as Hazarduari (a thousand doorway) which is located in Qila Nizamat. It was opened eight years later. It is a well proportioned neoclassical building of three storeys in which the top storey was destroyed during the earthquake of 1897. The Kathgola Palace built in 1870 served the purpose of entertaining the Nawabs and the foreign visitors. It is a conventional European style neoclassical building, with pairs of elongated Corinthian columns at the entrance and Bengali touches were added to the window arches on either side.



Hazarduari, Murshidabad

Photograph by Czarhind, July, 2009

Source: https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/a/a8/Hazarduari1_debaditya_chatterjee.jpg

The Nawabs of Murshidabad also patronised artists who produced a rich tradition of paintings from 1750-1820. The miniatures depict familiarity with European watercolour techniques. The artists worked on themes like festivities, topography and durbar scenes (J P Losty, 2013: 94). Sitaram, one of the finest painters belong to this period. Ivory craft-work is another hallmark of Murshidabad artists who made utilitarian as well as luxury goods (Pal, 2013: 110).

The nineteenth century period in Murshidabad witnessed ebbing away of the old camaraderie and emergence of new coalition of power. While Silk production was predominant in the eighteenth century, indigo ruled the roost in the 19th century and the zamindars in solidarity with the rising East India Company officials, encashed this fresh source of trade. The Nawabs and the traditional Murshidabad languished and the new generation of landlords and Rajput Jains prospered. They called themselves Murshidabadi (and later sheherwali) to differentiate themselves from the Marwari business class Jains who had settled in and around Cossimbazar. They built palatial houses for themselves and indulged in social welfare activities by constructing public buildings like schools, colleges, hospitals and temples. By the end of the century, the zamindars and nawabs were reduced to mere figureheads. The river, which was the lifeline of the city became unnavigable due to silting and changed its course. The new railway system became more popular for travel. The first reliable estimate of the population of Murshidabad was done in 1829 which suggested that it had less than two lakhs (1,46,176) residents in the region. Murshidabad felt the ripple effects of the capital shifting from Calcutta to Delhi in 1911. The trade declined in Murshidabad and merchants moved away to other places in search of better prospects as had happened earlier when the capital shifted from Dacca to Murshidabad (1703 but formally recognised in 1717) and from Murshidabad to Calcutta (1772) (Das and Jones, 2013: 57).

Murshidabad became a template for the East India Company to interfere in the affairs of the other successor states where similar tactics were adopted to outmaneuver the rulers (for instance the ouster of Asafud Daula in Awadh). The Nawabs were stripped

of their power as the Company compulsorily placed residents in the courts, insisted on reducing the household expenditure of Nawabs, stationed troops for the territorial protection and charged its upkeep from the regional court and reduced the ruler as titular heads.

All three men Murshid Quli Khan in Murshidabad, Burhan-ul-Mulk in Awadh and Asaf Jah in Hyderabad came from outside the territories in which they established themselves as rulers. The vigour of the new immigrant, the lack of roots and the subsequent need to create a fresh power base drove these men forward (Das and Jones, 2013: 20). This is evident in the next section where Asaf Jah becomes prominent in the politics of Hyderabad. Since Lucknow as a provincial capital will be dealt in Unit 32, we now turn attention to another successor state in the Deccan, which is Hyderabad.

31.3 HYDERABAD

There are different myths regarding the origins and etymology of Hyderabad. One theory states that Hyderabad was named in honour of the fourth Caliph, Ali Ibn Abi Talib who was known as Hyder because of his lion like valour in the battles (haydar means lion and abad is city). Another myth is that Muhammad Quli Qutb Shahi named Hyderabad initially as Bhagnagar (city of gardens) after he fell in love with a local nautch girl known as Bhagmathi. She converted to Islam and adopted the title Hyder Mahal and the city was renamed after her. However, there is no evidence to attest the legend (Nayeem 2011:16).

The city of Hyderabad founded in 1591 CE was the capital of Golconda during the reign of Qutb Shahi Sultan. In the sixteenth century, Mir Mumin Astrabadi, the Prime Minister belonging to the Qutb Shahi period planned the city in a scientific manner and constructed many prominent buildings. Hyderabad was built on a gridiron system in the form of a giant double cross. A road from Golconda eastward to Masulipatam intersected with another road running north to south at the city centre, where the Charminar (four minarets) was located. The Charminar or triumphal archway completed in 1592 lay at the junction of four roads leading to four quarters of the city. The city was divided into four quarters with 12000 precincts (muhallas) and its main thoroughfares were lined with 14,000 buildings including shops, mosques, schools, rest-houses etc. In the four quarters, the north-west was set apart for royal palaces and state offices and the north-east for the residence of the nobles and public (Nayeem: 19). Hyderabad took the form of a full-fledged autonomous state in the 18th century with its capital first at Aurangabad and from 1763 at Hyderabad city. The Subah (province) during the first quarter of the 18th century had 42 *sarkars* (districts) and 405 *mahals* (Nayeem 2011:1).

In the beginning of the Eighteenth century, Hyderabad was part of the Mughal administered portion of the Deccan Plateau. However, the weakening of the Mughal authority and the political instability caused by the rise of the Marathas led to the frequent change of officials in the Deccan. The Mughal appointed Mir Qamar-ud-Din (also known as Chin Qilich Khan or Nizam ul-Mulk meaning governor of the realm) in 1713 as the Subahdar (administrator). He centralised the administration of the Deccan under his personal control. Nizam ul-Mulk and his father were noted leaders of the Turani or Turkish Sunni faction in the Mughal court. In 1724 Nizam ul-Mulk won a major military victory over a rival Mughal appointee and declared Hyderabad as an autonomus kingdom.

After assuming the viceroyalty of Deccan, he adopted the title of Nizam-ul-mulk Asaf Jah. From then onwards he displaced rival Maratha and Mughal officials, conducted wars, made treaties and conferred titles and *mansab* appointments himself. During the

Mughal rule, *jagirs* (land assignments) were given but were also frequently transferred to prevent acquisition of property and to ensure the loyalty of the Deccani nobles. On the other hand, the Nizam allowed the *jagirs* to be given as an inheritance, which became an incentive for the nobility to transfer their allegiance to him as they received a permanent income and territorial base in the Deccan (Leonard, 1971: 577-578). The Nizam's appointees were termed as 'Asafia' *mansabdars* (from his title Asaf Jah), which distinguished them from the 'Padshahi' *mansabdars* appointed earlier by the Mughals (*padshah* means king or emperor) (Leonard, 1971: 569-570).

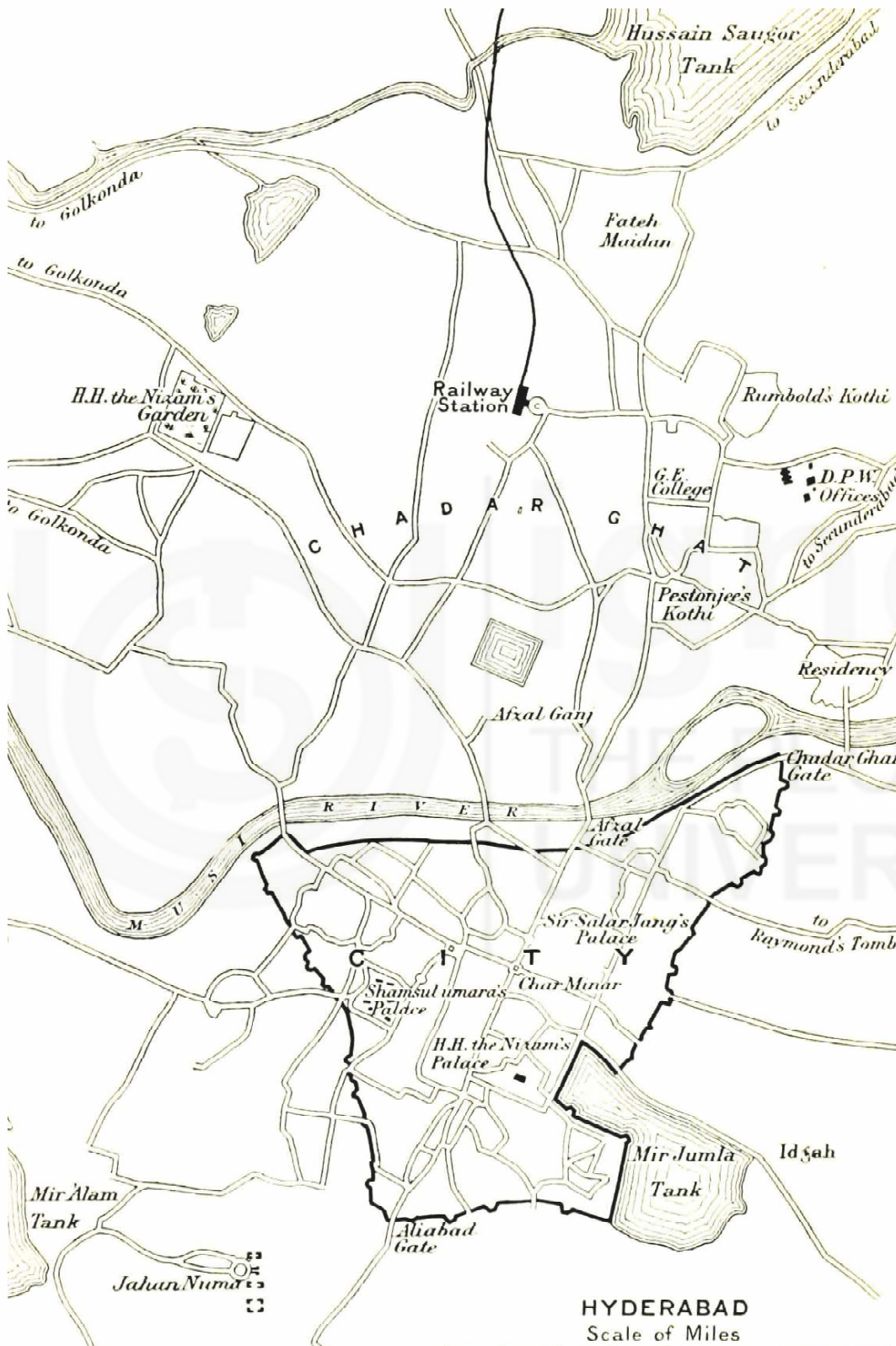
The Nizam had imperial ambitions but after 1740, he eventually settled for provincial autonomy by suppressing local dissenters and establishing an independent administrative set up. From 1702-1803, the state grew in importance under the rule of Nizam Ali Khan Asaf Jah II. The state of Hyderabad from the beginning had to contend with the Marathas and the ambitious local power factions. These exigencies shaped the nature of the state as it invested resources in building a strong military force along with nurturing a loyal ruling class (Subramanian, 2010: 26).

Karen Leonard suggests that Hindus, Deccanis and North Indians assumed extraordinary visibility in the state's administrative service and the patron-client relationship became an ordering principle of the new set up. Hindu Kayasths emerged as important scribal groups that dominated the civil administration. Asaf Jah decentralized the military and kept it under the command of old and leading families. In the army, units were organized under dual leadership: *serishtadars* kept the records and disbursed the pay while *jamadars* commanded the units in the field. The long reign of Nizam Ali Khan from 1762-1803, contributed to a stable reign as he reiterated the 'pattern of relationships' and a 'political system' that 'operated through loosely structured patron-client relationships' in Hyderabad (Leonard, 1971: 571).

The court was fixed in the Hyderabad city and the Nizam was in control of revenue from the land grants (*jagirs*) which enabled him and the nobles to maintain large establishments. The agents, intermediaries or 'vakils' represented the nobles in the court, negotiated business and even personal matters with other nobles. There were also semi-autonomous local rulers *samasthans* or 'Hindu royal houses' who paid an annual tribute to the Nizam and continued to govern their inherited lands themselves. The bankers, moneylenders, military commanders of Hyderabad city also had an important presence in the imperial system. The major financial communities in Hyderabad (except for the Telugu speaking Komatis) were Marwaris, Jains, Agarwals, Goswamis who were from outside the region and moved into the Deccan during this period. Initially they entered as merchants dealing in shawls and jewels and gradually took up money lending and banking. They created their own ghettos in the city where they settled and 'followed the lifestyle characteristic of their castes' (Leonard, 1971: 574).

Most of the prominent monuments in Hyderabad belong either to the preceding Qutb Shahi dynasty or to a later nineteenth century period. The Asaf Jahi Period of Hyderabad (1720-1948) boasts of a synthesis of several architectural styles and influences such as Turkish, Iranian, Qutb Shahi, Mughal, European, Rajasthani and Osmanian styles etc. The amalgam of technical and artistic features is also referred to as 'Asaf Jahi Style' (Nayeem 2011: 305). In the eighteenth century, Nizam ul Mulk's period saw the completion of the wall around the city, which had begun in 1720 under the Mughal Viceroy Mubariz Khan. The wall was six miles in circumference, built in stone and mortar and had thirteen gates (*darwazas*), each with a specific name and thirteen small posterns (*khirkis*). The oldest but incomplete city map of Hyderabad is dated to 1772 and is available in Idara Adabiat-i-Urdu, which shows the city walls, gates and different

quarters. By 1750, the population of Hyderabad was estimated to be around 2, 25,000 people. A French army officer's personal diary account reveals that the city was large and beautiful but not very clean. Interestingly there is a mention of a significant feature 'courtyard' and a 'fountain' in both the large or small houses (Shorey, 1993:180).



City of Hyderabad, 1911

Source: *A Handbook for Travellers in India, Burma and Ceylon*, 1911; Internet Archive Book Images @Flickr Commons; https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/d/d3/Hyderabad_map_1911.jpg

The architecture of the Asaf Jahi period includes, palaces of the Nizams, the Royalty, the chief nobles, government and public buildings, tombs and mosques. In the eighteenth century Nizam ul-Mulk built Khilwat Mubarak, Khwabgab, Diwan-i-Am, Julu Khana (palace square). The Chawmahalla as the name suggests was a complex of four palaces built in several phases. Salabat Jung initiated the construction in 1750 and it was completed under Asaf Jah V in 1857. The palaces were built around quadrangular garden with a large marble cistern in the centre and a fountain jetting water. The four palaces served different functions like the *Darbar Hall* was the place where the Nizam held audience and official receptions (entertained mostly Viceroys), in the southern palace the dignitaries and high officials (serving the state) were received and the western palace served as Nizam's private residence. Khilwat Mubarak is in the heart of the palace. The grand pillared durbar was the seat of the Asaf Jahi dynasty where the Nizam held the durbar, religious and other symbolic ceremonies. The nobles like Paigah ranked next to the Nizam and were related to them in matrimony. Their palaces were built in close proximity to the Nizam's original palaces at Chawmahalla (Nayeem, 2009: 309).



