

Chapter I

CHAPTER – I

HISTORY AND GEOGRAPHY OF THE MADRAS PRESIDENCY

The Madras Presidency was the Indian empire's southernmost province. Five native states bounded the presidency, including Mysore and Coorg. The Indian Ocean washed the southern coastline, while the Bay of Bengal washed the eastern coast, and it bordered Orissa, the central provinces, the state of Hyderabad, and the Presidency of Bombay's southernmost portion. Fort St. George was the administrative centre. The Presidency's capital was named after England's patron saint, in 1640. The origin of the word 'Madras' has been a source of debate. Although there are various theories regarding the same, the common consensus is that it is derived from the word, 'Madrasapattanam', that existed before the arrival of the British in India.¹

Geologically, the Presidency is largely made up of Achaean gneisses, schists, and old plutonic rocks. The raised portions above the deltaic coastal belt, that are not buried by younger groupings, are covered by these outcroppings.²

The Madras Presidency, also known as the Fort St George Presidency, was located at latitudes between 20°18' and 8°4', with longitudes spanning from 74°9' to 85°15'. From north to south, the Presidency's extreme linear length was 950 miles, and its extreme linear breadth was 450 miles.³

History of Madras Presidency

Madras has grown into a cosmopolitan metropolis that is vital to South India's historical, cultural, and intellectual development. Madras was the third most populous city in the British Empire in 1871. Madras' population growth was quite slow for fifty years, till 1921. Between 1921 and 1971, the population of the grew rapidly. Apart from a natural increase in the city's population, immigration has been cited as a major contributor from time to time.

1 Imperial gazetteer of india provincial series, madras p1

2 Ibid., p5

3 manual of the madras presidency

Madras was founded as a result of strategic need and historical circumstances. It represents the growth of British dominance in South India, with the establishment and consolidation of the East India Company in the 17th century, with its headquarters as a trading centre at Fort St. George. Within 350 years, a few dispersed villages had grown into a contemporary metropolis while maintaining its traditions, customs, and religion. Madras has historically served as a key centre for a variety of objectives, particularly in terms of trade and commerce. Madras was previously called Madrasapatnam, and it was part of the Thondaimandalam kingdom. During the period 1687-1692, the Mayor and Corporation of Madras City were established. Madrasapatnam was accorded this status after it was ruled by many kingdoms including the Golkondas, Mughals, and Europeans. In 1698, the position of Madras' administration was maintained for another 11 years. The local Nawab awarded the cities of Tondiarpet, Purasawalkam, and Egmore. The ensuing battle of Madras resulted in the siege of the city by the French, who took control over the fort and industries. Later, the Carnatic Wars resulted finally in the transfer of power to the British.

The period between 1755 and 1763 was one of massive development. A few changes, that made the city more prominent in the South were the establishment of ports, factories, a naval base and the incorporation of isolated towns as part of the city's extending boundaries. This agglomeration led to Madras becoming a British stronghold in South India⁴.

Location and Physiography

The Madras Presidency was disbanded after independence. Madras, currently known as Chennai, is India's teeming metropolis and the state capital of Tamil Nadu. It acts as a portal to the south Indian civilization, which has survived invasions and absorbed the finest of all the cultures to which it has been exposed. Madras is located on the Bay of Bengal coast in Tamil Nadu's northeast corner. It is located between 12⁰9' and 13⁰9' east Latitude on the north of equator. Madras is now a district in Tamil Nadu, India. From Thiruvannamiyur in the south to Tiruvottiyur in the north, Madras City boasts a 25-kilometer stretch of sea coast along the Bay of Bengal. The District is bounded on three sides by Chengalpattu District, and on the east by the Bay of Bengal. The City's average elevation is not higher than 22 metres above sea level, and most of the neighbourhoods are at or near sea level.

⁴ Census Of India 1991, Series 23 District Census Hand Book Madras K.SampathKumar, Director of Census Operations, TamilNadu,p10

Climate Rain Fall and Temperature

Madras has a hot climate, that falls within the tropical maritime monsoon category. Because the District is located in the tropics, the temperature is naturally high, but it is moderated, to some extent, by the vicinity of the sea. The monsoon season lasts from June to December, whereas the cold season lasts from December to February. From March to May, Madras City experiences the warmest weather, becoming a sweltering city that threatens to scorch its inhabitants and any unsuspecting visitor.

The mean minimum temperature rarely falls down to 20° C while the mean maximum temperature stays above 37° C. The actual mean minimum temperature recorded in Nungambakkam and Meenambakkam for the period between July and December in 1990, indicated that the temperature range from 22.8° C to 25.9° C and 21.9° C to 25.8° C respectively. Similarly, the actual mean maximum temperature, e for the same period was recorded between 28.9°C to 35.1° C respectively, in the two stations.

However the average actual mean minimum temperature per month for the period was 24.68°C in Nungambakkam while it was 24.45° C at Meenambakkam. The humidity in the City is reported to be high when compared to other areas in the State, due to its geographical location. The average humidity recorded per month at Nungambakkam and Meenambakkam, for the period between July and December 1990, were 76.83% and 76.33% respectively. It is reported that the humidity rate during morning was higher than the evening⁵.

Topography

About a mile south of the village of Madraspatanam, two streams running from the west and north meet at a single outflow to the sea. The first, then known as the Triplicane River and today known as the Cooum, winds its way through Chetput, Nungambakkam, and Triplicane villages. The North or Elambore River, a minor stream, flowed parallel to and about a mile away from the east, along the western edge of Madraspatanam, till it reached the current General Hospital location. It then curved steeply to the east before turning south for about three quarters of a mile and meeting the Triplicate River at its mouth. The present General Hospital was within 300 yards of the Triplicane River, and at that point, a cut was created between the two streams, most likely to equalise flood levels, at some unknown time before the end of the Seventeenth Century. As a result, the low-lying, marshy stretch of land

⁵ Ibid., p11

between the rivers was surrounded by water, and it was referred to as an island as early as 1643. The two streams combined to form a large backwater, with only the rainy season providing access to the sea. Three quarters of a mile north of the outlet, a location on the surf bank of sand between the Elambore River and the sea was chosen as the site for the fort. Mylapore has long been associated with Hindu mythology as the location where Sati, Siva's spouse, performed penance in the form of a peacock ('mayil' in Tamil) and hence obtaining its name. The famed Shrine of Sri Kapaleswarar, one of the ancient temples of South India, is located here.⁶

Natural Division

The Presidency, like the rest of India, was defined by natural borders: a narrow, elevated strip of land running between the Western Ghats and the Indian Ocean, and the Eastern Ghats and the Bay of Bengal. Though a section of the Eastern Ghats ran through the western parts of Ganjam, Visakhapatnam, and Godavari Districts, they were not only different in climate and physical elements from the rest of the districts, but the inhospitable jungle that covered the area was home to primitive forest tribes who were different in religion, language, customs, and ethnic features from the plains dwellers.

The Presidency had five natural divisions :

- a. The strip facing the Indian Ocean which may be called the west coast
- b. The central table lands usually known as the Deccan
- c. The Agencies
- d. The east coast division proper occurring as far south as Nellore District
- e. The south division comprising the remainder of the Province⁷

River System

A narrow, elevated strip of land, separating the Western Ghats from the Indian Ocean and the Eastern Ghats from the Bay of Bengal served as a natural barrier separating the Presidency from the rest of India. Though the main regions of its three northernmost districts, Ganjam, Visakhapatnam, and Godavari, ran across a section of the Eastern Ghats, they were distinct from the rest of the districts not only in climate and physical elements, but also because of the inhospitable jungle that covered the area and which was home to primitive

⁶ Ibid., 17

⁷ Imperial Gazetteer of India, MADRAS, VOLUME 1, p2

forest tribes who were distinct in religion, language, customs, and ethnic aspects from the plains dwellers.

Industrial Growth

In terms of industry, Madras is one of India's most important cities today. Indirectly, European and Indian business firms, created in the latter half of the 18th Century and the latter half of the 19th Century, contributed to the city's economic prosperity. There has always been a migration of people to the City. The attitude of government toward industry is another factor that can influence industrial progress⁸.

In a developing economy, the British government did not see the benefit of organising and regulating industry. The government pursued a non-interference approach. The British were limited to running a few commercial companies of their own, while a lack of raw resources near the City, insufficient power. A lack of machinery. A lack of cash, and other factors, hampered the growth of the industries. The City's industrial growth was not prioritised by the City's pre-independence leadership.⁹

Mr. Thomas Parry created the first factory on record, a tannery in Santhome, in 1855. In 1939, Madras had 120 industrial units out of a total of 1871 in the State. The industrial revolution began in the early Twentieth Century. Madras City had 141 factories by 1939, with an average daily workforce of 20946 workers. The number of workers increased by 50 percent as the number of factories increased. The Second World War provided a huge boost, as a large number of industrial units were forced to work at full capacity and in multiple shifts to satisfy the rising demand. During the latter half of the Nineteenth Century, a number of foreign enterprises, largely European, established themselves in Madras, the most notable of which being Simpson, Spencer's, Addison, Best & Co., Burmah Shell Oil, and others.¹⁰

IRRIGATION

Due to abundant rainfall, artificial irrigation, except for the most basic type, is not required on the west coast. The practice on irrigated land varies depending on the water supply. When water is plentiful, rice is the only crop planted. Irrigated regions are well-

8 . Opcit., p3

9 . Imperial Gazetteer of India volume1, p3 to 4.

