

The London School of Economics and Political Science

*Indian Cotton Textiles and the Senegal River Valley in a  
Globalising World: Production, Trade and Consumption, 1750-  
1850*

Kazuo Kobayashi

A thesis submitted to the Department of Economic History of the  
London School of Economics for the degree of Doctor of  
Philosophy, London, February 2016

## **Declaration**

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## **Abstract**

This thesis addresses how and why West African consumers, especially those along the Senegal River valley, imported and consumed Indian cotton textiles from the eighteenth to mid-nineteenth century, despite the fact that they produced textiles of various kinds. Using quantitative and qualitative sources collected from France, India, Senegal and the United Kingdom, the thesis fulfils this gap in the existing literature. Throughout this study, it will be shown that local textile production and consumption in West Africa based on factor endowments and natural environment shaped consumer demand and preferences for Indian cotton textiles whose quality was perceived to be more suitable to the life of inhabitants in the region (especially in the savannah and desert areas) than European textiles. In addition, Indian textiles not only suited conspicuous consumption among Africans but also regional economies in which cloth was used as an exchange medium. In the eighteenth century, West African demand for Indian cotton textiles of various types was central to the purchase by European merchants of slaves along coastal areas of West Africa. In the early nineteenth century, which witnessed the transition from the Atlantic slave trade to the trade in commercial agriculture, dark-blue cotton textiles produced in Pondicherry, called ‘guinéés’, were of essential importance in the trade in gum Arabic in the lower Senegal River as a currency that replaced a domestically-produced cloth currency. The gum from the region was indispensable in the development of the textile industry in Western Europe at that time. This regional demand influenced the Euro-West African trade and the procurements by Europeans of cotton textiles in India. The thesis argues that historically constructed consumer agency in pre-colonial West Africa had global repercussions from the eighteenth to mid-nineteenth century.

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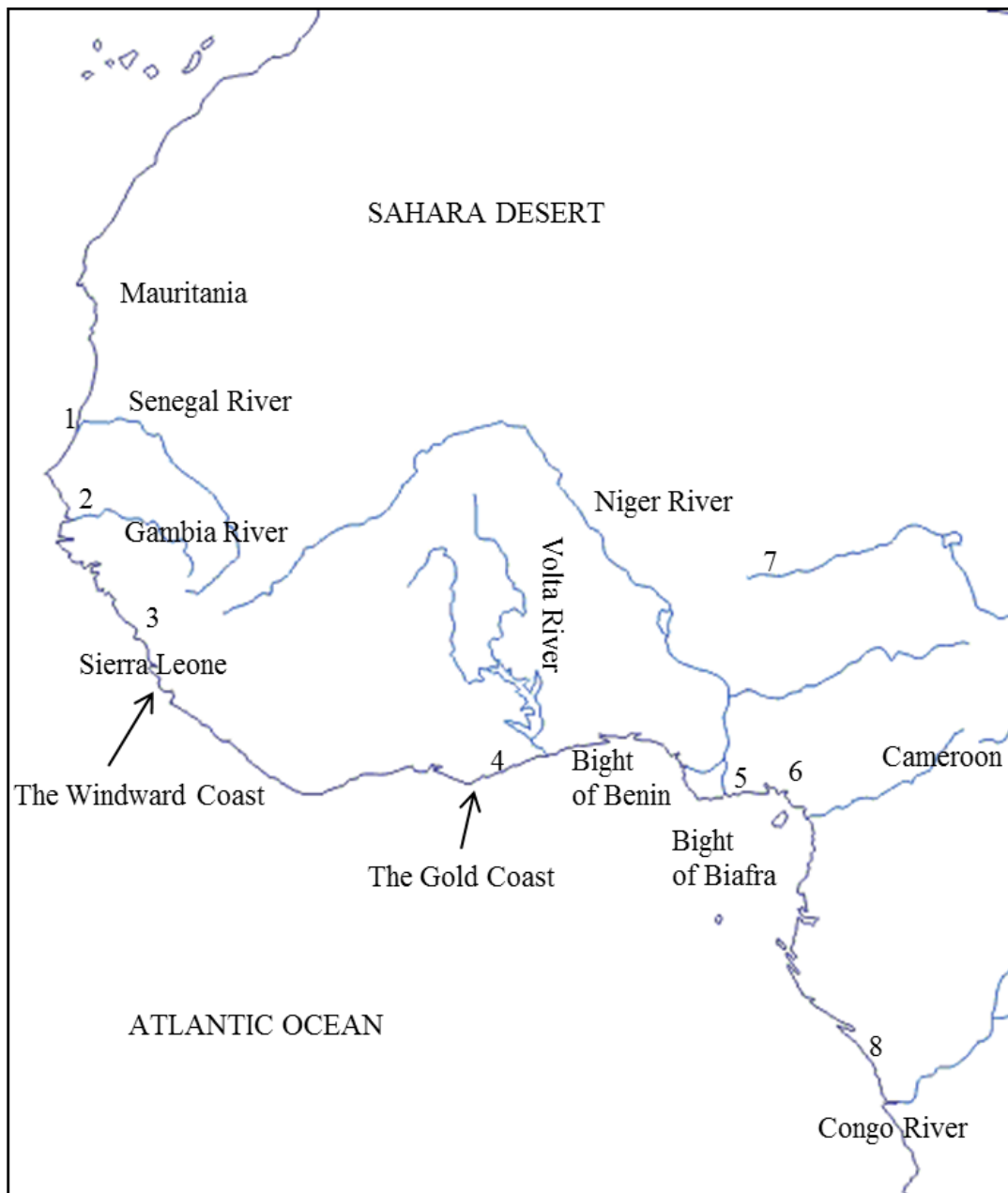
I would like to express my thanks to librarians and the directors working at the libraries and archives that I visited, whose valuable collections I consulted: in particular, the National Archives (Kew), British Library, LSE Library, Foyle Special Collections Library, Maughan Library, SOAS Library, Institute of Historical Research, Tamil Nadu Archives, Archives Nationales du Sénégal, Institut Fondamental d’Afrique Noire, Musée National des Douanes and Archives Nationales d’Outre-Mer. R. K. Raghavan, R. Maria Saleth and Derek Elliot helped me gain access to the Tamil Nadu Archives in October 2012. Hiroyuki Suzui, Nobuyuki Suzui and Vincent Hiribarren gave me useful tips on my trip to Senegal and access to the Archives Nationales du Senegal that I visited in February 2014.

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Map 1: West Africa

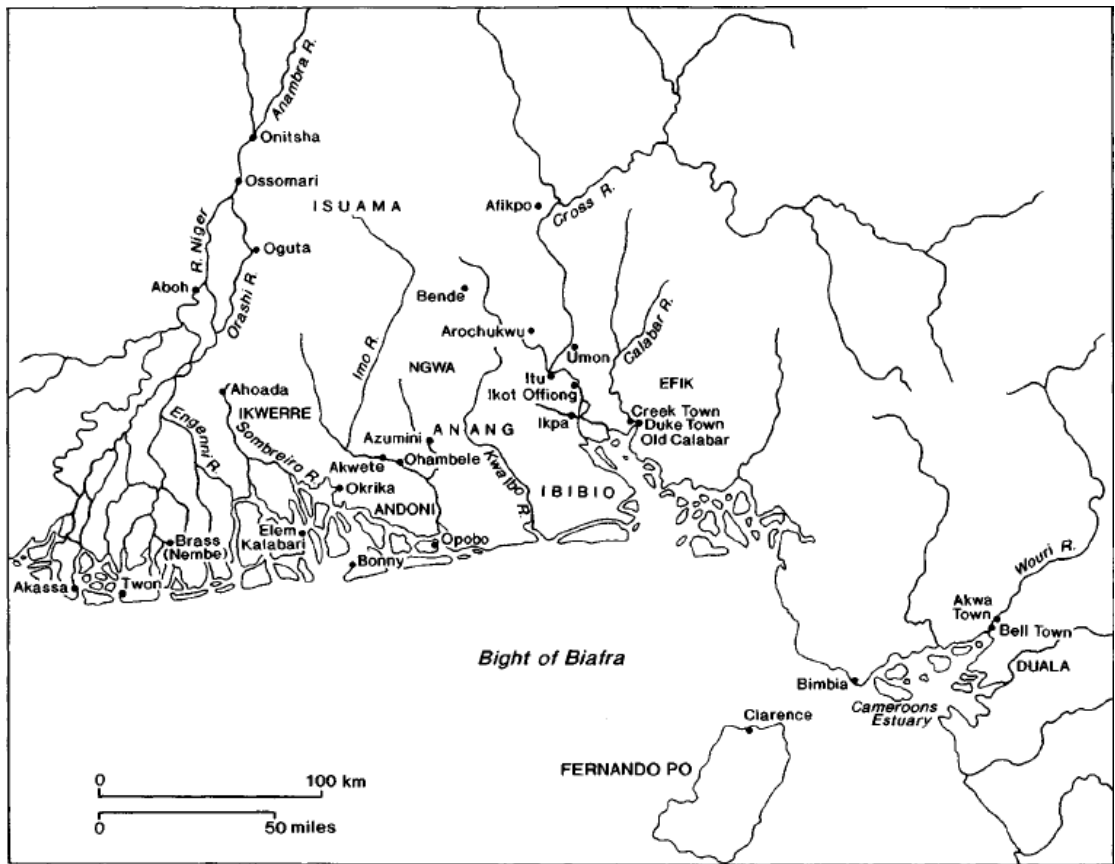


*Note:* The numbers on the map correspond to the following trading towns.

- 1... Saint Louis
- 2... Bathurst
- 3... Freetown
- 4... Cape Coast Castle
- 5... Bonny
- 6... Old Calabar
- 7... Kano
- 8... Loango

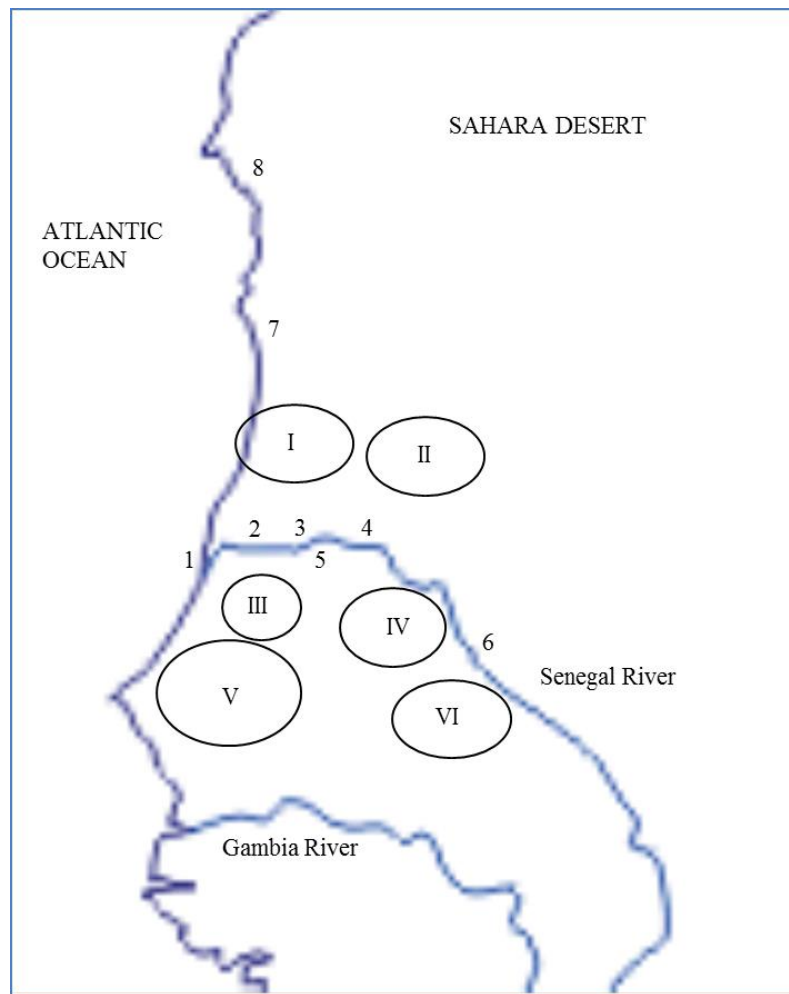
*Source:* Author's original.

Map 2: The Bight of Biafra and hinterland in the nineteenth century



Source: Martin Lynn, *Commerce and Economic Change in West Africa: The Palm Oil Trade in the Nineteenth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 36.

Map 3: Senegal and southwestern Sahara in the early nineteenth century

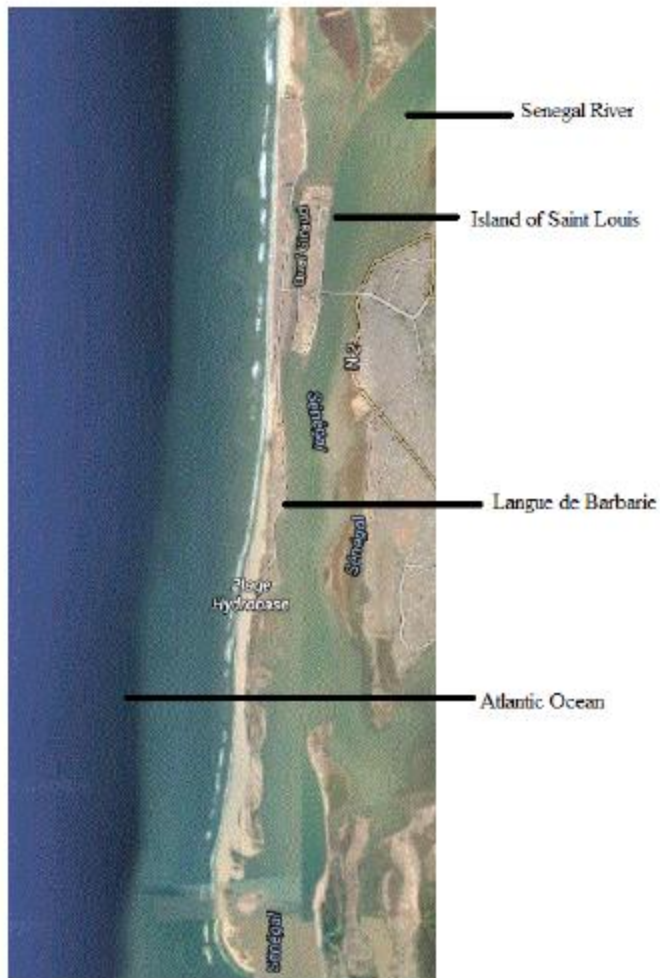


*Note:* The Roman numbers on the map correspond to the following kingdoms and emirates, and the Arabic numbers the trading towns and places.

- |                     |                          |
|---------------------|--------------------------|
| I...Trarza emirate  | 1... Saint Louis         |
| II...Brakna emirate | 2... Darmancour (escale) |
| III... Waalo        | 3... Desert (escale)     |
| IV... Futa Toro     | 4... Coq (escale)        |
| V... Kajor          | 5... Dagana              |
| VI... Gajaaga       | 6... Bakel               |
|                     | 7... Portendick          |
|                     | 8... Arguin              |

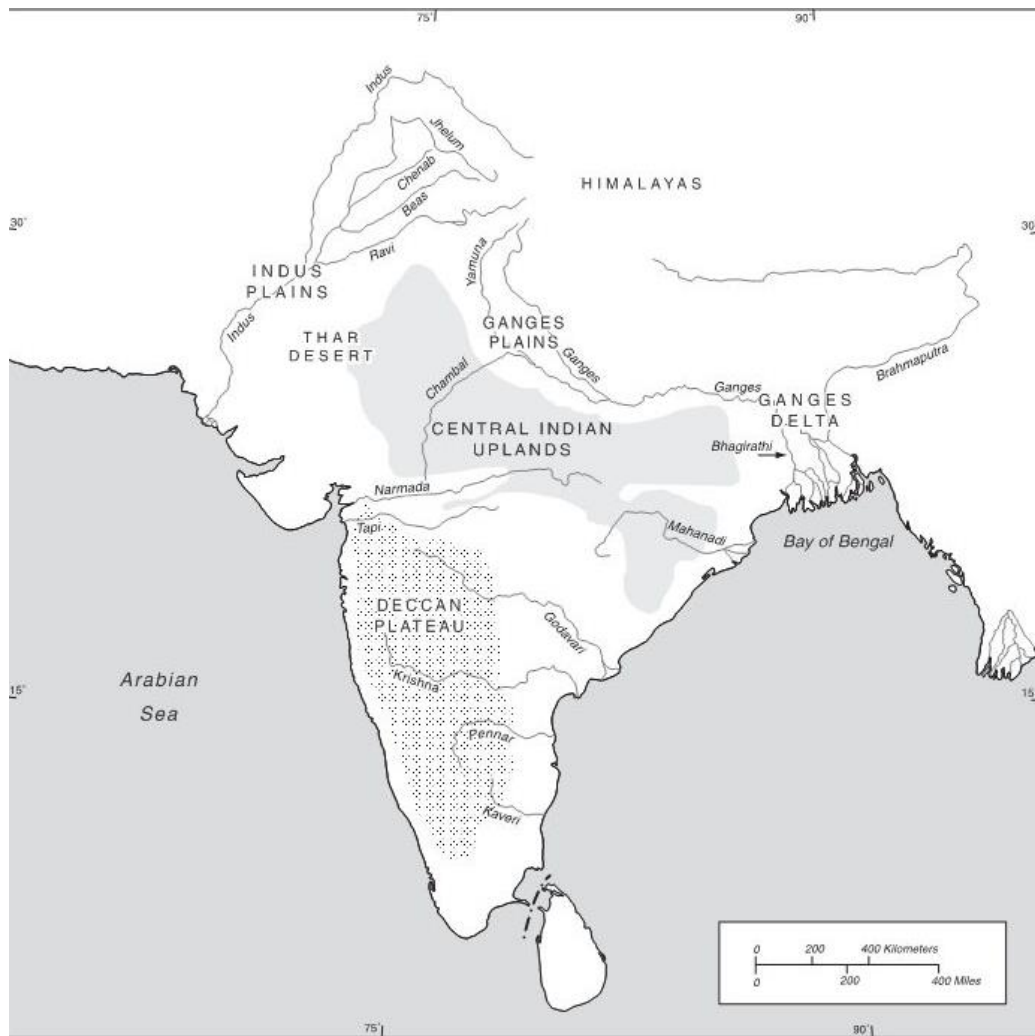
*Source:* Author's original.

Map 4: Saint Louis



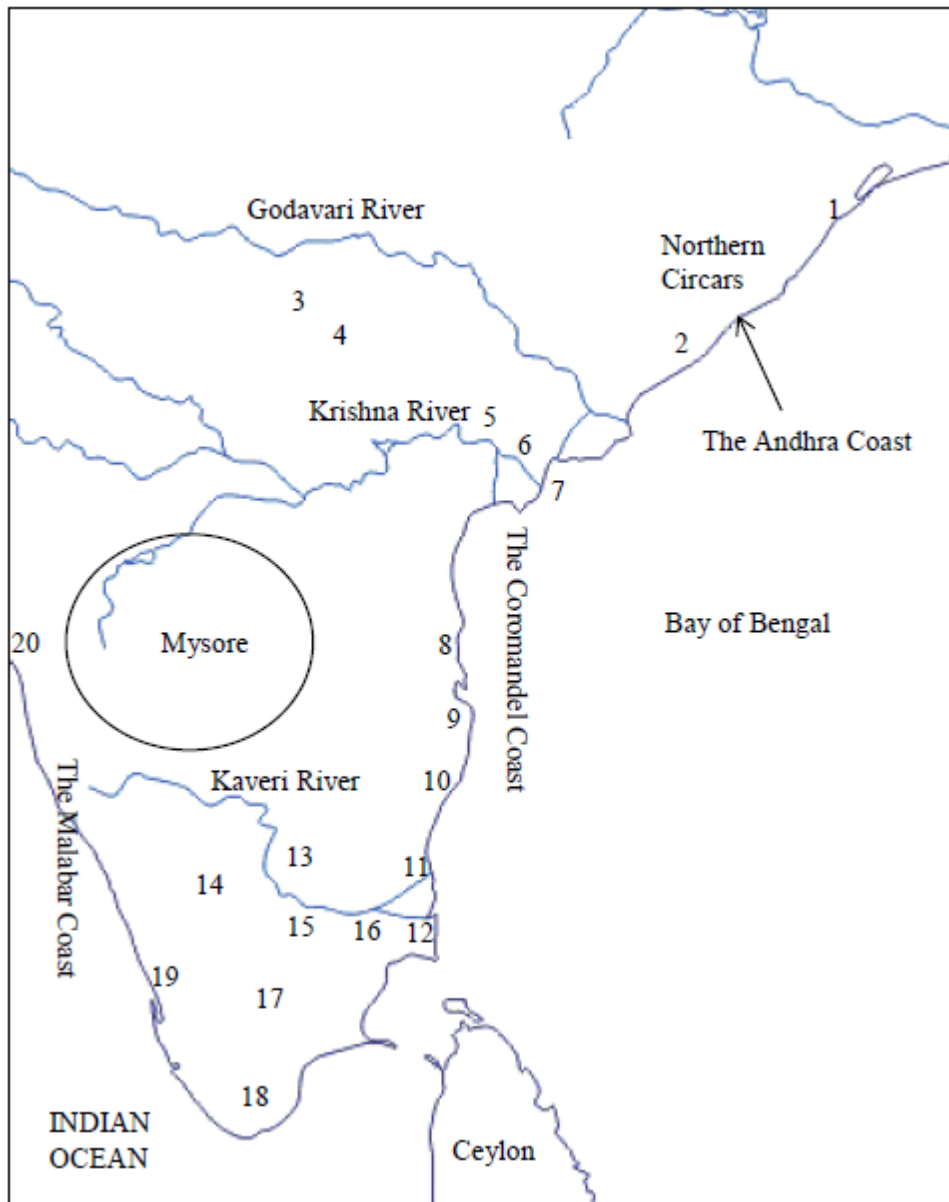
Source: Author's original.

Map 5: India (South Asia)



Source: Tirthankar Roy, *India in the World Economy: From Antiquity to the Present* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 7.

Map 6: South India



*Note:* The numbers on the map correspond to the following towns.

- |                   |                    |
|-------------------|--------------------|
| 1... Ganjam       | 11... Cuddalore    |
| 2... Vizagapatnam | 12... Nagore       |
| 3... Palvancha    | 13... Salem        |
| 4... Hyderabad    | 14... Coimbatore   |
| 5... Gollapudi    | 15... Trichinopoly |
| 6... Nagulvancha  | 16... Tanjore      |
| 7... Masulipatnam | 17... Madurai      |
| 8... Nellore      | 18... Tinnervelly  |
| 9... Madras       | 19... Cochin       |
| 10... Pondicherry | 20... Goa          |

*Source:* Author's original.



## Chapter 1

### Introduction

#### 1. Historical problems and research questions

This thesis is about Indian cotton textiles and the important role they have played in creating the modern world. It is also about West African consumers who, through their preferences to consume Indian cotton textiles, shaped patterns of global trade in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. In this thesis, it will be argued that consumer demand in West Africa for Indian textiles influenced economies and business in Europe, Asia and the Americas. This study contributes to three research fields: the history of Indian cotton textiles, the economic history of West Africa and the history of globalisation. To do this it utilises quantitative and qualitative sources collected in Britain, France, India and Senegal.

First, like much recent literature on cotton and cotton textiles, this thesis focuses on the production, trade and consumption of Indian cotton textiles, but with special reference to links with West African markets and consumers. Cotton textiles produced in India had been an important trade item in the Indian Ocean world well before Europeans entered the Asian seas to participate in maritime trade. In the early modern period, the European East India Companies imported a large number of Indian cotton textiles from South Asia into Europe, and many were re-exported to the Americas and West Africa. As will be discussed in detail, Indian cotton textiles were essential in the expansion of the Atlantic slave trade, and therefore in the rise and development of the Atlantic slavery-based economy in the late seventeenth to the early nineteenth centuries.<sup>1</sup> However, little is known about the shape of the demand in West Africa for Indian cotton textiles after the abolition of the Atlantic slave trade in the early

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<sup>1</sup> For example, Tirthankar Roy (ed.), *Cloth and Commerce: Textiles in Colonial India* (New Delhi: Sage Publication, 1996); Giorgio Riello and Prasannan Parthasarathi (eds.), *The Spinning World: A Global History of Cotton Textiles, 1200-1850* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009); Giorgio Riello and Tirthankar Roy (eds.), *How India Clothed the World: The World of South Asian Textiles, 1500-1850* (Leiden: Brill, 2009); Giorgio Riello, *Cotton: The Fabric that Made the Modern World* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013); and Sven Beckert, *Empire of Cotton: A Global History* (New York, NY: Knopf Publishing Group, 2014).

nineteenth century despite Western European businesses increasing the amount of cotton textiles exported into West Africa. Did the demand in West Africa for Indian cotton textiles persist or not in the first half of the nineteenth century? The short answer is yes but this needs qualification, as we will see in Chapter 2 with a new set of trade statistics providing greater detail.

Second, West Africa had a long-established history of cotton textile production, much like that found in South Asia and Mesoamerica.<sup>2</sup> Artisans in West Africa produced sophisticated cotton textiles, amongst other kinds of textiles, on the narrow loom. Surplus goods were traded regionally within West Africa and the Sahara Desert regions before the maritime trade with Europe commenced. The age of the Atlantic slave trade, that reached a peak in the eighteenth century, witnessed the massive inflow of non-African textiles, especially Indian cotton textiles, from European ports into West Africa. Here, two questions arise: why did West Africa import such large numbers of cotton textiles from India via European merchants, despite the region having a long tradition of locally-produced and consumed cotton textiles? This question can be best understood in a context that takes into account theoretical frameworks of monetary history, factor endowments and the environment in West African history, as will be

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<sup>2</sup> Sir Joseph Hutchinson, 'The History of Relationships of the World's Cottons', *Endeavour*, vol. 21 (1962), 5-15; Beckert, *Empire of Cotton*, 3-28. On West African textile history, see Heinrich Barth, *Travels and Discoveries in North and Central Africa: Including Accounts of Tripoli, the Sahara, the Remarkable Kingdom of Bornu, and the Countries Around Lake Chad* (London, New York, NY, and Melbourne: Ward, Lock & Co., 1890, originally published in 1857-1858), 300-302; Thurstan Shaw, *Igbo-Ukwu: An Account of Archaeological Discoveries in Eastern Nigeria*, vol. 1 (London: Faber and Faber, 1970); Phillip Shea, 'The Development of an Export Oriented Dyed Cloth Industry in Kano Emirate in the Nineteenth Century', Unpublished PhD thesis (Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin, 1975); Marion Johnson, 'Cloth Strips and History', *West African Journal of Archaeology*, vol. 7 (1977), 169-179; Marion Johnson, 'Technology, Competition, and African Crafts', in Clive Dewey and A. G. Hopkins (eds.), *The Imperial Impact: Studies in the Economic History of Africa and India* (London: Ashlone Press, 1978), 259-269, 378-379; Rita Bolland, *Tellem Textiles: Archaeological Finds from Burial Caves in Mali's Bandiagara Cliff* (Amsterdam: Tropenmuseum, 1991); Carolyn Keyes Adenaike, 'West African Textiles, 1500-1800', in Maureen F. Mazzaoui (ed.), *Textiles: Production, Trade and Demand* (Aldershot and Brookfield: Ashgate, 1998), 1-11; Colleen E. Kriger, *Cloth in West African History* (Lanham, MD: AltaMira Press, 2006); Marisa Candotti, 'Cotton Growing and Textile Production in Northern Nigeria: From Caliphate to Protectorate, c. 1804-1914', Unpublished PhD thesis (London: SOAS, University of London, 2015); Silke Strickrodt, *Afro-European Trade in the Atlantic World: the Western Slave Coast, c. 1550-c. 1885* (Woodbridge: Boydell & Brewer, 2015), 59-60.

discussed in Chapter 3. A further question is the extent to which imports of textiles from overseas impacted the local textile industry. This question is also debated in Chapter 3.

Third, connections between West Africa and India have been under-researched in the field of the history of globalisation. The term ‘globalisation’ became prevalent from the 1990s, and is defined as a process of intensification of multiple dimensions including commerce, finance and culture of exchange across national borders. Global history emerged partly as a response to this phenomenon.<sup>3</sup> The literature on world-systems theory that appeared in the 1970s, best exemplified by Immanuel Wallerstein, addressed the importance of the Atlantic economy and core-periphery relationships in the rise and development of the capitalist world-economy of European origin. However, these core-periphery models have tended to obscure African agency, the contribution of Indian cotton textiles in the formation of the Atlantic economy, and ignored the fate of global links in the age of industrialisation.<sup>4</sup> In this regard, Joseph Inikori made an important contribution by pointing out the roles of Indian cotton textiles in the Atlantic slave trade and the process of industrialisation in England.<sup>5</sup> In a similar vein, Giorgio Riello proposed the concept of ‘diamond-shape system’ that aims to integrate India into

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<sup>3</sup> For pioneering studies on history of globalisation, see A. G. Hopkins (ed.), *Globalization in World History* (London: Pimlico, 2002); Jürgen Osterhammel and Niels P. Petersson, *Globalization: a Short History* (translated by Dona Geyer, Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2005); and C. A. Bayly, *The Birth of the Modern World, 1780-1914: Global Connections and Comparisons* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2004). For important historiographical surveys on world/global history, see Patrick Manning, *Navigating World History: Historians Create a Global Past* (New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003); Patrick O’Brien, ‘Historiographical Traditions and Modern Imperatives for the Restoration of Global History’, *Journal of Global History*, vol. 1, issue 1 (2006), 3-39; and A. G. Hopkins (ed.), *Global History: Interactions between the Universal and the Local*, (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006).

<sup>4</sup> Immanuel Wallerstein, *The Modern World-System I: Capitalist Agriculture and the Origins of the European World-Economy in the Sixteenth Century* (London and New York, NY: Academic Press, 1974); Immanuel Wallerstein, *The Modern World-System II: Capitalism and the Consolidation of the European World-Economy, 1600-1750* (London and New York, NY: Academic Press, 1980); Immanuel Wallerstein, *The Modern World-System III: The Second Era of Great Expansion of the Capitalist World-Economy, 1730-1840s* (London and New York, NY: Academic Press, 1989); Immanuel Wallerstein, *The Modern World-System IV: Capitalist Liberalism Triumphant, 1789-1914* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, CA: University of California Press, 2011); Jeffrey Williamson, *Trade and Poverty: When the Third World Fell Behind* (Cambridge, MA, and London: MIT Press, 2011).

<sup>5</sup> Joseph E. Inikori, *Africans and the Industrial Revolution in England: A Study in International Trade and Economic Development* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002).

the development of eighteenth-century Atlantic economy.<sup>6</sup> What they have in common is attention and importance attached to the import of Indian cotton textiles into West Africa via Europe; their arguments were based on quantitative evidence compiled by Marion Johnson of the eighteenth-century Anglo-West African trade.<sup>7</sup> While they rightly discussed the effect of Indian cotton textiles on the eighteenth-century Atlantic trade and appreciated that there was large demand in West Africa for Indian cotton textiles of various types, they did not consider the lasting effects of West African demand for Indian cotton textiles on production in South Asia.<sup>8</sup> In other words, the question of how West African demand affected procurement by European merchants of cotton textiles in India from the eighteenth to early nineteenth century has yet to be explored, and will be discussed in Chapter 4. As will be shown throughout this thesis, a global perspective enables us to engage in trans-regional dialogues. But how can we address the subject matter from a global perspective? In the next section, we shall discuss frontiers in the research of global history.

## 2. Approaches: trade and consumption in global history

The study of trade has thrived in the growing field of global history over the past decades. One reason for the rise of this research field is the current wave of globalisation that has driven economic historians to explore its origin and development from a historical perspective.<sup>9</sup> Another reason is the rapid economic growth in Asia from the late twentieth century, and more recently that of sub-Saharan Africa. The

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<sup>6</sup> Riello, *Cotton*, 148.

<sup>7</sup> Marion Johnson, *Anglo-African Trade in the Eighteenth Century: English Statistics on African Trade 1699-1808* (edited by Thomas Lindblad and Robert Ross, Leiden: Intercontinenta No. 15, Centre for the History of European Expansion, 1990).

<sup>8</sup> Similarly, Frederick Cooper, in his article entitled 'Africa and the World Economy', discussed the methodologies that examined the effects of Africa's engagement in the economies outside Africa on African economies, while this thesis has an interest in interactions between West Africa and the world outside West Africa. Frederick Cooper, 'Africa and the World Economy', *African Studies Review*, vol. 24, nos. 2-3 (1981), 1-86.

<sup>9</sup> There was a debate over the historical origin of globalisation, see Kevin H. O'Rourke and Jeffrey G. Williamson, 'When Did Globalisation Begin?' *European Review of Economic History*, vol. 6, issue 1 (2002), 23-50; Dennis O. Flynn and Arturo Giraldez, 'Path Dependence, Time Lags and the Birth of Globalisation: A Critique of O'Rourke and Williamson', *European Review of Economic History*, vol. 8, issue 1 (2004), 81-108.

rapidly changing state of the world has prompted historians and others to seek alternative explanations of economic development in these regions from a long-term perspective and subsequently challenge the conventional notion of ‘the Rise of the West’. Hence, global history has emerged as a response to the prevailing Eurocentric paradigm in the literature.<sup>10</sup> Within this literature global trade has been analysed in terms of Smithian or non-Smithian patterns of growth and consumption.

Smithian growth is characterised by the expansion of the market through the division of labour, which triggers an increase of labour productivity brought about by the specialisation of skills. This process generated economic growth throughout the early modern period.<sup>11</sup> In this context, trade is often considered as one of the key causes in the expansion of the extent of markets by integrating formerly separated markets into a single larger unit, leading to proto-industrialisation. For example, the intra-European trade and the long-distance trade in the Atlantic Ocean were critical in finding new markets for manufactured goods such as European textiles in the seventeenth and eighteenth century.<sup>12</sup> In contrast, Tokugawa Japan, which was principally cut off from

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<sup>10</sup> For instance, Kaoru Sugihara, ‘The European Miracle and the East Asian Miracle: Towards a New Global Economic History’, *Sangyo to Keizai* [Industry and Economy], vol. 11, no. 2 (1996), 27-47; Andre Gunder Frank, *ReORIENT: Global Economy in the Asian Age* (London, Berkley and Los Angeles, CA: University of California Press, 1998); Kenneth Pomeranz, *The Great Divergence: China, Europe, and the Making of the Modern World* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2000); Giovanni Arrighi, Takeshi Hamashita and Mark Selden (eds.), *The Resurgence of East Asia: 500, 150 and 50 Year Perspectives* (London: Routledge, 2003); Prasanna Parthasarathi, *Why Europe Grew Rich and Asia Did Not: Global Economic Divergence, 1600-1850*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011); Tirthankar Roy, *India in the World Economy: From Antiquity to the Present* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012); Gareth Austin and Kaoru Sugihara (eds.), *Labour-Intensive Industrialization in Global History* (London: Routledge, 2013); and Osamu Saito, ‘Growth and Inequality in the Great and Little Divergence Debate: a Japanese Perspective’, *Economic History Review*, vol. 68, no. 2 (2015), 399-419.

<sup>11</sup> Gareth Austin and Kaoru Sugihara, ‘Introduction’, in Austin and Sugihara, *Labour-Intensive Industrialization*, 6-7; see also Osamu Saito, ‘Proto-Industrialization and Labour-Intensive Industrialization: Reflections on Smithian Growth and the Role of Skill Intensity’, in Austin and Sugihara, *Labour-Intensive Industrialization*, 85-106. For the original thesis of proto-industrialisation, see Franklin F. Mendels, ‘Proto-Industrialization: the First Phase of the Industrialization Process’, *Journal of Economic History*, vol. 32, issue 1 (1972), 241-261.

<sup>12</sup> For the significance of the intra-European trade for the new draperies (light worsteds) manufactured in England, see Robert C. Allen, *The British Industrial Revolution in Global Perspective* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 109-111. For the significance of the Atlantic trade for the linen industry in the hinterland of Central Europe, see Klaus Weber, ‘The Atlantic Coast of German Trade: German Rural

external economies, failed to capture these benefits from overseas trade.<sup>13</sup> Thus, recent studies on Smithian growth have highlighted that trade history offers valuable insight into different paths of economic development in the world from the early modern period onwards.

In the context of Smithian growth, trade is a channel that directly leads to economic growth in a region. However, there is another strand of trade-induced growth driven by colonialism and institutional change. Roman Studer expressed this as non-Smithian growth, or a ‘*visible hand* that brings about an international division of labor by force’.<sup>14</sup> A well-known account of the early modern British economy, first offered by Eric Williams, draws on this approach. He asserted that the profits from the Atlantic slave trade and slavery-based plantation economies in the Americas laid the financial foundation of the British Industrial Revolution.<sup>15</sup> Although this argument has been criticised by many scholars,<sup>16</sup> it influenced the later works of Immanuel Wallerstein and, more recently, of Joseph Inikori, who argued that the early modern Atlantic economy, underpinned by the trade in African labour, was linked to economic development in Britain.<sup>17</sup> Meanwhile, Daron Acemoglu and his co-authors have revisited the importance of the early modern Atlantic trade in the rise of Western Europe in the nineteenth century in light of New Institutional Economics (NIE). In their hypothesis, the European colonial trade itself was not large enough to generate economic growth in

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Industry and Trade in the Atlantic, 1680-1840’, *Itinerario*, vol. 26, no. 2 (2002), 99-119; Klaus Weber, ‘Deutschland, atlantischer Sklavenhandel, Plantagenwirtschaft der Neuen Welt (15. bis 19. Jahrhundert)’, *Journal of Modern European History*, vol. 7, no. 1 (2009), 37-67.

<sup>13</sup> Osamu Saito, *Hikaku keizai hatten-ron: rekishiteki apurochi* [Economic Development in Comparative and Historical Perspective] (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 2008), 131-134; Saito, ‘Growth and Inequality in the Great and Little Divergence Debate’, 415-416.

<sup>14</sup> Roman Studer, *The Great Divergence Reconsidered: Europe, India and the Rise to Global Economic Power* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 5. Emphasis is original.

<sup>15</sup> Eric Williams, *Capitalism and Slavery* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1944).

<sup>16</sup> For the details of the debate on the slave trade profits and their contribution to the British economy and the Industrial Revolution, see Barbara L. Solow and Stanley L. Engerman (eds.), *British Capitalism and Caribbean Slavery: the Legacy of Eric Williams* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987); Kenneth Morgan, *Slavery, Atlantic Trade and the British Economy, 1660-1800* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 29-48.

<sup>17</sup> Wallerstein, *The Modern World-System*; Inikori, *Africans and the Industrial Revolution in England*.

Western Europe, but the trade induced institutional changes such as improved property rights for merchants, which were ‘a fundamental cause of long-run growth’.<sup>18</sup>

Overall, these studies of non-Smithian growth have offered the view that trade indirectly contributed to economic growth in a country or region. However, despite their Atlantic perspectives, their approaches are problematic in that the main focus of the above-mentioned literature has centered on economic growth in early modern Western Europe. They are fundamentally Eurocentric, and therefore these works have a tendency to overlook non-European agencies that have contributed to the development of global trade. The shortcoming of the current scholarship in early modern global trade is a significant motivation for economic historians to examine the role of non-European agencies in global trade, and to assess their influence on the development of different regions.

The scholarship of Smithian or non-Smithian growth tends to focus on production (such as GDP per capita and real wages) and institutions as indicators of economic performance, but tends to regard consumption as being marginal to the discussion. This is a further weakness of this scholarship since it pays little attention to why consumer goods were imported and purchased in a remote market. Indeed, as C. A. Bayly argued, ‘Trade, like artisan production, was also a “moment in culture”’. Trade goods partly reflect a specific cultural value and use among consumers.<sup>19</sup> Furthermore, without examining the factors that led to the consumption of marketed commodities, it is impossible to explain complex relationships between consumer demand, trade and commodity production.

Trade history can, thus, also shed light on consumer demand. Literature in economic history and material culture, published for the past decade or so, has addressed this issue.<sup>20</sup> One of the primary discussions in this literature has been the debate around the consumption-driven ‘industrious revolution’ that preceded the

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<sup>18</sup> Daron Acemoglu, Simon Johnson and James A. Robinson, ‘The Rise of Europe: Atlantic Trade, Institutional Change, and Economic Growth’, *American Economic Review*, vol. 95, no. 3 (2005), 546-579; Daron Acemoglu, Simon Johnson and James A. Robinson, ‘Institutions as a Fundamental Cause of Long-Run Growth’, in Phillippe Aghion and Steven N. Durlauf (eds.), *Handbook of Economic Growth*, vol. 1A (Amsterdam: Elsevier, 2005), 385-472.

<sup>19</sup> C. A. Bayly, *Rulers, Townsmen and Bazaars: North Indian Society in the Age of British Expansion, 1770-1870* (Third Edition, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 74.

<sup>20</sup> For a pioneering work in the history of consumption, see John Brewer and Roy Porter (eds.), *Consumption and the World of Goods* (London: Routledge, 1994).

Industrial Revolution in Western Europe. Jan de Vries located the role of consumer demand and the household unit in the context of Smithian growth. In North Western Europe and British North America, during the period from 1650 to 1850, trade expanded the range of marketed items that created commercial incentives to drive households to reallocate their productive resources (such as the time of family members) to market-oriented activities. This choice was made in order to expand household earnings, subsequently used to purchase marketed goods.<sup>21</sup> Maxine Berg has elaborated how the desire for, and ability to consume luxuries among British consumers, was stimulated by a global trade in Asian products such as textiles and porcelain. This propelled the invention of a ‘new luxury’ and economic growth in early modern Britain.<sup>22</sup> Economists of consumption use the term ‘active consumers’ to direct attention to the fact that consumer choice affects the production of commodities. These works have placed the role of consumers at the heart of their analyses, showing that their demand influenced the processes of trade and production, leading to economic growth.<sup>23</sup> The integration of social and economic history of consumption into that of trade history and globalisation has revealed much about dynamic relationships between people in remote regions and economic growth.<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>21</sup> Jan de Vries, ‘The Industrial Revolution and the Industrious Revolution’, *Journal of Economic History*, vol. 54, no. 2 (1994), 249-270; Jan de Vries, *The Industrious Revolution: Consumer Behavior and the Household Economy, 1650 to the Present* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008); Jan de Vries, ‘Understanding Eurasian Trade in the Era of the Trading Companies’, in Maxine Berg, Felicia Gottmann, Hanna Hodacs and Chris Nierstrasz (eds.), *Goods from the East, 1600-1800: Trading Eurasia* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015), 7-39.

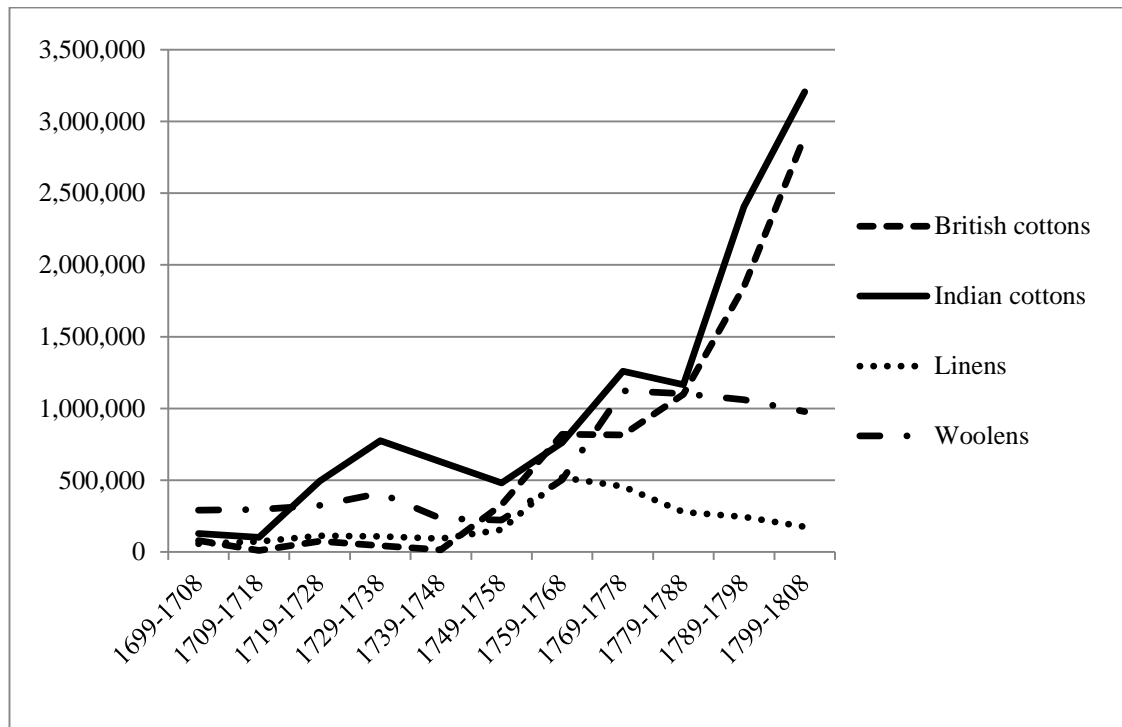
<sup>22</sup> Maxine Berg, ‘In Pursuit of Luxury: Global History and British Consumer Goods in the Eighteenth Century’, *Past and Present*, vol. 182, issue 1 (2004), 85-142; Maxine Berg, *Luxury & Pleasure in Eighteenth-Century Britain* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005).

<sup>23</sup> Marina Bianchi, ‘Introduction’, in Marina Bianchi (ed.), *The Active Consumer: Novelty and Surprise in Consumer Choice* (London: Routledge, 1998), 1-18.

<sup>24</sup> Werner Sombart, *Luxury and Capitalism* (translated by W. R. Dittmar, Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press, 1967); Arjun Appadurai (ed.), *The Social Life of Things: Commodities in Cultural Perspective* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986). For example, in India, economic history studies were until recently under the strong influence of Marxism that gave priority to production and of nationalist scholarship that focused on the impact of colonialism. Except some works, they tended to neglect the role of consumption in economic history in South Asia. See C. A. Bayly, ‘The Origins of Swadeshi (Home Industry): Cloth and Indian Society, 1700-1930’, in Arjun Appadurai (ed.), *The Social Life of Things: Commodities in Cultural Perspective* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), 285-321; Douglas E. Haynes and Abigail McGowan, ‘Introduction’, in Douglas E. Haynes, Abigail McGowan, Tirthankar



Figure 1.1: Textiles imported from Britain into West Africa, 1699-1808 (Unit: sterling pounds)



Source: Marion Johnson, *Anglo-African Trade in the Eighteenth Century: English Statistics on African Trade 1699-1808* (edited by Thomas Lindblad and Robert Ross, Leiden: Intercontinenta No. 15, Centre for the History of European Expansion, 1990), 54-55.

The studies on trade and consumption have shown that trade history can be a lens through which we can appreciate how consumer demand in one area of the world has intertwined with global trade and economic growth elsewhere. This is particularly the case for Indian cotton textiles in the pre-industrial period.<sup>25</sup> They have played a central role in global trade and consumer demand for Indian textiles contributed to

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Roy and Haruka Yanagisawa (eds.), *Towards a History of Consumption in South Asia* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2010), 1-25; Tirthankar Roy, 'Consumption of Cotton Cloth in India, 1795-1940', *Australian Economic History Review*, vol. 52, no. 1 (2012), 61-84. For Japan, see Penelope Francks and Janet Hunter (eds.), *The Historical Consumer: Consumption and Everyday Life in Japan, 1850-2000* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011). For the Ottoman Empire, see Donald Quataert (ed.), *Consumption Studies and the History of the Ottoman Empire, 1550-1922: An Introduction* (New York, NY: SUNY Press, 2000). For a variety of aspects of consumption in history, see Frank Trentmann (ed.), *The Oxford Handbook of the History of Consumption* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012).

<sup>25</sup> See the essays presented in Part II (entitled 'Global Trade and Consumption of Cotton Textiles') of Riello and Parthasarathi, *The Spinning World: A Global History of Cotton Textiles, 1200-1850*, and various essays presented in Riello and Roy, *How India Clothed the World*.

commercial relationships across the world. Giorgio Riello and Tirthankar Roy maintain that ‘Indian cloth was one of the agents lubricating the wheels of commerce in the early modern world, and forging closer economic, social and cultural contact between Europe, Africa, and Asia.’<sup>26</sup> The existing literature has indicated that future researches should address the interactions between textile producers and consumers and what factors (whether social, cultural, environmental, political or economic) shaped consumer demand. Studies on the latter point are very limited at present.

Thus, historical enquiry of trade and consumption of Indian cotton textiles has great potential to overcome the problem of Eurocentric historical accounts and help to create a broader global history.<sup>27</sup> Greater attention can be devoted to the exploration of multiple agencies outside Europe and their contributions to the process of economic growth and globalisation. Among the literature on the trade history of Indian textiles, explorations of African dimensions, especially West African, are still at an early stage.<sup>28</sup> This opens a line of enquiry that this thesis takes up, focusing on the trade of Indian cotton textiles, and its consumption in West Africa from the eighteenth to the mid-nineteenth centuries. In this period West Africa witnessed the peak and decline of the Atlantic slave trade and the subsequent development of ‘legitimate’ commerce, particularly around trade in commercial agriculture on the one hand, and the imports of a massive amount of textiles, both European and Indian, by way of Europe, on the other (for the case of the eighteenth-century Anglo-West African trade, see Figure 1.1).

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<sup>26</sup> Riello and Parthasarathi, *The Spinning World*, Part II; Riello and Roy, *How India Clothed the World*. Quotation is from Giorgio Riello and Tirthankar Roy, ‘Introduction: the World of South Asian Textiles, 1500-1850’, in Riello and Roy, *How India Clothed the World*, 10.

<sup>27</sup> For the Eurocentric (and other centric) traditions in the scholarship of world/global histories, see O’Brien, ‘Historiographical Traditions’.

<sup>28</sup> As discussed in the next section, there are a few excellent studies by Jeremy Prestholdt and Pedro Machado on East Africa and Mozambique. Jeremy Prestholdt, *Domesticating the World: African Consumerism and the Genealogies of Globalization* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, CA: University of California Press, 2008); Jeremy Prestholdt, ‘On the Global Repercussions of East African Consumerism’, *American Historical Review*, vol. 109, issue 3 (2004), 755-781; Pedro Machado, ‘Awash in a Sea of Cloth: Gujarat, Africa, and the Western Indian Ocean, 1300-1800’, in Riello and Parthasarathi, *The Spinning World*, 161-179; Pedro Machado, ‘Cloths of a New Fashion: Indian Ocean Networks of Exchange and Cloth Zones of Contact in Africa and India in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries’, in Riello and Roy, *How India Clothed the World*, 53-84; Pedro Machado, *Ocean of Trade: South Asian Merchants, Africa and the Indian Ocean, c. 1750-1850* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014).

However, it should be remembered that West Africa had an established position in the production of textiles, including cottons. Therefore, as indicated in the opening of this chapter, we need to ask a question that has not yet been answered in the existing literature: what varieties of factors, social and cultural, underpinned continued demand for Indian cotton textiles in West Africa that in turn influenced European business with West Africa and South Asia during the period concerned. Another question is how West African demand for Indian textiles influenced the procurement by Europeans of textiles in India. By analysing these questions, this thesis opens up a number of dimensions that arise from considering the global history of trade in Indian cotton textiles from the eighteenth to the mid-nineteenth centuries.

### 3. Historiography: Exploring African agency from a global perspective

The previous section highlighted that West African trade and consumption of Indian cotton textiles is at the research frontiers of global history. This section will provide a historiography of (West) African agency. This analysis reveals several issues within the literature that are central to this thesis.

In the age of dependency theory from the 1970s to 1990s, the literature on early modern Atlantic trade tended to portray Africa as ‘a passive victim’ of expanding European capitalism. Except the monographic literature by John Thornton, *Africa and Africans in the Making of the Atlantic World, 1400-1650* (original edition in 1992), little attention was paid to the active role of Africans within these processes of integration in the Atlantic and wider world economies.<sup>29</sup> However, in the past decade or so, exploring

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<sup>29</sup> For a well-known discussion from the standpoint of dependency theory, see Walter Rodney, *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa* (London and Dar-Es-Salaam: Bogle-L'Ouverture Publications and Tanzanian Publishing House, 1973). For critical discussions on interpretations that describe West Africa as a victim in the global commerce, see A. G. Hopkins, *An Economic History of West Africa* (Harlow: Longman, 1973), 117-123; John Thornton, *Africa and Africans in the Making of the Atlantic World, 1400-1800* (Second Edition, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 1-9. David Fieldhouse also criticised sharply the ‘pessimists’ including these schools, their approaches to Latin American, African, and Asian countries, were grounded in ‘belief that all indigenous societies at some stage possessed the potential to develop successfully, but that this potential had been blocked, arrested or checked by the effects of incorporation into the single “world system”.’ D. K. Fieldhouse, *The West and the Third World: Trade, Colonialism, Dependence, and Development* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1999), 348-349. For critical discussion on the current scholarship of Atlantic history, see Toby Green, *The Rise of the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade in Western Africa, 1300-*

African agency in economic history has revived. Representative of this turn is the special issue of the *Economic History Review* published in November 2014, the ‘Renaissance of African Economic History’. This phenomenon is partly a response to the increasing attention paid to current rapid economic growth in sub-Saharan Africa, and partly to the rise of global history studies mentioned above.<sup>30</sup> A big issue in rethinking African agency is the need to break down it;<sup>31</sup> historians are expected to explain what kind of agency has been constructed. In the context of seeking African agency, *An Economic History of West Africa* by A. G. Hopkins is a pioneering work published in 1973. Hopkins articulated African initiatives in each phase of West Africa’s economic history. One of the most notable arguments is that small-scale producers and traders emerged in response to new market opportunities in the transitional phase from the Atlantic slave trade to ‘legitimate’ commerce of the early nineteenth century, marking the beginning of modernity in the economic history of West Africa.<sup>32</sup> Richard Roberts revealed that although France tried to purchase raw cotton for metropolitan industry in French Sudan (Mali) in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, Sudanese cotton producers tended to sell their goods to local manufacturers, who bought at a higher price than the French. The choice of the cotton producers

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1589 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 14; Michael Pearson, ‘Notes on World History and Maritime History’, *Asian Review of World Histories*, vol. 3, issue 1 (2015), 145.

<sup>30</sup> For the detailed historiographical shifts to the current situation of African economic history and African history in general, see Gareth Austin and Stephen Broadberry, ‘Introduction: the Renaissance of African Economic History’, *Economic History Review*, vol. 67, issue 4 (2014), 893-906; A. G. Hopkins, ‘The New Economic History of Africa’, *Journal of African History*, vol. 50, issue 2 (2009), 155-177; Joseph C. Miller, ‘Presidential Address: History and Africa/Africa and History’, *American Historical Review*, vol. 104, no. 1 (1999), 1-32; Maghan Keita, ‘Africa and the Construction of a Grand Narrative in World History’, in Eckhardt Fuchs and Benedikt Stuchtey (eds.), *Across Cultural Borders: Historiography in Global Perspectives* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2002), 285-308.

<sup>31</sup> Walter Johnson explained that ‘the term “agency” smuggles a notion of the universality of a liberal notion of selfhood, with its emphasis on independence and choice’. Walter Johnson, ‘On Agency’, *Journal of Social History*, vol. 37, issue 1 (2003), 115.

<sup>32</sup> Hopkins, *An Economic History of West Africa*, 124-135. For discussions on Hopkins’s interpretation of the discontinuity in West African economic structures in the nineteenth century, see Robin Law (ed.), *From Slave Trade to ‘Legitimate’ Commerce: The Commercial Transition in Nineteenth-Century West Africa* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995); Robin Law, Susanne Schwarz and Silke Strickrodt (eds.), *Commercial Agriculture, the Slave Trade & Slavery in Atlantic Africa* (Woodbridge: Boydell & Brewer, 2013).

resulted in the failure of the French colonial policy and the persistence of local handicraft industry that continued to supply African consumers with cotton textiles.<sup>33</sup>

These works have revealed the choices of African producers and traders in new business opportunities in the process of globalisation. On the other hand, the active role of African consumers in it has also gained attention in the literature. David Richardson surveyed more than 90 voyages from Bristol and Liverpool to Africa, trying to reveal regional differences of consumption patterns in West Africa that affected Britain's slave trade in the half-century before 1807. He found that textiles, in particular Indian cotton textiles, were the most important goods traded in most of the West African coast.<sup>34</sup> Likewise, Robin Law pointed out that textiles were one of the major imports into the Slave Coast (or the Bight of Benin). He noted that the relative importance of different types of textiles changed over time due to shifts in local fashion.<sup>35</sup> Randy Sparks documented that Richard Brew from Ireland, an Royal African Company official and a private merchant, had to know exactly what goods were in demand on the Gold Coast in the eighteenth century.<sup>36</sup> Rebecca Shumway noted that alcohol, tobacco and cloth were used as payments from the Anomabo Fort to Africans in the 1750s.<sup>37</sup> Joseph Miller, Mariana Candido and Roquinaldo Ferreira investigated the Lusophone trade with West Central Africa, revealing that Indian textiles were in high demand and incorporated into local lifestyles.<sup>38</sup> Stanley Alpern has constructed a detailed list that shows what kind of

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<sup>33</sup> Richard L. Roberts, *Two Worlds of Cotton: Colonialism and the Regional Economy in the French Soudan, 1800-1946* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1996).

<sup>34</sup> David Richardson, 'West African Consumption Patterns and Their Influence on the Eighteenth-Century English Slave Trade', in H. A. Gemery and J. S. Hogendorn (eds.), *The Uncommon Market: Essays in the Economic History of the Atlantic Slave Trade* (London and New York, NY: Academic Press, 1979), 303-330.

<sup>35</sup> Robin Law, *The Slave Coast of West Africa, 1550-1750: the Impact of the Atlantic Slave Trade on an African Society* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991), 201-202. For the case of the Western Slave Coast, see Strickrodt, *Afro-European Trade in the Atlantic World*, 67, 114.

<sup>36</sup> Randy J. Sparks, *Where the Negroes Are Masters: an African Port in the Era of the Slave Trade* (Cambridge, MA, and London: Harvard University Press, 2014), 88.

<sup>37</sup> Rebecca Shumway, *The Fante and the Transatlantic Slave Trade* (Rochester, NY: Rochester University Press, 2011), 117-118.

<sup>38</sup> Joseph C. Miller, 'Imports at Luanda, Angola 1785-1823', in G. Liesegang, H. Pasch and A. Jones (eds.), *Figuring African Trade: Proceedings of the Symposium on the Quantification and Structure of the Import and Export and Long Distance Trade in Africa 1800-1913* (Berlin: Dietrich Reimer Verlag, 1986), 163-246; Joseph C. Miller, *Way of Death: Merchant Capitalism and the Angolan Slave Trade, 1730-1830* (Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 1988), Ch. 3; Mariana P. Candido,

goods Africans imported from European merchants from their first contact into the nineteenth century, and how they consumed the imported commodities.<sup>39</sup> In the literature, the following questions that will be addressed in this thesis emerge: what kinds of factors did shape and underpin their demand? What were the social meanings of consuming foreign commodities in pre-colonial West Africa? How did West African demand for foreign commodities affect intra- or inter regional and global connections with the region?

Colleen Kriger, in her researches on the West African handicraft industry, argues that consumer tastes for textiles played a large role in shaping demand but were changeable because of local textile production and regional trade.<sup>40</sup> This argument may explain why West Africa imported a large number of textiles of various types produced in Europe and India in the pre-colonial period. However it seems less persuasive to answer the question of why there was continued demand for textiles of a particular type for more than half a century. This is particularly true in the case of the lower Senegal River regions, where imports of a large number of guinées, indigo-dyed cotton textiles, from India via France continued in the nineteenth century. This case is discussed in Chapter 3.

The products imported into Africa often reflected local consumers' tastes and preferences. This fact can be a challenge to the received wisdom about the interpretation of globalisation that sees economically developed regions, or 'core' regions, determining the trajectory of globalisation. Jeremy Prestholdt produced a path-breaking work on the global impact of nineteenth-century East African consumerism, revealing consumers in Zanzibar actively engaged in global commerce and affecting textile production in both Salem, Massachusetts, and Bombay in Western India. Prestholdt

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'Merchants and the Business of the Slave Trade at Benguela, 1750-1850', *African Economic History*, no. 35 (2007), 5-6,13-17; Mariana Candido, *An African Slaving Port and the Atlantic World: Benguela and its Hinterland* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 189; Roquinaldo Amaral Ferreira, 'Transforming Atlantic Slaving: Trade, Warfare and Territorial Control in Angola, 1650-1800', Unpublished PhD dissertation (Los Angeles, CA: University of California, Los Angeles, 2003), 48-68; Roquinaldo Ferreira, *Cross-Cultural Exchange in the Atlantic World: Angola and Brazil during the Era of the Slave Trade* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 7-8.

<sup>39</sup> Stanley B. Alpern, 'What Africans Got for Their Slaves', *History in Africa*, vol. 22 (1995), 5-43.

<sup>40</sup> Colleen E. Kriger, 'Mapping the History of Cotton Textile Production in Precolonial West Africa', *African Economic History*, no. 33 (2005), 87-116; Kriger, *Cloth in West African History*.

developed the argument that ‘The global effects of East African demand demonstrate that accounts of globalization that posit a singular historical trajectory are untenable.’ He also suggested that ‘when activities like consumption in the “periphery” are reinserted into systemic analysis, we can develop multidimensional perspectives on economic relationships that amend unilinear models of the consolidation of economic power in a “core”.’<sup>41</sup>

In a similar vein, Pedro Machado demonstrated a much more complicated story that consumers in various regions shaped interregional commerce and commodity production from the eighteenth to the mid-nineteenth century. Machado focused on ‘intersecting consuming passions for’ African ivory (in India) and Indian cotton textiles (in Mozambique) that brought people in regions around the Western Indian Ocean into close relation with one another.<sup>42</sup> In Mozambique, Gujarat textiles were used as an exchange medium in the purchase of ivory, but local consumers’ tastes for textiles were changeable. Hence, vaniya merchants from Gujarat had to procure cotton textiles through their commercial networks within India and send them to Mozambique to serve choosy consumers. Their knowledge about consumers’ preference and markets was crucial in their Indian Ocean trade, and consumers’ tastes for textiles influenced the production of textiles in the particular area of Jambusar in Gujarat. Moreover, Machado discussed that the use-value of Gujarat textiles as money in Mozambique was also linked to the development of the southern Atlantic slave trade. During this period, slave traders from Brazil and Montevideo visited Mozambique to seek cheaper slaves. These Latin American merchants brought New World silver dollars to Mozambique to be exchanged for Indian textiles that enabled them to purchase slaves. While slaves were taken to plantations to work in Latin America, silver coins were brought by vaniya merchants back to India, where they were paid to Gujarati bankers to secure credit.<sup>43</sup>

This thesis also highlights the intersecting demands in Western Europe and West Africa in the early nineteenth century. In Western Europe, there was increasing demand

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<sup>41</sup> Prestholdt, *Domesticating the World*, 61, 86. See also, Jeremy Prestholdt, ‘Africa and the Global Lives of Things’, in Frank Trentmann (ed.), *The Oxford Handbook of the History of Consumption* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 85-108.

<sup>42</sup> Machado, *Ocean of Trade*, 5.

