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| Sommario/riassunto | <p>The modern plan of Pondicherry shows a large town in gridiron plan which obviously was extended to its present form through controlled urban development. Some Indian scholars consider that the town was built according to the principles of the ancient Hindu treatises of architecture, particularly the Silpa Sastra. French historians, on the other hand, feel that the plan should be considered as an achievement of "the French mind". In fact, the Dutch plans of Pondicherry dated 1693-1694, preserved at the National Archives at The Hague, show that the orthogonal street pattern of the town is a creation of the Dutch. The plans of 1693 show that, in Francois Martin's settlement, the streets or lanes were following an irregular pattern, without any shape or symmetry, whereas, in the plans drafted in 1694, during the Dutch occupation, one finds the design of a large new town, with a very regular geometric layout, rectangular blocks of houses, separated by straight streets, intersecting at right angles. This great urban project of the Dutch Company was adopted by the French who systematically carried out the extensive straightening out of streets into a planned grid, during the the first half of the 18th century. Le plan en damier de Pondichery surprend les specialistes d'histoire urbaine qui se demandent comment expliquer son origine. Certains chercheurs indiens pensent que la ville a ete construite suivant les principes des</p> |

anciens traites hindous d'architecture, en particulier les Silpa Sastra. Les historiens français, en revanche, estiment que ce plan d'urbanisme est "une reussite de l'esprit français". La verite est que le schema geometrique a ete concu par la Compagnie des Pays-Bas: l'analyse des plans hollandais de 1693-1694 deposes aux Archives nationales de La Haye montre qu'en verite le schema geometrique a ete concu par les Hollandais. En effet, leurs plans de 1693 montrent que la ville de Francois Martin etait construite suivant un plan anarchique avec des voies irregulieres, diversement orientees, reliant principalement des jardins, alors que ceux de 1694, realises pendant l'occupation hollandaise, presentent des surfaces divisees en rectangles egaux et des rues tirees au cordeau d'une rectitude et d'une harmonie singulieres, correspondant a un grand projet de reorganisation urbaine repris etachee par les gouverneurs français de Pondichery dans la premiere moitie du xviiie siecle.
