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All at Sea: Cross-cultural Encounters on the Coast of Masulipatnam, 1676-78

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[1] A sixteenth-century Mughal miniature of a European merchant ship. Image taken from: https://www.historians.org/publications-and-directories/perspectives-on-history/summer-2015/a-european-merchant-ship-with-indian-charm-a-mughal-miniature-on-auction-at-christies (Accessed 18th December 2019).

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Glossary

Chapter 1: Introduction

On the 24th of January 1676, the merchants of the Dutch East India Company in Masulipatnam received a letter from their interpreter, Narsa. The imperial Majesty of Golconda was nine miles away, he wrote, and it was best they make a journey to welcome him. The following day, all Persian shipping was stopped with the coming of the Sultan and his retinue.[2] Everything was being done to receive the unexpected visit of Sultan Abul Hasan Qutb Shah to their seaboard town.

This introduction to the *Dagh-Register* of Masulipatnam opens the remarkable and untold story of Sultan Abul Hasan Qutb Shah who, during a time of upheaval in the Deccan, decided to take a pleasure trip to the coast. What is curious is that the Sultan decided to visit the port-town not once but twice, returning again in 1678. In both instances, he lodged with the Europeans, sailed in their ships and set up court wherever he went. Despite the exceptional nature of these encounters, to wit, scant attention has been paid to them.

By looking closely at these two encounters of the Qutb Shahi Sultan with the Dutch and English factors on the coast of Masulipatnam, this thesis argues that it illuminates our understanding of diplomatic and cross-cultural interactions. This paper has hereby three objectives. First, it aims to demonstrate the lively intimacy between the Court and Company. Second, it highlights the competing diplomatic approaches taken by the Companies in their encounters with the Court. Third, it argues that despite the relative success of these encounters, such 'reverse' visits were not preferred; they were full of uncertainties outside the Company's control. Through the interrogation of these themes, it attempts to reassess the idea of commensurability, especially between Europeans and Indians, and rethink what it means to meet in the seventeenth century.

Historiography

The dominance of economic histories of the East India Companies

The reasons why these encounters off the coast have been thus far ignored are not difficult to find. Studies of the East India Companies (the Dutch and English) have often favored an economic approach. The Companies appeared in Indian waters in the first decade of the seventeenth century and quickly inserted themselves into the trading circuits of the Indian Ocean world.[3] As companies of merchants, most of the archival potential of these East India Companies has been successfully used

[2] NA VOC 1316: 530.
[3] A good bibliographical guide is Prakash, O. "Bibliographic Essay" in idem. Prakash, O. *European Commercial Enterprise in India* (Cambridge, 1998), pp. 352-365. For a brief outline of the trade that the Companies were conducting in Coromandel, see the next chapter.

for reconstructing early modern Asian economies. Till today, it continues to be a rich entry point for understanding Asia's involvement during a time of globalization and exchange. As an extension of this preference, studies on the European Companies and Golconda have often focused on the trading activities and movement of products, especially from its port enclaves overseas and within its extensive hinterland. There are three important works in this regard. The first is Tapan Raychaudhuri's *Jan Company in Coromandel, 1605-1690,* which relies heavily on Dutch missives to reconstruct the region's commercial activities.[4] Raychaudhuri's work continues to be relevant for grounding Dutch economic activity in the wider Indian Ocean world. Second, Sinnappah Arasaratnam's work, *Merchants, Companies and Commerce on the Coromandel Coast, 1650-1740,* attempts to be more integrative, uniting in one vision the trading companies to "reveal all they can of the host society in which they were looking."[5] The third work is Sanjay Subrahmanyam's *The Political Economy of Commerce: Southern India, 1500-1650,* which attempts to link trade to broader developments occurring in internal and coastal economies.[6] All three are solid researches that use commerce as the basis for understanding the European relationship to Asia. All three have also constituted one of the main ways we come to understand Golconda, through its only seaport, Masulipatnam.[7]

Although economic history continues to be a fruitful avenue of research for many scholars, they also shroud other possibilities in reading the histories of the East India Companies. Guido van Meersbergen has shown that in the larger scholarship being produced on the East India Companies, the study of culture and ethnography remains both rare and limited.[8] A steady stream of studies that look at power, mobility, slavery, violence, colonial governance, and colonial societies have appeared, but studies of culture and implicit ethnographies have been slow on the uptake. Thus far only Sanjay Subrahmanyam and Markus Vink have written about the cultural ideas and mentalities that shaped these cross-cultural encounters.[9] Besides them, scholars rarely engage with these issues compared to the larger number of specialist works produced on the broader themes above.