Chawmahalla Palace, Hyderabad

Photo by Gopikrishna, September, 2012

Source: https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/c/c9/Magnificent_Chawmahalla_Palace.jpg

Thus, it would be prudent to conclude that the second half of the eighteenth century was the formative period in Hyderabad's history when the Nizam and the principal nobles from the old Mughal capital of Aurangabad shifted to Hyderabad city and formed stable relationships through the court and administrative institutions (Leonard:570). Although the Mughal authority considerably diminished in Hyderabad, their symbolic legitimacy continued and the emperor's name was mentioned while reading the Khutbah and it was also embossed on the coins till 1857.

Nizam ul-Mulk differed from the other Mughal noblemen who founded the successor states. While the Nizam fought a war to establish his supremacy in the Deccan, the others like Murshid Quli Khan in Bengal and Burhan ul Mulk in Awadh 'parlayed' in their 'respective regions' towards asserting their independence (Faruqui, 2009:18). His challenges were compounded by the fact that the Mughal imperial rule in Deccan was imposed at the tail end of the Empire's expansion. Hence, there was no solid institutional foundation, which he could take advantage of compared to the strong structural legacy that the aforementioned states enjoyed at the time of their dissension.

Now it is imperative to contrast these provincial capitals with Poona and Lahore, which were the warrior state capitals where the Marathas and the Sikhs had rebelled to carve their own niche in the eighteenth century.

31.4 POONA

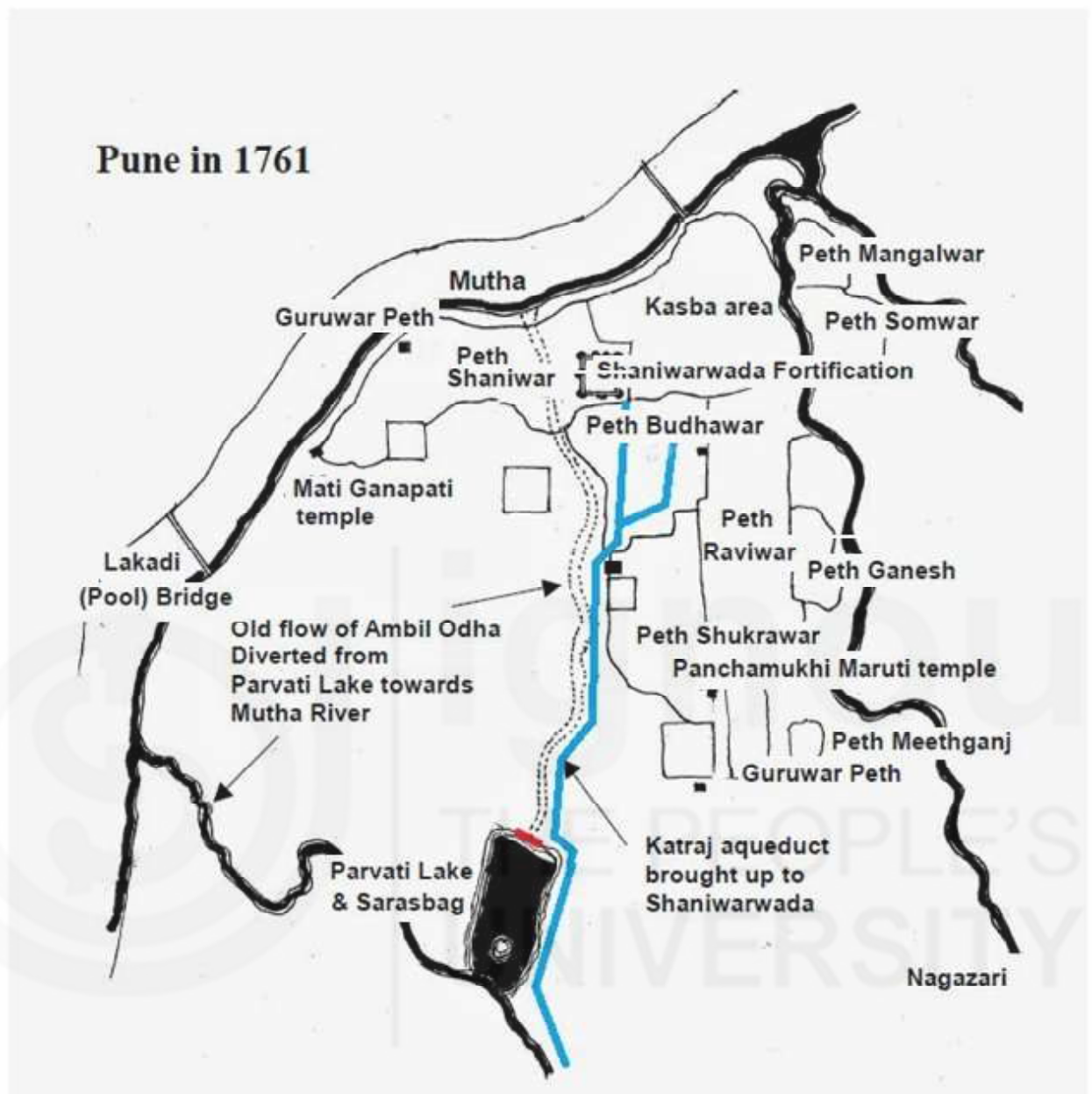
The toponymy of Poona, the provincial capital of Marathas in 18th century can be traced to a copper plate inscription found in the Rashtrakuta Empire in 758 CE. It refers to 'punya vishya' or 'punaka vishaya', which could mean either sacred news or sacred territory. The association with 'punya' (sacred in Sanskrit) or holiness arises from the proximity of a temple named 'Puneshwar', which lay at the confluence of the Mutha and Mula river (IPSC, 1957: 1). In another inscription of the Rashtrakuta king Krishna I dated A.D. 768, the region is called Punaka, which had a thousand villages. A tenth century A.D. inscription describes the town as Punaka Wadi. The evolution of the city's name is also reflected in terms such as Punnaka or Punyapura (the city of merit) which indicate some degree of religious sancity associated with its location near the temple shores (Gokhale, 1988: 2).

Poona was an unusual urban centre in the eighteenth century, as it did not inherit either any imperial status or possess any long drawn commercial significance. In the seventeenth century, the territory of Poona was under the Nizamshahi kings. Shahji Bhosale (1594-1664) (father of Shivaji) who came into prominence as a king-maker wrested Poona from the kingdom of Bijapur and it became his fiefdom (Gordan, 1998: 55). His son Shivaji (1627-80) grew up in Poona under the tutelage of his mother Jijabai in a house called Lal Mahal in the Kasba (Gokhale, 1988: 3). Shivaji was an ace military warrior who built many forts around Poona which symbolized the authoritative power of the Marathas (Gordan, 1998: 82).

Shivaji Bhonsle (1627-80) who belonged to an influential Dehshmukh (landed family) rebelled against the sultan of Bijapur and founded an independent polity based on the support of Deshmukh families and military exploits. The guerilla warfare of Maratha band was successful against Aurangzeb. In 1707, the release of Maratha regent Shahu (grandson of Shivaji) and the emergence of powerful family of Peshwa Balaji Vishwanath gave a new direction to the Maratha politics. The growing influence of the Peshwas in Poona and the countervailing influence of the expanding confederacy outside it made the city the centre of power and authority (Subramanian, 2010: 30).

There were three distinct phases in the growth and development of Poona. Initially, it was a small village located near a river with a seasonal market. The second phase dating from fourteenth century and continuing upto seventeenth century, saw it grow into a *kasba* (a village with robust mercantile activity), a fortified military emplacement and a market town with a few wards or *peths* (areas exclusively dedicated for commercial activity). The *Kasba* phase saw the three components of urban growth namely marketing facilities, establishment of defence and administrative apparatus. In the third phase Bajirao transferred the family residence from Saswad to Poona in 1730 and it began to be reckoned as a 'military bureaucratic' city with a strong administrative centre (Gokhale, 1988: 10).

The city of Poona in the eighteenth century served a dual role. It was the hometown and political constituency for the Peshwas and after the death of Shahu in 1789, it became the de facto capital of the Maratha Empire. Bajirao I entered his palace on 22nd January 1732 (Gokhale:49). It was under the leadership of his son Balaji Baji Rao that many of the *peths* (wards) in the city were laid out. The *peths* were named either after their founders or according to the days of the week. It is speculated that the traders or



Pune 1761

Source: Chinmay Datar, A Structured and Chronological Study of the Development and Expansion of Pune from A.D. 1610 till the Decline of the Peshwa' October 15, 2013 <http://chinmay-datar.blogspot.in/2013/10/a-structured-and-chronological-study-of.html>

In the seventeenth century (1637), Poona had four *peths* namely Kasba, Murtazabad, Raviwar and Shahpura (Somwar). In 1663 Astapura (Mangalwar by Shayasta Khan), in 1703 Muhiyabad (Budhwar by Aurangzeb) and Visapur (Shukrawar by Bajirao) were added. These *peths* had a population of 20,000-30,000 people. By 1720 the Kasba town located on the riverside began to develop into a modest city. It had earlier functioned as a local mart for decades and now it became a transit point for trade and retail. Nanasaheb added four new *peths* to Poona namely Vetar (Guruwar in 1750), Negesh (Nihal in 1755) and Narayan in 1759. Madhavrao added Bhawani (1767), Muzzafarjang (1768) and Sadhashiv (1769) to the city. By the end of the century there were about eighteen *peths* or wards in Poona including Ghorpade (1781), Shivpuri or Rasta (1783), Hanmant or Nana (1789), and Ganj. The core of Poona's urban spread was formed by these *peths* (Gokhale, 1988: 8-10).

Source: Chinmay Datar, A Structured and Chronological Study of the Development and Expansion of Pune from A.D. 1610 till the Decline of the Peshwa' October 15, 2013 <http://chinmay-datar.blogspot.in/2013/10/a-structured-and-chronological-study-of.html>

The *peth* was a complex of residential palaces, shops and artisan manufactories interspersed with temples (almost 412), shrines, parks, gardens, and a police post. A census enumerating the houses, occupancy by castes, taxes paid (*gharpatti* – house tax, *gulalpatti* – for festivals like holi, *jhendepatti* – professional tax) gives a peek into economic administration. The *Kamavisdar* was the officer in charge of the unit of revenue administration and he worked under a *mamlatdar* who looked after a larger area (Gokhale: 18). While the higher castes predominated in the *peths*, the lower castes like Mahars also occupied houses in the same vicinity.

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background. The Chitpavan Brahmins from the Konkan came to Poona and served in various capacities as bankers, merchants, priests, bureaucrats and military commanders. As priests and scholars they provided legitimacy to the new rulers and as merchants they rendered services from the temple verandahs to the shop fronts and banking counters (Gokhale:6). While the Maratha sovereign Shahu reigned from Satara, the Peshwas (his prime ministers) ruled the empire in his name from the city of Poona. The Peshwas belonged to Chitpavan Brahman caste and gave the city a characteristic Brahman visage.

The most prominent landmark of the city was Shanwar (Saturday) or Shaniwar wada (the residence of the ruling family, (Gokhale, 1988: 41). The Gaikwads, Holkars, Shindes, Bhonsles also had their residential palaces in Poona. While the buildings of the powerful and the wealthy had adequate sanitary systems for the disposal of waste, the arrangements elsewhere were rather rudimentary.

As the capital of the Maratha confederacy, Poona had the imperial secretariat known as *Huzur Daftar*, which was a repository of all government accounts concerning the income and expenditure of the state (Wink 1983: 622). Poona was both a kasba and the capital, functioning under two distinct but overlapping jurisdictions of the ruling family and of the urban officials specifically appointed by the family for the governance of the city. By the end of the eighteenth century, Poona was a conglomeration of 18 peths, 5 puras (wards), two ganjs (marts), 14 alis (streets inhabited by specific occupational/artisanal groups), three bazaars and four governmental departments (khanas) (Gokhale, 1988: 87-88).

Poona suffered a decline after the defeat of the Marathas at the hands of Afghan ruler Ahmad Shah Abdali in the third battle of Panipat in 1761. The civic unpreparedness and the weak defensive capabilities of the city came to limelight when Nizamali in 1763 and Yashwantrao Holkar sacked it in 1803. The city suffered a major setback with political intrigues (the murder of Narayanrao in 1773) and the final blow came when the English hoisted their own Union Jack replacing the Peshwa's saffron standard (bhagawa jhenda) in Shaniwar palace. It symbolized the end of Maratha independence (Gokhale, 1988: 45-46).

In conclusion, it is interesting to remember the Poona was quite distinct from the other provincial capitals as it came into prominence despite not being located on any major trade routes or possessing a rich agricultural hinterland capable of producing surplus for exchange and commerce. As a 'bureaucratic-military city', it developed facilities to satisfy the needs of the Peshwas and other elite classes (Gokhale, 1988: 138). Among the warrior states, Poona stands out for this atypical characteristic where as Punjab with its capital at Lahore had a different trajectory of development.

31.5 LAHORE

Lahore was one of the largest cities of the Mughal empire and apart from being a provincial and at times imperial capital, it was also the centre of considerable manufacturing and commercial activity (Singh 1997:50). According to the Indian mythical tradition, Lahore's toponymy can be traced to Loh-kot or Lav-kot (stronghold of Loh or Lava). Lava, who is considered to be the city's founder was the son of epic hero Ram (Suvorova, 2011: 29). Lahore was also mentioned by Ptolemy as 'Labokla' in the second century (Suvorova, 2011: 17). The city, founded in 1000 CE, served as the capital of Ghaznavid, Ghoriid, Sultanate and Mughal dynasties.

Lahore was a bustling city in the late sixteenth to eighteenth century when the Mughal emperors attracted commerce and the residents to the city by making it an imperial and

provincial capital. The *suba-i-Lahore* and *sarkar-i-Punjab* was often used synonymously in Mughal documents (Malhotra and Mir, 2012: xx). As the centre of commercial activity goods like carpets, shawls, cotton-textiles, bows arrows, tents, saddles, swords and shoes etc were manufactured there (Singh 1997: 50). However, during the eighteenth century the Mughal attention turned farther south to contain the threats from the Deccan and Lahore suffered a series of destructive raids. It was under Ranjit Singh (1799-1839) that it received some stability but it could not regain the grandeur it had enjoyed earlier (Glover, 2007: xii).