<sup>43</sup> Machado, *Ocean of Trade*. In the economy of Gujarat, the vaniya merchants were Hindu and Jains. See also Michael Pearson, *Merchants and Rulers in Gujarat: the Response to the Portuguese in the Sixteenth Century* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, CA: University of California Press, 1976), 26-27.

for palm oil, kernels and gum Arabic used in industrial processes. In order to procure these commodities, it was crucial for European merchants to offer local consumers in West Africa goods that they wished to consume. In the case of the gum trade in the lower Senegal River regions, the source of the best quality gum Arabic, Indian guineés were in demand. Roberts also made a case for this exchange, but his discussion lacked the quantitative evidence to support his arguments. Roberts is right to argue that the quality of Indian guineés was critical for consumers around the regions and that guineés were used as a currency in the gum trade, but a more detailed discussion of how such consumer agency had been constructed and that some guineés were further circulated as a currency into the Sahara Desert is required. Furthermore, in his discussion, the institutional factors that shaped the trade route of guineés from Pondicherry to the Senegal River remain unclear.<sup>44</sup>

Rethinking pre-existing connections between West Africa and other regions of the world enable us to see the development of the cotton industry in Western Europe on non-European agencies. Hopkins, in his edited essay collection on global history, highlighted the significance of interactions between the local and the universal in the history of globalisation that shows both convergence and divergence.<sup>45</sup> With its attention to West African demand for Indian cotton textiles, this thesis explores interactions between West African consumers and global economy in the age of Western European industrialisation.

#### 4. Indian cotton textiles and early modern globalisation

This section aims to trace how and why Indian cotton textiles reached West Africa prior to 1800, providing a foundation for the following chapters to show the trade in the early nineteenth century. The section also aims to challenge the prevailing Eurocentric assumptions in the world history and Indian Ocean literature, that the mid-eighteenth century marked the watershed in the global economic structure.<sup>46</sup> Such an assumption is

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<sup>44</sup> Richard Roberts, 'West Africa and the Pondicherry Textile Industry', in Roy, *Cloth and Commerce*, 142-174.

<sup>45</sup> Hopkins, *Global History*.

<sup>46</sup> See Wallerstein, *The Modern World-System III*, Ch. 3. The following works by Kirti Chaudhuri indicate that the middle of the eighteenth century was a turning point in the history of the Indian Ocean in the subtitles. In particular, the latter suggests that Europeans became the major actor in the world of the Indian Ocean. K. N. Chaudhuri,



problematic in that it is partly based on ignorance of the African role in the Indian Ocean world.<sup>47</sup> Instead, this section argues that, despite the rise of the British power in India, there was continuity in the process of globalisation at least until 1800 in terms of global demand for Indian cotton textiles.<sup>48</sup>

K. N. Chaudhuri, a pioneering historian of Indian Ocean history, claimed that the Indian Ocean trade had been demand-induced up to the eighteenth century.<sup>49</sup> Recent works on the history of Indian cotton textiles suggest that this framework could be extended to Japan in the east and Atlantic America in the west. The Indian Ocean trade is divided into three sub-regional trades, the Chinese Sea, Eastern Indian Ocean and Western Indian Ocean. The former two formed the Intra-Asian trade, in which Indian cotton textiles were exported into Southeast Asia (especially the Malay Archipelago) in exchange for pepper, spices, birds of paradise, aromatic woods and resins, tin and gold.<sup>50</sup> Indian cotton textiles were also transported to Tokugawa Japan in exchange for

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*Trade and Civilisation in the Indian Ocean: An Economic History from the Rise of Islam to 1750* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985); K. N. Chaudhuri, *Asia Before Europe: Economic and Civilisation of the Indian Ocean from the Rise of Islam to 1750* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990).

<sup>47</sup> Gwyn Campbell, 'Africa, the Indian Ocean World, and the "Early Modern": Historiographical Conventions and Problems', in Toyin Falola and Emily Brownell (eds.), *Africa, Empire and Globalization: Essays in Honor of A. G. Hopkins* (Durham, NC: Carolina Academic Press, 2011), 82-85.

<sup>48</sup> Prasannan Parthasarathi and Giorgio Riello, from the perspective of the long eighteenth century, exorcise the conventional Eurocentric and chronological approaches that stressed the significance of 1750 and discuss continuity in pattern of Indian Ocean trade, with focus on the Atlantic-Indian Ocean connection. Prasannan Parthasarathi and Giorgio Riello, 'The Indian Ocean in the Long Eighteenth Century', *Eighteenth-Century Studies*, vol. 48, no. 1 (2014), 1-19.

<sup>49</sup> Chaudhuri, *Trade and Civilisation*, 222; Janet L. Abu-Lughod, *Before European Hegemony: The World System A.D. 1250-1350* (New York, NY, and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989), Part III.

<sup>50</sup> Until the Portuguese came to India at the end of the fifteenth century, textiles – spice trade between India and Southeast Asia had been mainly in the hands of Arabs who sailed from the Red Sea and the Persian Gulf. European merchants – first the Portuguese and later the Dutch and the English – took the control of the trade away from the Arabs and diverted an import centre from Middle East to Western Europe. John Irwin and P. R. Schwartz, *Studies in Indo-European Textile History* (Ahmedabad: Calico Museum of Textile, 1966), 28; Kenneth R. Hall, 'The Textiles Industry in Southeast Asia, 1400-1800', *Journal of the Social and Economic History of the Orient*, vol. 39, no. 2 (1996), 87-135; Anthony Reid, 'Southeast Asian Consumption of Indian and British Cotton Cloth, 1600-1850', in Riello and Roy, *How India Clothed the World*, 31-51.

silver and copper.<sup>51</sup> In the Western Indian Ocean Gujarati merchants conducted a maritime trade through their extensive commercial networks that connected Western India, the Red Sea, the Persian Gulf and East Africa. They exported Indian cotton textiles produced in Gujarat to East Africa, where they obtained ivory from the coastal hinterland and gold from southern Zambesia. Their pre-dominance in the trade across the Western Indian Ocean persisted throughout the eighteenth century.<sup>52</sup>

Plate 1.1: Imitations of Indian cotton textiles for West African trade in 1751



*Note:* A niccane (above) is of the blue strips with some white and two red cross strips (19 threads per cm). A superfine chellow (below) is of blue and white checks (20 threads per cm).

*Source:* The National Archives (Kew, the United Kingdom), T 70/1517: Letter from W. Norris to William Hollier, Chorley, 7 May 1751.

The eighteenth century witnessed the rise and development of the Atlantic world, based on the Atlantic slave trade and the slavery-based plantation economy in the Americas. The latest dataset of the Atlantic slave trade estimates 6.5 millions of slaves

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<sup>51</sup> Ryuto Shimada, *The Intra-Asian Trade in Japanese Copper by the Dutch East India Company during the Eighteenth Century* (Leiden: Brill, 2006); Kayoko Fujita, 'Japan Indianized: The Material Culture of Imported Textiles in Japan, 1550-1850', in Riello and Parthasarathi, *The Spinning World*, 181-203.

<sup>52</sup> Edward A. Alpers, 'Gujarat and the Trade of East Africa, c. 1500-1800', *International Journal of African Historical Studies*, vol. 9, no. 1 (1976), 22-44; Machado, 'Awash in a Sea of Cloth'; Machado, 'Cloths of a New Fashion'; Machado, *Ocean of Trade*.

were taken from Africa to the Americas during this period.<sup>53</sup> European merchants carried to the Western coasts of Africa commodities that were in demand among African consumers to exchange for slaves. Marion Johnson's analysis of British trade statistics estimated the quantitative significance of textiles among the commodities imported from Britain into West Africa in the eighteenth century. The importance of Indian cotton textiles within these imports are shown in Figure 1.1.<sup>54</sup>

Similarly, increasing amounts of Indian cotton textiles were imported into North America during this period; especially after the newly-independent United States established direct trade with Bengal.<sup>55</sup> Europe also offered a huge market for Indian cotton textiles as well as other goods from Asia (such as Chinese porcelain and Japanese lacquers). These luxury items provided European consumers with new tastes and transformed the material cultures of both the elite and commoner. Efforts to create imitations to rival these Asian commodities stimulated economic growth and sparked processes that enabled the Industrial Revolution.<sup>56</sup> Demand in West Africa for Indian cotton textiles was so large that European manufacturers sought to produce and sell

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<sup>53</sup> Around 12.5 million, according to the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade Database, were taken from Africa from 1501 to 1866. The Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade Database: Voyages (<http://www.slavevoyages.org/>), accessed on 28 July 2015.

<sup>54</sup> Textiles, especially Indian cottons, were predominant in the commodities carried by the ships of other European countries into West Africa at that time. For the French case, see Jean Tarrade, *Le commerce colonial de la France à la fin de l'Ancien Régime: L'évolution du régime de «l'Exclusif» de 1763 à 1789*, vol. 1 (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1972), 125-126. For the Dutch case, see Johannes Menne Postma, *The Dutch in the Atlantic Slave Trade 1600-1815* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 103-105. For a more general statement on the significance of textiles in the eighteenth-century Europe-West African trade, see Herbert S. Klein, 'Economic Aspects of the Eighteenth-Century Atlantic Slave Trade', in James D. Tracy (ed.), *The Rise of Merchant Empires: Long Distance Trade in the Early Modern World 1350-1750* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 290-293.

<sup>55</sup> Robert DuPlessis, 'Cottons Consumption in the Seventeenth- and Eighteenth-Century North Atlantic', in Riello and Parthasarathi, *The Spinning World*, 227-246; Susan S. Bean, 'Bengal Goods for America in the Nineteenth Century', in Rosemary Crill (ed.), *Textiles from India: the Global Trade* (Calcutta, Oxford and New York, NY: Seagull Books, 2006), 217-232.

<sup>56</sup> Berg, 'In Pursuit of Luxury'; Berg, *Luxury & Pleasure*; de Vries, *The Industrious Revolution*; Beverly Lemire, 'Revising the Historical Narrative: India, Europe, and the Cotton Trade, c. 1300-1800', in Riello and Parthasarathi, *The Spinning World*, 205-226.

imitations there in the eighteenth century.<sup>57</sup> Figure 1.1 also suggests that the second half of the century witnessed a rapid increase in the import of British ‘cotton’ goods to West Africa. These were imitations of Indian piece goods, illustrated in Plate 1.1. However, it should be noted that, while Indian cotton textiles imported into West Africa by way of Europe were all cotton goods, British ‘cotton’ textiles were mostly linen-cotton mixes at least until the 1770s. At this time British manufacturers faced technological challenges that led to them using cotton yarn for the weft of fabrics and linen yarn for the warp. For example, a nicanee shown in Plate 1.1 was a fabric of half-linen and half-cotton.<sup>58</sup> Giorgio Riello shed light on a learning process for European merchants as to what and how to sell in these Atlantic markets. This process connected firmly the Indian Ocean world with the Atlantic world and made Indian cotton textiles truly global in the eighteenth century.<sup>59</sup>

Merchants dealing with Indian cotton textiles connected the Indian subcontinent with the global economy over the course of the eighteenth century. The subcontinent was geographically diverse, which shaped different regional economies prior to 1800 (Map 5). Textile production for foreign and overseas markets was concentrated along the coastal regions of the subcontinent, and raw cotton was supplied from inland areas.<sup>60</sup> According to Chaudhuri, there were four core production regions of cotton textiles for foreign and overseas markets: Punjab, Gujarat, the Coromandel Coast and Bengal. Each region produced various kinds of textiles and interacted with different markets both inside and outside India. The skilled weavers efficiently responded to changing consumer tastes in the markets outside South Asia.<sup>61</sup> Textiles produced in the Punjab were transported by land to Afghanistan, Persia and Central Asia, or by river to the

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<sup>57</sup> Andrea Reikat, *Handelsstoffe: Gründzüge des Europäisch-West Afrikanischen Handels vor der Industriellen Revolution am Beispiel der Textilien* (Cologne: Rüdiger Köppe, 1997).

<sup>58</sup> Linen was mainly imported from Germany, Ireland and Scotland. Alex Johnston Warden, *The Linen Trade Ancient and Modern* (Second Edition, London, 1867), 373; John Styles, ‘Fashion, Textiles and the Origins of the Industrial Revolution’, paper presented at the Eighth Anglo-Japanese Conference of Historians, Osaka, 11 August 2015. I would like to thank Professor John Styles of the University of Hertfordshire for the detailed information about yarns used in the fabrics in Plate 1.1.

<sup>59</sup> Riello, *Cotton*, Ch. 7.

<sup>60</sup> Prasanna Parthasarathi, *The Transition to a Colonial Economy: Weavers, Merchants and Kings in South India, 1720-1800* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), Ch. 2, especially 62-71.

<sup>61</sup> K. N. Chaudhuri, ‘The Structure of Indian Textile Industry in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries’, in Roy, *Cloth and Commerce*, 36-48.

ports of Sind.<sup>62</sup> Armenian merchants played a role in the overland trade that transported manufactured items from Northern India, via Iran, to the Ottoman market. With their colours and designs, Indian cotton textiles attracted wealthy consumers in the Ottoman Empire and became a model for imitation among manufacturers.<sup>63</sup> Gujarati textiles found markets in the Red Sea ports and East African ports of Mogadishu, Malindi and Kilwa, and Gujarati merchants played a large role in the regional commerce. Cotton textiles manufactured around the Coromandel Coast for export markets were initially carried to Southeast Asia, and, after the arrival of Europeans, the demand for the South Indian textiles came from West Africa and the Americas as well. Indian textiles, especially produced in the Coromandel Coast and Bengal, were brought eastward into Japan by Chinese maritime traders and the Dutch East India Company (Vereenigde Oost-Indische Compagnie). The interactions with Europe through East India companies caused the shift of the main markets for Bengal textiles from upper India to Europe.<sup>64</sup>

Indian cotton textiles were widely sought after goods in the eighteenth century. Why did Indian cotton textiles appeal to consumers around the world? Recent studies have highlighted cultural and social meanings of consumption, rather than price, as a key determinant of consumer demand. Prestholdt underscored the significance of social or cultural logics in forming consumer desire and demand.<sup>65</sup> Beverly Lemire argued that, ‘Indian cottons were imbued with different meanings by different societies and peoples. [...] desire rooted in cultural contexts of those societies where the requirements of self-definition, hierarchical display, and ritual gift giving shaped the flow of cottons. In whatever context, whether to sustain customary cultural forms or to feed powerful new consumer forces, culture shaped markets.’<sup>66</sup> In the case of French trade in Indian calicoes, the eighteenth-century French historian, Jacob Nicolas Moreau, noted that, ‘It is not their low prices [...] it is fashion, and it is a certain vanity that makes the women of the lower classes so curious about calicoes. Dresses in light or printed cottons, they

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<sup>62</sup> S. P. Sangar, ‘Export of Indian Textiles to Middle East and Africa in the Seventeenth Century’, *Journal of Historical Research*, vol. 17, no. 1 (1974), 1-5.

<sup>63</sup> Suraiya Faruqi, ‘Ottoman Cotton Textiles: The Story of a Success that Did Not Last, 1500-1800’, in Riello and Parthasarathi, *The Spinning World*, 97-98.

<sup>64</sup> Chaudhuri, ‘The Structure of Indian Textile Industry’, 40-43. For the more detailed trading networks of various goods in the pre-modern Indian Ocean world, including the coastal contacts of India, see Om Prakash, *European Commercial Enterprise in Pre-colonial India* (Cambridge and New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 1998), Ch. 1.

<sup>65</sup> Prestholdt, *Domesticating the World*.

<sup>66</sup> Lemire, ‘Revising the Historical Narrative’, 208.

think themselves no longer at the same level of women of their social station ... they think themselves superior to their social condition because ladies of quality too wear calicoes.’<sup>67</sup> Likewise, in societies of pre-colonial West Africa, the consumption of imported cloth was a means of demonstrating prestige for all levels of consumers. According to John Thornton, ‘Acquiring luxury cloth, foreign cloth, and cloth with unusual colors, designs, textures, and shapes could also play a role in conspicuous consumption’.<sup>68</sup> Phyllis Martin also noted that in pre-colonial Loango the display of valuable cloth whose production required considerable investment of labour was a case of the ‘politics of costume’. In Loango Coastal societies, it was considered that the consumption of prestige cloth was associated with power in societies.<sup>69</sup>

To be sure, social or cultural logics of consumption of Indian cotton textiles in societies outside the Indian subcontinent were an important, if not sufficient, condition that saw Indian cotton textiles in demand across the globe. The technological innovations in the cotton industry in Western Europe enhanced the international competitiveness of their products, and began to challenge the Indian textiles. Yet, the advantage of India in cotton manufacturing needs to be considered from different perspectives. It might be assumed that Indian distinctiveness in the production and trade of cotton textiles could be attributed to cheap labour or technologies. However, the comparison between India and Ming China in the use of raw materials and technologies to produce textiles show similarities between both regions. Instead, what placed India at the fore of production, until the eighteenth century, was the finishing processes of textiles in South Asia such as printings, paintings and penciling. These processes made Indian textiles unrivalled on global markets.<sup>70</sup> Indeed, as Chapter 3 underlines, the quality of Indian cotton textiles can partly explain why West African consumers still preferred Indian textiles to British machine-produced textiles even in the early nineteenth century.

On the other hand, it should be stressed that Indian cotton textiles were often imported into the regions where such textiles were already produced. Southeast Asia

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<sup>67</sup> Cited from Giorgio Riello, ‘The Globalization of Cotton Textiles: Indian Cottons, Europe, and the Atlantic World, 1600-1850’, in Riello and Parthasarathi, *The Spinning World*, 266-267.

<sup>68</sup> Thornton, *Africa and Africans in the Making of the Atlantic World*, 50.

<sup>69</sup> Phyllis M. Martin, ‘Power, Cloth and Currency on the Loango Coast’, *African Economic History*, no. 15 (1982), 2.

<sup>70</sup> Riello, *Cotton*, 37-83.

and West Africa were such cases. This fact raises two questions. Why did such regions import textiles from overseas despite producing such textiles locally? Was there an impact of imported textiles on local textile production? These questions are of critical importance especially if we wish to discuss eighteenth-century global trade as demand-induced trade as Chaudhuri did for the Indian Ocean trade.<sup>71</sup> Moreover, these questions help us to explore a local agency in these regions, although such a viewpoint has been completely missing in the Eurocentric literature of dependency theory and the world system schools.<sup>72</sup> As for Southeast Asia, Indian cotton textiles might stimulate the development of local handicraft industry rather than deindustrialise it. For example, from the late seventeenth century, piece goods manufactured in India propelled technical innovation in Java that encouraged local artisans to produce cost-competitive textiles such as batik with wooden blocks that found markets around the Indian Ocean in the course of the eighteenth and nineteenth century.<sup>73</sup> As Chapter 3 addresses cases of West Africa in some detail, Indian cotton textiles prevailed in the global market through interactions with local manufactures and material cultures which consumer taste and choice were crucial in shaping. In doing so, cotton textiles produced in India cemented the connections between South Asia and other parts of the world. Thus, South Asian textiles whose quality met consumer demand in numerous places in the world played a large role in early modern globalisation.

#### 4. Sources

This thesis uses both quantitative and qualitative sources collected from Britain, France, India and Senegal. The main quantitative sources are the British and French trade statistics that recorded annual imports and (re-)exports at the customs offices in both countries over the period of this study. Economic historians are familiar with these sources. Ralph Davis and Elizabeth Schumpeter produced the pioneering works on eighteenth-century British overseas trade using the statistical sources. However, they

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<sup>71</sup> Chaudhuri, *Trade and Civilisation*, 222.

<sup>72</sup> Wallerstein, *The Modern World-System III*, 152; J. E. Flint, 'Economic Change in West Africa in the Nineteenth Century', in J. F. A. Ajayi and Michael Crowder (eds.), *History of West Africa*, vol. 2 (London: Longman, 1974), 387.

<sup>73</sup> Hall, 'The Textile Industry in Southeast Asia', 121-122; W. G. Clarence-Smith, 'The Production of Cotton Textiles in Early Modern South-East Asia', in Riello and Parthasarathi, *The Spinning World*, 131, 140-141.

unfortunately lacked a concern for the Anglo-African trade that was included in the categories of ‘America and Africa’ or ‘Africa and East Indies’. Therefore, it is impossible to accurately calculate the trade in Indian cotton textiles imported from Britain into West Africa from their works.<sup>74</sup> Davis also published another work using nineteenth-century British trade statistics. Although he presented some data of the Anglo-African trade during the era of the Industrial Revolution (1784-1856), there is, again, no detailed information about the trade in Indian cotton textiles.<sup>75</sup> This information for the case of the eighteenth century became accessible through the publication of the dataset compiled by Marion Johnson in 1990.<sup>76</sup> Joseph Inikori also provided data for the second quarter of the nineteenth century.<sup>77</sup> It is important to note that the value data shown in the British trade statistics are constant official values set in 1696, not market value (or current prices) in each year. Hence, there is an increasing discrepancy between official value and market value over the course of the eighteenth century, especially after the French Revolution and the Napoleonic Wars. Yet, it is still possible to view the data of official value as an indicator of quantitative changes in the volume of the trade.<sup>78</sup>

British trade statistics show only part of the quantitative evidence of the imports of Indian cotton textiles into West Africa as the region also imported the goods from France as well. Therefore, unless the combined data from the British and French trade statistics are provided, there is a risk of producing misleading information about the trade in Indian cotton textiles into West Africa in this period. Chapter 2 utilises a new set of quantitative data obtained from both British and French trade statistics to reveal the peculiar trend of the imports of Indian cotton textiles into Senegal in comparison with other regions of West Africa. The French trade statistics show not only the trade between France and other regions and countries, but also which port cities in France engaged in the trade. Chapter 5 uses the quantitative data to illustrate and analyse the

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<sup>74</sup> Ralph Davis, ‘English Foreign Trade, 1700-1774’, *Economic History Review*, vol. 15, no. 2 (1962), 285-303; Elizabeth Boody Schumpeter, *English Overseas Trade Statistics, 1697-1808* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1960).

<sup>75</sup> Ralph Davis, *The Industrial Revolution and British Overseas Trade* (Leicester: Leicester University Press, 1979).

<sup>76</sup> Johnson, *Anglo-African Trade in the Eighteenth Century*.

<sup>77</sup> Inikori, *Africans and the Industrial Revolution in England*, 444.

<sup>78</sup> P. Deane and W. A. Cole, *British Economic Growth, 1688-1959: Trends and Structure* (Second Edition, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1967), 319-22.



predominance of Bordeaux in the guinée trade among the French ports in the early nineteenth century.

Patrick Manning said that ‘imports can be used as a window on demand’.<sup>79</sup> The quantitative evidence used in this thesis suggests that Indian cotton textiles continued to be in demand in West Africa, and Senegal in particular, even after British machine-made cotton goods were increasingly imported into West Africa from the late eighteenth century. However, in order to explain why West African consumers preferred Indian cotton textiles, it is necessary to rely on qualitative sources such as archival documents and contemporary publications. Chapters 2 and 3 draw on British Parliamentary Papers (or the House of Commons Parliamentary Papers) and contemporary publications written by travellers and merchants to explore why Africans continued to choose Indian cotton textiles over European goods; these records highlight that Africans preferred the quality of Indian textiles.

In addition, qualitative sources offer information about particular areas of the textile production in India for West Africa. Chapter 4 uses documents of the English East India Company (hereafter ‘EEIC’) held at the Tamil Nadu Archives (Chennai, India) and the British Library illustrating that Cuddalore, Salem and Nagore in South India produced indigo-blue cotton textiles for West Africa. These documents also describe the organisation of textile procurement, based on business networks between inland weaving villages and port towns in India. Documents at the French colonial archives in Aix-en-Provence show the reconstruction of Pondicherry, where the French government and private entrepreneurs set up a workshop, which became a major producer of guinées for Senegal from the 1830s.

The documents at the French colonial archives and the National Archives of Senegal include correspondence between France and Senegal. These are used in Chapters 2 and 3 to explain why gum Arabic from Senegal mattered in the European economy, despite the invention of dextrin, a cheaper substitute than the Senegalese gum. They also account for the use of the guinées as an exchange medium and unit of account in the gum trade in the Senegal River regions; and they suggest that the prices of guinées and gum Arabic varied with time and place.

Samples of guinée (probably produced in 1843 or 1844) still remain in the collection at the colonial archives in France. Likewise, contemporary publications

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<sup>79</sup> Patrick Manning, *Slavery, Colonialism and Economic Growth in Dahomey, 1640-1960* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982), 115.

provide us with valuable visual materials. For example, David Boilat, a nineteenth-century Senegalese priest, drew some pictures of inhabitants around the Senegal River regions, which show how they consumed Indian guinées. These sources, as well as the secondary literatures on Indian cotton textiles, Indian history and West African history, are employed to complement and enrich the discussions of the archival sources and contemporary publications.

## 5. Chapter outlines

The thesis is organised into six chapters. Chapter 2 employs a quantitative approach to analyse ‘legitimate’ commerce, or the trade in commercial agriculture, in early nineteenth-century West Africa. The chapter seeks to quantify major commodities exported from or imported into West Africa at that time: palm oil, gum Arabic and British and Indian cotton textiles. In doing so, Chapter 2 explores the extent to which patterns of West African overseas trade changed from the previous century. The chapter argues that, despite the staggering increase of the imports of British textiles into West Africa during this period, Senegal had a peculiar upward trend of the import of Indian cotton textiles, more precisely, guinées which accounted for the largest proportion of the imports into the region.

Chapter 3 is a study of demand and consumption that addresses why Senegal continued to import Indian textiles in the first half of the nineteenth century. This question will be examined from two viewpoints. One, through comparison with European textiles; and second by analysis of the relationship with local handicraft industries. The chapter employs qualitative sources to answer the former point; and the latter issue will be addressed by theoretical perspectives such as factor endowments. The chapter draws on recently developed monetary theories to discuss the monetary function of Indian textiles in the trade in gum Arabic around the lower Senegal River regions. In this chapter, a historically constructed consumer taste emerges as a crucial factor in explaining the continued demand in Senegal for Indian guinées.

Chapter 4 examines how European merchants procured cotton textiles in India for West African markets from the late eighteenth to mid-nineteenth century. Using correspondence of the EEIC and French colonial records, it aims to explore which areas of India produced cotton goods for West Africa. This chapter is a study of the production side and seeks to understand how these regions responded to demand in

West Africa for Indian cotton textiles. The comparative case studies of the British possessions of South India and the French in Pondicherry showed an incentive problem in European enterprises in pre-colonial and colonial India.

Chapter 5 complements the discussions in the preceding chapters by looking at the shipping of Indian cotton textiles from India by way of Europe into West Africa. It focuses on European business networks that connected production and consumption areas of cotton textiles produced in South Asia. It also discusses the commercial environment before and after the abolition of the Atlantic slave trade, the French Revolution and the Napoleonic Wars. These events, as well as the insurrection in Saint Domingue, will be taken into consideration when exploring why Bordeaux became predominant in the *guinée* trade between India and France and then from France into Senegal, in the early nineteenth century.

Chapter 6 reflects the findings from the discussion of this thesis, and locates its contributions to the larger historiographical literature on the history of West Africa, the history of Indian cotton textiles and the history of globalisation. In addition, the chapter opens up various possibilities for further researches.

## Chapter 2

### The Rise and Development of 'Legitimate' Commerce, 1750-1850

#### 1. Introduction

West Africa-Asian connections, which as the previous chapter highlighted were crucial in the development of the Atlantic economy up to 1807, have been missing from the historiography of globalisation. This chapter addresses the following questions in an attempt to fulfil the gap in this literature. Did the patterns of West Africa-European trade, in which Asian commodities served a major role in the eighteenth century, change? If so, how and why? This chapter aims to set the broad context for these questions by quantifying major items exported from and imported into West Africa. For exports statistical data is presented on palm products and gum Arabic; for imports textiles and cowrie shells are detailed, for the early nineteenth century. By doing so, it will show that, while West Africa became a large market for British cotton goods, the region's maritime trade was partly based on the continued imports of such Asian items as Indian textiles and cowrie shells as it was in the eighteenth century.

In the context of West African history, this period is known as the transitional phase from the Atlantic slave trade to 'legitimate' commerce. The trade gradually shifted from the source of labour for the Americas to that of raw materials for industrialising Europe.<sup>80</sup> Palm oil and kernels, and later groundnuts alike, were used as

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<sup>80</sup> Robin Law, 'The Historiography of the Commercial Transition in Nineteenth-Century West Africa', in Toyin Falola (ed.), *African Historiography: Essays in Honour of Jacob Ade Ajayi* (Harlow: Longman, 1993), 91-115; Robin Law, 'Introduction', in Robin Law (ed.), *From Slave Trade to 'Legitimate' Commerce: The Commercial Transition in Nineteenth-Century West Africa* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 1, 26; Christopher Leslie Brown, 'The Origins of "Legitimate Commerce"', in Robin Law, Suzanne Schwarz and Silke Strickrodt (eds.), *Commercial Agriculture, the Slave Trade & Slavery in Atlantic Africa* (Woodbridge, Suffolk: Boydell & Brewer, 2013), 145-146, 151; J. E. Inikori, 'The Economic Impact of the 1807 British Abolition of the Transatlantic Slave Trade' in Robin Law, Toyin Falola and Matt D. Childs (eds.), *The Changing Worlds of Atlantic Africa: Essays in Honor of Robin Law* (Durham, NC: Carolina Academic Press, 2009), 163-182. It should be noted that the rise of palm oil did not mean the decline of the slave trade. There was the compatibility between the 'illegal' slave trade and the 'lawful' palm oil trade in the transitional phase. David Northrup, 'The Compatibility of the Slave and Palm Oil Trades in the Bight of Biafra', *Journal of African History*, vol. 17, no. 3 (1976), 353-364; Elisée Soumonni, 'The Compatibility of the Slave and Palm Oil Trades in Dahomey, 1818-1858', in Law, *From Slave Trade to 'Legitimate' Commerce*, 78-92.

lubricant for machinery and railways, and were also made into soaps and candles in Europe.<sup>81</sup> Gum Arabic was a key material in dyeing textiles as a stiffener, manufacturing printed cottons, and was also used for medical and confectionary preparations and paper making in Europe.<sup>82</sup> Meanwhile, West Africa continued to import from Western Europe a large number of textiles, especially British and Indian, and cowrie shells along with other goods such as iron, weapons, alcohols and tobacco.<sup>83</sup>

The major sources used in this chapter are trade statistics recorded at the customs offices in both Britain and France. A time series for the exports of palm oil from West Africa for the early nineteenth century is available from the British Parliamentary Papers.<sup>84</sup> James Webb provides price data for guinéés in France and Senegal.<sup>85</sup> Jan Hogendorn and Marion Johnson's study provides trade volumes of cowrie shell imported from Britain into West Africa.<sup>86</sup> Joseph Inikori draws on the British trade statistics to argue that West Africa witnessed massive inflow of British machine-made cotton textiles that replaced the leading position of Indian textiles.<sup>87</sup> However, his analysis missed the imports of textiles from France. This chapter uses both the British and French trade statistics to present a more balanced picture of textile imports into West Africa and show that Senegal exhibited a peculiar demand for Indian cotton textiles rather than European textiles in this period. Furthermore, this chapter uncovers that the British trade statistics show various types of British and Indian cotton textiles imported into West Africa and that regional differences of demand for these

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<sup>81</sup> Allan McPhee, *The Economic Revolution in British West Africa*, (Second Edition, London: Frank Cass, 1971), 30-31.

<sup>82</sup> S. M. X. Golberry, *Travels in Africa*, vol. 1 (translated by W. Mudford, London, 1803), 138; Geneviève Désiré-Vuillemin, 'Un commerce qui meurt: la traite de la gomme dans les escales du Sénégal', *Cahiers d'outre-mer*, no. 17 (1952), 90.

<sup>83</sup> C. W. Newbury, 'Credit in Early Nineteenth Century West African Trade', *Journal of African History*, vol. 13, issue 1 (1972), 83-84.

<sup>84</sup> A. J. H. Latham and Martin Lynn already used the same source to quantify trade volumes of palm oil from West Africa to Britain. A. J. H. Latham, *Old Calabar, 1600-1891: The Impact of the International Economy upon a Traditional Society* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1973); Martin Lynn, *Commerce and Economic Change in West Africa: Palm Oil Trade in the Nineteenth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997).

<sup>85</sup> James L. A. Webb, Jr., 'The Trade in Gum Arabic: Prelude to French Conquest in Senegal', *Journal of African History*, vol. 26, no. 2 (1985), 162.

<sup>86</sup> Jan Hogendorn and Marion Johnson, *The Shell Money of the Slave Trade* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986).

<sup>87</sup> Joseph E. Inikori, *Africans and the Industrial Revolution in England: A Study in International Trade and Development* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 444.

goods emerged (see Appendices 2.3-2.8). In addition, the colonial statistics, also known as the Blue Book, for Sierra Leone, are used to explore which goods might be exchanged for textiles imported from Britain. Some correspondences between France and Senegal are also used to provide price information of gum Arabic in Senegal and the proportion that guinéés made up in the imports from France into Senegal.

The next section examines the overview of the trans-Atlantic slave trade from 1751 to 1850, with special reference to the slave trade from Senegambia. Then, the discussion will focus on major exports from West Africa in the early nineteenth century: (1) palm oil and kernels and (2) gum Arabic. It will discuss that the demand for these commodities from overseas increased due to industrialisation in Western Europe. Also, the discussion focuses on major imports into West Africa during the same period. It will show that, while the imports of British cotton textiles into many coastal areas of West Africa expanded, Senegal continued to import Indian cotton textiles rather than European goods. Apart from Indian cotton textiles, West Africa continued to import cowrie shells from the Maldives by way of Europe.

## 2. The trans-Atlantic slave trade from 1751 to 1850

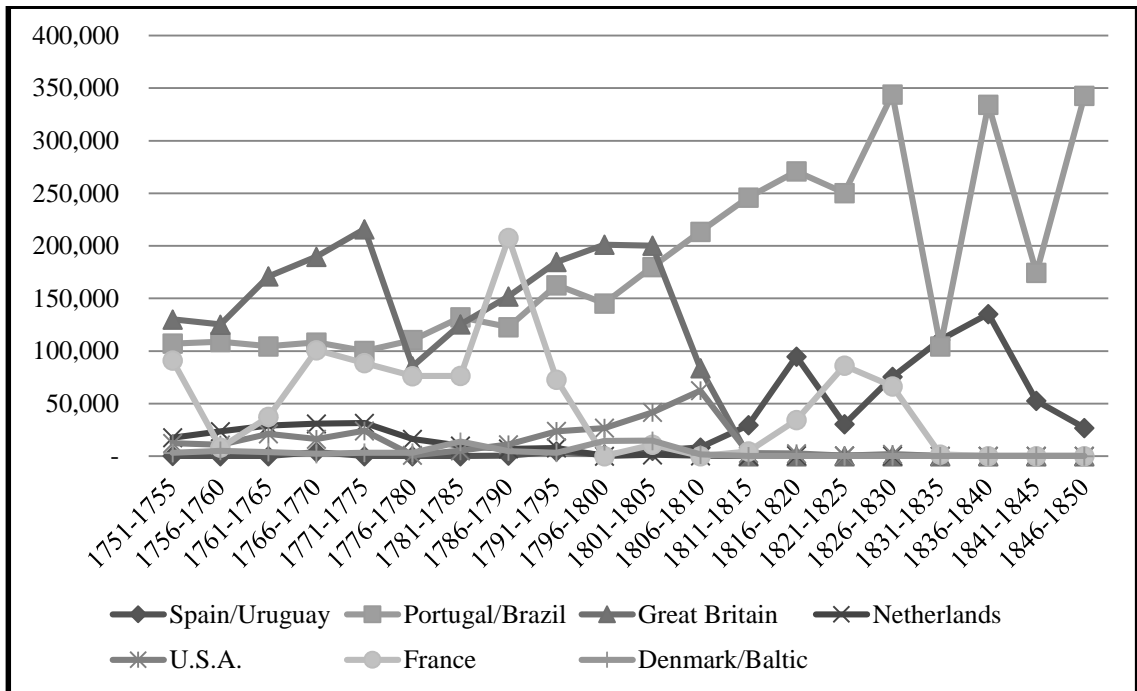
The Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade Database (hereafter ‘TSTD’) compiled by David Eltis and others estimates that as high as 12.5 million slaves were forcibly taken from Africa to the Americas from the sixteenth to the nineteenth century.<sup>88</sup> Figure 2.1 shows the slave trade by each participant from Europe and the Americas from 1751 to 1850, and the data are based on five-year periods. It is clear that during the eighteenth century Portugal/Brazil, Spain/Uruguay, Great Britain and France were the major four participants in the Atlantic slave trade, while Portugal/Brazil came to be the leading player in the trade, followed by Spain/Uruguay, after the British and French withdrawals from the trade. The TSTD data also suggests that 1787 was the peak of the Atlantic slave trade, which began to decline thereafter.<sup>89</sup>

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<sup>88</sup> The Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade Database (hereafter ‘TSTD’): Voyages (<http://www.slavevoyages.org/>), accessed on 23 March 2015.

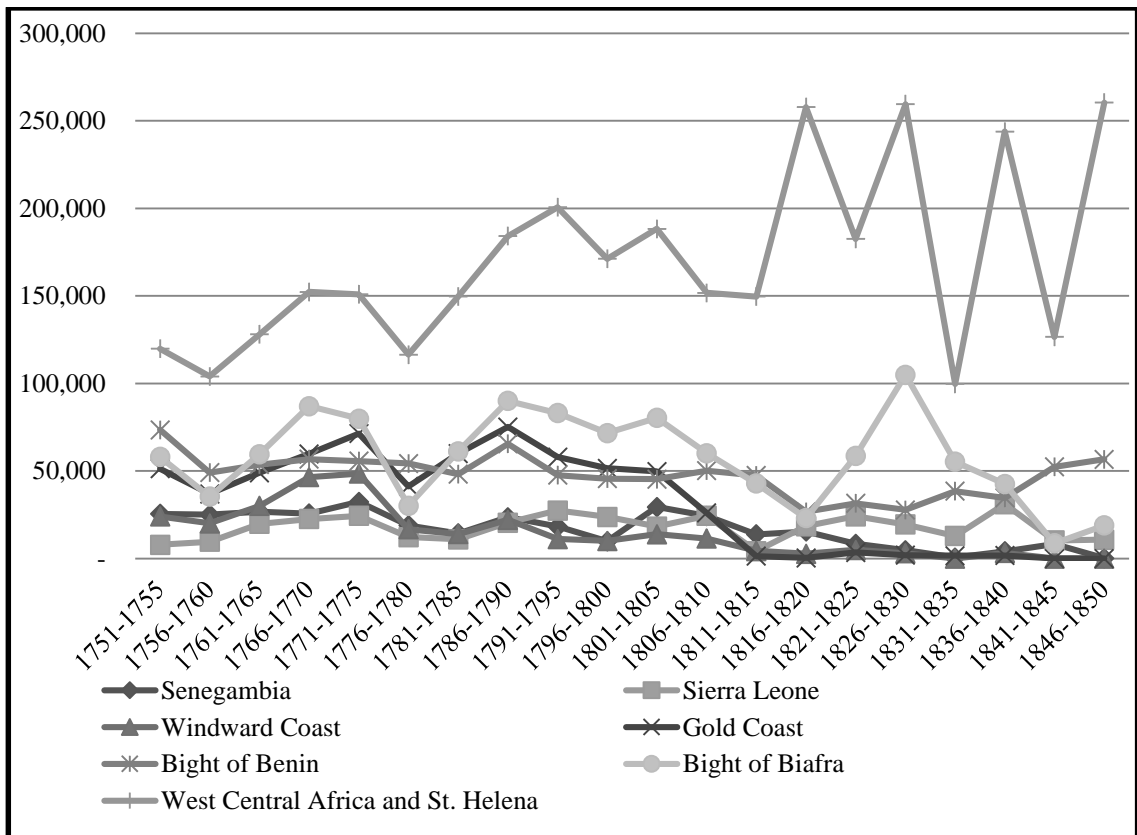
<sup>89</sup> Gareth Austin, ‘Commercial Agriculture and the Ending of Slave-Trading and Slavery in West Africa, 1780s-1920s’, in Law, Schwarz and Strickrodt, *Commercial Agriculture, the Slave Trade & Slavery in Atlantic Africa*, 243-265.

Figure 2.1: Slave trade by flag, 1751-1850



Source: The Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade Database (hereafter ‘TSTD’): Voyages (<http://www.slavevoyages.org/>), accessed on 23 March 2015.

Figure 2.2: Slaves embarked by region, 1751-1850



Source: TSTD.

Figure 2.2 shows the volume of slaves embarked from West and West Central Africa between 1751 and 1850. Except for West Central Africa, the largest region, especially for the Portuguese/Brazilian slave shipping, West Africa in general underwent a decline in the slave exports for Atlantic markets from the 1780s onwards. In particular, Senegambia witnessed the peak of the slave exports in 1774 and subsequently declined towards 1800. Slave exports from Senegambia hit a trough in 1797. Thereafter, the exports from the region revived during the first decade of the nineteenth century, and subsequently declined towards the mid-century.<sup>90</sup> As for an endogenous factor in the decline of the slave exports from Senegambia, James Searing paid attention to the growing demand for slaves in the production of grain in the lower Senegal River valley and in the extraction of gum Arabic that will be discussed below. Under these conditions the African traders would probably prefer to sell slaves to African buyers rather than Europeans.<sup>91</sup>

### 3. Exports from West Africa in the early nineteenth century

#### (1) Palm oil and kernels

In the period of 'legitimate' commerce, two of the major commodities exported from West Africa were palm oil and kernels. Oil palm, which is of African origin, grew wild widely from Gambia to Angola, and palm oil production was concentrated in particular in the hinterland of the Bight of Biafra, or central and southern Igboland.<sup>92</sup> The increasing demand for West African palm oil in the nineteenth century was closely linked to the growing population in industrialising Britain.<sup>93</sup> From 1820 to the 1850s, West Africa was the *de facto* sole source of palm oil to Britain, which accounted for 97 to 100 per cent of British imports because West Africa did not have any competitors in the production of palm oil on the global market.<sup>94</sup>

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<sup>90</sup> TSTD.

<sup>91</sup> James F. Searing, *West African Slavery and Atlantic Commerce* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993); Austin, 'Commercial Agriculture and the Ending of Slave-Trading and Slavery in West Africa', 248-258.

<sup>92</sup> Lynn, *Commerce and Economic Change in West Africa*, 1-2, 34-35.

<sup>93</sup> McPhee, *The Economic Revolution in British West Africa*, 30-31.

<sup>94</sup> Lynn, *Commerce and Economic Change in West Africa*, 16-17.



The type of palm oil was divided into ‘soft’ and ‘hard’ in terms of its free fatty acid (FFA), and in turn this difference affected its use and the price in Britain (see Table 2.1).<sup>95</sup> Soft oil was used in the production of soap, lubricants for machines, especially for the railways and tinplate processing, while hard oil could be used in the production of candles and certain kinds of soap.<sup>96</sup> The hardness or softness of palm oil depended on the duration of fermentation that releases the enzymes to create the FFA. For harder oil, the fermentation could take as much as three months, while fermentation for softer oil was shorter. Meanwhile, the duration of fermentation affected the labour and fuel input in the production process. Longer fermentation required less boiling in water and pounding and labour, while less fermentation was needed to input more labour and fuel. Warri (in the Bight of Benin), Nembe, the Niger River, Elem Kalabari (in the Bight of Biafra), the Gold Coast, Sierra Leone and the Congo were known as sources of hard oil, which was sold in lower price in British markets. Old Calabar, Bonny, Opobo and the Cameroons (in the Bight of Biafra) were sources of soft oil, which fetched a higher price in Britain (Map 2). In particular, a certain type of oil, called ‘fine Lagos’, was known as the softest oil amongst the British buyers and gained a premium of as much as twenty per cent.<sup>97</sup>

Table 2.1: Types of palm oil, the fermentation process and labour required

	Soft	Hard
Free fatty acid (FFA)	Low	High
Duration of fermentation	Shorter	Longer
Labour	More needed	Less needed
Market price in Britain	High	Low
Use-value	Soap, lubricants, tinplate processing	Candle, Certain kinds of soap

*Source:* see text.

What made local producers determine which type of oil to produce depended on several elements: types of trees, climate conditions, factor endowments (especially land and labour) and the price in the market. There were differences in yield of the fruit

<sup>95</sup> Whether palm oil was soft or hard depended on its FFA. The former was low in FFA, while the latter high. Lynn, *Commerce and Economic Change in West Africa*, 46-47.

<sup>96</sup> McPhee, *The Economic Revolution in British West Africa*, 30-31.

<sup>97</sup> Lynn, *Commerce and Economic Change in West Africa*, 46-48.

between wild and cultivated palms. One estimate shows that the cultivated palm produced five times that of the wild palm. The available amount of fruits should affect required amount of labour and therefore the method of production. Also, climate conditions, in particular rainfall and sunshine, mattered in the yield of the fruit. Neither excessive nor scanty rainfall led to good harvest; lack of sunshine reduced output; and drought could decrease the next year's yield. There was a correlation between the yield and rainfall patterns. In the case of the early nineteenth century, there was a cycle of four to six years, related to rainfall patterns, in the output of the fruit, and this cycle also corresponded with the export of palm oil from West Africa to Western Europe.<sup>98</sup>

Why did West African producers choose different methods to produce soft and hard oil? The answer lies in factor endowments such as availability of labour and natural resources and the price differential in the market. The production of soft oil required much more labour and other inputs such as water or fuel than that of hard oil. As for time required for the production of a ton of oil, according to Martin Lynn, it took 420 working days in the case of soft oil. This was more than three times longer than the case of hard oil (132 working days). Lynn stressed that the critical factor was labour to collect natural resources and transport palm oil, whether by headloading across land or canoe in rivers.<sup>99</sup>

Figure 2.3 shows the exports of palm oil from West Africa to Britain in the early nineteenth century. Although Britain imported palm oil from the United States of America, Brazil and other regions, West Africa accounted for the overwhelming majority in the sources of palm oil to Britain throughout this period.<sup>100</sup> Lynn found three periods of sharp increase in the exports of palm oil from West Africa to Britain. The first expansion phase was in the 1810s.<sup>101</sup> Until the British abolition of the slave trade in 1807, the export of palm oil had usually been less than 10,000 cwt. Thereafter, the trade began to expand with 4 years cycles and more than doubled between 1808 and

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<sup>98</sup> Lynn, *Commerce and Economic Change in West Africa*, 48-49.

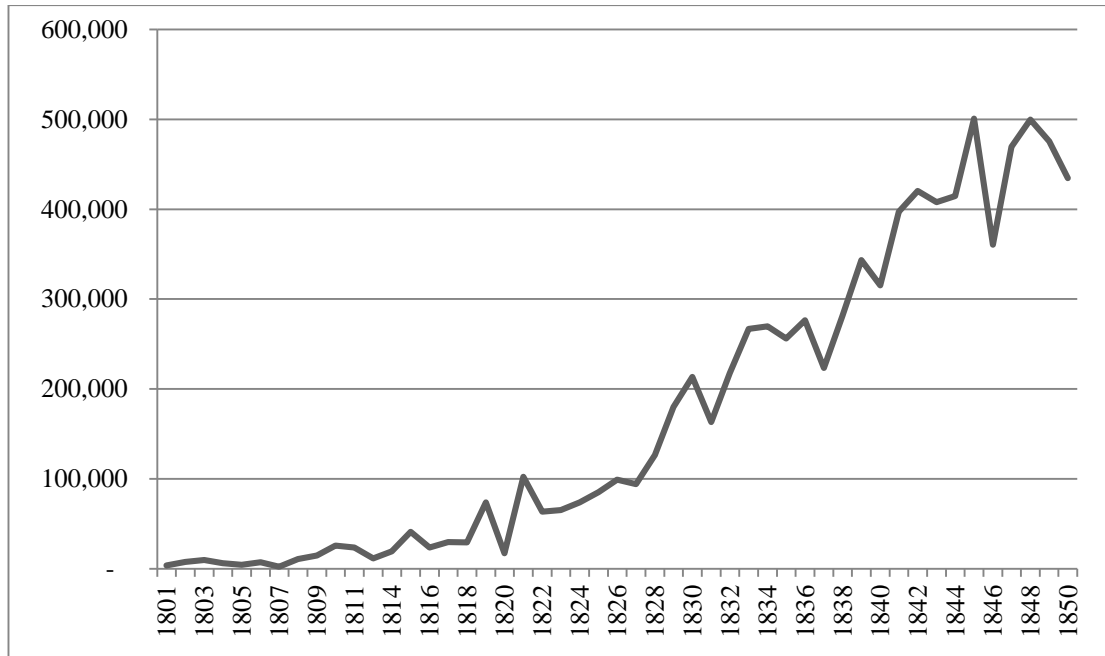
<sup>99</sup> Lynn, *Commerce and Economic Change in West Africa*, 49.

<sup>100</sup> British Parliamentary Papers (hereafter 'BPP'), 1854, LXV (296): Tallow, & c. Return of the quantities of tallow, palm oil, train oil, spermaceti, hemp, flax seed, hides and skins, and sheep's wool, imported into the United Kingdom during the years 1844 to 1853 inclusive, specifying the quantities imported from each country, 2-3.

<sup>101</sup> Lynn, *Commerce and Economic Change in West Africa*, 15-16.

1818. The Bight of Biafra, especially Old Calabar and Bonny, was home to the export of palm oil to Britain in this period.<sup>102</sup>

Figure 2.3: Exports of palm oil from West Africa to Britain, 1801-1850 (Unit: cwt)



Source: Appendix 2.1.

The second expansion phase lasted from the late 1820s to the early 1830s. The volume of palm oil almost tripled from 94,000 cwt in 1827 to 270,000 cwt in 1834. In the decade until 1834, the price of palm oil in Britain was relatively stagnant between 24 to 26 sterling pounds per ton except 1830-1832, when the price was as high as 31 to 34 sterling pounds per ton.<sup>103</sup> The Bight of Biafra continued to be dominant in the export trade of oil to Britain, but this decade saw the growth of the exports from other regions of West Africa such as the Bight of Benin and the Gold Coast.<sup>104</sup>

The third expansion phase took place in the years from the late 1830s to early 1840s; the peak year of this period was 1845 with 501,000 cwt. This was accompanied with the decrease of the palm oil prices in the British markets from 40 sterling pounds per ton in 1838 to 27 sterling pounds in 1844. The Bight of Biafra maintained the

<sup>102</sup> Lynn, *Commerce and Economic Change in West Africa*, 21.

<sup>103</sup> Lynn, *Commerce and Economic Change in West Africa*, 29.

<sup>104</sup> Lynn, *Commerce and Economic Change in West Africa*, 21-23. On the Gold Coast, see James Sanders, 'Palm Oil Production on the Gold Coast in the Aftermath of the Slave Trade: A Case Study of the Fante', *International Journal of African Historical Studies*, vol. 15, no. 1 (1982), 49-63.

leading position of the exports to Britain. The growing contribution of the Bight of Benin was also remarkable, while the Gold Coast accounted for around 10 per cent of the total imports of palm oil into Britain.<sup>105</sup>

West African exports of palm oil into Britain mushroomed in this way throughout the early nineteenth century. The volume increased by more than one hundred-fold from 3,900 cwt in 1801 in the first half of the century. A large number of new trading firms arrived in the Bight of Biafra as well as other regions of West Africa for the trade. However, former slave traders, such as John Tobin from Liverpool, turned to the palm oil trade after 1807, and continued to play a major role in the trade.<sup>106</sup>

Continuity from the days of the Atlantic slave trade characterised not only the trade routes between West Africa and Britain but also those within West Africa in the early nineteenth century. As for the trade between West Africa and Britain, Liverpool was dominant in the imports of palm oil, and the rest of the imports was divided between London and Bristol. As for the trade routes within West Africa, the brokerage networks of the West African trade that emerged in the slave-trade era were a key in the palm oil trade in the early nineteenth century. Traders from local states brokered between palm oil producers in the interior and the export ports on the coast of Africa. Such traders mostly emerged as strong slave suppliers in the course of the eighteenth century. In the case of Old Calabar in the Bight of Biafra, Efik groups as the intermediary purchased palm oil from the Ibibio and Igbo producers in the interior markets along the Cross River, such as Ikpa, Umon, Ikot Offiong and Itu, and transported the goods on canoes to Old Calabar (Map 2).<sup>107</sup>

What is more, Figure 2.3 clearly suggests that the rapid growth of the palm oil trade following the British abolition of the slave trade reflected the unprecedented level of demand for palm oil in Britain. But how did West African producers respond to such an increasing external demand in that period? It is crucial to explain the labour

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<sup>105</sup> Lynn, *Commerce and Economic Change in West Africa*, 26. On the palm oil trade around the Bight of Benin, see Patrick Manning, *Slavery, Colonialism and Economic Growth in Dahomey, 1640-1960* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982), 12-19; Robin Law, *Ouidah: the Social History of a West African Slaving 'Port' 1727-1892* (Athens, OH: Ohio University Press, 2004), Ch. 6; Silke Strickrodt, *Afro-European Trade in the Atlantic World: the Western Slave Coast, c. 1550-c. 1885* (Woodbridge: Boydell & Brewer, 2015), Ch. 6.

<sup>106</sup> Latham, *Old Calabar*, 57-58.

<sup>107</sup> Lynn, *Commerce and Economic Change in West Africa*, 61; David A. Northrup, *Trade without Rulers: Pre-colonial Economic Development in South-Eastern Nigeria* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1978), 190-191.

utilisation in West Africa since labour was needed to harvest palm fruits, cultivate the trees, carry the resources needed for boiling such as water and fuels, and transport the agricultural product to markets. Economists and historians have long debated this issue. One famous explanation is based on modification of the ‘vent-for-surplus’ theory. This theory was originated in the Adam Smith’s *The Wealth of Nations* and later was revisited by the Burmese economist, Hla Myint, who applied this theory of nineteenth-century international trade in regions like West Africa and South East Asia. The vent-for-surplus theory has three assumptions for the development of international trade in underdeveloped regions: (1) population is static; (2) there was no technological innovation; and (3) the expansion of international trade did not sacrifice the production for domestic market. These assumptions formed the crux of the theory that the increase in the production of exports in the underdeveloped regions, when exposed to international trade, was due to utilisation of factors of production such as land and labour that had been underutilised before. Therefore, the underutilised factors of production provided with a vent. Myint also assumed that the process of reallocation of the factor of production in such regions was economically ‘costless’.<sup>108</sup>

The vent-for-surplus theory of export growth has been subject to debate in African economic history for the past half century.<sup>109</sup> The debate has so far concentrated on the ‘cash-crop revolution’ that occurred in forest-zones of tropical Africa like southern regions of Ashanti of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. John Tosh highlighted the limitation of this model: it does not fit well to savannah zones. For example, the cases of Senegambia and Kano demonstrate that expansion of cash crop

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<sup>108</sup> Hla Myint, ‘The “Classical Theory” of International Trade and the Underdeveloped Countries’, *Economic Journal*, vol. 68, no. 270 (1958), 317-337; A. G. Hopkins, *An Economic History of West Africa* (Harlow: Longman, 1973), 232.

<sup>109</sup> Jan S. Hogendorn, ‘The Vent for Surplus Model and African Cash Agriculture to 1914’, *Savanna*, vol. 5, no. 1 (1976), 15-28; W. M. Freund and R. W. Shenton, ““Vent-for Surplus” Theory and the Economic History of West Africa’, *Savanna*, vol. 6, no. 2 (1977), 191-196; Jan S. Hogendorn, ‘Vent-for-Surplus Theory: A Reply’, *Savanna*, vol. 6, no. 2 (1977), 196-199. For the most recent survey of the debate about the ‘vent-for-surplus’ model in Africa, see Gareth Austin, ‘Explaining and Evaluating the Cash Crop Revolution in the “Peasant” Colonies of Tropical Africa, ca. 1890-ca.1930: Beyond “Vent for Surplus”’, in Emmanuel Akyeampong, Robert H. Bates, Nathan Nunn and James Robinson (eds.), *Africa’s Development in Historical Perspective* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 295-320.

production for overseas markets like groundnuts curtailed food production for domestic markets.<sup>110</sup>

However, the application of the theory to forest-zones of West Africa also needs qualifications. As for the reallocation of labour to cash agriculture, Gareth Austin recently criticised the assumption of the vent-for-surplus theory that ‘the labour force on the eve of the “cash-crop revolution” consisted entirely of farmers and free family members’ and their neglect of ‘the fact that slavery had ever existed within African societies’.<sup>111</sup> Austin paid attention to the role of slavery in the mobilisation of labour for cash agriculture in the pre-colonial Gold Coast. The British official withdrawal from the Atlantic slave trade brought about the oversupply of slaves within internal markets of West Africa, which in turn caused a decline in slave price. This facilitated the growth in the use of slaves in Ashanti societies for commodity production both for overseas and domestic markets.<sup>112</sup>

This criticism of the theory is relevant to the palm oil production in wider areas of West Africa during the period of ‘legitimate’ commerce. During the decade or so after the British abolition of the slave trade, according to Paul Lovejoy and David Richardson, slave prices along the West African coasts dropped. This slump of slave prices enabled the large-scale production by slaves of agricultural commodities within West Africa and the transport of the goods from production areas to the coast. The increasing demand for slave labour in the production of commodities and foodstuff for local consumption and external trade triggered the recovery of slave prices during the 1820s.<sup>113</sup> Given that the palm oil production was labour-intensive, the increased demand

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<sup>110</sup> John Tosh, ‘The Cash-Crop Revolution in Tropical Africa: An Agricultural Reappraisal’, *African Affairs*, vol. 79, issue 314 (1980), 91-94; Kenneth Swindell and Aliou Jeng, *Migrants, Credit, and Climate: the Gambian Groundnut Trade, 1834-1934* (Leiden: Brill, 2006), 16-18.

<sup>111</sup> Gareth Austin, ‘Vent for Surplus or Productivity Breakthrough? The Ghanaian Cocoa Take-Off, c. 1890-1936’, *Economic History Review*, vol. 67, no. 4 (2014), 1055-1056; Paul E. Lovejoy, *Transformations in Slavery: A History of Slavery in Africa* (Third Edition, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 163-171.

<sup>112</sup> This point raises a question about the assumption of what Robert Szeseszewski called ‘a large reserve of leisure’ as well. Austin, ‘Vent for Surplus or Productivity Breakthrough?’, 1055-1056; R. Szeseszewski, *Structural Changes in the Economy of Ghana, 1891-1911* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1965), 21.

<sup>113</sup> The trend of slave prices in Angola was different from West Africa during the period observed by Lovejoy and Richardson. Therefore, the discussion here is the case of West Africa. Paul Lovejoy and David Richardson, ‘British Abolition and its Impact on Slave Prices along the Atlantic coast of Africa, 1783-1850’, *Journal of Economic*

for palm oil from Europe would increase demand for slave labour within West Africa, especially where population density was low. For example, palm oil producers in Yoruba and Igbo societies around the Bight of Biafra imported slaves from the Sokoto Caliphate, the large Islamic emirate established in the Central Sudan, and the Bamenda plain in present northwestern Cameroon was also a source of slaves for Igbo and Cross River regions during this period. Slaves were paid for with cowrie shells and textiles in the regions.<sup>114</sup> Therefore, the shift to the ‘legitimate’ commerce and the take-off of the palm oil production and trade in West Africa in the early nineteenth century were closely associated both with the intensive use of slaves and with increasing imports of cowrie shells and textiles. As Lovejoy argued, ‘There is no reason to believe that the general level of enslavement declined significantly [due to the end of the Atlantic slave trade]. The only difference [between the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries] was that slaves were not sent to the Americas but instead were used domestically’.<sup>115</sup>

The development of ‘legitimate’ commerce also shed light on the role of female labour in productive activities and marketing within West Africa. As Susan Martin stressed with the case of nineteenth-century Igboland, there was a division of labour by gender in the palm oil production and trade. While men climbed palm trees to harvest and claimed the right to the saleable goods, women carried the harvested fruits to the compound to process, separated them from the spiky bunch, boiled and pounded it, extracted the oil from it, transported the oil on the head, and, as petty independent traders, sold the product.<sup>116</sup> Furthermore, fetching water was a predominant domain of female labour in some areas like Abomey in the Dahomey kingdom, where water was scarce and needed to be supplied from distant areas.<sup>117</sup> Development of the trade in the palm products, in particular palm kernels that increased in the second half of the century,

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*History*, vol. 55, issue 1 (1995), 108, 113; Martin A. Klein, *Slavery and Colonial Rule in French West Africa* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), 41.

<sup>114</sup> Paul E. Lovejoy, ‘Interregional Monetary Flows in the Precolonial Trade of Nigeria’, *Journal of African History*, vol. 15, no. 4 (1974), 574-575.

<sup>115</sup> Lovejoy, *Transformations in Slavery*, 144.

<sup>116</sup> Susan Martin, ‘Slaves, Igbo Women and Palm Oil in the Nineteenth Century’, in Law, *From the Slave Trade to ‘Legitimate’ Commerce*, 181-183.

<sup>117</sup> Robin Law, ‘“Legitimate” Trade and Gender Relations in Yorubaland and Dahomey’, in Law, *From the Slave Trade to ‘Legitimate’ Commerce*, 202.

offered an increasing opportunity from which West African women benefited by sale of the product.<sup>118</sup>

The roles of slaves and women in the period of ‘legitimate’ commerce are also linked to the debate about the relative importance of large-scale and small-scale enterprise. A. G. Hopkins argued that the slave trade had been in the hands of a small number of large entrepreneurs, such as political elites, whereas the trade in agricultural products was open to a mass of small-scale traders, including women, free Africans and slaves.<sup>119</sup> There was the coexistence of large-scale and small-scale merchants in West Africa in the transitional phase from the slave trade to ‘legitimate’ commerce. The emergence of small-scale merchants was probably linked to the growth of cowrie and cloth imports because the level of consumer income, along with the purchase price of any good and consumer preference for the good, determined regional demand.<sup>120</sup> The quantitative change in cowrie and cloth imports will be discussed later in this chapter.

## (2) Gum Arabic

Table 2.2: Exports of gum Arabic from Senegambia to France, 1790s to 1830s

	1793-97	1802-1803	1822	1824-1826	1830s
Tons	316	952	754	1,034	3,390
Value (£)	9,594	57,082	50,518	71,346	245,741
% of total value	99.4	81.9	93.1	88.7	71.8

*Source:* Philip D. Curtin, *Economic Change in Precolonial Africa: Senegambia in the Era of the Slave Trade*, vol. 2 (Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 1975), 96-97, 101.

In the early nineteenth century Senegambia was known as the vital source of gum Arabic to Europe. This half-century saw the growth of the exports of gum Arabic from this region, mainly from the island of Saint Louis at the mouth of the Senegal River, to Europe. In particular, there was the ‘gum fever’ around 1830, when French agricultural project in Waalo which made Senegal into another Caribbean that would maintain

<sup>118</sup> Susan Martin, *Palm Oil and Protest: An Economic History of the Ngwa Region, South-Eastern Nigeria, 1800-1980* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), 47-48.

<sup>119</sup> Hopkins, *An Economic History of West Africa*, 125-126.

<sup>120</sup> Manning, *Slavery, Colonialism and Economic Growth in Dahomey*, 114.



France's commercial dominance, resulted in failure.<sup>121</sup> Table 2.2 shows that gum Arabic was pre-dominant in the exports from Senegambia from the turn of the nineteenth century to the early nineteenth century.

It should be noted that the 1830s and 1840s witnessed the rise of the groundnut exports from Senegambia, especially from Gambia. 1831 saw the first export of groundnut from Gambia to Britain and 1840 about a ton of the product from Saint Louis to France. On the other hand, the Blue Books of Gambia record that the exports of groundnuts from Gambia increased from 1,146 tons in 1841 to 3,040 tons in 1844 and to 6,313 tons in 1848. At that time the groundnut exports from Gambia was relatively unspecialised, was facilitated by the established networks of the western savannah, and was advanced by the French and other merchants.<sup>122</sup>

Gum Arabic (acacia verec or acacia Senegal) is a solidified vegetable juice, which 'oozes from clefts in the bark of' acacia trees of the family of Mimosoideae 'either naturally or by incision, and which afterwards coagulates.'<sup>123</sup> Gum trees make their habitat in the forests of Sahel extending from Mauritania to Somalia at the present day. From the seventeenth to nineteenth century, their habitat moved south due to the desiccation of the southern Sahara. In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, for European traders, Arguin and Portendick had been the major desert ports in Mauritania where they bought gum Arabic from desert merchants. However, aridification made Arguin unsustainable by the late eighteenth century, and Portendick followed the same fate as Arguin by the middle of the nineteenth century (Map 3). Instead of these Mauritanian ports, Saint Louis at the mouth of the Senegal River, which runs between southern Mauritania and northern Senegal, became the single source of gum Arabic

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<sup>121</sup> Georges Hardy, *La mise en valeur du Sénégal de 1817 à 1854* (Paris: Émile Larose, 1921), 253-255. The proximate causes of the agricultural project were the loss of Saint Domingue and the suppression of the slave trade. As for the causes for failure of the project, the French faced 'the pressure from neighboring peoples, the difficulties involved in the transfer of plantations, the difficulties in hiring a labor force, and the resistance of former slave traders from the post of Saint-Louis'. Boubacar Barry, *The Kingdom of Waalo: Senegal before the Conquest* (New York, NY: Diasporic Africa Press, 2012), 136, 151-161, 219, citation from 151.