10 . Census of India.1991 Seris-23, p21.

manured, either naturally or artificially, with intensive farming necessitating, among other things, the extensive use of leaf manure, which is a major practical concern.¹¹.

Lakes

The tides and streams that drain the region, divide the Chilka Lake in Ganjam and the Pulicat Lake in Nellore, which are both lagoon branches. The fight between rivers and the sea on the Western Coast has resulted in the creation of an unusual string of backwaters that encircles the bulk of the beaches in South Kanava, Malabar, and Travancore¹².

Ponds

Ponds provide a variety of purposes, including providing water for agriculture and livestock, a source of insect and plant-based food, and cover for emerging plants and trees.

Wells

Growers own several wells that provide water to about a fourth of the irrigated land, in addition to the government irrigation works. These are almost always massive, long-lasting constructions with masonry revetment. They irrigate only three acres of land on an average, compared to nine acres in northern India. However, this is due to the fact that they are typically employed for producing valuable crops that require a lot of water, rather than irrigation of basic grains. The cost of digging them organically varies a lot depending on the soil type¹³.

CONSTRUCTION

Canals

The Kurnool-Cuddapah canal is a 190-mile irrigation and navigation canal in Madras, that flows through the Kurnool and Cuddapah Districts, into the Pennar, and finally to Cuddapah Town. It flows from the Sunkesula dam, 17 miles above Kurnool, across the Tungabhadra, via the Kurnool and Cuddapah Districts, into the Pennar, and finally to the town. The canal is the result of a methodical plan to bring private finance and enterprise to

11 Census of India. 1991 Series-23, p, 22.

12 Imperial Gazetteer of India, vol, p44

13 Manual of the Madras Presidency

the Indian irrigation sector from England. It was built by the Madras Irrigation and Canal Company, which was established in 1858 by an Act of the Parliament¹⁴.

Buckingham Canal is a salt-water navigation canal that runs for 262 miles along the east coast of the Madras Presidency, from Pedda Ganjam in Guntur District, through Madras city, and on to Merkanam. in South Arcot. It is tidal to a significant extent wherever the river bars are open. It connects to the Krishna River delta system's fresh water high-level canals, and therefore, to the Godavari delta canals, allowing water contact with the port of Cocanada across a total length of 462 miles. The Buckingham Canal lies within three miles of the coast for the most part, and numerous sections are within half a mile. Pulicat Lake appears in several scenes¹⁵.

Dams

Dams are being built in almost every country in the globe, whether developed or developing economies, for a variety of reasons, including energy generation, irrigation, and flood control. Dams are more than just technological fixes and they are a mix of technical, social, economic, political, and legal processes.¹⁶

Dams are regarded as the state's backbone for large-scale irrigation. There is little doubt that the main dams ensured the state's food security. Food grain self-sufficiency was ensured. In the years following 1967, the Madras State witnessed the Green Revolution. All the projects are extremely beneficial to the nation's multifaceted development.¹⁷

The Grand Anicut or Kallanai Dam and the Soloaiyar water reservoir are located in the State of Madras and they are India's oldest and deepest dams. The following is a list of the state's main dams. Aliyar Dam, Gomukinadhi reservoir, Sathanur water reservoir, Krishnagiri water reservoir, Pechiparai water reservoir, Vaigai dam, Mukadal dam, Amaravathy dam, and Mettur dam are all well-known dams in Madras State.¹⁸

14 ImperialGazetter of India, volume 1 p,52.

15 Imperial Gazetteer of India .volume1, p180, 181,182.

16 <https://dams.development.com>

17 Dam SITE.WALL REPORT2020

18 WWW.WALH THROUDHINDIA.COM

Mountains

From a geographical aspect, the Presidency was divided into three sections: the long and broad eastern coast, the shorter and narrower Western coast, and the high table land in the interior. These divides are dictated by the two massive mountain ranges of the Eastern and Western Ghats, which provide the key to the configuration of all of Southern India¹⁹.

The Eastern Ghats are a continuation of Chota Nagpore's hill system, and they span entirely through this Presidency. They run almost the entire length of Madras in a south-westerly direction until they meet the Western range in the Nilgiris. Their average height is 1500 feet, and there is a huge stretch of low land between them and the sea. The Western Ghats, on the other hand, stretch southwards along the Indian Ocean's shoreline from north of Bombay, satisfying all the characteristics of a mountain range²⁰.

They rise abruptly from the coast in the Madras District at a distance of 10 to 50 miles, catching the majority of the monsoon's rainfall, and there is no stream that does not pass through them in the south. Their peaks are between 5000 and 8000 feet in elevation²¹.

The Shevroys near Salem, the Annamalai hills in Coimbatore, and the Palani hills in Madurai are some of the most notable outlying spurs and masses of hills. Annamudi Mountain, part of the Anaimalai range, is currently the highest mountain range in southern India²².

They spread across alluvial deltas before reaching the sea, where the agriculture engineer could regulate and utilise them. The basin of the Godavari is estimated to be 1, 12,200 square miles in area, with an 898-mile length. Krishna covers an estimated 94,500 square miles and stretches over 800 kilometres. With a length of 472 kilometres, the Cauvery's basin is estimated to be 3, 27,700 square miles in size. Each of these rivers has a large number of tributaries²³.

19 History of Land Revenue Settlement and Abolition of Intermediary Tenures in TamilNadu, 1977.

20 Vadilal Dagli, Natural Resources in the Indian Economy. Ana and co-Bombay, 1971, p293.

21 S.Y.Krishnaswamy"Monograph of Madras"p5

22 Francis Buchanan.A.JourneyfromMadras –Through the countries of Mysore.canara and Malabar London 1807,p8

23 Manual of the Madras Presidency.The Government Press.1886,p13

Soils

The 'outer weathered layer of the earth's soil crust' is characterised as soil. The Presidency's soils are split into four categories.

1. Alluvial
2. Black cotton
3. Red
4. Laterite

In both coastal and delta contexts, alluvial soil has no chemical or mineralogical properties in common with the rock on which it is deposited. The Krishna, Godavari, and Cauvery deltas, as well as sections of south Arcot and Thirunelveli, are home to them. Paddy is the main crop, but higher elevations also yield sugarcane, plantains, and turmeric. Around a million acres of black cotton soils make up roughly a third of the province's agricultural area. They can be found in Guntur and Krishna in the north, as well as Ramnad, Trichinopoly, and Thanjavur in the south. Cotton and sorghum are important crops in the north, while cumbu is important in the south²⁴.

Two-thirds of the cultivable land area, or twenty million acres, is covered by red soils. The west coast and central districts are particularly devoid of red soil areas. Red soil is used to grow almost all crops.²⁵ In 1807, Buchanan was the first to use laterite soil to create the brick-colored earth that is suitable for drying bricks. Laterites thrive in climates with high annual precipitation of over a hundred inches and a dry, hot phase. The two phrases refer to the two varieties' relative positions on the highlands near the beaches. Paddy is a low-cost crop that thrives in these environments. Other crops grown include ginger, pepper, and plantains.

Agricultural Conditions in Madras Presidency

Agriculture in the Presidency is naturally impacted by the environment, soils, and seasons. For the entire month of March to October, the climate is hot and equable, with high temperatures combined with substantial atmospheric dryness in the centre area. It is in the northern hemisphere, between 8o and 16o north latitude. For the entire month of March to October, the climate is hot and equable, with high temperatures combined with substantial atmospheric dryness in the centre area. As previously said, the West Coast receives a heavy

24 S.Y.Krishanswamy,History of Land Revenue Settlement and Abolition of Intermediary Tenures in TamilNadu,1977,p6

25 Franas Bachanan,op.cit.,p8

and constant fall of 100 cms and more while the East Coast benefits fully from the north east monsoon. Further, where rainfall is scarce, it is the most variable in terms of both amount and distribution. While much of the rain is too light to be helpful in the tropical sun, there are frequent excessive and harmful intervals and early cessations of water flow to irrigation sources during critical seasons. The environment in the Deccan and central areas of India is mostly dry, with dew occurring only during the winter months²⁶.