In the sixteenth century, the Mughal emperors Babur and Humayun used Lahore as a base for mounting military campaigns but it gained prominence when Akbar shifted his capital from Fatehpur Sikri to Lahore in 1584 A.D. Akbar built a new palace called Lahore fort, and fortified the city's walls enclosing it with thirteen gates. Soon Lahore became extensive and populous, as the nobles were encouraged to build palaces, gardens and religious institutions. The large number of buildings in Lahore indicate that brick making was an important activity in and around the city. Mughal grandees and prominent local zamindars also contributed to constructing havelis or large mansions with massive walled compounds whose inner precincts contained a number of buildings occupied by retainers, servants, relatives of the family (Glover, 2007: 8).

During Akbar's reign, nine of the thirty-six urban quarters (guzars) lay inside the urban wall and the rest were in the suburbs. The suburban locales were founded by wealthy guilds such as Jowhari bazaar (jewellery market), Mohalla (urban quarter) (founded by Khoja traders and moneylenders) or by officers in the Imperial army (Mohalla Zen Khan). During Shah Jahan's time, the built up area of Lahore's suburb was almost six times that of the walled inner districts. In the seventeenth century, Lahore was a densely settled and a walled urban core surrounded by a large area of suburbs spreading eastward and southward away from the city walls (Glover, 2007: 9-11).

Aurangzeb held court in Lahore only briefly and spent most of the time on the move in the pursuit of Marathas. By this time, the Sikh power was ascendant in Punjab. The origin of Sikhism lay in a Hindu revival movement with a strong social and egalitarian message around a line of gurus who developed community based institutions and practices (*sangat* and *langar*). The movement assumed a distinct political and militant character in the wake of the state pressure (Subramanian, 2010: 33). In the eighteenth century Nadir Shah (1738-39) and later successive bands of Sikh *Misls* (armed groups) took advantage of the weakened Mughal rule to attack Lahore. The 12 states of Sikh confederacy were known as the *Misls* who competed amongst themselves for power and territory but acted in unison against outsiders. In 1765, Lahore was divided among three Sikh chiefs, Gujar Singh, Lahna Singh and Sobha Singh who split the city's revenue amongst themselves (Grewal, 1994: 100).

In 1799, Ranjit Singh consolidated the *Misldhars* (commanders) and established Lahore as the administrative capital of a new Sikh kingdom. By 1812, he had refurbished the city's defences by adding a second circuit of outer wall that followed the outline of Akbar's original wall and was separated from it by a moat. The Sikh state continued the older tradition of patronage and supported the religious institutions in and around the city through revenue-free grants of land (*madad-i-ma'ash*). While the state sponsored the building of Gurudwaras, temples and mosques, the merchant's groups built dharamsalas (rest houses), serais (camping grounds), and public wells (Glover, 2007: 13). In order to boost internal trade, Amritsar was linked by road with Lahore, and through Lahore with Multan, Srinagar and Peshawar.



Samadhi of Ranjit Singh, circa 1860

Source: British Library, author unknown; https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/0/01/Ranjit_Singh_circa_1860.jpg

A number of Mughal monuments in and around Lahore were either desecrated or destroyed during the Sikh rule. The havelis were also dismantled or altered during this period. However, Ranjit Singh retained certain principles of managing the urban affairs, which were initiated by the Mughals like the office of the *kotwal* and *mir-i-mohalla*. Ain-i- akbari records that the *kotwal* was in charge of maintaining peace in the city, organising police, ensuring the functioning of the market, conducting urban census (recorded in *Khanashumari*, which was a count of urban households and mohallas). He also appointed *mir-i-mohalla* (or mohalladar) who kept a watch over the neighbourhood. The *Kotwal* was subordinate to *Qazi* who administered both civil and criminal law. The *Qazi* also executed deeds of sale (*bainama*) that vested absolute rights to property in the purchaser, verified mortgage contracts (*rahn-nama*) that could be legally redeemed in case there was a default, signed rental agreements (*raiyatnama*) for consideration of cash or non cash forms of regular payment etc. It seems that urban property was available for sale and purchase but it was mostly kept as a well-guarded asset by its owners (Glover, 2007: 15-16).

The long standing practice of asserting the authority to rule by physically appropriating or sometimes destroying a previous ruler's building continued after the death of Maharaja Ranjit Singh (in Lahore on June 27, 1839) (Glover, 2007: 19). During the colonial period, the new ruling dispensation adopted or altered the remnants of the erstwhile urban administration according to its needs. The British often resorted to retrofitting the existing buildings from the Mughals and the Sikh periods for new administrative and social functions. Thus, in Lahore with each passing rule, the urban administration was often adapted from the previous authority with changes tailor-made to suit their purpose.

While the provincial capitals of warrior states gained pre-eminence from eighteenth century till twentieth century and beyond, the compact kingdom of Mysore with its capital at Srirangapatna has an antithetical story of development and decline.

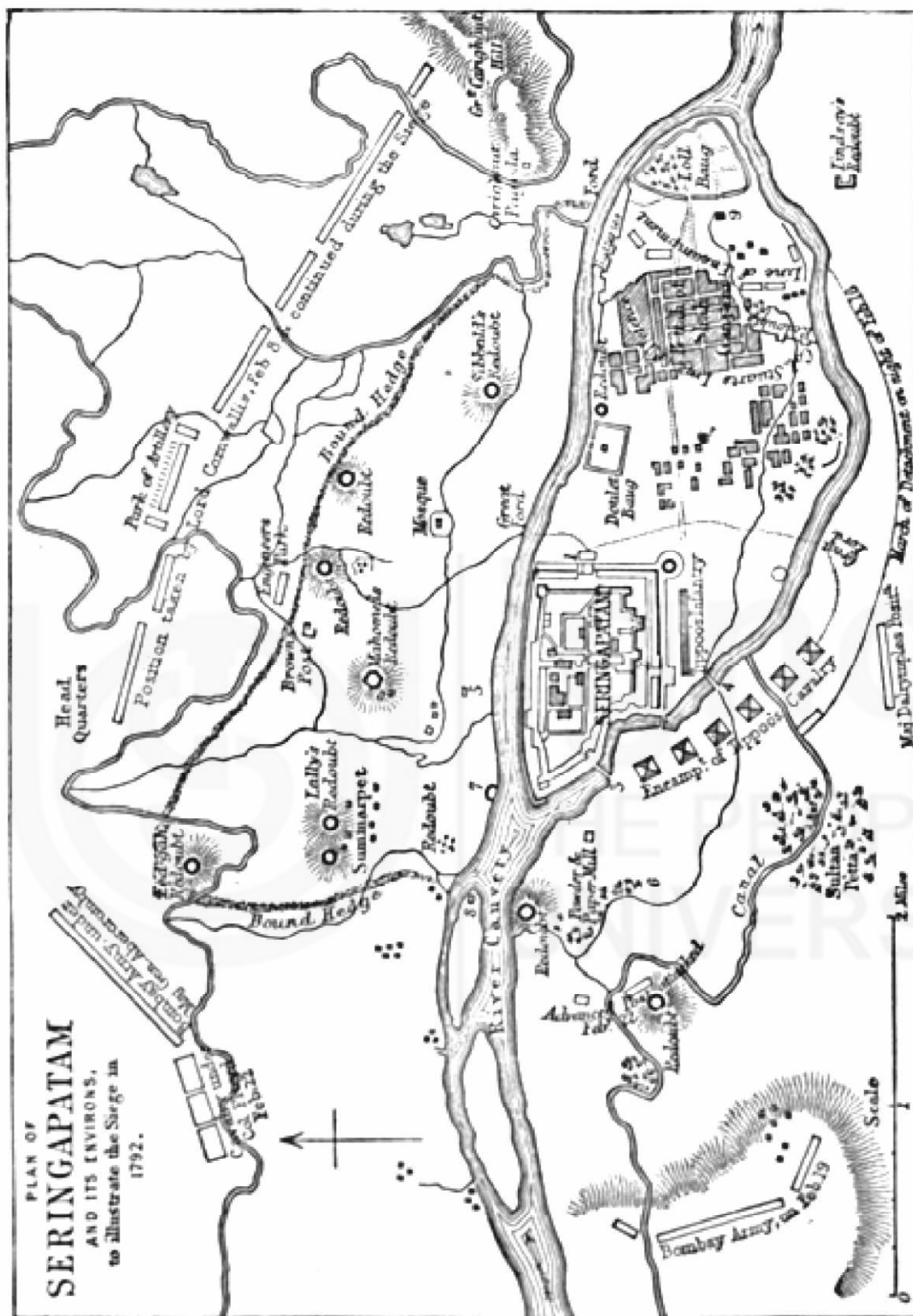
31.6 SRIRANGAPATNA

Srirangapatna, the capital city of Mysore in eighteenth century takes its name from the celebrated Ranganathaswamy temple, which was an important Vaishnavite centre of pilgrimage in South India. The legacy goes back to it being a temple town built in (9-10th century). In the hymns of later *alvars* Srirangam with focus on Ranganathaswami temple emerged as a centre of religious activities in the Chola mandalam (for more details refer to Unit 19:19.6). Srirangapatna became the capital of Mysore in 1610. It was a city of ‘considerable antiquity’ and decades later, during the reign of Tipu Sultan it gained significance with the construction of forts, monuments, tombs and temples (Nair: 105). Governor General Wellesly noted soon after the siege of “Seringapatam” (anglicized by the British) that it was a site of many important institutions in Tipu’s Mysore. The capital was the centre of power had a strong fortification, the principal granary for Tipu’s army, contained his arsenal, was the repository of treasure and the prison of the legitimate claimant of his throne as well as of the families of all his great chieftains (Nair, 2012: 108).

The Mysore state originated as the Vice Royalty under the Vijayanagar Empire in the sixteenth century, but was transformed into an autonomous state by the Wodeyar Chieftancy in the seventeenth century. The new principality offered opportunity to military commander like Haider Ali who rose from a junior officer to a higher rank and took political reign in his hands (1761) by reducing the Wodeyar ruler to a titular head. Haider adopted a policy of military modernisation in consultation with French experts. The army was organized on a European model through a system of *risalas*, (Habib, 2013: 44-45).

His son Tipu Sultan took this policy forward by establishing centralized control over the revenues of the state and commercial income. The expansion of Mysore under Haider Ali and Tipu threatened the growth and commercial prospects of East India Company in Madras. The four Anglo-Mysore wars (1766-69, 1780-84, 1790-92, 1799) attest to the escalating hostility between the two powers. Despite being preoccupied with confronting the British throughout his reign, Tipu did not neglect the building of his capital city. After the second Mysore war ended in 1784, Tipu built Dariya Daulat or the Summer Palace on the banks of Cauvery in Srirangapatna. It is an oblong building mounted on a high basement surrounded by deep verandahs. The modestly sized building with lavish decorations on the walls was the favourite retreat of Tipu Sultan. It was set in a landscaped garden and was one of the three palaces on the island capital of Mysore kingdom. The main palace, called the Lal Mahal, was to the northwest within the fort and was the chief residence of Tipu Sultan. The southeastern end of the island was the Gumbaz or Mausoleum of Haider and adjoining it was the ‘modest but lavishly decorated palace in the Lal Bagh’, a garden planted by Haider Ali (Nair, 2012: 32-33). The Shahar Ganjam occupied the area between the Lal Bagh was an extensive town full of wealthy industrious inhabitants (Nair, 2012: 108).

In 1792, the tide turned in favour of the British when Tipu was forced to sign the ignominious Treaty of Seringapatam by which he surrendered half his territory and sent his two sons as hostages in lieu of debts to be paid to the British. Finally, with the defeat and death of Tipu Sultan on May 4, 1799, the British decided to reinscribe and rewrite the history of Srirangapatna from the standpoint of the victors. Within a year of the defeat of the Sultan, Srirangapatna was abandoned by the British and it wore a deserted look. By the early nineteenth century, the population of the city dropped from 1,50,000 to about 30,000 (Nair, 2012: 109). The British apart from establishing a garrison cemetery in 1800 did little to salvage the image of the city.



1, Bangalore Gate. 2, Mysore Gate. 3, Old Bridge. 4, New Bridge. 5, Place for breaching Batteries. 6, Place intended for the enflading Battery. 7, Battery to defend the Bridge. 8, Montresor's Redoubt. 9, Hyder Ali's Tomb.

Seringapatna in 1792

Source: G.A. Henty, (1896) *The Tiger of Mysore* (London: Blackie & Son , p. 165; https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/7/72/Plan_of_Seringapatam_and_its_environs.jpg

Srirangapatna was shorn of its erstwhile glory of being the imposing capital under Tipu Sultan and was reduced to a mere War Memorial. The Wodeyar dynasty, which replaced Tipu's regime, colluded in this move to settle in Mysore (fifteen miles away), which gained at the expense of the historically dismembered city of Srirangapatna.

The unmaking of the Srirangapatna as the capital city and Mysore into a 'Museumized cityscape' was a conscious project erasing the enduring legacy of a formidable ruler.

The commemoration of the British military victory was repetitively done through a wide circulation of British representations of Tipu's death in paintings. The hostage paintings (by A.W.Davis) illustrated the 'paternal qualities' of the empire symbolizing the 'loving relationship of the colonial masters to their new subjects' (Nair, 2012: 46-47). Similarly, the act of storming the impregnable fort of Srirangapatna was a favourite subject constantly reproduced in paintings to emphasize that battles of legitimacy are not just fought on the field but also find expression in visual representation and display, which superimpose one memory over the other. Thus, among all the provincial capitals of eighteenth century, Srirangapatna not only suffered decline but was also relegated to oblivion and effaced from the historical memory, lest the ghost of its illustrious ruler might resurrect its regional significance.

31.7 SUMMARY

The fledgling regional states along with their provincial capitals symbolized a vibrant political, social and cultural milieu in the eighteenth century. However, it remains a matter of speculation as to what trajectory these disperse polities would have taken if their growth was not stemmed by the East India Company. One can draw out certain similarities and distinctions in the rather short-lived polities. Each state had a provincial capital, which served as its core administrative centre. Lucknow, Hyderabad and to some extent Srirangapatna were cosmopolitan capitals and home to a number of Europeans who created a part European Dilettante and part Indian courtier lifestyle. While all others largely remained provincial cities, Poona initially grew into a centre of power with imperial aspirations (Gokhale, 1988: 8). Despite ambitious beginnings, Poona ultimately became a 'bureaucratic- military agglomeration' compared to Lucknow and Hyderabad, which had superior economic potential and relatively older established commercial centres serving a rich hinterland (Gokhal, 1988: 40). Lahore was unique among all as it had a long history of serving as a capital of Ghaznavid, Ghorid, Sultanate and Mughal dynasties. Murshidabad showed immense potential to grow but was thwarted in its development by the East India Company. In most cases, the operation of a military economy put pressure on extraction of resources which was distributed among the newly emerging communities who were co-sharers of power in the provincial capitals (Subramanian, 2013: 27). Ultimately, all the provincial capitals were important administrative and commercial centres whose growth and vitality were closely linked to the vicissitudes of the rulers who administered them.