<sup>122</sup> Philip D. Curtin, *Economic Change in Precolonial Africa: Senegambia in the Era of the Slave Trade*, vol. 2 (Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 1975), 69-70. It should be noted that the 400 baskets of groundnuts which were valued at £10 6s 8d had already been exported from Gambia to the West Indies in 1830. Swindell and Jeng, *Migrants, Credit, and Climate*, 4. For possible links between the emergence of groundnut exports from and cloth imports into Senegambia, see Chapter 6.

<sup>123</sup> Golberry, *Travels in Africa*, vol.1, 138.

during this period.<sup>124</sup> Searing describes the gum trade as ‘the lifeblood of Saint Louis’ in the early nineteenth century,<sup>125</sup> and Boubacar Barry also highlighted that ‘Gum became “the palladium of Senegalese industry and commerce”; it demanded “an exclusive cult” and any other conception of how Senegal could become a rich country was regarded as “heresy”.’<sup>126</sup>

The productivity of gum Arabic is very sensitive to two ecological conditions. One factor is the harmattan, the hot and dry trade wind from the Sahara Desert that split the acacia bark. The harmattan would start to blow around the end of October or the beginning of November and persist until June. The best season for gum harvesting lasted from March to May, when the harmattan would be at its strongest. It is important to note that the harmattan weakened as it approached the savanna partly due to the blockages such as the tree and shrub at the desert edge. The decrease of its intensity created different productivity zones between the north and south banks of the Senegal River. In the early nineteenth century, the northern zones (the domains of Muslim emirates) were major productive regions of good quality gum Arabic.<sup>127</sup>

The other factor in determining the amount of gum exuded is rainfall. Excess rainfall increased moisture inside the gum trees, so it could prevent the bark from cracking and the quality of gum could be friable. The best quality gum Arabic was produced in the areas where rainfall was 400 mm per annum. On the other hand, severe droughts that occurred serially for four or five years might have also seriously affected the exudation of the gum trees. James Webb notes that ‘The most productive years are when intense wind and little rainfall follow years of plentiful rainfall’.<sup>128</sup> Therefore, it was crucial for Europeans to trade with desert merchants in the lower Senegal River in order to purchase a large amount of gum Arabic of better quality, because these merchants controlled the supply of the commodity along the region at that time.

This product had been an important commodity for European traders from the early stage of their commerce along the ‘Gum Coast’, or the coastal areas of southern Mauritania, and Saint Louis. It was Dutch merchants who introduced gum Arabic from

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<sup>124</sup> Webb, ‘The Trade in Gum Arabic’, 153.

<sup>125</sup> Cited from Searing, *West African Slavery and Atlantic Commerce*, 166.

<sup>126</sup> Barry, *The Kingdom of Waalo*, 161.

<sup>127</sup> Webb, ‘The Trade in Gum Arabic’, 153-154.

<sup>128</sup> Webb, ‘The Trade in Gum Arabic’; Philip D. Curtin, *Economic Change in Precolonial Africa: Senegambia in the Era of the Slave Trade*, vol. 1 (Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 1975), 216.

Senegal into Europe in the early seventeenth century. The demand in Europe for gum Arabic increased in the course of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, as this material, together with indigo from the Americas and original textiles from Asia to be imitated, formed an integral part in producing imitations of Indian blue-white patterned cottons called ‘*indiennes*’ in Europe.<sup>129</sup> A rough estimate by Philip Curtin on gum exports from Saint Louis suggests that French traders imported 200 to 400 metric tons of gum Arabic annually from the late seventeenth to the end of the eighteenth century.<sup>130</sup> In pre-colonial West Africa, gum Arabic fed slaves or provided nourishment during famines, but it was not necessarily used for local industries. For this reason, it would be possible to export a large amount of gum Arabic from West Africa.<sup>131</sup> During the seventeenth century French merchants made some comparative experiments, through which they found gum Arabic from Senegal ‘was more mucilaginous and adhesive’ than any other gums such as the one brought from Arabia to Marseille by way of Egypt.<sup>132</sup> By the end of the eighteenth century, gum Arabic from Senegal replaced all other types of gums in European markets, and Senegal became the sole source of supply of the gum to Europe.<sup>133</sup>

Figure 2.4 shows the export of gum Arabic from Senegal to France in the second quarter of the nineteenth century, whose data is based on the French official trade statistics recorded in the French customs offices. Even if taking into consideration that the French mercantile policy called ‘*exclusif*’ or ‘*Pacte coloniale*’ allowed only the French vessels to transport goods into and from its colonies in this period, the quantities

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<sup>129</sup> Golberry, *Travels in Africa*, vol. 1, 138; Jutta Wimpler, ‘Material Exchange as Cultural Exchange: The Example of West African Products in Late 17<sup>th</sup> and Early 18<sup>th</sup>-Century France’, in Veronika Hyden-Hanscho, Renate Pieper and Werner Stangl (eds.), *Cultural Exchange and Consumption Patterns in the Age of Enlightenment: Europe and the Atlantic World* (Bochum: Winkler, 2013), 142.

<sup>130</sup> Curtin, *Economic Change in Precolonial Africae*, vol. 2, 96-97. Curtin notes that the information on the quantity of gum Arabic from the Senegal River region does not necessarily reflect actual export: some numbers are based on expectations by the authors of the records that Curtin used. Also, the data that Curtin presents seems to suggest that the years 1718 and 1750 were exceptional, as each year exported 2,200 tons and 1,028 tons of gum, respectively. At least, as Curtin noted, the former was based on expectation; not actual scale. Therefore, I ignore these numbers.

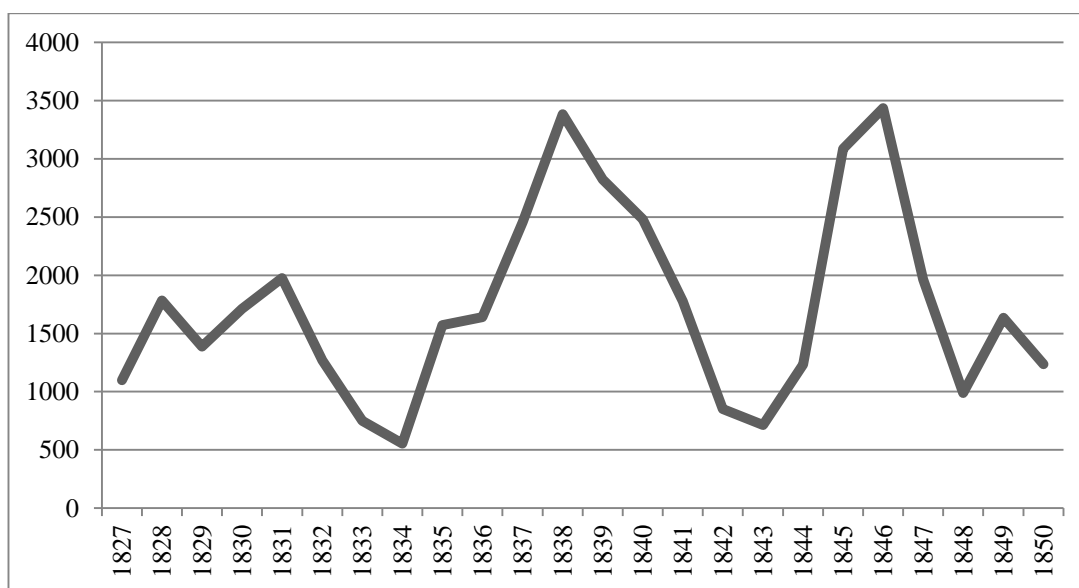
<sup>131</sup> Wimpler, ‘Material Exchange as Cultural Exchange’, 142.

<sup>132</sup> Golberry, *Travels in Africa*, vol. 1, 138-139.

<sup>133</sup> P. Bellouard, ‘La Gomme Arabique en A. O. F.’, *Bois et Forêts des Tropiques*, vol. 9 (1947), 4; Curtin, *Economic Change in Precolonial Africa*, vol. 1, 215-216.

of gum that appear on Figure 2.4 would be smaller than they really were.<sup>134</sup> This commercial regulation was modified in 1832 so that the French vessels were allowed to ship gum Arabic directly from Senegal to foreign countries including Britain, which offered large markets for the product.<sup>135</sup> For example, one source that was gleaned from the Archives Nationales d’Outre-Mer (hereafter ‘ANOM’) in southern France on the exports of the gum trade from Saint Louis from 1837 to 1843 records that 4,738 tons of gum Arabic was exported from Saint Louis in 1837. It also indicates that that number declined by 77 per cent to 1,068 tons in 1843.<sup>136</sup> Meanwhile, most of gum Arabic imported into France was re-exported to other countries in Europe. In 1832 only 18 per cent of gum Arabic imported from Saint Louis of Senegal to France was consumed within France.<sup>137</sup>

Figure 2.4: Exports of gum Arabic from Senegal to France, 1827-1850 (Unit: tons)



Source: Appendix 2.2.

<sup>134</sup> Bernard Schnapper, ‘La fin du régime de l’exclusif: le commerce étranger dans les possessions françaises d’Afrique tropicale (1817-1870)’, *Annales Africaines* (1959), 149-199. At least during the years from 1831 and 1850, the French trade statistics show that there was no foreign vessel entering and leaving Senegal. France. Direction générale des douanes, *Tableau général du commerce de la France avec ses colonies et les puissances étrangères* (Paris: Imprimerie Royale, 1831-1851).

<sup>135</sup> J.-P. Duchon-Doris, *Commerce des toiles bleues dites guinées* (Paris, 1842), 17.

<sup>136</sup> Archives Nationales d’Outre-Mer (Aix-en-Provence, France, hereafter ‘ANOM’), Sénégal XIII, Dossier 27a: ‘Notes annexées à l’Etat de commerce de Saint Louis (Sénégal) pour l’année 1843’.

<sup>137</sup> Webb, ‘The Trade in Gum Arabic’, 150.

There were fluctuations in the gum trade during this period, which reflected unpredictable productivity of the gum trees in the desert edge. According to Webb, because desert harvesters of gum Arabic did not understand the growing condition of the gum trees properly, and because it took 1 to 2 years for an order for Indian dark-blue cotton textiles called ‘guinées’, an important exchange medium in the gum trade, to arrive in Saint Louis, oversupply of guinées would occur. In such cases French merchants turned to dump guinées in Senegal.<sup>138</sup> After the good harvesting years in the mid-1830s, guinées reached saturation in the markets along the Senegal River valley for some years after 1838, leading to a relative increase of the gum price in Senegal. Correspondence between Minister of the Marine and the Colonies in Paris and the Governor in Saint Louis recorded that the exchange rate between a piece of guinée and gum Arabic around the lower Senegal River increased from 40 livres (15 to 20 kg) of gum Arabic per piece of guinée in June 1839 to 27 livres in May 1840.<sup>139</sup> Such a commercial circumstance had a significant implication for French merchants and Senegalese middlemen and brought institutional changes to the gum trade in the 1840s.<sup>140</sup>

Moreover, warfare between the French and African states and changing relation between the French and the nomadic emirates around the lower Senegal River affected the gum trade in the early nineteenth century. Searing describes as follows:

In 1819 the Trarza Moors raided the [gum] plantations that had been established in the kingdom of Waalo. By 1820 the colony of Senegal [i.e. Saint Louis] was at war with the Trarza and with Fuuta Tooro, leading to a boycott of the gum trade and the collapse of commerce. Warfare continued in 1821, when the Trarza threatened French commerce by boycotting river markets and selling

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<sup>138</sup> Webb, ‘The Trade in Gum Arabic’, 163. There might have been an issue such as a problem of coordination (or lack of it) among individually small producers.

<sup>139</sup> Archives Nationales du Sénégal (Dakar, Senegal, hereafter ‘ANS’), 1B29: Correspondence from Minister of the Marine and the Colonies to Ed Devès, 11 June 1839, Paris, F 181; 2B18: Correspondence from the Governor to Minister of the Marine and the Colonies, No. 156, 20 May 1840, Saint Louis, F 30. Webb noted that the gum price changed throughout the year, especially between the peak season of the gum trade and the rest of the year. Webb, ‘The Trade in Gum Arabic’, 159. Considering this changeable nature of the gum price, the examples mentioned here are relatively appropriate to compare because of almost same time of different years.

<sup>140</sup> This point will be discussed in Chapter 5.

their gum to the British at Portendick, located to the north of the Senegal River on the Mauritanian coast.<sup>141</sup>

Political instability of the early nineteenth century compelled the French to continue to depend on the *habitants*, Afro-European métis in Saint Louis, thus these agents established the terms of trade from 1824 to 1827.<sup>142</sup> In 1833 the Governor of Senegal, Germain Quernel, waged a war against the Trarza and the Waalo-Waalo (inhabitants of Waalo) to cut off Waalo from the Trarza, who *de facto* had conquered Waalo. In terms of geography, Waalo was indispensable to the expansion of the French trade. The war that ended in 1835 posed a serious threat to the French position in the Senegal River, and thus the gum trade temporarily declined.<sup>143</sup>

It is important to note that the early nineteenth century saw the invention of dextrin in France, which was intended to serve as a cheaper alternative to gum Arabic. However, a letter from a Minister of Agriculture and Commerce to an Admiral, his colleague, noted that dextrin deteriorated easily, and that it did not suit some of the purposes that gum Arabic served.<sup>144</sup> Thus, the gum trade from Senegal to France (and other countries in Europe) continued even after dextrin was invented in Europe. Its scale in the period of Figure 2.4 had been larger than the previous centuries, and even in 1834, the trough year of the trade in the second quarter of the nineteenth century, gum of more than 500 tons was exported from Saint Louis.

The expansion of the gum trade in the early nineteenth century entailed the population growth of Saint Louis (Table 2.3). In most of the eighteenth century the island's population had been around 3,000, but grew rapidly in the last two decades of the century, when the gum trade became more important than ever and came to rival the slave trade. The population continued to grow to approximately 9,000 in 1819 and reached at 13,500 in the 1840s.<sup>145</sup> This growth was made possible in part by food imports from neighbouring African states such as Kajor, Futa Toro and Gajaaga.

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<sup>141</sup> Searing, *West African Slavery and Atlantic Commerce*, 169.

<sup>142</sup> Searing, *West African Slavery and Atlantic Commerce*, 171.

<sup>143</sup> J. M. Gray, *A History of the Gambia* (New Edition, London: Frank Cass, 1966), 408; Barry, *The Kingdom of Waalo*, 187-188.

<sup>144</sup> ANOM, Sénégal XIII, Dossier 3a: a letter from Minister of Agriculture and Commerce to the Admiral, Paris, 3 December 1839.

<sup>145</sup> Michael D. Marcson, 'European-African Interaction in the Precolonial Period: Saint Louis, Senegal, 1758-1854', Unpublished PhD dissertation (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University, 1976), 162-168.

Because Saint Louis accepted such a large migration of free traders from these African states and Waalo in this period, *habitants* faced new competition with them for profits of the gum trade in the Senegal River valley.<sup>146</sup>

Table 2.3: Population in Saint Louis

1786	5,460
1798	8,000
1811	7,000
1819	9,000
1832	9,030
1838	12,081
1844	13,523

*Note:* Searing noted that these numbers underestimate the real population because free African migrants are not counted.

*Source:* James F. Searing, *West African Slavery and Atlantic Commerce: the Senegal River Valley, 1700-1850* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 165.

The island of Saint Louis, or ‘*N’Dar*’ in Wolof, is located at the connecting point between the Senegal River and the Atlantic Ocean. There is a 25 km long sandbar, called ‘*Langue de Barbarie*’ (whose meaning is tongue of Barbary), which stretches from Mauritania and separates the island from the Atlantic Ocean. There are shallows between the sandbar and the continent that prevents the large ships from sailing up the river and thus they had to wait at sea their cargoes brought by smaller boats (Map 4). This situation created a dependence of Europeans on local societies of fishermen who had acquired expertise in the passage of this natural obstacle.<sup>147</sup>

Saint Louis was one of the earliest European outposts in West Africa and the first French colonial settlement in Senegal. In 1659 French trader founded a permanent fort on the island, which enabled the French to control over trade along the Senegal River, at different desert trading posts in Waalo and Futa Toro. Since then, Saint Louis had been one of three major islands that functioned as hub in Senegambian maritime trade up to nineteenth century.<sup>148</sup> The main business of Saint Louis was to hold slaves in

<sup>146</sup> Searing, *West African Slavery and Atlantic Commerce*, 165-167.

<sup>147</sup> Ibrahim Thioub, ‘L’esclavage à Saint-Louis du Sénégal au xviii<sup>e</sup>-xix<sup>e</sup> siècle’, *Wissenschaftskolleg zu Berlin: Jahrbuch 2008/2009* (2010), 337.

<sup>148</sup> The other two islands were Gorée, an offshore island from the Cape Verde Islands, and James Island near the mouth of the Gambia River. Gorée was first occupied by the Dutch, then retaken by the Portuguese in 1629 and 1645. In 1667, the island came to be in the position of the English. In 1677 the French took the island over and

transit. Barry argued that the development of the slave exports from Saint Louis had profound impacts on regional economy along the Senegal River valley. One was that the nomadic Berbers in the northern bank of the Senegal River were denied to access to the slave labour they had long used for both production and trade with North Africa. Another was the redirection of the cereal trade towards Saint Louis to feed slaves. As a consequence, cereal supplies were cut off from the valley and exacerbated the political and social enmity between the Banu Maghaf, Arab warriors called ‘*hassani*’ and Sanhadja marabouts of Berber origin. This crisis led to the *jihad* led by Nasir Al Din, a Berber scholar and warrior from Mauritania, in the Senegal River valley aimed to reconquer lost cereal and slave markets and to convert the population to Islam in the 1670s.<sup>149</sup>

Following the *jihad* led by Nasir Al Din, Senegambia experienced a series of *jihads* from the end of the seventeenth century into the eighteenth century. The defeat of the religious revolution led by Nasir Al Din triggered a mass exodus of Muslims from Futa Toro into Bundu that stretched from the upper Senegal River to the upper Gambia River. About the 1690s they founded the first Islamic state in Bundu which lasted for two centuries. This second revolution was followed by the third revolution in Futa Jallon in the following century. The Futa Jallon plateau was located in a key transit area and the Jallonke, the Susu and the Peul migrated into the region. Among the population in the region, the Peul were known as the wealthiest group with roots in agriculture and pastoralism. After Futa Jallon was invaded by Koli Tengela and was integrated into the Atlantic trading system, the region underwent a profound economic, political and social

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made it their base to trade with Kajor at Rufisque, with Baol at Portudal and with Siin at Joal. But James Island was replaced by Bathurst in 1816, and it was the English Royal African Company, who conducted trade on the Gambia from the 1720s to 1751. In 1751, the Company of Merchants Trading to Africa was set up by the British Parliament as a new company to replace the Royal African Company, and engaged in fortification, rather than trade, in the region up to 1765. Curtin, *Economic Change in Precolonial Africa*, vol. 1, 102, 104; Boubacar Barry, *Senegambia and the Atlantic Slave Trade* (translated by Ayi Kwei Armah, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 47.

<sup>149</sup> This marabout-led movement defeated the kingdoms of Waalo, Futa Toro, Kajor and Jolof, where the ruling aristocracies sold their own subjects to purchase European commodities. It also threatened the French slave business at Saint Louis. As soon as Nasir Al Din died in 1674 and his movement was forced to retreat, the French intervened directly by offering military support to the fallen aristocracies in these four kingdoms. By 1680 they had regained power. Barry, *Senegambia and the Atlantic Slave Trade*, 50-54; David Robinson, ‘Revolutions in the Western Sudan’, in Nahemia Levtzion and Randall L. Pouwels (eds.), *The History of Islam in Africa* (Athens, OH: Ohio University Press, 2000), 133.



transformation that triggered the *jihad* led by Peul marabouts, ending with the creation of a Muslim theocratic regime by around 1780.<sup>150</sup> As for this movement, Barry made an argument as follows:

As in the case of the kingdom of Dahomey or that of the Asante Confederation, the historical development of Futa Jallon makes sense only when placed in the global context of the slave trade. At the time, slave trading was the dominant commercial activity on the African coast. These kingdoms were originally founded to combat the deleterious effects of slave raids. Once consolidated, however, they too made slave trading their exclusive business. Sometimes the reason was the need for self defense against neighboring states. But there were instances where the initiatives came from the new states themselves, eager as they were to share in profits from the slave trade. In such cases, Islam was simply another opportune ideology that served to maintain and consolidate the power of the incumbent aristocracy.<sup>151</sup>

This argument highlighted that the Atlantic trade shaped the trajectory of newly emerged Muslim states in Senegambia in the eighteenth century.

Following the *jihads* in Bundu and Futa Jallon, Futa Toro around the middle valley of the Senegal River also underwent the marabout movement led by the *Toorodo* (or clerical elite) group – in particular, Suleyman Bal and later Abdul Kadel Kane. Futa Toro was the granary of the region because it constituted a rich floodplain that allows its farmers to cultivate a dry season crop and thus provide insurance against the uncertainties of rainfed agriculture. The region also attracted herders, traders and settlers throughout its history. The *Denyanke* dynasty, which was founded in 1464, underwent a remarkable until the seventeenth century and thus established its hegemony in the region. However, from 1673 onwards, the combined effect of the slave trade, the growing pressure from the nomadic emirates like Trarza and the European presence dealt a blow to the legitimacy of the dynasty and created political instability in the region. In this context, the *Toorodo* movement challenged the ruling warrior regime of

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<sup>150</sup> Barry, *Senegambia and the Atlantic Slave Trade*, 94-102; Robinson, 'Revolutions in the Western Sudan', 133-135; Philip D. Curtin, 'Jihad in West Africa: Early Phases and Inter-relations in Mauritania and Senegal', *Journal of African History*, vol. 12, issue 1 (1971), 11-24.

<sup>151</sup> Barry, *Senegambia and the Atlantic Slave Trade*, 98.

the *Denyanke* who lost its ability to ensure security throughout Futa Toro. This movement was also aimed to challenge the domination by Brakna and the practice of selling Muslims as slaves. Abdul Kadel passed with the treaty with the French in 1785 that imposed them to pay the ‘customs’ for the right to trade in gum and slaves through Futa Toro with the upper Senegal River. The payments were made in commodities, especially cloth and guns. The treaty also clarified that Muslims must not be the victims of the slave trade.<sup>152</sup>

As for French business in Senegal, the Compagnie des Indes conducted the trade at the Fort Saint Joseph in Gajaaga in the upper Senegal River after 1716, and the trade had been a part of the French trade in the lower Senegal River until the English captured Saint Louis in 1758.<sup>153</sup> Thereafter, a long competition over Saint Louis, and Senegambia, between Britain and France followed. With the treaty of Paris in 1763 the island was officially conceded to Britain from France, the French were forced to transfer their headquarters to the island of Gorée.<sup>154</sup> In 1764 Senegambia became put under the committee of Britain’s Company of Merchants Trading to Africa. The following year an Order in Council of November 1 placed the Province of Senegambia under the direct control of the British government as a crown colony subjected to the Navigation Laws, and Saint Louis became the capital of the territory.<sup>155</sup> Until 1783 the province was ‘part of the British Atlantic common market, within which all British subjects traded freely, but from which all others were excluded. The governor of the province had to ensure that the exclusion of non-British traders was enforced and the free trade rights of all British traders were protected. The colony also had a

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<sup>152</sup> David Robinson said that ‘The tolls were translated by *jizya*, the tax paid to Muslim authorities by the *dhimmi* or protected non-Muslim communities.’ Barry, *Senegambia and the Atlantic Slave Trade*, 102-106; Robinson, ‘Revolutions in the Western Sudan’, 135-137; David Robinson, ‘The Islamic Revolution of Futa Toro’, *International Journal of African Historical Studies*, vol. 8, no. 2 (1975), 185-221, citation from 202; Oumar Kane, *La première hégémonie peule: le Fuuta Tooro de Koli Tengella à Almaami Abdul* (Paris and Dakar: Karthala – Presses Universitaires de Dakar, 2004), 457-495.

<sup>153</sup> Curtin, *Economic Change in Precolonial Africa*, vol. 1, 105, 109.

<sup>154</sup> Andrew F. Clarke and Lucie Colvin Philips, *Historical Dictionary of Senegal* (Second Edition, London and Metuchen, NJ: Scarecrow Press, 1994), 231-233.

<sup>155</sup> Inikori noted that the Province of Senegambia can be seen as the first British colony in Africa. J. E. Inikori, ‘Gentlemanly Capitalism and Imperialism in West Africa: Great Britain and Senegambia in the Eighteenth Century’, in Toyin Falola and Emily Brownell (eds.), *Africa, Empire and Globalization: Essays in Honor of A. G. Hopkins* (Durham, North Carolina: Carolina Academic Press, 2011), 214.

superintendent of trade whose duty was to keep the British Board of Trade and Plantations informed about the state of affairs in the colony.<sup>156</sup> What made the British occupation different from the French one was that the British was more preoccupied with the gum trade on the Mauritania Coast by relinquishing control over the trade in the upper Senegal River. This allowed the nomads on the right bank of the river to return to the Futa region.<sup>157</sup> In 1778 France recaptured Saint Louis and transferred the headquarters there again from Gorée, where the yellow fever was prevalent at that time. With the treaty of Paris in 1783 Gambia was conceded to Britain, but France obtained an agreement about the right to control both Saint Louis and Gorée. But Saint Louis fell to the British again in 1809, and the French took back the control of the island in 1817. Afterwards, Saint Louis became the centre of the French commercial empire in West Africa, which required no territorial conquests until after 1850.<sup>158</sup>

The expansion of the gum trade also had an implication about slavery within Senegal. Because it was slaves of desert Muslim merchants who tapped gum from acacia trees, growing demand for gum Arabic from Europe would probably fuel demand for labour from Muslim people along the lower Senegal River. In fact, in 1823, in order to redress the internal labour shortage in Senegal, the French restored the slave trade from Gajaaga under the guise of indentured servants, and the Galam Company focused on indentured servants and gum as its main business.<sup>159</sup>

As such, Senegal in the early nineteenth century saw the development of seaborne trade in gum Arabic. As a consequence, the population on the island of Saint Louis increased, more grains were imported from neighbouring regions such as Kajoor and Waalo, and demand among desert merchants for slaves would also increase. The expansion of the gum trade with Europe also meant that more commodities were imported into Senegal and interior regions along the Senegal River valley than ever. The next section turns to major commodities – cotton textiles and cowrie shells – which were imported into West Africa from overseas in this period.

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<sup>156</sup> Inikori, 'Gentlemanly Capitalism and Imperialism in West Africa', 214.

<sup>157</sup> Barry, *The Kingdom of Waalo*, 118.

<sup>158</sup> Clarke and Philips, *Historical Dictionary of Senegal*, 231-233. In contrast to Saint Louis, Gorée and James Island faced difficulties in developing new trade products and experienced a decline in total trade. This was due to an increase in pillaging both of agriculturalists and traders by *tyeddo* (the powerful slaves of the crown) within the mainland states. Martin A. Klein, 'Social and Economic Factors in the Muslim Revolution in Senegambia', *Journal of African History*, vol. 13, issue 3 (1972), 423.

<sup>159</sup> Searing, *West African Slavery and Atlantic Commerce*, 165, 170.

#### 4. Imports into West Africa

##### (1) Cotton textiles

This section focuses on two fabrics: English cottons and Indian cottons. Textiles, especially cotton goods, which had been flagship commodities in the imports from Europe into West Africa in the eighteenth century, continued to be pre-dominant in the early nineteenth century.<sup>160</sup> Existing works have stressed the rapid expansion of the inflow of Lancashire cotton goods into West Africa in the early nineteenth century due to Western European industrialisation, and have argued that the competitiveness of English goods came to be superior to Indian cotton textiles from early in the century. For example, drawing on the British annual trade statistics termed ‘Customs 8’ and ‘Customs 10’, Joseph Inikori compared between the volume of English and Indian cotton goods, then highlighted that ‘the trend from 1806 (second half of the decade) is clear; British cottons were decisively taking over the Western African market [...] Thus, British cottons won a decisive victory over East India cottons in Western Africa very early in the nineteenth century’ (Table 2.4).<sup>161</sup>

To be sure, it is clear from Table 2.4 that the second quarter of the nineteenth century witnessed the rapid expansion of the imports of English cotton goods into West African markets and a relative stagnation of Indian cotton goods in the Anglo-West African trade. However, it should be noted that West Africa also imported Indian cotton textiles from France in the early nineteenth century, which is completely missing from Inikori’s data. This section will show that the Inikori’s argument needs to be qualified in light of other sources such as French trade statistics.

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<sup>160</sup> For the case of the Anglo-African trade in the eighteenth-century, see Marion Johnson, *Anglo-African Trade in the Eighteenth Century: English Statistics on African Trade 1699-1808* (edited by Thomas Lindblad and Robert Ross, Leiden: Intercontinenta No. 15, Centre for the History of European Expansion, 1990), 53-96. For a general overview of textile trade from Europe into West Africa, see Andrea Reikat, *Handelsstoffe: Gründzüge des Europäisch-West Afrikanischen Handels vor der Industriellen Revolution am Beispiel der Textilien* (Cologne: Rüdiger Köppe, 1997).

<sup>161</sup> Inikori, *Africans and the Industrial Revolution in England*, 447.

Table 2.4: Inikori's estimates on the exports of English and Indian cotton goods, 1827-1850 (Unit: yards)

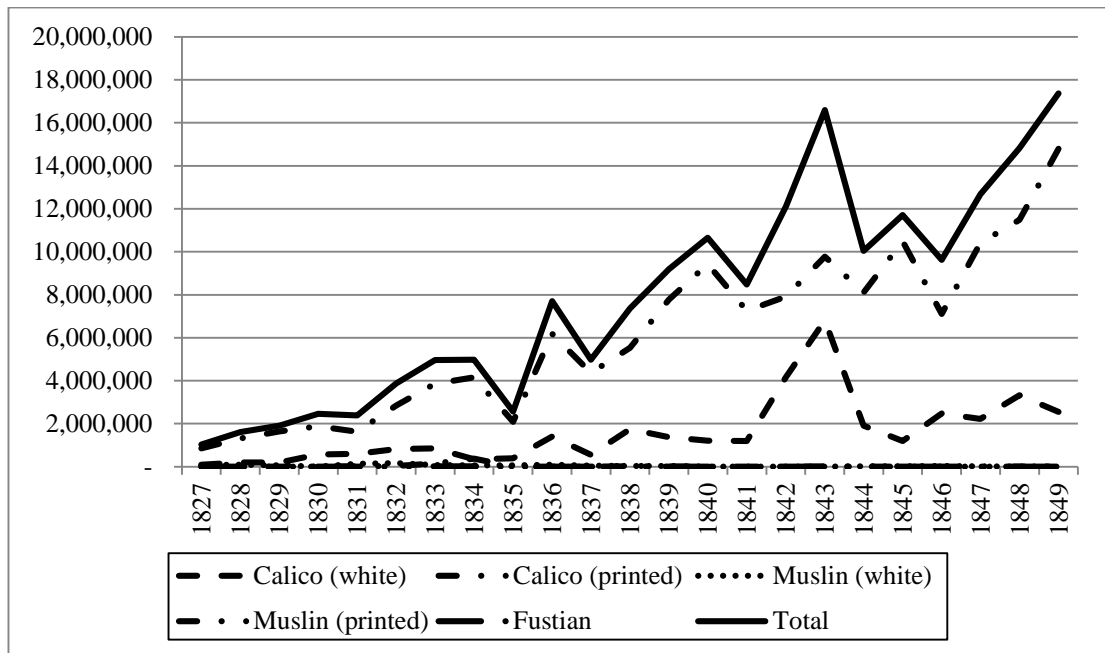
	English cottons	Indian cottons
1827	1,025,942	643,670
1828	1,535,493	726,190
1829	1,910,940	929,120
1830	2,443,202	536,520
1831	2,361,090	416,160
1832	3,364,360	409,750
1833	4,988,400	621,970
1834	4,975,636	577,570
1835	3,905,729	303,790
1836	7,706,901	276,460
1837	4,973,412	500,420
1838	7,370,755	463,630
1839	9,160,022	478,050
1840	10,489,550	488,400
1841	8,389,266	503,210
1842	12,021,627	388,810
1843	16,571,981	610,880
1844	N/A	521,010
1846	9,463,310	873,830
1847	12,465,956	665,590
1848	14,595,528	347,710
1849	17,275,824	407,970
1850	16,891,599	457,580

*Note:* Inikori converted the unit of Indian cotton textiles from pieces to yards on the basis of a record of London merchant Thomas Lumley who ran wholesale business in Indian textiles at the turn of the nineteenth century. He calculated that the average conversion rate was 10 yards per piece. Also, his estimate does not include the figures for English cottons for 1844 and 1845 and for Indian cottons for 1845.

*Source:* Joseph E. Inikori, *Africans and the Industrial Revolution in England: A Study in International Trade and Economic Development* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 444.

As a matter of fact, the Customs 10 presents more detailed information than Inikori presented. First, the data of British cottons imported from Britain into West Africa have sub-categories such as 'white and plain calicoes', 'printed and checked calicoes', 'plain muslins', 'printed and checked muslins' and 'fustians'. These sub-categories varied throughout the concerned period, but it is possible to get consistent sub-categories for English cotton goods from 1827 to 1849. In addition, such detailed information reveals which regions of West Africa imported what types of cotton textiles during the period.

Figure 2.5: Imports of English cotton goods of various kinds from Britain to West Africa, 1827-1849 (Unit: yards)



Note: see text.

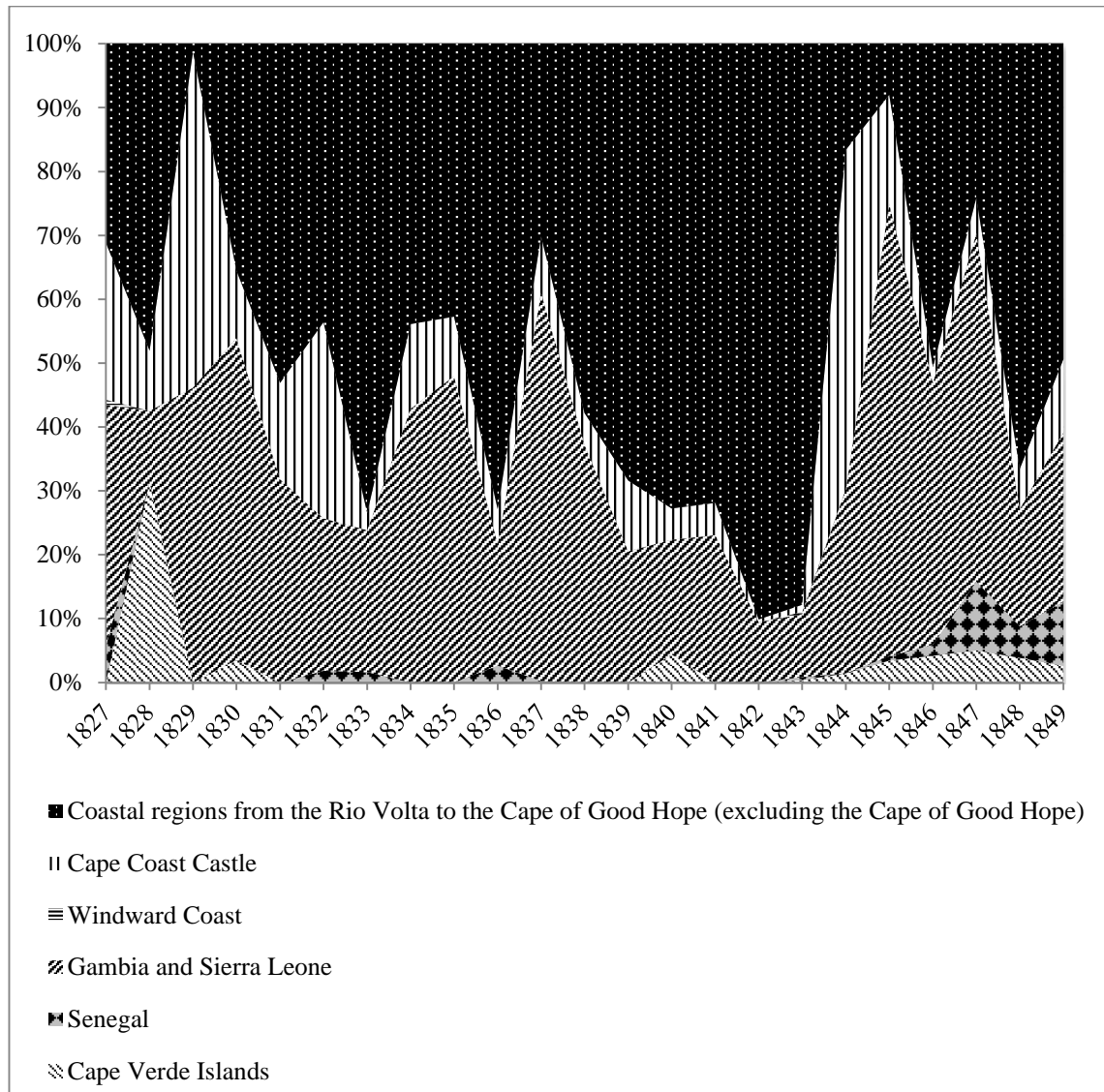
Source: Appendix 2.3.

Figure 2.5 presents the details of English cotton goods imported from Britain to West Africa. As for constructing ‘West Africa’ as a unit of region, I take the data from the sub-units of the Cape Verde Islands, Senegal, Gambia and Sierra Leone, Windward Coast, Cape Coast Castle and Rio Volta to the Cape of Good Hope. In the British Customs ledgers, there is an independent category of ‘Cape of Good Hope’, and the category of ‘Rio Volta to the Cape of Good Hope’ does not include the Cape of Good Hope. Therefore, this category means the coastal regions from the Bight of Benin to Angola. Considering the increasing importance of palm oil trade from the Bights of Benin and Biafra in the early nineteenth century, I assume this category signifies mainly the Bights of Benin and Biafra.

It is evident that calicoes, both plain and non-plain, accounted for more than 90 per cent of total English cotton goods imported into West Africa, especially almost 100 per cent after 1836 (see also Appendix 2.3). In addition, West Africa imported certain amounts of muslins, both plain and non-plain, and fustians from Britain, although their amounts were negligible and smaller than total amounts of Indian cotton textiles imported from Britain to West Africa. Indeed, the British trade statistics even suggest that the volume of these English goods did not increase in the second quarter of the

nineteenth century. Therefore, it is possible to argue that English calicoes, in particular printed or painted ones, would gain competitiveness in West Africa in the second quarter of the nineteenth century, but it was probably not the case with other kinds of English cotton goods.<sup>162</sup>

Figure 2.6: Regional proportions of calicoes (white and plain) imported from Britain to West Africa, 1827-1849



Source: Appendix 2.4.

<sup>162</sup> High demand for dyed and printed cotton textiles continued to be found in early colonial Dahomey (1890-1914). They constituted the majority of the imports of textiles into the region. Manning, *Slavery, Colonialism and Economic Growth in Dahomey*, 124-126, 373-374.

What is more important, there was huge demand for printed or painted calicoes in West Africa in the early nineteenth century. That meant that British manufacturers needed not only raw cotton but also dyestuffs in the production of these goods for West African trade. It is well known that American cotton was crucial in the development of textile industry in Britain during this period.<sup>163</sup> But, in almost every process of dyeing and printing, indigo, other kinds of dyestuffs and various materials including gum Arabic from Senegal were also required.

Furthermore, the British trade statistics offer information of regional differences of West African trade. As for the years from 1827 to 1849, trade information with the Cape Verde Islands, Senegal, Gambia and Sierra Leone, the Windward Coast, the Cape Coast Castle and the coastal regions from the Rio Volta to the Cape of Good Hope is available. Figure 2.6 illustrates how much each region accounted for in the imports of white and plain calicoes from Britain. In this figure, the coastal regions from the Rio Volta to the Cape of Good Hope made up the largest proportion. Its average proportion in the imports of plain calicoes into West Africa was about 50 per cent. In addition, as seen in Figure 2.5, the region saw the rapid growth of the import of the fabrics in 1842 and 1843. Gambia and Sierra Leone ranked second in this period, on average at 33 per cent, and the Cape Coast Castle followed at 13 per cent.

However, fluctuations in each region in individual years were too large to conclude a general tendency in the Anglo-West African trade of white and plain calicoes. One possible factor behind West African demand for white cloth, as Ghislaine Lydon suggests, was a series of *jihad* that broke out across the region in the nineteenth century. Given that Muslims used white cloth to wrap the dead for burial, the age of *jihad* must have witnessed the increase of consumption of white cloth for this purpose along with conversions.<sup>164</sup> Definitive answers concerning the details of the connection between *jihad*, local consumption of white cloth, and the imports of white cloth from overseas into West Africa await further research.

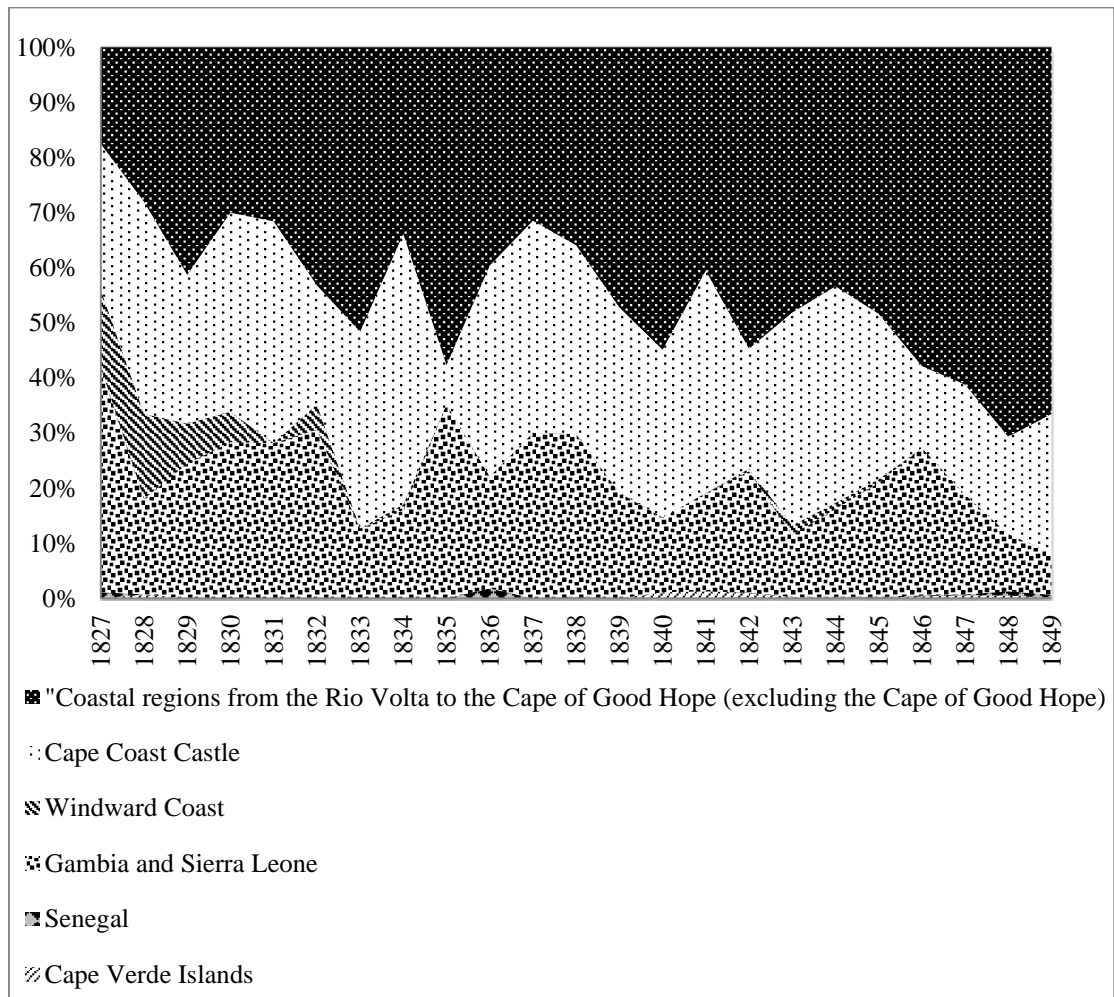
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<sup>163</sup> Eric J. Hobsbawm, *Industry and Empire: From 1750 to the Present Day* (London: Penguin Books, 1968), 58.

<sup>164</sup> Ghislaine Lydon, *On Trans-Saharan Trails: Islamic Law, Trade networks, and Cross-Cultural Exchange in Nineteenth-Century Western Africa* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 113.



Figure 2.7: Regional proportions of calicoes (printed and checked) imported from Britain to West Africa, 1827-1849



Source: Appendix 2.5.

Figure 2.7 shows the imports of printed and checked calicoes from Britain into West Africa from 1827 to 1849. In contrast to the imports of white and plain calicoes from Britain into West Africa, Figure 2.7 presents a relatively clear picture of regional differences of English cotton textile imports. The coastal regions from the Rio Volta to the Cape of Good Hope made up the largest proportion in the imports of English non-plain calicoes into West Africa until the middle of the 1840s, 30 to 50 per cent. Its proportion increased towards the middle of the century, and reached 70 per cent in 1848. During the second quarter of the nineteenth century the imports of printed cotton goods into the region skyrocketed more than 20 times, from 370,000 yards in 1828 to 8,110,000 yards in 1848. Also, Cape Coast Castle accounted for 30 to 35 per cent in the imports of English non-plain calicoes into West Africa until 1845, and the proportion dropped to 20 per cent thereafter. Its quantity spiked from 510,000 yards in 1828 to

2,030,000 yards in 1848. On the other hand, the proportion of Gambia and Sierra Leone decreased from 30 to 10 per cent during the same period. While the imports of English printed calicoes into the Cape Coast Castle and the coastal region from the Rio Volta to the Cape of Good Hope increased towards the mid-century, those of Gambia and Sierra Leone relatively stagnated from the mid-1830s. This little divergence would reflect the growing importance of the Gold Coast and the Bights of Benin and Biafra as main sources of palm oil to Western Europe.

Thus, West Africa imported a massive amount of English cotton goods, especially calicoes, both plain and non-plain, in the early nineteenth century. However, it would be wrong to assume that Lancashire produced cotton textiles perceived to be of good quality. In the 1810s the committee of the Company of Merchants Trading to Africa investigated the state of the settlements and forts on the coast of Africa, and the reports from the British Governors at the Company's forts testified some problems with the quality of English cotton goods in West African markets. George Richardson, the then-Governor at the Annamaboe fort on the Gold Coast, answered the following questions by the British commissioners on 29 May 1810 as below:

Q. 44. - What proportion of the goods chiefly demand among the natives, is of English production or manufacture, and what foreign?

A. 44. - Cloth of India manufacture is chiefly in demand; the Manchester goods, and English iron and lead, find a market. I cannot say as to the proportion of each, but the India goods have a preference, and are sold in much greater quantities.

Q. 45. - Is it probable that new English articles of trade could be advantageously introduced; could they be made to supplant foreign articles, or are the natives so much attached old customs, as to render this change hopeless?

A. 45. - This change is hopeless, unless they were deprived of India goods altogether.<sup>165</sup>

The then-Governor at Sucondée William Mollan gave more detailed information about the problem of English cotton goods. To the above-quoted question on the prospect of English cotton textiles, he answered on 20 August 1810 that:

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<sup>165</sup> BPP, 1816, VII Pt. B (506): *Report from the Select Committee on the Papers Relating to the African Ports*, 163-164.

Unless there were [sic] an entire prohibition to the importation of India goods, the manufactures of Great Britain could not be introduced to supplant foreign articles. – Many attempts have been made at Manchester to imitate the India fabric, but they appear to be chiefly defective in the colours (some not being fixed) and in the strength of the cloth.<sup>166</sup>

As Mollan's statement indicates, it was quality of textiles that made Indian cottons remain popular and competitive against English manufactures in West Africa. English cotton textiles might probably have lessened the sale of Indian cotton goods on the coasts of West Africa to some extent, but demand in West Africa for Indian cotton textiles persisted.<sup>167</sup>

As with English cotton textiles, the British Customs ledgers (Customs 10) contain sub-categories of Indian cotton textiles imported from Britain to West Africa in the early nineteenth century. In the records the piece goods of Indian cotton are largely classified into two: (1) 'white or plain' and (2) 'dyed in India but not printed'.<sup>168</sup> Figure 2.8 shows the imports of Indian cotton textiles from Britain to West Africa between 1827 and 1849. As a whole, the imports of Indian cotton goods into West Africa by way of Britain slightly decreased in this period. This might be in part because English cotton goods gradually replaced Indian textiles in West African markets. However, as represented in the above-cited testimonies from Richardson and Mollan, the persistence

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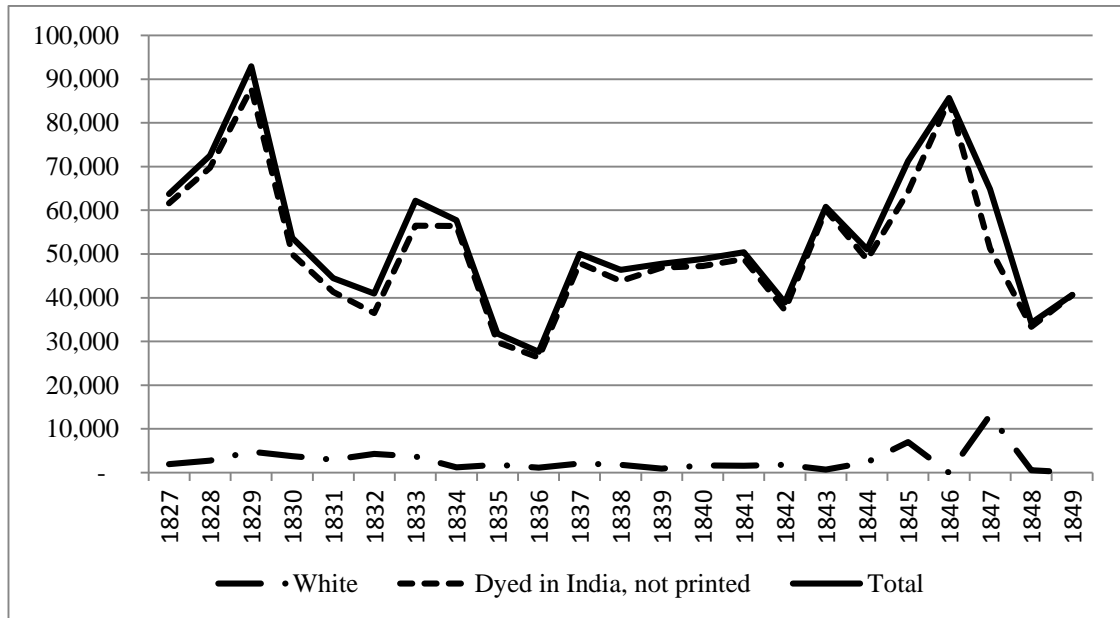
<sup>166</sup> BPP, 1816, VII Pt. B (506): *Report from the Select Committee on the Papers Relating to the African Ports*, 178.

<sup>167</sup> This was not a problem specific to West Africa. English cotton goods faced a similar problem in Southeast Asian markets in the 1830s as well. One report on regional commerce noted, 'Of late years it is said Indian cloths have met with better sales, in consequence of the Natives beginning to find out that they are far more durable than the English.' T. J. Newbold, *Political and Statistical Account of the British Settlements in the Straits of Malacca, viz. Pinang, Malacca, and Singapore*, vol. 1 (London: John Murray, 1839), 353, cited in Atsushi Kobayashi, '19 seiki zenhan ni okeru tonan ajia ikinai koeki no seicho: singaporu chukai shonin no yakuwari [The Growth of Intra-Southeast Asian Trade in the First Half of the Nineteenth Century: the Role of Middlemen in Singapore]', *Socio-Economic History*, vol. 78, no. 3 (2012), 106.

<sup>168</sup> The data of Nankeen, textiles produced in China, is also available from the Customs 10, but the amounts of the imports of the fabric from Britain to West Africa during the concerned period are negligible. Therefore, I omitted the goods for the sake of convenience.

of demand in West Africa for Indian cotton textiles was probably attributed to quality of Indian textiles that met with consumer taste.

Figure 2.8: Imports of Indian cotton textiles from Britain into West Africa, 1827-1849 (Unit: pieces)



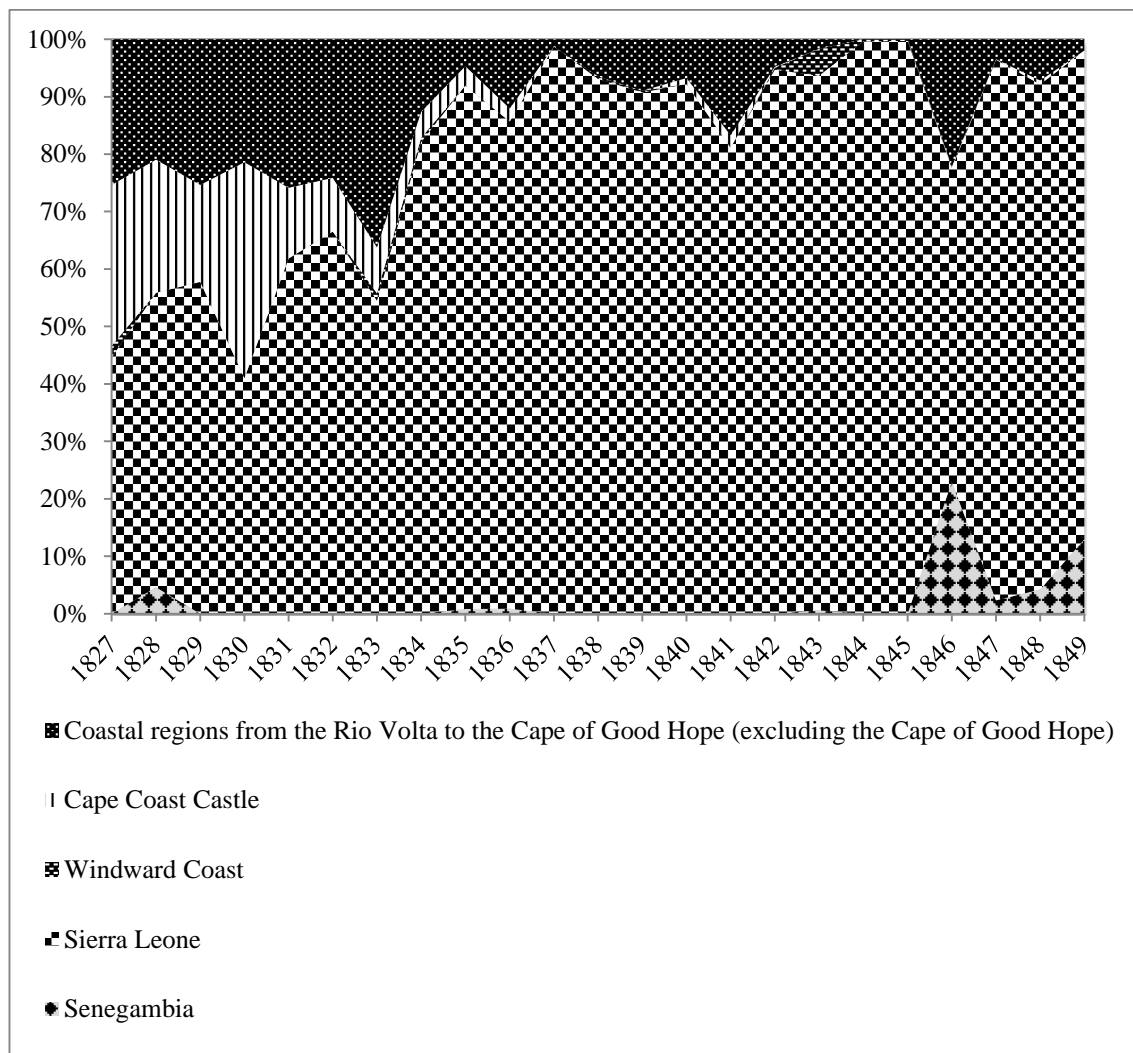
Source: Appendix 2.6.

In addition, Figure 2.8 shows the proportion of each category of the Indian cotton textiles imported from Britain to West Africa. What is remarkable is that dyed cloths were dominant in West Africa's imports of Indian textiles from Britain. The imports of Indian dyed textiles from Britain to West Africa fluctuated between 30,000 pieces and 88,000 pieces from 1827 to 1849. On the other hand, white or plain cotton goods of India accounted for less than 10 per cent during the same time except 1847. It was rare to import more than 10,000 pieces of white or plain Indian textiles from Britain into West Africa.

Figure 2.9 illustrates regional differences of the imports of Indian cotton textiles from Britain into West Africa. Although Figure 2.7 shows that Sierra Leone, the Cape Coast Castle and the regions from the Rio Volta to the Cape of Good Hope were three major destinations for English cotton goods in the second quarter of the nineteenth century, Figure 2.9 reveals that Sierra Leone alone came to be important as a market for Indian dyed cotton goods. From the middle of the 1830s, its proportion increased from 50-60 per cent to 80-99 per cent. Moreover, the quantity of Indian dyed cotton goods

relatively increased towards the middle of the nineteenth century, while the other regions imported fewer cotton textiles of India. As will be discussed in the next chapter, considering that Upper Guinea constituted a part of cloth currency zone in which Indian cotton textiles served a role of regional currency, these dyed goods were exchanged for regional products on the coast of Sierra Leone such as timber, camwood, palm oil and ginger.<sup>169</sup>

Figure 2.9: Regional proportions of Indian dyed cotton cloths imported from Britain into West Africa, 1827-1849



Source: Appendix 2.7.

Also, there was no or little import of Indian dyed cotton textiles from Britain into Senegambia until 1845 (see Appendix 2.7). However, the trade increased from

<sup>169</sup> The National Archives (Kew, United Kingdom, hereafter 'NAUK'), CO 272/1-27: Sierra Leone's Blue Books.

1846 probably due to the expansion of groundnut exports from the Gambia River region, as mentioned in the previous section. Considering the fact that at that time the expansion of the groundnut trade enabled Senegambian peasants to increase the involvement in a market economy through which they could purchase guns and horses that became a challenge to the authority of military elites,<sup>170</sup> it would be likely that the peasants were able to get access to Indian and European textiles as well.

In order to measure the scale of the nineteenth-century imports of Indian cotton textiles into West Africa in detail, it is indispensable to analyse French trade statistics as well as English sources. The French statistics offer a different view of textile trade into West Africa, in particular Senegal, than what we have seen above. As is the case with the Anglo-West African trade, textiles were dominant in the imports from France to Senegal until the middle of the nineteenth century. However, in contrast to the imports from Britain into West Africa, Indian cotton textiles remained to overwhelm European textiles in the imports from France throughout the first half of the nineteenth century. In the total value of the imports into Senegal, Indian cotton textiles accounted for 50 per cent in 1820-1823 and 40 per cent in 1824-1828.<sup>171</sup> In the late 1830s and the late 1840s, they accounted for 47 per cent and 37 per cent, respectively, while the proportion of European textiles was 28 per cent and 24 per cent.<sup>172</sup> Therefore, the aforementioned argument by Inikori that English cotton goods were superior to Indian textiles in West Africa is not true of France's West African trade.

Figure 2.10 reveals a little divergence between the West African imports of the Indian textiles from Britain and France in the second quarter of the nineteenth century. The scale of Indian dyed cotton textiles imported via France continually increased towards the mid-nineteenth century, from 56,000 pieces in 1828 to 216,000 pieces in 1848, while the imports of Indian dyed textiles via Britain stagnated. It is clear from Figure 2.10 that almost all of Indian dyed cotton textiles imported from France into West Africa were imported into Senegal. Moreover, the quantity of Indian dyed cotton

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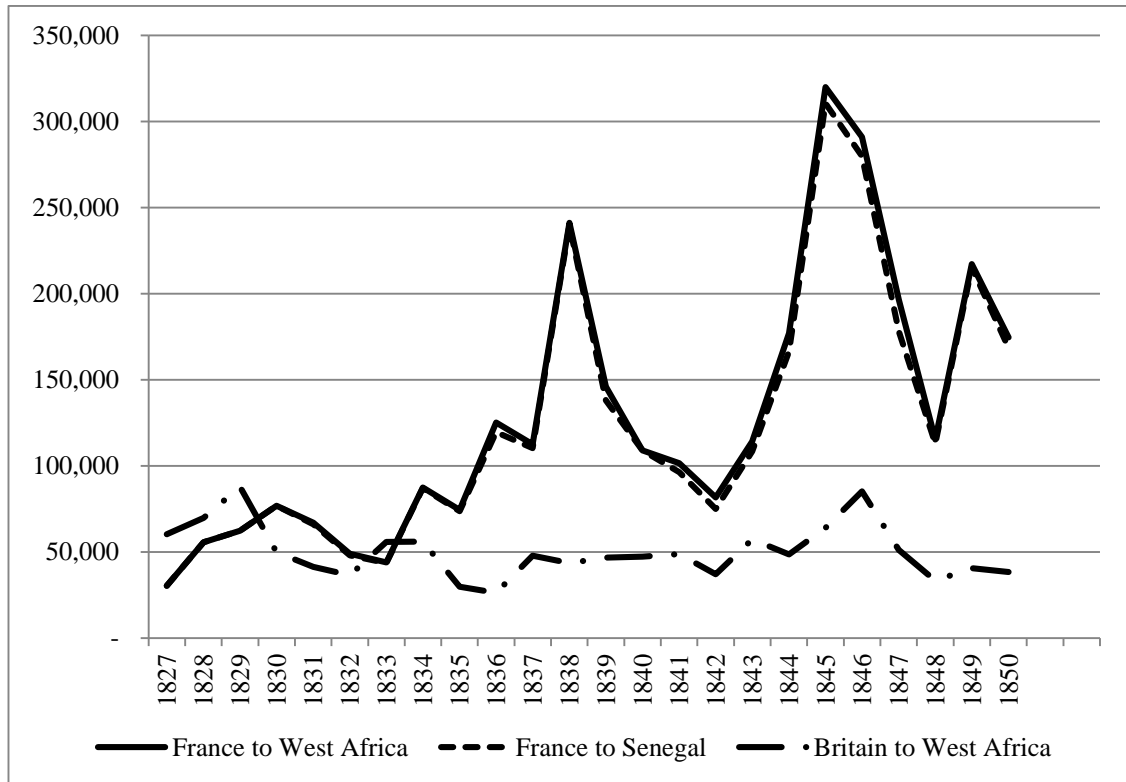
<sup>170</sup> Martin A. Klein, *Islam and Imperialism in Senegal: Sine-Saloum, 1847-1914* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1968), 36-38; Klein, 'Social and Economic Factors in the Muslim Revolution in Senegambia', 424.

<sup>171</sup> ANOM, Sénégal XIII, Dossier 1: Notes sur système exclusif qui régit à l'importation et à l'exportation le Sénégal et ses dépendances by Bruno Devès, 1 February 1829, Bordeaux.

<sup>172</sup> Curtin, *Economic Change in Precolonial Africa*, vol. 2, 88.

textiles imported from France to Senegal had been superior to those from Britain to West Africa in most of the period since 1827.

Figure 2.10: West African imports of Indian dyed cotton textiles from Britain and France, 1827-1850 (Unit: pieces)



Sources: France: Appendix 2.8. Britain: Appendix 2.6.