Area, Chart and Total Districts of Madras Presidency

1.ANANTAPUR

The Madras Presidency's centre of four ceded districts are situated between 13°41' and 15°14' N. and 76°49' and 78°9' E. and covering 5557 sq miles. It is bounded on the north by Bellary and Kurnool districts, on the west by Bellary and the state of Mysore, and on the south by the same state. Only the northern and eastern parts of the districts have been studied by geologists, and all that is known about the rest is that it is made up of archaean crystalline rocks.

The climate is one of the driest in Madras, Early March marks the start of the hot season, which lasts until early June, when the monsoon arrives. The weather thereafter improves in comparison to most other districts. Rainfall is frequently insufficient in Anantpur since it does not receive the full power of each monsoon. It is also inconsistent most of the time.

The District's history is unknown until approximately the middle of the 14th Century, when it became a part of the Vijayanagar Empire. Two of the dynasty's most cherished holdings were the formidable hill-fortresses of Penugunda and Gooty²⁷.

Meanwhile, the Vijayanagar family had relocated to North Arcot's Chandragiri. When Hydera Ali came to power, he grabbed control of the region rapidly, with Gooty looking to be the only stronghold. After Tipu, Hyder's son, was defeated by the British in 1792, the District was given to the Company.

With the exception of the northern part of the District, the soil is mostly poor and thin. Even the black cotton soil in the two northern taluks is inferior to that in Bellary and Curnool, with wide regions of high alkalinity and low yields. The colour of the red earth varies from

26. *opcit.*, pp 37,38

27 Imperial Gazetteer of India, Provincial volume 1 pp.470 471

dark red loam in valleys to stony soil in mountains. Agricultural practices differ depending on rainfall and soil type. Bellary farmers employ the bamboo drill and bullock hoe, which are far superior to the Tamil districts broadcast planting and manual weeding techniques²⁸.

A series of small cuts from the Pennar and Chitravathi Rivers, none of which are dammed or sluiced, water the area supplied by government channels.

Forests cover 516 square miles of the district's total land area, accounting for 9% of the total land area. Due to the aridity of the climate, famines have occurred frequently in the territory. They have a low, stunted growth pattern similar to Bellary and Cuddapah's western taluks²⁹.

2. BELLARY

With a total size of 5,714 square miles, the Madras Presidency's westernmost ceded region was located between 14°28' and 15°58' N. and 75°40' and 77°38' E. The river Tungabhadra separates it from the Bombay Presidency and the Nizam's Dominions on the west and north, the Kurnool and Anantapur Districts on the east, and the state of Mysore on the south. The District was divided east and west by a range of hills, with Sandur, the district's original state, at its centre. Several pivotal passages in the Ramayana are typically situated in the countryside near Vijayanagar. The fortunes of the early Western Chalukya kings and their heirs, the Hoysala Ballalas, were intricately linked to Bellary, according to inscriptions. 11 A group of Deccan sultans overthrew Vijayanagar after the battle of Talikkota in 1565. In the late 18th century, Hydera Ali of Mysore and his son Tippu conquered Bellary. The province was handed over to the British Empire in 1800 after Tippu's defeat and death in Seringapatam in 1799³⁰. Despite the fact that the Districts lack zamindaris, inam land accounts for more than a quarter of the total land area. The two most important dietary grains are cholam and korra. Approximately a third of the total planted area was under cultivation. The agriculturists' loans Act has also been utilised to borrow substantial sums for debt relief, seed purchasing, and other similar purposes.

28 Statistical Report of Madras Administration

29 Opcit , pp 476 - 478

30 Imperial Gazeetter of India, provincial volume 1 p 432

It is bridged by 10 dams, all of which were erected by the Vijayanagar rulers, although the supply from them has been substantially enhanced and managed by English engineers.

The District's tanks are typically small, irrigating less than 50 acres each tank on an average, totaling about 1800 acres.

Though each taluk includes a considerable area of "forest," the reserves are mostly pockets of poor scrub jungle where it is hoped that meticulous upkeep over time will foster the growth of additional timber³¹.

3. CHITTOOR

Chittoor District is located in the extreme south of Andhra Pradesh. The forest covers 30% of the total land area. Black clay covers 9% of the land. The District developed trading links with Rome. The Eastern Chalukyan Dynasty unified most of Andhra in the 11th Century. The establishment of the Vijayanagar kingdom to the south-west of Warangal halted the Muslim power's expansion. In the 17th Century, European businessmen began to become involved in Indian politics³².

Chittoor became a part of the Madras state after India's independence in 1947. North Arcot District, which was formed by the British in the 19th Century, was the forerunner to the contemporary Chittoor District. Following that, Chittoor's Headquarters District was divided into Chittoor and North Arcot Districts.

The district's average annual rainfall is 934 mm. The District has a dry and healthy climate.

The Chittoor District is one of the state's few main districts. Agriculture is a walk with nature, where farmers do not change their planting patterns, to ensure the agriculture sector's survival³³.

4. CHINGLEPUT DISTRICT

With a total area of 3,079 square miles, this District is located on the east coast of the Madras Presidency, between 12°15' and 13°47' N. and 79°34' and 84°21' E. It is bounded on

31 Ibid, p.435, 437

32 Major Agriculture crops chittur district ISSN – 2250 – 1991

33 Chittur District census hand book pp 19, 21, 58

the east by the Bay of Bengal, on the north by Nellore, on the west and south by north and south Arcot, and on the north and south by north and south Arcot³⁴. Due to its position, the temperature is temperate, similar to that of other coastal areas in the province's south, with no extremes of heat or cold. The average annual temperature in Madras City, the district's centre, is 83 degrees. Rainfall is sporadic and infrequent. The annual average fall is 45 inches across the country, but however this varies by location. The impressive monolithic temples and rathas at Mahabalipuram, commonly known as the 7 pagodas, on the seashore almost straight east of Chingleput Town, are credited to them. Chengilput's most powerful ruler, Rajaraja Deva, was at the height of his power at the time when it was rapidly conquered by the Cholas. When the Cholas fell out of favour in the middle of the 13th Century, the Warangal Kakatiyas took over the province. It was subsumed into the Vijayanagar Kingdom around 1393, It was captured by the Naiks after the battle of Talikota in 1565. After the battle of Golconda in 1687, Chingleput, along with the rest of the Carnatic, was absorbed into the Mughal Empire of Delhi. Several villages that are today part of Madras City, were included in the district in 1763. The District was divided into six taluks, with headquarters ranging from Thiruvalluvar to Madurandagam. The land was mostly ryotwari, with zamindari and 'whole inam' parts comprising up to 950 square miles of the total 3,079 square miles. Although a substantial amount of the cultivation was on poor soil, as the population grows, a larger area of land will likely be cultivated over time³⁵.

The District's major cereals are rice and ragi. Varagu is planted predominantly on inferior forms of 'dry' terrain in the Madurandagam Taluk, Indigo. Kambu, and groundnut are grown primarily in the Tiruvallur taluk, and sparsely in Conjeevaram and Madurandakam. Sugarcane and plantains, both valuable crops, are now grown in these locations, with yields ranging from 8 to 20 times higher than before. Irrigation covered 702 square miles, or more than half of the entire area of ryotwari and minor inam lands. In the District, there is not much real forest growth. With the exception of the forest surrounding the Kambakkam and Nagalapuram hills in the Tiruvalluvar taluk, which has some timber, there are 94'reserved' woodlands in the Tiruvalluvar Taluk, covering 214 square miles³⁶.

34 Imperial Gazetteer of India, Provincial Series, Madras, Volume I p 522, 524, 530

35 Imperial Gazetteer of India, Provincial Series, Madras, Volume II p 66, 67, 68

36 Census of India 1971, Administrative Atlas Volume 2

5. COIMBATORE DISTRICT

Coimbatore District is a 7,860 square mile inland district in the Madras Presidency, lying between 10°15' and 11°18'N. and 76°39' and 78°14' E. Archean gneisses buried to a significant extent beneath surface alluvium make up the majority of the district's southern half. The lower hills of the area are particularly unpleasant, especially from February to June, despite Coimbatore's climate being relatively dry and healthy the rest of the year. Coimbatore has an average annual temperature of 80 degrees, compared to 83 degrees in Madras. The amount of rain that falls in various parts of the District varies dramatically, just as the temperature. Rainfall, on the other hand, is variable and unpredictable, and the country is prone to recurrent cycles of chronic monsoon deficit, which result in prolonged droughts. Coimbatore and the south-western taluks of the present-day Salem District form the Kongu region, and Coimbatore is still known as the Kongunad. In the ninth century, the Chola monarchs conquered the Kongu region, which they dominated for about 200 years. Coimbatore passed to the Vijayanagar deputy at Seringapatnam, who had received independent powers like his colleagues. During the second part of the 17th Century, the entire territory appears to have been subjected to repeated battles and incursions. The Chikka Devaraja of Mysore acquired control of the entire region in 1704. The District was given to the Company after Tippu Sultan's defeat and death in Seringapatam in 1799. When the British took over the District, it was in a bad state. The Kollegal Taluk differs from the rest of the district in terms of agricultural conditions as much as it does in terms of temperature and elevation. With only 684 square miles of Zamindari and inam holdings, the area is almost entirely ryotwari. The ryots have made far more extensive use of the Land Improvement Loans Act than any other District in the Presidency. Irrigation covered 671 square miles of ryotwari and minor inam land cultivated, or 19% of the entire area. Many canals from the Amaravathy, fed by Korambus or temporarily across the river, irrigate 44,000 acres of first and second crop in Udamalpet, Dharapuram, and Karur. The District's wells are its principal source of water. They irrigate three times the area supplied by government channels and tanks, and they do it consistently in all but the worst droughts. Coimbatore is one of the few districts in the Presidency with actual forest, rather than the scrub and small trees that make up the majority of the technical forest area.³⁷