31.8 EXERCISES

- 1) What was the contribution of Jagat Seths to the city of Murshidabad?
- 2) How did the 'patron-client' relationship in Hyderabad serve the interest of the city?
- 3) Throw light on the unique aspects of Lucknow as an eighteenth century provincial capital.
- 4) Would it be justified to say that the Peshwas were indispensable to the planning of Poona city?
- 5) The urban administration in Lahore was adapted and reconfigured from seventeenth to nineteenth century. Comment.
- 6) Despite the painstaking investment made by Tipu Sultan, why did Srirangapatna decline?

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UNIT 32 CASE STUDY: LUCKNOW*

Structure

- 32.1 Introduction
- 32.2 The Origins and Growth of Lucknow
- 32.3 Political Prowess of the Nawabs and Begums of Awadh
 - 32.3.1 Genealogy of the Nawabs
 - 32.3.2 Lucknow as an Administrative and Economic Center
 - 32.3.3 The Mughal, Nawabi and European Architectural Legacy
 - 32.3.4 Art and Cultural Efflorescence
- 32.4 Political Events and the City
 - 32.4.1 Impact of the Annexation of Awadh (1856) and the Revolt of 1857
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32.1 INTRODUCTION

Places embody a meaningful past, either ensconced in myths or steeped in a historical, social-political context. The primal culture associated with a place often augments the aura of a region and imparts uniqueness to its existence. Lucknow is no exception to the aforementioned axiom and the city draws its customary legacy from the affluent Shia Nawabs, who ruled it from 1775-1856 CE. As a provincial capital of Awadh (anglicized as Oudh by the British after its annexation), Lucknow epitomized the values of its prodigal rulers, who on the one hand were admired for ushering in the refined and unfailing courtesy of *adabs* (a way of greeting/salutation) and on the other were vilified for their whimsical propensities. The place may be associated with the legendary duality of a resplendent yet decadent culture of the aristocracy, but its inhabitants relate more often to its fabled pristine past. It is a region to reckon with since it did not lose its charm despite the profligacy of the Shia dynasty and the ignominious ouster and exile of its last Nawab Wajid Ali Shah to Matiaurj (in the suburbs of Calcutta).

This Unit will take you through the tale of this city, which underwent remarkable changes in three centuries. It transformed from a *pargana* headquarter to the provincial capital of Awadh in 1775. After the British annexation in 1856, it became a major colonial centre. The revolt of 1857 and its aftermath shook the city in many ways and it underwent significant morphological changes to pacify the wrath of the colonial authenticities. A major blow to its prestige came with its demotion to a provincial town when Oudh was absorbed in the North West Provinces in 1877. Finally, Lucknow was restored as the capital of the United Provinces in 1920. The region is significant from the perspective of varied changes it underwent in a short span of time. It witnessed the confluence of Mughal

decline, the ascendance of the Nawabi supremacy and finally the dominance of a colonial rule. However, the imprint of a short-lived Awadhian culture remains pervasive and unsurpassed in the city even today.

32.2 THE ORIGINS AND GROWTH OF LUCKNOW

Lucknow was a flourishing town in the sixteenth century, which lay between Gonda in South and Ayodhya in North. It shared proximity with vital centers of trade and pilgrimage like Varanasi, Allahabad and Gorakhpur (Graff, 1997: 2). Lucknow etymologically derives its name from Lakshman, brother of Ram Chandra of Ayodhya and was known as Lakshmanpur, Lakhanpur or Lachmanpur (Oldenburg, 1984:6). The town's most prominent landmark was a hillock named Lakshman Tila. According to another popular belief, when Mahmud of Ghazni invaded India, he brought with him Sheikhs and Pathans, some of whom settled in Lakshmanpur. A Hindu architect named Likhna designed a fort for them known as Likhna Kila, which probably later shortened to Lucknow (Hay, 1939: 160).

The initial settlements included two small hills on the southern bank of Gomti, occupied mainly by Brahmins and Kaysthas initially. (There is a significant omission in the ethnographic narrations of Lucknow regarding the menial and other important castes present in Lucknow during this period. The Gazetteer of Oudh and William Crook's handbook on 'Castes and Tribes of Oudh and North Western Provinces' do not enumerate them specifically). The Kaysthas occupied the highest government offices under all three reigns as they served as ministers in the Mughal Empire, held political sway under the Nawabs and also played a key role in the administration of the British rule (Hasnain, 2015: 64). A Hindu shrine existed on one of the hills, which was later replaced by a mosque during Aurangzeb's period. The *Chawk* or the main market place lay southwest of the mosque where a Muslim mystic Shah Mina's tomb (who settled in 1450) served as a site for veneration and pilgrimage (Jones, 1985: 8). It was a walled city during the medieval times, though there is no record of the demolition of the same.

In the eighteenth century, there was a decline in the Mughal courtly culture and in the population of major cities like Lahore, Agra and Delhi. It was an opportune moment for towns like Lucknow and Varanasi to grow and thrive during this period (Graff, 1997: 3). By this time, politically the Mughal Emperors began to lose hold over Shaikhzadas and the tussle for power intensified with the entry of a Shia nobleman Saadat Khan from Iran.

32.3 POLITICAL PROWESS OF THE NAWABS AND BEGUMS OF AWADH

Awadh acquired its initial social and political distinction in the eighth century BCE as Kosala, one of the sixteen *mahajanapadas* of the later vedic period (Graff, 1997: 17). Lucknow was a significant region within the larger socio-political milieu of the *suba* of Awadh. During the reign of Delhi Sultanate and Mughals, Lucknow rose to prominence and served as an important administrative seat for the rulers (Graff, 1997:18). The Mughals deemed Lucknow to be a tenable link for eastward expansion as it was three hundred miles south-east of Delhi and six hundred miles north-east of Calcutta (Kolkata). Akbar incorporated the *suba* of Awadh into the Mughal Empire as one of the twelve constituent provinces and chose Lucknow to be the seat of the *subadar* in 1580. Shaikh Abdur Rahim, a nobleman from Bijnaur gained favour in the eyes of the emperor and became the *subadar* of the region (Sharar, 1975:37).

After the Sheikhzadas, the Shia Nawab, Saadat Khan from Iran entered Delhi and was influential among the court nobility. The Mughal Badshahs of Delhi and the later Nawabs of Awadh shared a tenuous relationship often signified by a struggle for supremacy of power in this region. Gradually the Nawabs gained at the expense of the declining Mughal Empire and the hereditary nawab-wazirs held reign for almost eight decades in the region (Oldenburg, 2007: 20).

32.3.1 Genealogy of the Nawabs

Saadat Khan, a Shia¹ believer and a Persian noble from Nishapur (Iran) arrived in India in 1707 CE when the centralised Mughal Empire was ebbing away under Emperor Aurangzeb. Khan also known as Burhan ul Mulk had suffered a declining fortune in his native land and therefore sought employment in the Delhi Court (Jones, 1985:1). The Mughal ruler appointed Khan as the *faujdar* (commandant) of Agra in 1719 and subsequently, he was promoted as the governor of Awadh in 1721. It was a difficult and challenging place where semi-independent feudal barons held judicial sway over the subjects through their private armies and civil establishments. Khan made an essential move of establishing his headquarters in the city, which firmly entrenched his base in the province.

Table 1 : Genealogy of the Nawabs of Awadh (1722-1856)

Saadat Khan Burhan-ul-Mulk	1722-1739	Ghazi-ud-Din Haider (son)	1814-1827
Safdar Jung (nephew)	1739-1754	Nasir-ud-Din Haider (son)	1827-1837
Shuja-ud-Daula (son)	1754-1775	Mohd. Ali Shah (brother of Ghazi- ud-din Haider)	1837-1842
Asaf-ud-Daula (son)	1775-1797	Amjad Ali Shah (son)	1842-1847
Wazir Ali (son)	1797-1798	Wajid Ali Shah (son)	1847-1856
Saadat Ali Khan (half-brother of Asaf- ud-Daula)	1798-1814		

Source: Jones R., (ed.) (2003) *Lucknow, City of Illusion*, pp. 259-261.

He laid the foundations of the Nawabi dynasty of Oudh in 1722 after choosing his nephew Safdar Jung as his deputy to the throne. Safdar Jung consolidated his position by becoming virtually independent from the Mughal Emperor's influence and he established his own dynasty in the province.

The relationship between 'Nawabs' or governors of Awadh and the Delhi court was redefined under the changed context. While the title of 'Nawab' meant deputy in Persian, (recognizing the supremacy of the Mughal emperors), the Awadh Nawabs followed the royal orders only when it suited them (Jones, 1985: 3). Safdar Jung's son Shuja-ud-Daula succeeded him and the Mughal ruler recognised his hereditary right to the throne. The equation with the Mughals gradually changed in favour of the Nawabs as they asserted their rights over the remittance of revenue from Awadh.

By 1761, Awadh became so prosperous and prominent that it could not escape the attention of the expanding East India Company. The battle of Buxar (1764) which

¹ Shī'ah literally means a partisan or follower. They believed that after the Holy Prophet, the religious authority was vested with his follower Ali (Trivedi, 2010: 42).

resulted in the defeat of Shuja-ud-Daula fulfilled Company's desires to milk the region. The Company benefited immensely from the treaty of Allahabad as it allowed them to carry out duty free trade throughout the empire. The Nawab was also fined Rupees fifty thousand as an indemnity to cover the war expense of the East India Company. Since the Nawab was unable to pay the indemnity, the begums of Awadh came to his rescue and emerged as his political counterpart.

Two powerful women who reigned in Awadh were Nawab Begum and Bahu Begum. Aliya Sadr un Nisa, better known as Nawab Begum was the daughter of Saadat Khan and the wife of Safdar Jung (1739-54). Her son Shuja ud Daula (1754-75) was married to Amat uz Zehra (known as Bahu Begum), the daughter of a powerful Persian courtier at the Mughal court. These two women wielded considerable power in the court of Awadh. They were economically independent, hard working and expert in the court intrigues. They were wealthy as they had received dowries including jewels, personal valuables, horses, elephants, retainers, troops and enjoyed ownership of revenues from vast tracts of fertile lands. Both maintained their independent establishments and a bureaucracy of women, men and eunuchs and influenced the policy decisions regarding state matters (Kidwai, 2008:118-119).

In 1764, when Shuja-ud-Daulah lost the battle of Buxar, Bahu and Nawab Begum helped him out of their own treasury to pay back the punitive charges imposed by the Company. When Shuja-ud-Daula died, Bahu Begum ensured the succession of her son Asaf-ud-Daula to the throne despite facing opposition from the Company. While the British considered the Nawab incompetent to rule, Asaf-ud-Daulah on the other hand did not want to become a plaything in the hands of either Company or his mother and grandmother. He shifted the capital from Faizabad to Lucknow in 1775 to escape the domination and interference of the two begums.

It is indisputable that the Nawabs and the Begums played a key role in the politics of Awadh. However, once Asf-ud-Daula shifted the capital to Lucknow, the priorities shifted to developing Lucknow at par with other provincial capitals of eighteenth century.

32.3.2 Lucknow as an Administrative and Economic Center

After Asaf-ud-Daula transferred the capital from Faizabad to Lucknow (1775), it became the centre for doing business, building treasury, judicial courts and prisons. The palace complex became the focus of diplomatic, governmental, judicial, financial, and military functions. There were different buildings within the complex allocated for specific work. The palace also housed domestic servants, royal coachmen, personal bodyguards, people in charge of royal tents and hunting equipments, artists and skilled craftsmen needed for the royal upkeep (Jones, 1985: 13-14).

The efflorescence of the rich courtly culture of Lucknow in the eighteenth century can be gauged from its vibrant commercial engagements then and the quaint architectural heritage, which is ubiquitous in the city even today. The famed court was the fulcrum around which the urban life revolved. The Nawabs constructed large palace gardens, major mosques, gateways, *imambaras* and the *chowks*. The affluent Nawabs along with their privileged entourage exhibited feudal tendencies and basked in the lap of luxury. The administrative and the military elite were concentrated in and around the royal quarter, including the Machhi Bhawan fort (a medieval fort partially demolished in 1857 and was reduced to ruins by 1890). The nobility built their own residential palaces, which were dotted with mohallas, mosques and bazaars.

Lucknow served as a nerve centre for grain trade in Oudh and the court city drew its revenue mainly from the countryside. The administrative retinue depended on agriculture

for its economic sustenance. The Sanskrit word '*gunj*' was in currency to denote a grain market, though several *gunjes* expanded into retail centers for a variety of goods. The word *gunj* also signified either name of streets, quarters or new centres of grain trade that later grew into towns. In Lucknow, the name or the title of the founder usually prefixed to the word *gunj* designated the well-known markets such as Hazratgunj, Nawabgunj, Wazirgunj and Victoriagunj (Oldenburg, 1984:13).

The feudal ruling apparatus of the city was largely dependent on the countryside for revenue. However, one cannot deny the possibility of commercial gains to certain classes who produced lavish goods and services for the elites. Workshops of artisans, craftsmen, jewellers, bankers and tradesman sprang up to supply the needs of the court and Lucknow became the hub of luxury industries in northern India. The upper class spent an estimated crore of rupees (one million pound sterling) on an ostentatious lifestyle in contrast to the modest artisans who despite constituting two thirds of the population survived on a subsistence wage (Oldenburg, 1984:12). The merchants, traders and artisans who serviced the royal household or nobility lived in close proximity to the latter's residence. The flourishing state of trade and industries in Lucknow is also attributed to the 'cautious policy followed by the rulers of Awadh' especially Nawab Shuja ud Daula and Saadat Ali Khan. They created high tariff trade barriers to resist the commercial penetration of East India Company (Trivedi, 2014: 402).

The *Chowk* (literally the square or the main bazaar for luxury goods) was a nodal point for commercial exchange. It was the oldest and continuously inhabited area of Lucknow and the principal street from the medieval period (Jones, 2006:193). The Chowk lay between Gol Darwaza and Akbari Darwaza and there were many shops in this stretch between the two Gateways. For example the cluster of jewellery shops were popularly known as *Sarrafa*.