As will be discussed in the next chapter, the trade of Indian dyed cotton textiles, called ‘guinées’, from France into Senegal was closely linked to the gum trade in the Senegal River valley. Prices of a piece of guinée in France and Senegal also fluctuated from year to year and from place to place.<sup>173</sup> They also varied by supply situations on markets of gum Arabic within Senegal. Table 2.5 presents the price of guinée in France and Senegal from 1817 to 1849. The price data for France are based on the 1842 pamphlet by J.-P. Duchon-Doris Jr., an entrepreneur from Bordeaux, and those for Senegal (f.o.b.) are based on Webb’s 1982 article. Both sources do not cover every year during the period, but indicate downward trends in prices in both places. Duchon-Doris

<sup>173</sup> As discussed in Chapter 3, there were diverse types of guinées with different names according to the quality of cloth. This implies that each type of guinée would probably be sold at different prices.

attributed the drop of the price of guinées in France in the late 1830s to the 1838 prohibition in the Dutch colony of the Sunda Islands in Southeast Asia from importing guinées from both British and French India that caused an oversupply of guinées into the Bourbon Islands, France and Senegal.<sup>174</sup>

Table 2.5: Prices of guinées in France and Senegal in French francs, 1817-1849

Year	France	Senegal (f.o.b.)
1817	40 – 45	N/A
1818	30 – 35	
1819		
1820		51
1821	25 – 28	N/A
1822		35
1823		N/A
1824	15 – 18	
1825	21 – 25	
1826	12 – 15	20
1827		17.5
1828		17.5
1829	15 – 18	17.5
1830		N/A
1831		16-17
1832	8 – 11	N/A
1833		12
1834		N/A
1835	N/A	13 – 14
1836		13
1837		13.5
1838	N/A	
1839		
1840		
1841		
1842		
1843		
1844		
1849		

Sources: France: J.-P. Duchon-Doris, *Commerce des toiles bleues dites guinées* (Paris, 1842), 16-17. Senegal: James L. A. Webb, Jr., 'The Trade in Gum Arabic: Prelude to French Conquest in Senegal', *Journal of African History*, vol. 26, no. 2 (1985), 162.

<sup>174</sup> Duchon-Doris, *Commerce des toiles bleues dites guinées*, 13.



In addition, as discussed in the section of gum Arabic in this chapter, it was difficult to predict the amount of gum harvest for the coming years. Also, it took 1 to 2 years for orders of the goods sent to India to arrive in Saint Louis of Senegal. Such uncertainties in the trade of guinéés into Senegal should be counted as causes of the fluctuations of the price of guinéés. For example, during the time of saturation of guinéés in Senegalese markets in the late 1830s, the price of guinéés decreased because the oversupply of the goods drove merchants into dumping.<sup>175</sup>

## (2) Shell money of the West African trade

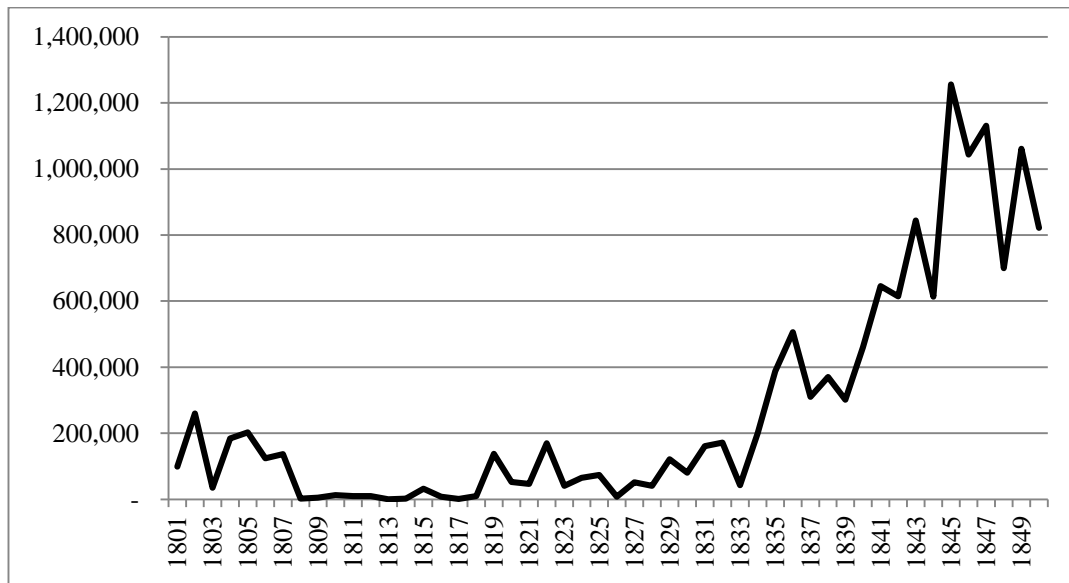
This section aims to examine how much West Africa imported cowrie shells in the early nineteenth century and which parts of West Africa used them as money. Apart from Indian cotton textiles, the imports of cowrie shells from the Indian Ocean world also show continuity in West African maritime trade from the eighteenth to the mid-nineteenth century. This commodity functioned as a major currency in many areas of pre-colonial West Africa. Cowries from the Maldives, called ‘*cypraera moneta*’, which means cowrie money, were circulated as small change for transaction in West Africa, in particular the region known as the Central Sudan, where had already absorbed cowrie shells overland from North Africa across the Sahara Desert as early as the eleventh century. In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries cowrie began to be circulated as a currency inland from the southern coasts of West Africa. The circulating volume of cowries reached an unprecedented level after droughts hit the Central Sudan in the mid-eighteenth century. This is partly because the demand from the Atlantic side for slaves increased, and partly because regional economy developed. Lovejoy attributed the reasons that cowrie shells were an ‘ideal currency’ in the interregional trade within pre-colonial West Africa to the following characters: (1) cowrie shell was scarce and almost indestructible; (2) it was not easy to counterfeit; and (3) there was a limited purpose to just use it as jewellery and ornamentation.<sup>176</sup>

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<sup>175</sup> See the discussion about gum Arabic in this chapter.

<sup>176</sup> Lovejoy, ‘Interregional Monetary Flows in the Precolonial Trade of Nigeria’, 564-567; Hogendorn and Johnson, *The Shell Money of the Slave Trade*, 5; Peter Boomgaard, ‘Early Globalization: Cowries as Currency, 600 BCE-1900’, in Peter Boomgaard, Dick Kooiman and Henk Schulte Nordholt (eds.), *Linking Destinies: Trade, Towns and Kin in Asian History* (Leiden: KITLV Press, 2008), 13.

Figure 2.11: West African import of cowrie shells from Britain, 1801-1850 (unit: lbs. avoirdupois)



Source: Appendix 2.8.

Britain was a major supplier of the Maldives cowrie shells to West Africa. Figure 2.11 shows that there was a cycle of boom and slump of the imports of cowrie shells from Britain into West Africa in the early nineteenth century. The nineteenth-century shell trade started with boom and lasted until the British abolition of the slave trade in 1808. There was a firm connection between the Atlantic slave trade and cowrie trade. The annual average of the import amounts for the eight years 1800-1807 reached 68 tons, which was more than double for the years 1791-1798. The British withdrawal from the slave trade, along with the declining demand for cowrie shell in Bengal and Orissa by the British monetary policy in India, caused depression in the cowrie trade from Britain to West Africa in the decade up to 1818, during which time the annual average of amounts was 4.5 tons, which was less than 7 per cent of the amounts for the years 1800-1807.<sup>177</sup>

After around 1820 there was a gradual revival of the cowrie import from Britain to West Africa, and the 1830s and 1840s saw the rapid expansion of the trade. The import scale reached an unprecedented level of almost 400 tons per annum in the fifth

<sup>177</sup> Hogendorn and Johnson, *The Shell Money of the Slave Trade*, 64.

decade of the nineteenth century. 1845 was the peak year of cowrie imports from Britain in the first half of the century, with almost 570 tons.<sup>178</sup>

These expansions were linked to the fact that West Africa became the significant source of palm oil for industrialising Britain at that time. Brodie Cruickshank, who was a British member of the legislative council on the Cape Coast Castle, noted clearly about this point as follows:

The introduction of the cowrie-shell and its application to this purpose [utility as exchange medium] supplied the desideratum necessary for the prosecution of the trade in palm-oil, the supply of which is found to fluctuate according to the supply of the cowries. If these have been exhausted in the stores of the merchants, no oil is brought to the market unless in such small quantities as may be required for immediate consumption; and although the manufacture of oil may go on in the meantime, in the expectation of new importations of cowries, yet if these be long delayed, the activity of the labourer slackens and finally ceases; the object of his labour being to obtain what to him is tantamount to ready cash, which he can apply in any manner he think fit.<sup>179</sup>

The link of this kind was also found in the participants of small-scale traders such as women and slaves in the palm oil trade. Robin Law pointed out that cowrie shells were usually paid out in bulk in the slave trade, while they were ‘commonly *counted out*’ in the oil trade. This difference implies that the palm oil trade could be carried out in small-scale transactions. Law cited an account by Archibald Ridgway, a British official that ‘a number of women who were occupied in counting out a cask of cowries’. Frederick Forbes, a British naval officer, also observed that ‘dozens of his own slaves were counting out cowries to pay for the produce’.<sup>180</sup>

In the early nineteenth century, as a consequence of the *jihād* of 1804-20, the Sokoto Caliphate was established as the largest empire in the Central Sudan.<sup>181</sup> This

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<sup>178</sup> Hogendorn and Johnson, *The Shell Money of the Slave Trade*, 65-69.

<sup>179</sup> Brodie Cruickshank, *Eighteenth Years on the Gold Coast of Africa*, vol. 2 (London, 1853), 43-44. See also, Law, “‘Legitimate’ Trade and Gender Relations”, 199.

<sup>180</sup> Law, “‘Legitimate’ Trade and Gender Relations”, 199-200. See also, Strickrodt, *Afro-European Trade in the Atlantic World*, 216.

<sup>181</sup> For the emergence of the Sokoto Caliphate, see Robinson, ‘Revolutions in the Western Sudan’, 137-138.

powerful Islamic empire integrated many Hausa states, large parts of the Oyo Empire, which was one of the Yoruba states located between the Bight of Benin and the Central Sudan, Western Borno and others into its territory. The Caliphate, thus, removed the political and economic barriers and conducted major demographic changes, leading to economic development thereafter. In addition, the Caliphate promoted agricultural expansion, increased market demand for foodstuffs, manufactures and raw materials, and developed a favourable condition for foreign investment and merchants. Agricultural and artisanal production grew with the help of an expanding supply of slaves from the smaller societies to the south. The Niger River continued to serve as an important trade route through which cowrie shells flowed into the interior from the southern coasts of West Africa.<sup>182</sup>

As a consequence of the rise of the Sokoto Caliphate, a larger commercial sphere was established in the Central Sudan in the early nineteenth century. It also accompanied the expansion of the currency zone for cowrie shells in response to the increasing demand for slaves for the sake of palm oil production and others. Wider participation of small-scale traders would lead to the massive inflow of cowrie shells as well as manufactured goods from external world. The exchange rate between cowrie shells and silver coins had been relatively stable in the Caliphate until the 1840s, although the late nineteenth century saw an inflation of cowrie currency in the Caliphate.<sup>183</sup>

## 5. Conclusion

After the abolition of the slave trade, although the slave exports from Senegambia continued for more than a third of a century after 1807, Western European interests in trade with West Africa shifted from slaves to agricultural products; palm oil, gum Arabic and later groundnuts became major exports from West Africa in the early nineteenth century. In order to purchase the products on the Atlantic coasts of Africa, European merchants had to transport the commodities Africans wanted to West Africa as they did in the slave-trade era. What is shown is that textiles, like cowries, continued

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<sup>182</sup> Lovejoy, 'Interregional Monetary Flows in the Precolonial Trade of Nigeria', 571-573; Robinson, 'Revolutions in the Western Sudan', 138.

<sup>183</sup> Lovejoy, 'Interregional Monetary Flows in the Precolonial Trade of Nigeria', 584-585.

to be important trade goods that were exchanged for African products in West Africa. In particular, Saint Louis, the major colonial town of French Senegal and the supply centre of gum Arabic, imported a large number of pieces of Indian dyed cotton textiles from France in the early nineteenth century, while other regions of West Africa imported more English cotton goods than Indian textiles. The importance of cotton textiles from India in Senegal and of cowrie shells from the Indian Ocean world in extensive regions of West Africa highlights that economic connections between the Indian Ocean world and West Africa continued even after Lancashire's cotton goods expanded into global markets in this period. But answers concerning the little divergence between Indian dyed cotton textiles imported from France to Senegal and those imported from Britain into West Africa in the early nineteenth century need a further investigation. The next chapter will have a look at the reasons behind the continued demand for South Asian goods in West Africa in the early nineteenth century, with its focuses on the demand in Senegal for Indian cotton textiles and on structural backgrounds in West Africa.

Appendix 2.1: Exports of palm oil from West Africa to Britain, 1801-1850 (Unit: cwt)

1801	3,897	1826	99,068
1802	7,718	1827	94,246
1803	9,790	1828	126,553
1804	6,327	1829	179,922
1805	4,327	1830	213,467
1806	7,215	1831	163,288
1807	2,233	1832	217,804
1808	11,047	1833	266,991
1809	14,983	1834	269,907
1810	25,754	1835	256,337
1811	23,537	1836	276,635
1812	11,637	1837	223,292
1813	N/A	1838	281,373
1814	19,344	1839	343,449
1815	41,278	1840	315,458
1816	23,831	1841	397,076
1817	29,700	1842	420,171
1818	29,310	1843	407,884
1819	74,049	1844	414,570
1820	17,456	1845	500,833
1821	102,490	1846	360,452
1822	63,754	1847	469,348
1823	65,402	1848	499,719
1824	73,989	1849	475,364
1825	85,366	1850	434,450

*Note:* Records for 1813 destroyed by fire.

*Sources:* 1801-1844: British Parliamentary Papers (hereafter ‘BPP’), 1845, XLVI (187): Palm oil. An account of the quantity of palm oil annually imported into the United Kingdom from the western coast of Africa, since the year 1790, to the 31st day of December 1844; 1845-1850: BPP 1854, LXV (296): Tallow, & c. Return of the quantities of tallow, palm oil, train oil, spermaceti, hemp, flax seed, hides and skins, and sheep’s wool, imported into the United Kingdom during the years 1844 to 1853 inclusive, specifying the quantities imported from each country.

Appendix 2.2: Exports of gum Arabic from Senegal to France, 1827-1850 (Unit: tons)

1827	1,099
1828	1,783
1829	1,389
1830	1,712
1831	1,976
1832	1,269
1833	749
1834	555
1835	1,573
1836	1,641
1837	2,458
1838	3,385
1839	2,822
1840	2,483
1841	1,779
1842	851
1843	715
1844	1,233
1845	3,086
1846	3,437
1847	1,965
1848	989
1849	1,636
1850	1,237

*Sources:* France. Direction générale des douanes, *Tableau décennal de commerce de la France avec ses colonies et les puissances étrangères, 1827 à 1836* (Paris: Imprimerie Royale, 1838); France. Direction générale des douanes, *Tableau général du commerce de la France avec ses colonies et les puissances étrangères* (Paris: Imprimerie Royale, 1839-1851).

Appendix 2.3: Imports of English cotton goods of various kinds from Britain to West Africa, 1827-1849 (Unit: yards)

	Calicoes		Muslins		Fustians	Total
	White and plain	Printed and checked	White and plain	Printed and checked		
1827	91,026	847,065	80,789	4,954	1,350	1,025,184
1828	193,685	1,317,702	95,473	0	2,950	1,609,810
1829	204,806	1,644,918	58,564	600	2,052	1,910,940
1830	573,560	1,880,317	6,362	0	806	2,461,045
1831	600,528	1,620,838	138,030	14,720	8,601	2,382,717
1832	823,101	2,847,927	173,069	30,000	1,292	3,875,389
1833	851,762	3,856,216	84,999	158,739	12,210	4,963,926
1834	346,324	4,162,272	67,793	380,224	17,520	4,974,133
1835	396,675	2,086,611	60,264	6,776	10,614	2,560,940
1836	1,410,136	6,188,386	92,159	7,744	6,430	7,704,855
1837	553,003	4,360,321	54,840	2,400	2,848	4,973,412
1838	1,739,680	5,527,964	41,628	15,545	42,109	7,366,926
1839	1,370,564	7,774,681	27,732	10,000	1,795	9,184,772
1840	1,203,386	9,434,500	5,748	284	122	10,644,040
1841	1,194,473	7,260,708	7,630	8,226	2,558	8,473,595
1842	4,158,936	7,917,234	7,560	4,100	2,921	12,090,751
1843	6,811,342	9,768,400	5,420	4,560	1,604	16,591,326
1844	1,917,649	8,104,786	13,536	8,906	0	10,044,877
1845	1,203,289	10,484,217	17,410	6,300	159	11,711,375
1846	2,470,049	7,113,694	34,825	6,310	0	9,624,878
1847	2,221,137	10,417,638	16,490	6,332	10,564	12,672,161
1848	3,324,691	11,482,880	8,550	7,884	2,357	14,826,362
1849	2,548,035	14,787,263	20,358	5,160	4,488	17,365,304

*Notes:* ‘Coastal regions from the Volta River to the Cape of Good Hope’ does not include the trade with the Cape of Good Hope. For the conversion rate between yards and pieces, see Table 2.4.

*Sources:* The National Archives (Kew, the United Kingdom, hereafter ‘NAUK’), CUST 8/25-70.



Appendix 2.4: Calicoes (white and plain) imported from Britain to West Africa by regions, 1827 – 1849 (Unit: yards)

	Cape Verde Islands	Senegal	Gambia & Sierra Leone	Windward Coast	Cape Coast Castle	Coastal regions from the River Volta to the Cape of Good Hope	West Africa (Total)
1827	0	5,100	34,509	680	22,337	28,400	91,026
1828	60,930	0	21,471	0	18,220	93,064	193,685
1829	0	0	94,585	0	107,533	2,688	204,806
1830	20,216	0	288,996	0	60,844	203,464	573,560
1831	0	0	190,919	0	90,577	319,032	600,528
1832	0	15,000	196,515	0	252,866	358,720	823,101
1833	0	14,000	189,242	0	22,524	625,996	851,762
1834	0	0	148,419	0	45,901	152,004	346,324
1835	0	0	190,302	0	36,943	169,430	396,675
1836	0	37,080	268,816	0	76,261	1,027,979	1,410,136
1837	0	1,204	336,281	0	48,873	166,645	553,003
1838	0	0	648,197	0	85,499	1,005,984	1,739,680
1839	0	0	281,752	0	151,342	937,470	1,370,564
1840	52,924	0	216,209	0	58,853	875,400	1,203,386
1841	0	0	275,559	0	60,454	858,460	1,194,473
1842	0	0	392,549	0	18,847	3,747,540	4,158,936
1843	24,320	35,140	668,164	25,540	74,100	5,983,808	6,811,342
1844	27,922	0	552,915	0	1,018,062	318,750	1,917,649
1845	41,371	8,100	852,586	0	205,230	96,002	1,203,289
1846	103,752	42,390	1,012,393	0	61,300	1,250,214	2,470,049
1847	112,096	239,080	1,210,425	0	123,516	536,020	2,221,137
1848	127,663	165,910	608,884	0	207,948	2,214,286	3,324,691
1849	66,220	255,547	676,749	0	291,187	1,258,332	2,548,035

*Note:* ‘Coastal regions from the Volta River to the Cape of Good Hope’ does not include the trade with the Cape of Good Hope.

*Source:* see Appendix 2.3.

Appendix 2.5: Calicoes (printed and checked) imported from Britain to West Africa by regions, 1827 – 1849 (Unit: yards)

	Cape Verde Islands	Senegal	Gambia & Sierra Leone	Windward Coast	Cape Coast Castle	Coastal regions from the River Volta to the Cape of Good Hope	West Africa (Total)
1827	0	9,613	345,675	118,981	224,645	148,151	847,065
1828	9,518	0	228,592	202,721	507,646	369,225	1,317,702
1829	0	0	402,434	119,484	444,327	678,673	1,644,918
1830	0	0	533,211	103,482	679,235	564,389	1,880,317
1831	0	0	456,338	0	653,089	511,411	1,620,838
1832	0	0	871,388	132,000	614,515	1,230,024	2,847,927
1833	0	0	486,310	4,320	1,374,631	1,990,955	3,856,216
1834	0	0	668,835	40,000	2,044,911	1,408,526	4,162,272
1835	0	0	734,990	0	148,943	1,202,678	2,086,611
1836	0	112,400	1,258,928	0	2,366,531	2,450,527	6,188,386
1837	0	0	1,308,701	0	1,679,422	1,327,198	4,360,321
1838	0	15,050	1,631,431	0	1,895,398	1,986,085	5,527,964
1839	0	0	1,489,556	0	2,616,247	3,668,878	7,774,681
1840	102,637	0	1,282,702	0	2,873,485	5,175,676	9,434,500
1841	92,849	0	1,293,358	0	2,935,086	2,939,415	7,260,708
1842	76,942	7,003	1,740,889	39,105	1,724,092	4,329,415	7,917,234
1843	23,113	0	1,105,147	167,876	3,770,865	4,701,399	9,768,400
1844	17,570	7,003	1,289,678	91,425	3,184,331	3,514,779	8,104,786
1845	15,051	14,230	2,170,266	66,635	3,146,786	5,071,249	10,474,217
1846	27,226	10,800	1,903,890	0	1,058,184	4,113,594	7,113,694
1847	64,224	8,820	1,888,152	0	2,079,483	6,376,959	10,417,638
1848	58,360	90,060	1,194,082	0	2,028,150	8,112,228	11,482,880
1849	13,540	84,436	1,114,617	0	3,734,125	9,840,518	14,787,263

*Note:* ‘Coastal regions from the Volta River to the Cape of Good Hope’ does not include the trade with the Cape of Good Hope.

*Source:* see Appendix 2.3.

Appendix 2.6: Indian cotton goods imported from Britain into West Africa, 1827-1849  
(Unit: pieces)

	White or plain	Dyed, not printed	Nankeens	Total
1827	1,928	61,619	210	63,757
1828	2,735	69,740	10	72,485
1829	4,824	87,918	210	92,952
1830	3,736	49,951	0	53,687
1831	2,970	41,318	160	44,448
1832	4,281	36,493	175	40,949
1833	3,663	56,503	2,031	62,197
1834	1,240	56,437	80	57,757
1835	1,762	29,818	200	31,780
1836	1,140	26,306	200	27,646
1837	2,117	47,925	0	50,042
1838	1,806	43,841	716	46,363
1839	905	46,900	0	47,805
1840	1,611	47,229	0	48,840
1841	1,546	48,875	0	50,421
1842	1,797	37,134	0	38,931
1843	700	60,075	0	60,775
1844	2,400	48,701	0	51,101
1845	7,021	64,227	35	71,283
1846	0	85,213	500	85,713
1847	13,142	51,267	400	64,809
1848	520	33,370	356	34,246
1849	60	40,577	50	40,687

Sources: NAUK, CUST 10/18-41.

Appendix 2.7: Indian cotton goods (dyed in India, not printed) imported from Britain into West Africa by regions, 1827-1849 (Unit: pieces)

	Senegambia	Sierra Leone	Windward Coast	Cape Coast Castle	Coastal regions from the River Volta to the Cape of Good Hope	West Africa (Total)
1827	0	27,490	1,250	17,259	15,620	61,619
1828	3,225	35,725	0	16,175	14,615	69,740
1829	0	50,790	0	14,822	22,306	87,918
1830	0	20,478	0	18,783	10,690	49,951
1831	0	25,558	0	5,070	10,690	41,318
1832	0	24,263	0	3,432	8,798	36,493
1833	0	30,783	711	4,534	20,475	56,503
1834	0	46,337	420	2,527	7,153	56,437
1835	240	27,162	0	1,015	1,401	29,818
1836	223	22,317	0	594	3,172	26,306
1837	0	47,324	0	0	601	47,925
1838	0	40,820	180	0	2,841	43,841
1839	0	42,575	120	10	4,195	46,900
1840	0	43,542	0	510	3,177	47,229
1841	0	39,646	0	1,067	8,162	48,875
1842	0	35,171	120	60	1,783	37,134
1843	360	55,889	2,809	0	1,017	60,075
1844	0	48,521	180	0	0	48,701
1845	0	64,047	180	0	0	64,227
1846	19,602	46,478	0	240	18,893	85,213
1847	1,200	48,247	0	60	1,760	51,267
1848	1,401	29,340	0	229	2,400	33,370
1849	5,261	34,516	0	20	780	40,577

*Note:* ‘Coastal regions from the Volta River to the Cape of Good Hope’ does not include the trade with the Cape of Good Hope.

*Sources:* see Appendix 2.6.

Appendix 2.8: Guinées imported from France to West Africa, 1827-1850 (Unit: pieces)

	Senegal	St. Thomas	Other parts of Africa	West Africa (Total)	Total
1827	30,322	0	0	30,322	30,976
1828	55,738	0	0	55,738	56,491
1829	62,436	0	0	62,436	62,437
1830	76,807	80	0	76,887	77,144
1831	66,005	1,020	0	67,025	67,849
1832	48,197	0	788	48,985	49,880
1833	43,598	0	299	43,897	48,157
1834	87,045	300	82	87,427	97,997
1835	73,719	480	334	74,533	77,357
1836	119,593	1,777	3,733	125,103	134,719
1837	110,265	1,538	694	112,497	118,041
1838	239,943	500	720	241,163	249,184
1839	138,090	965	6,978	146,033	164,947
1840	109,614	520	892	111,026	128,722
1841	96,456	2700	2,350	101,506	106,947
1842	75,072	0	6,545	81,617	85,408
1843	108,520	0	5,737	114,257	114,440
1844	166,444	0	10,690	177,134	177,338
1845	310,584	0	9,415	319,999	320,286
1846	279,851	0	11,104	290,955	291,909
1847	178,237	0	18,286	196,523	204,910
1848	112,931	0	2,400	115,331	118,568
1849	215,368	0	1,760	217,128	221,921
1850	168,514	0	6,190	174,704	180,118

*Note:* The French official trade statistics somehow lack the data for Senegal in 1832.

*Sources:* see Appendix 2.2. For the 1832 data, J.-P. Duchon-Doris, *Commerce des toiles bleues dites guinées* (Paris, 1842), appendis.

Appendix 2.9: Cowrie shells imported from Britain to West Africa, 1801-1850 (unit: lbs. avoir-dupois)

1801	99,008	1826	8,176
1802	259,728	1827	51,184
1803	35,504	1828	40,432
1804	184,240	1829	121,184
1805	202,272	1830	80,304
1806	123,872	1831	160,832
1807	136,976	1832	171,584
1808	2,576	1833	42,896
1809	5,488	1834	200,144
1810	12,880	1835	387,408
1811	10,192	1836	506,016
1812	9,632	1837	310,016
1813	N/A	1838	370,048
1814	2,128	1839	301,514
1815	32,592	1840	460,656
1816	7,728	1841	645,456
1817	1,232	1842	614,880
1818	9,968	1843	844,144
1819	138,096	1844	613,648
1820	52,640	1845	1,255,632
1821	46,256	1846	1,043,280
1822	169,344	1847	1,130,640
1823	40,544	1848	699,888
1824	64,848	1849	1,061,200
1825	74,256	1850	821,296

*Note:* Records for 1813 destroyed by fire.

*Source:* Jan Hogendorn and Marion Johnson, *The Shell Money of the Slave Trade* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), 67.

## Chapter 3

### Guinées: Trade and Consumption Patterns around the Lower Senegal River Region

#### 1. Introduction

In the last chapter, we have seen that, as a result of the development of Lancashire's cotton industry, British cotton textiles were increasingly imported into West Africa in the early nineteenth century. In contrast to British cotton textiles, the imports of Indian cotton textiles from Britain to West Africa appeared to stagnate or slightly decline in this period (Figures 2.5 and 2.8). However, as shown in Figure 2.10, the imports of Indian cotton textiles into Senegal continually increased towards the middle of the nineteenth century. Drawing on these findings this chapter asks, why did Indian cotton textiles remain in demand in Senegal in the early nineteenth century, while the other regions of West Africa witnessed a decrease in the imports of Indian cotton goods? This chapter focuses attention to the consumption of Indian cotton textiles around the Senegal River regions.

Existing literature on the pre-colonial history of Senegal has emphasised the role played by Indian cotton textiles, called 'guinées', as an exchange medium and a standard unit of account in the trade in gum Arabic in Senegal. The suppliers of gum Arabic were traders in the nomadic emirates in the Senegal River region, who preferred to receive Indian guinées rather than European textiles.<sup>184</sup> However, given that West Africa had a long-established position in the production, trade and consumption of textiles, there is still room to consider why this type of cotton textile continued to function as a currency in, and beyond, Senegal. In this context, the argument stressed by Colleen Kriger that consumer tastes for textiles in West Africa were changeable seems

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<sup>184</sup> See for example, Geneviève Désiré-Vuillemin, 'Un commerce qui meurt: la traite de la gomme dans les escales du Sénégal', *Cahiers d'outre-mer*, no. 17 (1952), 90-94; Philip D. Curtin, *Economic Change in Precolonial Africa: Senegambia in the Era of the Slave Trade*, 2 vols. (Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 1975); Michael D. Marcson, 'European-African Interaction in the Precolonial Period: Saint Louis, Senegal, 1758-1854', Unpublished PhD dissertation (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University, 1976); James L. A. Webb, Jr., 'The Trade in Gum Arabic: Prelude to French Conquest in Senegal', *Journal of African History*, vol. 26, no. 2 (1985), 149-168; Richard L. Roberts, 'West Africa and the Pondicherry Textile Industry', in Tirthankar Roy (ed.), *Cloth and Commerce: Textiles in Colonial India* (New Delhi: Sage Publications, 1996), 142-174.

less suitable in explaining the continued imports and consumption of a particular type of Indian textiles in the region throughout (and beyond) the period under review.<sup>185</sup>

Drawing on a similar set of archival materials and contemporary publications used in the existing literature, this chapter shows that the quality of Indian cotton textiles, rather than European textiles, suited the life in the savannah, Sahel and the Sahara Desert. In addition, the chapter visualises the commercial network of guineés, gum Arabic and other products along the lower Senegal River regions, showing that this regional trade functioned as a gateway to the Sahara Desert regions. As a theoretical framework to explain the continued trade and consumption of guineés, this chapter pays attention to the role of natural environment and monetary ‘circuits’.<sup>186</sup> Furthermore, in this chapter, the continued demand for guineés will be situated in a long-term perspective of textile production and consumption in West Africa. In this manner, the chapter will argue that a variety of factors shaped the regional demand for Indian cotton textiles in the first half of the nineteenth century.

The following section shows what guinée cloth is, and highlights that quality of the cloth appealed to African consumers and that no European textiles could match Indian guineés in quality during the period under consideration. Then, it will show the detailed commercial networks around the lower Senegal River regions in which guineés and gum Arabic were traded in the early nineteenth century. Furthermore, this chapter discusses the use of guineés as a currency in the Senegal River regions and explores its historical background in the context of the history of West African textile production, trade and consumption. In doing so, this chapter reveals a historically constructed consumer agency in West Africa that shaped a continued demand for Indian cotton textiles even in the nineteenth century.

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<sup>185</sup> See for example, Marion Johnson, ‘Cloth as Money: the Cloth Strip Currencies of Africa’, in Dale Idiens and K. G. Ponting (eds.), *Textiles of Africa* (Bath: Pasold Research Fund, 1980), 193-202; Colleen E. Kriger, *Cloth in West African History* (Lanhan, MD: Altamira Press, 2006).

<sup>186</sup> For the effect of climate change in the long term on regional economy in what is now northern Senegal and Mauritania, see James L. A. Webb, Jr., *Desert Frontier: Ecological and Economic Change Along the Western Sahel, 1600-1850* (Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 1995). For recent scholarship on monetary history that employs the concept of monetary circuits, see Akinobu Kuroda, ‘What is the Complementarity among Monies? An Introductory Note’, *Financial History Review*, vol. 15, issue 1 (2008), 7-15.



## 2. What is a piece of guinée?

Plate 3.1: Samples of guinées



*Note:* They are stamped with the following words in red: ‘ORDONNANCES ROYALES DES 18 MAI ET SEPTEMBRE 1843’ around the outer border of the mark, whose diameter is 56 mm, ‘PONDICHERY’ on the upper centre, ‘GUINÉE’ on the left of centre and ‘Poids 2<sup>k</sup> 30, Long<sup>r</sup> 16<sup>m</sup> 50, Larg<sup>r</sup> 1<sup>[m]</sup> 00’ in the centre.

*Source:* Archives Nationales d’Outre-Mer (Aix en Provence, France), Inde 494, Dossier 871: L’Arrêté signed by Gouverneur Du Camper, 23 August 1844, Pondicherry.

Before discussing the organisation of trade and consumption patterns of guinées around the lower Senegal River region, it is appropriate to see guinée itself in some detail. A piece of guinée (*pièce de guinée* in French) was one of the varieties of Indian cotton textiles imported into West Africa from the era of the Atlantic slave trade onwards.<sup>187</sup> This Gallic appellation of the cloth derives from a coastal area of West Africa (Guinea). Guinée was the term given to dark-blue, fine cotton cloth produced along the

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<sup>187</sup> For Indian cotton textiles of various kinds imported into West Africa, see George Metcalf, ‘A Microcosm of Why Africans Sold Slaves: Akan Consumption Patterns in the 1770s’, *Journal of African History*, vol. 28, no. 3 (1987), 377-394; Stanly B. Alpern, ‘What Africans Got for Their Slaves: A Master List of European Trade Goods’, *History in Africa*, vol. 22 (1995), 5-43.

Coromandel Coast in South India, in particular Pondicherry and Salem, mainly for European trade with Senegal (see Plate 3.1).<sup>188</sup> Guinéés were also known as ‘filature’, ‘opéapaléons’, ‘conjons’, ‘salem’ and others, according to the quality of finished products.<sup>189</sup>

The assumption that guinée was identical to guinea cloth – also known as guinea stuffs – may be misleading. Guinea cloth was also Indian cotton textiles. Like guinéés, the origin of the English appellation derived from the Guinea coast (region) in West Africa because the textiles served for the West African trade as well. However, according to John Irwin, it was produced in Western India, and was ‘the generic term for a wide range of cheap, brightly-coloured Indian calicoes, mostly striped or chequered, and very popular with negroes’.<sup>190</sup> That means that guinée cloth was one type of the guinea cloths. In other words, guinea cloth was not always identical to guinéés. Curtin has also argued that most guinea cloths were not shipped to Senegambia.<sup>191</sup> For these reasons, I employ the term guinée in order to avoid the likelihood of confusion with other appellations.

In the early nineteenth century, the major consumers of guinéés imported into Senegal were Saharan inhabitants (who were mixed origins of Arab, Berber, and Africans) on the right bank of the Senegal River and other Africans who settled in the areas in the opposite side of the river such as Waalo, Futa Toro and Kajor.<sup>192</sup> In

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<sup>188</sup> J.-P. Duchon-Doris, Jr., *Commerce des toiles bleues dites guinéés* (Paris, 1842), 3-4; Saignier, *Relations de plusieurs voyages à la côte d’Afrique, a Maroc, au Sénégal, a Gorée, a Galam, etc.* (Paris, 1791), 287.

<sup>189</sup> *Le Sénégal et les guinéés de Pondichéry: Note présentée à la commission supérieure des colonies par les négociants sénégalais* (Bordeaux, 1879), 7; *Dictionnaire universel théorique et pratique, du commerce et de la navigation*, vol. 2 (Paris, 1859-1861), 918-919.

<sup>190</sup> John Irwin and P. R. Schwartz, *Studies in Indo-European Textile History* (Ahmedabad: Calico Museum of Textile, 1966), 65.

<sup>191</sup> Curtin, *Economic Change in Precolonial Africa*, vol. 1, 260.

<sup>192</sup> They referred themselves as ‘Bidan’ (White men) and were commonly known as ‘Moor’ in English or ‘Maures’ in French. The term ‘Moor’ was originally the term for Muslim Spaniards, which in turn derived from the territory of Mauritania in the ancient Roman Empire. Ghislaine Lydon, *On Trans-Saharan Trails: Islamic Law, Trade Networks, And Cross-Cultural Exchange in Nineteenth-Century Western Africa* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), xviii; Ann McDougall, ‘The Sahara in An Economic History of West Africa: A Critical Reflection on Historiographical Impact and Legacy’, in Toyin Falola and Emily Brownell (eds.), *Africa, Empire and Globalization: Essays in Honor of A. G. Hopkins* (Durham, North Carolina: Carolina Academic Press, 2011), 102, n. 42. Here, I use the term ‘Saharans’ rather than Bidan or

particular, those in the nomadic emirates of Trarza and Brakna along the lower Senegal River were in advantageous areas to reach directly guinées imported from South Asia by way of Europe. As shown in the picture by David Boilat of a Trarza princess (Plate 3.2), they wrapped themselves with guinées loosely. Ghislaine Lydon, in her book on the nineteenth century trans-Saharan trade, argued that the loose clothing of desert nomads across the Sahara ‘provided windshield, sunscreen, and ventilation, while functioning as a resting sheet.’ Also, the indigo blue dye used for textiles ‘stained the skin, acting as a protective coating against sun rays.’<sup>193</sup> That means that indigo-blue guinées suited the life in the savannah, Sahel and the Sahara Desert. This is one reason of the large demand for guinées among the inhabitants in West Africa’s savannah and Sahel regions and across the Sahara Desert.

Plate 3.2: A princess of Trarza who wears guinées



Source: L’A. P.–David Boilat, *Esquisses Sénégalaises* (Paris, 1853), Planche XII.

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Moors/Maures. By doing so I intend to give an impression that they stood in the connecting point between the lower Senegal River regions and the Sahara Desert.

<sup>193</sup> Lydon, *On Trans-Saharan Trails*, 60. Apparently plausible as it is, Lydon unfortunately gave no reference on this account.

As we have seen the testimonies about the consumer preferences for Indian cotton textiles on the Gold Coast in Chapter 2, consumers along the lower Senegal River valley also preferred for the quality of guinées. More importantly, astute Saharan merchants were known to reject undesired imitation goods.<sup>194</sup> Silvester Golberry, a French traveller, in his travelogue, recorded how Saharan merchants in Senegal determined the difference between authentic Indian guinées and European imitation goods as below.

The Moors are paid for their gum in pieces of calico-dyed blue, which is manufactured in India, and is called in the commerce of western Africa, by the name of pieces of guinea. These pieces are seven or eight ells long, and half an ell in width. During my residence in Africa, they were considered as an essential and principal part in all the bargains which were contracted, and in fact the Moors would not take any other kind of merchandize in exchange.

It has been attempted in France, to imitate these pieces of guinea, but they were doubtless imperfect, for the Moors were never deceived by them; they possess indeed so quick a sense in this respect, that they can tell immediately if a piece of guinea be fabricated in France or in India, and this discovery is not made either by the feel or the colour; they immediately put the piece to their nose, and ascertain its true quality by the smell. These Indian calicoes, as well as the indigos used by the Indians in dyeing them, have doubtless a particular smell, which it is impossible to imitate.

During the time which I passed in Africa, real Indian pieces of guinea were in high estimation, a preference which nothing could be found to equal, much less to supersede.<sup>195</sup>

Golberry highlighted the role of guinées as an ‘essential’ exchange medium in the gum trade in Senegal, the role that will be examined in some detail later in this chapter, as well as the fact that smell of guinées formed an integral part of ‘real Indian piece of guinea’ that differentiated themselves from European fabrications. He

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<sup>194</sup> Saugnier, *Relations de plusieurs voyages à la côte d’Afrique*, 287.

<sup>195</sup> S. M. X. Golberry, *Travels in Africa*, vol. 1, (translated by W. Mudford, London, 1803), 173-174.

attributed ‘a particular smell’ of guinées to indigo used in India for the textiles for West African markets.

While Golberry’s account was based on his visit to West Africa in the mid-1780s, Saharan consumers’ preference for guinées from India persisted into the early nineteenth century. Mireille Lobligeois argued that by the end of the 1820s manufacturers in Europe could imitate the colour of guinée, although it was impossible for them to imitate smell of the Indian goods, and the essential difference between Indian and European textiles was thought to be due to the chemical substances in the water.<sup>196</sup> In a similar vein, the special report for the commission of the trading posts and the trade of African coasts submitted in June 1851 recognised that the fabrics produced in Rouen could not find the way to imitate Indian guinées, thereby did not meet the demand from the Saharans yet.<sup>197</sup>

Apart from quality of textiles, the French paid attention to the weight and size of the goods shipped for Senegal in the early nineteenth century. In the early 1840s, the French merchants, the principal actors in shipping guinées from India into Senegal by way of France of that time, needed to send uniformly-sized guinées to Senegal. J.-P. Duchon-Doris Jr., who invested in Pondicherry’s guinée production in the early nineteenth century, noted that each piece of guinées had to weigh 2 to 3 kilograms, 17 meters in length, and more than 1 meter in width.<sup>198</sup> The French Royal Orders (Ordonnances du Roi) issued on 18 May and 1 September 1843 also defined the proper weight and size for each piece of guinée, as discussed in detail in Chapter 4. The Royal Order issued on 18 May 1843, which was to be enforced on 1 October of that year, defined that a piece of guinée weighted more than 2.30 kilograms and had more than 16.5 meters in length and 1 meter in width.<sup>199</sup> The Royal Order issued on 1 September 1843, in the Article 2, stipulated that guinées produced in Pondicherry for Senegal had to be covered with a mark or stamp by the local administration in Pondicherry. The mark or stamp guaranteed the textiles that met such official criteria defined in the

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<sup>196</sup> Mireille Lobligeois, ‘Ateliers public et filatures privées à Pondichéry après 1816’, *Bulletin de l’Ecole française d’Extrême-Orient*, vol. 59 (1972), 22-23.

<sup>197</sup> ANOM, Sénégal XIII, Dossier 3c: rapport spéciaux, June 1851.

<sup>198</sup> Duchon-Doris, *Commerce des toiles bleues dites guinées*, 3-4.

<sup>199</sup> No. 66, Ordonnance du Roi, 18 May 1843, in Sénégal, *Bulletin Administratif des Actes du Gouvernement* (Paris, 1846), 87-88.

former order.<sup>200</sup> The aim of this measure was to prevent fraud by differentiating real Indian textiles from imitated textiles produced in Europe.<sup>201</sup> However, Saharan merchants would not receive stamped guinées if they were of inferior quality.<sup>202</sup>

Consumption of guinée was suitable to life in the savannah, Sahel and the Sahara Desert regions, where the land under relentless sun. But in the context of West Africa and the Sahara Desert, consuming foreign textiles or dyed textiles also had a social meaning. Wearing indigo-dyed cloth, some from India and others from the production areas in Western Sudan, had been a sign of luxury, which differentiated the wearer from farmers who wore white cloth.<sup>203</sup> In the second half of the eighteenth century, there was a considerable increase of demand for guinées because not only the Saharans on the right bank of the Senegal River but also the inhabitants in Waalo, Futa Toro and Kajor emulated the clothing of the marabouts.<sup>204</sup> Such was a pattern of conspicuous consumption that was seen widely in pre-colonial West Africa.<sup>205</sup> Anthropological research by David Ames also confirmed that dyed cloth was more valuable than white cloth among the Wolof around Gambia.<sup>206</sup> Presumably, the growing demand for Indian guinées among consumers in Senegambia at that time would partly imply that the local handicraft industry might be unable to maintain an adequate supply of cloth to meet the regional demand due to the factor endowment constraint discussed below.

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<sup>200</sup> No. 88, Ordinance du Roi, 1 September 1843, in Sénégal, *Bulletin Administratif des Actes du Gouvernement*, 125-126.

<sup>201</sup> ANS, 2B24: Correspondence from Commandant Laborel to Minister of the Marine and the Colonies, No. 145, 15 April 1844, Saint Louis, F 50; ANOM, Sénégal XIII, Dossier 3c: rapport spéciaux, June 1851.

<sup>202</sup> Philip D. Curtin, 'Africa and the Wider Monetary World, 1250-1850', in John F. Richard (ed.), *Precious Metals in the Later Medieval and Early Modern Worlds* (Durham, NC: Carolina Academic Press, 1983), 258.

<sup>203</sup> Gaspard T. Mollien, *Travels in the Interior of Africa, to the Sources of Senegal and Gambia* (London, 1820), 256; Richard L. Roberts, *Two World of Cotton: Colonialism and the Regional Economy in the French Sudan, 1800-1946* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1996), 54.

<sup>204</sup> Mamadou Fall, 'Marchés locaux et groupes marchands dans la longue durée: des marchés du Cayor aux marchés du Fleuve Sénégal XVIIIe – début XXe siècle', in Boubacar Barry and Leonhard Harding (eds.), *Commerce et commerçants en Afrique de l'Ouest: L'Sénégal* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 1992), 79; Webb, 'The Trade in Gum Arabic', 163.

<sup>205</sup> John Thornton, *Africa and Africans in the Making of the Atlantic World, 1400-1800* (Second Edition, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 48-53.

<sup>206</sup> David W. Ames, 'The Use of a Transitional Cloth-Money Token among the Wolof', *American Anthropologist*, vol. 57, issue 5 (1957), 1016.

As will be seen in detail in Chapter 4, guinée production in Pondicherry for the gum trade in Senegal mobilised native Indians who had been unemployed when Pondicherry was returned from Britain to France in 1816. French weavers and dyers were dispatched to Pondicherry as advisors at public workshops, and the latest technology available in Europe at that time, such as spinning machine of the Prince and Poulain Co., was also introduced to their workshops. In addition, in order to dye the cotton product in blue, Pondicherry imported indigo from Bengal.

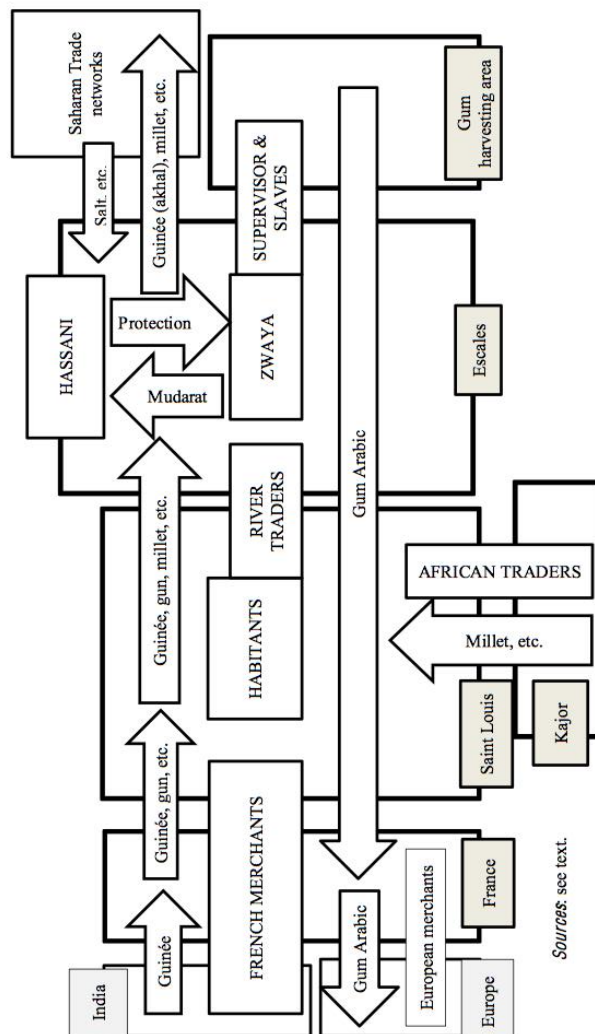
Therefore, as long as the French merchants wanted to purchase gum Arabic from Saharan merchants in Senegal, they had to bring Indian guinées that served as principal currency in the Senegal River region since European manufacturers could not completely imitate Indian cotton textiles at least during the nineteenth century. That is why guinées survived as the most important trading goods in the Franco-Senegal trade throughout the early nineteenth century. The next section examines the major commercial networks in the lower Senegal River through which guinées were exchanged for gum Arabic and received by consumers.

### 3. Commercial networks in the lower Senegal River

The lower Senegal River region was essential for French merchants to purchase gum Arabic of high quality that helped the development of the textile industry in Western Europe in the early nineteenth century. Figure 3.1 illustrates the commercial network in the lower Senegal River from 1817, when Saint Louis returned from Britain to France, to around 1850. This figure visualises who participated in this river trade, who entered and left each point of exchange, what kind of major commodities (i.e. guinée, gum Arabic, grain, firearms, etc.) were traded. In addition, it shows that the river trade was linked to West Africa and Saharan trade networks (see also Map 3). In other words, the lower Senegal River functioned as a gateway from the Atlantic Ocean to the Sahara Desert regions. The river trade in the first half of the nineteenth century witnessed the collaboration between French merchants – mainly those from Bordeaux – and Senegalese métis who were called ‘*habitants*’. The upper river areas such as Bakel were used for the trade of slaves and gold before the French withdrawal from the slave trade. These areas also supplied gum Arabic, but its quality was crumbly and lacking in richness compared to that which was harvested in the lower river regions such as

Dagana.<sup>207</sup> Thus, in Figure 3.1 the commercial network of the gum trade focuses exclusively on the one extending from Saint Louis through the lower Senegal River to the gum harvesting area.<sup>208</sup>

Figure 3.1: Commercial networks around the lower Senegal River region in the early nineteenth century



<sup>207</sup> Désiré-Vuillemin, 'Un commerce qui meurt', 92.

<sup>208</sup> This kind of commercial network, which extended from the coast through local intermediaries to the interior, was found in other regions of pre-colonial West Africa and West Central Africa. See David P. Gamble, *Contributions to a Socio-Economic Survey of the Gambia* (London: Colonial Office, 1949), 60; Martin Lynn, *Commerce and Economic Change in West Africa: the Palm Oil Trade in the Nineteenth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), Ch. 3; Mariana P. Candido, 'Merchants and the Business of the Slave Trade at Benguela, 1750-1850', *African Economic History*, no. 35 (2007), 13-17.



## (1) Between France and Saint Louis

The seaborne trade between France and Saint Louis was the province of the French merchants; especially those from Bordeaux. Under the regime of the *exclusif*, or the *pacte colonial*, the metropolitan merchants dominated the trade between France and its colonies.<sup>209</sup> Commodities shipped from France to Senegal in the early nineteenth century included textiles (mainly from India and some from Europe), metals and metalware, arms and ammunition, beads and semi-precious stones, alcohols and tobacco.<sup>210</sup>

The trade between Saint Louis and the fixed seasonal markets in the lower river, called ‘*escales*’, was the province of the *habitants* and their river traders, who intermediated between French merchants at Saint Louis and the nomadic emirates of Brakna and Trarza at the *escales*. The *habitants* were the descendants of métis offspring between Europeans and Africans in Saint Louis and the Island of Gorée. Ibrahima Thioub described them as ‘the vertebral column of the social architecture of the island’ of Saint Louis. In Saint Louis society, they, including female *habitants* known as ‘*signares*’, were socially noble and wealthy enough to own their houses, boats and domestic slaves to enter into the trade in the Senegal River. Their skill in speaking European languages enabled them to serve as translators for Europeans, and they profited from not only the intermediary business with Saharan merchants but also the overseas trade with European merchants.<sup>211</sup> French merchants needed their help for the river trade; partly because they had no immunity against tropical diseases such as

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<sup>209</sup> Bernard Schnapper, ‘La fin du régime de l’exclusif: le commerce étranger dans les possessions françaises d’Afrique tropicale (1817-1870)’, *Annales Africaines* (1959), 149-199.

<sup>210</sup> Curtin, *Economic Change in Precolonial Africa*, vol. 2, 88.

<sup>211</sup> L’A. P. –David Boilat, *Esquisses Sénégalaises* (Paris, 1853), 209-212; Ibrahima Thioub, ‘L’esclavage à Saint-Louis du Sénégal au xviii<sup>e</sup>-xix<sup>e</sup> siècle’, *Wissenschaftskolleg zu Berlin: Jahrbuch 2008/2009* (2010), 338; George E. Brooks, ‘The *Signares* of Saint-Louis and Gorée: Women Entrepreneurs in Eighteenth-Century Senegal’, in N. J. Hafkin and E. G. Bay (eds.), *Women in Africa: Studies in Social and Economic Change* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1976), 19-44; Hilary Jones, *The Métis of Senegal: Urban Life and Politics in French West Africa* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2013), Ch. 1. For a comparison with similar female traders, called ‘*donas*’ in Portuguese, at Benguela in West Central Africa, see Candido, ‘Merchants and the Business of the Slave Trade’, 11-13. For the latest scholarship about brokerage in West Africa in the pre-colonial period, see Toby Green (ed.), *Brokers of Change: Atlantic Commerce and Cultures in Pre-colonial Western Africa* (Oxford: Oxford University Press and British Academy, 2012).

malaria and yellow fever, and partly because there were rivalries between the French and the Trarza emirate in the lower Senegal River.<sup>212</sup> In other words, European business at that time needed the help of local intermediaries to reduce potential risks associated with the trade in West Africa.<sup>213</sup>

In Saint Louis of Senegal, French merchants offered guinéés, firearms and other goods on credit to the *habitants*. Based on the 1792 travelogue by Saugnier and Brisson, James Webb accounted for the credit system in pre-colonial Senegal. The intermediaries were expected to carry an adequate amount of gum Arabic to the French merchants by the end of the trade season. The *habitants* could secure their loans with either their trade slaves or house slaves. In the case of non-fulfillment of initial contract, the creditors would allow them time to conduct another river trade, although second agreement could bear heavy interest, generally at 50 per cent per trade season. The failure to fulfill the second agreement could be a reason that the slaves of the debtor could be seized by the creditor.<sup>214</sup>

## (2) Between Saint Louis and three *escales*

In Saint Louis the *habitants* consigned guinéés, firearms and other goods to their river traders who conducted the river trade on their behalf. River traders included the ‘*laptots*’, the ‘*gourmets*’ and the ‘*maître de langue*’. The *laptots* served as sailors, roustabouts and deckhands on the river fleet; the *gourmets* served as pilots, helmsmen and boatswains; and the *maître de langue* were skilled Africans and métis who served as translators and interpreters between the French and the Africans. As they could

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<sup>212</sup> Marcson, ‘European-African Interaction in the Precolonial Period’, 51-56.

<sup>213</sup> The roles of the *habitants* in the gum trade in Senegal could be compared with those of the trading companies that in the literature of business history ‘can be seen as reducing search, negotiation, transaction, and information costs in international trade through their specialist knowledge of markets and business environment.’ Geoffrey Jones, *Merchants to Multinationals: British Trading Companies in the Nineteenth to Twentieth Centuries* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 6.

<sup>214</sup> Saugnier and Brisson, *Voyages to the Coast of Africa* (London, 1792), 278-279; James L. A. Webb, Jr., ‘On Currency and Credit in the Western Sahel, 1700-1850’, in Endre Stiansen and Jane I Guyer (eds.), *Credit, Currencies and Culture: African Financial Institutions in Historical Perspectives* (Stockholm: Nordiska Afrikainstitutet, 1999), 51-52.

apprehend political and economic behaviors of both sides, their role as diplomats was crucial in Saint Louis and in the Senegal River region.<sup>215</sup>

The productivity of gum harvesting varied from season to season and depended on climate condition. The harmattan, hot and dry Saharan wind, and rainfall were crucial in determining the season of the gum trade in the Senegal River. The harmattan started around the end of October or the beginning of November and persisted until June. The best season of the gum harvesting lasted from March to May, when the harmattan became the strongest of the year. Therefore, the gum trade in the peak season (from January/February to July) was called '*grande traite*' in French, while the one in the off-peak season from November to the end of January was known as '*petite traite*'.<sup>216</sup>

The river traders carried Indian guinéés, firearms and foodstuffs by boat from Saint Louis to the *escales* over several weeks. The traded foodstuffs included millet, dried fish and salt from the Wolof state of Kajor, which was stretching from north to central Senegal at that time, and whose foodstuffs accounted for half of the total value of the goods brought to the *escales* in 1852.<sup>217</sup> As a piece of guinée served as an exchange medium in the regional trade at that time, so did millet.<sup>218</sup> However, little is known about the recognised exchange rate between millet and guinée, millet and gum Arabic in existing literature, probably because of limited availability of sources. The following evidence is a rough indication at a point in the 1840s. According to the '*compromis*' for the gum trade in three *escales* in 1841, the price of a piece of guinée was fixed at 54 livres (27 kilograms) of gum Arabic, and the price of one barrel of millet was fixed at 2 pieces of guinéés. This means that one barrel of millet was equal to

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<sup>215</sup> Marcson, 'European-African Interaction in the Precolonial Period', 11-13; Thioub, 'L'esclavage à Saint-Louis du Sénégal', 340.

<sup>216</sup> Gaston Donnet, *Une mission au Sahara occidental* (Paris, 1896), 46; Webb, *Desert Frontier*, 117-124. See also the discussion in the previous chapter.

<sup>217</sup> Marcson, 'European-African Interaction in the Precolonial Period', 21.

<sup>218</sup> Mollien, *Travels in the Interior of Africa*, 60; James F. Searing, *West African Slavery and Atlantic Commerce: The Senegal River Valley, 1700-1860* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 238. It should be noted that nomads in the desert edge had no or little access to grain and textiles due to their resource endowment. This would be an incentive to demand these goods from the river traders at the *escales*. Philip D. Curtin, *Cross-Cultural Trade in World History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984), 16.

108 livres of gum in the *escales*.<sup>219</sup> However, considering that the prices of these goods in transactions varied from season to season, from year to year, and from place to place, the real prices might not conform to the above-mentioned, rather idealised ones.

The exchanges between the goods shipped from Saint Louis and gum Arabic took place in the *escales* along the lower Senegal River. In the early nineteenth century there were three *escales*: (1) *escale des Darmancours*, (2) *escale du Coq* and (3) *escale du Désert*. Each *escale* was held under the jurisdiction of the warrior nomads of the desert edge, called ‘*hassani*’ or ‘*arab*’. Among the *hassani* groups, the Darmancours controlled the nearest *escale* from Saint Louis. The Brakna controlled the *escale du Coq*, which was ranked second in importance to the *escale du Désert* controlled by the Trarza, the most powerful group in the lower river regions.<sup>220</sup> These *hassani* groups protected the clerical lineages, known as ‘*zwaya*’ (marabout), who in return paid taxes, called ‘*mudarat*’, to the *hassani*, and designated the *escales* as the locations of transactions between the *zwaya* groups and the river traders.<sup>221</sup>

The *hassani* also imposed taxes on the river traders who traded in the *escales*, and this fell into two categories. One was taxed on the weight of gum traded. The river trader paid in goods and foodstuffs to the rulers of the *escales*, and the amount of tax payment was at one piece of guinée per half ton of gum traded. The other and more expensive was the tax on boat tonnage, which was independent of the size of the trade. This tax was an important source of revenue for the rulers of the *escales*, yet it became burdensome for the river traders especially in years of poor harvest of gum. In such cases, the traders faced risks not only of losing money in the river trade but also of failing to repay the debt to the creditor in Saint Louis. Therefore, the river traders requested the abolition of the tax on boat tonnage from the 1830s to 1840s, and only the

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<sup>219</sup> ANS, Q18: Compromis pour les trois *escales* année 1841. In the standard weight and measure for 1827 in Senegal, one barrel was equal to 280 liters. France. Ministère de la marine et des colonies, *Notices statistiques sur les colonies françaises*, vol. 3 (Paris, 1839), 306.

<sup>220</sup> In terms of the scale of the gum trade in each *escale*, the *escale* of Trarza supplied 695,000 kg of gum to the river traders, that of Brakna 605,000 kg, and that of Darmancours 84,000 kg from January to April 1840. ANOM, Sénégal XIII, Dossier 25: *etat des gommés traitées aux escales* 1<sup>er</sup> Janvier au 1<sup>er</sup> Mai 1840.

<sup>221</sup> Marcson, ‘European-African Interaction in the Precolonial Period’, 4-5; Lydon, *On Trans-Saharan Trails*, xx.

Darmancours accepted their favour in 1847, when gum was not a major commodity traded at their *escale*.<sup>222</sup>

The river traders also gave gifts to the nomads and caravans at the *escales* until gum was delivered to the *escales* in a few weeks, or months. According to Geneviève Désiré-Vuillemin, the gifts included guinéés, tea, sugar and grain.<sup>223</sup> It is true that a large amount of sugar had been imported from France to Senegal every year during the 1830s and 1840s. However, it seems that tea had not been carried so regularly from France into Senegal and, thereby, into the Senegal River valley. Indeed, French trade statistics show that there was no tea trade between France and Senegal during the first half of the 1830s, and that 1836 was the first year of trade in the 1830s. That year saw the import of tea of 192 kilograms from France to Senegal, followed by no tea trade in 1837.<sup>224</sup>

As seen above, the river traders paid much more than the market price to purchase gum Arabic in the *escales* in the lower Senegal River. This means that market prices of gum per piece of guinée that appear in archival sources and existing literature should be carefully treated; especially if we try to estimate the profit from the exchange rate difference between Saint Louis and the *escales*. As noted by Webb, Marcson's assumption regarding the exchange rate differential is misleading, since he did not take into account other costs that include the above-mentioned taxes and transport costs. Take the example of the exchange rate differential in 1841. Marcson estimated it at fewer than 21 livres (10.5 kilograms) of gum per guinée by subtracting the price in the *escales* (fewer than 54 livres) from that in Saint Louis (fewer than 33 livres). However, according to the same source that Marcson used, the transport cost per piece of guinée was 45 per cent of the price of 16.5 kilograms in Saint Louis, or 7.5 kilograms of gum. Considering the tax paid to the nomadic emirates, along the lower Senegal River valley as well as the above-mentioned transport cost, it was clear that the margin habitants gained from the trade was much smaller than Marcson thought.<sup>225</sup>

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<sup>222</sup> Webb, 'The Trade in Gum Arabic', 157-159.

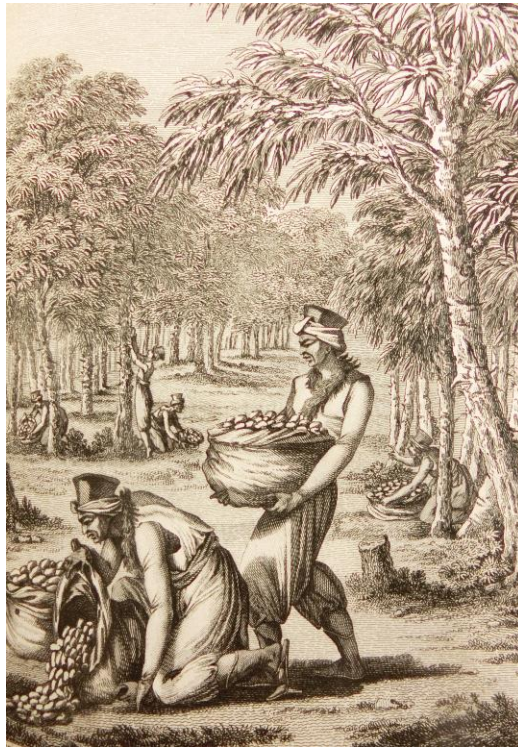
<sup>223</sup> Désiré-Vuillemin, 'Un commerce qui meurt', 90-92.

<sup>224</sup> France. Direction générale des douanes, *Tableau général du commerce de la France avec ses colonies et les puissances étrangères* (Paris: Imprimerie Royale, 1831-1851).

<sup>225</sup> Marcson, 'European-African Interaction in the Precolonial Period', 159-160; Webb, 'The Trade in Gum Arabic', 159; ANS, 2B18: Correspondence from the

### (3) Gum harvesting in the Senegal River valley

Plate 3.3. Gum harvesting in Senegal



*Note:* I gained permission to reproduce this plate from King's College London, Foyle Special Collections Library.

*Source:* J. P. L. Durant, *Un Voyage au Sénégal* (Paris, 1802), Planche IV.