³⁷ Imperial Gazetteer of India, Provincial Series, Madras, Volume I pp 371, 373, 376 to 379

6. CUDDAPH DISTRICT

This is the most south-eastern of the Madras Presidency's Ceded Districts, comprising 8,727 square miles with latitudes between 13°27' and 15°14' N. and 77°51' and 79°29' E. In Telugu, Kadapa means 'gate,' and the name is thought to stem from Cuddapah, which is the entrance of Tirupathi, a sacred location. There is a lot of geological interest in the District. The highland taluks' rocks are distinct from those found elsewhere in the country. In the dense forests, tigers, sambar, and spotted deer, as well as wild hog and the rare nilgai, can be found. The two natural divisions, that make up the districts, have drastically different climates. Rainfall varies greatly depending on where you are in the country, just as temperature does. Cuddapah was never a political powerhouse, and its history is plagued with raids from other states' rulers. It was part of the Chola monarchy of Tanjore's dominion from the Eleventh to the Thirteenth centuries, when they were at the height of their dominance. After Tipu's death in 1799, the Nizam was given the remainder of the District. In exchange for a subsidiary force stationed on his land, he handed over the entire country to the British in 1800. Agricultural practices vary depending on the unique qualities of each local region. The soil is shallow and poor but there are little swaths of better-quality earth washing down from above amid the many towns. Chains of small tanks or reservoirs are frequently employed to safeguard them. The inam regions have no zamindars, and the District is entirely made up of ryotwari. Cholan, kambu, and ragi are the staple food grains. Tobacco is grown on small plots in each district. Sugarcane is grown mostly in highland taluks, while melons are grown primarily in Sidhout and to a lesser extent in Cuddapah. The entire area of ryotwari and small inam fields cultivated was 470 square miles, with 15% irrigated by canals and 40% by the farmer, and the ryots consuming little water except in bad years. Wells are frequently the ryot's primary source of water during periods of little rainfall. The District's woodlands cover 2360 square miles, or 27% of the area for which data are available. There are only a handful in the plains, and they are nearly entirely restricted to the hills. The majority of their current growth comes from coppice shoots³⁸.

7. GANJAM DISTRICT

Ganjam District is the northernmost District of the Madras Presidency, covering 8,372 square miles and lying along the Bay of Bengal, between 18°12' and 20°26'N and 83°30' and 85°12'E. Ganjam is a country that values sportsmanship. The district has one of the rare

³⁸ A Manual of the Cuddapah District in the Madras Presidency.

winter seasons in the Presidency. The agency tracts receive a lot of rain, with an average of 55 inches per year.

The kingdom of Vengi encroached on the old Kalinga state, which was eventually overthrown by the Mauryan ruler, Asoka, around 260 BC. De Bussy arrived in 1757 to restore order, but Lally, the then-Governor of Pondicherry, called him south the next year to help in the siege of Madras. Ganjam, on the other hand, took longer to pacify than any other region in the Presidency, and it took another 70 years to bring it under control. The agency tract's soils are black earth, loam, and red ferruginous land. But the first, which is the most productive, can only be found in a few patches, and the second, which is the next most prolific, is mostly used for turmeric growth. Rice, the District's main crop, is mostly spread sowed on 'dry' ground before being moved to 'wet' fields and artificially irrigated. Rice and ragi are the District's principal food crops, with rice accounting for over three-quarters of the total farmed area and ragi, at roughly one-sixth. Ganjam ryots have made few agricultural breakthroughs. Water was delivered to 213 square miles (45 percent) of the 378 square miles of ryotwari and inam land under cultivation via government channels, 127 square miles via tanks, and only two square miles via wells.

The majority of forests are on zamindari territory, and even where they are owned by the government, expanding the Act is thought to be superfluous and unwise. On one of the reserves, there is a little teak plantation, but it is not doing well³⁹.

8.9. GODAVARI DISTRICTS (EAST AND WEST)

Godavari District, with a total size of 7,972 square miles, is located on the north-east coast of the Madras Presidency, between 16°19' and 18°04' N. and 80°52' and 82°36' E. Vizagapatnam is District bounded it on the north-east, central regions on the north, the Nizam's dominions on the west, and Krishna district on the south-west.

Malaria is rampant in the agency tracts, and the Guditeru valley is especially dangerous. Along the coast, beri-beri is common. Despite the heat being harsh due to the humidity, the average temperature in Rajahmundry, the District's centre, is 82 degrees . The temperature in Badrachalam and the hill regions in general varies greatly.

39 The Ganjam District Manual, 1882

There is very little rain in the first four months of the year. Two-thirds of the annual rainfall is caused by the south-west monsoon, which arrives in the middle of June. In the District, the average annual fall is 31 inches. The Godavari River, too, has been inflicting havoc. The region was originally home to parts of the ancient kingdoms of Kalinga and Vengi. The border between these two shifted over time but it was never south of the Godavari River, and it was generally found in Vizagapatnam or possibly Ganjam, in the District's far north. The imperial capital's power was rarely felt from such a distance, and the big zamindars had essentially become self-sufficient. The British eventually took control of this land⁴⁰.

Only 3,897 square miles of the Godavari District are owned by the government, with the remaining 4,075 square miles under Zamindhari or Inam tenancy. Cultivation is done on 464 square miles of agricultural land, mostly in the delta taluks, more than once a year. Rice is the District's most staple food grain, accounting for 1,156 square miles, or 52 percent of the gross cropped area. Then there's cholam, which covers 144 square miles, and pulses, which cover 270 square miles and they comprise horse-gram and green-gram. The cropped area has expanded by more than 50% throughout this time. About 62 percent of the ryorwari and inam land are cultivated. The majority of it comes from government canals, with the rest flowing almost entirely from man-made reservoirs called tanks. The Godavari Annaicut, a massive masonry dam built across the Godavari river, feeds the canals. The Agency's Forests are mostly within the Agency's limits⁴¹.

10.GUNTUR

Guntur District is the in the Madras Presidency that was, formed from portions of Nellore's Ongole taluk and Krishna's Krishna District.

GUNTUR SUBDIVISION consists of the Guntur and Sattanapalle Taluks and it is part of the Guntur District of Madras. With a land area of 500 square miles, Taluk of Guntur District, Madras was located between 16°8' and 16°35' N. and 80°20' and 80°41' E.

SATTANAPALLE TALUK in Guntur District, Madras was spread over an area of 714 square miles, located between 16°15' and 16°49' N. and 79°51' and 80°26' E.

40. mperial Gazetteer of India Volume I pp 196, 202

41 . Census of India 1971, Administrative Report of Tamilnadu

GUNTUR TOWN the headquarters of the Guntur District was located in 16°18' N. and 80°28' E⁴²

11.KISTNA

Kistna District was spread over an area of 8,498 square miles and located on the north-eastern coast of the Madras Presidency, between 15°37' and 17°9'N and 79°14' and 81°33'E. Malaria was rampant in the agency tracts, and the Guditeru valley was especially dangerous. Along the coast, beri-beri was common. Despite the heat being harsh due to the humidity, the average temperature in Rajahmundry, the district's centre, was 82 reported degrees. The temperature in Badrachalam and the hill regions in general varied greatly.

There is very little rain in the first four months of the year. Two-thirds of the annual rainfall is caused by the south-west monsoon, which arrives in the middle of June. In the District, the average annual fall was 31 inches. The Godavari River, too, has been inflicting havoc. The region was originally home to parts of the ancient kingdoms of Kalinga and Vengi. The border between these two shifted over time, but it was never south of the Godavari River, and it was generally found in Vizagapatnam or possibly Ganjam, in the District's far north. The imperial capital's power was rarely felt from such a distance, and the big zamindars had essentially become self-sufficient. The British eventually took control of this land⁴³.