Mandi or wholesale market was associated with bulky articles of low value, such as timber, grass, coal, vegetables (*Subzi Mandi*), food grains (*ghalla mandi*) etc. It was a trading place for any commodity and initially two mandis existed – one in Daliganj and another in Saadatganj.

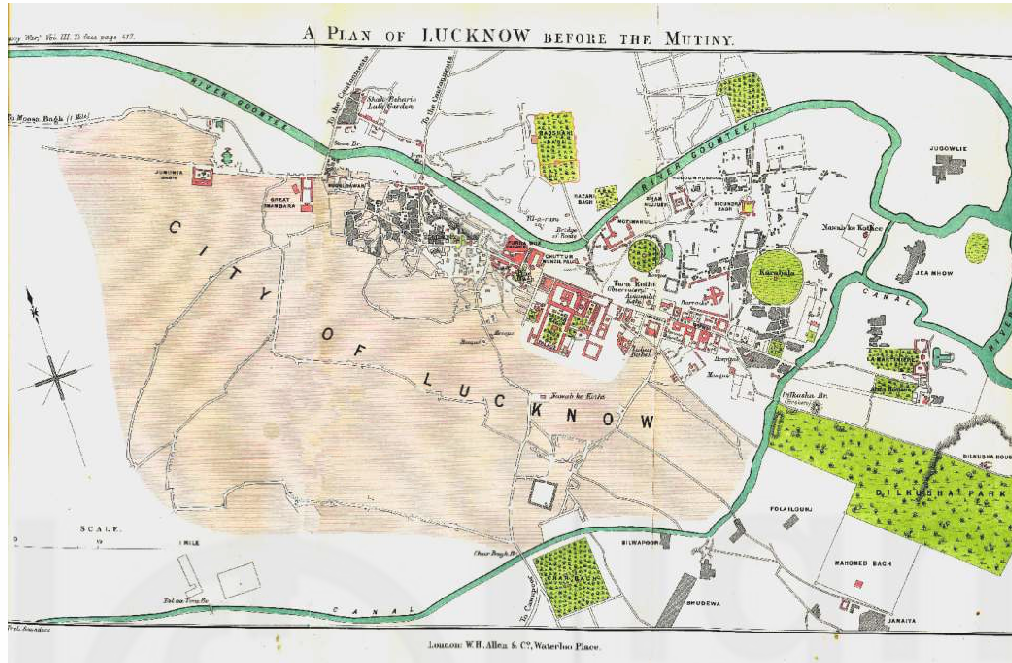
The *Katra* designated a bazaar that sold small cheap goods. It sometimes also signified the quarter or suburb dominated by artisans specialising in a particular trade. The artisans engaged in different trades and crafts often formed caste guilds and emerged as distinct local groups. This was reflected in the areas inhabited by them and the streets and the quarters were known after the popular guilds like Rastogi Tola or a Kashmiri Mohalla (Oldenburg, 1984:14).

The *Bazaar* apart from signifying a generic term for market also indicated the extent of trade and exchange relations with foreign countries. The Kandahari and Chini Bazaar in Lucknow came into existence as one-time trade centres of Afghan and China respectively. During Asaf-ud-Daula's rule (1775), the city exported sugar, indigo, cloth to England and Afghanistan. It was a centre for commerce with a bullion market and gained reputation for copper work, which was one of its biggest industries. The makers of silver, goldwares, lace and perfumers thrived under the nawabs. By 1831, seventeen lithographic press were present in Lucknow, which provided employment to people. The older profession like money lending continued to thrive under the shroffs (moneylenders). The coins from the mint had the name of the Nawabs embossed on them replacing the names of erstwhile rulers. The staple industries like tobacco manufacturing, sugar refining, spinning and weaving continued as well (Jones, 1985:13-14).

The decorative arts were industrialised in Lucknow. The obsession of the elite class with embellished clothes led to the demand for embroidered cloth. Innumerable

workshops sprang up in the city and the suburbs to cater to this need. Lucknow grew in to a centre of production for *chikan* work, *zardozi*, *kamdani*, shawl embroidery, brocade, lace work and metallic art. Many skilful artists were employed based on their ingenuity and workmanship (Trivedi 2010:32).

The stylish taste of Awadh rulers, their fixation with adornment and benevolent patronage to the skilled artists continued even in the commissioning of buildings in Lucknow.



The Residency, Palaces, &c. of Lucknow,” as they looked just before the Rebellion; a Weekly Dispatch Supplement map, Jan. 24, 1858, by Edward Weller, with original hand coloring. Published in 1880, London W. H. Allen & Co. Waterloo Place.

Source: <http://www.columbia.edu/itc/mealac/pritchett/00maplinks/colonial/wellermaps/lucknow1857/lucknow1857.html>

32.3.3 The Mughal, Nawabi and European Architectural Legacy

Lucknow is a city built by immigrants who enriched its architectural heritage by constructing religious (*Imambaras*² and *Karbala*³) and secular (palatial palaces, splendid gardens, educational, institutional) buildings. The city has many monuments and remnants of buildings belonging to pre-nawabi, Nawabi and Colonial period, which were raised in no apparent order.

The pre nawabi Lucknow was a curious mix of different kinds of structures like tombs from the Mughal era and a house cum warehouse known as Farangi Mahal or Frankish (White/European) Quarter.⁴ Among the Mughal Emperors, Akbar built several *mohallas* or neighborhoods south of the *Chowk*, the main bazaar of the city. He gave special treatment to the brahmans of the regions and facilitated the establishment of Mohallas such as Vajpayee Tola, Katari Tola and Sondhi Tola near the Chowk (Hasnain, 2015: 97). Jahangir built an ornate Akbari gate south of the *Chowk* and the Mirza market that was destroyed after the mutiny (Oldenburg, 1984:7). During the reign of Aurangzeb,

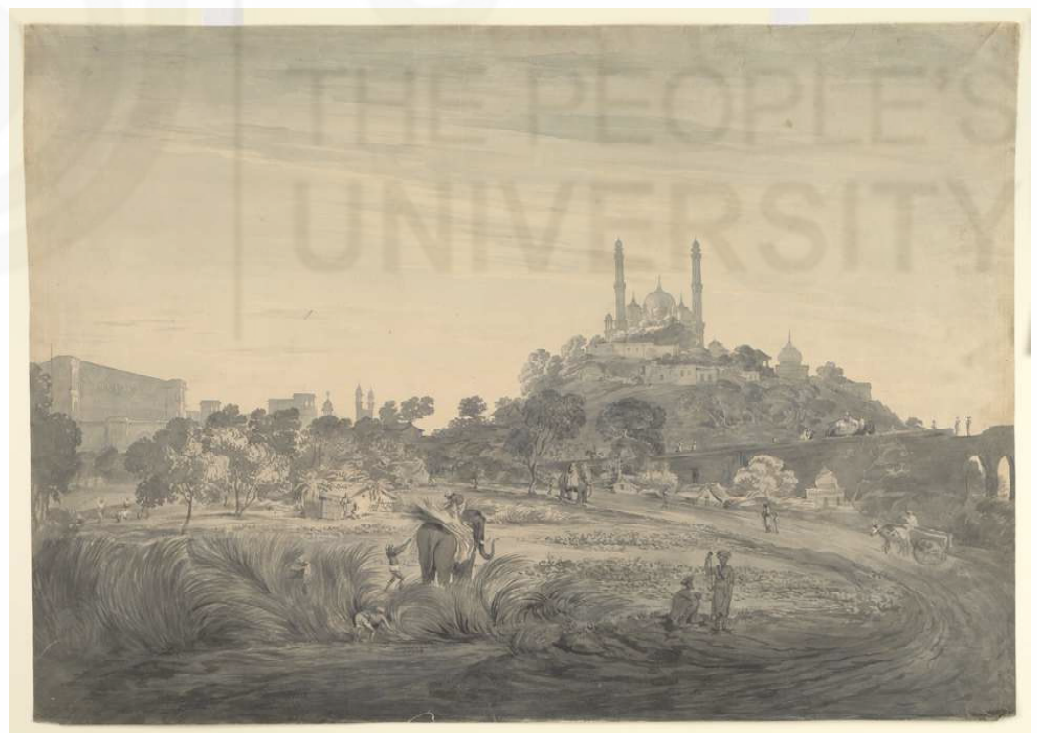
² A Shia religio-cultural centre.

³ A Shia cemetery where *tazias* are symbolically buried every year.

⁴ In 1647, the East India Company had hired the house to station its employees who would deal in *derebauds*, a kind of muslin cloth made in Hasanganj in Lucknow. Later due to want of assistance and lack of transport from Lucknow to other places, the British decided to move out.

Lucknow became a notable Sunni Theological center. He ordered the transfer of the confiscated property called 'Firangi Mahal' that belonged to a wealthy French trader to Mullah Nizam ud Din Sehaldi who founded the Sunni Theological School. The seminary was in a complex of four buildings and it produced several scholars who played a key role in twentieth century politics of Lucknow (Oldenburg, 1984:7). The Mughals made a limited contribution to buildings in Lucknow as they focused more on planning Delhi and Agra.

The Nawabs of Awadh played a key role in creating a distinct style that was different from the Mughal architecture. They developed the residential and commercial areas of Lucknow on a priority basis (Graff, 1997:3). The foremost among them was Saadat Khan, who on entering Lucknow built palaces and gardens in Lakshman Kila, which he renamed as Macchi Bhawan, (the palace of fish) (Hay, 1939: 3). The origin of Machhi Bhawan is contentious. While some attribute it to Saadat Khan, Sharar (1860-1926), an important historian belonging to the period of the last Nawab Wajid Ali Shah, attributes it to Shaikh Rahim. He suggests that either Shaikh Abdur Rahim was awarded the title of Mahi Maratib⁵ or the twenty-six arches in one portion of the court had two fishes engraved on each arch making fifty-two, which led to the corruption of Machhi Bavan (52) to Macchi Bhavan (fort). Another belief is that an Ahir named Lakhna was the architect who designed the fort and the town Lucknow was named after him (Sharar, 1975:37). It might hold some grain of truth because Saadat Khan on entering Lucknow had established his headquarters in the old Macchi Bhawan displacing the Sheikhzadas from the fort and it became the seat of the rulers of Awadh. This implies that Lakshman Kila later renamed as Machhi Bhawan was a medieval fort, which suffered irreparable damages in the mutiny period and was completely ruined by 1890.



Machhi Bhawan

Wash drawing by Henry Salt in 1803 of the the Fort of Machhi Bhawan, built on the Lakshman Tila mound, and the Mosque of Aurangzeb, with grass cutters by the roadside. Salt painted this view in the time of Nawab Saadat Ali (1798-1814). British Library (sketch 1803)

Courtesy: <http://www.bl.uk/onlinegallery/onlineex/apac/other/019wdz000001299u00000000.html>

⁵ Persian *Mahi* is fish and Arabic *Maratib* is Honour. The Mughals conferred the title 'Honour of the fish' as a mark of distinction on individuals of the highest order. Machhi Bhawan was destroyed during mutiny (Sharar, 1975:240).



Felice Beato (1858) photograph of the Machchi Bhawan in the post mutiny period.

Source: Anne S. K. Brown Military Collection

http://web.archive.org/web/20060114100252/http://www.brown.edu/Facilities/University_Library/collections/askb/beato/Beato4.jpg

Shuja-ud-Daula built a five storeyed pavilion *Panch Mahalla* within the Machchi Bhawan. Safdar Jung enlarged this *Panch Mahalla* or the main palace building situated inside the walls of Machhi Bhawan (Gordon, 2006:31). The Nawabs also built other grandiose palaces like Daulat Khana (by Asaf-ud-Daula in 1789), Moti Mahal (Nasir-ud-din-Haider), Chattr Manzil (early nineteenth century), Qaiserbagh (Wajid Ali Shah 1848-52). The last two palaces reflect a general shift in both style and function. Unlike the heavy fortresses which were designed for defense purpose, these were ‘lighter, more accessible and a place for entertainment and pleasurable pursuits’ (Gordon, 2006:31). The palace fortress, Machhi Bhawan soon afterwards lost its charm as the later Nawabs moved into more enticing palladian villas.

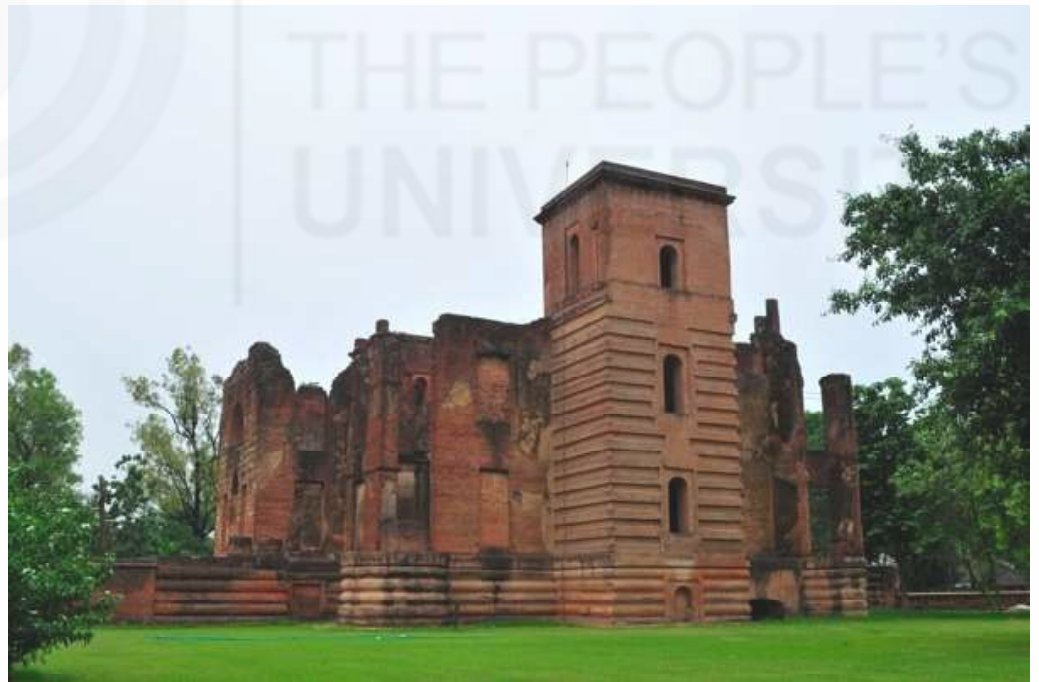
By the mid nineteenth century, Lucknow had many villa type houses, called *Kothi* for the European and Indian elite. For the Nawabs, architecture was an outward expression of their newly attained independence marked by severing of the ties from the Mughal court. The Nawabs also entertained foreigners who became their close friends and influenced them in building houses, which replicated the taste of the rich and powerful in Europe (Das, 2006:168). Asaf-ud-Daula employed a French architect Antoine Louis Polier to build the Asafi Kothi in 1789, which was the centre-piece of the New Daulat Khana Complex. Saadat Khan commissioned the building of hunting cum resting lodge called Dilkusha (pleasing to heart) in 1805. Later this place also served the purpose of celebrating ceremonies, religious festivals and hosting distinguished guests. Gore Ousley entrusted with the task of building it, made it like a prototype of a country house in Northumberland (Das, 2006:180). The *kothis* patterned after European villas served as country houses, which created a ‘hybrid’ of ‘neo classical nawabi’ mansion in Lucknow city (Das, 2006:180).