The *zwaya* merchants dispatched groups of up to 50 slaves with a supervisor to the harvesting area of gum, which was far away from their camps. The dispatched slaves included slaves of the supervisor and those of his kinsmen and allies. They built huts near a well around the gum grove, and ate and slept there during the harvesting period.<sup>226</sup>

The harvesting period was linked to the harmattan season so that it began at the end of October or the beginning of November. The slaves gathered gum in the gum grove under supervision (Plate 3.3). In return for his supervisory services, the supervisor

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Governor of Senegal to the Bureau du Régime politique et du Commerce, 11 September 1841, No. 390, F 119.

<sup>226</sup> Webb, 'The Trade in Gum Arabic', 154; Searing, *West African Slavery and Atlantic Commerce*, 168.

received the amount of one day's labour of gum harvest per week from slaves who were not his. In an average year, eight grams of gum were produced from a single acacia tree. However, the productivity of gum harvesting varied according to the harvesting season and the condition of the trees. In addition, the productivity of a slave was 1 to 3 kilograms per day, but this also depended on his industriousness, food supply and abuse by the supervisor.<sup>227</sup> The slaves put the harvested gum Arabic into bags of oxhide and brought them on the backs of camels or cattle to the *escales*, where the gum was exchanged for guinée and millet that the river traders carried from Saint Louis.<sup>228</sup>

The quality of harvested gum Arabic varied by region within Senegal, because it depended on rainfall and the harmattan. Gum Arabic of the best quality in Senegal was produced in north Fuuta where rainfall was 400 mm per annum. On the other hand, gum produced in the upper Senegal River was friable and less valuable and demanded than gum from the lower river region.<sup>229</sup> European merchants sought for higher quality of gum Arabic in Senegal. Indeed, in the later 1840s, 70 per cent of total gum exported from Saint Louis was supplied by the *escales*.<sup>230</sup> As for the price of gum, one piece of guinée could be exchanged for 27 livres in the *escale du Coq*, although it could be exchanged for 80 livres at Bakel in the upper river in 1840.<sup>231</sup>

Through such a commercial network, guinées were carried from Europe via Saint Louis into the Senegal River region in the early nineteenth century. They were also exchanged mainly for gum Arabic that was carried in the opposite direction from the harvesting area to Saint Louis. Some guinées were consumed within the realm of the nomadic emirates such as Trarza and Brakna along the river region, and others were further circulated under the names of '*akhal*' and others into Sahara Desert regions via caravan trade networks. These networks brought from North Africa into the nomadic

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<sup>227</sup> F. Carrère and P. Holle, *De la Sénégambie française* (Paris, 1855), 328-329; Webb, 'The Trade in Gum Arabic', 154-155.

<sup>228</sup> Abdoulaye Ly, *La compagnie du Sénégal* (Dakar: Présence Africaine, 1958), 282.

<sup>229</sup> See Chapter 2.

<sup>230</sup> ANOM, Sénégal XIII, Dossier 2: relevé comparatif des quantités exportées de la colonie à toutes destinations, pendant la période quinquennale de 1845 à 1849, 9 December 1850.

<sup>231</sup> ANS, 2B18: Correspondence from the Governor to Minister of the Marine and Colonies, No. 202, 9 August 1840, Saint Louis, F 37-38.

emirates a variety of goods including salt, which was essential to the people and animals in the desert and savanna.<sup>232</sup>

#### 4. Guinée as a currency in the Senegal River

West Africa had a long established tradition in the production, trade and consumption of cotton textiles, dated well before Europeans arrived in the fifteenth century. In the regional trade within West Africa and with the Sahara Desert areas, textiles were widely traded as consumer goods as well as exchange medium. This tendency persisted well into the nineteenth century, and guinée from South Asia was used as one of the cloth currencies in West Africa and across the Sahara Desert. Why did guinées matter as an exchange medium in the lower Senegal River regions in the early nineteenth century? In other words, how did they become a regional currency in the regional history? In order to answer these questions, this section explores the historical backgrounds in the context of textile production and consumption in pre-colonial West Africa and from the viewpoints of factor endowments and complementarity among monies.

##### (1) Early West African cloth production, trade and consumption

In the pre-colonial period West Africa had been rich in materials available for textile production, and its cloth had been made from various kinds of fibres from animal to plants. In the northern savannah and the desert areas, cloth was made from animal fibres from sheep, camels and horses, while, in the forest zones of West Africa, the protein fibre from silkworm was used. Weavers also used vegetable fibres such as linen, cotton, costa of raphia and tree bark and leaves. In addition to various fibres that could be used for cloth production, there were plenty of resources, such as insects, shellfish, plants and minerals, available as dyestuff in the continent of Africa.<sup>233</sup>

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<sup>232</sup> Lydon, *On Trans-Saharan Trails*, 251-252. For the significance of the Saharan salt trade, see E. Ann McDougall, 'Salts of the Western Sahara: Myths, Mysteries, and Historical Significance', *International Journal of African Historical Studies*, vol. 23, no. 2 (1990), 231-257.

<sup>233</sup> Carolyn Keyes Adenaike, 'West African Textiles, 1500-1800', in Maureen F. Mazzaoui (ed.), *Textiles: Production, Trade and Demand* (Aldershot and Brookfield: Ashgate, 1998), 1-2.



Although the origins of cloth production in West Africa have been a mystery, archaeological findings have so far identified the earliest cloths produced in West Africa. One found in the modern Mali Republic dated back to the eighth century,<sup>234</sup> and another to the ninth or tenth century in what is now southern Nigeria.<sup>235</sup> As of the eleventh century, when Europeans were still familiar with processing protein fibres to be utilised to dye cloth, weavers in West Africa had already mastered the skill of handling vegetable fibres.<sup>236</sup>

The spread of Islam played a major role in diffusing technology of textile production in West Africa in the early stage. The diffusion of the technology was due to the increased demand for cloth among Muslim converts. For example, men who converted to Islam wore long flowing robes and baggy pants. From the seventeenth century onwards, on the occasions of important Islamic ceremonies and burials, the people in Hausaland (modern northern Nigeria) wore white clothes due to their adherence to Islam.<sup>237</sup> It is also recorded that the king of a kingdom around the Futa Toro region of what is now Senegal and Mauritania officially converted into Islam in the early eleventh century.<sup>238</sup> Later, the Portuguese also contributed to the diffusion of textile production and cloth currency from Senegambia to the Cape Verde Islands which they controlled. The islands became a place where slaves taken from Senegambia wove cloth by using local cotton, and there were assimilations in both textile production and monetary system between Senegambia and the Cape Verde Islands.<sup>239</sup>

Based on linguistic evidence about the variants of the term of cotton, Colleen Kriger suggested that there were two distinct centres of cotton production in pre-colonial West Africa. The one cluster covered the regions that include the Niger River,

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<sup>234</sup> Rita Bolland, *Tellem Textiles: Archaeological Finds from Burial Caves in Mali's Bandiagara Cliff* (Amsterdam: Tropenmuseum, 1991).

<sup>235</sup> Thurstan Shaw, *Igbo-Ukwu: An Account of Archaeological Discoveries in Eastern Nigeria*, vol. 1 (London: Faber and Faber, 1970), 240-244.

<sup>236</sup> Adenaike, 'West African Textiles, 1500-1800', 1-2.

<sup>237</sup> David W. Ames, 'The Rural Wolof of the Gambia', in P. Bohannon and G. Dalton (eds.), *Markets in Africa* (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1962), 38; Marisa Candotti, 'The Hausa Textile Industry: Origins and Development in the Precolonial Period', in Anne Haour and Benedetta Rossi (eds.), *Being and Becoming Hausa: Interdisciplinary Perspectives* (Leiden and Boston, MA: Brill, 2010), 189, 193-194.

<sup>238</sup> Lydon, *On Trans-Saharan Trails*, 58.

<sup>239</sup> Curtin, *Economic Change in Precolonial Africa*, vol. 1, 212.

the Gambia River and the Senegal River, and the other the regions surrounding the Lake Chad. Then, following the archaeological findings, Kriger also proposed that ‘the tenth century is a reasonable *terminus a quo* [of cotton textile production] for these two cotton centres’.<sup>240</sup> An earliest cotton skirt excavated in today’s Mali in the 1960s and 1970s by the Institute of Human Biology of Utrecht University was used in the eleventh to twelfth century.<sup>241</sup>

In many areas of pre-colonial West Africa, textile production basically drew on the household division of labour: spinning was the principal occupation for women during the dry season, and weaving for men.<sup>242</sup> The technology of textile production used in pre-colonial West Africa was simple. West African weavers were familiar with textile production on narrow looms with pulleys and foot-treadles.<sup>243</sup> The West African narrow looms were similar to those of other regions of the world and might have been introduced from Eastern Sudan or further eastern parts of the world such as Arabia, although there are various theories on the origins of the loom of that kind.<sup>244</sup> In Senegambia, the treadle loom on which the weavers wove cloth was the only horizontal one, while vertical looms were found in forest and south-savannah areas of West Africa.<sup>245</sup>

Using the narrow loom, whether horizontal or vertical, was a choice in the textile industry in pre-colonial West Africa. The narrow loom was not costly, and it was easy to construct and deconstruct, so the weaver could take the loom indoors in case of

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<sup>240</sup> Colleen E. Kriger, ‘Mapping the Cotton Textile Production in Precolonial West Africa’, *African Economic History*, no. 33 (2005), 95-96.

<sup>241</sup> Bolland, *Tellem Textiles*, 28.

<sup>242</sup> Charles Monteil, ‘Le coton chez les noirs’, *Bulletin du Comité d’Études Historiques et Scientifiques de l’Afrique Occidentale Française*, vol. 9, no. 4 (1926), 637-642.

<sup>243</sup> Marion Johnson, ‘Technology, Competition, and African Crafts’, in Clive Dewey and A. G. Hopkins (eds.), *The Imperial Impact: Studies in the Economic History of Africa and India* (London: Ashlone Press, 1978), 259.

<sup>244</sup> For the various theories of the origins of the narrow loom in West Africa, see Marion Johnson, ‘Cloth Strips and History’, *West African Journal of Archaeology*, vol. 7 (1977), 169-179.

<sup>245</sup> Curtin, *Economic Change in Precolonial Africa*, vol. 1, 214. See also, Venice and Alastair Lamb, ‘The Classification and Distribution of Horizontal Treadle Looms in Sub-Saharan Africa’, *Textile History*, vol. 11, issue 1 (1980), 22-62.

rain.<sup>246</sup> From a theoretical perspective of factor endowments, Gareth Austin has recently explained that, in pre-colonial West Africa, ‘labour was scarce, whereas land had usually been relatively abundant’, but, during the dry season that was unfit for farming, labour was temporally abundant and the opportunity cost of labour was low. As for cotton, it ‘could be grown over wide areas of the savanna but it had to be planted during the same short season as food crops, creating a risky trade-off which severely constrained the price-elasticity of the supply of raw cotton’.<sup>247</sup> Austin argued that these conditions facilitated the choice of the narrow loom that required a labour-intensive method of production but reduced labour productivity.<sup>248</sup>

There had been extensive commercial networks within, and beyond, West Africa before the fifteenth century. Locally woven textiles were carried mainly through the network of Muslim merchants to consumer markets. During the sixteenth century Kano became a manufacturing and commercial centre in Hausaland. The artisans in the city manufactured various cotton cloth, including indigo-dyed cloth, and the Tuareg traders from North Africa, who played a major role in the trans-Saharan trade of that time, bought cotton cloth there in exchange for salt, copper and many types of European cloths.<sup>249</sup> Once European merchants started to trade directly with West Africa, they found a role in the intra-African trade in textiles. For example, in the sixteenth century the Portuguese bought country cloths, such as red cloth and scarlet cloth, on the coast of

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<sup>246</sup> Angela W. Browne, ‘Rural Industry and Appropriate Technology: the Lessons of Narrow-Loom Ashanti Weaving’, *African Affairs*, vol. 82, issue 326 (1983), 30-31.

<sup>247</sup> Gareth Austin, ‘Labour-Intensity and Manufacturing in West Africa, c. 1450 – c. 2000’, in Gareth Austin and Kaoru Sugihara (eds.), *Labour-Intensive Industrialization in Global History* (London: Routledge, 2013), 202-203. See also, Gareth Austin, ‘Resources, Techniques, and Strategies South of the Sahara: Revising the Factor Endowments Perspective on African Economic Development, 1500-2000’, *Economic History Review*, vol. 61, no. 3 (2008), 602-606. Marion Johnson also pointed out that the production of cotton textiles in pre-colonial West Africa was carried out in non-farming season. Marion Johnson, ‘Cotton Imperialism in West Africa’, *African Affairs*, vol. 73, issue 291 (1974), 181.

<sup>248</sup> Austin, ‘Labour-Intensity and Manufacturing in West Africa’, 203-207. This factor endowments approach does not work for the case of pre-colonial Kano. Marisa Candotti, ‘Cotton Growing and Textile Production in Northern Nigeria: From Caliphate to Protectorate, c. 1804-1914’, Unpublished PhD thesis (London: SOAS, University of London, 2015), 92-94.

<sup>249</sup> Candotti, ‘The Hausa Textile Industry’, 192-194.

Senegambia for resale elsewhere.<sup>250</sup> This kind of commercial activity might facilitate or extend the frontiers of existing African trading networks along the coast of West Africa.<sup>251</sup>

Thus, weavers in West Africa had produced cotton textiles of high quality on the narrow loom that diffused through trade across, and beyond, West Africa, and contributed to shaping consumers' tastes in textiles for centuries before Europeans arrived in West Africa in the fifteenth century. This was the major reason that African consumer taste was changeable, and therefore the knowledge of the market was crucial for European merchants to the success of a voyage.<sup>252</sup>

## (2) The debates: Atlantic trade and pre-colonial West African cloth production

Since the contact with European merchants on the coast of West Africa began, a wide range of textiles produced in Europe and India started to come in abundance to West Africa by sea. It is known that the main reason that European merchants brought across textiles of various kinds was to purchase African slaves along the coast of West Africa. However, as we know that West Africa had long been a source of sophisticated textiles, it is worth considering why West Africa imported a large amount of non-African textiles, especially Indian cotton textiles, from Europe despite the fact that they produced various textiles of high quality.

As already discussed, this was partly due to conspicuous consumption trends among local consumers in West Africa. Consuming textiles from Europe and Asia would be seen as part of luxury for African consumers. However, it should be noted that certain African textiles were more appreciated than European and Asian textiles in pre-colonial West Africa. John Thornton offered an important insight: 'What seemed to

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<sup>250</sup> A. A. de Almada, *Brief Treatise on the Rivers of Guinea* (Liverpool: Department of History, University of Liverpool, 1984, original in 1594), 24; Robin Law, *The Slave Coast of West Africa, 1550-1750: the Impact of the Atlantic Slave Trade on an African Society* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991), 44-46; Randy J. Sparks, *Where the Negroes Are Masters: an African Port in the Era of the Slave Trade* (Cambridge, MA, and London: Harvard University Press, 2014), 88.

<sup>251</sup> Adenaike, 'West African Textiles, 1500-1800', 6.

<sup>252</sup> John Atkins, *A Voyage to Guinea, Brazil, and the West-Indies; in His Majesty's Ships, the Swallow and Weymouth* (London, 1735), 158-168; Law, *The Slave Coast of West Africa*, 201-202.

count for these consumers [in what is now coastal Ghana] was foreignness and perhaps difficulty of access.’ Then, he continued, based on the opinion by protestant missionary Johann Wilhelm Müller who visited the Gold Coast in 1667-68, ‘the most extravagant purchases [...] were not from European sellers, but from Mandinga sellers from the far interior.’<sup>253</sup>

The massive imports of textiles from Europe and Asia into West Africa raised another debatable question: whether there was any impact by textiles from Europe and Asia on the local textile industry during the age of the Atlantic slave trade. There are some arguments from conflicting viewpoints. As for the scholars who stressed the negative impacts on West African handicraft industry as a whole, Walter Rodney in his 1973 book *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa*, assumed that from the fifteenth to the seventeenth century ‘European cloth industry was able to copy fashionable Indian and African patterns, and eventually to replace them. Partly by establishing a stranglehold on the distribution of cloth around the shores of Africa, and partly by swamping African products by importing cloth in bulk, European traders eventually succeeded in putting an end to the expansion of African cloth manufacture’.<sup>254</sup> More recently, Joseph Inikori proposed a nuanced hypothesis that considering the fact that textile import had been tied to the Atlantic slave trade, European and Indian textile imports ‘inhibited’ the development of the cotton textile industry in West Africa between 1650 and 1850.<sup>255</sup>

By contrast, A. G. Hopkins has stated that there is ‘no general evidence’ to support the claim about the decline of West African manufactures. He has claimed that the overseas trade led to the expansion of market ‘in terms of the volume and range of goods’ rather than replacement of local industries by the products imported from overseas.<sup>256</sup> Marion Johnson also argued that there is no evidence that imported textiles from overseas caused the decline of the textile industry in West Africa, and presumed

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<sup>253</sup> John Thornton, ‘Precolonial African Industry and the Atlantic Trade, 1500-1800’, *African Economic History*, no. 19 (1990-1991), 18-19.

<sup>254</sup> Walter Rodney, *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa* (London and Dar-Es-Salaam: Bogle-L’Ouverture Publications and Tanzanian Publishing House, 1973), 104.

<sup>255</sup> Joseph E. Inikori, ‘English Versus Indian Cotton Textiles: The Impact of Imports on Cotton Textile Production in West Africa’, in Giorgio Riello and Tirthankar Roy (eds.), *How India Clothed the World: the World of South Asian Textiles, 1500-1850* (Leiden: Brill, 2009), 85-114.

<sup>256</sup> A. G. Hopkins, *An Economic History of West Africa* (Harlow: Longman, 1973), 121.

that most of the imported textiles entered into the regions where no textile industry existed.<sup>257</sup> Kriger challenged the Johnson's presumption by stating that the regions where imported European and Indian textiles had their own textile industry. Instead, based on the analysis of archaeological findings extrapolated from West Africa, Kriger argued that foreign textiles could motivate local textile producers to manufacture new types of textiles.<sup>258</sup> Paul Lovejoy offered a view that some imports would compete with local manufactures but as a whole imported textiles, as well as beads, tobacco and alcohol, supplemented African production.<sup>259</sup>

Some case studies on specific areas of West Africa presented different outcomes of the effects of the Atlantic trade on the textile industry in the pre-colonial period. For example, A. J. H. Latham argued that, in the case of nineteenth-century Old Calabar in the Bight of Biafra, the goods brought across by European merchants did not have a negative impact on local economy. As for textiles, they seemed to have little impact on local industry, because the region produced raphia cloth from palm-wine-tree fronds only and the cloth was dressed in the ceremonial occasions of the Ibibio and Efik's secret societies. However, he claimed that imported goods including textiles brought about a rather beneficial effect because they increased options for local consumers.<sup>260</sup>

Asante was also an interesting case in pre-colonial West Africa. Gareth Austin, based on the reports by the colonial administration, stated that the competition from European textiles had different effects on spinners and weavers in Asante: the former did not survive, but the latter adopted imported machine-spun yarn that enabled them to specialise in the production of various textiles of higher quality on the narrow loom.<sup>261</sup>

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<sup>257</sup> Marion Johnson, 'Commodities, Customs, and the Computer', *History in Africa*, vol. 11 (1984), 364.

<sup>258</sup> Kriger, 'Mapping the Cotton Textile Production', 106-107; Kriger, *Cloth in West African History*; Colleen E. Kriger, "'Guinea Cloth': Production and Consumption of Cotton Textiles in West Africa before and during the Atlantic Slave Trade', in Giorgio Riello and Prasanna Parthasarathi (eds.), *The Spinning World: A Global History of Cotton Textiles, 1200-1850* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 105-126.

<sup>259</sup> Paul E. Lovejoy, *Transformations in Slavery: A History of Slavery in Africa* (Third Edition, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 106.

<sup>260</sup> A. J. H. Latham, *Old Calabar 1600-1891: The Impact of the International Economy Upon a Traditional Society* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1973), 75-79.

<sup>261</sup> Gareth Austin, *Labour, Land and Capital in Ghana: From Slavery to Free Labour in Asante, 1807-1956* (Rochester, NY: University of Rochester Press, 2005), 53, 75-77.

Another surviving case was found in the Sokoto Caliphate. The Caliphate, established in the first decade of the nineteenth century after the *jihad*, offered institutional frameworks such as large domestic markets and tax exemption for weavers in Kano, the commercial and manufacturing centre in the Caliphate.<sup>262</sup> Kano imported cotton by wealthy merchants from its neighbouring city of Zaria, where slaves for cotton production were readily available and the fertile soil was suitable to cotton growing. As Phillip Shea revealed, throughout the nineteenth century, there was no decline of local manufacturing industry, but rather innovation in dyeing technology, thereby development in the cotton textile industry in Kano and of exports into various regions of Africa.<sup>263</sup> Marisa Candotti argued that the trans-Saharan trade also contributed to the development of the textile industry in the Sokoto Caliphate.<sup>264</sup>

Apart from the debate over the impact of the textiles from Europe and Asia on local industry in pre-colonial West Africa, there is another debate related to the value of textiles imported by European merchants into West Africa. Presumably, there is little point in trying to discuss whether foreign textiles imported into West Africa were in general cheaper than African textiles, since values of both local and foreign textiles would vary substantially. Therefore, unfocused comparisons and general statements would be misleading and might contain errors. For example, Inikori believed that European and Indian textiles imported into West Africa in the age of the Atlantic slave trade were 'cheap'.<sup>265</sup> However, based on records of the Royal African Company, Kriger presented that non-African wrappers were at least three times more expensive

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<sup>262</sup> Paul E. Lovejoy, 'Interregional Monetary Flows in the Precolonial Trade of Nigeria', *Journal of African History*, vol. 15, issue 4 (1974), 571.

<sup>263</sup> Phillip Shea, 'The Development of an Export Oriented Dyed Cloth Industry in Kano Emirate in the Nineteenth Century', Unpublished PhD thesis (Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin, 1975).

<sup>264</sup> Heinrich Barth, *Travels and Discoveries in North and Central Africa: Including Accounts of Tripoli, the Sahara, the Remarkable Kingdom of Bornu, and the Countries Around Lake Chad* (London, New York, NY, and Melbourne: Ward, Lock & Co., 1890, originally published in 1857-1858), 300-302; Candotti, 'The Hausa Textile Industry'. For the significance of the trans-Saharan trade in northern Nigerian economy, albeit after the last quarter of the nineteenth century, see also Marion Johnson, 'Calico Caravans: The Tripoli-Kano Trade after 1880', *Journal of African History*, vol. 17, issue 1 (1976), 95-117.

<sup>265</sup> Joseph E. Inikori, 'Introduction', in Joseph E. Inikori (eds.), *Forced Migration: the Impact of the Export Slave Trade on African Societies* (London: Hutchinson University Library, 1982), 55.

than locally made wrappers on the Upper Guinea Coast in the late seventeenth century. She argued that it was unlikely that English manufacturers could lower their production costs of cloth than those of West African cloth until the British industrial revolution.<sup>266</sup> This case suggested that textiles from Europe and Asia were not necessarily be cheaper than African textiles until the late eighteenth century. In other words, there were other reasons such as conspicuous consumption, quality of textiles and factor endowments behind the imports of textiles from the Atlantic trade into West Africa in the pre-colonial period.

### (3) Cloth as money in pre-colonial West Africa

In pre-colonial West Africa, while textiles were consumed as necessity or luxury items, they were also used as a currency along with cowries, copper, iron, gold and silver coins in market exchange. Its role as a currency lasted until the introduction and diffusion of colonial currencies. Despite its wide distribution, a large gap remains in our knowledge of cloth currency in pre-colonial West Africa, compared to that of cowrie shells.<sup>267</sup> How can we account for the continued imports of guinéés into Senegal and the use of guinéés as a currency in the early nineteenth century? This question needs to be considered in a broad context of monetary history of pre-colonial West Africa. As mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, existing literature on the economic history of pre-colonial Senegal treated guinéés as an exchange medium and unit of account in the gum trade along the Senegal River. However, guinéés were re-exported from the nomadic emirates of Trarza and Brakna and others around the Senegal River regions further into the Sahara Desert. Indeed, in the latter regions, a piece of guinée was called in ‘*baysa*’ or ‘*akhal*’ and was no longer an exchange medium in the trade of gum Arabic, but rather that of salt carried from the coastal regions of North Africa (Figure 3.1). This means

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<sup>266</sup> Colleen E. Kriger, ‘The Importance of Mande Textiles in the African Side of the Atlantic Trade, ca. 1680-1710’, *Mande Studies*, vol. 11 (2009), 10, 13.

<sup>267</sup> Lovejoy, ‘Interregional Monetary Flows in the Precolonial Trade of Nigeria’; Curtin, ‘Africa and the Wider Monetary World’, 255; Marion Johnson, ‘The Cowrie Currencies of West Africa’, *Journal of African History*, vol. 11, issues 1 & 3 (1970), 17-49, 331-53; Jan Hogendorn and Marion Johnson, *The Shell Money of the Slave Trade* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986); Jan S. Hogendorn and Henry A. Gemery, ‘Continuity in West African Monetary History? An Outline of Monetary Development’, *African Economic History*, no. 17 (1988), 127-146.



that there were more extensive circuits for guineés in West Africa and Sahara Desert regions than the existing literature on the economic history of Senegal has described in the past.<sup>268</sup> Although source on this is scarce, it would probably be a basis of the continued demand for guineés from Saharan merchants who controlled the supply of gum Arabic along the Senegal River regions, thereby continuity of the guinée trade from India in the period under review.

In pre-colonial West Africa, unlike Eurasia, the high-value monetised metals had not been used; instead commodities such as textiles, salt, cowries and others served as money in the region. In his speculation, Webb referred to three ‘plausible lines of explanations’ about the difference of monetary systems between sub-Saharan Africa and Eurasia. The first explanation was related to the nature of the trade between the Mediterranean world and sub-Saharan Africa, through which gold was transported from sub-Saharan Africa to the northward. The second one was linked to political and economic environments in sub-Saharan Africa. The collapse of the Songhai Empire by the Moroccans at the end of the sixteenth century ‘sharply fragmented economic demand’ and ‘the continuing political violence among and within the smaller, successor Black African horse cavalry states ensured a less stable political and less productive economic environment that was more conducive to the use of commodity moneys, rather than high-value monetized metal.’ The third one was involved with transport costs across the Sahara Desert.<sup>269</sup>

Pre-colonial currencies have been one of the debated subjects in the studies of West African history. For example, the major issues of the economic anthropologist debate between the ‘substantivists’ such as Karl Polanyi and the ‘formalists’ fell on two points. One was whether pre-colonial currencies in West Africa functioned as general-purpose currencies or as special-purpose currencies, and the other was whether pre-colonial currencies had the attributes of modern money such as a medium of exchange, a unit of account, and a store of value. However, what seems certain is that, as Hopkins

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<sup>268</sup> For example, Marcson rightly discussed the important role of guinée as a unit of account in the trade in gum Arabic along the Senegal River, although the fact that some guineés were further carried into Sahara Desert regions where a piece of guinée served as a standard unit of account as well was completely missing from his perspective. Marcson, ‘European-African Interaction in the Precolonial Period’.

<sup>269</sup> Webb, ‘On Currency and Credit in the Western Sahel’, p. 46. See also, Lars Sundström, *The Trade of Guinea* (Uppsala: Studia Ethnographica Upsaliensia XXIV, 1965).

has discussed, ‘the principal currencies of West Africa served to extend trade, not to obstruct it.’<sup>270</sup> On the other hand, Philip Curtin, with specific reference to pre-colonial Senegambia, stated that it does not make much sense to apply the interpretations by the substantivists and the formalists to the analysis of Senegambian currencies, which were ‘not special-purpose or general-purpose, but more-general-purpose or less-general-purpose’.<sup>271</sup> This statement can be linked to the view of Jane Guyer, as outlined below.

Recent studies of pre-colonial currencies have moved beyond the paradigms of substantivists and formalists. Instead of using the dichotomy between ‘primitive’ and ‘modern’ monies, Guyer has brought our attention to what she terms ‘interface currencies’ that were ‘largely created from the outside, and whose capacities to permeate economic relationships across the borderland were kept limited.’ In the case of commodity currencies imported from Europe and the Americas into West Africa, they only became currencies when Africans used them for African trade.<sup>272</sup> What is more important is ‘[f]or interface currencies, some functions [of monies] were always more important than others.’<sup>273</sup> Indeed, the concept of interface currencies is interesting and useful; particularly because cloth currency, including guinéés, in pre-colonial West Africa apparently did not necessarily meet a trinity of monetary functions presumed in the present day: a medium of exchange, a unit of account and a store of value.

Before revisiting the monetary functions of cloth currency in pre-colonial West Africa from the viewpoint of interface currencies, it is appropriate to take a look at the transaction system in the market in pre-colonial West Africa. The case in pre-colonial Senegambia discussed by Curtin can be used as an example. Curtin described a common pattern of transaction in the market in pre-colonial Senegambia, more precisely in the age of the Atlantic slave trade, as ‘assortment bargaining’, which was

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<sup>270</sup> ‘Principal currencies of West Africa’ included cowrie shells, strips of cloth, gold, iron and copper. Hopkins, *An Economic History of West Africa*, 68-70. Quotation is from 70.

<sup>271</sup> Curtin, *Economic Change in Precolonial Africa*, vol. 1, 233-237. Quotation is from 234.

<sup>272</sup> Jane I. Guyer, ‘Introduction: The Currency Interface and its Dynamics’, in Jane I. Guyer (ed.), *Money Matters: Instability, Values and Social Payments in the Modern History of West African Communities* (Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann, 1995), 8.

<sup>273</sup> Guyer, ‘Introduction’, 9.

more complicating than pure barter, or ‘the exchange of one commodity for another’.<sup>274</sup>  
The detail of this pattern of transaction was as follows:

Bargaining between men who are both buying and selling normally involves two agreements, one on the price of the items being sold and one on the price of those bought in return. A Senegambian dealing with Europeans also involved two agreements. The first established the price of the export goods in [iron] bars – so many bars per slave, per quintal of ivory or wax, and so on. A second then established the assortment of goods in which those bars were to be paid. The whole transaction shares some aspects of a barter, but simple barter is the exchange of one commodity for another. These exchanges were rarely a single export against a single import. Even when slaves were sold alone, for example, the return goods always included an assortment of ten to fifty commodities.<sup>275</sup>

The standard unit of account in Senegal in the slave-trade age was the iron bar. However, as the exports in gum Arabic from and imports of guinéés into Senegal increased, two changes occurred in transactions in Senegambia from the late eighteenth century. One change was that a piece of guinée replaced the iron bar as a new standard unit of account in Senegal, since gum Arabic was usually paid for in guinéés. The other change was that, even after assortment bargaining wound down, this institution could still be found at some points in the early nineteenth century. For example, Curtin noted a case in which guinéés functioned as a unit of account for assortments of goods for ransom paid by the French official Duranton to the king of Kaarta in 1829. The demanded ransom in the case was 10 pieces of guinéés, and Table 3.1 shows what kinds of commodities formed the assortment.<sup>276</sup>

Whether it was iron bar, strip of cloth or gold ounce, functioning as a unit of account had another aspect: ‘ghost money’ or ‘imaginary money’. The prevailing view that the term currency should be applied only to money physically circulating cannot

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<sup>274</sup> Curtin, *Economic Change in Precolonial Africa*, vol. 1, 247-253.

<sup>275</sup> Curtin, *Economic Change in Precolonial Africa*, vol. 1, 249.

<sup>276</sup> Curtin, *Economic Change in Precolonial Africa*, vol. 1, 268.

classify such type of monies as currency.<sup>277</sup> However, most recently, Akinobu Kuroda has shed fresh light on this riddle from the viewpoint of complementarity among monies. He states that ‘the majority of human beings through most of history dealt with concurrent currencies. [...] the coexistence of monies was not incidental but functional, since they worked in a complementary relationship. That is, one money could do what another money could not, and vice versa’.<sup>278</sup> As for the complementarity between cloth and other currencies in pre-colonial West Africa, Johnson has also stated that cloth strip rarely circulated alone, and that ‘there were frequently currencies of comparable value circulating alongside cloth strip. These might be other local products, such as iron hoes, or imports, including silver coin and cowries.’<sup>279</sup> Indeed, this kind of division of roles among monies was found in the trade in the lower Senegal River region during the early nineteenth century as well. It would be possible to say that imported guinéés and local grain formed a complementary relationship: guinée was suitable to pay for larger units such as gum Arabic, and grain could serve as small change that was paid for services.<sup>280</sup> That is probably why the above-cited 1841 *compromis* recorded the conversion ratios between gum Arabic and millet, guinéés and millet, at the *escales*.

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<sup>277</sup> This sort of argument is most clearly found in the work of Luigi Einaudi, who claimed, ‘Imaginary money – here is my thesis – is not money at all. It is a mere instrument or technical device used to perform some monetary functions.’ Luigi Einaudi, ‘The Theory of Imaginary Money from Charlemagne to the French Revolution’ (translated by Giorgio Tagliacozzo), in Frederick C. Lane and Jelle C. Riemersma (eds.), *Enterprise and Secular Change: Readings in Economic History* (London: Richard W. Irwin, 1953), 237.

<sup>278</sup> Kuroda, ‘What is the Complementarity among Monies?’, 7.

<sup>279</sup> Johnson, ‘Cloth as Money’, 197.

<sup>280</sup> The work by David Ames, on nineteenth-century Gambian Wolof societies supports the complementarity between cloth currency and others. Here, I quoted an interesting paragraph on this point from his work.

Some commodities, like garden vegetables, were worth so little than they could not be paid for in cloth. Grain in small amounts, measured out in gourds, was the “petty cash” used in such payments. At the same time, a very expensive commodity like a fine horse, worth two slaves, was rarely bought with cloth-money alone by people, whole granaries (worth 15 *xopa*), livestock, or other objects of value entered the exchange, often in conjunction with cloth. Some exchanges, then, especially the “expensive” ones, were primarily or wholly barter, but even here most of the articles exchanged were evaluated in terms of cloth-money. [Emphasis is original.]

Ames, ‘The Use of a Transitional Cloth-Money Token among the Wolof’, 1018-1019.

Table 3.1: An assortment of goods (equal to 10 pieces of guinéés)

Commodity and quantity	Value in piece of guinée
2 actual pieces of guinéés	2
1 double-barrelled gun	3
8 beads of no. 2 amber	1
2 pistols, high quality	2
2 pieces scarlet cloth	2

*Source:* Philip D. Curtin, *Economic Change in Precolonial Africa: Senegambia in the Era of the Slave Trade*, vol. 1 (Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 1975), 268.

According to Kuroda, ghost money could be interpreted as ‘a part of the complementary monetary system, as far as it interfaced with assortments of currencies’. That means that ghost money could work as long as it was associated with other coexisting currencies. In this context, Kuroda unveils the importance of a ‘circuit’ along which a currency moved in a unilateral way, and, in fact, it is ‘a particular merchant circuit’ that enabled ghost money to exist.<sup>281</sup> Hence, ghost money, or money without substance, could exist only when it circulated along a particular circuit and alongside other coexisting currencies that likewise had circuits through which to move. Lars Sundström and Johnson have also pointed out that some currencies in pre-colonial Africa had a tendency to become ghost money, although they never accounted for what made it possible to function as a unit of account without substance.<sup>282</sup> In that sense, Kuroda’s innovative approach to monetary history is helpful even in considering the experience of pre-colonial West African currencies.

Circuits along which currencies moved indicate another important element of the current of money. As mentioned above, the movement of money along a particular circuit was one-way. Kuroda demonstrates this point with reference to the cases of the Maria Theresa dollar that circulated in East Africa in the early twentieth century and the

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<sup>281</sup> Akinobu Kuroda, ‘Concurrent but Non-Integrable Currency Circuits: Complementary Relationships among Monies in Modern China and Other Regions’, *Financial History Review*, vol. 15, issue 1 (2008), 28.

<sup>282</sup> Sundström, *The Trade of Guinea*, 167-168; Johnson, ‘Cloth as Money’, 193-194.

Japanese silver dollar in southern China during the same period.<sup>283</sup> This tendency has also been noted by Johnson with the case of cloth strip currencies in pre-colonial West Africa. Cloth strip that was usually produced in the savannah regions circulated as money on the east-west axis, while other goods that were exchanged for cloth were carried in the opposite direction.<sup>284</sup>

What is common between the cases discussed by Kuroda and by Johnson is that a currency rarely returned to a starting point to circulate. The Maria Theresa dollar, which was minted outside the circuits in East Africa, landed in Aden then moved to Gore (in Ethiopia), where the route of the currency was divided into two streams. Some circulated via Gambela, Khartoum and Port Sudan by the Red Sea, and others via Addis Ababa and Djibouti. After the journeys along these routes, some of it finally returned to Aden.<sup>285</sup> Also, it was unlikely that cloth currencies in pre-colonial West Africa returned to the starting points of their origins, as Johnson identified the transport costs as its major reason.<sup>286</sup>

Webb has also pointed out that textiles could deteriorate as time passed or be consumed as commodity at some point during the circulation.<sup>287</sup> This was particularly true of guinéés that functioned as money in the Senegal River and Sahara Desert regions in the early nineteenth century. Guinéés were manufactured in India, from where they were transported by French merchants via Bordeaux or other French ports to Saint Louis of Senegal. This network that fed guinéés into the circuit connecting Saint Louis with the Sahara resulted from two factors. The one was the French *exclusif* policy that

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<sup>283</sup> Akinobu Kuroda, 'The Maria Theresa Dollar in the Early Twentieth-Century Red Sea Region: A Complementary Interface Between Multiple Markets', *Financial History Review*, vol. 14, issue 1 (2007), 89-110.

<sup>284</sup> Johnson, 'Cloth as Money', 196.

<sup>285</sup> Kuroda, 'The Maria Theresa Dollar in the Early Twentieth-Century Red Sea Region', 103-108.

<sup>286</sup> Johnson, 'Cloth as Money', 196.

<sup>287</sup> Webb has estimated how quickly each commodity currencies used in pre-colonial West Africa were consumed as goods in the end. In his estimate cloth was consumed within three years, which was as quick as salt, while iron was used as currency longer than cloth and salt but shorter than brass manilas, cowries and gold. Although grain was not included in his estimate, it was likely that it was consumed more quickly than any other commodity currencies. J. L. A. Webb, Jr., 'Toward the Comparative Study of Money: A Reconsideration of West African Currencies and Neoclassical Monetary Concepts', *International Journal of African Historical Studies*, vol. 15, no. 3 (1982), 460-461.

regulated the metropolitan and colonial trade in this period. The other one was the geography around the island of Saint Louis, which was separated from the Atlantic by the Langue de Barbarie, the 600km long sandbar stretching from Mauritania, which probably shaped the trajectory of the maritime trade from Saint Louis that maintained a close connection with France during the period (Map 4).<sup>288</sup> In Saint Louis, some pieces of guinéés were consumed among the *habitants* or other individuals. The rest of the guinéés were carried by Senegalese intermediaries alongside local grains (a small denomination currency) and others to the *escales*, where they were exchanged for gum Arabic. Again, some pieces of guinéés were consumed within the land of the nomadic emirates of Trarza and Brakna, and others further circulated into the interior of the Sahara alongside other commodities. So, although the current of guinéés formed a circuit connecting West Africa with the Sahara Desert regions and moved unidirectionally from the coast of Senegal to the interior of the Sahara, they never returned to Saint Louis of Senegal.

Consumption of guinéés as garments indicated a unique aspect of cloth currency, which was related to the function of store of value. Although, guinéés, like other cloth currencies, functioned as an exchange medium and a standard unit of account in the trade in the Senegal River and Saharan regions, cloth had a disadvantage as currency; namely, it needed space in which to be stored. The Saharans on the right bank of the Senegal River lived in tents and therefore had limited space in which to store cloth, although they accepted guinéés as an exchange medium in the gum trade. However, wrapping themselves with guinéés could save a small amount of space in their tents. This uniqueness proved that commodity could become currency when necessary, and vice versa.<sup>289</sup>

In light of recent scholarship of monetary history such as interface currency and complementarities among monies, this section has so far revisited the monetary functions of pre-colonial West African cloth currencies in general; in particular, those of

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<sup>288</sup> See Chapter 2 and the previous section of this chapter.

<sup>289</sup> Johnson, 'Cloth as Money', 194; Webb, 'Toward the Comparative Study of Money', 460-461. In the case of pre-colonial Angola, where raphia cloth produced in Loango Coastal societies was imported, raphia cloth was not only used as currency in local market to buy foodstuffs and slaves but also sewn together to make tents which could withstand the wind and rain. This was also a case that currency became commodity. Phyllis M. Martin, 'Power, Cloth and Currency on the Loango Coast', *African Economic History*, no. 15 (1982), 4.

guinéés around Senegal. The rest of the section below will look briefly at how guinéés replaced local cloth currencies in the pre-colonial period. The sources on this process of replacement are scarce, but some clues are available.

Table 3.2: Equivalence of cloth in the Wolof

<i>Wala wala</i> or <i>sech</i>	1 strip of cloth
<i>Xasap</i>	2 strips of cloth
<i>Xasap</i> and a <i>wala wala</i>	3 strips of cloth
<i>Nyari</i> (two) <i>xasap</i>	4 strips of cloth
<i>Nyari xasap</i> and a <i>wala wala</i>	5 strips of cloth
<i>Nyeta</i> (three) <i>xasap</i>	6 strips of cloth
<i>Nyeta xasap</i> and a <i>wala wala</i>	7 strips of cloth
<i>Malan</i>	8 strips of cloth
<i>Malan</i> and a <i>wala wala</i>	9 strips of cloth
<i>Xopa</i>	2 <i>malan</i> (= 16 strips of cloth)

*Note:* Each strip of cloth had slightly less than 2 yards in length.

*Source:* D. W. Ames, ‘The Use of a Transitional Cloth-Money Token among the Wolof’, *American Anthropologist*, vol. 57, issue 5 (1955), 1018, Table 1.

Like other savannah regions of pre-colonial West Africa, Senegambia produced cotton textiles and used strips of cloth as a currency as early as the eleventh century in the upper Senegal River.<sup>290</sup> The geography for circulation of cloth currency was expanding in the pre-colonial period, and the diffusion of cloth currency across the region was linked to the diffusion of Islam and subsequent dispersion of cloth production.<sup>291</sup> By the fifteenth century, cotton production and weaving had become established in Upper Guinea societies. In her recent work, Linda Newson revealed that locally-woven textiles called ‘*panos*’ functioned as a unit of account in local transactions in Upper Guinea by the early sixteenth century.<sup>292</sup> A piece of locally made cloth was called ‘*pagne*’ in Senegalese French, ‘country cloth’ in English in Gambia, ‘*soro*’ in Pulaar, and ‘*tama*’ in Soninke. As the basic unit for transactions, each strip of

<sup>290</sup> Johnson, ‘Cloth as Money’, 198; J. F. P. Hopkins and Nehemia Levtzion (eds.), *Corpus of Early Arabic Sources for West African History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982), 78, 85, 385. Kriger, *Cloth in West African History*, 82.

<sup>291</sup> Johnson, ‘Cloth as Money’, 201; Johnson, ‘Cloth Strips and History’, 175-176.

<sup>292</sup> Linda Newson, ‘The Slave-Trading Accounts of Manoel Batista Peres, 1613-1619: Double-Entry Bookkeeping in Cloth Money’, *Accounting History*, vol. 18, no. 3 (2013), 356.



cloth woven on the narrow loom in the region measured approximately 2 meters long and 15 to 18 cm wide, and some strips were sewn together to make a piece.<sup>293</sup> According to Johnson, cloth was quantified by length alone.<sup>294</sup> Here, take the case of nineteenth-century Wolof societies as example. Drawing on the findings from the fieldwork conducted by Ames, Table 3.2 shows there were different individual units of plain white cloth strip in Wolof societies. ‘*Wala wala*’ or ‘*sech*’ was the smallest individual unit of value, and ‘*Xopa*’ was the largest individual unit, which was equal to 16 strips of cloth.

In the market exchange, textiles could serve as either money of large denomination or small change. In fact, cloth currency usually had flexibility in changing its monetary value by sewing strips into a large cloth (made up of 8 or 10 strips) or cutting into small pieces.<sup>295</sup> In the case of Wolof societies, the costs of goods and services were stated in these units of cloth strip, and the payments were made with cloth. Table 3.3 suggests that recognised exchange rates between cloth and other commodities in the societies. It is clear from the table that *xasap* (2 strips of cloth) and *xopa* were often-used units of value to express the prices of the commodities in the Wolof economic exchanges. These equivalent prices also suggest that in the Wolof societies kola nut and grain were cheap commodities, whereas cattle, such as goat, cow, horse, slaves and bridewealth were categorized as expensive payments. A fine horse cost 800 strips of cloth, which was equal to the combined prices of two cows and young female slave.

Ames noted that a strip of plain white cloth was the basic unit of account in the Wolof societies, but dyed cloth was more valuable than plain white cloth. He added that dyed cloth with designs, which was rarely used in exchange, was even more valuable than dyed cloth without.<sup>296</sup> This information indicated that guineés would serve as a

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<sup>293</sup> Curtin, *Economic Change in Precolonial Africa*, vol. 1, 237. As for sewing strips into a piece of cloth, Walter Rodney noted that ‘the neat craftsmanship made the stitching virtually indiscernible.’ Walter Rodney, *A History of the Upper Guinea Coast, 1545-1800* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1970), 181.

<sup>294</sup> Johnson, ‘Cloth as Money’, 195.

<sup>295</sup> Sundström, *The Trade of Guinea*, 166; Johnson, ‘Cloth as Money’, 195.

<sup>296</sup> Ames, ‘The Use of a Transitional Cloth-Money Token’, 1018.

larger denomination currency in Senegal and the Sahara. Indeed, a piece of guinée was equal to 10 *soro* in Senegal.<sup>297</sup>

Table 3.3: Recognized exchange rates in the Wolof economic exchanges in the nineteenth century

3 large kola nuts	1 <i>xasap</i>
6 handfuls of unthreshed grain called a <i>sabarr</i>	1 <i>xasap</i>
8 <i>sabarr</i>	1 <i>xopa</i>
1 short-handled hoe	2 <i>xasap</i>
1 cock	2 <i>xasap</i>
1 large goat	1 <i>xopa</i>
1 cow	15 <i>xopa</i>
1 female slave about 14 years old	20 <i>xopa</i>
Bridewealth payment (approximate)	32 <i>xopa</i>
1 fine horse	50 <i>xopa</i>

*Source:* Ames, ‘The Use of a Transitional Cloth-Money Token’, 1019, Table 2.

In the pre-colonial period, the savannah regions of West Africa were home to the production of cotton textiles of high quality. The major manufacturers in the Upper Guinea regions included the Wolof, Mandinga, Fula, Banhun, Casanga and Biafada, and in the land of Waalo the workmen called ‘Rabeseyr’ produced piece goods of cotton.<sup>298</sup> At that time, especially as the Atlantic slave trade expanded, uncertainties in the supply and demand in West African markets became so significance that they encouraged not only the emergence of a system of credit and delayed payments but also a medium of exchange. In theory, in order for a commodity to be a currency, it was of essence that it was widely available and traded. In fact, cloth in pre-colonial West African economies fulfilled these requirements, and thus West African textiles were circulated not only as a commodity but also as a currency.<sup>299</sup> However, in the late eighteenth century the Saharans along the Senegal River came to accept guinées from India as new standard unit of account.<sup>300</sup> Guinée was exceptional among imported textiles in the Senegal River

<sup>297</sup> Curtin, *Economic Change in Precolonial Africa*, vol. 1, 238.

<sup>298</sup> Rodney, *A History of the Upper Guinea Coast*, 181; Boubacar Barry, *The Kingdom of Waalo: Senegal before the Conquest* (New York, NY: Diasporic Africa Press, 2012), 26.

<sup>299</sup> Newson, ‘The Slave-Trading Accounts’, 357.

<sup>300</sup> P. Dubié, ‘La vie matérielle des Maures’, in *Mélanges ethnologiques* (Dakar: IFAN, 1953), 220-221.

region, because imported textiles rarely became a currency.<sup>301</sup> Why could Indian guinéés replace locally woven textiles as new standard unit of account in the region?

There is no clear explanation on this riddle in existing literature. Instead, there are only explanations that compared guinéés with iron bar in pre-colonial Senegal. As for the comparative advantages of guinéés over iron bars, guinéés were lighter than iron bars, thereby easier to transport, and hard to counterfeit.<sup>302</sup> It seems likely that the second reason for comparative advantage of guinéés over iron bars would be helpful to consider the case of why guinéés, not local cloth, served as a principal currency in the gum trade in the Senegal River region. Apart from the significance of the tastes of the inhabitants within the nomadic emirates along the river, a constant supply from outside the circuit ensured that guinée maintained its role as a principal currency in the Senegal River region and the Sahara Desert in the early nineteenth century. As Kuroda highlights, it was necessary to be made up for with an additional supply of money or local credit in the one-way movement of money along a circuit.<sup>303</sup> The annual additional supply of guinéés from India via France was indispensable to sustain the important role of guinée as regional currency throughout the period in question.

Meanwhile, environmental and factor endowment perspectives in African economic history offer an insightful viewpoint to address the aforementioned riddle. Due to the constraints by land abundance and labour scarcity and by the savannah climate, the inhabitants in the savannah regions, including the Senegal River region, had to choose agriculture or cash crop production, and textile production was an activity during the agricultural slack season. Therefore, in contrast to the forest regions in West Africa, it was difficult to increase cotton production in the savannah regions for local handicraft industry without any threat to food security.<sup>304</sup>

What is more important, the period from 1600 to 1850 witnessed an increasing aridity that caused serious droughts and subsequent famines. As for the lower Senegal River region, the ecological zone shifted from western savannah to western Sahel (or

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<sup>301</sup> Hogendorn and Gemery, 'Continuity in West African Monetary History?' 131.

<sup>302</sup> Curtin, *Economic Change in Precolonial Africa*, vol. 1, 268-269.

<sup>303</sup> Akinobu Kuroda, *Kahei shisutemu no sekaishi* [A Global History of Monetary System] (Second Edition, Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 2014), 10.

<sup>304</sup> Austin, 'Labour-Intensity and Manufacturing in West Africa'; Austin, 'Resources, Techniques, and Strategies South of the Sahara'. See also, John Tosh, 'The Cash-Crop Revolution in Tropical Africa: An Agricultural Reappraisal', *African Affairs*, vol. 79, issue 314 (1980), 79-94.

the southern frontier of the Sahara) during this long period. Webb has noted that this ecological shift ‘pushed rainfed agriculture south to within 100 kilometers of the Senegal River’.<sup>305</sup> Indeed, the aridification and subsequent ecological crises brought about a change in life of the inhabitants in the region. As one of the effects of the aridification, droughts displaced the weaving industry from the Senegal River region around the middle of the eighteenth century. In other words, this climate change made the production of textiles, or the supply of cloth currency, less reliable.<sup>306</sup> This would be consistent with the above-mentioned fact that there was the growing demand for indigo-dyed textiles among consumers in Senegambia from the late eighteenth century. In this perspective, the consequence of the displacement of the weaving industry from the Senegal River would imply that the local weavers might be unable to carry an adequate supply of textiles across and beyond Senegambia. This is probably why guineés from India, not locally made cotton textiles, could serve as a new currency in the Senegal River regions and the Sahara Desert in the early nineteenth century since it was possible for guineés to be constantly supplied from India in abundant by the French merchants.<sup>307</sup>

## 5. Conclusion

This chapter has explored the historical backgrounds that created the continued demand for Indian guineés in, and beyond, the Senegal River regions in the early nineteenth century from a long-term perspective. It has had two main focuses: the first focus was the trade along the lower Senegal River region in which guineés were exchanged for good quality gum Arabic that was indispensable in industrialisation in Western Europe.

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<sup>305</sup> Webb, *Desert Frontier*, 3-26. Quotation is from 11. For ecological crises such as droughts, locusts and famines in pre-colonial Senegambia, see Curtin, *Economic Change in Precolonial Africa*, vol. 2, 3-7; Boubacar Barry, *Senegambia and the Atlantic Slave Trade* (translated by Ayi Kwei Armah, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 108-112; George E. Brooks, *Western Africa to c. 1860: A Provisional Historical Schema Based on Climate Periods* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University African Studies Program Working Papers Series, 1985), Part V.

<sup>306</sup> Hogendorn and Gemery, ‘Continuity in West African Monetary History?’ 131-132; Newson, ‘The Slave-Trading Accounts’, 358.

<sup>307</sup> It is probably because of this fact and because there was the growing demand for guineés around the Senegal River regions that cowries were not used as money there, like other parts of West Africa.

Tracing guinéés carried and exchanged along the major trade network around the lower Senegal River regions opened our eyes to the fact that the guinée trade was also linked with Saharan trade within the lands of the nomadic emirates of Trarza and Brakna. Guinéés were a principal currency in the gum trade along the Senegal River regions, but they also played a similar role in the desert trade. Examining consumption patterns of guinéés in those regions has highlighted that quality of guinéés, not that of European imitation goods, met the tastes of astute consumers and that it was also suitable to life in the savannah, Sahel and Sahara Desert regions. The scope of the guinée trade in existing literature on the economic history of pre-colonial Senegal tended to limit to the regions along the Senegal River regions, and rarely extended beyond it. However, the chapter has shown that there was an extensive circuit for the current of guinéés, which was fed into from Saint Louis of Senegal via the *escales* of the lower Senegal River even into the interior of the Sahara Desert.

The second focus of the chapter was consumption patterns of guinéés around the Senegal River regions in the early nineteenth century. Guinéés served for desert life, consumer taste, conspicuous consumption and regional commerce as larger denomination money. In the savannah regions, Africans had long produced cotton textiles on the narrow loom during the agricultural slack season, and used cloth as a currency in local market transactions. Locally woven textiles had shaped West African consumers' tastes for textiles before Europeans arrived in West Africa and brought a large number of textiles. However, the aridification that hit the region around the right bank of the lower Senegal River from 1600 to 1850 transformed the savannah regions into the desert edge, and subsequently it came to be increasingly difficult to cultivate cotton in the former savannah regions. Such an ecological shift and subsequent impact on the locations of textile production in Senegal would probably offer the foundation for guinéés to be a new regional currency from the late eighteenth century. Also, in order to maintain the functions of money in the regional economies and the circuit of guinée extending from Saint Louis via the *escales* along the lower Senegal River into the Sahara Desert, it was necessary to continue to supply guinéés from India via France to Saint Louis regularly.

In the Senegal River regions, the second half of the nineteenth century witnessed the French military campaigns to expand their control. As the French made inroads into the upper Senegal River and further interior regions, they faced serious problems,

among which was to ensure food locally for the military. For the purpose of this, the military command was aware of the need to have guinéés with them, and ordered his people to pay the food suppliers in the Indian goods in the late 1880s. This episode implies not only that guinéés remained to function as money in local transactions but also that the cloth currency prevailed into interior regions of West Africa. Indeed, the quantity of guinéés required exclusively for the military campaigns was 35,000 to 45,000 pieces in the first half of the 1880s, and increased to around 70,000 pieces in 1886-87. The Maurel and Prom, a major company from Bordeaux, transported guinéés to the fort at Médine in the upper Senegal River, and the company gained considerable profits from the trade. On the other hand, the Savana Mills in Pondicherry, which was operating under the name of ‘La Société Poulain, Duboy et Cie’ in the early nineteenth century, was still in charge of the production of standard guinéés for West Africa in the late nineteenth century. Moreover, the French still could not substitute their imitation goods for Indian textiles. Thus, demand in the Senegal River regions for guinéés persisted beyond the mid-nineteenth century, and it was necessary to meet effectively the local demand, especially that from African food suppliers, for the success of the French military campaigns. For this purpose, Pondicherry continued to play a large role as the supplier of original guinéés for West Africa even after the military campaign began in the 1850s.<sup>308</sup>

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<sup>308</sup> Roberts, ‘West Africa and the Pondicherry Textile Industry’, 161-167. For the early history of the Savana Mills, see Chapter 4.

## Chapter 4

### Production: Procurement of Cotton Textiles for West Africa in India, *c.*1750 – *c.*1850

#### 1. Introduction

This chapter explores how European merchants procured cotton textiles for the West African trade in India, in particular from around the Coromandel Coast regions in South India. The preceding chapters have highlighted that Indian cotton textiles played a large role in the Atlantic slave trade and then ‘legitimate’ commerce. A variety of types of cotton textiles were conspicuously consumed by Africans, while guinees functioned as money in the exchange for slaves and other African commodities. During the age of the Atlantic slave trade many types of cotton textiles needed to be procured in India for West African trade, and during that of ‘legitimate’ commerce and Western European industrialisation the procurement and importation of guinees for Senegal mattered most for Europeans. This chapter asks, how did Europeans procure cotton textiles for West Africa in India?

Based on the documents of the East India Companies available at European and Indian archives, the existing literature has detailed various aspects of the procurement process of Indian cotton textiles for European markets. However, the procurement of cotton textiles for the West African market during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries remains implicit and unaddressed in the literature. This chapter intends to fill the lacuna of the literature, with special reference to two major participants in the procurement business: the EEIC in South India for the long eighteenth century and French merchants in Pondicherry for the early nineteenth century.

There are certain EEIC sources available at the British Library and Indian archives that address the procurement business of cotton textiles and the growth and decline of the Atlantic slave trade. These descriptive accounts are helpful to understand the connection between West Africa and Indian port towns and hinterlands that formed during the age of the Atlantic slave trade and provided a foundation for later periods represented by products under the trade names ‘Roomals [Romals]’, ‘Kerchief’, or

‘(Real) Madras handkerchiefs’.<sup>309</sup> Meanwhile, the ‘Inde’ (i.e. India) documents at the ANOM and existing literature help this chapter to trace the development of cotton textile production in Pondicherry of French India in the early nineteenth century. From a comparative viewpoint, the investments by the EEIC and the French in textile production in India resulted in different outcomes. In order to sharpen the analysis to explain the factor that produced the different results, this chapter pays attention to the incentives given by the Europeans to the Indian weavers.

This chapter is planned as follow. After a survey of relevant works on the European business to procure textiles in India, the discussion focuses on British investment in textile production in India, especially South India, in the late eighteenth century to the early nineteenth century, with reference to the Atlantic slave trade. Following the geographical distributions of the production of cotton in South India and the basic network of textile procurement that was found around the Coromandel Coast regions until the late eighteenth century, the discussion will focus on the institutional change to the procurement system by the EEIC, followed by the impact of the abolition of the Atlantic slave trade in the age of the British Industrial Revolution. Then, the fourth section will examine the innovation of textile production in French India in the early nineteenth century, and highlight what caused the different results in textile production in India between the British and French cases from the institutional viewpoint.

## 2. The literature

There are a good number of original researches about the procurement and importation by European merchants, mainly represented by the East India Companies, of Indian cotton textiles for European markets from the seventeenth to the nineteenth century. The literature has so far revealed various aspects of the procurement process of cotton

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<sup>309</sup> Despite its term, this article was used as loincloth or turban, and they were cotton textiles with checks or patterns. Tirthankar Roy, ‘Madras Handkerchiefs in the Interwar Period’, *Indian Economic and Social History Review*, vol. 39, nos. 2-3 (2002), 285-300. See also, John Forbes Watson, *The Textile Manufacturers and the Costumes of the People of India* (London, 1866), 20, 53, 123; Joanne B. Eicher, ‘Kalabari Identity and Indian Textiles in the Niger Delta’, in Rosemary Crill (ed.), *Textiles from India: the Global Trade* (Calcutta, Oxford and New York, NY: Seagull Books, 2006), 153-172.



textiles in India from the geographical distribution of raw cotton and the textile industry to the social organisation and structure of textile production, the commercial networks of cotton textiles between the producing regions and European markets, institutional changes by colonial administration to the procurement system and the response from weaver.<sup>310</sup> However, our knowledge about the procurement and importation of Indian cotton textiles for West Africa in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries is still limited. This is mainly due to the concentration of the interest on Europe-Asian trade. Take the

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<sup>310</sup> For the most influential works on the English East India Company and Indian textile production in the period before 1800, see K. N. Chaudhuri, 'The Structure of Indian Textile Industry in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries', *Indian Economic and Social History Review*, vol. 11, nos. 2-3 (1974), 127-182. This article was reproduced in K. N. Chaudhuri, *The Trading World of Asia and the English East India Company, 1660-1760* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1978), Ch. 11 (under the title 'The Company and the Indian Textile Industry') and in Tirthankar Roy (ed.), *Cloth and Commerce: Textiles in Colonial India* (New Delhi: Sage Publications, 1996), Ch. 2. See also S. Arasaratnam, 'Weavers, Merchants and Company: The Handloom Industry in Southeastern India, 1750-1790', *Indian Economic and Social History Review*, vol. 17, no. 3 (1978), 257-281; Joseph Brenning, 'Textile Producers and Production in Late Seventeenth Century Coromandel', *Indian Economic and Social History Review*, vol. 23, no. 4 (1986), 333-355; Sanjay Subrahmanyam, 'Rural Industry and Commercial Agriculture in Late Seventeenth-Century South-Eastern India', *Past and Present*, no. 126, issue 1 (1990), 76-126; Lakshmi Subramanian, 'Power and the Weave: Weavers, Merchants and Rulers in Eighteenth-Century Surat', in Rudrangshu Mukherjee and Lakshmi Subramanian (eds.), *Politics and Trade in the Indian Ocean World: Essays in Honour of Ashin Das Gupta* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1998), 52-79; Prasanna Parthasarathi, *The Transition to a Colonial Economy: Weavers, Merchants and Kings in South India, 1720-1800* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001); Potkuchi Swarnalatha, *The World of the Weaver in Northern Coromandel: c. 1750-c.1850* (Hyderabad: Orient Longman, 2005); Hossain Hameeda, *The Company Weavers in Bengal: the East India Company and the Organization of Textile Production in Bengal, 1750-1813* (Dhaka: University Press, 2010); Om Prakash, 'From Market-Determined to Coercion-Based Textile Manufacturing in Eighteenth-Century Bengal', in Giorgio Riello and Tirthankar Roy (eds.), *How India Clothed the World: the World of South Asian Textiles, 1500-1850* (Leiden: Brill, 2009), 217-251. For the French East India Company, see Philippe Haudrère, *La compagnie française des Indes au XVIIIe siècle* (Second Edition, Paris: Les Indes Savantes, 2005). For the Dutch East India Company (hereafter 'VOC'), see Om Prakash, *The Dutch East India Company and the Economy of Bengal, 1630-1720* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1985); Om Prakash, *European Commercial Enterprise in Pre-colonial India* (Cambridge and New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 1998); Glamann Kristof, *Dutch-Asiatic Trade, 1620-1740* (Copenhagen: Danish Science Press, 1958); Els M. Jacobs, *Merchant in Asia: the Trade of the Dutch East India Company during the Eighteenth Century* (Leiden: CNWS Publications, 2006) (which is the English reprint version of the book published in Dutch in 2000).

case of the EEIC as example. Kirti Chaudhuri, in his masterpiece of the EEIC published in 1978, noted that there was resale of Indian cotton textiles in London for the consuming markets of Europe, the Americas and Africa in the first half of the seventeenth century.<sup>311</sup> Huw Bowen also touches the increasing demand for Indian cotton textiles in West African market in the early 1760s.<sup>312</sup> But they provided no more than snapshots, and the shortage of the research on the British procurement of cloth for West Africa is the justification for this chapter.

In comparison to the case of the EEIC and the British enterprise in India, the research of the procurement by the French of Indian cotton textiles for West Africa has been relatively advanced. Drawing on the documents at the ANOM, Mireille Lobligeois has presented a detailed outline of the development of cotton textile production in Pondicherry of French India in the nineteenth century. But her work focuses on earlier phases of the reconstruction of the French colony rather than the dimension of textile production for West Africa. Following her work, especially the materials she used on the textile production in Pondicherry, Richard Roberts attempted to make clear the complicated economic linkage between West African demand and Pondicherry textile production in the nineteenth century.<sup>313</sup> Meanwhile, Jacques Weber produced five volumes of monograph on the colonial history of French India from 1816 to 1914, in which textile production in Pondicherry was situated in the broader context of the development of the colonies.<sup>314</sup> Yet, the literature on French Pondicherry needs to be incorporated into a broader context of the European procurements of textiles in India, in which a comparative perspective will shed light on similarity and difference between

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<sup>311</sup> Chaudhuri, *The Trading World of Asia and the English East India Company*, 132. See also, K. N. Chaudhuri, *The English East India Company: the Study of an Early Joint-Stock Company 1600-1640* (London: Frank Cass, 1965), 147-150.