Only 3,897 square miles of the Godavari District were owned by the government, with the remaining 4,075 square miles being under Zamindhari or Inam tenancy. Cultivation was done on 464 square miles of agricultural land, mostly in the delta taluks, more than once a year. Rice is the District's most staple food grain and accounted for 1,156 square miles, or 52 percent of the gross cropped area. Then there is cholam, which covered 144 square miles, and pulses, which covered 270 square miles and comprise horse-gram and green-gram⁴⁴. About 62 percent of the ryorwari and inam land was under cultivated. The majority of it was irrigated by government canals, with the rest flowing almost entirely from man-made reservoirs called tanks. The Godavari Annaicut, a massive masonry dam built across the

⁴² .Administrative Reports of Madras Presidency, Perur Archieves, Coimbatore

⁴³ Imperial Gazetteer of India,ProvincialSeries,Madras,Volumel pp 328 to 332

⁴⁴ Ibid, p.327

Godavari River, feeds the canals. The woods of the Godavari are particularly valued because of their diversity and ease of use.⁴⁵.

12. KURNOOL DISTRICT

With an area of 7,578 square miles, it is one of the four ceded districts of the Madras Presidency, located between 14°54' and 16°18'N. and 77°21' and 79°34' E. It is bordered by the Tungabhadra and Kistna rivers on the north, Guntur on the north-east, Nellore on the east, Cuddapah and Anantapur on the south, and Bellary on the west. Kurnool is geologically located in the middle of a basin inhabited by the Cuddapah and Kurnool systems, which are both large azoic formations. Each of the District's tree natural divisions has its own geological characteristics. The eastern half is part of the Cuddapah system, which is dominated by slates over quartzites⁴⁶.

The Nallamalai forests, which cover around 2,000 square miles and have a wide variety of trees, are the best in this section of the Presidency. All the game, found in such areas may be found in the hill country. Kurnool's climate cannot be described as healthy. The rainfall is light and erratic, and the District as a whole is part of the Presidency's famine zone. The District's centre, or Nandyal valley, receives the least amount of rain. There is less than 18 inches of yearly rainfall, compared to 26 inches for the entire District. After the Vijayanagar rulers captured the District it was under Chalukyas, Cholas, and Warangal's Ganpatis. Aurangzeb took the land south of Kistna in 1687, and Ghiyas-ud-din, one of his generals, captured Kurnool. Daud Khan, a Pathan general who served the Mughals in key military tasks, was given the district as a jagir shortly after. In the territorial redistribution that followed Tippu Sulthan's last defeat and death in 1799, the territory was ceded to the Nizam. In 1800, he handed it to the British in exchange for a subsidiary force stationed in his territory⁴⁷.

The current collectorate was formed in 1858 when the Pattikonda taluk of Bellary and three taluks of Cuddapah (Koilkunthla, Cumbum, and Markapur) were merged into Kurnool proper. The soils in the District are either red or black. In the eastern part, the prevailing land type is red, with patches of black cotton soil and red clay strewn about in the Tigaleru,

45 Ibid p. 305

46 Administrative Report of Kurnool District, Coimbatore

47 Census of India ,1971,Administrative Archieves Report ,Madras.

Gundalakamma, and Sagileru valleys. The district, which is virtually entirely ryotwari, has no zamindaris. The 'whole inam' villages cover a total of 204 square miles. Forests cover 34% of the total land area, whereas cultivable waste makes up only 5%. The principal food grains are cholam (sorghum vulgare) and korra (setaria italic), which cover 884 and 598 square miles of land, respectively.

There is not much irrigated land in the District. Irrigation is used on only 157 square miles of the total ryotwari and inam land cropped. Tanks irrigated 74 square miles, government canals and channels watered 32 square miles, and wells irrigated 31 square miles. Because of their size and nature, Kurnool's forests are notable.

13. MALABAR DISTRICT

Malabar, or Malayalam, 'the region of hills,' lies between 10°15' and 12°18' N. and 75°11' and 76°51' E. on the west coast of the Presidency, and is undoubtedly the most beautiful, as well as one of the richest and most prolific of Madras' districts. Its traditional name was Kerala, and it included the South Kanara region as well as the home states of Cochin and Travancore. The underlying rock is made up of fine-grained gneisses, quartzose, garnetiferous, and quartz-felspathic, despite the fact that laterite covers the majority of the low terrain. Because of the climate's continual humidity, the district's flora is particularly luxuriant.

The climate is generally healthy, despite being exceedingly humid, but from February to June, the Wayanad region and the lower slopes of the Ghats, as well as the land at the foot of the hills, are particularly terrible. Rainfall is steady and substantial throughout the district, and the seasons are predictable. Around April, thunderstorms begin to emerge in the Highlands. In May, the south-west monsoon arrives, bringing clouds to the Ghats. Rainfall is lowest in Palghat, where a gap in the Western Ghats prevents as much precipitation from gathering as it would elsewhere, and heaviest in Wayanad's southern high hills. The average yearly rainfall in the District is 116 inches⁴⁸.

Malabar's early history is inextricably linked to that of the neighbouring state of Travancore. Except for the accident of a split governmental administration, the entire historic Kerala is homogenous in every regard, including people, language, laws, customs, and

48 A Manual of the Kurnool District in the Presidency of Madras 1890 – 1947

climate. It is likely that the subsequent influx of immigrants who gave Kerala or Chera their Nairs and Nambudaries. Kerala's physical development was most likely caused by some natural process, either gradual or convulsive, which gave it the tradition of being a gift from the sea. At 1498, Vasco da Gama made his first journey to Malabar, and his successors quickly established themselves in Cochin, Calicut, and Cannanore. The Dutch arrived in the Indian Ocean in 1656 to compete with the Portuguese for the country's trade. Their many wars with the English resulted in the ruin of their eastward trade, with Mahe being captured and regained three times.

The English had settled at Calicut in 1664, Tellicherry in 1683, and Anjengo, Chetwai, and other commercial establishments in 1684. Malabar's agricultural conditions, like its physical features, differ significantly from those of the east coast. The predominant soil is a red ferruginous loam but there is a thick coating of black mould, created by decomposed vegetative debris on the Ghats' slopes. The best rice crops in the area are cultivated in the District's deeper interior valleys, where a hardy soil is supplemented by surface earth washed down from the hills, resulting in a hardy soil. Rice is the most staple food crop, with 60 percent of all cultivated area being dedicated to it. The coconut plantation is by far the most important crop, which cover roughly half of the cultivated land. The Malabar ryot follows traditional farming practises, including using straw and leaf manure for 'wet' areas. A greater usage of well irrigation could substantially benefit the gardens on a regular basis. There has been no use of the Land Improvement Loans Act.

Agriculture in the District depends on near-constant rainfall, and there are no major irrigation projects. Some of the high-lying fields are irrigated by small reservoirs and wells, while the numerous streams that run down the valleys are redirected into 'wet' lands. The wells in the majority of the gardens are utilised to manually water the plants. Forest covers over a third of Malabar's entire land area. The majority of the woods are privately held, and the products they produce have long been important sources of wealth for the country⁴⁹.

14. MADRAS CITY

The capital of the Madras Presidency and India's third largest city is strewn across a strip of land nine miles long, two to four miles wide, and twenty-seven square miles in size, on the Bay of Bengal's shore, between 13°4'N and 80°15'E. With the highest point rising to

49 Imperial Gazetteer of India, Volume I pp 325, 327, 328

twenty-two feet above sea level, the region is low-lying and practically flat. For municipal and statistical purposes, Madras was divided into twenty divisions. The names of the villages inside the city's ancient boundaries were used to refer to the various parts of the City. The city's commercial centre is Black Town, the city's original portion. In the south – western of the fringe, Egmore, Chetpat, Kilpauk, Nangambaukam, and Teynampet, as well as the strip of land on the north bank of the Adyar river, were the primary European settlements⁵⁰.

The average temperature in December and January is 76 degrees because the winter months are rarely frigid. Summers in this part of India are not as hot as they are in northern India. The average annual rainfall is 49 inches. The company's headquarters on the Coromandel coast, Masulipattnam, was formed in 1639 under the reign of Charles I. The unfriendliness of the authorities of the Golconda kingdom, within which it was located, as well as its distance from the native weaving and dyeing centres, impeded it. These were the Vijayanagar dyeing empires, whose representatives lived in Chandragiri and were administered by Naiks with local power. Francis Day, the ruler of Masulipattnam's south, was granted half of Madraspatanam's profits and permission to build a fort there from one of them in August 1639⁵¹. The construction of this fort began in preparation for the arrival of the Company. Chennappattanam was given to the village, which was independent of Madras, by the local Naik's father Chennappa, but Chennappattanam is now used to refer to the entire town. The location was chosen as the company's headquarters in 1641. Between 1763 and the end of the Century, the majority of the Fort, including its northern half and the Secretariat buildings, was or built. The bulk of today's European Madras were constructed between the late 18th and early 19th centuries.⁵².