Dilkusha (Kothi) Palace

Photo by Felice Beato(1858)

<https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/b/b4/Dilkusha6.jpg>



Dilkusha Palace

Photo by Radhika Govindrajan (2008)

Apart from palaces, the Nawabs also built thoroughfare. Saadat Khan commissioned various *ganjes* (market streets) on both sides of the *chowk*, a feature common to most north Indian towns. A typical *ganj* was an enclosure of masonry or earth or simple wooden planks in which housing and stalls were built. The stalls served as a caravanserai to sell necessities to travelers, their steeds and beasts of burden. The landowners (mostly

nawabs and ministers) let-out ganjes to families and to shopkeepers and the latter often built small houses at their own expense.

While Veena Oldenburg is of the opinion that *gunj* like Hazratgunj signified market place (mentioned in 32.3.2), other scholars like Jones and Neeta Das believe that Hazratganj was a famous main road of the new city (Das, 2006:171). Saadat Ali Khan conceived the making of Hazrat Ganj in 1810 A.D. but it was Nasir ud- din Haider, who laid its foundation in 1842 A.D. This market street remains indispensable for Lucknavites even today as they frequent the place for strolling, eating and shopping there. During the colonial period, it catered primarily to the British and elite customers and exotic food items like wines, cakes, pastries, canned food were available at Hazratganj (Hasnain, 2015: 99). In common parlance today '*ganjing*' has come to signify romantic walks, leisurely strolls and carefree window shopping in Lucknow culminating in a visit to some coffee house or a restaurant. If Hazratganj was known as the market for the elite, Aminabad developed as its counterpart and was known as the market for middle class and commoners (built by Amirudduala, prime minister of Amjad Ali Shah 1842-47) (Hasnain, 2015:110).

Mostly *ganjes* symbolised either a market place or an important street around which markets developed and thrived. Some ganjes were also named after their owners or signified occupation of the workers. Saadat Khan founded the Saadat Ganj, Loha Ganj denoted the iron worker's area and Gola Ganj was meant for stocking arsenal. Over a period, many of the *ganjes* either suffered encroachment or were demolished (Jones, 1985, 9-11).

The lanes and the by lanes of Lucknow are known as *Gali or Koocha*. The Nawabs built the routes and pathways in a manner that one could traverse one mohalla to another and cover the entire city without touching the main road. The lanes where a specific occupational group resided were named after the practitioners of that vocation like the *Kanghiwali Gali* (abode of comb makers). The lane where the elite or respectable people lived was called *Koocha* and it was considered distinct from a gali. For example Koocha Meer Anees (named after an Urdu Poet who resided there), Koocha Shah Chara (named after a Sufi Saint who lived there) etc. (Hasnain, 2015: 99)

The Nawabs of Awadh modified the urban morphology of Lucknow by building many Mohallas in the city. Asaf ud Daula who shifted the capital from Faizabad to Lucknow in 1775 AD was nostalgic of the former capital of Awadh. He named many mohallas in Lucknow after the names of mohallas in Faizabad like Fateh Ganj, Rakab Ganj etc. Saadat Ali Khan established mohallas like Maqbool Ganj, Rastogi Tola (guild), Daliganj and Saadat Ganj. Nawab Naseeruddin Haider established Ganesh Ganj etc. Several Mohallas were named after the profession followed by its inhabitants such as Batashey Wali Gali, Dorwali Gali, Phool Wali Gali, Baan Wali Gali. By the 20th century many of the mohallas and lanes remained only in namesake as either some of these professions declined or people from outside migrated and settled in these areas. There were some mohallas named after Hindu women such as Bagh Padain, Rani Katra etc. Since the Nawabs wanted to promote harmony between the Muslim and Hindu communities, their quarters were established close to each other. For instance Ram Nagar was established with Husainabad, Katra Abutarab Khan with Raja Bazaar, Husain Ganj with Phool Ganj etc. (Hasnain, 2015: 94). Later on, since Shias were dominant among the Muslims, a number of mohallas in 'Old Lucknow' were almost entirely populated by them like Kazmain, Angoori Bagh, Muftiganj etc. (Hasnain, 2015: 72-73).

While opulence, oriental splendour and Awadhi culture exemplified Lucknow's built heritage, the Nawabs also commissioned the building of Imambaras that had an exclusive

Shia stamp on it. Although the design for the palaces and country houses were mostly inspired from European architecture, the religious buildings had its roots in Persian style of art and architecture confirming the Nawab's credentials as upholders of the Shia faith. The rulers representing a minority sect of Islam decided to make Lucknow the centre of the Shia faith in northern India. The Imambaras acquired the finest form here and it became the focal point of celebrating the important ritual of mourning during Muharram (Jones, 2006:16). There was a proliferation of public and private Imambaras where Taziyas⁶ were displayed and *Zarihs* were housed (Peter Chelkowski, 2006:105). Therefore, the majestic religious structures often seem to tower the other public buildings in Lucknow.

Asaf-ud-Daula built the famous Bara or Asafi Imambara (1784-91). The Nawab who had the reputation of being a philanthropic ruler, built this imposing edifice during a terrible famine, as a relief measure to provide income and livelihood to his starving subjects (Jones, 2006:7). Therefore, it became widely known

‘Jisse na de maula, usse de Asaf-ud-Daula’

(Who from heaven nought receiveth, to him Asaf-ud-Daula giveth)

(Oldenburg, 1984:16)

To which the Nawab quipped,

‘Jisse na de maula, usse kya de Asaf-ud-Daula’

(Asaf-ud-daula's altruism is dependent on God who is the ultimate provider).



Bara Imambara

Photo by Radhika Govindrajan (2008)

⁶ Taziya developed in the mid eighteenth century from the fusion of ambulatory and stationary rites followed in Iran. An artist recreates Husain's tombs in various shapes and sizes. They are carried during months of mourning, displayed in Imambaras and buried in local *karbala* (Shia cemetery). It symbolises ritual bier carrying Husain's body. The participation in the procession with the Taziya is a pilgrimage to Husain's tomb and a re-enactment of his funeral. *Zarih* is a ritual cenotaph that is re-used with new decorations every year.



Bara Imambara facade

Photo by Muhammad Mahdi Karim

Source: https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/f/f0/Bara_Imambara_Lucknow.jpg

Kifayat-ullah, the chief architect of the Imambara belonged to Delhi. The Imambara became a place of pilgrimage for Shias where the mourning rituals of the martyred Hasan and Husain at Karbala (Kar=pain and bala=trial) were commemorated every year (Jones, 2008:98). The western gateway of the great forecourt of the monument has the ornamental Rumi Darwaza (Constantinople Gate, supposedly named after a similar gateway in Istanbul). The Bara Imambara is entirely made of brick covered with stucco. The masons used recovered lime or shells from dried up lakes to produce stucco that shone as beautifully as the marble tombs of the Mughals (Peter Chelkowski, 2006:110).



Rumi Darwaza

Photo by Felice Beato (1858)

Source: <http://www.getty.edu/art/collection/objects/104613/felice-beato-henry-hering-rumi-darwaza-and-the-imambara-british-1858-1862/?dz=0.5000,0.4125,0.68>

It is interesting to note that the Nawabs had multifarious interests in making different kinds of buildings and other structures. They built lavish gardens like Alam Bagh (Garden of the World by Wajid Ali in 1850), Sikandar bagh (Wajid Ali), Qadam Rasul (horticulture garden), iron bridge (Saadat Khan 1810), a press Matba-e Sultani (by Nasir ud din Haider, which published books and dictionary). Nawab Haider built the taronvali kothi or observatory (1832-40), which housed very large telescopes and other astronomical instruments (Sharar, 1975:56). Colonel Wilcox supervised and maintained it. Many Europeans worked for the Nawabs and Lucknow became a cosmopolitan home for them as well.

European traders, planters, manufacturers, technicians and mercenary soldiers felt at ease in Lucknow. Shuja ud Daula engaged the services of Antoine-Louis Henri Polier, the East India Company's chief Engineer at Fort William, Calcutta to look after civil works and to improve the defenses of the city. The Nawab also organized his army on the European model and established workshops for the preparation of war material. He had about two hundred French and other Europeans enlisted in his service. The French influence in the Awadh court diminished significantly after his death with the only exception of Claude Martin, the Frenchman who combined the functions of trader, military adventurer, architect and rose to eminence in the court circle.

Jones has categorised the Europeans who lived in Lucknow into four groups. The first category was of the military men, who were part of the East India Company's battalions stationed in and around Lucknow as a peacekeeping force. Secondly, there were civilian officials of the Company, which included the Resident, his assistant, the Residency surgeon, chaplain, writers and other staff. Thirdly, there were Europeans who worked for the Nawabs in various capacities and lastly there were people who were not in Company service or freelancers like artists, traders, soldiers, indigo planters and shopkeepers. While the military officials and the company servants were posted officially and did not come to Lucknow of their own volition, it is the last two categories of people who settled in the city owing to personal efforts and initiative (Jones, 1997:17).



La Martiniere College
Photo by Radhika Govindrajan (2008)

Among all Europeans, the most influential foreigner in Lucknow was Major General Claude Martin (1735-1800), a French man who initially was a soldier in the East India Company in 1760. After 1775, he worked as a superintendent in the arsenal of Asaf-ud-Daula. He became a rich and influential man in Lucknow as he enjoyed patronage from both ends. He bought, sold and rented houses in Lucknow. He turned the Hayat Baksh Kothi as an arsenal that was later sold to Saadat Ali Khan (Hay, 1939:27). He built a town house for himself at a wooded site called 'Lakh-e-pera' (a lakh of trees, later renamed as Farhat Baksh) in 1781. He planned a country house named as 'Constantia' in 1796 and it is the largest European funerary monument in India. Martin is commemorated in the building Constantia, the central portion of La Martiniere college where he was buried well below the ground level (the substantial additions were made to the building from 1840-44) (David, 2006:221).

The bonhomie between the Europeans and the Nawabs can be seen in other contexts too where Lucknow became a potpourri of different cultures.

32.3.4 Art and Cultural Efflorescence

The rulers of Awadh were undoubtedly great patrons of art and culture. The Nawabi culture of Lucknow represented the 'fruition of *ganga-jamuni tehzib*' where Persian aesthetics intermingled with Indian cultural values (Madhu Trivedi, 2010:xi). The culture of Awadh was oriented towards Persia but from the time of Shuja-ud-Daula, the European influence also becomes visible. Thus, the Nawabs assimilated the Persian, European and indigenous influences to form the Awadhian culture in Lucknow.

The Nawabs had a penchant for overseas artifacts and had a huge collection of the same. Some even incorporated European mannerisms in their day-to-day lifestyle. Saadat Ali Khan, a popular ruler was well versed in the social etiquettes of English culture. He could not speak but understood and wrote English Language correctly. He was also fond of wearing English clothes. His European guests were treated to banquets in rooms decorated with English furniture, looking glasses and cut glass vases. Among the later rulers, Ghazi ul Din Haider was the first Indian ruler to adopt European courtly dresses and crown for formal occasions. His Anglo-Indian queen was fondly known as Wilayati begum (Madhu Trivedi, 2014:402-4).

The Nawabs were not merely anglophiles but promoted various art forms of music, dance, poetry and public entertainment competitions like kite flying, cock fights, quail fights etc. It is under their patronage that artists, poets, writers, musicians, painters and courtesans flourished in this period. Kathak, a dance form, gained tremendous popularity during the reign of Wajid Ali Shah, the last nawab who was a skilled musician, dancer and a poet. He established Pari Khana or fairy house for the training of young courtesans under the guidance of accomplished, musicians, dancers and instrumentalists (Trivedi 2010:28-29). He developed *rahas*, wherein he combined *kathak* and *ras* (theatre, dance and music) (Trivedi 2010:113). He composed many classical genres of music like *thumri* and improvised ghazals. He also took interest in theatre as he staged the play *Radha Kanhaiyya ka Qissa* in the Qaiser bagh complex in Rahas Manzil. He himself wrote and produced the play, which is reputed to be the first Urdu play.

Lucknow in a short span of time became the *markaz* or centre of Urdu language. With the Mughal decline in Delhi, poets, artisans and craftsmen sought refuge here since it offered both patronage and appreciation (Graff, 1997:5). The Urdu language thrived after the migration of poets like Muhammad Taqi Mir (1722-1810) and Muhammad Rafi Sauda (1713-1780) from Delhi to this city. Mushairas or open competitions among Urdu poets enthralled the audience and became a source of public entertainment.

Urdu also developed and branched out in many other forms and styles. Prominent singers like Ghulam Rasul and Miyan Jani popularized *qawwali* and *khayal* in Lucknow. In the Shia kingdom, the *marsiyas* or the poems commemorating the martyrdom of Imam Husain were improvised and they became sustained narratives of substantial length on a particular hero or event (Naim, 1997:166-169).

Rekhti as a genre of Urdu poetry developed exclusively under the Nawabs of Lucknow. *Rekhti*, the feminine of *Rekhta*, refers to poetry written mostly by men but given the voice of women. Though associated with three important *Rekhta* poets-Rangin (1755-1835), Jurrat (1748-1810) and Insha (1756-1835), *Rekhti* was also written by many others including women and became a popular style of poetry. Since it was explicit in content and represented erotic love poetry genre, the erudite literary tradition branded *Rekhti* as vulgar and distanced themselves from it. However, this failed to discourage poets who transgressed notions of gender by donning feminine attire during public trials. Rangin, the founder of the language openly admitted that his source of inspiration was the language of the courtesans in whose company he spent considerable time. The *Chapti Namahs* had a strong *kotha* linkage but much of the *Rekhti* also depicted the mundane lives of the *zenana* (Kidwai, p. 120).