<sup>312</sup> H. V. Bowen, *The Business of Empire: the East India Company and Imperial Britain, 1756-1833* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 238-239.

<sup>313</sup> Mireille Lobligeois, 'Ateliers publics et filatures privées à Pondichéry après 1816', *Bulletin de l'Ecole française d'Extrême-Orient*, vol. 59 (1972), 3-100; Richard L. Roberts, 'West Africa and the Pondicherry Textile Industry', in Roy, *Cloth and Commerce*, 142-174.

<sup>314</sup> Jacques Weber, *Les établissements français en Inde au XIX<sup>e</sup> siècle (1816-1914)*, 5 vols. (Paris: Librairie de l'Inde, 1988). Recently, a concise colonial history of French India written by the same author became available. Jacques Weber, 'French India (Nineteenth - Twentieth century)', in Claude Markovits (ed.), *A History of Modern India, 1480-1950* (London: Anthem, 2004), 495-519.

the British and French enterprises in India from the eighteenth to mid-nineteenth century.

As for the literature of globalisation, in which attention has been paid to the influence of West African demand for textiles on the cloth production and economies outside Africa, the best known case is probably the connection with the development of the cotton industry in Lancashire, thereby that with the British Industrial Revolution. In recent years, Joseph Inikori, developing the famous theses proposed by Eric Williams, emphasised a critical role of West Africa as not only the labour source to the Americas but also an important market for the rise of Lancashire's cotton industry from the late eighteenth century onwards.<sup>315</sup> On the other hand, Klaus Weber, in his works on the contributions of German merchant families to the Atlantic slave trade, shed light on the influence of West African demand for German linens on the Central European proto-industrialisation in the early modern period.<sup>316</sup> Both historians highlighted the role of West Africa in shaping textile productions in hinterlands of Europe. However, despite the fact that Indian cotton textiles were in most demand in West Africa as a whole,<sup>317</sup> the procurement of cotton textiles in India for West Africa has not been sufficiently studied in the literature of the history of early modern globalisation.

### 3. British investment in the production of Indian textiles – the case of South India

#### (1) The geographical distributions of the production of cotton in South India

The Indian subcontinent was geographically diverse, which shaped different regional economies prior to 1800 (Map 5). The core regions of textile industry in the

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<sup>315</sup> Joseph E. Inikori, *Africans and the Industrial Revolution in England: A Study in International Trade and Economic Development* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002). For the Williams theses whose most famous thesis is that the profits from the slave trade and slavery financed the origin of the British Industrial Revolution, see Eric Williams, *Capitalism and Slavery* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1944).

<sup>316</sup> Klaus Weber, 'The Atlantic Coast of German Trade: German Rural Industry and Trade in the Atlantic, 1680-1840', *Itinerario*, vol. 26, no. 2 (2002), 99-119; Klaus Weber, 'Deutschland, atlantischer Sklavenhandel, Plantagenwirtschaft der Neuen Welt (15. bis 19. Jahrhundert)', *Journal of Modern European History*, vol. 7, no. 1 (2009), 37-67.

<sup>317</sup> See Chapter 1.

subcontinent were Punjab, Gujarat, the Coromandel Coast and Bengal. These regions shared some common features, such as active trade with different markets, both within and outside the subcontinent, availability of plenty of skilled labour, easy access to raw cotton, and the presence of an enterprising business class. Between 1500 and 1800 European merchants entered into the Indian Ocean world to participate in the maritime trade in Asia; Madras, Bombay and Calcutta were established as major port-towns for the EEIC, and Chandernagore and Pondicherry for the French.<sup>318</sup>

In geographical terms, a large part of South India consisted of the Madras Presidency in the eighteenth century. The Presidency was physically divided into three regions: the long and broad eastern coast that covers the Coromandel Coast, the shorter and narrower western coast that covers the Malabar Coast, and the plateau in the interior. These divisions were configured by the two chains of great mountains known as the Eastern and Western Ghats running parallel to the coasts.<sup>319</sup>

On the eastern side of the Madras Presidency were there the three major rivers that run through the Eastern Ghats to the Bay of Bengal in the Indian Ocean: the Godavari, the Krishna and the Kaveri as well as other minor rivers such as the Pennair and the Palaur. Northern Coromandel stretches from the Godavari Delta in the north to the Pennair Delta in the south. Southern Coromandel includes Madras, North and South Arcot, Chingleput, Salem, Trichinopoly and Tanjore (Map 6).

In addition to these river basins, the rainfall fluctuations, caused by the seasonal monsoons, both north-east and south-west, determined the rhythm of a whole range of social and economic activities including the cotton production in South India. Besides, natural disasters such as inundations of the coast by the sea and cyclones, in the short run, caused disruptions of the textile production, crippled shipping and transportation, and even overwhelmed the low-lying ports.<sup>320</sup>

Prasannan Parthasarathi offers an important note on the cotton cultivation process. Cotton was cultivated extensively on red soils in South India, which were light and easy to plough without much labour. Ploughing the earth was usually carried out between April and June, followed by sowing between August and October. The usual

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<sup>318</sup> See Chapter 1.

<sup>319</sup> The word of Ghaut means gate in English.

<sup>320</sup> Madras. *Manual of the Administrations of the Madras Presidency, in Illustration of the Records of Government & the Yearly Administration Reports*, vol. 1 (Madras: Government Press, 1885), 1-29.

method of manuring after sowing relied on a flock of cattle, sheep or goats who were reared within the enclosure. The cotton could be picked six to twelve months after sowing. A peasant household played a central role in the process of picking cotton but its practice varied from region to region. Therefore, the extensive cultivation of cotton in South India did not require either capital or labour so much, and this form was spread in Ganjam, Vizagapatnam, the Baramahal, South Arcot, Trichinopoly, Dindigul and others.<sup>321</sup>

Peasants in South India usually cultivated cotton with grains and other dry crops to reduce the risks posed by uncertainties in rainfall. The variety of cotton grown in the Tamil districts was '*nadam*' (*gossypium nanking*), which had several advantages to peasants. The *nadam* cotton was a perennial crop that lasted 3 to 5 years. This means that, even if the *nadam* cotton did not yield very well in times of poor rainfall, it would recover in the following picking seasons after good rainfall. In comparison to grains, the *nadam* cotton was relatively independent of rainfall, and it could withstand droughts. Hence, planting the *nadam* cotton offered peasants in South India a sort of security.<sup>322</sup>

On the other hand, cotton was cultivated intensively on black soils in South India that concentrated on such particular districts as Tinnevely, Madurai, Coimbatore and the Ceded Districts (or part of the southern Deccan plateau). In common with extensive cultivation, cotton seeds were interspersed with such crops as coconuts, oil-seeds, pulses and spices in these regions as well. In contrast to red soils, these soils were clayey and heavy, so cotton cultivators needed to hire extra labourers from outside their households. The hired labourers were required not only for sowing and ploughing that normally took place between mid-August and mid-September but also for picking that commenced in February or March and lasted until May. In the Ceded Districts, women and children played a major role in the first of three pickings. Therefore, they needed more capital and labour in the intensive cultivation of cotton than those in extensive cultivation.<sup>323</sup>

While cotton was produced mostly in the interior regions, the weaving regions concentrated on the coats. Therefore, it was regional trade that connected the regions of cotton cultivation and those of weaving. The Deccan was a major supply centre of

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<sup>321</sup> Parthasarathi, *The Transition to a Colonial Economy*, 62-64.

<sup>322</sup> Parthasarathi, *The Transition to a Colonial Economy*, 62-63.

<sup>323</sup> Parthasarathi, *The Transition to a Colonial Economy*, 50, 64-66.

cotton for the weavers in the Northern Circars (northern Coromandel), the northern Tamil country and others. The Deccan region was known as the production of cotton of high quality.<sup>324</sup> Joseph Brennig noted that, ‘Northern Coromandel’s high humidity and frequent flooding in its lowlands made the region unsuited to cotton cultivation in appropriate quantities and qualities for an export industry.’ Therefore, the Northern Circars relied on the caravan trade in raw cotton organised by the nomadic Banjara community ‘which escorted thousand of bullock loads of cotton from the Deccan to the coast every year’. The major item for their return trip from the coast to the Deccan was salt. This internal trade persisted at least from the 1630s into the early nineteenth century.<sup>325</sup>

Around the Godavari Delta, one of the major commercial crops was indigo, which was crucial in the textile industry, especially the dyeing process. One of the major areas of the indigo production was what are now the Khamman districts of Andhra Pradesh. The south-west monsoon that began in June and lasted until September created the cycle of the indigo production in the region. The sowing in sandy soil took place in June and July, followed by three cuttings. The first cutting took place in late August or early September, and the second and third ones from November to December. Because indigo harvested in later cuttings was of better quality than the first cutting, the busiest season for marketing lasted from October to February. Merchants who visited the principal regional markets of indigo, Nagulvanha, Palvanha and Gollapudi, bought and distributed indigo to the weaving villages along the Andhra coast on the one hand, and those in Goa and Debol on the other.<sup>326</sup>

The Deccan, Raichur Doab in particular, also supplied cotton to the northern Tamil districts and Mysore at least from the late seventeenth to the early nineteenth century. Cotton and yarn supplied from the Deccan were transported to Nellore, Walajapet and Mysore, from which some were re-exported to Salem. Parthasarathi has

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<sup>324</sup> Parthasarathi, *The Transition to a Colonial Economy*, 67-68.

<sup>325</sup> Parthasarathi, *The Transition to a Colonial Economy*, 68; Brennig, ‘Textile Producers and Production in Late Seventeenth Century Coromandel’, 335-336. Among the regions in the Deccan, Sanjay Subrahmanyam presumed that ‘the region extending west from Nanded almost to Aurangabad’ around the Godavari valley was the principal source of cotton in the seventeenth century. Subrahmanyam, ‘Rural Industry and Commercial Agriculture’, 86-87.

<sup>326</sup> Subrahmanyam, ‘Rural Industry and Commercial Agriculture’, 87-89; Swarnalatha, *The World of the Weaver in Northern Coromandel*, 57-58.

estimated the scale of these trades in the early nineteenth century, and the average scale for the years (1806, 1813 and 1814-15) was 13,000 candies (or more than three tons). In addition to the Deccan regions, the Tamil districts, Coimbatore and Tinnervelly in particular, also produced cotton and supplied the weavers inland and along the coast, including Salem and Cuddalore.<sup>327</sup> These two places played a large role in the production of cotton textiles for West Africa during the period under consideration.<sup>328</sup>

## (2) A network of intermediaries between South India and England

The Coromandel Coast was positioned at the centre of the trade networks of Indian cotton textiles for West African markets during the age of the Atlantic slave trade. There was no direct trade between India and West Africa at that time. Indian textiles were imported into European ports, and then were re-exported into West Africa. India and West Africa was connected by the growing demand for Indian cotton goods that were utilised for the early modern Europe-West African trade, thereby the purchase of African slaves along the coast of West Africa. The hand-woven cloths included white goods and coloured goods (usually, blue or red). Blue-coloured cotton textiles were known as ‘bafts’ or more simply ‘blue goods’ and ‘blue cloths’ in English. The Coromandel Coast was also known for red-dye from chay root (*oldenlandia umbellata*), as well as morinda in Western India, whose alizarin enabled local skilled artisans to produce red-coloured textiles.<sup>329</sup>

One of the staple cloths manufactured in South India was ‘longcloths’, most of which was originally woven in Golconda in northern Coromandel in the early seventeenth century and later across the Madras Presidency. This type of textiles was ‘the best or “superfine” grades of plain white cloth’ in the region, and was known as

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<sup>327</sup> Parthasarathi, *The Transition to a Colonial Economy*, 67-71.

<sup>328</sup> In addition to cotton imports by land from other areas of India into Cuddalore, cotton was also cultivated to the extent of 10,120 cawnies (54.15 square kilometers) in the district. There was no exportation of cotton from Cuddalore. (English) East India Company, *Reports and Documents Connected with the Proceedings in Regard to the Culture and Manufacture of Cotton-wool, Raw Silk and Indigo in India* (London, 1836), 404-405.

<sup>329</sup> Mattiebelle Gittinger, *Master Dyers to the World: Technique and Trade in Early Indian Dyed Cotton Textiles* (Washington D. C.: The Textile Museum, 1982), 19-21; Swarnalatha, *The World of the Weaver in Northern Coromandel*, 21-29.

being exceptionally long (around 37 yards). Another was sallampores, which was also initially woven in Golconda and later in the various parts of the Presidency, and whose length was usually around 16 yards.<sup>330</sup> Initially, Cuddalore and Salem in the South Arcot district were the major places of the production of these dyed goods in southern Coromandel, and Nagore was also seen as an alternative source in the early nineteenth century.<sup>331</sup> These places also produced red-coloured textiles, but apparently blue goods dominated in the procurement by the EEIC.<sup>332</sup> One letter from the EEIC to the Governor in Council at the Fort St. George in Madras shows that even if the investment in Cuddalore was not successful, it was ‘highly necessary to supply the deficiency of blue goods from Nagore’ where their colour was superior to the standard for African markets, and their odour was also highly appreciated.<sup>333</sup>

We have no quantitative data about the proportion of cotton textiles for West Africa in the total exports of the goods from India to Europe throughout the eighteenth century, thereby that in the total production of the manufactured goods in India. Om Prakash, in the case of Bengal, has estimated that 10 per cent of total manufacturers engaged in the textile production for the VOC and the EEIC from the late seventeenth to the early eighteenth century. That means that most of the weavers in India produced cotton textiles for domestic consumption. Prakash has also assumed that demand from European East India Companies became ‘a vehicle for an expansion in income, output and employment in the subcontinent.’ This implies that growing demand from the Atlantic world would probably generate additional workforce to produce textiles for the consumers in Europe, West Africa and the Americas throughout the eighteenth century.<sup>334</sup> Similarly, Parthasarathi has calculated the exports by the EEIC and the VOC of cotton textiles accounted for 22 per cent of total textile production in South India in the first quarter of the eighteenth century. More importantly, Parthasarathi noted that purchase by Europeans of Indian cotton textiles not only increased quantity of cotton textiles in demand, ‘but also changed the type of cloth demanded’: while patterned

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<sup>330</sup> John Irwin and P. R. Schwartz, *Studies in Indo-European Textile History* (Ahmedabad: Calico Museum of Textiles, 1966), 39, 67, 70.

<sup>331</sup> British Library (hereafter ‘BL’), India Office Records (hereafter ‘IOR’), E/4/888: Madras dispatch, 9 September 1801, 655.

<sup>332</sup> BL, IOR, E/4/904: Madras dispatch, 16 January 1810, 478.

<sup>333</sup> BL, IOR, E/4/895: Madras dispatch, 19 June 1805, 75-76; BL, IOR, E/4/901: Madras dispatch, 6 March 1807, 747.

<sup>334</sup> Prakash, *European Commercial Enterprise in Pre-colonial India*, 316-317.



cloths, painted or printed, were in demand among Southeast Asian consumers, calicoes, or plain cloths, were sought by European consumers.<sup>335</sup> Here, it would be fair to add that blue goods probably represented demand from West African markets.

In any event, in the case of South India, the information about African markets had been transmitted through networks of intermediaries, which included the EEIC's Court of Directors in London, the Board of Trade in the Fort St. George of Madras and Commercial Residents of the Company. Because of scarcity of available sources, it is very hard to specify how such information had reached from West Africa through England to India. However, some archival sources suggest connections between West African demand for textiles and the textile production in South India in the eighteenth to the early nineteenth century.

The EEIC's Court of Directors informed the Board of Trade about market situations and which types of cotton textiles including length and colour were needed for the market. For instance, in response to the end of the Seven Year's War, which revived the Atlantic slave trade, the Court of Directors in London requested the Fort William in Bengal, the Fort St. George in Madras and the Council in Bombay to supply London with the handloom articles to purchase slaves in West Africa. Among them, in particular, the letter to the Fort St. George stressed that 'you are upon no account whatsoever omit sending the full quantity of longcloths, salampores blue as they in particular are very much wanted' in West Africa.<sup>336</sup>

The Board of Trade in Madras informed Commercial Residents in Cuddalore and other places about what types of textiles the EEIC needed. They would rarely clarify the final consumption areas but market situations for Indian textiles of specific kinds.<sup>337</sup> Therefore, Indian intermediaries and weavers probably did not know the fact that some of their products were carried to West Africa via London.

In addition, the Board of Trade desired regular supply of textiles of acceptable quality to London. They carefully observed the texture, thickness, colour, assortment

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<sup>335</sup> Parthasarathi, *The Transition to a Colonial Economy*, 73-77.

<sup>336</sup> BL, IOR, E/4/863: Madras dispatch, 15 February 1765, 79; BL, IOR, E/4/997: a letter from London to Bombay, 22 March 1765, 611-612; C. S. Sriktivasachari (ed.), *Fort William-India House Correspondence and Other Contemporary Papers Relating Thereto*, vol. 4: 1764-1766 (Delhi: Government of India, 1962), 92.

<sup>337</sup> Tamil Nadu Archives (former Madras Record Office in Chennai, India, hereafter 'MRO'), South Arcot 100/18464: a letter from Edward Holland, 28 May 1794, in a letter from J. William Junior to John Kentworthy, 19 January 1795, Fort St. George.

and odour of these handloom articles against the standard musters in the warehouse after these goods were delivered from the weaving villages to the trading settlements on the coast.<sup>338</sup> In reality, the handloom products varied in quality, and unsatisfied cloths were rejected by the Board of Trade.<sup>339</sup> This implies that procurement in India by the EEIC of piece goods for West African markets was largely dependent upon the weavers' performances, which in turn was based on the price of raw materials and food, access to water and ecological conditions.

### (3) 'Advance system' until the late eighteenth century

The organisation of textile production for the EEIC on the Coromandel Coast was based on what Chaudhuri called the 'advance system'. The system was not same as the putting out system, under which merchants advanced raw material, not cash, to weavers, so the merchants could control capital and thus the weavers lacked economic independence. In the advance system, by contrast, the textile producers in South India could retain their independence to some extent and determine how to spend the advanced cash for textile production and livelihood at individual discretion.<sup>340</sup> A sample cloth came to the EEIC within 6 to 8 weeks after cash was advanced, and the remaining followed within six months.<sup>341</sup>

It was impossible for the EEIC to enter into the weaving villages and to establish direct contracts with the weavers due to the barrier of language. Therefore, a key to the advance system was Indian intermediaries who connected weaving villages with the export market on the coast. Some originated from within the villages, and others from outside.<sup>342</sup> A census taken in 1771 shows that, out of 246 households, 90 were

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<sup>338</sup> MRO, South Arcot 100/18464: a letter from Fallofield to Kentworthy, 1 May 1795, Fort St. George.

<sup>339</sup> The annual dispatches from the Court of Directors in London to the Commercial Department at the Fort St. George in Madras included comments and evaluations on the procured cloths in the Madras Presidency.

<sup>340</sup> Advanced supply of raw materials was organised in eighteenth-century Western India, but it was exceptional. Chaudhuri, 'The Structure of Indian Textile Industry', 147-160. For putting out system, see Brenning, 'Textile Producers and Production', 350-351.

<sup>341</sup> Roberts, 'West Africa and the Pondicherry Textile Industry', 148.

<sup>342</sup> For different views on the intermediaries in South India before 1800, see Vijaya Ramaswamy, 'The Genesis and Historical Role of the Master Weavers in South India

landowning weavers, 68 cotton spinners and 40 merchants in a weaving village in the Chingleput district of the Madras Presidency. In this case, Indian merchants as intermediaries provided credit to artisans and supplied textiles to an export market outside the villages. The profit they earned from the textile trade was 4 to 5 per cent at most. This enabled the Company to purchase textiles at low cost, and thereby Indian textiles remained highly profitable to them well into the eighteenth century.<sup>343</sup>

In the weaving villages there were also brokers. Some brokers would be head weavers and acted as intermediaries between the weavers and the local merchants. Those in the weaving villages in the north of the Godavari River were known as 'kopudarudu' or 'copdar' (contractor), who had influence over the weavers in the villages. They received a commission of 3 to 5 per cent from the local merchants, the clients of the EEIC. Their main business was to purchase textiles from the weavers or to advance loan on the loom. In addition, they 'extended all the possible help to the weavers in times of distress, and also provided grains at an advantageous rate.'<sup>344</sup> In course of time, some brokers became more independent and brought textiles from the weaving villages and sold them to the merchants outside. In such cases, they could earn more profits than the above-mentioned commission.<sup>345</sup>

In the advance system, however, there was a problem between the brokers and the EEIC. It could occur that the brokers made arrangements with other purchasers. For example, at the close of the eighteenth century, Edward Holland, the then-deputy secretary of the Madras Presidency, reported that once the EEIC rejected the goods of somewhat inferior quality, the brokers supplied those goods to the French at Pondicherry. The fact that the advance system worked in favour of the weavers, the

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Textile Production', *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient*, vol. 28, no. 3 (1985), 294-325; Brenning, 'Textile Producers and Production', 333-355.

<sup>343</sup> Arasaratnam, 'Weavers, Merchants and Company', 264.

<sup>344</sup> Swarnalatha, *The World of the Weaver in Northern Coromandel*, 77.

<sup>345</sup> BL, IOR, P/240/41: a report to Lord Pigot from George Stratten, export warehouse keeper, 22 July 1776, Fort St. George. There were a variety of brokers in the subcontinent, and the brokers to the European trading companies were one type of them. For more detailed discussions on the brokers, see Ashin Das Gupta, *Indian Merchants and the Decline of Surat, c. 1700-1750* (Wiesbaden: Franz Steiner, 1979), 84-85; A. Jan Qaisar, 'The Role of Brokers in Medieval India', *Indian Historical Review*, vol. 1, no. 2 (1974), 220-246; M. N. Pearson, 'Brokers in Western Indian Port Cities: Their Role in Serving Foreign Merchants', *Modern Asian Studies*, vol. 22, issue 3 (1988), 455-472; Arasaratnam, 'Weavers, Merchants and Company', 266-267.

brokers or the Indian merchants frustrated the EEIC, and became a reason to consolidate the control of textile production later.<sup>346</sup>

Thus, one of the natures of the advance system was that it allowed the weavers to determine how to allocate the advanced cash to raw materials to weave cloths, foodstuffs to feed their family members, the maintenance of the loom and others at their discretions. This system also allowed the weavers to maximise their profits by choosing thread at the cheapest price. Given that major parts of the advanced cash normally went for food, the quality of their finished goods could vary according to the price of rice, not only of cotton, since they had to manage the limited money to produce the ordered goods.<sup>347</sup>

#### (4) The EEIC in South India from the 1770s to the 1780s

The EEIC's performance in supplying Indian cotton textiles to London was not always satisfactory to merchants who engaged in West African trade. For example, the EEIC was unable to provide sufficient quantity of Indian blue cloths for merchants who invested in the slave trade around 1770. Under such circumstance, London merchants, such as Gilbert Ross, who had interests in the slave trade with Senegambia to present a petition to the Lords of the Treasury in order to get a license to purchase thousands pieces of Indian cotton textiles in Rotterdam for their trade.<sup>348</sup> In their petition on 10 October 1770, Ross and other merchants claimed that, 'the article of East India Blue Long Cloths is absolutely necessary for carrying on the trade to Senegambia and make above three fourth in value of the whole goods exported thither. [...] there is no

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<sup>346</sup> MRO, South Arcot 100/18464: a letter from Edward Holland to Resident in Cuddalore, 28 May 1794, Fort St. George. See also, BL, IOR, E/4/880: Madras dispatch, 28 May 1794, 745.

<sup>347</sup> Arasaratnam, 'Weavers, Merchants and Company', 268.

<sup>348</sup> In the eighteenth century, the Dutch ports such as Rotterdam played an alternative source of Indian cotton textiles for the English merchants who traded with Africa. BL, Add. Mss. 25,503: Minutes of the South Sea Company, 21 February 1729, 385. This was in part because of the Dutch hardly imposed taxation the VOC and their special arrangements for the re-exports of Asian goods. Chris Nierstrasz, 'The Popularization of Tea: East India Companies, Private Traders, Smugglers and the Consumption of Tea in Western Europe, 1700-1760', in Maxine Berg, Felicia Gottmann, Hanna Hodacs and Chris Nierstrasz (eds.), *Goods from the East, 1600-1800: Trading Eurasia* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015), 270.

substitute whatever for the said article of East India Blue Long Cloths' because they might have missed the season of the gum trade in Senegambia unless they secured enough quantity of Indian cotton goods of that type immediately. They also mentioned that away from Senegambia 'there is likewise a very considerable annual demand for the said article [Indian blue long cloths] for the other parts of Africa.'<sup>349</sup> They referred to 'an Act of the 5th of his present Majesty entitled an Act for more effectually supplying the export trade of this Kingdom to Affrica etc' as the supportive evidence that I quote as follows:

Provided that if the United Company of Merchants of England Trading to the East Indies shall at any time refuse or neglect to keep this market supplied with a sufficient quantity of such goods at reasonable prices to answer the African trade it shall and may be lawfull to and for the Lords Commissioners of the Treasury on any three or more of them or the Lord High Treasurer for the time being or they shall think proper to grant licenses to any other person or persons to import such goods into any port of Great Britain from any ports of Europe not within His Majesty's dominions in such and the like manner and under such restrictions and limitations as are herein before prescribed and directed.<sup>350</sup>

In the late eighteenth century the expansion of demand for Indian textiles from the overseas market led to the increasing demand for raw cotton, yarn and foodstuffs from an agricultural hinterland of South Asia that extended far beyond Bengal and the Coromandel Coast both of which the EEIC controlled.<sup>351</sup> On the other hand, in response to the growing demand for textiles from the Atlantic world, including West Africa, more weavers, with their family members, devoted more time to work on the looms for

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<sup>349</sup> BL, IOR, E/1/54: a petition to Commissioner of His Majesty's Treasury from Gilbert Ross, James Mill, William Crichton, John Shoollred and Thomas Bell, 10 October 1770, London, 250-252. As we have seen in Chapter 3, the gum trade was closely linked to the trade in blue-coloured cotton textiles produced by Indian weavers.

<sup>350</sup> BL, IOR, E/1/54: a petition to Commissioner of His Majesty's Treasury from Gilbert Ross, James Mill, William Crichton, John Shoollred and Thomas Bell, 10 October 1770, London, 250-252.

<sup>351</sup> Frank Perlin, 'The Problem of the Eighteenth Century', in P. J. Marshall (ed.), *The Eighteenth Century in Indian History* (Oxford and New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2003), 59.

the export market instead of agriculture. Arasaratnam deduced that there were long-term implications of the consequence of such changes in the weaving villages: ‘Land-owning weaver families in the Arcot area were, it appears, either leasing their fields to other castes, or employing labour to work those fields. In either case, it meant that the weavers now needed enough cash on their hands to buy food grains and to pay their labourers and this cash had to be earned from the produce of their labour on the looms.’ There were two conditions that made the above-mentioned changes possible: one is that the weavers could make money to purchase the daily needs of the family; the other is that they were able to meet all the expense of the maintenance of tools and raw materials for textile production. These conditions ‘required capital to be provided in advance of the returns that could be expected after production. The weaver had now to be, more than ever before, a man of credit or dependent heavily on available sources of credit.’<sup>352</sup>

In the late eighteenth century the procurement of cotton textiles in India for the European purchasers in London became a serious problem posed to the EEIC. In the early 1790s, the prices of thread and indigo increased in Cuddalore; the price of thread increased from 50 to 60 per cent. John Kentworthy, the then-Commercial Resident in Cuddalore, wrote to Ernest William Fallofield, the then-President of the Board of Trade in Madras, that the rise in the price of those materials and the indifference of colour caused ‘a general debasement in nearly every articles of Cuddalore goods’.<sup>353</sup> As a letter, sent from London to Surat in Western India, urged the Council in Bombay to ‘bring regularly to sale a considerable assortment of Surat Goods for the supply of the African Trade in particular’, the procurement of cotton goods for the Atlantic slave trade remained a matter of concerns among the EEIC in South India.<sup>354</sup>

Furthermore, the EEIC fell into adverse situations in both in Britain and Asia in the late eighteenth century, especially in the 1770s and 1780s, which marked a turning point in the affairs of the EEIC in India and the trade between Britain and South Asia. First, the EEIC faced a serious capital shortage in India after the Carnatic Wars. This was another issue behind the procurement problem of textiles in India. Second, there

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<sup>352</sup> Arasaratnam, ‘Weavers, Merchants and Company’, 263.

<sup>353</sup> MRO, South Arcot 100/18464: a letter from John Kentworthy to Ernest William Fallofield, 13 March 1795, Cuddalore. Unfortunately, in this source cited in the text, there is no precise information about how quality of textiles fell.

<sup>354</sup> BL, IOR, Home/374: extract letter from London to Bombay, 4 May 1791, 5-6.

was a challenge from the rise of Lancashire cotton industry. The emerging manufacturers craved new markets for their goods, especially textiles, and sources of raw materials such as cotton and indigo. In the political debate in Downing Street, they increasingly voiced a complete ban on the import of Indian cotton goods into Britain. In 1774, Parliament prohibited the imports of Indian cotton goods except for plain chintz and muslins and for re-export. Third, a new idea of political economy represented by Adam Smith emerged and extended its influence, and this idea supported the promotion of free trade instead of monopolies of trade, such as that of the EEIC. Fourth and more importantly, a 1787 instruction by Charles Cornwallis, the then Governor-General, eliminated the private trade by the EEIC servants, and was accomplished with increased their salaries to compensate. This reform operated in favour of the free merchants who carried out their business, especially the country trade, on their own account outside the EEIC, and contributed to set up agency houses that played multiple roles in trade, shipping, remittances of wealth to Europe, and investment in such plantation commodities as indigo. Thus, the difficult situations surrounding the EEIC aided more private traders to participate in trading and financial business and production in India from the late eighteenth century.<sup>355</sup>

In fact, this period saw a growing number of private merchants who engaged in the Europe-Asian trade and the Intra-Asian trade (or the ‘country trade’) between India, Southeast Asia, China and Japan.<sup>356</sup> In the English case, there were three major groups of private traders. First, the EEIC allowed their servants to pursue the profits arising from trade. Bengal played a pivotal role in the private business and after the Battle of

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<sup>355</sup> Arasaratnam, ‘Weavers, Merchants and Company’, 277; Anthony Webster, *The Twilight of the East India Company: the Evolution of Anglo-Asian Commerce and Politics 1790-1860* (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2009), 24, 33; Sven Beckert, *Empire of Cotton: A Global History* (New York, NY: Alfred A. Knopf, 2014), 48. For the detailed discussion of the agency houses, see Anthony Webster, *The Richest East India Merchant: The Life and Business of John Palmer of Calcutta 1767-1836* (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2007); Geoffrey Jones, *Merchants to Multinationals: British Trading Companies in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), Ch. 2.

<sup>356</sup> Anthony Reid, ‘A New Phase of Commercial Expansion in Southeast Asia, 1760-1850’, in Anthony Reid (ed.) *The Last Strand of Asian Autonomies: Responses to Modernity in the Diverse States of Southeast Asia and Korea, 1750-1900* (Basingstoke: Macmillan Press, 1997), 57-81; Prakash, *European Commercial Enterprise in Pre-colonial India*, 286-97; Ryuto Shimada, *The Intra-Asian Trade in Japanese Copper by the Dutch East India Company during the Eighteenth Century* (Leiden: Brill, 2006).

Plassey (1757) the private trade expanded. Second, a restricted number of 'free merchants' and other private entrepreneurs were also permitted to engage in the trade between Europe and Asia, the country trade and the production of commodities, such as indigo, sugar and coffee. They could conduct these adventures unless they infringed the EEIC's monopoly of trade. Third, the EEIC directors gave the commanders and officers of East Indiamen a substantial financial stake in each voyage to engage in freight-free private trade between Britain and Asia. They were allowed to export a wider range of goods from Britain than the EEIC, who retained the right to export woollens, copper, gunpowder and firearms.<sup>357</sup>

Among the British private merchants in Madras, for example, Thomas Parry from Wales and John Binny from Scotland developed a trading and private banking business from the late eighteenth to the nineteenth century. Since the EEIC limited the amount of remittances sent home by its employees, private banks, including those of Parry and Binny, could use surplus capital to invest in the plantations of indigo, sugar refining and textile production. Such British merchant houses in India not only invested in their own plantations but also nudged other merchants into investing their capitals in private business opportunities that were, however, maintained by these houses. The agency houses formed the foundation of the later British managing agency system that spread from India to elsewhere.<sup>358</sup>

##### (5) Failure of the aumany system in South India

In South India the EEIC faced these issues that raised a question among the EEIC officials about how to improve and control the quality and prices of textiles for export.

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<sup>357</sup> P. J. Marshall, *East Indian Fortunes: the British in Bengal in the Eighteenth Century* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1976); Webster, *The Twilight of the East India Company*, 24-25; H. V. Bowen, 'Sinews of Trade and Empire: the Supply of Commodity Exports to the East India Company During the Late Eighteenth Century', *Economic History Review*, vol. 55, no. 3 (2002), 467; H. V. Bowen, 'Privilege and Profit: Commanders of East Indiamen as Private Traders, Entrepreneurs and Smugglers, 1760-1813', *International Journal of Maritime History*, vol. 16, no. 2 (2007), 43-88.

<sup>358</sup> G. H. Hodgson, *Thomas Parry: Free Merchant Madras 1768-1824* (Madras: Higginbothams, 1938); Stephanie Jones, *Two Centuries of Overseas Trading: the Origins and Growth of the Inchcape Group* (Basingstoke and London: Macmillan Press, 1986), 9-10; Jones, *Merchants to Multinationals*, 11-12; Tirthankar Roy, 'Trading Firms in Colonial India', *Business History Review*, vol. 88, special issue 1 (2014), 31-32.



When the British increased its own influence as a colonial power in South India in the 1770s, they started to enter the weaving village to establish direct relationships between the Company and the weavers. The EEIC also tried to eliminate the Indian merchants who had brought finished cloths from the interior villages to the British commercial settlements on the coast. Instead, the Company employed their paid servants, called ‘*gumastahs*’, as Indian agents to make advance to weavers and superintend the looms. However, this institutional change, carried out under the name of ‘aumany system’, invoked the opposition of the weavers with violence. The EEIC found it difficult to break the nexus between the weavers and the Indian brokers in South India.<sup>359</sup>

The aumany system was a replication of the system that had already been introduced in Bengal and elsewhere.<sup>360</sup> The term aumany meant land and weaving villages that were placed under the direct management of the collector.<sup>361</sup> This system was designed to procure good quality textiles through the superintendents, such as peons, appointed by the EEIC as their agents. These superintendents replaced intermediate Indian merchants who had connected the EEIC with the head weavers in the weaving villages under the advance system. The superintendents knew the native languages that enabled them to conduct all requisite transactions directly with the head weavers without native interpreters or delay.<sup>362</sup>

In addition, the weavers, employed by the EEIC, received subsistence instead of money that was advanced under the former system. The aumany system appeared to the EEIC ‘well calculated to answer the important purpose of furnishing our sales [in

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<sup>359</sup> BL, IOR, P/240/40: a letter from John Whitehill to Peter Baars of Jaggarnaikparam, 18 August 1775, Masulipatnam; Arasaratnam, ‘Weavers, Merchants and Company’, 271-274; S. Arasaratnam, ‘Trade and Political Dominion in South India, 1750-1790: Changing British – Indian Relationships’, *Modern Asian Studies*, vol. 13, no. 1 (1979), 30.

<sup>360</sup> BPP 1812, VII (397): The Fifth Report from the Select Committee on the Affairs of the East India Company, 206-207; BL, IOR, E/4/889: Madras dispatch, 23 June 1802, 703; MRO, South Arcot 110/18474: a letter from Kinchant to Fallofield, 15 June 1802, Cuddalore. For the cases of Bengal and the Western India, see Prakash, ‘From Market-Determined to Coercion-Based Textile Manufacturing’; Hameeda, *The Company Weavers in Bengal*; Subramanian, ‘Power and the Weave’.

<sup>361</sup> Swarnalatha, *The World of the Weaver in Northern Coromandel*, 217.

<sup>362</sup> Peons were one of those who were employed to superintend the Company’s cloths. MRO, South Arcot 113/18477: a letter from C. Wynox to Commercial Resident at Caddalore, 4 January 1804, Fort St. George.

London] with ample and regular supplies of piece good.<sup>363</sup> They entertained a hope that this new procurement system ‘may ultimately tend to stop the manufacture of inferior goods if the contractors are obliged to deliver them to us at considerable reduction of price they being also subject to penalty on account of any deficiency of standard goods.’<sup>364</sup>

At the very beginning of the nineteenth century were there 15 to 20 villages within 50 to 60 miles of Cuddalore containing about 1,000 looms, with which they produced blue and red handkerchiefs, sallampores and others.<sup>365</sup> Richard Kinchant, a Commercial Resident in Cuddalore, informed the Board of Trade in Madras that the aumany system, established in the areas around Cuddalore, was ‘absolutely necessary’ to secure cotton textiles. One of the EEIC’s concerns was to protect the Company’s interests in the investment from private traders. For this purpose, as far as cloths inferior to the standard muster are concerned, they were ‘rejected and returned to the weavers, stamping every fold with a rejected mark to prevent its being again brought to the factory on account of the company.’<sup>366</sup> Besides, the EEIC intended to put the weavers under their control by giving them some ‘privileges’ such as ‘a total reduction of the monthly tax, customs on thread’.<sup>367</sup>

It was during the French Revolutionary Wars when the aumany system was taking effect in South India. Despite the greater demand for piece goods of Indian cotton in the European continent and West Africa, the French hostility to Britain made the supply of cotton piece goods of India to the continent only occasional.<sup>368</sup> However, such a challenging situation seemed to the EEIC an opportunity to review their investment in textile production in India. In May 1794 Edward Holland instructed John Kentworthy in Cuddalore by a letter, saying that ‘At present the demand for blue goods is not very brisk, the prices are consequently very low but this is to be attributed to the

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<sup>363</sup> BL, IOR, E/4/889: Madras dispatch, 23 June 1802, 705, 710-711.

<sup>364</sup> BL, IOR, E/4/879: Madras dispatch, 25 June 1793, 1009-1014.

<sup>365</sup> MRO, South Arcot 110/18474: a letter from Richard Kinchant to Fallofield, 8 May 1802, Cuddalore.

<sup>366</sup> MRO, South Arcot 110/18474: a letter from Kinchant to Fallofield, 15 June 1802, Cuddalore.

<sup>367</sup> MRO, South Arcot 110/18474: a letter from Kinchant to Fallofield, 27 July 1802, Cuddalore; a letter from Kinchant to John Wallace (Collector of Trichinopoly), 26 December 1802, Cuddalore.

<sup>368</sup> BL, IOR, E/4/884: Madras dispatch, 2 March 1798, 141-143.

[French Revolutionary] War, we have not therefore relaxed from the extended plan of investment we have some time intimated it was our intention to adopt, not doubting that when peace shall return these goods will again become much in request.’<sup>369</sup>

The Berlin Decree excluded the British commerce from the European continent, so there were unsold cloths that accumulated at the EEIC’s warehouses in London. The EEIC sent a letter to the Fort St. George in Madras in 1807, in which the EEIC officials expressed an intention to limit the procurement to a much lower scale than has been ordered in previous years.<sup>370</sup> On the other hand, the EEIC regarded the depressed state of cloth sales in Europe as ‘an opportunity more favorable than has ever occurred to restore and improve the fabric of the investment’ in Cuddalore of which Richard Kinchant was in charge.<sup>371</sup>

The French Revolutionary Wars affected both the British overseas trades and domestic consumption in England. An EEIC’s dispatch to the Madras Presidency stated that, ‘We must certainly expect to experience much inconvenience from the present War so long as it continues during this period our gains will be much reduced, as none but absolutely necessaries will find ready purchasers to exportation’ and the consumption of their invested goods such as calicoes were expected to be ‘very small’ during this period.<sup>372</sup> In wartime the British Atlantic slave trade scaled down by 40 per cent from 46,236 slaves in 1793 to 27,454 slaves in 1794. The year of 1794 marked one of the lowest years of the trans-Atlantic slave trade in the period from the French Revolution to the abolition of the slave trade in Britain.<sup>373</sup>

Arasaratnam noted that the EEIC accomplished ‘a degree of control over the Carnatic handloom industry by 1780.’<sup>374</sup> However, as a whole, the outcome of the aumany system seems not to have been in favour of the EEIC, who tried to tighten control over the weavers in the South Indian weaving villages under the commercial

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<sup>369</sup> MRO, South Arcot 100/18464: a letter from Edward Holland, 28 May 1794, in a letter from J. William Junior to John Kentworthy, 19 January 1795, Fort St. George. See also, BL, IOR, E/4/880: Madras dispatch, 28 May 1794, 748-749.

<sup>370</sup> BL, IOR, E/4/900: Madras dispatch, 10 June 1807, 211.

<sup>371</sup> MRO, South Arcot 113/18477: a letter from John Chameir to Kinchant, 23 October 1804, Fort St. George. It should be added that in that letter Chameir addressed the market trend for piece goods of various kinds, not solely for blue goods.

<sup>372</sup> BL, IOR, E/4/879: Madras dispatch, 25 June 1793, 946.

<sup>373</sup> The Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade Database: Voyages (<http://www.slavevoyages.org/>), accessed on 16 October 2013.

<sup>374</sup> Arasaratnam, ‘Weavers, Merchants and Company’, 278.

department. In effect, there was an incentive problem: the aumany system seemed that the EEIC did not give the weavers enough incentive to fulfil contract obligations with the EEIC, despite the fact that they were granted such privileges as ‘a total reduction of the monthly tax and customs on thread’.<sup>375</sup> Moreover, there were weavers who escaped from the indebtedness to the EEIC and Indian merchants to flee into Pondicherry around the turn of the nineteenth century.<sup>376</sup> The weavers around the Coromandel Coast was so mobile that they could set their looms up wherever they preferred and move from one place to another if they found better conditions provided.<sup>377</sup>

Swarnalatha presented the case of Visakhapatnam district in northern Coromandel regions. Under the aumany system the EEIC dealt directly with the copdars and the head weavers, instead of relying on intermediary merchants who had connected the EEIC and the weaving villages. This change to commercial networks within India enabled the copdars and the head weavers to be more powerful. Indeed, soon after the introduction of the system ‘they began to take advantage of the Company’s contracts and used the Company’s services and peons for their own private trading.’<sup>378</sup>

Moreover, the outcome through the EEIC’s investment in the production of textiles in India in this period had always depended upon a variety of circumstances. They included: (1) demand in the domestic and external markets that international relations in Europe and the Atlantic world also mattered, (2) the EEIC’s financial problem that persisted since the Carnatic Wars, (3) the competition with foreign merchants and private traders in purchase of textiles, and (4) the weavers’ performances in India. The last one was also dependent on access to water for the washing and dying processes and market for raw materials, whose price mattered, mean of transport from the hinterland to the coast and ecological conditions including natural disasters and famines. It can be conjectured, therefore, that the effect of the aumany system was limited from the beginning of its introduction.

In fact, evidence illustrates that the aumany system did not necessarily work out the procurement problem. As for the procurement of textiles for the West African trade, for example, the year of 1802 saw an increased demand for coloured cloths, especially

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<sup>375</sup> MRO, South Arcot 110/18474: a letter from Kinchant to Wallace, 26 December 1802, Cuddalore.

<sup>376</sup> Roberts, ‘West Africa and the Pondicherry Textile Industry’, 148.

<sup>377</sup> Irwin and Schwartz, *Studies in Indo-European Textile History*, 31-32.

<sup>378</sup> Swarnalatha, *The World of the Weaver in Northern Coromandel*, 77.

plain blue goods from Cuddalore and blue sallampores from Salem, at the Company's sales in England. However, the Company complained about the inability of the Commercial Resident at Cuddalore to meet the EEIC's order for textiles. In this situation, Salem was expected to make up for the deficiency from Cuddalore, and Nagore's blue longcloths were also regarded to suit to West African market.<sup>379</sup>

Also, an examination at export warehouse of the Madras Presidency revealed 'very great debasement and inferiority' of the invested cloths, and there are bitter comments addressed to each of 16 assortments of the invested cloths.<sup>380</sup> For example, one of three assortments of longcloth, called 'Chennamanaickpollam', was 'Of very bad quality throughout and loose in texture the cross threads particularly coarse this assortment inferior to N1 of Warriarpollam though invoiced at the same price'. The referred assortment of longcloth, Warriarpollam, was 'Very inferior with few exceptions the cross threads too coarse and goods flimsy'. Although bleaching and packing materials were approved, the generality of the pieces were 'soiled with marking chop'. To this adverse situation, Holland requested the Commercial Resident at Cuddalore to explain the causes of the problem.<sup>381</sup> The EEIC suffered from the protracted problem of this kind in the first decade of the nineteenth century.<sup>382</sup>

(6) After the British withdrawal from the Atlantic slave trade

In Britain the slave trade became illegal in 1807. The abolition brought about a decline in the re-exports of Indian cotton textiles from Britain to West Africa for the following years. The volume of the re-export of Indian cotton goods from Britain into West Africa

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<sup>379</sup> MRO, South Arcot 109/18473: a letter from Holland to the Commercial Resident at Cuddalore, 3 September 1802, Fort St. George; BL, IOR, E/4/889: Madras dispatch, 23 June 1802, 765, 769-774.

<sup>380</sup> Of 16 assortments, three were longcloth Warriarpollam, three longcloth Chennamanaickpollam, six longcloth sheally and four longcloth sheally half pieces. In the same letter there was also continuation of examination of four assortments of Cuddalore goods: three were longcloth fine and one sallampores middling.

<sup>381</sup> MRO, South Arcot 109/18473: a letter from Edward Holland to the Commercial Resident at Cuddalore, 13 September 1802, Fort St. George.

<sup>382</sup> MRO, South Arcot 113/18477: a letter from C. Wynox to the Commercial Resident at Cuddalor, 28 March 1804, Fort St. George.

sharply declined from on average 256,800 pieces in the years from 1805 to 1807,<sup>383</sup> and hit the trough in 1811, at 27,800 pieces.<sup>384</sup> The shrinking demand for the West African trade affected the policy of the procurement by the EEIC of Indian cotton textiles, but there were different fates in production regions. One dispatch from Madras dated 29 October 1828 reported that the decline of the demand for Indian cotton piece goods in West Africa drove Surat cloths out of the British market.<sup>385</sup> On the other hand, the EEIC reconsidered the investment in textile production in the Madras Presidency:

In consequence of the present situation of the trade with Africa, and adverting also to the want of a demand in the West Indies for the coloured piece goods usually consigned thither; we have considered that our stock of prohibited goods of every description, but more particularly of Blue Goods and Romals, is more than adequate to any probably [sic] demand. We have therefore been constrained to limit our investments at Masulipatam [Masulipatnam] and Cuddalore to the very inconsiderable sums hereafter mentioned and we have seen it necessary to reduce the amount of goods to be provided at Nagore to about thirty thousand pagodas.<sup>386</sup>

This letter was written to the Fort St. George in Madras in 1812, just one year after the trough of the re-export of Indian textiles from Britain to West Africa. Masulipatnam was a principal district for textile production for the markets of Europe and West Africa in the northern Coromandel, as was Cuddalore in southern Coromandel.<sup>387</sup> The above-cited letter indicates that the EEIC considered a measure to reduce their investment in the production of cotton textiles in South India for the Atlantic markets due to the shrinking demand for the trades with West Africa and the West Indies.

Nonetheless, it should be stressed that the demands for blue cloths from African merchants did not diminish completely in the first half of the nineteenth century. As

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<sup>383</sup> NAUK, CUST 17/27-29. The volumes of Indian cotton textiles that West Africa imported from Britain were 281,000 pieces in 1805, 336,000 pieces in 1806 and 153,000 pieces in 1807.

<sup>384</sup> NAUK, CUST 10/3.

<sup>385</sup> BL, IOR, E/4/936: Madras dispatch, 29 October 1828, 228.

<sup>386</sup> BL, IOR, E/4/909: Madras dispatch, 3 June 1812, 187.

<sup>387</sup> For Masulipatnam, see Swarnalatha, *The World of the Weaver in Northern Coromandel*, 22.

discussed in Chapter 2, there was the continued re-exports of Indian textiles, especially dyed goods, from Britain to West Africa in the early nineteenth century. In fact, the scale of the re-exports of Indian cotton textiles recovered somewhat after 1811, and until 1830 Britain re-exported on average 75,000 pieces of Indian textiles into West Africa.<sup>388</sup>

Moreover, it is of great interest that the EEIC continued to direct the Madras Presidency to supply blue cloths to London, despite technological innovations in Lancashire's cotton industry from the late eighteenth century. At that time British imitations of Indian cotton textiles found paths to West African markets. This development had an impact upon the EEIC's investment in textile production in the Madras Presidency, especially that of white cloths. In the second decade of the nineteenth century, Indian white calicoes faced a difficulty to sell in the markets of Europe and the Americas because of the challenge from Lancashire. Much is known about the development of the cotton industry in Lancashire that sharpened a competitive edge of their calicoes over Indian counterparts on the global stage in the second decade of the nineteenth century.<sup>389</sup> In the 1820s the British cotton goods were equal to fine assortments of calicoes both of Madras and Bengal in appearance, and produced at half the price of the Indian.<sup>390</sup> The shrinking volume of Indian white calicoes re-exported from Britain into West Africa in the early nineteenth century largely mirrored the change of competitiveness between British and Indian cotton textiles.

However, this was not true for blue goods. The price of Indian cloths of that kind at the EEIC's sale in London declined from 27 to 29 shillings per piece in 1820 to less than 15 shillings per piece in 1828.<sup>391</sup> In the late 1820s, Indian dyed cloths re-exported from Britain into West Africa were more than ten times Indian white calicoes, on average 65,000 pieces per annum, and most of the dyed goods went to Sierra Leone to be exchanged for timber, ginger and others.<sup>392</sup> It is fair to say that West African

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<sup>388</sup> NAUK, CUST 10/3-20.

<sup>389</sup> Giorgio Riello, *Cotton: the Fabric that Made the Modern World* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 269-272. A recent empirical study also supported this point. Stephen Broadberry and Bisynupriya Gupta, 'Lancashire, India, and Shifting Competitive Advantages in Cotton Textiles, 1700-1850: the Neglected Role of Factor Prices', *Economic History Review*, vol. 62, no. 2 (2009), 279-305.

<sup>390</sup> BL, IOR, E/4/936: Madras dispatch, 29 October 1828, 228.

<sup>391</sup> BL, IOR, E/4/936: Madras dispatch, 29 October 1828, 233.

<sup>392</sup> See Chapter 2.

demand and consumption patterns played a role in the EEIC's continued investment to produce the coloured cloths in the Madras Presidency in the early nineteenth century.<sup>393</sup>

Thus, the EEIC continued to invest in textile production to some extent even after the British official withdrawal from the Atlantic slave trade. It should be remembered that, as far as the information of the EEIC documents allow, the EEIC transformed the textile production relations in India from the late eighteenth to early nineteenth century, in order to procure weavers' products. However it did not bear in fruit immediately and Indian cotton textiles faced a difficulty in finding markets in the Atlantic world because British machine-made calicoes expanded into global markets. More interestingly, the EEIC did not introduce the latest style of spinning and weaving machines that emerged in Britain into India during this period in order to improve quality of textiles and efficiency of textile production. This was completely different from what took place in Pondicherry of that time.

#### 4. French investment in textile production in Pondicherry

##### (1) Rebuilding under the initiative of the French government, 1816 - 1829

Pondicherry had been one of the major establishments of French India and a chief trading place on the Coromandel Coast since 1674 with interruptions by Britain. When the establishment was returned to France in 1816, it was in a disastrous situation: buildings were ruined, roads in a bad condition, defective irrigations, leading to unsuccessful cultivation, and poverty of its inhabitants because of shortage of jobs.<sup>394</sup>

In the rebuilding of the establishment of Pondicherry, creation of jobs for them was a primary concern for the local administration. The Governor-General, Eugène Panon Vicomte Desbassayns de Richemont, became the prime mover in the project of the rebuilding in the late 1820s. He restored order in the administration and the finances, built an improved bazaar, established the royal college and schools (where French teachers educated children from the upper classes to the pariahs and these students wore,

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<sup>393</sup> Another reason is that the blue goods also afforded a better remittance to London than the white goods, so the EEIC considered it expedient to continue the investment of blue goods at the Madras Presidency. BL, IOR, E/4/934: Madras dispatch, 16 May 1827, 142-143; IOR, E/4/936: Madras dispatch, 29 October 1828, 228

<sup>394</sup> Lobligeois, 'Ateliers publics et filatures privées à Pondichéry', 4.



as a uniform, a blue jacket with a yellow collar), agriculture, grant concessions to European projects to cultivate sugarcane, indigo, cotton, mulberry and others, and promoted the modernisation of weaving and dyeing industry in Pondicherry. He set up public workshops to give the inhabitants jobs under the direction of the Comité de Bienfaisance (the committee of charity), reorganised by the Ordonnances of 24 July 1826, and the workshops already employed 150 workers at the time of April 1827.<sup>395</sup>

Desbassayns de Richemont called for French weavers and dyers to improve textile production in Pondicherry. As for the French weavers, Thomas Godefroy, a weaver in Rouen, was nominated by Minister of the Marine and the Colonies as the chief of the Pondicherry's workshops in May 1827. On the other hand, Michael Gonfreville who worked as a dyer and chemist in his father's place around Rouen was nominated as the government dyer. He was known as a skilled dyer, and worked at the Royal Manufacture of Gobblins and at the National Conservatory of Arts and Crafts and won some prizes at expositions in 1819 and 1823. He was dispatched with his loom on a royal transport vessel, and arrived in Pondicherry in September 1827.<sup>396</sup> One of his remarkable achievements in his mission that lasted until 1830 was that he created a building for dyeing and for weaving of cotton and silk in Pondicherry.<sup>397</sup>

In the early nineteenth century, Bengal was renowned for cultivation and production of indigo, one of India's major export products, and the region accounted for about three-quarters in the indigo trade from India to Britain. This was partly due to a small transit duty and partly due to the Calcutta-based agency houses, or Indo-British partnership firms.<sup>398</sup> On the other hand, Pondicherry was excellent at dyeing textiles, especially in blue. According to the pharmacist Bernard Plagne, who investigated indigo and the water in Pondicherry in the late 1810s, 'the blue dying among others has assured textiles of Pondicherry of uncontested preference in the market of the four parts of the world'. He also discovered the proportion of aluminium that explained the

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<sup>395</sup> Lobligeois, 'Ateliers publics et filatures privées à Pondichéry', 5, 11 ; Weber, 'French India', 500; James Holman, *A Voyage Round the World Including Travels in Africa, Asia, Australasia, America, etc., etc.*, vol. 3 (London, 1835), 368-369.

<sup>396</sup> Lobligeois, 'Ateliers publics et filatures privées à Pondichéry', 5, 12, 33.

<sup>397</sup> His request to set up the building was accepted by the Article 1 in the Arrêté issued on 1 March 1828. Lobligeois, 'Ateliers publics et filatures privées à Pondichéry', 14.

<sup>398</sup> Tirthankar Roy, 'Indigo and Law in Colonial India', *Economic History Review*, vol. 64, S1 (2011), 61-62.

superiority of blue dyeing in Pondicherry.<sup>399</sup> In May 1824, there were 57 indigo factories in Bengal of British India, while there were 19 factories in Pondicherry.<sup>400</sup> The reason, according to the Governor-General Comte Du Puy, was shortage of apprentices to produce indigo in Pondicherry.<sup>401</sup> The number of indigo factories in the French territory was only one in September 1829.<sup>402</sup>

Desbassayns devoted himself to an institutional design for industrial development in Pondicherry. After he created the public workshop in 1826, he encouraged private enterprises such as Blin and Delbruck. On 27 September 1827 he wrote to Minister of the Marine and the Colonies to request to establish a European-style spinning mill in Pondicherry with an engineer to set it up, although this was initially rejected on the ground that India imported cotton spun in Britain for the previous years.<sup>403</sup>

In order to justify this demand, Desbassayns wrote to Minister of the Marine and the Colonies again on 3 February 1828. In the letter, he called attention to current situations in India and Britain: the massive inflow of British cotton goods into India; British merchants also planned to establish European-style factories there. However, this idea faced objections because it seemed that the principle of the British cabinet of the free trade was ceded to their personal interests in this situation, and that the government or the EEIC never permitted similar establishments.<sup>404</sup> He added Pondicherry's advantages:

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<sup>399</sup> ANOM, Inde 537, Dossier 1034: Procès-verbal de la séance du conseil de gouvernement et d'administration qui a eu lieu à l'hôtel du gouvernement, 26 August 1825, Pondicherry.

<sup>400</sup> ANOM, Inde 537, Dossier 1034: le Gouverneur Civil, M. Du Puy, to le Ministre Secrétaire d'Etat de la Marine et des Colonies, 9 March 1824, Pondicherry.

<sup>401</sup> ANOM, Inde 537, Dossier 1034: le Gouverneur Civil, M. Du Puy, to le Ministre Secrétaire d'Etat de la Marine et des Colonies, 10 April 1824, Pondicherry.

<sup>402</sup> Lobligois, 'Ateliers publics et filatures privées à Pondichéry', 85.

<sup>403</sup> ANOM, Inde 534, Dossier 1002: l'Administrateur Général des Établissements français de l'Inde, Desbassayns, to le Ministre Secrétaire d'Etat de la Marine et des Colonies, 27 September 1827, Pondicherry.

<sup>404</sup> ANOM, Inde 534, Dossier 1002: l'Administrateur Général des Établissements français de l'Inde to le Ministre Secrétaire d'Etat de la Marine et des Colonies, 3 February 1828, Pondicherry; Lobligois, 'Ateliers publics et filatures privées à Pondichéry', 47.

The position of Pondicherry is 60 leagues from Tinnevely from which the most esteemed cottons in this part of India are extracted, the safety of our harbour, the cheap price of labour and cattles necessary to move the machines, many weavers that have established here and that it would be easy to multiply, the goodness of our water for the dyeing, and finally the former reputation of our textiles.<sup>405</sup>

His request to Minister of the Marine and the Colonies was encouraged by two French merchants, Blin and Delbruck, whose project was to establish a large cotton spinning mill in Pondicherry with support from the French government.<sup>406</sup> Blin was a merchant in Pondicherry, and Delbruck a son of Bordeaux merchant.<sup>407</sup> In the summer of 1828, Minister of the Marine and the Colonies and the local administration in Pondicherry gave them permission to purchase a spinning machine that the local administration ordered. Prince and Poulain, a manufacturer in Paris, was in charge of sending the spinning machine to Pondicherry. The machine was sent from Paris to Bordeaux, from where it was shipped on the vessel *L'Alexander* (Captain Teyssot) to Pondicherry, which also carried Charlemagne Poulain.<sup>408</sup>

## (2) Pondicherry and West African market, 1829 - c. 1850

Prince and Poulain thought Blin and Delbruck's project to construct the first spinning mill with French government support in Pondicherry was far from enough. In their letter to Minister of the Marine and the Colonies on 18 February 1829, Prince and Poulain asked for advantages and guarantees, which were partly used for an association to be formed with Duchon-Doris Junior, a merchant in Bordeaux and a brother-in-law of Blin and Delbruck, in order to establish another spinning machine within five months. In their estimate the daily output of the new machine was 600 to 700 kilograms of cotton, which was five times as productive as the first mill. Apart from the Prince and Poulain, the association members included Charlemagne Poulain, Edouard Duboy (a manufacturer in Pondicherry), Blin, Delbruck, Duchon-Doris Jr. and A. Decrouy (a

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<sup>405</sup> Cited in Lobligeois, 'Ateliers publics et filatures privées à Pondichéry', 47.

<sup>406</sup> ANOM, Inde 534, Dossier 1000: Rapport to le Ministre Secrétaire d'Etat de la Marine et des Colonies, 15 July 1828, Paris.

<sup>407</sup> Lobligeois, 'Ateliers publics et filatures privées à Pondichéry', 48-49.

<sup>408</sup> Lobligeois, 'Ateliers publics et filatures privées à Pondichéry', 49-51.

merchant in Paris and a friend of Prince and Poulain). They also envisaged setting up a dyeing machine and a dyeing factory later.<sup>409</sup> Minister of the Marine and the Colonies agreed with their request to support their project after negotiation.<sup>410</sup>

While *L'Alexandre* was en route to Pondicherry, a new spinning machine was embarked on the vessel *La Laure* (Captain Guezennec, and the ship owner was Henri Godde) for Pondicherry on 27 June 1829. This machine was equipped with a steam engine for cotton spinning. *La Laure* arrived in Pondicherry around 25 February 1830, *L'Alexandre* on 30 March 1830, when there was, however, no spinning mill of Blin and Delbruck and of Prince and Poulain because these two firms had been merged into one larger mill since the beginning of that month.<sup>411</sup>

In the letter to St. Hilaire on 16 March 1830, Blin and Delbruck informed that they handed over all their land, machinery, tools, materials, buildings and everything that composed of their establishment in Champ du Mars, and that two establishments were united under the name of 'La Société Poulain, Duboy et Cie'.<sup>412</sup> Shortly after the Governor-General De Mélay ratified this transfer via an Arrêté of 19 March 1830, in order to run their mills, the new company faced a difficulty to secure financial aid which was later sorted out by a major Scottish merchant at Madras, George Clark Arbuthnot. Thus, they launched the production of cotton textiles with European spinning machines in Pondicherry in 1831.<sup>413</sup>

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<sup>409</sup> ANOM, Inde 534, Dossier 1000: Le Prince et Poulain to le Ministre Secrétaire d'Etat de la Marine et des Colonies, 18 February 1829, Paris.

<sup>410</sup> Lobligeois, 'Ateliers publics et filatures privées à Pondichéry', 52-53; Roberts, 'West Africa and the Pondicherry Textile Industry', 152.

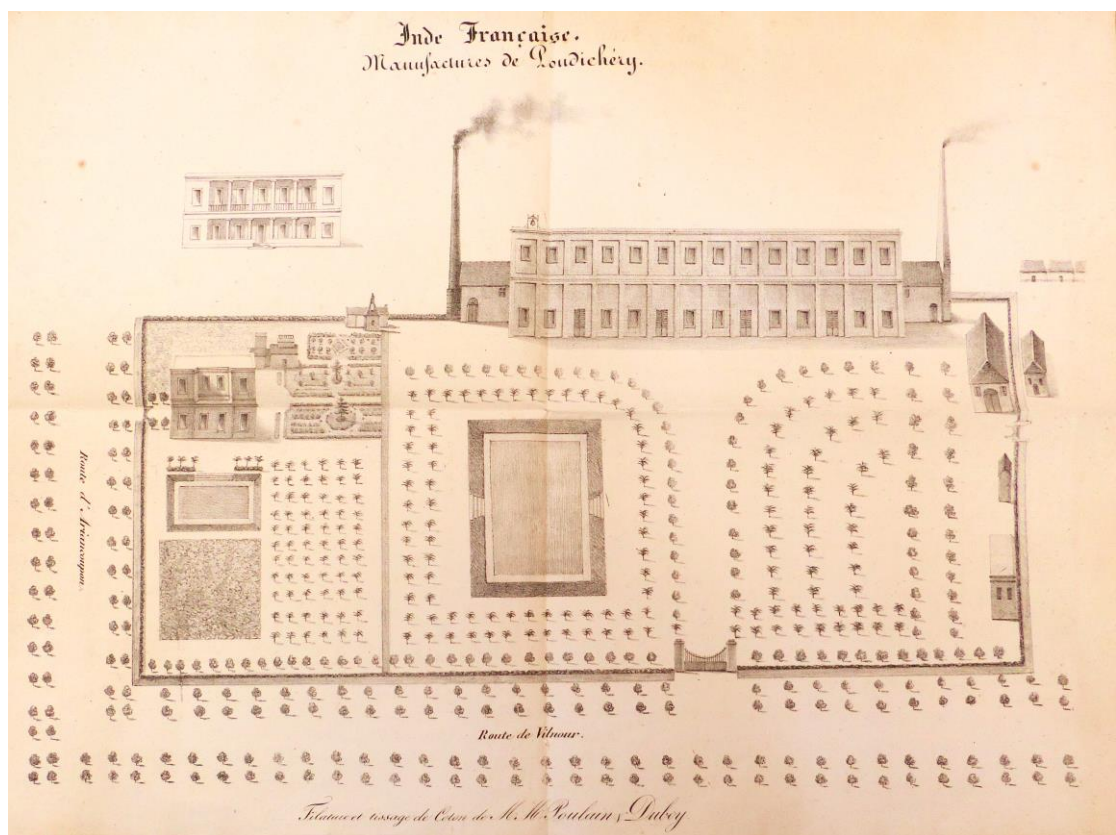
<sup>411</sup> Lobligeois, 'Ateliers publics et filatures privées à Pondichéry', 56-58.