15. MADURAI DISTRICT

With an area of 8,701 square miles, Madurai District was located on the east coast of the Madras Presidency, between 90⁰6' and 100⁰49' north latitude and 77⁰11' and 79⁰19' E. It included a piece of the plain that spans from the eastern slope of the Western Ghats mountain range to the sea, as well as the drainage basin of the Vaigai River. With the exception of the plains, yearly rainfall in the District normally ranged from 26 to 36 inches, with an average of around 30 inches. Only in the area near to Tinnevely is water supply significantly below

50 Geographical structure of Malabar District, Chennai Archives

51 Opcit, pp, 334, 335

52 Imperial Gazetteer of India, Volume I pp 497, 502

normal, while it is above average in the middle and eastern parts. It included the Pandya dominion, which is said to have gotten its name from Pandu, the father of the Pandava brothers, Mahabharata battle heroes, as well as Tinnevely and parts of Travancore state and Trichinopoly. The kingdom is estimated to have existed 300 years before the Christian Era. Following that, for more than 200 years, the country's history was incomplete and unclear, until the famous Madura Naik dynasty rose to prominence in the middle of the 16th Century which ruled for 200 years⁵³.

Meanwhile, the Nawabs of Arcot had grown powerful enough to make an attack on the south, and Chanda Sahib, the Nawab's son-in-law and chief minister, Dost Ali, gained Trichinopoly and Madura by cunning and force. In 1790, the first English collector was appointed in Dindigul. The rest of Madura was granted to the company in 1801 through the Treaty of with the Nawab of Arcot.¹¹⁵

The most frequent geological formation in the District is granite. A gravelly bed of laterite, which is extensively quarried for building purposes, runs through the east from north to south. These formations determine the nature of the soil in various places. A noteworthy aspect of Madura is the preponderance of Zamindari tracts over those held on the ryotwari tenure.

Sixty Five percent of the overall area is arable, with 82 percent of the occupied area under cultivation. Rice, varagu, cholam, ragi, and kambu are the most commonly grown cereals. Thirumangalam produced over 90% of the cotton in the Century. In the taluks adjoining Tinnevely, the black type of cholam is grown. Crop planting is most active in the months of July, August, September, and October. Before a field is used for 'wet' farming, a large amount of money must be spent levelling it. In addition, bullocks are necessary for 'wet' cultivation rather than 'dry' cultivation. The total area of land irrigated from various sources was 482 square miles, with government canals providing 167 square miles (almost 35 percent), tanks or artificial reservoirs providing 175 square miles (36 percent), and wells irrigating 133 square miles. A tunnel runs through the Western Ghats, leading down to the eastern side of the range, where water for agriculture was the single most essential component in the country's development. The total area of 'reserved' woods is 619 square miles, including 10 square miles of "reserved" lands. Its forest has few more important

53 Madras Administrative Report Perur Archives, Coimbatore.

timbers, such as teak, but a small teak plantation has been established near the Vanatiparai reserve⁵⁴.

16. NELLORE DISTRICT

Nellor District was located on the east coast of the Madras Presidency, north of Madras city, between 13°29' and 16°1'N and 79°5' and 80°16'E. With an area of 8,761 square miles, it is the second-largest District in the Presidency after Vizapatnam. The climate is arid and healthy, with little temperature change. The heat is intolerable for two or three months of the year when a sweltering breeze blows. The District is frequently regarded as one of the wealthiest in the Presidency. Nellore is affected by both the north-east and south-east monsoons. Kanigiri and Udyagiri's inner taluks receive the least rainfall. Rain, on the other hand, is unpredictably inconsistent. Little is known about the Nellore's history prior to the Chola Empire. It remained a part of their kingdom until the 13th century AD, when they began to decline, according to Tamil inscriptions. In the next century, it became a part of the Hindu kingdom of Vijayanagar, which was located in what is now the Bellary District.

In terms of scenery and soil types, the coastal taluks differ greatly from those in the District's west. The soils on the western side are mostly poor and gravelly, while there are some areas of good loam and clay near the sea, where laterite formation is not prominent. The most reliable food crops are rice and cholam, which are cultivations in 497 and 567 square miles, or 28 and 32 percent of the net farmed area, respectively. Next in importance are cambu, ragi, and other pulses. Ragi is grown extensively in Guddar and Nellore. The money is usually used on drilling new wells and repairing old ones.

The irrigation system is made up of equal parts of canals and tanks, with wells accounting for a small fraction of the supply. The only use of the Pennar Canal System was for irrigation. The 747 square miles of "reserved" woods and "reserved" lands are separated into six ranges and are categorised into roughly three groups. The Reserves of the Western Forests, the Central Belt, and the Coast⁵⁵.

17. NILGIRI DISTRICT

Nilgiri's the smallest District in the Presidency, having a land of only 958 square miles. The state of Mysore lies to the north, Coimbatore District to the east and south, and Malabar to the west and south.

⁵⁴ Imperial Gazetteer of India, Volume II pp 340, 341, 343, 350

⁵⁵ Census of India, 1971, Tamilnadu Administrative Report.

The "sweet half-English air" of the Nilgiris has long been known, prompting the establishment of Ootacamund, Southern India's principal sanitarium, as well as the lesser stations of Coonoor, Wellington, and Kothagiri on the plateau. Ootacamund, the highest of these, with a mean annual temperature of 57°F, compared to 83°F in Madras, with mild frosts in the lowlands at night in December and January. On average, the Nilgiris receives 67 inches of yearly rainfall⁵⁶. There is no definitive evidence about the early history of the District. The Nilgiris, on the other hand, appear to have benefited from Coimbatore's success. In the second half of the 16th Century, it appears to have fallen under the rule of the Madura Naiks. As part of Tipu's estate distribution after his death at Seringapattam in 1799, the district was given to the Company. In 1800, Buchanan, from Devanayakkankota in the Bhavani valley, became the first Englishman to visit the plateau. After visiting the plateau in 1819, Mr. John Sullivan, the collector of Coimbatore, did everything he could to make it more and accessible. In 1827, Ootacamund was established as the Presidency's sanitarium.

The Governor of Madras, was Mr. Stephen Rumbold Lushington (1827 to 1830) and he introduced Europe into Asia, for such was his growth in Nilgiris." The agricultural conditions of the District differed greatly from those throughout the Presidency. Of all the soils, the deep black loam is the most productive. Only 'dry' crops are produced and it can be found in the more sheltered areas to the east and south. There are no Zamindaries or inam lands in the Nilgiris and the entire territory was under ryotwari control. Planters (mainly Europeans who specialise in the production of coffee, tea, and cinchona) and ordinary native ryots worked together to cultivate the land. Coffee is the most important of the three crops grown by the planters. There were two types of forests and plantations each with its own set of traits.⁵⁷

18.NORTH ARCOT

North Arcot is a 7,386-square-mile interior area on the Madras Presidency's eastern border, located between 12°20' and 13°55' north latitude and 78°14' and 79°59' E. It gets its name from the fact that it was once part of the Musalman Subah of Arcot, which is located north of the Palar River.

The climate is beneficial because it is rather dry. Every year, the district receives an average of 37 inches of rain. Cyclonic storms are typical during the monsoon season, which

⁵⁶ Imperial Gazetteer of India, Volume II p 295, 296, 297

⁵⁷ Madras Administrative Report, Districts of Nilgiris

runs from May through October. The land was part of the Pallava kingdom, whose capital was at Conjeeveram, in the Chingleput District, from the earliest dates known till the end of the 9th Century A.D. North Arcot was the site of some of the most important battles in Southern India's history during the 16th century⁵⁸. After the Nawab transferred the Carnatic revenues to the company in 1781, North Arcot passed under the Company management. With a red-to-black ratio of 4 to 1, the red ferruginous series makes up the majority of the soil in government taluks. Black soils are more common. Nearly half of the cultivatable area is covered in various degrees of fertile black or red soil. Rice is the most common crop in all taluks except Palmaner, where ragi accounts for 43 percent of the cultivated acreage. The land of 'minorinam' and 'wholeinam' covered 599 square miles of ryotwari's entire area, or 45 percent. In a good year, the irrigated area can easily exceed half of the net cultivated area, with tanks accounting for the majority of the increase. Around 60% of the irrigated area is supplied by tiny tanks, which are subject to local rainfall fluctuations. The remaining 40% rely on larger tanks provided by river-crossing dams.