Urdu gained preeminence among the courtesans or *tawaifs*, who were considered purveyors of elaborate etiquette in Lucknow. The *tawaif* is an open-ended term, which generically signified a broad spectrum of professional female performers, ranging from wealthy courtesans in the harem of the Nawab to destitute prostitutes in the bazaars on the fringes of the city (McNeil, 2009:47). They were proficient in music, dance and poetry. During the nawabi rule, it was a pleasure and a privilege for a man to be seen in the company of the courtesan (Trivedi, 2010:26). The young sons of gentry were sent to the *kothas* or salons of the best-known *tawaifs* for lessons in etiquette, mannerism and to appreciate Urdu poetry (Oldenburg, 1984:136).

The courtesans practiced their profession under the patronage of the Nawabs of Awadh. They lived in Chowk Bazaar and their apartments were centers for musical and cultural soirees. A courtesan was usually a part of the household established under a chief courtesan called *chaudhrayan* (almost like a matriarch), who had gained fame through her beauty, musical and dancing abilities. A kind or a wealthy patron usually supported her household including her entourage of singers, dancers and musicians. She would mentor young girls often related to her who eventually became courtesans. Every reputable house competed with the other in maintaining a group of skilled musicians connected to famous lineages or *gharanas* of performers. Thereby every *kotha* achieved a distinction of its own by presenting beautifully decked up women who entertained the clients with delectable food, lively music and dance (Oldenburg, 1984:136).

Even though prostitution was an 'unlawful trade', yet the evidence from colonial records reveal that the *tawaifs* were rich and the largest taxpayer under the British rule (Oldenburg, 1984:165). However, later the British were wary of them as they provided financial and logistical aid to the rebels during the revolt of 1857. The British hit back by ransacking their establishment, confiscating their valuables, urban and agricultural properties and other business ventures. (The denigration of their status under the colonial period is given in detail in Section 32.5) In order to understand the link between historical events and the social-cultural changes of Lucknow, we turn our attention to the revolt of 1857.

32.4 POLITICAL EVENTS AND THE CITY

Some political events have repercussions, which linger and prevail beyond the immediate aftermath. The consequences of such events can be gauged from their place in the collective memory of the people living in the city. The annexation of Awadh and more importantly the revolt of 1857 qualify to become the formidable events in the memory of the citizens of Lucknow. The social and urban life of the city changed dramatically post the occurrence of these events.

32.4.1 Impact of the Annexation of Awadh (1856) and the Revolt of 1857

Oudh was the most coveted province from the time of the Mughal era and Lucknow as its capital gained the privilege of possessing the richest hinterland. In the eighteenth century the British, while using Oudh as a buffer against the northwest, steadily eroded its territories and revenues. As Oudh shrank in size, the powers of the British resident grew in the court and he demanded equal if not more respect than the king did. Moreover, the East India Company undermined the ability of the ruler by creating a competing power structure. Lord Dalhousie the Governor General of India (1848-52) alluded to Oudh as the luscious “cherry that will drop into our mouth one day” especially if the British continued, “shaking the tree to help it down”. As expected, on 13 February 1856, the British annexed Oudh on the pretext of maladministration (Oldenburg, 1984:9).



Secunderbagh, Lucknow

Source: Anne S. K. Brown Military Collection: Photographic views of Lucknow taken after the Indian Mutiny; http://web.archive.org/web/20071222051622/http://www.brown.edu/Facilities/University_Library/collections/askb/beato/beato.html; https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/2/26/Image-Secundra_Bagh_after_Indian_Mutiny_higher_res.jpg

However more than the annexation of Awadh, it was the mutiny of 1857, which became a deciding factor for the British to revamp the city in a daunting manner. The encounter with disease, dirt and death were etched in the minds of the colonial officials and survivors. Hence, they took due cognizance of it while attempting to plan the city after the violent insurrection was over (Oldenburg, 1984:26).

The sepoy discontent, which was simmering in Barrackpore in March 1857, broke out as a full-fledged mutiny at Meerut on 11 May 1857. Later it spread like a wild fire to northern India and Lucknow was engulfed by the revolt on 30 May 1857. Initially, the 7th Regiment of the Oudh Irregular infantry refused to accept the cartridges for their rifles. By the end of May, the soldiers led the uprising in the city and participated in the burning of property and attacking the European Bungalows. The rebels besieged Lucknow for almost 140 days. The epicenter of the revolt in Awadh was Lucknow, but the sepoys received solidarity from peasants and *taluqdars* of the nearby regions as well. These classes fought on behalf of the deposed Nawab, reacting sharply to the British annexation of Oudh, new settlement policies, alienation of land rights, over assessment of revenues, loss of older ties of protection and patronage.

32.4.2 Changes in the Layout and Administration of Lucknow

Veena Oldenburg has looked into the governance and planning of Lucknow in the aftermath of the mutiny of 1857. According to her, the colonial focus strategically shifted from interference in the native social customs to reconfiguring the urban spaces. The three imperatives that dominated the policy in the urban context were safety, sanitation and loyalty (Oldenburg, 1984:xv). Henceforth the reconstruction of Lucknow and the reconsolidation of British power happened in a systematic and intrusive manner to preempt any form of future dissension against the authority. In fact, Act X of 1858, which remained in force for two years made the inhabitants of cities, towns and villages culpable to pay fine or face punishment if they were found guilty of fomenting trouble (Oldenburg, 1984: 59).

The Nawabi capital was seen as a dangerous city, which had narrow alleys that had facilitated the sinister rebellion and made defence impossible. The dense city with labyrinthine rows of residential and commercial buildings, mosques and temples had served the cause of the rebels. Therefore, it was necessary to modify the form of the city to prevent any misadventure in future (Oldenburg, 1984:27-28).

In such a scenario, the appointment of a military personnel to reshape the city does not come as a surprise. Colonel Robert Napier of the Bengal Engineers with a proven record of military and engineering feat in difficult terrains seemed a befitting candidate to plan Lucknow. He had the experience of building roads in Darjeeling, designing the cantonment in Ambala etc. Moreover, his selection also served the possibility of vindicating and reinstating the authority of colonial power, still convalescing from the consequences of the revolt. He proved his mettle by producing 'Memorandum on the Military Occupation of the city of Lucknow' on 26 March 1858. Thus, in a rather short span of time, a blueprint for making the city invincible emerged (Oldenburg, 1984:30-31).

The Napier plan proposed to establish several military posts in prominent buildings including Machchi Bhawan fort. All the constructions around these posts were to be cleared. The roads had to be broadened to make the movement of troops swifter and easier. Scores of houses were razed, garden enclosures defaced, cemetery and mosques levelled to realise this plan. The old meandering alleys, which functionally served the purpose of allowing people to mingle, exchange pleasantries, buy things from itinerant

hawkers soon disappeared. For Lucknavites the ‘frenetic construction work was an extension of the battle they had just lost’ (Oldenburg, 1984:35). The plan apart from justifying strategic necessity was a punitive measure directed specifically against the Muslim community for their participation in the revolt.

The British in one sweep of Act, which was reminiscent of defiling Delhi’s Jama Masjid in the same period, occupied the Asafi Imambara and Jami Masjid. The Asafi or Bara Imambara was not only a place of worship but also contained the tomb of the Nawab Asaf-ud-Daula. The British regimental barracks deliberately reviled the holy place by eating pork, drinking alcohol and trampling the sacred hall with their boots. The seizure of many other mosques in Lucknow ensured that spaces to congregate, pray and socialize were unavailable to the people. Thus, the implementation of Napier Plan in the city hastily converted the Muslim holy places into temporary barracks widening the Shia-Sunni and Hindu-Muslim divide.

The vision of a safe city also meant that a vast sum of revenue had to be collected to provide expeditiously for the civic services. Hence, a strong, centralized civil government came into existence to tackle the chaos and provide an orderly rule (Oldenburg, 1984:64). The Municipal Committee specifically looked into the civic affairs. The committee with native participants or Indian collaborators became the arena of enforcing colonial reforms and they formulated bylaws to regulate the city life. The inclusion of elite or prominent men in the city as members of committee did not mean that their opinion mattered on urban reforms but it was done to ensure that they endorsed the levying of local taxes. The Special Act XVIII of 1864 for Lucknow city legalized the constitution of the Committee (Oldenburg, 1984:79).

The aim of the tax collection was to provide a salubrious city. The Sanitary Report of Lucknow 1868-69 suggested that the butchers, workers in tanneries and distillery were to be relocated to the outskirts of the city. The plan to resettle these workers and build a new colony for them never materialised. The citizens had no prior experience of direct taxation under the Nawabs. Earlier, the funds for the city came from the state coffers, which were replenished from the countryside (Oldenburg, 1984:145). The process of estimating and collecting taxes implied that the everyday life of individuals now came under official surveillance. The *mohalla panchayats* were roped in to assist the trade headman to assess the individual income of residents.

Thus, civic planning became the weapon in the armoury of the military bureaucrats to reorder the city. This was an essential step to restore the confidence of the new ruling dispensation in a mutiny battered city. It was on the pretext of implementing legislations related to improving the civic services that the colonial rulers now subjugated the inhabitants. This power structure was buttressed with the collusion of allies who were loyal to the Raj (Oldenburg, 1984:182). In fact, those who had helped the rebels during the revolt were penalised (with the confiscation of their properties) and those who had sided with the British were rewarded for their assistance. With the exit of the Oudh court, the Muslims felt more vulnerable to the policies of the new rulers. On the other hand, the commercial elite composed of Jain bankers, Hindu Bania groups thrived in their money lending business. The Shiite nobles ruined in status became permanently indebted to the usurers of the city. The court lost its sheen and the schism between the Shia and Sunnis widened as the latter sought employment under the British rulers.

In the post-rebellion period when the political equation between the British and *taluqdars* became favourable, Kaiserbagh, a palace complex became a resting place for the new urban elite. The Kaiserbagh ‘had been built by the last king of Oudh, Wajid Ali Shah to house his ever growing harem, and it is ironic that the British, who set out consciously to

“woo” the taluqdars, offered them these *zanana* suites as their first physical urban base’ (Oldenburg, 1984:221). The *taluqdars* opened Canning College in 1864 as a monument of their loyalty to the British (Oldenburg, 1984:239). Thus, the new colonial rule meted out a preferential treatment to those who were unconditionally loyal to their regime.

The Colonial rulers razed, rebuilt and planned the city in a way that left an indelible mark on it. The colonial buildings validate the powerful presence of the British governance and the relics are a reminder of that era.

32.4.3 The Colonial Built Heritage

The colonial rulers built Lucknow largely following the same principle, which they applied to other towns and cities in India. The three main areas of British occupancy (where officers, army personnel and attendants lived) in Lucknow were the Residency, Cantonment and Civil lines. The British before inhabiting the place mapped out the main routes and the areas within the city. In the late eighteenth century, the East India Company’s historian Robert Orme collected the maps of Lucknow, which indicated the route between different cities. The earliest maps used by the officials depicted the direction they gave to their palanquin bearers on the stages of their journey. In 1767, Thomas Daniell drew a detailed map of *mohallas* as distinct areas, separated by paths, radiating out from the Macchi Bhavan. After the revolt, the maps were made to survey the region more closely. In December 1857, Lt Col. William Moorsom drew a precise map for military uses. Later on, the Revenue Surveyor, Lt.Col. D.C. Vanrenen’s map (1858) distinctly brought out Napier’s drastic changes in town planning (Jones, 2006:19-21). While mapping the city gave a broad idea of the morphology of Lucknow, the colonial rulers also added their touch to the landscape by building new residence and offices for their entourage.



The Residency - the walls riddled with the cannon holes during the time of Mutiny is preserved till date.

Photo by Radhika Govindrajan (2008)

The Residency developed in a piecemeal fashion in the last quarter of the eighteenth century. A natural hill was chosen as a dwelling site since it was considered healthier than marshy low-lying grounds. The Residency, which initially consisted of only three

bungalows, later became a self-sufficient unit with a treasury, banquet hall, guard's room, school, post office, printing press, stable, slaughterhouse etc. The British might have commissioned the building but the Nawabs paid the expenditure to build, maintain and furnish the houses. It was a utilitarian building, which was battered during the six-month long siege in 1857. The British preserved the ruins to commemorate it as a monument displaying the courage of its officers (Jones, 2006:194-8).

The pattern of colonial urbanisation in Lucknow before the revolt is evident in the building of a quiet and distant Residency, but in its aftermath, the focus shifted entirely to prioritising military and strategic needs. The British, who had been isolated in the Residency during revolt, now ensured that the cantonment, railways and police station flanked the civil lines and the three formed a well-linked unit.

The development of Cantonment or the permanent Military Station in Lucknow began after it became the capital of Awadh (1775). In 1801, the Nawab had to disband his forces and pay a million pound sterling for the upkeep of British troops. He reluctantly granted them land in Murian village, north to the river Gomti in 1806 to build a Cantonment. After the revolt, the Cantonment spread its outposts to the city by converting buildings, harems, palaces, mosques into armed camps. About three-fourth of the PWD budget was spent on Military works. The escalating costs were passed on to public in the form of new taxes designed for urban areas. The European officers in the Cantonment lived in a typical bungalow (with garden, servant quarters, compounds) and the native troops lived at some distance, in self-constructed thatched houses. The Cantonment included Church, cemeteries, racecourse, clubhouse etc. It created a 'European cosmos' serving the officers social and recreational needs (Oldenburg, 1984:48-52).

In 1875, the Cantonment population was 23,154 people including 4000 Europeans. It was one thirteenth of the population of the Lucknow City but the European population never exceeded 2 percent of its population. This was an anomalous situation because despite receiving the municipal subsidy, the Cantonment was outside its limits and had no reciprocal obligation (Oldenburg, 1984:54-55).

The Civil Station was the residential area for the European non-military community comprising of civil servants, traders, shopkeepers etc. The *nuzul* lands (belonging to the royal family) were at the disposal of the British and they could easily acquire real estate forcibly or at a very low price for building purposes. The civil lines had a clock tower, shopping arcade, theatre and service club. The United Service Club in the Chhattar Manzil Palace was a place designated for social gatherings. Thus, it is apt to believe that Lucknow's 'social life matched its political importance as a regional capital and a regimental headquarter' (Oldenburg, 1984:244).