<sup>412</sup> The new company was known as 'Savana' in the late nineteenth century. It is one of the origins of the today's Swadeshee and Barathee Textile Mills Ltd. in Pondicherry. ANOM, Inde 534, Dossier 1000: Blin et Delbruck to l'Ordonnateur et Directeur de l'Intérieur à Pondichéry, St. Hilaire, 16 March 1830, Pondicherry. See also the website of the Swadeshee and Baratee Textile Mills Ltd. (<http://www.sbtml.com/> accessed on 1 June 2015). Little is known about Arbuthnot. As far as we know, Arbuthnot came to India as a captain in the EEIC and came to conduct business on his own account as an early private British entrepreneur working in India in the early nineteenth century. He also became a partner of the Scottish merchant F. M. Gillanders, and had interests in business of sugar, cotton and Assam tea. S. G. Checkland, *The Gladstones: A Family Biography 1764-1851* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1971), 318; Jones, *Two Centuries of Overseas Trading*, 11, 29.

<sup>413</sup> Lobligeois, 'Ateliers publics et filatures privées à Pondichéry', 59-65; Roberts, 'West Africa and the Pondicherry Textile Industry', 153.

Mireille Lobligeois said that ‘The appellation of “Poulain et Duboy” made an epoch: between 1830 and 1832.’<sup>414</sup> Plate 4.1 is the sketch of the company’s establishment in Pondicherry in 1831. The establishment was divided into two: the larger one, whose main gate faced the route de Villenour, had the two-story building with two tall chimneys and a large pond; the smaller one facing the route d’Ariancoupon had a two-story building, small French gardens and a small pond. Outside the wall of the land was a two-story residence.<sup>415</sup>

Plate 4.1: The spinning and weaving mill of cotton of Poulain and Duboy in 1831



Source : Archives Nationales d’Outre-Mer (Aix-en-Provence, France), Inde 494, Dossier 865: Inde Française, Manufactures de Pondichéry.

Lobligeois also stressed the significance of Prince and Poulain, not of Blin and Delbruck, as a ‘revolution’ in the production of cotton textiles in India, because the company shipped the steam machine to Pondicherry on the vessel *La Laure*, while the machine that Blin and Delbruck ordered in 1828 needed human or animal force to

<sup>414</sup> Lobligeois, ‘Ateliers publics et filatures privées à Pondichéry’, 64.

<sup>415</sup> Lobligeois, ‘Ateliers publics et filatures privées à Pondichéry’, 64-65.

run.<sup>416</sup> Indeed, after the new machine with steam engine was introduced in Pondicherry's establishment, the expansion phase in production and trade of cotton textiles followed. The number of weavers in Pondicherry increased from 191 in 1832 to 623 at the end of 1835, and the monthly output from 1,300 pieces to 5,300 pieces.<sup>417</sup> In terms of quantity of cotton threads manufactured during the first half of the 1830s, Poulain's machines produced thread of 2,451 livres per month in 1831, increased to 6,501 livres in 1832 and 10,988 livres in 1833. This upward trend continued; they produced 13,000 livres in March 1834 and 14,000 livres in the end of that year, and 188,776 livres in the first half of 1835, namely 31,462 livres per month.<sup>418</sup> Thereafter, textile production thrived in Pondicherry, and the machine-made threads, produced by Poulain, replaced handcrafted ones for the various purposes, especially in the production of guinées.<sup>419</sup>

Pondicherry was renowned for dyeing cotton textiles. This practice was found in other parts of the Coromandel Coast at that time. However, the dyed products in Pondicherry were known for their peculiar brilliancy of the colour. A British traveller, James Holman, who visited Pondicherry in 1830, recorded in detail how to dye cotton textiles in blue there as follow:

To dye twenty pieces, or one corge per day, requires the services of an overseer and twelve coolies; the dye is contained in large earthen pots, about three and a half or four feet in depth, which are sunk in the earth, bringing their mouths on a level with the surface. Sixty of these pots are required to finish a corge per day; and they are divided into sets of fifteen each, which come into use by regular rotation: thus, after using a set of pots for a day, fresh indigo is added to them, and they are allowed to acquire strength, until their turn comes round again.

In each set of fifteen pots, there are three different strengths of dye; into the weakest of which, after being well washed, the cloth is dipped twice for a few seconds, drying it in the sun between each dipping: this gives it a good deep sky blue: it is then dipped two or three times, as may be found necessary, in the

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<sup>416</sup> Lobligeois, 'Ateliers publics et filatures privées à Pondichéry', 82.

<sup>417</sup> France. Ministère de la marine et des colonies, *Notices statistiques sur les colonies françaises*, vol. 3 (Paris: Imprimerie Royales, 1839), 102.

<sup>418</sup> Weber, *Les établissements français en Inde au XIX<sup>e</sup> siècle*, vol. 1, 406.

<sup>419</sup> Lobligeois, 'Ateliers publics et filatures privées à Pondichéry', 82, 85-86.

second strength, drying it as before, between each dipping, which should give the cloth a dark but dull blue: it is then dipped in the third strength, which finishes the dyeing process, by giving the cloth a deep reddish, or coppery blue: it is then dried, and afterwards washed in a solution procured from a seed called “nacheny,” possessing the quality of starch, which stiffens the cloth: it is then dressed, by being beaten upon a smooth block of wood, with two heavy wooden mallets, by two coolies, which fits it for the market.

The dye is obtained from about equal quantities of indigo and chunam [plaster], added to water filtered through a mixture of quick-lime, and a description of sand, containing a quantity of soda, which is procured in this neighbourhood; in passing through which the water becomes of a reddish colour: - to this is also added, a solution obtained by boiling a seed, called by the natives, “taggerly”, which is of a yellowish colour. Before adding the indigo, it is well ground down; the mixture is stirred frequently for the first twenty-four hours. It is then allowed to stand for two or three days, by which time it is fit for use; and, if of proper strength, the composition should, when stirred up, appear of a deep madeira colour.<sup>420</sup>

As already mentioned, the indigo used in the dyeing in Pondicherry was originally those grown locally but later those imported from Bengal.

The most important market for guinées, produced in Pondicherry in the nineteenth century, was Senegal in West Africa, where guinées were exchanged for gum Arabic supplied by Saharan merchants in the lower Senegal River. In order to sell Senegal, the details of guinées became the major issue of the Ordonnances du Roi issued on 18 May and 1 September 1843.<sup>421</sup> In particular, the Ordonnance of 18 May that was to be enforced on 1 October of that year defined that a piece of guinée weighted more than 2.30 kilograms and had more than 16.5 meters in length and 1 meter in width.<sup>422</sup> However, this definition was unknown to Pondicherry until 17 July, when some textiles had already been sent from Pondicherry. These textiles were to

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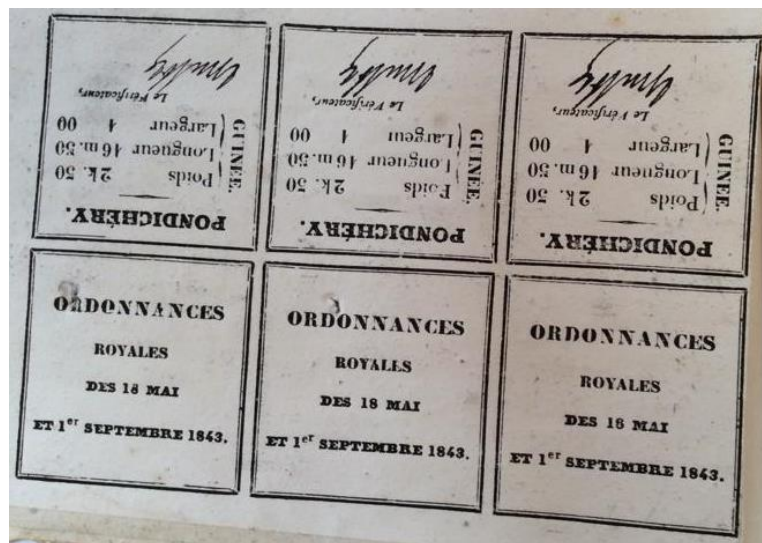
<sup>420</sup> Holman, *A Voyage Round the World*, 372-373.

<sup>421</sup> No. 66, Ordonnance du Roi, 18 May 1843 and No. 88, Ordonnance du Roi, 1 September 1843, in Sénégal, *Bulletin Administratif des Actes du Gouvernement* (Paris, 1846), 87-88, 125-126.

<sup>422</sup> Ordonnance du Roi, 18 May 1843, 87-88.

arrive in the West African destination after 1 October without meeting the required conditions, and therefore to be banned to enter in Senegal.<sup>423</sup> In response to this problem, the Pondicherry entrepreneurs who had interests in guinées, including Poulain and Blin, sent a petition to Minister of the Marine and the Colonies to postpone the enforcement of the Ordonnance to 1 October 1844.<sup>424</sup>

Plate 4.2: Cardboards attached to the guinées in Pondicherry



Source: ANOM, Inde 494, Dossier 871: L'Arrêté signed by Gouverneur Du Camper, 18 December 1843, Pondicherry.

On the other hand, the Article 2 of the Ordonnance of 1 September stipulated that 'each piece of guinée dispatched from the French establishments of India and destined to the commerce will be covered, in the establishments, with a mark or stamp whose form will be determined by the local administration, and which indicates the weights and the dimensions of the fabric.'<sup>425</sup> The Article 4 of Arrêté of 18 December

<sup>423</sup> Lobligeois, 'Ateliers publics et filatures privées à Pondichéry', 88.

<sup>424</sup> ANOM, Inde 494, Dossier 871: Amalric et al. to the Ministre de la Marine et des Colonies, 7 August 1843, Pondicherry.

<sup>425</sup> Ordonnance du Roi, 1 September 1843, 125-126.



1843 also defined the mark that was in the form of cardboard (Plate 4.2). That was ‘to be attached by a thread to one of the ends of a piece [of guinée].’<sup>426</sup>

As shown in Plate 3.1, valuable samples of marked guinées survive until today, which were produced in Pondicherry, probably at some point from 1843 to August 1844. It indicates with the following words: ‘ORDONNANCES ROYALES DES 18 MAI ET SEPTEMBRE 1843’ around the outer border of the mark, whose diameter is 56 millimeters, ‘PONDICHERY’ on the upper centre, ‘GUINÉE’ on the left of centre, and ‘Poids 2<sup>k</sup> 30, Long<sup>r</sup> 16<sup>m</sup> 50, Larg<sup>r</sup> 1[<sup>m</sup>] 00’ in the centre (see Chapter 3).

As for the fate of the above-mentioned regulations over Pondicherry’s guinées, the Ordonnances of 18 May and 1 September 1843 were revoked in the Décret of 17 January 1852, and the session of general council of 27 March 1852 also affirmed that the application of the stamp was ‘thoroughly useless’.<sup>427</sup>

This section has so far seen how the textile production in Pondicherry of French India commenced and thrived in the early nineteenth century since the territory returned to France in 1816. This case study has provided a contrasting perspective with the British investment in textile production in South India. It is obvious that, although both British and French capitals were invested in textile production more or less for West African markets, Britain and France acted in their territories of South India in different ways. The EEIC tried to procure textiles with a change of the organisation of the textile procurement in South India from the late eighteenth century, which appeared to be unsuccessful in terms of improving output and quality of cotton textiles, thereby procuring cotton textiles for the Atlantic markets. An institutional viewpoint has also suggested that, because of lack of enough incentives, tightening the EEIC’s control over the Indian weavers caused another problem: weavers escaped from their villages of the Madras Presidency. In addition, the development of textile production in Lancashire came to be a growing thread to the EEIC’s textile imports from India.

In contrast, the French colonial officers and entrepreneurs changed the mode of textile production itself in Pondicherry. There were two distinct phases in the development of guinée production. First, new workshops for Indian labour were built with supports from the metropolitan government and French artisans. Second, and more

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<sup>426</sup> ANOM, Inde 494, Dossier 871: L’Arrêté signed by Gouverneur Du Camper, 18 December 1843, Pondicherry.

<sup>427</sup> Lobligeois, ‘Ateliers publics et filatures privées à Pondichéry’, 89-90.

importantly, French private entrepreneurs introduced European spinning machines to improve the output from the late 1820s, as Lobligeois stressed Prince and Poulain's contribution to textile industry in Pondicherry. The results of the French enterprise were the increase of textile production. As Roberts argued, the development of textile industry in Pondicherry took place 'as a consequence of a colonial economic strategy designed to increase production of cloth widely used in West African commerce', although to call this industrial development 'industrialisation' (like Roberts) or 'Industrial Revolution' (like Lobligeois) seems to need qualification.<sup>428</sup> The French entrepreneurs could not have seen such outcomes without technological innovation in Western Europe, Rouen's failure to imitate Indian textiles, European demand for gum Arabic from Senegal, and consumption of dark blue textiles around the Senegal River region and across the Sahara Desert.

## 5. Conclusion

This chapter has examined the procurement by Europeans of cotton textiles in India from the late eighteenth to the early nineteenth century. South India has been the main focus of this chapter, since it is the region that was known for indigo-dyed cotton textiles that were in demand in West Africa. Our focus has been divided into British India and French India. The chapter has also shown how West African demand was linked to the textile production in each region in the period concerned. Each weaving village and Pondicherry had complex networks to secure raw cotton and indigo to manufacture cotton textiles, including indigo-blue textiles. While Roberts highlighted the connection between the consumption in Senegal of guinées and the production in Pondicherry, this chapter has revealed that the French Pondicherry's case was in a sharp contrast with the British case by using new sources on the procurement by the EEIC of cotton textiles for West Africa.

The British case has argued that the EEIC, the major actor in supplying cotton textiles for those who invested in the West African trade, faced difficulties in procuring textiles in South India throughout the late eighteenth century. The EEIC documents have revealed that they certainly transmitted demand for a variety of cotton textiles that

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<sup>428</sup> Roberts, 'West Africa and the Pondicherry Textile Industry', 168; Lobligeois, 'Ateliers publics et filatures privées à Pondichéry', 82.

included blue-coloured longcloths and sallampores for West African markets. They have also suggested that the South Arcot districts on southern Coromandel Coast were known for these blue goods. The EEIC's procurement of these textiles depended on various circumstances, such as the weavers' performances, the Indian intermediaries' behaviours and the price of raw materials. A petition from London merchants in 1770 suggests that the EEIC did not always secure enough cotton textiles in South India.

Therefore, it was crucial for the EEIC to reduce the uncertainties in order to procure cotton textiles effectively in South India. Following the system that had already been introduced to Bengal and elsewhere, the EEIC carried out an institutional change of the system of textile procurement in South India. Under the *aumany* system the EEIC tried to control the weavers directly, eliminating Indian intermediaries who had connected the EEIC with the weaving villages under the advance system. However, this new system did not bring about a change in the textile production. Also, because it lacked enough incentive for the weavers to meet the demand from the EEIC, there were reports that quality of cotton textiles did not meet the EEIC's standard, and there were even cases that weavers fled the Madras Presidency. In the early nineteenth century, the British abolition of the slave trade, the development of the cotton industry in Lancashire and the subsequent lobbying campaign by the emerging manufacturers who increasingly voiced a complete ban on the import of Indian cotton goods into Britain, were a major treat to the EEIC. These adverse situations forced the EEIC officials to reduce their investment in the production of cotton textiles in South India, though they still entertained a hope that blue goods could sell in the 1820s.

The French case in Pondicherry made a sharp contrast to the British case. This is because that the French transformed the mode of textile production itself in Pondicherry. Shortly after Pondicherry returned to France in the middle of the 1810s, rebuilding the establishment was the top priority for the local administration. In the early stage, Desbassayns devoted himself to a new institutional design for industrial development, building the public workshops that originally aimed to solve the problem of Indian unemployment. It was he who encouraged private entrepreneurs such as Blin and Delbruck to invest their capitals in developing textile industry in Pondicherry from the 1820s. Another epoch commenced in 1830 when Prince and Poulain introduced a steam machine to spin cotton into threads from France to Pondicherry, and consequently the output of cotton textiles in the establishments increased. The major market for *guinée*

cloths manufactured there was Senegal. Some Ordonnances du Roi and Arrêtés decreed the weight and size of guinée cloths to be sold in Senegal and that authentic guinées needed a mark by the local administration, although these attempts were revoked in the early 1850s. Thus, cotton textile production thrived in Pondicherry, using locally grown cotton, indigo from Bengal, Indian and French artisans, and a latest-style spinning machine with steam engine, with financial support from the French government and Arbuthnot. It should be stressed that, in contrast to Britain, which would have the technological edge in the cotton industry in the early nineteenth century, France had not yet been successful in the production of textiles whose quality satisfied West African consumers.

## Chapter 5

### Western European merchants and Indian textiles for West African business, c.1790 – 1850

#### 1. Introduction

This chapter examines the Western European trade system that saw cotton textiles shipped from India via Europe into West Africa from the late eighteenth century to 1850. It also examines whether the trade was impacted by the political and economic changes in Europe around the turn of the nineteenth century, such as Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars, the British withdrawal from the slave trade and the Charter Act of 1813, upon the British and French merchants. As such, this chapter addresses the question about continuity and change in Western Europe's West African trade, in particular the extent to which merchants, trade patterns, or business institutions evolved.

Little is known about the business networks in which Indian cotton textiles flowed from India by way of Europe into West Africa in this period. This chapter uses original sources from Thomas Lumley, a London merchant who dealt with Indian cotton textiles, available at the National Archives in the United Kingdom, and the TSTD. The latter dataset provides rich information about the slave trade, including the trade routes.<sup>429</sup> These sources enable us to illustrate some patterns of trade of Indian cotton textiles imported by the EEIC through the hands of British merchants into West African markets, albeit for a limited period.<sup>430</sup>

As for the French trade in guinéés with West Africa, there are conflicting views in the existing literature about the major players in the trade along the Senegal River regions. By using the French trade statistics, this chapter offers a quantitative framework to approach the guinée trade into the Senegal River regions by merchants

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<sup>429</sup> TSTD; Kazuo Kobayashi, 'Igirisu no taiseiyo dorei boeki to indosan menorimono: Thomas Lumley shokai no jirei wo chushin ni [The British Atlantic Slave Trade and Indian Cotton Textiles: the Case of Thomas Lumley & Co.]', *Socio-Economic History*, vol. 77, no. 3 (2011), 113-130.

<sup>430</sup> Unfortunately, we have to admit the fact that at present there exists no sales record of the EEIC. That means that it is impossible to know who bought Indian cotton textiles from the EEIC for West African trade of that time from the EEIC records. That is why this chapter uses Lumley's sources as an alternative to the EEIC records.

from Bordeaux and Marseille, both of whom competed for gum Arabic in the region between the 1830s and 1840s.

Following the literature section, the discussion focuses on British business networks that carried Indian cotton textiles into West Africa from the final decade of the eighteenth century to the mid-nineteenth century. Then, we examine the case of French business in the same period, and address how merchants from Bordeaux took an interest in the gum trade in Senegal in the early nineteenth century. The subsequent section addresses commercial rivalry between Bordeaux and Marseille over the gum trade along the Senegal River in two decades before the military campaign in the 1850s.

## 2. The literature

From the late eighteenth century to the 1820s, a series of events affected British and French enterprises and shipping activities in many ways. These events included the Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars that resulted in the British hegemony (or the Pax Britannica) and a range of economic changes in Continental Europe, the British withdrawal from the slave trade and the subsequent British naval patrols to combat the slave trade by other countries and the Charter Act of 1813 that ended the commercial monopoly of the EEIC in India. Meanwhile, technological innovations such as copper sheathing allowed ships to conduct more frequent voyages and have longer working lives.<sup>431</sup>

In Western Europe's Asian trade the major players shifted from the East India Companies (and private merchants who associated with these monopoly companies) to private companies during this period,<sup>432</sup> whereas private companies continued to be

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<sup>431</sup> François Crouzet, 'Wars, Blockade, and Economic Change in Europe, 1792-1815', *Journal of Economic History*, vol. 24, issue 4 (1964), 567-588; Patrick K. O'Brien, 'The Pax Britannica and the International Order 1688-1914', in Shigeru Akita and Takeshi Matsuda (eds.), *Looking Back at the 20th Century: The Role of Hegemonic State and the Transformation of the Modern World-System (The Proceedings of the Global History Workshop Osaka, 1999)* (Osaka: Osaka University of Foreign Studies, 2000), 44-71; Peter M. Solar, 'Opening to the East: Shipping Between Europe and Asia', *Journal of Economic History*, vol. 73, no. 3 (2013), 625-661.

<sup>432</sup> For the rise of British private business in the Asian waters during this transitional phase, see Anthony Webster, *The Twining of the East India Company: The Evolution of Anglo-Asian Commerce and Politics 1790-1860* (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2009); Yukihisa Kumagai, *Breaking into the Monopoly: Provincial*

dominant in the Western Europe's West African trade. Britain and France remained as the two largest countries in the West African trade. In the existing literature, the point on continuity or change in Western European merchant activities has been addressed with very narrow time scope. As for the British trade in this period, David Williams and B. K. Drake revealed continuity in the Liverpool trade with West Africa and the Americas in terms of vessels used for the slave trade.<sup>433</sup> Martin Lynn also stressed continuity in the business with West Africa from the major British ports: London, Bristol and Liverpool from the slave trade to 'legitimate' commerce. As with the age of the Atlantic slave trade, merchants from Liverpool continued to be dominant in the palm oil trade between Britain and West Africa in the early nineteenth century.<sup>434</sup> Yet, little is known about who transported Indian cotton textiles into West Africa and what kinds of business networks enabled the flow of the goods from India by way of Britain into West Africa.

In contrast to the British case, the early nineteenth century witnessed the shift in major French port cities for the West African trade from Nantes to Bordeaux and Marseille.<sup>435</sup> As far as I am aware, the studies of Bordeaux merchants who engaged in the West African trade have concentrated on the Maurel and Prom Company from Bordeaux, although they did not address the trade in guinées.<sup>436</sup> As for the guinée trade

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*Merchants and Manufacturers' Campaigns for Access to the Asian Market, 1790-1833* (Leiden: Brill, 2013).

<sup>433</sup> David M. Williams, 'Abolition and the Re-deployment of the Slave Fleet, 1807-1811', *Journal of Transport History*, vol. 2, no. 2 (1973), 103-115; B. K. Drake, 'Liverpool-African Voyage c. 1790-1807: Commercial Problems', in Roger Anstey and P. E. H. Hair (eds.), *Liverpool, the African Slave Trade, and Abolition: Essays to Illustrate Current Knowledge and Research* (Liverpool: Historic Society of Lancashire and Cheshire, 1976), 126-156; B. K. Drake, 'Continuity and Flexibility in Liverpool's Trade with Africa and Caribbean', *Business History*, vol. 18, issue 1 (1976), 85-97.

<sup>434</sup> Martin Lynn, *Commerce and Economic Change in West Africa: The Palm Oil Trade in the Nineteenth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), Ch. 4.

<sup>435</sup> A. G. Hopkins, *An Economic History of West Africa* (Harlow: Longman, 1973), 129-130. Although German merchants, especially from Hamburg, also entered in West African trade as new participants from the second half of the nineteenth century, this chapter focuses on British and French merchants.

<sup>436</sup> Leland Conley Barrows, 'General Faidherbe, the Maurel and Prom Company, and French Expansion in Senegal', Unpublished PhD dissertation (Los Angeles, CA: University of California, Los Angeles, 1974); Leland Conley Barrows, 'The Merchants and General Faidherbe: Aspects of French Expansion in Sénégal in the 1850's', *Revue française d'histoire d'outre-mer*, tome 61, no. 223 (1974), 236-283; Yves Péhaut, 'A l'époque de la « traite » de l'arachide: les « Bordelais » au Sénégal', *Revue historique*

from France into Senegal in the early nineteenth century, when witnessed the commercial competitions between Bordeaux and Marseille over the interest in the gum trade along the lower Senegal River, Colin Newbury remarked that these textiles were ‘carried and imported exclusively by merchants of Bordeaux’.<sup>437</sup> On the other hand, Margaret McLane stated that Bordeaux and Marseille achieved ‘near parity at the end of the 1830s’ in the Senegal trade.<sup>438</sup> However, neither of them provides quantitative evidence to support these statements.

### 3. British merchants shipping Indian textiles into West Africa, c. 1790-c. 1850

The EEIC had been the major supplier of Indian cotton textiles for the British merchants who invested in the Atlantic slave trade until Britain outlawed the trade in 1807. The EEIC continued to supply textiles for those who engaged in ‘legitimate’ commerce in the early nineteenth century, though their role may have become less important after their monopoly in the trade with India ended. Marion Johnson’s effort to compile the dataset of the eighteenth-century Anglo-West African trade has shown the large contribution of Indian cotton textiles to the trade.<sup>439</sup> However, mapping the detailed routes of textile commerce between South Asia and West Africa via Britain has yet to be explored. As an attempt to fulfil the lacuna of our knowledge about connections between the Anglo-Indian trade and the Anglo-West African trade in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, wholesalers of Indian textiles need to be identified as key intermediaries in Britain between the EEIC and the West African traders. Thomas Lumley played a role from the end of the eighteenth century to the beginning of the nineteenth century.

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*de Bordeaux et du département de la Gironde*, vol. 30 (1983-84), 49-64; Yves Péhaut, *La doyenne des « Sénégalaises » de Bordeaux: Maurel et H. Prom de 1831 à 1919*, 2 vols. (Pessac: Presses Universitaires de Bordeaux, 2014).

<sup>437</sup> C. W. Newbury, ‘The Protectionist Revival in French Colonial Trade: The Case of Senegal’, *Economic History Review*, vol. 21, no. 2 (1968), 338.

<sup>438</sup> Margaret O. McLane, ‘Commercial Rivalries and French Policy on the Senegal River, 1831-1858’, *African Economic History*, no. 15 (1986), 41.

<sup>439</sup> Marion Johnson, *Anglo-African Trade in the Eighteenth Century: English Statistics on African Trade 1699-1808* (edited by Thomas Lindblad and Robert Ross, Leiden: Intercontinenta No. 15, Centre for the History of European Expansion, 1990).



Lumley was a merchant in London at the end of the eighteenth century. As far as I am aware, his origin remains unclear from his existing sources, and his name appears in the *London Directory* since around 1800, which shows that he was registered as a ‘warehouseman’ and lived in Gutter Lane in the City of London.<sup>440</sup> His cashbook recorded that he regularly bought Indian cotton textiles from the EEIC by cash or bills.<sup>441</sup> Indian cotton textiles he bought were sold through his business networks on to merchants in London, Liverpool, Dover, Guernsey and other places. These included large-scale merchants in Liverpool who engaged in the slave trade, and Lumley also invested in the trade eight times between 1803 and 1808.<sup>442</sup>

Lumley’s invoices and transaction records are useful in the analysis of this chapter. His invoice records show what kinds of commodities were shipped on his vessels from London to Africa. His transaction records include the dates of transactions, the names of merchants in Liverpool to whom Lumley sold Indian textiles, the value and the quantity (pieces) of sold textiles, a variety of textiles and, more importantly, the names of vessels that carried Indian textiles from Liverpool to West Africa. By combining these data with those available on the TSTD, it is possible to identify not only which region(s) of West Africa these vessels sailed from Britain to and bought slaves and but also which region(s) of the Americas and the Caribbean Islands the slaves exchanged with the textiles were taken to and sold.

According to the TSTD, Lumley invested in the voyages of the *Bedford* (three times), the *Betsey*, the *Frederick* (twice) and the *Harriott* (twice). His invoices for these voyages prove that various kinds of Indian cotton textiles were shipped into Africa and exchanged for slaves and other products. Take the first voyage of the *Bedford* for example. This voyage, which left London in March 1803 and completed on 26 May 1804, was aimed at purchasing goods and gold dust at Accra on the Gold Coast, and 225 African slaves and local products at the Congo River on the coast of Angola. The total value of the merchandises loaded in London reached at 5,500 sterling pounds,<sup>443</sup> of which Indian cotton textiles made up the overwhelming majority (3,484 pieces, 3,887 sterling pounds). In particular, byrampouts (692 pieces, 605 sterling pounds), bafts (456

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<sup>440</sup> *London Directory* (Kent’s Directory, 1801-1808).

<sup>441</sup> NAUK, C 114/155: Cash Book, Jan. 1801 - Mar. 1803.

<sup>442</sup> NAUK, C 114/154: Journal of Thomas Lumley & Co., 1801-1810.

<sup>443</sup> This amount of value excludes charges and costs of insurance.

pieces, 912 sterling pounds) and nicanees (400 pieces, 265 sterling pounds) were the main varieties of Indian textiles in this voyage, followed by alcoholic drinks, such as brandy and wine, and British-made muskets. After purchasing 246 slaves and 13 ivories in Africa, the *Bedford* sailed across the Atlantic to Jamaica, where the 221 surviving slaves were sold and logwoods, mahogany woods, coffee and others were bought before it returned to London.<sup>444</sup>

His 1801 journal includes all in all 130 transactions where Lumley sold Indian textiles to merchants. Appendix 5.1 presents 35 out of the 130 transactions. These transactions were all those with Liverpool merchants most of whom invested in the slave trade. These merchants were also members of the Company of Merchants Trading to Africa, a British Chartered Company founded in 1752, such as James, John and William Aspinall, John Bolton, P. W. Brancker, George Case, Thomas Hinde and Jonathan Ratcliff.<sup>445</sup> They were distinct in their purchase amounts from the others: these Liverpool merchants tended to buy more than 1,500 pounds of Indian textiles from Lumley for each slave ship, while the others less than 300 pounds for each transaction. There were also large-amount transactions over 2,500 pounds like the one dated 18 April 1801 for the *Active* of George Case and that of 9 June for the *Thomas* of John and James Aspinall. In addition, it was likely that some Liverpool merchants made additional purchases of textiles for their slave ships, as indicated with asterisk marks in Appendix 5.1. As a whole, Liverpool merchants accounted for over the three-quarters of the total value and volume of Lumley's transactions throughout 1801, when it was in the middle of the final peak of the British Atlantic slave trade.<sup>446</sup>

Furthermore, the TSTD reveals Lumley's contribution to the Liverpool's slave trade of that time. Appendix 5.2 linked the information about Liverpool merchants who

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<sup>444</sup> NAUK, C 114/158: Invoice of Thomas Lumley & John Ramsden, 5 March 1803, London; NAUK, CO 142/21: Trade Statistics of Jamaica, 1801-1804, 100, 146; TSTD, Voyage ID 80455, Bedford (1803).

<sup>445</sup> Wilson E. Williams, 'Africa and the Rise of Capitalism', in *The Howard University Studies in the Social Sciences* (Washington, D.C.: Howard University, 1938), 19-20. George Case was the father of the Liverpool Common Council, which was a stronghold of Tories and African traders in the early nineteenth century. *Liverpool Mercury*, 19 October 1832.

<sup>446</sup> This peak was probably attributed to the anticipation of the merchants and planters that the slave trade would soon be outlawed by the decision in Westminster. Philip D. Curtin, *The Atlantic Slave Trade: A Census* (Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 1969), 154.

bought Indian textiles from Lumley for their African trade in 1801 with the primary destinations of their voyages. From the 21 vessels presented in Appendix 5.2, it is clear that Indian cotton textiles were re-exported from Liverpool to various parts of Atlantic Africa from West-Central Africa to Cameroon, the Bight of Biafra (including Bonny and Old Calabar), the Gold Coast, Windward Coast and Sierra Leone. Out of 21 vessels, 7 vessels, that carried Indian textiles purchased from Lumley, sailed from Liverpool to Bonny, the most important West African port in the final decades of Britain's Atlantic slave trade.<sup>447</sup> In 1801, according to the TSTD, the number of vessels that left Liverpool for Bonny as principal place of slave purchase was 25.<sup>448</sup> That means that supplies by Lumley of Indian textiles were linked to almost 30 per cent of the Liverpool-Bonny trade in 1801.

Appendix 5.2 also suggests that the most of the vessels that carried Indian textiles, bought from Lumley, was often co-funded by several merchant firms. Such methods to organise the trade through the partnerships were commonly employed to reduce individual risks among merchants, both large-scale and small-scale, in the eighteenth century. For the European merchants, the long-distance trade, such as that with West Africa, required the larger amounts of capital for large-size ships, cargoes, insurance and wages to the crew, and involved higher risk than the intra-European trades. These methods persisted even after the abolition of the slave trade. It was common that these partnerships were formed for a single voyage only and dissolved on its completion, and thereby it required new partnerships for another voyage.<sup>449</sup> Lynn succinctly described this system as 'immensely flexible, allowing firms to respond quickly to opportunities as they arose, but provided little stability over a longer period.'<sup>450</sup>

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<sup>447</sup> Paul E. Lovejoy and David Richardson, "'This Horrid Hole': Royal Authority, Commerce and Credit at Bonny, 1690-1840', *Journal of African History*, vol. 45, issue 3 (2004), 363-392.

<sup>448</sup> TSTD.

<sup>449</sup> The risk included disruption caused by piracy, shipwreck, natural hazards, or capture. W. E. Minchinton, 'The Voyage of the Snow Africa', *Mariner's Mirror*, vol. 37, no. 3 (1951), 187-188; Jacob M. Price, 'The Imperial Economy, 1700-1776', in P. J. Marshall (ed.), *The Oxford History of the British Empire*, vol. 2: the Eighteenth Century (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), 93.

<sup>450</sup> Lynn, *Commerce and Economic Change in West Africa*, 94.

There is one debatable question about whether the end of the slave trade led to the end of the African business of the British merchants who gained profits from the Atlantic slave trade. This issue needs to be situated in the wider context of the British overseas trade of the early nineteenth century. In general, the British merchants faced problems in carrying out their overseas trade due to difficult economic and political relationships with Europe and the United States in the first decade of the century. The Continental System, represented by the Berlin and Milan decrees, restricted the British trade with Continental Europe and later with Northern Europe and the Baltic regions. This commercial blockade led to the exclusion of the British colonial goods from European markets, and consequently depressed the Anglo-West Indian trade. Meanwhile, the United States retaliated against Britain's Orders of Council of 1807 and 1808 which aimed to prevent neutral ships, such as American ships, from trading with France by enacting the Non-Importation Act of 1806 and the Embargo Act of 1807. As a consequence, the British trade with the United States was disrupted. The ending of the slave trade took place in such a situation, and it was difficult for the vessels of the slave trade to find an alternative employment.<sup>451</sup> Therefore, it was unsurprising that, in the short run, many merchants faced bankruptcy or a great loss of the profits from the slave trade soon after the formal abolition of the slave trade. Indeed, the fact that Thomas Lumley sent a petition on behalf of London merchants to Spencer Perceval, the then-Chancellor of the Exchequer, to seek compensation by the government for the commercial loss should be understood in this context.<sup>452</sup> John Aspinall, a leading Liverpool merchant at that time, had also been out of business for four or five years after abolition, but later played an important role as a palm oil trader.<sup>453</sup>

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<sup>451</sup> Williams, 'Abolition and the Re-deployment of the Slave Fleet', 105.

<sup>452</sup> NAUK, C 114/3: Letter from J. C. Harries to Thomas Lumley, 17 June 1809, London; Letter from G. Harrison to Thomas Lumley, 30 November 1809, London. Meanwhile, existing sources show that after abolition Lumley, by using his extensive business networks, continued to import sugar, cocoa, coffee and cottons from the West Indies and Latin America. NAUK, C 114/158: Invoice of Thomas Lumley & Co., 20 July 1809, London; NAUK, C 114/158: Invoice of Thomas Lumley & Co. 12 November 1809, London.

<sup>453</sup> Aspinall was a Magistrate of Liverpool at the time of May 1812, but it is unclear, from his testimonies, how long he had served the role until then. BPP, 1812, III (210): Minutes of evidence, taken before the Committee of the Whole House, to whom it was referred, to consider of the several petitions which have been presented to the House, in

On the other hand, there were continuities in the Anglo-West African trade between pre- and post-abolition of the slave trade. One was the vessels that had been used for the slave trade before abolition. David Williams surveyed the entries in *Lloyd's Register of Shipping* for the years 1808 to 1811 to reveal the fate of the ex-slave vessels in Liverpool after abolition. One of his findings was that 'the great majority of slave trade vessels found fresh employment, and found it relatively speedy, after abolition.'<sup>454</sup> Indeed, around half of the slave vessels that appeared on the *Lloyd's Registers* found new owners in the years after abolition. Following the emerging markets of the West Indies and South America, West Africa offered an opportunity for these re-deployed vessels to develop 'legitimate' commerce.<sup>455</sup>

Another continuity was found in merchants who participated in the West African trade before and after abolition. Liverpool merchants who invested in the slave trade before abolition became leading palm oil traders in the early nineteenth century, because they had the skill and knowledge of the West African trade through their past business contacts. In particular, their knowledge of the Niger Delta, which was the prominent region in the British slave trade from the middle of the eighteenth century, was essential since the region came to be established in the production of palm oil in West Africa before other regions began to expand the production and exports. In the early nineteenth century, especially in the 1830s and 1840s, a handful of large firms in Liverpool, such as the Tobin and Horsfall families, played a leading role in the Anglo-West African trade. They undertook several voyages to West Africa with large ships for large amounts of palm oil each year.<sup>456</sup> The Tobin family, in the time of Patrick Tobin (1735-94) in the Isle of Man, became established by profits from the slave trade and estates in the West Indies, and in 1798 his eldest son, John Tobin (1765-1851), married Sarah Aspinall (1770-1853), a daughter of John Aspinall of Liverpool. This marriage marked a turning point for the business of the Tobins, because the Aspinall family was

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this session of Parliament, relating to the orders in council, John Bridge Aspinall, 361-362.

<sup>454</sup> Williams, 'Abolition and the Re-deployment of the Slave Fleet', 107.

<sup>455</sup> Williams, 'Abolition and the Re-deployment of the Slave Fleet', 107-108.

<sup>456</sup> K. Onwuka Dike, *Trade and Politics in the Niger Delta 1830-1885: An Introduction to the Economic and Political History of Nigeria* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1956), 49; Martin Lynn, 'Change and Continuity in the British Palm Oil Trade with West Africa, 1830-55', *Journal of African History*, vol. 22, issue 3 (1981), 342-347. See also Chapter 2.

rich and prominent in the slave trade, especially in the Niger Delta and Angola. Their financial support was crucial in operating their business, while their connection with the West Indies supplied him with sugar and rum for the African trade.<sup>457</sup>

The TSTD has shown that in the 1790s John Tobin, as a ship captain, sailed to Africa several times for major Liverpool merchants, such as George Case, the Aspinalls and Gregsons. His major destinations of that decade for slave purchase were Loango and Anomabu on the Gold Coast.<sup>458</sup> From his marriage in 1798 to the first decade of the nineteenth century, John Tobin co-owned the ships, most of them with William Aspinall, for the slave trade, and all the principal destination of his co-owned ships was Bonny in the Niger Delta.<sup>459</sup> In addition to his connection with the West Indies and the Aspinall family, these experiences of African trade provided the Tobin family the foundation to rise to a leading position in the British imports of palm oil from West Africa in the period of 'legitimate' commerce.<sup>460</sup>

During the first two decades after abolition, while John Tobin came to be involved in the local politics of Liverpool as he was elected as the Mayor of Liverpool in October 1819, he continued to send ships for the palm oil trade with the Niger Delta, especially with Old Calabar. In Old Calabar, Tobin bought palm oil from Duke Ephraim (died in 1834), who monopolised the overseas trade of the local region and imported mainly cheap Cheshire salt, Indian cotton textiles and rum of the West Indies. These items were supplied through his global trade networks. He built up friendship with the

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<sup>457</sup> A. J. H. Latham, 'A Trading Alliance: Sir John Tobin and Duke Ephraim', *History Today*, vol. 24, issue 12 (1974), 863; Martin Lynn, 'Trade and Politics in 19th-Century Liverpool: the Tobin and Horsfall Families and Liverpool's African Trade', *Transactions of the Historic Society of Lancashire and Cheshire*, vol. 142 (1993), 103.

<sup>458</sup> The following vessels are those John Tobin was involved with as ship captain in the 1790s. TSTD, Voyage ID 80699, Brothers (1796); 81178, Eliza (1795); 81603, Gipsey (1793); 82776, Molly (1797); 82777, Molly (1798); and 83892, Union (1794).

<sup>459</sup> The following vessels are those Tobin was involved with as one of the co-owners in the 1800s. TSTD, Voyage ID 82169, Kingsmill (1803); 82371, Lord Stanley (1801); 82372, Load Stanley (1804); Will (1800); 84029, Will (1801); 84030, Will (1802); 84031, Will (1804); 84102, Young William (1800); and 84103, Young William (1802).

<sup>460</sup> According to the *Customs Bills of Entry* of 1835, John Tobin imported 6,054 casks of palm oil that accounted for the largest proportion (19.5 per cent) among the British palm oil merchants of the year. Lynn, 'Change and Continuity', 344.

Duke through the trade and visits, and thereby Old Calabar became the major source of palm oil for John Tobin.<sup>461</sup>

In the meantime, his young brother, Thomas Tobin, engaged in the oil trade with Bonny, the former largest port of slave exports at the peak of the British Atlantic slave trade. This port in the Niger Delta grew and replaced Old Calabar as the leading port of the oil trade in the 1830s and 1840s. Besides, Thomas Tobin also sent ships to the coast around the Congo River for ivory, gums and copper ore under the name of ‘Thomas Tobin and Son’. He also formed a partnership with Charles Horsfall, another major Liverpool oil trader of that time, and operated the oil trade under the name of ‘Horsfall and Tobin’, which appeared to have been dissolved when Charles Horsfall left the business in the 1830s.<sup>462</sup>

Britain’s – mostly, Liverpool’s – West African trade continued to be a family business dominated field in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. As for shipping Indian cotton textiles, there appeared to be a change in networks that carried the goods from India via Britain to West Africa. Until the first decade of the nineteenth century, the EEIC had a monopoly of trade with India, and therefore wholesale merchants, such as Thomas Lumley, played a key role in supplying the goods to provincial merchants. However, after the EEIC’s monopoly of the trade with India ended with the Charter Act of 1813, individual merchants also imported cotton textiles from India, as the Tobins and Horsfalls of Liverpool did themselves for their West African trade from the 1820s to the 1840s. In terms of commodity flows, by reflecting such an institutional change, there was a little diversification of trade route of Indian cotton textiles in the first half of the nineteenth century.

#### 4. French business environment from the Revolution to the early nineteenth century

One of the questions of this chapter is whether the French Revolution and the subsequent wars until the Congress of Vienna (1815) had any impact on France’s business environments in the early nineteenth century. The answer is yes, but needs to

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<sup>461</sup> Latham, ‘A Trading Alliance’, 862-867; Lynn, ‘Trade and Politics in 19th-Century Liverpool’, 106.

<sup>462</sup> Lynn, ‘Trade and Politics in 19th-Century Liverpool’, 106-108.

be qualified. A series of reforms that were made during the Revolution provided the legal and economic infrastructure for the development of French business in the nineteenth century. The Declaration of the Rights of Man and the Citizen that defined 'free and equal in rights' for all men ended aristocratic privileges; the Allard Law in February 1791 that destroyed the guild system opened the door for all men to enter all occupations; the abolition of privileges of royal manufactures, the trade monopoly of the French East India Company, and Marseille's privilege in the Levant trade heralded free enterprise for French citizens, albeit not for foreigners. The reforms of this period also included a new tax system that removed an unfair regressive nature of the old system, the creation of a national market, the metric system, free use of private property, and a unified law code that formed the basis of courts.<sup>463</sup>

The continuous warfare from 1792 to 1815, including the British occupation of Guadeloupe and Martinique in the French West Indies and the Ile-de-France (Mauritius) in the Indian Ocean, interrupted the French overseas trade. In addition, the insurrection by slaves on the French colony of Saint Domingue in August 1791 eventually led to the independence of Haiti in 1804. During this period, the sugar production in the French colonies also declined from 102,891 metric tons in 1791 to 39,279 metric tons in 1815-1819 (on average). In 1814 France abolished the international slave trade and in 1818 it ended the slave trade within French territories. These challenging situations marked a turning point in French maritime trade, and, according to a French business historian, Michael Stephen Smith, the end of the Napoleonic Wars left two options for France's leading port cities 'to salvage and rebuild what remained of the colonial trade or, alternatively, to find new niches in the international trade system that was taking shape in the early nineteenth century.'<sup>464</sup>

A new generation of merchants appeared in the first half of the nineteenth century. Their business activities were still based on the continuity in conditions of trade from the preceding centuries. This situation lasted until the renovation of

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<sup>463</sup> Michael Stephen Smith, *The Emergence of Modern Business Enterprise in France, 1800-1930* (Cambridge, MA, and London: Harvard University Press, 2006), 23-27.

<sup>464</sup> Smith, *The Emergence of Modern Business Enterprise in France*, 36; for the sugar production in the French colonies, see Dale W. Tomich, *Slavery in the Circuit of Sugar: Martinique and the World Economy, 1830-1848* (London and Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1990), 15.



transportation, such as railways and steamships, and the development of financial institutions, such as large joint-stock investment and deposit banks, from around the middle of the century. Continuity in French trade was also found in a pyramid hierarchy of merchants that consisted of petty retailers (commerçants) at the bottom, wholesale merchants (négociants) at the middle, and grands négociants at the top of the structure. The last group, including the Rothschild and the Mallet families, organised and financed interregional and international trade in high value commodities. In this period, French merchants continued to act as generalists in a range of fields from ‘commodities trading and merchant banking with currency speculation, government finance, industrial investment, and whatever else promised a profit.’<sup>465</sup>

As for France’s West African trade in the early nineteenth century, major players shifted from Nantes to Bordeaux and Marseilles. Nantes played a leading role in the French Atlantic slave trade, and it accounted for 44 per cent of the French voyages (1,346 out of 3,066 voyages) for the slave trade from 1701 to 1790.<sup>466</sup> Merchants from Nantes also engaged in the sugar trade with the French colonies in the Caribbean, and Nantes became the second largest French port, next to Bordeaux, in the trade in the 1780s. In the early nineteenth century the port on the Loire River continued to seek profits from the trade in sugar and slaves with the French West Indies until the abolition of slavery in 1848. In the meantime, Nantes also showed an increasing interest in sugar plantations in Réunion (Bourbon), and became a major importer of sugar from the island in the Indian Ocean. Thus, Nantes maintained sugar business with the French Antilles and later developed it with the Indian Ocean.<sup>467</sup>

Bordeaux, which had prospered through the trade in the wines of the Gironde from medieval times, functioned as an important entrepôt for colonial products, such as sugar, coffee, cotton and indigo from the Caribbean, in the eighteenth century. The proportion of the Caribbean in the imports of tropical products into Bordeaux considerably increased from 32 per cent in 1723-24 to 77 per cent in 1775-76, and that in the exports from there also from 6 per cent to 62 per cent during the same period. This Atlantic port accounted for almost half of the total value of the French re-exports from 1786 to 1789. On the other hand, Bordeaux was blessed with navigable water

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<sup>465</sup> Smith, *The Emergence of Modern Business Enterprise in France*, 31-34.

<sup>466</sup> This is based on the estimate on the TSTD.

<sup>467</sup> Smith, *The Emergence of Modern Business Enterprise in France*, 39-40.

channels, such as the Garonne River and canals, that brought commodities produced in hinterland to the port city. The regional products included flour, wine and textiles, and major markets for these were the French Antilles. On the eve of the French Revolution, in 1788, one out of three vessels that carried such commodities produced by slave labour in the Americas sailed to Bordeaux.<sup>468</sup>

Throughout the eighteenth century before the Revolution, the expansion of the Bordelaise trade was mostly owing to the work of Protestant amateurs, such as Jean Pellet, German merchants, such as Friedrich Romberg and Johann Jacob von Bethmann, and Sephardim, such as the Grandis family.<sup>469</sup> The size of population of the city rapidly increased from 60,000 in 1747-1750 to 111,000 in 1790.<sup>470</sup> The Atlantic port city maintained close links with the merchant-bankers from Germany and Switzerland, whose presence was significant in capital-intensive enterprises, such as the slave trade and plantation management in the Caribbean.<sup>471</sup> Thus, family networks, geographical conditions and the Atlantic trade contributed to social and economic integration between the port city of Bordeaux and its hinterland.

The insurrection in Saint Domingue and the war with Britain declared in 1793 that accompanied the naval blockade caused a severe disruption in the commerce of Bordeaux. M. L. Bachelier noted that the warfare with Britain ‘completely stopped’ the maritime trade of Bordeaux, and indeed there was no vessels entering and leaving the

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<sup>468</sup> Jean Tarrade, *Le commerce colonial de la France à la fin de l’Ancien Régime: L’évolution du régime de «l’Exclusif» de 1763 à 1789*, vol. 2 (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1972), 755 ; Paul Butel, *Les Négociants bordelais, l’Europe et les îles au XVIII<sup>e</sup> Siècle* (Paris: Aubier-Montaigne, 1974), 94-104; Silvia Marzagalli, ‘The French Atlantic World in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries’, in Nicholas Canny and Philip Morgan (eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of the Atlantic World: 1450-1850* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 246.

<sup>469</sup> Richard Drayton, ‘The Globalization of France: Provincial Cities and French Expansion, c. 1500-1800’, *History of European Ideas*, vol. 34, issue 4 (2008), 427; Klaus Weber, ‘The Atlantic Coast of German Trade: German Rural Industry and Trade in the Atlantic, 1680-1840’, *Itinerario*, vol. 26, no. 2 (2002), 111-112.

<sup>470</sup> Jean-Pierre Poussou and Paul Butel, ‘La Fierté d’une capitale provinciale’, in Robert Étienne (ed.), *Histoire de Bordeaux* (Toulouse: Privat, 2001), 178.

<sup>471</sup> Weber, ‘The Atlantic Coast of German Trade’, 111-112; Françoise Thésée, *Négociants bordelaise et colons de Saint-Domingue; liaisons d’habitations: La maison Henry Romberg, Bapst et C<sup>ie</sup> 1783-1793* (Paris: Société Française d’Histoire d’Outre-Mer, 1972).

port between November 1793 and September 1794.<sup>472</sup> On the other hand, a French historian, Silvia Marzagalli, has highlighted that this period witnessed the trade by neutral vessels, such as the Americans, continued to carry sugar from the Caribbean to Bordeaux, and from the 1790s a number of merchant families migrated from Bordeaux to the east coast of the United States, and acquired American citizenship, which enabled them to engage in trade as Americans.<sup>473</sup>

In the early nineteenth century Bordeaux turned its interest from the sugar trade with the Caribbean to wine trade and a new business with Africa, Asia and the South Pacific. As for the Bordelaise trade with West Africa, the first three decades saw the rise of a new generation of Bordeaux merchant families who seized the commercial chance that emerged from the end of the monopoly granted to the Compagnie du Sénégal (Senegal Company), and under the Bourbon Restoration they sought for an alternative commerce to the slave trade that became illegal in France in 1818. The Devès was one of the pioneering families. After their bankruptcy in 1807, Justin Devès and his brother, Bruno, left Bordeaux for Philadelphia on an American ship. Thereafter, they set foot in Saint Louis of Senegal in 1810, when the islands of Saint Louis and of Gorée were under the control of Britain.<sup>474</sup>

When these islands were returned to France in 1817, there were four French merchants in Saint Louis: Bruno Devès, Potin, Nicolas Duréc and Bourgerel. Except Bourgerel, who was from Marseille, all of these merchants were from Bordeaux and engaged in the gum trade in the wartime.<sup>475</sup> Due to the official abolition of the slave trade, the French merchants turned to gum Arabic as an alternative economic value in Senegal. As stated in previous chapters, gum Arabic was increasingly essential to the development of European textile industry. These merchants carried out the gum trade along the Senegal River valley through the trading method used before and during the

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<sup>472</sup> M. L. Bachelier, *Histoire du commerce de Bordeaux depuis les temps les plus reculés jusqu'à nos jours* (Bordeaux: Imprimerie de J. Delmas, 1862), 228-229; Haruhiko Hattori, *Furansu-kindai-boeki no seisei to tenkai* [The Growth and Development of Trade in Modern France] (Kyoto: Minerva Shobo, 1992), 110-113.

<sup>473</sup> Silvia Marzagalli, 'Establishing Transatlantic Trade Networks in Time of War: Bordeaux and the United States, 1793-1815', *Business History Review*, vol. 79, no. 4 (2005), 811-844.

<sup>474</sup> Hilary Jones, *The Métis of Senegal: Urban Life and Politics in French West Africa* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2013), 5, 46, 191-192.

<sup>475</sup> McLane, 'Commercial Rivalries and French Policy', 43, 60-61.

wartime: the pattern that relied on Senegalese auxiliaries, including local interpreters and traders to conduct the river trade with the Saharans at the *escales*.<sup>476</sup>

Table 5.1: The proportions of Bordeaux, Marseille and Nantes in some African trading areas, in percentage of French trade (tonnage) with those destinations

	1841	1845	1850
Bordeaux - Senegal	31.5	28.6	25.2
Marseille - the western coasts of Africa	63.8	36.6	81.0
Nantes - Réunion	40.0	42.5	33.5

*Source:* Olivier Pétré-Grenouilleau, ‘Cultural Systems of Representation, Economic Interests, and French Penetration into Black Africa, 1780s-1880s’, in Olivier Pétré-Grenouilleau (ed.), *From Slave Trade to Empire: Europe and the Colonization of Black Africa 1780s-1880s* (New York, NY: Routledge, 2004), 174.

Once the system of ‘*exclusif*’ was re-established, the Bordelaise took advantages of commercial opportunities with Senegal for two reasons. One was the fact that the location of Bordeaux is closer to Senegal than other ports of France. The other was their close connection to French politics. In 1821 the Baron Portal from Bordeaux was appointed as Minister of Marine and the Colonies whose role included colonial policy making. Portal played an intermediate role between the Bordeaux merchants and the government, thus his colonisation project, which soon downgraded to ‘experiment’, in Senegal reflected the interests of Bordeaux merchants, although such attempt was abandoned in the later Restoration period due to the rise of the Ultra-Royalists and the change of administration.<sup>477</sup> Table 5.1, which is excerpted from a table that Olivier Pétré-Grenouilleau created on the base of the French trade statistics, illustrates the division of African trading areas by French ports in the fourth decade of the nineteenth century. While Marseille had interests in the trade in the western coasts of Africa between the Senegal River and the Niger Delta, and Nantes was linked to Réunion in

<sup>476</sup> For the commercial network between Saint Louis and *escales* in the lower Senegal River, see Chapter 3, especially Figure 3.1.

<sup>477</sup> Péhaut, ‘A l’époque de la « traite » de l’arachide’, 49-50; Shepard Bancroft Clough, *France: A History of National Economics 1789-1939* (New York, NY: Charles Schribner’s Sons, 1993), 101-102; Michael D. Marcson, ‘European-African Interaction in the Precolonial Period: St. Louis, Senegal, 1758-1854’, Unpublished PhD dissertation (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University, 1976), 98-113.

the Indian Ocean, Bordeaux had a strong connection with the Senegal River region at that time.

The new generation of Bordelaise merchants arrived in Senegal from 1810 to the 1830s, and the number of French merchants in Saint Louis increased from only 4 at the reoccupation to 30 in 1837.<sup>478</sup> Along with the brothers Justin and Bruno Devès, Jean-Louis-Hubert Prom (hereafter 'Hubert Prom') established himself in the island of Gorée in 1822. Justin Devès arrived in Saint Louis at the age of 21, and Hubert Prom arrived in Gorée at 15. In 1830, Auguste Teisseire came to Saint Louis, and later he was appointed as one of the six commission members who were in charge of controlling and marking guinéés without stamps before they were sent to the *escales*. In 1830, Marc Maurel also arrived in Saint Louis, whereas Hilaire Maurel joined his cousin, Hubert Prom, in Gorée and they created the Maurel and Prom Company on 1 January 1831. They all left Bordeaux for Senegal, although their origins were not necessarily from the port city. As for the Maurel family, their ancestor was in Tarn in the Midi-Pyrenees region, and Teisseire was from Provence. These young merchants obtained the 'recommendations' in Bordeaux after some merchants established themselves in Africa. In the island of Gorée Justin Devès lodged in the house of Potin, who also accommodated Hubert Prom.<sup>479</sup> Among these French merchants, the Maurel and Prom Company was known as one of the largest and most powerful companies operating in Senegal by the middle of the nineteenth century. This company directly or indirectly generated capitalist organisations in the late nineteenth century, such as the Compagnie française de l'Afrique occidentale, the Société commerciale de l'Ouest africain, and the Banque du Sénégal, which later turned to be the Banque d'Afrique Occidentale.<sup>480</sup>

In the first half of the nineteenth century, the Bordeaux merchants, as major players in the trade with Senegal, bought gum Arabic, hides, beeswax, ivory and groundnuts, whose importance increased from the 1840s, from the *traitants*, who were a trader group of the *habitants*, or directly from African producers. These items were

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<sup>478</sup> E. Bouët-Willaumes, *Commerce et traite des noirs aux cotés occidentales d'Afrique* (Paris, 1848), 12-13.

<sup>479</sup> Péhaut, 'A l'époque de la « traite » de l'arachide', 50-51; Arrêté relatif aux guinéés non estampillées, Saint Louis, 19 February 1847, in Sénégal, *Bulletin Administratif des Actes du Gouvernement depuis le 1<sup>er</sup> janvier 1847 jusqu'au 31 décembre 1848* (Paris, 1849), 18-19.

<sup>480</sup> Barrows, 'General Faidherbe, the Maurel and Prom Company', 116; Péhaut, 'A l'époque de la « traite » de l'arachide', 55-56.

shipped on French vessels to France, and the goods in demand among Africans, such as guinéés, alcohols and weapons, were shipped from France to Senegal.<sup>481</sup> The new generation of French merchants followed the earlier trading patterns: the Bordeaux merchants established in Saint Louis and collaborated with *habitants* on the basis of trust in the gum trade in the Senegal River, while the Marseille merchants bypassed *habitants* in Saint Louis and sailed directly to the *escales*. The former pattern had an advantage in that the *habitants* as middlemen offered the links with the Saharan merchants at the *escales*, whereas the latter pattern gave the French merchants a pricing advantage.<sup>482</sup>

The success of the Bordeaux merchants in Senegal was partly due to the expansion of their family enterprises. Justin, Bruno and Édouard were brothers in the Devès family. Albert Teisseire, son of Auguste Teisseire and Marianne d'Erneville, created 'Buhan et Teisseire' with his father-in-law. There were also mergers between families, such as 'J. Devès, Lacoste et Cie', which Justin Devès amalgamated 'P. Lacoste' in 1850.<sup>483</sup> These Bordeaux families' business became a model for métis familial enterprises, such as the Durant brothers and the Pellegrin family, although, unlike the French merchants, the métis firms themselves could not import guinéés into Senegal due to the *exclusif* policy.<sup>484</sup>

In addition to family enterprises, close associations with the *habitants* through marriage that were also established in the eighteenth century would lead to the success of their business.<sup>485</sup> Both Hilaire Maurel and his elder brother, Jean-Louis Maurel, married daughters of Laporte, the powerful *habitant* mayor of the island of Gorée at that time, and the descendants of Emile, the eldest son of Hilaire Maurel, continued to run the company.<sup>486</sup> Hilaire Maurel moved from Gorée to Saint Louis to build a commercial base for the gum trade in the Senegal River in 1834. His commitment to this regional trade lasted until he returned to Bordeaux in 1853. In Saint Louis, from 1842 Hubert Prom served as the President of the Senegal's General Council, which was authorised to

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<sup>481</sup> Barrows, 'General Faidherbe, the Maurel and Prom Company', 116.

<sup>482</sup> McLane, 'Commercial Rivalries and French Policy', 43-44.

<sup>483</sup> Péhaut, 'A l'époque de la « traite » de l'arachide', 51-52

<sup>484</sup> Jones, *The Métis of Senegal*, 47.

<sup>485</sup> For the importance of marriage with *signares* in Saint Louis and Gorée for the Europeans, see Chapter 3.

<sup>486</sup> Barrows, 'General Faidherbe, the Maurel and Prom Company', 115.

determine budget and revenue in the colony, and formulated recommendations that created the gum ordinance of 1842. The two cousins worked together in Senegal until Hubert Prom returned to Bordeaux in 1845.<sup>487</sup>

##### 5. French shipping of guinées and commercial rivalry between Bordeaux and Marseille in Senegal

This section examines the guinée trade into Senegal and a related competition between French ports in the early nineteenth century. As discussed in Chapters 2 and 3, guinées were imported into Senegal by way of France under the regime of the *exclusif*, and the trade expanded in particular after the colonisation project ended in failure in 1831, which coincided with the ‘gum fever’. Among the French port cities, it was Bordeaux that played a leading role as an entrepôt in the trade during the period. Merchants from Bordeaux imported guinées from Pondicherry into Bordeaux, and then re-exported them into Senegal. Thus, merchants from Bordeaux bought a large quantity of gum Arabic in the Senegal River regions. However, there were merchants from Marseille who sought for profits from the gum trade in Senegal, and they competed with those from Bordeaux in the early nineteenth century.

In the early 1830s, Delbruck, the son of a Bordeaux merchant in Pondicherry, thought that some measures for textiles manufactured there were needed to thwart the repercussion of the July Revolution. As a measure without costing to the treasury, he proposed to Minister of the Marine and the Colonies to export guinées directly to Senegal since more profit could be expected. Delbruck recognised that guinées were ‘about the only object of exchange’ in the gum trade in Senegal.<sup>488</sup> Ultimately, this request was rejected because France and the metropolitan goods were given priority

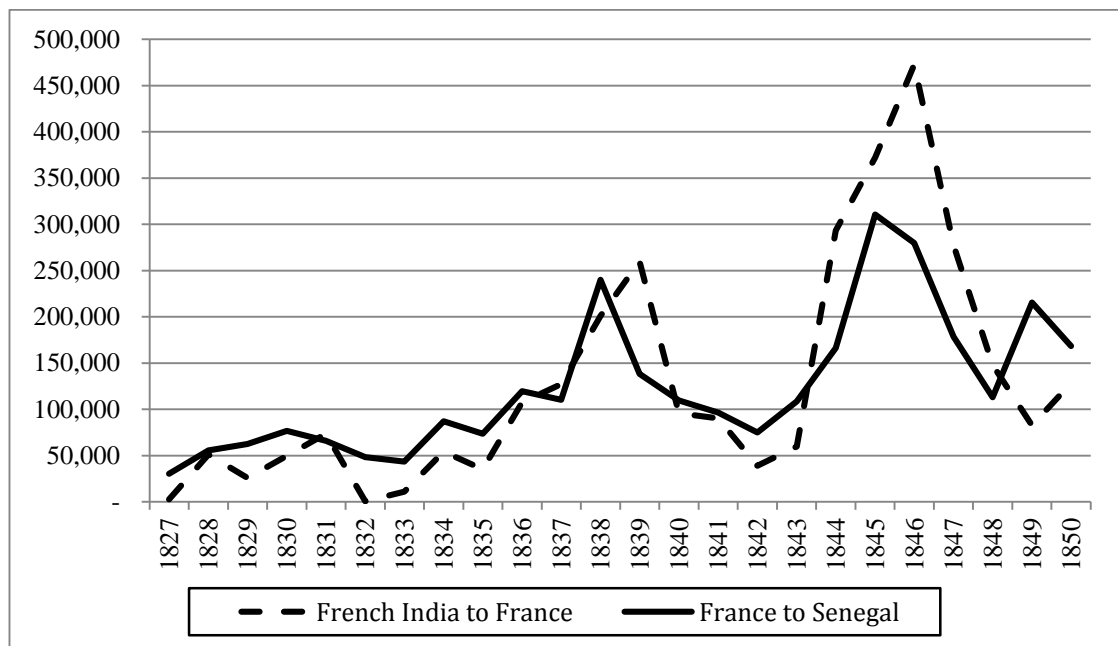
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<sup>487</sup> Péhaut, ‘A l’époque de la « traite » de l’arachide’, 61; Barrows, ‘General Faidherbe, the Maurel and Prom Company’, 117. As for the major role of the General Council of Senegal, see Jones, *The Métis of Senegal*, 127-128; Martin A. Klein, *Islam and Imperialism in Senegal: Sine-Saloum, 1847-1914* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1968), 117-118. At present, the Maurel and Prom Company is, as one of the biggest French oil companies, operating in Africa (Congo, Gabon, Namibia, Mozambique and Tanzania), Latin America (Peru and Columbia), North America (Canada), Southeast Asia (Myanmar) and others. (<http://www.maureletprom.fr/> Accessed on 18 February 2015.)