The Javadi hills in the Polur and Vellore taluks are the most strongly protected, followed by the Chandragiri, Palmaner, and Gudiattam forests in the Polur and Vellore Taluks.⁵⁹

19 RAMNAD

The Ramnad District of the erstwhile Madras Presidency in British India was a permanently created zamindari estate in the Ramnad subdivision of the Madurai District. Ramnad District of the erstwhile Madras Presidency in British India from 1801 to 1949, was located between 9°6' and 10°6' north latitude and 77°56' and 79°19' E. It encompasses the district's southern and eastern portions, as well as the district's whole Bay of Bengal coast. Since the Puranic era, the district has been well-known. The Hindu sacred Island City of Rameshwaram was included in the Ramnad district. This area had previously been part of the Chola Dynasty when Rajendra Chola I conquered it in 1063 AD. Syed Ibrahim controlled this province in the late 12th and early 13th Centuries. Following a peace pact with the Sethupathis, the province changed hands. The Pandian Empire encompassed Ramanathapuram and Rameshpuram in the early 15th Century. The District was ruled by the Nawab of Arcot.

⁵⁸ Opcit p.1, 12

⁵⁹ The Imperial Gazetteer of India, Volume V p. 408

In 1795, the British toppled Muthuramalinga Sethupathi and took over Ramanathapuram's governance. Following the death of queen Velunachiar, the Marudhu Brothers assumed control of the East India Company's regular revenues. After Tippu Sulthan's collapse, the British seized power and imprisoned the Nawab⁶⁰. The zamindari system was dissolved in 1892, and its administration was given to a British collector. Ramnad was the name of the district during the British rule, and it was retained after independence. Ramnad district is in the southern zone and it is bordered on the east by Ramanathapuram District's Palk Strait. The primary types of soil in Ramnad District are clay, coastal alluvium, sandy loam, alluvium, sandy and red soil clay, and black cotton soil. The principal food grain crops are paddy, cholam, cambu, ragi, and black grame. Cotton is the most widely grown non-food crop paddy is the most important food crop, accounting for more than 73 percent of the net area cultivated. It may be grown both under irrigated and rain-fed lands. In Ramnad District, there are 18 forest areas with a total area of 5,356.85 ha spread among 13 forest sections⁶¹.

20 SOUTH ARCOT

South Arcot District covered 5,217 square miles of the Madras Presidency's south-east and coast, is was located between 11°11' and 12°35'N and 78°38' and 80°0'E. On the east, the Bay of Bengal; on the south, Tanjore and Trichinopoly, from which districts it is separated by the Coleroon and Vellar; on the west, Salem; and on the north, North Arcot and Chingleput. The district's rivers all run into the Bay of Bengal from west to east. Ponnaiyar is the most well-known, stretching for nearly 75 kilometres. The early history of the area was likely similar to that of the Chola nation as a whole. The Chola Sovereigns appear to have had power from the start, but the Pallavas of Kanchi or Conjeeveram may have taken control in the north. It appears to have followed Tanjore's fortunes from the Thirteenth Century. The region was seized by the Bijapur Sultans in 1646, and thirty years later, Sivaji, the founder of Maratha ruele, reclaimed it. The imperial Mughals succeeded the Marathas as rulers of the country with the fall of Gingee in 1698. The ruler of Bijapur invaded the Governor of Fort St. George in 1674 in order to establish businesses in his domains. South Arcot's terrain is made up of two-thirds ferruginous soil and one-third black cotton soil. Sandy soil can be found in a

60 . Census of India 1991, P.26

61 . A statistical atlas of Madras Presidency North Arcot District

few isolated areas along the coast and it is mostly utilised to grow cashew and casuarina trees⁶².

Groundnut is the most significant industrial crop. This District is responsible for more than two-thirds of the overall land in the Presidency, as well as up to 20% of the net cultivated area. Gingelly is a plant that grows across the District. The Land Improvement Loans Act, was mostly used in Tiruvannamalai and Kallakurichi to sink and maintain wells. All the taluks, with the exception of Tiruvannamalai, report extensive irrigation. The District has the second-highest number of wells in the Presidency, behind North Arcot. Despite their relative insignificance individually, the many tanks from the main source of irrigation feed roughly half of the 'wet' area in the District, an amount even greater than that irrigated by the channels. The forest on the Tenmalais, a protrusion of the Javadis, is the largest. The next largest area is Kallakurichi. These low-elevation hills have a forest that looks similar to other low-elevation growth. The hill forest covers around three-tenths of the entire land area of the District⁶³.

21. SOUTH KANARA

South Kanara was located between 12°7' and 13°59'N. and 74°34' and 75°45'E. with a total area of 4,021 square miles. The early history of South Kanara is largely unknown. According to inscriptions, it was part of the Pallava kingdom of Kanchi, which comprised the modern-day Conjeevaram in the Chingleput area. Vatapi or Badami, in the Bijapur District of Bombay, thought to have been the first capital. Mayuravarma, the later Kadamba ruler, exiled him in the middle of the eighth century. The Hoysala monarchs took control of the district about the 12th Century. The Hindu rulers of Vijayanagar ruled over a District in the first half of the 14th Century. The presence of the Portuguese resulted in urbanisation as they established their first colonies along the west coast, with Vasco Da Gama landing on one of the Udipi islands in 1498. The Muhammadans of the Deccan defeated the Vijayanagar king in the battle of Talikota in 1565⁶⁴.

During the final battle with Tippu, which concluded with his death with the fall of Seringapatnam in 1799, the District was destroyed by the Coorgs. It was ceded to the Company under the same-year partition accord.

62 Imperial Gazetteer of India, Volume 16, 1908

63 Imperial Gazetteer of India, Madras Volume II pp 98, 107

64 Ibid Volume -2, pp. 371, 379, 380

South Kanara's farming methods are influenced by its climate and geological features. As previously stated, the district is a laterite plateau atop a granite base surrounded by the Ghats and furrowed by the monsoons into innumerable valleys.

As a second crop, a large amount of black gram, horse gram, and green gram are produced on level terrain along the shore, as well as on majal soils elsewhere if enough moisture is available. Along the aterways, sugarcane is planted. The District is basically ryotwari, with any inams that exist being merely land revenue assignments.

Because of the high rainfall and swiftness of the rivers, no substantial irrigation reservoirs or permanent dams can be built, and as a result, the District lacks government irrigation facilities.

The majority of South Kanara is forested. The District's total forest area is 662 square miles, with the forest department managing the 'Reserved' territory⁶⁵.

22. SALEM

Salem is a 7,530-square-mile inland District in the Madras Presidency, located between 11^o 11' and 12^o 54' north latitude and 77^o 29' and 79^o 2' east latitude. It is bordered on the north by Mysore and North Arcot, on the west by Coimbatore and the State of Mysore, on the east by North and South Arcot, and on the south by Trichinopoly and Coimbatore.

There are five rivers in Salem's river system. The Cauvery River, which runs along the District's western and southern limits and separates it from Coimbatore, is joined by the Sanatkumaranadi, Sarabanganadi, Thirumanimuthar, Karuvatur, and Aiyar rivers. The District was never a political entity in its own right. The Pallavas dominated the north of it in ancient times, while the Kongu Kingdom ruled the south. The Chola King seized the entire region in the 9th Century, and the Hindu Kings of Vijayanagar were accepted until the beginning of the 17th Century. Chikka Deva Raja, the growing Hindu dynasty of Mysore ruled from 1652 onwards. Haidar Ali claimed the throne of Mysore in 1761. After that, the entire district, with the exception of the Hosur Taluk, was given to the Company by the treaty that ended the battle with Hidar's son, Tippu in 1792.

After the fall of Seringapatam and the death of Tippu in 1799, the English took Hosur. The District's northern and central parts, in terms of soil and position, are generally inferior

⁶⁵ Census of India 2008

than the District's southern or Talaghat section. Red sand is the most common soil, accounting for 82 percent of the total area. Zamindari and inam land make up a large part of the district, accounting for 2,052 square miles of the District's total size of 7,530 square miles. The district's traditional food grains include ragi and cambu. In general, the farmer has a stronger presence in the northern and central regions. Irrigation covered 291 square miles of the ryotwari and 'minorinam' land's total cultivated area. The tributaries of the Cauvery do not have the same steady flow as the main stream. The land they water is vulnerable to crop failure due to shortage of water. The primary forests form a horseshoe belt across the District from west to east, beginning on the bulk of hills around the Cauvery and running along the shevaroyis in the District's centre to the Chitteri and Kalrayanhills. A second forest officer has been dispatched to the District due to the high oak in the forest department⁶⁶.

23. TANJORE

Tanjore is a 3,710 square mile coastal district of the Madras Presidency, lying between 9⁰49' and 11⁰25'N. and 78⁰47' and 79⁰52'E. To the north, the River Coleroon separates it from Trichinopoly and South Arcot Districts. Until the middle of the 10th Century, the region was a part of the ancient Chola Kingdom. Raja Raja I (985-1011), considered the greatest of the Chola dynasty's monarchs, led the Cholas to their zenith of power. They ruled practically the whole Madras Presidency, as well as Mysore and Coorg, as well as the northern half of Ceylon, at the time of his death.