In the early nineteenth century, Lucknow stood apart in terms of size and affluence after the three colonial port cities of Madras, Calcutta and Bombay (Oldenburg, 1984:3-4). However, after the deposition of the last Nawab, the city underwent social upheaval and demographic changes.

32.5 THE DECLINE IN THE NAWABI PATRONAGE

In 1800, it was estimated that about 3,00,000 people lived in Lucknow. After the ouster of the last Nawab Wajid Ali Shah (1856), the colonial administrators carried out a census in 1872. It estimated the inhabitants in the city to around 2,84,779 and by 1901 the population further came down to 2,56,000 (Jones, 1985:12; Oldenburg, 1984:19). The city witnessed not just demographic changes but also suffered socio-cultural decline that affected the livelihood of many people. The dethroned Nawab

took a sizeable number of royal elite (including artists, poets) to Matiya Burj (suburb of Calcutta) and supported them from his monthly pension. His entourage included thousand people, thirty-seven wives and several courtiers. Abdul Halim Sharar, the celebrated writer whose family joined the court of the ex-king in 1862 lived there for ten years (1869-79). He claims that Matiaburj grew into a flourishing township, complete with fine palaces, bazaars, imambaras and mosques and re-created the social life of Lucknow:

From the time of king's arrival in Calcutta, a second Lucknow had risen in its neighbourhood...there was the same bustle and activity, the same language, the same style of poetry, conversation and wit,...the same aristocrats, noble and common people... (Sharar, 1975:74).

Sharar was a noted essayist, novelist and historian who grew up in Matiaburj before returning to Lucknow to study in Farangi Mahal. He chronicled the cultural heyday of Lucknow by recounting the contribution of Nawabs to the capital of Awadh. His account is interesting as it gives detail of every-day life in Lucknow and the topophilia associated with the place, which compelled the last Nawab to quintessentially replicate it in Matiaburj (Oldenburg, 1984:203-204).

The Waning Culture of the Courtesans

The Nawab of Awadh not only patronised the courtesans but also promoted musical *gharanas* and encouraged the refinement of dance forms. The *kothas* (literally top floor) prospered owing to the extravagant patronage from the royal households. However, the British with their 'Victorian notions of propriety and masculinity' labelled them as effete, licentious and hedonist and considered their relationship with courtesans as an indicator of their decadence (S Kidwai, 2008:118).

While the Nawabs believed that the courtesans were a 'cultural asset', the colonizers treated them condescendingly. They were despised as prostitutes who were required to gratify the physical needs of the soldiers (Oldenburg, 1984:136). The *kothas* or salons were reduced to merely *chaklakhana* (brothel) and *nishatkhana* (night house and clubs) where men had neither taste for their Urdu speeches or their dance performance. This had an unfavorable impact on their artistic creativity, which declined subsequently. Earlier the *tawaifs* were in a position to make a choice on whom to bestow sexual favours but now they were associated with only flesh trade. The *kothas* became synonymous with their promiscuous activities where they entertained clients. (Kidwai, 2008: 122). The colonial government was very skeptical of them and introduced laws to regulate their interaction with the soldiers.

The European garrisons, around whose health the urban planning of Lucknow revolved were considered susceptible to communicable diseases (Oldenburg, 1984:25). The venereal disease linked with the local prostitutes was a matter of concern. The provisions given in Britain's Contagious Diseases Act, found its resonance in the Act XXII of 1864 in India. In all the cantonments, both soldiers and prostitutes were treated and quarantined in specially isolated hospitals called Lock Hospitals (Oldenburg, 1984:132). The registration and medical inspection of the prostitutes became mandatory in Lucknow. Among the 956 registered women, around 100 were handpicked and relocated to the regimental bazaars to serve the soldiers exclusively. These women routinely underwent the humiliating experience of examination of their bodies and inspection of their rooms (Oldenburg, 1984:140).

Even though the courtesans were associated with the feminisation and emasculation of males in general and the Nawabs in particular, yet they played a key role in upholding the vitality of Awadh's culture and in contributing to the court politics. Many courtesans

aided the rebels during the time of the revolt. Some even refused to give sexual favors to the British soldiers. When Nawab Wajid Ali Shah, was exiled to Calcutta, he left behind many wives. Among them Begum Hazrat Mahal, a *tawaif*, took a bold stance against the British in the revolt of 1857. Hazrat Mahal, had been sold to talent scouts for Wajid Ali Shah's harem, the *Pari Khana* (Fairy House). The *Pari Khana* had an elaborate hierarchy. Entrants came as attendants and were proclaimed as *paris* once they learnt to sing and dance. If they became concubines, they attained the status of *begums* and if they bore the Nawab a child, they were given the highest title of 'Mahal'. Mahak Pari (fragrant fairy) thus became Hazrat Mahal when she reached the top rung of the hierarchy (Kidwai, 2008: 123).

After the Nawab's ouster, she remained in Lucknow and proclaimed herself the representative of the Awadh dynasty. Hazrat Mahal defied *purdah* and took direct control of public affairs by proclaiming her twelve-year-old son Bajris Qadar, the successor to the throne in August 1857 (Roy, 2007:1722). She rallied the support against the enemy, participated in planning strategies and fortified Lucknow. Her aide Uma Devi (a *dalit virangana* or heroic woman) supported and fought with her to regain control over Awadh (Gupta, 2007:1741). When Lucknow was sieged by the British, Mahal took refuge in Nepal and refused to accept the pension offered by Queen Victoria. In her state of exile, she countered, Queen Victoria's proclamation as Empress of India with one of her own decree, which was affixed with a royal seal. She did not compromise on her status and dignity and died in Nepal in 1874 (Kidwai, 2008:123).

By 1860s, the British had succeeded in suppressing the rebellion and in eliminating their foes. The form of the city had changed drastically. The old city was considered populous and decaying while the new city comprising of cantonment and civil lines was thriving and bustling with activity. The schism between the old and the new city made the integration implausible (Oldenburg, 1984:264). By this time, The British began to promote Allahabad, the Hindi speaking heartland of India over the proverbial Urdu speaking city of Lucknow. Allahabad gained primacy as the capital of Oudh for strategic reasons as it seemed easily defensible and had direct links with Calcutta. The British reasoned that in order to govern Awadh more frugally, it should be merged with the neighbouring North West provinces. Thus, two provinces of Oudh and North West were amalgamated into a single state of the United Provinces in 1877, with Allahabad as its capital. Lucknow was demoted to a provincial town and it languished for a while until Harcourt Butler restored it as the capital of United Provinces in 1920 (Oldenburg, 2007:27).

While the urban planning of Lucknow under the British rule seemed inevitable, it did receive backlash on more than one occasion. A notable urban planner, Patrick Geddes was its strongest critic and questioned the government for developing the city in a flawed manner.

32.6 RE-EMERGENCE OF LUCKNOW IN THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

Patrick Geddes a Scottish biologist, sociologist, geographer and an urban town planner visited India in early twentieth century. It was an opportune moment for him as the British engaged many foreign experts to grapple with the urban squalor that plagued the cities and towns in the colonial period (Partho Dutta, 2012:1-2). He travelled extensively and wrote a series of town planning reports on around 40 cities and towns in India.

In 1916, Geddes wrote a detailed report appraising Lucknow's urban morphology. He was appalled at the demolition of large parts of the 'historic core' of the Indian cities and 'appreciated the varied urban and civic traditions of pre modern India' (Partho

Dutta, 2012:4). By this time, Lucknow had become a layered city within a short period. For instance, the Machhi Bhawan, which somehow survived the Napier plan, was demolished in 1891 and by 1912, Samuel Swinton Jacob built King George and Queen Mary's hospital and College on the same site. (Gordon, 2006:37). This indicated a remarkable urban change within a short period.

Geddes was displeased with the obdurate laws, which restricted the layout and façades of houses and shops. The balconies that people used for airy extensions of rooms were prohibited. He pointed out that the British uniform and regular-shaped structures had replaced the 'sporadic, self expressive, ornate balconies and other structures produced by native artisans (Oldenburg, 1984:120). His exasperation was evident from what he wrote:

At various points I have made suggestions in details; but rarely have I had any serious criticism to make. The only one, in fact which I need to mention, is to deprecate, in at least one section, a profusion unnecessary of roads and lanes to houses. The principle of planning is not to put roads round the houses but the houses round the roads and to keep this clearly in view is a main secret of economic planning... similarly bye-laws (sic) were made for houses and not houses for Bye-laws (sic)... (Geddes, 1916:32)

Patrick Geddes thoroughly disapproved the broad roads built by Napier. He considered them 'out of place in the antique city and even as unbeautiful as they are destructive and costly' (Geddes, 1916:21). He criticized the 'wide and monotonous' boulevards in the city which were incompatible with the customary buildings. On the contrary, he suggested the narrowing of the Victoria Street and quipped that a boulevard of that width seemed 'exceptional and unnecessary even in Paris' (Geddes, 1916:6). He advised that the roads should be re-built in a way that restored the splendor of the old city and the street should become a place for social and commercial transactions (Oldenburg, 1984, p.42).

Geddes was one of the first people to observe that the Indian towns were 'organic' in form or rooted in a specific historical and regional context (Narayani Gupta, 2011). He was supportive of indigenous artisans and admired them for their building elegant structures in Lucknow. He appreciated the 'skill and beauty of old craftsmanship', which suited the dwelling forms of the city. He suggested that the local artisans should be allowed to practice their unique expertise even in the changed political scenario (Geddes, 1916:37). It is a pity that his advice went unheeded and his ideas were dismissed as utopian and lacking pragmatic sensibility. Nevertheless, his critique as an urban planner remains thought provoking and relevant.

In the twentieth century, apart from the Municipal Board who looked after the urban affairs of Lucknow, a large number of civil servants 'untrained in town planning', with 'little knowledge or experience', were given authority to revamp the city (Jopling, 1923:28). After the passage of 1919 Act, a body of Town Improvement Trust emerged in Lucknow, and its members suggested schemes to decongest the city, provide markets, sites for factories and industries, etc. (Jopling, 1923:29). The stage was set to make Lucknow a vibrant city again.

By this time, the political fortunes of Lucknow revived and it began to regain its lost significance. As the national movement gained momentum in the United Provinces (UP), Allahabad became the hotbed of politics for the rising middle class. It was also the headquarters for the United Province Congress organization and a number of leading nationalist newspapers were printed in Allahabad. Governor Harcourt Butler (1918-22) played a crucial role in focusing attention on the development of Lucknow and mooted the idea of making it the capital of United Provinces. Lucknow was favoured

over Allahabad now as the Taluqdars were ready to support the British government in return for guarding their landed interests. In 1921, Butler called Allahabad the ‘intellectual’ capital and Lucknow the ‘social’ capital of the province. Thus, the stage was set to make Lucknow the provincial capital as it became the residence of governor, housed the chamber of the Legislative Council, and was the headquarters of All India Muslim League (Joshi:242-244). The Sunni *ulema* of the Firangi Mahal also came to limelight after they participated in the Khilafat movement. Thereafter, Lucknow gained national recognition and preeminence as a political, educational and administrative hub in north India.

32.7 SUMMARY

The Shia Nawabs of Awadh shared an extraordinary relationship with the city of Lucknow, which witnessed the flowering of a specific aesthetic style, literary elegance and an inimitable *lucknavi tehzeeb* or protocol that became synonymous with their reign. The rule exemplified an assimilation of Persian, European and indigenous influences that resulted in a cosmopolitan and hybrid ‘Awadhian’ culture. The British coveted the opulent and resourceful province of Awadh for many strategic reasons. Lucknow as its provincial capital by default inherited the splendour of the famed court and became the focus of colonial interest.

The rebellion of 1857 marked an important turning point in the political history of British in India and in the life of this city. In the aftermath of the revolt, the colonial rulers strengthened their hold over the capital of Awadh by shifting focus from social reform to reconfiguring the urban spaces. The new governance pattern camouflaged the social and economic control ingrained in it. The military and civilian officers who reconstructed Lucknow penetrated the city more efficiently than before. The inhabitants became accustomed to paying taxes to experience the benefits planned for the city. Many of the administrative features built therein became a permanent feature of organising civic affairs, which continue to hold its sway over Lucknow and other cities even today.

Although the British annexed Awadh on the pretext of maladministration, yet they failed to take into cognizance the political stability, architectural magnificence and cultural refinement achieved under the Nawabs in the eight decades prior to their takeover. It will be presumptuous to believe that the Awadhian rulers were merely cultural conduits devoid of any political sensibilities. The fact remains that the city did not lose its charm despite the exile of the last Nawab and its demotion to a provincial town in 1877. Moreover, the ‘Awadhian’ cultural legacy has outlived different political regimes and is implicitly present in the urban life of Lucknow even today.

32.8 TIMELINE

1722-1856	Reign of Shia Nawabs in Awadh
1722-39	Saadat Khan begins to treat Awadh as its family fief
1764	Shuja-ud-Daula loses to East India Company in the Battle of Buxar
1775	Asaf-ud-Daula moves the capital of Oudh from Faizabad (Ayodhya) to Lucknow
1801	The building of British Residency begins in the outskirts of Lucknow

1819	Nawab Ghaziuddin Hyder declared Oudh an independent state
13 Feb 1856	Annexation of Awadh and Nawab Wajid Ali Shah exiled to Matiaburj
30 May 1857	Sepoy Mutiny breaks out in Lucknow
1 July 1857	Rebels sieged the Residency
22 March 1858	Lucknow recovered by British
1877	Oudh amalgamated with the North West Provinces and Allahabad is made its capital. Lucknow demoted to the status of a provincial town
1920	Lucknow becomes the Capital of United Provinces

32.9 EXERCISES

- 1) Explain the political and cultural contribution of the Nawabs and Begums of Awadh to the city of Lucknow.
- 2) The revolt of 1857 significantly transformed the urban life of the city. Comment.
- 3) Elaborate on the role of the courtesans in stimulating a specific urban culture of Lucknow.
- 4) What do monuments signify? Is there any power dimension associated with them?
- 5) Discuss the unique aspects of art and architecture belonging to different political regimes in Lucknow.
- 6) How did colonial planning of the city differ from the interventions made by the Nawabs in the preceding period?

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Things to do

Watch

Shatranj Ke Khiladi (1977) movie by Satyajit Ray (based on the story written by Munshi Premchand in 1924).

Umrao Jan (1981) movie by Muzaffar Ali (based on novel *Umrao Jan Ada* by Mirza Hadi Ruswa published in 1899).

Embroidery of Lucknow: A documentary by NDTV on Youtube.

(https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7G_OTbjULq0).