<sup>488</sup> ANOM, Inde 494, Dossier 865: Delbruck to Minister of the Marine and the Colonies, 30 January 1832, Paris.

over its colonies and colonial products. In fact, Minister of the Marine and the Colonies expected that the gum trade in Senegal increased the commercial opportunity for the metropolitan products.<sup>489</sup> However, as seen in Chapter 3, the Saharan merchants along the Senegal River valley could tell authentic guinées from metropolitan imitations.<sup>490</sup> Therefore, the importance of guinée cloths, produced in Pondicherry, in France's Senegal trade did not diminish at all throughout the nineteenth century.

Figure 5.1: Guinée trades from Pondicherry to France and from France to Senegal, 1827-1850 (Unit: pieces)



*Sources:* for the trade from Pondicherry to France, see Appendix 5.1. For the trade from France to Senegal, see Appendix 2.8.

Figure 5.1 illustrates the exports of guinées from Pondicherry to France and the re-exports of the products from France to Senegal between 1827 and 1850. The trade began to expand in 1832, and this expansion came after the launch of textile machines

<sup>489</sup> ANOM, Inde 494, Dossier 865: Note, 12 February 1832 (?).

<sup>490</sup> In 1833 Tourette, a diplomatic agent in Madagascar, suggested to sell metropolitan guinées in Madagascar. However, Indian guinées had already secured the market there, and, like the Saharan merchants in West Africa, the Malagasy could easily tell the difference between the authentic Indian cloths and metropolitan imitations. Mireille Lobligeois, *De la Reunion a l'Inde française: Philippe-Achille Bédier (1791-1865) Une carrière coloniale* (Pondicherry: Historical Society of Pondicherry, 1993), 135.



introduced by Prince and Poulain. The exports of guinée cloths from Pondicherry quintupled between 1834 and 1839, followed by a drop due to saturation in the Senegalese markets and a recovery during the middle of the 1840s. The volume of guinées exported from Pondicherry to France in 1846 almost doubled that in 1839.

Table 5.2: The proportions of guinées in the exportation of cotton textiles from Pondicherry, in the selected years from the 1830s to the 1840s

Year	Exportation of guinées		Total value of exportation of cotton textiles
	Value (francs)	Proportions (%)	Value (francs)
1834	2,991,420	82	3,635,579
1835	2,314,166	83.5	2,772,116
1836	3,799,420	89.5	4,243,812
1837	4,970,360	86.8	5,726,301
1838	4,994,942	87.2	5,728,205
1839	4,827,665	96.8	4,982,805
1841	2,082,528	85.4	2,437,697
1842	1,672,042	81.8	2,042,977

*Source:* Jacques Weber, 'Le port et le commerce maritime de Pondichéry au XIX<sup>e</sup> siècle', *Revue historique de Pondichéry*, vol. 19 (1996), 73.

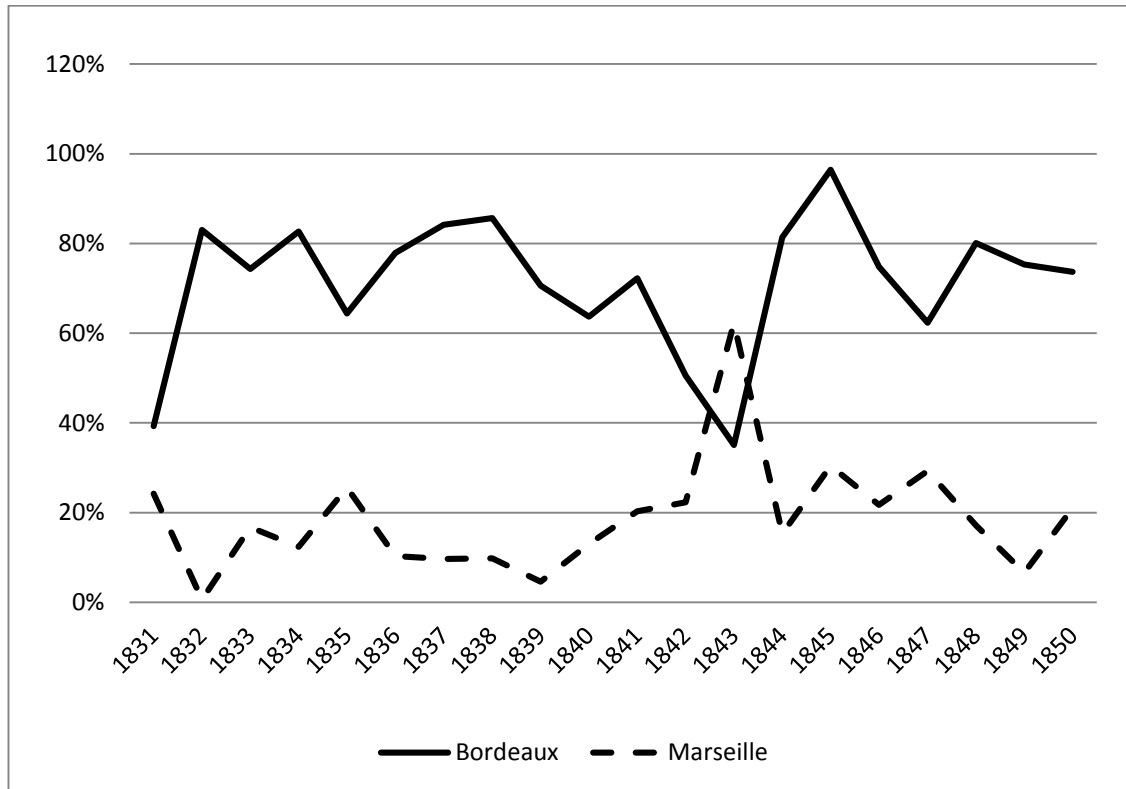
Table 5.2 shows that guinées were the flagship cotton textiles exported from Pondicherry from the 1830s. They accounted for 80 to 90 per cent in the 1830s and 1840s. White cotton textiles and other types of textiles were also exported from Pondicherry, but their proportions were marginal in the whole exports of cotton textiles from the colonial port town.<sup>491</sup>

There were several ports in France where imported guinées from Pondicherry in the early nineteenth century: Bordeaux, Marseille, Le Havre, Nantes and others. Drawing on the available data in the entrepôt section of the French official trade statistics, Figure 5.2 represents the proportions of two major French ports in the imports of guinées from French India in the 1830s and 1840s: Bordeaux and Marseille. It shows that Bordeaux dominated the French imports of guinées from Pondicherry during these

<sup>491</sup> See also, J. -P. Duchon Doris, *Commerce des toiles bleues dites guinées* (Paris, 1842), 29.

decades, except the early 1840s, when Marseille merchants tried to challenge the Bordelaise interests in the guinée trade.

Figure 5.2: The proportions of Bordeaux and Marseille in the imports of guinées from Pondicherry to France, 1831-1850

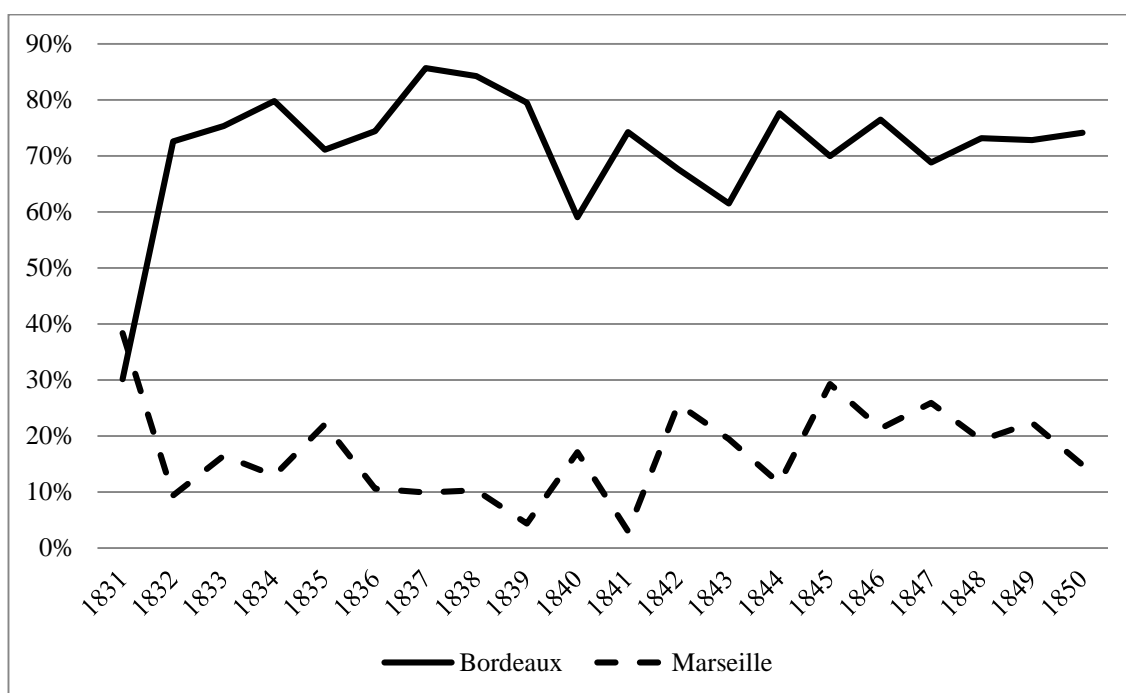


Sources: France. Direction générale des douanes, *Tableau décennal de commerce de la France avec ses colonies et les puissances étrangères, 1827 à 1836* (Paris: Imprimerie Royale, 1838); France. Direction générale des douanes, *Tableau général du commerce de la France avec ses colonies et les puissances étrangères* (Paris: Imprimerie Royale, 1839-1851).

As will be discussed below, Marseille merchants tried to break the chain of monopoly that Bordelaise merchants enjoyed in the gum trade with Senegal and the guinée trade with Pondicherry. In 1842 the Marseille merchants sent a petition to the government to object the formation of an anonymous society which comprised of négociants and merchants in Senegal only. Due to this petition, the general council of Pondicherry convened extraordinary meetings on 23 June and 5 July 1842.<sup>492</sup>

<sup>492</sup> Mireille Lobligeois, 'Ateliers publics et filatures privées à Pondichéry après 1816', *Bulletin de l'Ecole française d'Extrême-Orient*, vol. 59 (1972), 87.

Figure 5.3: The proportions of Bordeaux and Marseille in the re-exports of guinéés from France, 1831-1850



Source: see Figure 5.1.

As with Figure 5.2, based on the data available in the *entrepôt* section of the French trade statistics, Figure 5.3 estimates the shares of Bordeaux and Marseille in the re-exports of guinéés from France to Senegal in the 1830s and 1840s. As is the case with Figure 5.2, Figure 5.3 illustrates that Bordeaux played the leading role in the re-exports of Indian cotton textiles during the period. Although the French trade statistics do not make clear the linkages between Bordeaux and the export markets, the evidence that Senegal continued to account for 85 to almost 100 per cent in the re-exports of guinéés from France during these decades would allow us to estimate that the largest market of guinéés re-exported from Bordeaux was Senegal.<sup>493</sup> These findings confirm the above-mentioned argument by Newbury. But the view by McLane that Bordeaux and Marseille achieved ‘nearly parity at the end of the 1830s’ needs to be qualified.<sup>494</sup>

The Governor of Senegal, Louis Faidherbe, is known as the driving force behind the territorial conquest in the Senegal River region in the middle of the 1850s. One of

<sup>493</sup> For the calculation of the proportion of Senegal in the French trade of guinéés, see Appendix 2.8.

<sup>494</sup> McLane, ‘Commercial Rivalries and French Policy’, 41.

the major reasons for this military campaign was commercial competitions between French merchants. While the Bordeaux merchants had been leading players in the gum trade in the Senegal River throughout the early nineteenth century, the boom in the trade in the 1830s and its profits encouraged small-scale French merchants to try to enter the river trade. Then, a fierce competition over the profit from the gum trade started.<sup>495</sup> As shown in Figure 5.3, the proportion of Marseille in the re-exports of guinéés from France to Senegal slightly increased between the 1830s and 1840s. Like Bordeaux merchants, Marseille merchants, including Raphaël Cohen, Roch Olive, Jacques Isnard, Jérôme Borelli, Victor and Louis Régis, traded gum Arabic in Senegal for guinéés.<sup>496</sup> For them the Bordeaux merchants were their rival in the trade in Senegal. In order to challenge the Bordelaise predominance, the Marseille merchants sailed directly to the *escales*, where they undersold the Bordeaux merchants who used the help of *habitants* in Saint Louis. This competition diminished the profits for the Bordeaux merchants and the *habitants* who participated in the river trade as agents for their business partners from Bordeaux.<sup>497</sup>

The response to this challenge, posed by the Marseille merchants, came from the Bordeaux merchants, and ultimately led to the territorial conquest in the Senegal River regions from the mid-1850s. McLane divided their response to maintain their control of the gum trade in the lower Senegal River into two phases. The first phase, from the late 1830s to the early 1840s, was characterised as the creation of a privileged association to exclude the Marseille merchants from the gum trade at the *escales*. The association, set up in 1842, marked a new regime for the trade in the lower Senegal River, which was in favor of the collaboration between Bordeaux merchants and *habitants* in Saint Louis. The second phase, from the late 1840s to the early 1850s, ended the regime of 1842, as the Bordeaux merchants established new trading posts that replaced the *escales* to trade without the help of the *habitants*.

The first phase of the competition falls on the years of crisis of the gum trade. As seen in Chapter 2, the harvest of gum was unpredictable and dependent on climate

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<sup>495</sup> McLane, 'Commercial Rivalries and French Policy'.

<sup>496</sup> Xavier Daumalin, 'Commercial Presence, Colonial Penetration: Marseille Traders in West Africa in the Nineteenth Century', in Olivier Pétré-Grenouilleau (ed.), *From Slave Trade to Empire: Europe and the Colonization of Black Africa 1780s-1880s* (New York, NY: Routledge, 2004), 211.

<sup>497</sup> McLane, 'Commercial Rivalries and French Policy', 44-45.

conditions. Also, the price of gum changed according to the supply of guinées. Oversupply of guinées led to decline of guinée price from 1838 to 1841, which meant relative increase of gum price in Senegal.<sup>498</sup> Although the fall of value of guinée was in favour of the Saharan merchants who supplied gum Arabic at the *escales*, it posed a challenge to the *habitants* who acted as the middlemen in the river trade. At the year of 1838, when Saint Louis imported exceptionally a large number of pieces of guinées from France for the past decade, the prices of gum Arabic per piece of guinée were 21 kilograms at Saint Louis and 15 to 17 kilograms at the *escales*.<sup>499</sup> By relating these figures to the fact that slaves collected 1 to 3 kilograms a day during the harvesting season, the barter terms of trade in labour terms were the daily output of 1 to 7 slaves per piece of guinée at Saint Louis and 1 to 5 slaves at the *escales*.<sup>500</sup> Édouard Bouët-Willaumez, who served as the Governor of Senegal from 1843 to 1844, estimated their indebtedness accumulated to 2,500,000 francs at the end of 1841.<sup>501</sup>

*La Sémaphore de Marseille* dated 20 May 1842 published an article on the commerce of Senegal, which reported the poor harvest in 1840 and 1841 and its consequence:

The trade is not propitious. The gum is in short supply, the guinées are very abundant, and the competition is very severe. The *traitants* have operated at a loss. For us it is a crisis of commerce due to the prosperity of precedent years which attracted many foreigners. Besides, the manufacturers in Pondicherry and the shippers in France have doubled their shipping of guinées. Thereupon: lack of harvest of the gum for two years.<sup>502</sup>

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<sup>498</sup> See Chapter 2.

<sup>499</sup> É. Bouët-Willaumez, *Commerce traits des noirs aux côtes occidentales d'Afrique* (Paris, 1848), 14. Saint Louis of Senegal imported 240,000 pieces of guinées from France in 1838, and this quantity of that year more than doubled those in 1836 and 1837. See Appendix 2.8.

<sup>500</sup> See Chapter 3.

<sup>501</sup> Bouët-Willaumez, *Commerce traits des noirs*, 15.

<sup>502</sup> Cited in Xavier Daumalin, *Marseille et l'Ouest africain: L'outremer des industriels (1841-1957)* (Marseille: Chambre de commerce et d'industrie Marseille-Provence, 1992), 22.

In the severe competition the French merchants tried to sell their stocks of guinéés as soon as possible, even if they dumped goods at a low price.<sup>503</sup>

In order to address the commercial crisis, merchants from Bordeaux and those from Marseille proposed different solutions to the colonial administration of Senegal. The former preferred to set up a privileged association which had an exclusive right to trade gum Arabic at the *escales*, while the latter called for free trade that was open to all French merchants. The colonial administration decreed several '*compromis*' to satisfy these claims in 1837, 1839 and 1841, but these institutional responses were not successful due to lack of enforcement.<sup>504</sup>

As with the first quarter of the nineteenth century, Bordeaux merchants could obtain the political support for their gum trade from the French government again. The Arrêté of 16 April 1842 gave the privileged association of Saint Louis an exclusive right to trade gum Arabic at the *escales* along the lower Senegal River for five consecutive years. The aim of this association was to ensure the monopoly of the gum trade and the payment to the Saharans with the price that was in favour of the association. As a consequence of the creation of the privilege association, the merchants from Marseille were excluded from the river trade. Shortly thereafter, Marseille merchants, including those who traded Indian cotton textiles, sent a petition to Minister of the Marine and the Colonies. This action aimed to protest the privileged association of Saint Louis which was in favour of the Bordeaux merchants.<sup>505</sup>

In order to seek a solution to this struggle, a commission, whose members were comprised of administrative notables and members of the Chambers of Commerce, was organised by the Ministry of the Marine and the Colonies. Jean-Elie Gotier, who was president of the House of Peers in France, merchant shipper in Bordeaux and deputy from the Gironde, served as the chair in the commission. Other members included Jean Henri Galos from Bordeaux, the director of colonies, Magnier De Maisonneuve, the director of external commerce, Gréatin, the director of customs, and the delegates of each Chamber of Commerce from Bordeaux, Marseille, Nantes and Le Havre. However, because it was impossible to gain consensus among the delegates of the Chambers of

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<sup>503</sup> Daumalin, *Marseille et l'Ouest africain*, 22.

<sup>504</sup> McLane, 'Commercial Rivalries and French Policy', 46.

<sup>505</sup> ANS, 2B20: Correspondences from the Governor, Eduard Paul Pageot des Noutières to Minister of the Marine and the Colonies, Nos. 197 bis and 207, 9 and 15 June 1842, Saint-Louis; Bouët-Willaumez, *Commerce traits des noirs*, 16.

Commerce, Gautier turned to place importance on the testimony of the gum merchants, several Bordeaux companies in particular, Victor Régis of Marseille and Durand Valentin.<sup>506</sup>

Their comments shaped a committee report that was formulated in the Ordinance issued on 15 November 1842. The Ordinance restricted the gum trade along the Senegal River into the *escales*, and confirmed the importance of the commissioned Senegalese traders as intermediaries in the trade at the *escales*. It dissolved the privileged association, but instead created the commission syndicate, consisting of five members. The Governor appointed them, a senior official who chaired this commission, and an employee of the administration.<sup>507</sup> Therefore, the conditions designed by the Ordinance of 15 November 1842, were almost the same as the situation from which the Bordeaux merchants and the *habitants* benefited before the crisis of the gum trade.

The gum harvest was not abundant in 1843, but it recovered from 1844 to 1846. The number of the Senegalese traders increased from 53 to 88 and 121 in 1843, 1844 and 1845, respectively. This recovery of the gum trade and high prices for gum Arabic in Saint Louis enabled almost half of the Senegalese traders to repay their debts from 1844 to 1846, and almost half of their debts were cleared. However, the poor harvest of gum in the following three years that saw an increase of debt among river traders proved the commercial regime of 1842 would not work for them.<sup>508</sup>

On the other hand, there were two major forces to move from the regime of 1842 to that of free trade. One was the abolition of slavery in 1848 by which emancipated slaves who participated in the gum trade as auxiliaries of their masters were given equal rights to trade at the *escales*. The other was the Ordinance of 22 January 1852 that reflected heightened calls in France for free trade in Senegal.<sup>509</sup>

Durand Valentin, who was now a new deputy in Senegal, and French merchants, who sought free trade, introduced the question of the 1842 regime into deliberations of the National Assembly. The assembly decreed to form the Commission des Comptoirs

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<sup>506</sup> Durand Valentin was a notable *habitant* and an associate of Justin Devès of Bordeaux. McLane, 'Commercial Rivalries and French Policy', 47-48; Bouët-Willaumez, *Commerce traits des noirs*, 16-17.

<sup>507</sup> Bouët-Willaumez, *Commerce traits des noirs*, 17-18.

<sup>508</sup> See Figure 2.2; Bouët-Willaumez, *Commerce traits des noirs*, 23; James L. A. Webb, Jr., 'The Trade in Gum Arabic: Prelude to French Conquest in Senegal', *Journal of African History*, vol. 26, no. 2 (1985), 167.

<sup>509</sup> McLane, 'Commercial Rivalries and French Policy', 48-49.

et du commerce des côtes d’Afrique to address the question over the gum trade along the Senegal River. In contrast to the said committee of 1842, it was Victor Régis from Marseille who spoke for the merchants who had interests in the West African trade. His remarks gained support by the representative from Marseille, and thereby the Ordonnance of 22 January 1852 included specific provisions that reflected the concern among the French merchants who were excluded from the river trade under the regime of 1842. It aimed to loosen the ties between French merchants and Senegalese river traders in the gum trade, and broaden the possibility for Marseille merchants to participate in the trade in the lower Senegal River. Therefore, it marked a step forward to free trade at the *escales*, although the trading posts in the lower Senegal River was abolished thereafter and replaced by a new one on the left bank of the river at Podor. Also, Bordeaux merchants who were challenged by this situation transferred their trading posts to upriver at Bakel, where they enjoyed predominant position over any other European traders in the gum trade.<sup>510</sup>

Meanwhile, several Marseille merchants sought alternative trading posts along the coast southwards from the Senegal River in the 1830s and 1840s. They included the Régis brothers, the Rabaud brothers, Roch Olive, Jacques Isnard, Aquaronne fils and Féraud & Honorat. During this period Charles-Auguste Verminck, who was later known as the ‘king of groundnuts’, was employed by Victor Régis and Maurel & Prom until he became independent in 1852. Table 5.1 has shown that Marseille’s interests were larger in the western coasts of Africa than in the Senegal River in the 1840s. While the major commodities they sought in Senegal were gum Arabic and groundnuts, those in other coastal areas of West Africa, in particular Dahomey, the Ivory Coast and Guinea, were palm oil, groundnuts and cabbage palm. In the late 1840s, Marseille absorbed more than 95 per cent of all groundnuts exported from West Africa to France.<sup>511</sup>

The growing interests in these oleaginous plants among the Marseille merchants mirrored the challenging situation surrounding the soap-making industry, the most prominent industry in Marseille during the era of the July Monarchy. Originally, the industry used olive oil, harvested in the Mediterranean basin, to make soap. However, the 1820s and 1830s were difficult time for the soap-making industry in Marseille. It

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<sup>510</sup> McLane, ‘Commercial Rivalries and French Policy’, 49-51.

<sup>511</sup> Daumalin, ‘Commercial Presence, Colonial Penetration’, 211-214, 228.



faced difficulty in securing olive oil due to a series of bad harvest seasons of olive trees around the Mediterranean basin and increasing demand for the product for soap-making in other parts of southern Europe. These problems made the soap-making from olive oil in Marseille costly, leading to another problem: the products of Marseille had to compete in the British markets with cheaper soap made from flax, groundnuts and palm oil. Meanwhile, the Marseille industry faced a problem in maintaining quality of their product. This was because they used Leblanc soda, which contained rich alkali that enabled to produce a greater quantity of soap than that from the same amount of olive oil. But the soap made from the mixture of Leblanc soda and olive oil had disadvantages in quality: the product was rough and more corrosive, and therefore, it was less demanded in the markets. In order to solve these problems, Marseille soap-producers needed innovation of their production and alternative fatty products in West Africa.<sup>512</sup>

## 6. Conclusion

This chapter has had a look at British and French shipping of Indian cotton textiles into West Africa in the final phase of their slave trade and the period of the following 'legitimate' commerce (up to around 1850). The questions here were related to the impacts of the Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars and the formal end of the Atlantic slave trade in both countries upon these merchant activities. To be sure, these events restricted the trade opportunities for Western European merchants, and particularly the abolition of the slave trade forced merchants into bankruptcy and retreat from African trade. On the other hand, in France, the Revolution resulted in institutional changes that were in favour of French business, including maritime trade, and particularly private business. Nonetheless, their business in the first half of the nineteenth century followed the traditional method of the previous centuries.

In Britain the EEIC was the largest supplier of Indian cotton textiles for British markets until the Charter Act of 1813 that abrogated the monopoly of the EEIC in the trade with India. Indian cotton textiles were carried by wholesale merchants, such as Thomas Lumley, into merchants who carried out the slave trade. In the meantime,

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<sup>512</sup> Daumalin, 'Commercial Presence, Colonial Penetration', 210-211.

private merchants increasingly participated in Asian trade and some imported cotton textiles from India and would substitute the role that the EEIC had played until 1813. It was these merchants who supplied merchants who had interests in West Africa with Indian cotton textiles in the early nineteenth century.

Liverpool represented the British West African trade at that time. There were several continuities in the trade despite the abolition of the slave trade: (1) family business dominated compared with British trades with other regions of the world; (2) merchants who partook in the West African trade, both the slave trade and then the palm oil trade; and (3) trade connections with the Niger Delta, especially Old Calabar and Bonny. The effects of the Napoleonic Wars such as the commercial blockade and the 1807 embargo would contribute to the continuity in the overseas trade of post-abolition Liverpool. The situation surrounding the trade changed from the 1850s, when steamships began to be largely used and the joint-stock companies, such as the Company of African Merchants, were created. Indian cotton textiles continued to be in demand in West Africa, but their commercial routes appeared to have been changed from the eighteenth century to the early nineteenth century, because the end of the monopoly of the EEIC to trade with India enabled individual merchants to enter the Indian trade.

As for French business with West Africa, the major players switched from Nantes to Bordeaux and Marseille in the nineteenth century: Nantes continued to pursue commercial interests in the Caribbean and the Indian Ocean, whereas Bordeaux and Marseille launched a new business with West Africa. As the French trade statistics show, it was particularly Bordeaux that played a leading role in the guinée trade into Senegal in the 1830s and 1840s. The former largest entrepôt for sugar trade from the Caribbean faced a great difficulty in the commerce from the 1790s to 1815 mainly due to the French Revolution and the loss of Saint Domingue, although the role of Bordeaux was maintained by trade on neutral vessels such as the American vessels to some extent during the turbulent period. After the Napoleonic Wars, the French withdrawal from the slave trade and return of Saint Louis to France, the attention of Bordeaux merchants to the gum trade increased. They conducted the gum trade mainly in the lower Senegal River regions with the support from the Senegalese intermediaries who had navigational skill and knowledge about interior geography and local language until the territorial conquest started in the 1850s. Like the case of Liverpool trade with West Africa at that

time, family business characterised the French West African trade. Also, as Britain's African merchants influenced local politics of Liverpool in the early nineteenth century, the strong ties with the metropolitan politics helped the Bordelaise merchants maintain their leading position in the shipping of guinées for gum Arabic around the lower Senegal River regions despite the fierce competitions posed by merchants of Marseille in the 1830s and 1840s.<sup>513</sup> That is why Marseille merchants sought alternative markets along the coast southwards from the Senegal River, and as a result there was division of major destinations by merchants of major French cities in the 1840s.

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<sup>513</sup> For the influence of Britain's African traders on local politics in Liverpool in the nineteenth century, see Lynn, 'Trade and Politics in 19th-Century Liverpool'.

Appendix 5.1: Lumley's sale of Indian textiles to Liverpool merchants in 1801

Date	Month	Names of merchants	Purchase value	Purchase pieces	Vessels
10	Feb	Jonathan Ratcliffe	2,562	3,577	Charles Hamilton
18	Apr	George Case	2,578	2,799	Active
		George Case	344	494	Victory
7	May	Brown Huson	2,651	2,768	Princess Amelica
14		John Bolton	251	258	N/A
30		George Case	3,036	2,663	Molly
6	June	Charles Fairclough	2,968	3,070	Polly
7		Brown Huson	38	25	N/A
9		John & James Aspinall	3,427	3,049	Thomas
13		John Bolton	55	42	N/A
18		George Case	1,785	2,745	Arthur Howe
30		Thomas Hinde	2,308	2,669	Diligent
2	July	Brown Huson	1,312	1,551	Friendship
10		Thomas Hinde	677	392	Diligent*
16		John Bolton	1,501	1,842	Christopher
21		P. W. Brancker	507	600	N/A
		Brown Huson	711	560	Friendship*
17	Aug.	John Bolton	666	325	Christopher*
22		Nicholas & Robert Vickers	622	630	Eliza
27		John Bolton	2,108	1,985	Gov. Wentworth
29		John & James Parr	122	77	Earl of Liverpool
14	Sep.	Gabriel James	1,703	1,919	Levant
15		Samuel McDowal	521	446	N/A
16		William Aspinall	2,042	2,139	Will
		Samuel Hinde	1,799	1,736	Agreeable
30		William Aspinall	2,657	2,366	Young William
6	Oct.	William Aspinall	580	290	Will*
16		Samuel Hinde	489	245	Agreeable*
		George Case	1,973	2,814	Aurora
		Thomas Jones	14	62	N/A
20		George Case	100	100	Aurora*
31		G. Preston, Winder	252	340	Prudence
3	Nov.	George Case	1,510	2,070	Nimble
6		William Aspinall	814	400	Young William*
16		Samuel McDowal	527	408	Annan
Total transactions with Liverpool merchants			45,210	47,456	
Total transactions with all merchants			59,147	60,807	

*Note:* Asterisks are given for the already-mentioned vessels. It should be noted that the 35 cases mentioned here are identifiable as transactions with merchants based in Liverpool because there are notes of Liverpool as their location on the journal of Thomas Lumley.

*Source:* NAUK, C 114/155: Journal of Thomas Lumley & Co., 1801.

Appendix 5.2: Liverpool merchants who were Lumley's customers and their voyages in 1801

Vessels	Vessel owner(s)	Principal place and region of slave purchase	Voyage ID in the TSTD
Sir Charles Hamilton	Jonathan Ratcliffe, James Thompson Cuckit, Thomas Huson, Edward Bennet	Malembo, West Central Africa	83557
Victory	George Case, John Brine	Congo River, West Central Africa	83968
Princess Amelia	James McGauley, John Livingston, James Browne, Thomas Huson	Bonny, Bight of Biafra	83217
Active	George Case, Barton Mawdsley, John Bridge Aspinall, James Aspinall	Unknown	80025
Thomas	John Bridge Aspinall, James Aspinall	Bonny, Bight of Biafra	83764
Molly	George Case, John Bridge Aspinall, James Aspinall	Bonny, Bight of Biafra	82780
Polly	John Smale, Charles Fairclough, Robert Walmough, John Dwerryhouse, Joseph Barnes	West Central Africa, port unspecified	83138
Arthur Howe	George Case, John Bridge Aspinall, James Aspinall	Cameroons, Bight of Biafra	80364
Diligent	William Hinde, Samuel Hinde, Thomas Kirkby, Thomas Hinde	Bonny, Bight of Biafra	81039
Friendship	James Brown, Thomas Huson, James McGauley, John Livingston	Unknown	81533
Eliza	Nicholas Vickers, Robert Vickers, John Brett, John Pepper	Unknown	81187
Governor Wentworth	John Bolton	Gold Coast, Port unspecified	81652

Levant	Gabriel James, Richard Stevens, Thomas Cubbin, Thomas Powell, Nathaniel McGhie	Rio Pongo, Sierra Leone	82249
Agreeable	Thomas Hinde, William Hinde, Thomas Kirkby, Samuel Hinde	Bonny, Bight of Biafra	80125
Earl of Liverpool	John Parr, James Parr	Gallinhas, Sierra Leone	81116
Will	William Aspinall, John Tobin	Bonny, Bight of Biafra	84030
Young William	William Aspinall, John Tobin	Bonny, Bight of Biafra	84103
Aurora	George Case	Old Calabar, Bight of Biafra	80401
Prudence	William Winder, Josiah Wheeler, John Gibb, Gerard Preston, James Miller, John Latham	West Central Africa, Port unspecified	83250
Nimble	George Case	Windward Coast (Nunez-Assini)	82948
Annan	Thomas Twemlow, Samuel McDowal, James Swanzy	Gold Coast, Port unspecified	80307

*Source:* The Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade Database: Voyages (<http://www.slavevoyages.org/>), accessed on 23 March 2015.

## Chapter 6

### Conclusion

This thesis has explored global interactions shaped by West African demand for Indian cotton textiles from the eighteenth to mid-nineteenth century. The key issues discussed by the thesis were (1) consumption and demand in pre-colonial West Africa; (2) globalisation and West Africa: trade-led growth; (3) West Africa, Western European industrialisation and globalisation; (4) continuity and change in the trade between West Africa and Western Europe; and (5) European enterprises in pre-colonial and colonial India. Reflecting the findings from this discussion, this thesis contributes to the larger historiographical literature on global economic history, and opens up various possibilities for further researches.

#### 1. Consumption and demand in pre-colonial West Africa

This thesis has explored the role of West African demand for Indian textiles, and the dynamic relationships that emerged between production, trade and consumption from a global perspective. Recent studies by Jeremy Prestholdt and Pedro Machado highlighted the role of consumers in East Africa and Mozambique and their interaction with India, Western Europe, North America and Latin America in shaping the trajectory of long-distance commerce and commodity production. The cultural dimension of demand, consumer's desire for foreign commodities and consumer tastes played a significant role in the processes of trade and production.<sup>514</sup> These insights are relevant to the thesis, which makes the case that West Africa, in particular the lower Senegal River regions, connected consumers in West Africa to various global regions, due to their demand for Indian cotton textiles.

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<sup>514</sup> Jeremy Prestholdt, *Domesticating the World: African Consumerism and the Genealogies of Globalization* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, CA: University of California Press, 2008); Jeremy Prestholdt, 'Africa and the Global Lives of Things', in Frank Trentmann (ed.), *The Oxford Handbook of the History of Consumption* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 85-108; Pedro Machado, *Ocean of Trade: South Asian Merchants, Africa and the Indian Ocean, c. 1750-1850* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014).

Existing scholarship on the economic history of West Africa highlighted that indigo-blue cotton textiles produced in India, called 'guinées' in French, were used as an exchange medium and unit of account around the regions along the Senegal River in the early nineteenth century. Considering that Gambia and Sierra Leone also imported Indian textiles from Britain in the early nineteenth century but its scale was much smaller than that of British cotton textiles (see Appendices 2.4, 2.5 and 2.7), and that Lancashire goods gained the competitive edge over Indian calicoes from the 1820s, it is very interesting to explore why there were the contrasting trends of British and French re-exports of Indian dyed cotton textiles to West Africa (Figure 10). Also, little was known about what factors made guinées a currency in the region. This thesis found five factors underpinned the continued demand for guinées in the Senegal River valley:

- (1) Consumer taste for quality – contemporary accounts showed that local consumers along the Senegal River, and in the Sahara Desert, preferred the quality of the Indian textiles, particularly its colour and smell, which European textiles could not match despite technological advances.
- (2) Use-value in the consuming areas – wrapping bodies loosely with guinées and the dark-blue colour of the textiles suited the life in the savannah, Sahel and desert, where the population were exposed to relentless sunshine and desert wind.
- (3) Social and cultural meaning for dyed textiles – in a local context wearing dyed textiles had a social meaning, a sign of luxury, which differentiated the wearer from those who wore white cloth. Increased demand for guinées in the late eighteenth century partly reflected the pursuit from the inhabitants across Senegambia to emulate the clothing of the marabouts.
- (4) Natural environment and local industry – droughts that hit the Senegal River regions displaced the domestic cloth industry from there before guinées were imported in abundance. This created conditions that favoured the importation of textiles, as factor endowments limited the capacity for local producers to meet demand. These imported textiles functioned as a new



cloth currency in the region,<sup>515</sup> while other regions of West Africa used locally woven textiles as a currency.

- (5) An extensive circuit for cloth currency – as recent studies of monetary history suggest, there was an extensive circuit along which guinéés flowed unidirectionally from Saint Louis to the lower Senegal River and even the Sahara Desert regions. As the French merchants and textile producers in Pondicherry responded, a constant supply of guinéés was critical in maintaining the monetary function in the regions.

It is true that guinéés played a large role as a currency in the gum trade along the Senegal River regions, but it is misleading to assume that guinéés were the sole currency there, as multiple currencies functioned across these regions. The scarcity of available sources inhibits historians from exploring this issue in greater detail. However, Chapter 3 provided some information about conversion ratios between gum Arabic and millet, guinéés and millet, indicating that the exchange of guinéés might have been complemented with one for millet, which may have acted as small change. This thesis located cloth currency around the Senegal River regions in the context of complimentary relationships between multiple currencies.<sup>516</sup>

Existing works on guinéés have tended to focus on the Senegal River regions. As shown in Figure 3.1, however, this was only a part of a larger picture of dynamic regional commerce in textiles. Some guinéés were further circulated and distributed by

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<sup>515</sup> In the history of Senegambia, Indian guinéés were not the first foreign cloth that supplanted locally produced textiles. During the seventeenth century, when sporadic droughts hit the region, cotton textiles manufactured in the Cape Verde Islands, called ‘panos’, replaced local manufactures in Senegambia and became the principal textiles in the coastal trade up to the 1860s. George E. Brooks, *Western Africa to c. 1860: A Provisional Historical Schema Based on Climate Periods* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University African Studies Program Working Papers Series, 1985), 187.

<sup>516</sup> For the theoretical background of complementarities among monies, see Akinobu Kuroda, ‘What is the Complementarity among Monies? An Introductory Note’, *Financial History Review*, vol. 15, issue 1 (2008), 7-15. Marion Johnson noted that grain or beads functioned as small change in transactions. Marion Johnson, ‘Cloth as Money: the Cloth Strip Currencies of Africa’, in Idiens, Dale and Ponting, K. G. (eds.), *Textiles of Africa* (Bath: Pasold Research Fund, 1980), 193-202. From this point of view, Machado’s position that Gujarati cotton textiles played a significant role in ‘all economic exchange in the territory’ sounds like an exaggeration. Machado, *Ocean of Trade*, 2.

caravan traders in the territories of the nomadic emirates of Trarza and Brakna into the Sahara Desert, where guinéés were called ‘*akhal*’. From this perspective, trade along the lower Senegal River regions can be seen as a gateway into the Sahara Desert regions.<sup>517</sup>

It should be stressed again that the continued supply of guinéés by the French merchants from Pondicherry via France into Senegal was inextricably linked with the continued demand in industrialising Western Europe for good quality gum Arabic that was purchasable in the lower Senegal River. Therefore, the increased import of guinéés into Senegal during this period should be seen as the product of the intersecting consumer demand for gum Arabic in Western Europe and guinéés in West Africa.

## 2. Globalisation and West Africa: trade-led economic growth

Quantitative analysis in Chapter 2 indicated that demand for imported textiles in West Africa evolved in the early nineteenth century. For example, the more palm oil and kernels were exported from West Africa to Britain, the more British machine-made cotton goods flowed into the same areas of West Africa. A firm connection between both sides confirms Hopkins’s contention that small-scale producers and traders came to play a large role in the ‘legitimate’ commerce which boosted their purchasing power through the sale of their produce and undermined the relative economic dominance of elites.<sup>518</sup> This point could be explored further.

In this argument Hopkins applied the staple theory of economic growth developed by Canadian neoclassical economist Melville H. Watkins. Watkins, with the United States and the former British dominions in mind, argued that in an area with a favourable man-land ratio, and without inhibiting traditions staple exports played a leading role in economic growth. According to Watkins, the increased activity of export sector led to what he called ‘final demand linkage effect’, that is ‘a measure of the

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<sup>517</sup> This view is in line with the argument by Ann McDougall that ‘During the Atlantic slave trade, the desert-edge functioned as an interface not only between the Sahara and Sudan, but also between their economic systems and those of the Senegambian coast.’ E. Ann McDougall, ‘In Search of a Desert-edge Perspective: the Sahara-Sahel and the Atlantic Trade, c. 1815-1890’, in Robin Law (ed.), *From Slave Trade to ‘Legitimate’ Commerce: The Commercial Transition in Nineteenth-Century West Africa* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 215.

<sup>518</sup> A. G. Hopkins, *An Economic History of West Africa* (Harlow: Longman, 1973), 124-135.

inducement to invest in domestic industries producing consumer goods for factors in the export sector'.<sup>519</sup>

Later, Kaoru Sugihara revisited this concept to elaborate his discussion on economic development in Asia from the nineteenth century to the present. As a response to the 'Western impact' represented by forced free trade in the mid-nineteenth century, the intra-Asian trade, which consisted of regional trade between Japan, China, Southeast Asia and India, experienced more rapid growth than Asian trade with Western Europe and the United States. The mass exports of primary products for Western markets, such as raw cotton, raw silk, raw jute, rice, tea, oil seeds and tin, created consumer demand amongst the producers of these commodities in the producing areas. This demand was broken down in two; one was primary products for consumption such as rice, sugar and raw cotton, and the other for final manufactured goods including cotton textiles, sundries and machinery. This Western impact enabled the growth of intra-regional trade in Asia and an international division of labour. Thus, Sugihara argued that the final demand linkage effect played a key role in the labour-intensive industrialisation in Asia.<sup>520</sup>

Can we find the final demand linkage effect in the context of early nineteenth-century West Africa? The statistical evidence in Chapter 2 showed that the increased exports of such staples as palm oil might have boosted the purchasing power of the export sector that in turn induced the growth of local and regional commercial activities around the production areas of staples to some extent.<sup>521</sup> The increasing imports of cotton textiles from Britain into West Africa should be integrated into a larger picture that incorporates dynamism of intra-regional and local business in necessities and luxuries.

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<sup>519</sup> Melville H. Watkins, 'A Staple Theory of Economic Growth', *Canadian Journal of Economics and Political Science/Revue canadienne d'Economie et de Science politique*, vol. 29, no. 2 (1963), 141-158.

<sup>520</sup> Kaoru Sugihara, *Ajiakan boeki no keisei to kozo* [Patterns and Development of Intra-Asian Trade] (Kyoto: Minerva Shobo, 1996); Kaoru Sugihara, 'Japan as an Engine of the Asian International Economy, c. 1880-1936', *Japan Forum*, vol. 2, no. 1 (1990), 127-145.

<sup>521</sup> George Brooks made a similar point about the consequence of the expansion of Senegambian trade in groundnuts, rice, cowhides, tropical timber and other goods during this period. George E. Brooks, *Western Africa and Cabo Verde, 1790s-1830s: Symbiosis of Slave and Legitimate Trades* (Bloomington, IN: AuthorHouse, 2010), 160.

The export of gum Arabic from Senegal into Western Europe could also be seen from this point of view. The export of gum Arabic from the region was associated with the increased import of guinees from overseas. James Searing identified the link between the growth in demand in Western Europe for gum Arabic and the increased demand for slave labour to extract gum Arabic. Searing discussed this mainly in the context of the Atlantic slave trade, hypothesising that the growing demand for slave labour in the production of gum Arabic and grains might have caused the decline of slave exports for the Atlantic trade, but his explanation also seems to be applicable to the subsequent era of 'legitimate' commerce.<sup>522</sup>

In the meanwhile, Martin Klein put forward the argument that the groundnut trade that began in the 1830s and started to expand in the following decade enabled Senegambian peasants to increase the involvement in a market economy through which they could purchase guns that became a challenge to the authority of military elites.<sup>523</sup> Klein linked the purchase of guns and horses by peasants with its implication on the *jihads* in Senegambia, but it would also be possible to extend his discussion into the purchase of Indian and European textiles by peasants. Considering that the zone influenced by the trade expanded, it was likely that more peasants responded to the new opportunity of market economy in the Senegambia and could get access to and consume imported textiles in this period. On the other hand, Kenneth Swindell and Aliou Jeng argued that in the early nineteenth century local chiefs in the kingdoms of Niimi and Baddibu on the northern bank of the Gambia River used slaves to produce groundnuts

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<sup>522</sup> James F. Searing, *West African Slavery and Atlantic Commerce* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 197. This raised a valid point for the discussion that the Atlantic and Saharan slave trades were based on economic incentives that the profit from these commercial activities was larger than that from the supply of slaves in domestic markets in West Africa. For an endogenous viewpoint of the slave trade in West Africa, see Stefano Fenoaltea, 'Europe in the African Mirror: the Slave Trade and the Rise of Feudalism', *Rivista di Storia Economica*, vol. 15, no. 2 (1999), 123-166; Hopkins, *An Economic History of West Africa*, 105; Gareth Austin, 'Commercial Agriculture and the Ending of Slave-Trading and Slavery in West Africa, 1780s-1920s', in Robin Law, Suzanne Schwarz and Silke Strickrodt (eds.), *Commercial Agriculture, the Slave Trade & Slavery in Atlantic Africa* (Woodbridge: Boydell & Brewer, 2013), 248-258.

<sup>523</sup> Martin A. Klein, *Islam and Imperialism in Senegal: Sine-Saloum, 1847-1914* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1968), 36-38; Martin A. Klein, 'Social and Economic Factors in the Muslim Revolution in Senegambia', *Journal of African History*, vol. 13, issue 3 (1972), 424.

for European markets, which replaced the lost grain and slave trade with Europe. Because the groundnut trade was more profitable than the slave exports from Gambia, ‘the ending of the trade in slaves provided an incentive for erstwhile owners and traders to develop new enterprises, which they found in the cultivation of groundnuts.’<sup>524</sup>

As seen in Chapter 2, cowrie imports expanded as a consequence of the establishment of the Sokoto Caliphate, which created a larger market and currency zone for cowrie shells, which were exchanged for slaves throughout the region. This expansion was also due to the increased demand for slave labour in the production of palm oil and other goods. Thus, ‘legitimate’ commerce and the increased imports of cowrie shells contributed to the economic growth of the region.<sup>525</sup> Likewise, the imports of British cotton goods need to be integrated into the same context. The development of the cash crop exports gave wealth to those who participated in the trade, especially small-scale producers and traders, and boosted their purchasing power that would lead to the increasing imports of cotton goods from Western Europe in the early nineteenth century. Thus, the increase of ‘legitimate’ trade stimulated West African economies, and this was a case of trade-led economic growth, or Smithian growth.<sup>526</sup>

### 3. West Africa, Western European industrialisation and globalisation

The thesis covered the period from the eighteenth to the mid-nineteenth century, which corresponded with the peak and declining phases of the Atlantic slave trade and the rising importance of the ‘legitimate’ commerce. One of the issues raised in this thesis is West Africa’s long-run contribution to the process of economic globalisation. As Joseph Inikori recently made the concept clear by summarising the debate between O’Rourke – Williamson and Flynn – Giraldez, economic globalisation has produced two different

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<sup>524</sup> Kenneth Swindell and Alieu Jeng, *Migrants, Credit, and Climate: the Gambian Groundnut Trade, 1834-1934* (Leiden: Brill, 2006), 9-11.

<sup>525</sup> Paul E. Lovejoy, ‘Interregional Monetary Flows in the Precolonial Trade of Nigeria’, *Journal of African History*, vol. 15, no. 4 (1974), 563-585; Paul E. Lovejoy, *Transformations in Slavery: A History of Slavery in Africa* (Third Edition, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), Ch. 8.

<sup>526</sup> This perspective needs to be integrated in the literature of the history of globalisation based on the core and periphery model that tends to ignore the internal dynamism of ‘peripheral’ economies. For example, Jeffrey G. Williamson, *Globalization and the Poor Periphery before 1950* (Cambridge, MA, and London: MIT Press, 2006).

consequences: an international commodity price convergence and the establishment of complex global trade connections.<sup>527</sup>

Historians have made considerable efforts to explain the role of West Africa in the globalisation process during this period. The effort often entailed the debates over the African contribution to the early modern Atlantic economy, and particularly to the origin of the British Industrial Revolution. The most prominent debate was over the plausibility of the Williams thesis, which argued that the wealth from the slave trade and the plantation economies in the Americas provided the financial basis of the British Industrial Revolution.<sup>528</sup> In recent years, Inikori emphasised that African labour in the plantation production of commodities in the Americas was critical in the formation of the Atlantic economy from 1650 to 1850, which, he argued, provided large export markets for British manufactured goods, such as textiles produced in Lancashire.<sup>529</sup> These works focused on the era of the Atlantic slave trade, especially the British one.

As for the post-abolition period, or particularly from 1807 onwards, Inikori made the point that, 'In the end the Industrial Revolution was powerfully instrumental in the final integration of the economies of the Atlantic basin into one economic system, the Atlantic economy.' He rightly identified that the Industrial Revolution created 'factory organization and mechanized manufacturing' and applied 'its technology to transportation overseas (the steam and steel ship) and over land (the railways in particular)'.<sup>530</sup> He also provided an overview about the impact of British abolition of the slave trade, or the rise of the 'legitimate' commerce, on West African economies in the early nineteenth century. Although Inikori mentioned the growth of palm oil trade to Britain, there is still room for this thesis to reinsert West Africa's economic contribution to other regional economies and the process of globalisation in the early nineteenth century into the literature of global economic history.<sup>531</sup>

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<sup>527</sup> Joseph E. Inikori, 'Africa and Globalization Process: Western Africa, 1450-1850', *Journal of Global History*, vol. 2, issue 1 (2007), 64-70.

<sup>528</sup> Eric Williams, *Capitalism and Slavery* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1944).

<sup>529</sup> Joseph E. Inikori, *Africans and the Industrial Revolution in England: A Study in International Trade and Economic Development* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002); Inikori, 'Africa and Globalization Process', 63-86.

<sup>530</sup> Inikori, 'Africa and Globalization Process', 79.

<sup>531</sup> J. E. Inikori, 'The Economic Impact of the 1807 British Abolition of the Transatlantic Slave Trade' in Robin Law, Toyin Falola and Matt D. Childs (eds.), *The*

As seen in Chapter 2, West Africa shifted its role in the world from the major source of slave labour for the plantation economies in the Americas, to an export sector of commercial agriculture for markets of Europe and North America, in the early nineteenth century. Palm oil imported from West Africa was an important component in the running of machines and railways; gum Arabic from Senegal was a crucial element used to stiffen the colour of dyed textiles in the textile industry in Western European textile centres such as Lancashire and Rouen. Statistical and documentary sources used in Chapter 2 showed that the demand in Western Europe for these commodities increased in the period and that the French invention of dextrin did not match the gum in its versatility. The fact that French colonial trade policy was modified to allow the French vessels to directly carry gum Arabic into Britain in 1832, recognised the significance of the market for the commodity in Britain. As such, a West African contribution was evident in Western European industrialisation and therefore globalisation in the first half of the nineteenth century.

On the other hand, it would be fair to examine West Africa in economic globalisation from another perspective. Jeffery Williamson and Kevin O'Rourke look at international commodity price convergence as evidence in economic globalisation. For them, globalisation means the integration of international commodity markets that influenced domestic factor prices and living standards. In their 2002 article on the origin of globalisation 'big ban', they argued that it occurred in the 1820s, when transport costs drastically declined. Their evidence from the Britain's North American trade and the Britain's Asian trade supported their argument.<sup>532</sup>

It is hard to establish a convincing time-series by which we find the date for the origin of international price convergence between West Africa and other regions, because of the limited availability of sources. However, the currently available data from existing literature suggest that there also appeared to have been similar, not so drastic, trends in the trade of gum Arabic and guinees from and into Senegal in the

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*Changing Worlds of Atlantic Africa: Essays in Honor of Robin Law* (Durham, NC: Carolina Academic Press, 2009), 163-182. The reason I use 'reinsert' here instead of 'insert' is, as mentioned in Chapter 2, earlier works on the trade in palm oil and gum Arabic from West Africa in the nineteenth century has already appreciated the importance of these goods in the industrialisation in Western Europe.

<sup>532</sup> Kevin H. O'Rourke and Jeffrey G. Williamson, 'When Did Globalisation Begin?' *European Review of Economic History*, vol. 6, issue 1 (2002), 23-50.

eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Indeed, the France – Saint Louis of Senegal gum Arabic price gap fell from 2.1 – 3 in 1785 to 1.25 in 1836 and 1.4 in 1838.<sup>533</sup> The price-spread on guinéés in France and Senegal markets declined in the early nineteenth century. The average percentage by which Senegal exceeded France price quotes was: 1821, 1.4 – 1.7; 1825, 1.25 – 1.4; 1830, 1.17 – 1.67 and 1832 – 1834, 0.97 – 1.17 (see Table 2.5).

#### 4. Continuity and change in the trade between West Africa and Western Europe

Another issue to analyse is the level of continuity and change of West Africa's seaborne trade from slave labour to agricultural produce and Western European business in the early nineteenth century. Earlier works have so far focused more on the palm oil trade along the coasts of West Africa than on the gum trade in Senegal, which should be integrated into the discussion here. This issue is relevant to the questions: which local conditions determined the development of trade and how did the trade affect local economies and societies?

While Hopkins paid attention to the emergence of small-scale participants, which was certainly witnessed in this period, A. J. H. Latham and Martin Lynn stressed that the existing elites of the coastal areas continued to take advantage of access to the market by political and economic means. These large-scale traders utilised institutions to regulate the sale of produce and owned enough capital to cover the transport costs from the interior to the coast using large canoes and many canoe men. In addition, there was continuity in the method of trade, in particular the importance of trust (or personal bond), which had been an institutional foundation in the era of the Atlantic slave trade. This was partly due to the fact that the trade was based on personal contacts and partly because of the lack of alternative mechanisms to ensure European merchants could procure slaves in West Africa. Thus, the large-scale traders still played a role as brokers for Europeans, and could survive in the transition from the slave trade to the palm oil trade in this period.<sup>534</sup>

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<sup>533</sup> James L. A. Webb, Jr., 'The Trade in Gum Arabic: Prelude to French Conquest in Senegal', *Journal of African History*, vol. 26, no. 2 (1985), 166.

<sup>534</sup> A. J. H. Latham, *Old Calabar, 1600-1891: The Impact of the International Economy upon a Traditional Society* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1973); Martin Lynn,



Continuity was also found in the palm oil trade on the British side. As discussed in Chapter 5, earlier works explored the flexibility of the former slave traders in Liverpool, who responded to the abolition of the slave trade by switching to participate in the palm oil trade. Family-based enterprise persisted in Britain's West African trade; Liverpool, Bristol and London continued to be the three major cities in Britain's West African trade; British merchants continued to transport textiles, British and Indian cottons, into West Africa. Chapter 5 provided information about the major trade routes of Indian cotton textiles, highlighting the importance of re-exports. In the era of the Atlantic slave trade, the EEIC played a principal role in carrying cotton textiles from India into London, where local merchants purchased them and resold them to merchants in provincial cities who invested in the Atlantic business, as seen in the case of Thomas Lumley. After the repeal of the EEIC's monopoly of the India trade, individual private merchants were allowed to participate in the trade, although Indian textiles became less important for British merchants in the nineteenth century because cheaper Lancashire goods were now available.

Meanwhile, Senegal witnessed the commercial shift in major trading items from slaves to gum Arabic. The significance of the nomadic emirates of Trarza and Brakna as brokers for the French in the gum trade persisted in the early nineteenth century. This continuity was partly based on the fact that they were politically powerful and controlled the trading posts, called '*escales*' in the lower Senegal River regions, like the case in the Niger Delta. The geographical location of the island of Saint Louis and the French mercantilist policy, called '*exclusif*', shaped the trade route of guinéés into the Senegal River regions. Moreover, the métis in Saint Louis, called '*habitants*', played an important role as intermediaries in the river trade as they had done in the slave trade before. Therefore, this thesis has emphasised that apart from the intersecting demand for gum Arabic and Indian guinéés, a combination of these three factors, geography, institutions and commercial networks, determined the patterns in the Franco-Senegal trade in the early nineteenth century.

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'The West African Palm Oil Trade in the Nineteenth Century and the "Crisis of Adaptation"', in Robin Law (ed.), *From Slave Trade to 'Legitimate' Commerce: The Commercial Transition in Nineteenth-Century West Africa* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 57-77; Paul E. Lovejoy and David Richardson, 'Trust, Pawnship, and Atlantic History: the Institutional Foundations of the Old Calabar Slave Trade', *American Historical Review*, vol. 104, no. 2 (1999), 333-355.

While the major ports involved in the West African trade continued to be the same on the British side despite the ending of the slave trade, France saw a shift from Nantes to Bordeaux and Marseille. The loss of Saint Domingue, a major source of sugar for France in the Caribbean, made Marseilles seek a different path, while Nantes maintained the sugar business with the French Antilles and the Indian Ocean in the nineteenth century. After the Napoleonic Wars and the end of the monopoly granted to the Compagnie du Sénégal, Senegal offered a new avenue for a new generation of the Bordeaux merchants in the early nineteenth century. Moreover, their strong ties with the French government enabled Bordeaux merchants to gain an upper hand over their rivals from Marseille in the gum trade along the Senegal River.

##### 5. European enterprises in pre-colonial and colonial India

West African demand for cotton textiles produced by Indian artisans required Europeans to develop efficient responses to procure these products in India and supply them in European markets to merchants who engaged in African trade. Chapter 4 touched on European colonial policies in India related to the procurement of cotton textiles for West Africa from the late eighteenth to the early nineteenth century. The comparative case studies of the British possessions of South India and the French in Pondicherry showed interesting different results. These were based on whether Europeans could motivate Indian labour to produce cotton textiles for African buyers. In short, there may have been an incentive problem in European enterprises in pre-colonial and colonial India. As this issue has gained increasing attention from economic and business historians, incentives arguably play a large role in the success or failure of a venture.<sup>535</sup>

Indian artisans, similar to those in West Africa, produced textiles under conditions of natural resource endowments. The EEIC initially procured textiles for

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<sup>535</sup> For the EEIC's policy on the Bengal silk industry in the eighteenth century, see Karolina Hutkova, 'The English East India Company and Bengal Silk Industry in the Late Eighteenth Century', paper presented at the Economic and Social History of the Early Modern World, the Institute of Historical Research, London, 24 October 2014. For two British firms, the Assam Company and Gillanders, Arbutnot and Co. in the nineteenth century, see Michael Aldous, 'Avoiding Negligence and Profusion: the Failure of the Joint-Stock Form in the Anglo-Indian Tea Trade, 1840-1870', *Enterprise & Society*, vol. 16, no. 3 (2015), 677-679.

domestic consumption and re-exports under the advance system in which they relied on local networks in India. Indian weavers retained some independence and retained agency over how to spend the advanced cash. This system allowed the artisans to maximise their gains by using cheaper materials for the ordered produce. However, this led to a quality problem with their products, which, in turn, led the EEIC to carry out an institutional change with the introduction of the aumany system. This mode of procurement was problematic in that, despite the fact that the EEIC granted some privileges to their weavers, it did not lead to the outcome expected by the EEIC. Rather, it was reported that weavers fled to escape from the EEIC's tight controls. This implies that the incentive given by the EEIC was weak or other forces unrelated to incentives such as allowance in kind that replaced cash advances, may have undermined the success of their attempt.<sup>536</sup>

Pondicherry's experiences suggest that incentives are often a function of initial conditions in the local economy. When Pondicherry was returned from Britain to France in the mid-1810s, the port town was completely ruined. For the local administration, the reconstruction of the town, in particular the creation of employment opportunities for the jobless inhabitants was a pressing task. Another task was to procure guineés for the gum trade in Senegal; this was due to the inability of the French manufacturers to produce cotton textiles which satisfied African consumers. These situations prompted the French to not only invest the colonial town and but also create strong incentives to Indian labour to produce textiles for West African consumers.

## 6. Future research directions

Finally, I would like to highlight a couple of new directions that await further research. One direction is to explore the case of West African demand for textiles in the late pre-colonial and early colonial phases and its interactions with European and American traders and extend the analysis into the second half of the nineteenth century.<sup>537</sup> This

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<sup>536</sup> This inference is inspired by Eric Hilt's discussion on the failures of American whaling corporations in the nineteenth century. Eric Hilt, 'Incentives in Corporations: Evidence from the American Whaling Industry', *Journal of Law and Economics*, vol. 49, no. 1 (2006), 208.

<sup>537</sup> On West African trade with the United States in the nineteenth century, see George E. Brooks, *Yankee Traders, Old Coasters and African Middlemen: A History of*

effort may be helpful in exploring the developmental path of West African economies during the pre-colonial and colonial periods.

Also, while this thesis examined consumption patterns of Indian cotton textiles in the savannah, Sahel and desert regions in West Africa, it leaves room to consider the case of the southern forest zones of West Africa. As pointed out in Chapter 2, in the southern coastal areas of West Africa, the palm oil trade developed in the nineteenth century, and small-scale traders, women and slaves participated in the business through which they purchased textiles, cowrie shells and other goods. Considering that cloth currency zones concentrated on the savannah, Sahel and desert regions,<sup>538</sup> we should assume that there were different social and cultural factors in the forests than those that constituted local demand for imported textiles than the savannah. This is interesting not only because it would be possible to reveal different consumption patterns of textiles within West Africa, but also because we might be able to explore what types of textiles slaves and women purchased and consumed.

Lastly, as discussed in Chapter 4, the production of cotton textiles in Pondicherry thrived largely because of the demand in West Africa for guineés, and their products were consumed around the Senegal River regions well into the colonial period. This is a case of non-European products that maintained a competitive edge in the early modern and modern periods. Future research may pay attention to other non-European products that were traded and consumed outside their producing regions, like Indian guineés traded and consumed in West Africa. Such an effort would lead us to see a ‘global survival of non-European products in the age of industrialisation’,<sup>539</sup> showing the complicated structure of what Hopkins termed ‘modern globalization’.<sup>540</sup>

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*American Legitimate Trade with West Africa in the Nineteenth Century* (Boston, MA: Boston University Press, 1970).

<sup>538</sup> Johnson, ‘Cloth as Money’, 194.

<sup>539</sup> I got the idea of this phrase from personal communication with the late Professor Sir Christopher Bayly (10 December 2014, London).

<sup>540</sup> A. G. Hopkins, ‘Introduction: Globalization – An Agenda for Historians’, in A. G. Hopkins (ed.), *Globalization in World History* (London: Pimlico, 2002), 6.

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