The Hoysala Ballalas and Madura's Pandyas dominated the State in the 13th Century. In the 14th century, it became a part of the Hindu Kingdom of Vijayanagar. Tanjore started the Naik dynasty in the 17th Century. Tanjore was originally visited by the English in 1749. Tanjore's current District is built up of the land thus secured, which was divided into three communities with distinct histories. Devakottai, Nagapattam, and Tranquabar were the three locations. The Cauvery delta makes up more than half of the district. Alluvial soil makes up practically the entire area. To take advantage of the two rainy seasons, rice is planted on these areas between June and August. Tanjore's land is mostly held on ryotwari tenure, with zamindars and inam regions covering only 1,239 square miles out of a total of 3,710 square miles in the District.

Rice is a staple delta grain that is grown over 1,683 square miles, with a 77 percent moisture content. Varagu, cambu, and ragi are the most important 'dry' cereals and red

⁶⁶ Imperial Gazetteer of India, Volume 14

gramme is the most important pulse, and gingelly and groundnuts are the most important industrial crops. Except in the taluks of Tanjore and Tirutturaippundi, where large portions are unsuited for farming. There is little waste land to rehabilitate. Irrigation was used to irrigate 1,488 square miles, or 74% of the total area under cultivation. The government canals covered only 194 square miles, with the remaining 30 square miles fed by wells. As previously stated, the Cauvery and its branches are the primary source of irrigation, with about 98 percent of the region irrigated by canals supplied by them. There are no significant forests in the district, except for low jungle, which covers 19 square miles. The blocks can be used as grazing land and as a source of minor fuel⁶⁷.

24. TRICHINOPOLY DISTRICT

Trichinopoly District is an interior district in the Madras Presidency, having a total size of 3,632 square miles, located between 10°16' and 11°32'N and 78°8' and 79°30'E. It gets its name from the well-known city that serves as the administrative centre. One of the district's most prominent natural features is the Cauvery. It flows from west to east through the country's centre, separating into two streams near the holy island of SriRangam, one of which is known as Cauvery and the other as Coleroon. The history of Trichinopoly is lengthy and famous. As evidenced by Asoka inscriptions from the third century B.C. and Ptolemy in the second Century A.D., the Chola monarchs' capital was originally at Uraiyur, now Trichinopoly city, and then in the Eleventh Century at Gangaikondapuram in the Udaiyarpalaiyam taluk. In the middle of the Thirteenth Century, the Hoysala Ballas conquered the region. In 1372, it became part of the rising Hindu Empire of Vijayanagar, and in the 16th Century, the dynasty passed to Madura's Naiks. The Nawab of Arcot took advantage of the subsequent succession conflicts in 1731. The assignment was handed over to the Nawab by the British in 1792, but Trichinopoly still commanded by British officers⁶⁸.

According to the classification at settlement, the district's total area is 6%, alluvial land is 40%, black soil is 54%, and red earth is 6%.

Rice, cholam, cambu, ragi, and varagu are the District's staple foods. The groundnut seed imported from Mauritius, is reported to provide a substantially higher yield than native seed. As a result, the population is growing faster than the area under cultivation. The funds have primarily been used to construct and repair wells. The main waterways are old

67 Imperial Gazetteer of India, Madras Volume II pp 40, 41, 45

68 Ibid Volume 2, pp.132, 133, 134, 137, 141

constructions, built by former indigenous regimes. They are supplied by 'korambus,' or temporary dams built in the riverbeds every year. They are employed for direct irrigation as well as water delivery to the tanks. Every year, when the rivers flood, they are washed away. For many years, they were managed by the people, but they are now under government control. Trichinopoly is made up of 1,84 305 square miles of "reserved" woodland and 10 square miles of "reserved" cropland. The forest officer of Trichinopoly is also in charge of the neighbouring Tanjore District due to the size of the forest land in that District⁶⁹.

25. TINNEVELLY

Tinnevelly District, included the eastern half of the Indian peninsula's extreme southern tip. It stretches between 8o9' and 9°43'N and 77°12' and 78°23'E, covering 5,389 square miles. It stretched 120 miles north to south and reached a maximum width of 75 miles near the Madura border. Tinnevelly's Eighteenth-Century history is almost identical to Madura District's. Madura's original rulers, the Pandyas, are supposed to have held their capital in Korkai, near the mouth of Tamabraparni, which was once part of Tinnevelly District. Tirumala Naik, the most famous of Madura's Naik Dynasty, founded a small village in the district's north-west corner, Srivilliputtur. Tinnevelly was ostensibly held by the Nawabs of Arcot when the Nizam-ul-Mulk, the Deccan's subahdar, drove the Marathas out of most of Southern India in 1743. In 1781, the Nawab transferred the revenue to the East India Company, and civil authorities known as Superintendents of Assigned Revenue were established to manage it. Tinnevelly was therefore totally occupied by the British, and its history has been rather peaceful since then. The District's northern half is black loam, with a strip of red soil running south of Srivilliputtur along the foothills and the District's southern half is red loam or sand, with a strip of black loam running across the Tambraparani valley. The earth is more fruitful in the hollows and along the pathways of the streams, but most of the high-lying red soil is barren. The most land tenure in the district is ryotwari, but there are a few zamindaris as well. The main food grains are rice, cholam, cambu, and ragi. Rice is planted on 467 square miles, accounting for 22% of all farmed land. Cotton is the most important industrial crop, with 365 square miles under cultivation. Gingelly is notable in all taluks except Sattur and Ottappidaram. The advantages of proper crop rotation and manure management are well known but there has been little effort to depart from existing practises, either by introducing new and improved instruments or by farming crops other than the usual

69 Ibid Volume 2, p.170, 171, 177, 178, 179

staples. The Tambraparani irrigates the majority of the 'wet' area in the Ambasamudram, Tinnevely, and Srivaikutam Taluks, and they are primarily fed by government canals. The Chittar provides water to the Tenkasi Taluk and sections of Tinnevely. Tinnevely's only real forest is on the Ghats, which run along the District's western boundary⁷⁰.

26. VIZAGAPATAM

One of the Madras Presidency's northern shore districts, located between 17°15' and 20°7' N. and 81°24' and 84°3' E, roughly halfway between Madras and Culcatta. It has a 110-mile-long coastline and a 180-mile-long inland stretch. It is the Presidency's largest District in terms of area. Vizagapatam is mostly steep and scenic, especially in the north, and features some of the Presidency's wildest and least civilised areas. The rivers are usually short because the primary watershed runs through the District. The border between the kingdoms of Vengi and Kalinga used to move up and down Vizagapatam in a somewhat perplexing manner. The Kalinga kingdom, which Asoka defeated in 260 B.C., appears to have included the entire District⁷¹. The Andra kings of Vengi, who succeeded the Mauryans, controlled over extensive swaths of the area. After the Pallavas, the Ganga King of Kalinga, and the Eastern Chalukyas of Venki, Krishnadevaraya of Vijayanagar governed the province in 1515. The land was later annexed to the Northern Circars, which the French were given in 1753. The East India Company developed a factory at Vizagapatam in the mid-Seventeenth Century. In 1794, the area was partitioned into three Collectorates. At the time of the permanent settlement in 1802, these were incorporated into the current District.⁷² The District's soils are mostly sands and loams with a high ferruginous red content. The most valuable food crops are cultivated on these black soils, followed by 'dry' grains and pulses on red loams and pulses on sandy terrain.

Crop rotation's basic assumption is that staple cereals such as cambu or ragi are alternated with pulses such as black, green, or horse gramme. The benefits of trailing and manuring are also generally recognised. The majority of rivers in the low area have short and variable flows, making them unsuitable for irrigation. Temporary dams are gradually being phased out in favour of permanent mechanical constructions. The amount of land that is irrigated by wells is negligible. The Jeypore plateau, to the south and west of the Indravathi

70 Madras Administrative Report, Trinelveili District

71 Imperial Gazetteer of India, Provincial Series, Madras, Volume II pp 257, 265 to 267

72 Census of India 1970, Tamil Nadu

and Sileru river valleys, has the only extensive forest. There is a lot of valuable timber in the Jeypore hills, especially teak and sal.⁷³

The agriculture situation in Madras Presidency's 26 districts has been detailed in this chapter. The majority of the farming was done during the rainy season. Monsoon rains are fully reliant on a large chunk of the area. Rain is also necessary for de-salting the soil and replenishing groundwater levels, allowing our crop to absorb moisture. In India good monsoon brought the country economic wealth. The bulk of rivers in the low region are short and erratic in flow and yet they play an important role in irrigation. After independence, the Indian government focused only on the first and second five-year plans, which included the construction of numerous dams. Agriculture development refers to the efforts made by the Indian government in response to rising population demands. As a result, each district must install irrigation facilities. In India, high-yielding wheat and rice varieties have been introduced to alleviate food shortages and allow the country to become self-sufficient in agriculture.

73 Imperial Gazetteer of India, Volume pp .230, 238, 239, 240