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[4] Raychaudhuri, T. *Jan Company in Coromandel, 1605-1690* ('s-Gravenhage, 1962). Raychaudhuri follows on from Terpstra's early work, see Terpstra, H. *De Vestiging van de Nederlanders aan de Kust van Koromandel* (Groningen, 1911).
[5] Arasaratnam, S. *Merchants, Companies and Commerce on the Coromandel Coast, 1650-1740* (New Delhi, 1986), p. 3.
[6] Subrahmanyam, S. *The Political Economy of Commerce: Southern. India 1500-1650* (Cambridge, 1990).
[7] Many studies have been done of Masulipatnam. See for example Subrahmanyam, S. "Masulipatnam Revisited, 1550-1750*:* A Survey and Some Speculations" in Broeze, F. ed. *Gateways to Asia: Port Cities of Asia in the 13th-20th Centuries* (London and New York, 1997), pp. 33-65; Shah, M.A. "Masulipatnam, a metropolitan port in the XVIIth century", *Islamic Culture* 33, 3 (1959): 169-187; Arasaratnam, S. and Ray, A. *Masulipatnam and Cambay*: A *History of Two Port Towns 1500-1800* (New Delhi, 1994). Another important work is Joseph Brennig's dissertation in which he analyses textile production and trade as it develops and declines into the eighteenth century. Brennig, J. J. *The Textile Trade of Seventeenth Century Northern Coromandel: A Study of a Pre-Modern Asian Export Industry* (Doctoral Dissertation) (Wisconsin-Madison, 1975).
[8] Van Meersbergen, G. "Writing East India Company History after the Cultural Turn: Interdisciplinary Perspectives on the Seventeenth-Century East India Company and Verenigde Oostindische Compagnie", *Journal for Early Modern Cultural Studies* 17, 3 (2017): 10-36.
[9] See for example Vink, M.P.M. "Images and Ideologies" in idem, *Encounters on the Opposite Coast: The Dutch East India Company and the Nayaka State of Madurai in the Seventeenth Century* (Leiden, 2015) and Subrahmanyam, S. *Forcing the Doors of Heathendom: Ethnography, Violence and the Dutch East India Company* (Amsterdam, 2002).

The lack of studies on the Golconda Sultanate

It would also not be remiss to say that few studies make the Qutb Shahis the central object of research. Historians are still heavily dependent on the scholarly work done by Indian scholars such as Haroon Khan Sherwani and Abdul Majeed Siddiqui. These authors focused mainly on the socio-political and economic aspects of the kingdom. Siddiqui's *History of Golcunda* was one of the earliest general histories; it is a short account but gives a rough outline of the kingdom from its beginnings to its end.[10] Sherwani, seen today as the doyen of Deccan studies, was more prolific, writing extensively on the Qutb Shahis and publishing a wide range of articles ranging from numismatics to poetry. His studies on the Golconda Sultanate have been collected in two important works, *History of the Qutb Shahi Dynasty* and *History of Medieval Deccan, 1295-1724.*[11] A third work here is Shakeb's dissertation, *The Relations of Golconda with Iran*, which focuses on the political and diplomatic correspondence and commercial traffic between these two states.[12] The value of these works lies primarily in their use of indigenous manuscripts and printed sources. These are mainly in Persian but also complemented by works in Arabic, Telugu, and Urdu. However, this literature is also limited in three respects. First, they say little about the reign of Abul Hasan Qutb Shah and the years between 1674 and 1686. Second, although they use European sources, they rarely discuss cross-cultural encounters with the Europeans.[13] Third, and most pertinently, these sources rarely use Dutch sources. Even though they were aware that Dutch archival materials were at hand, they rarely were able to make use of them.

In recent years, only a few authors have made Golconda the focus of extensive research. Robert Simpkins has written about road networks in Golconda from European accounts.[14] Laura Weinstein has undertaken a close study of early manuscripts produced in Golconda and Marika Sardar has conducted an extensive study of the Golconda Fort.[15] These authors contribute to our understanding of the urban architecture and the regional literary styles that were being developed in the Deccan. However, it is also slim pickings compared to the large corpus of scholarly work being produced on the Mughal Empire and Colonial India. More research is therefore sorely needed. In light of this historiography, it is not unreasonable to conclude that the Dutch, as prominent traders in the kingdom, would make a significant contribution to our understanding of both period and polity.

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[10] Siddiqui, A.M. *History of Golcunda* (Hyderabad, 1956), first published in Urdu as idem. *Tarikh-e Golconda* (Hyderabad, 1939).
[11] Sherwani, H.K. *History of the Qutb Shahi Dynasty* (New Delhi, 1974); Sherwani H.K. and Joshi, P.M. eds. *History of Medieval Deccan, 1295-1724* (Hyderabad, 1973-1974).
[12] Shakeb, M.Z.A. *Relations of Golkonda with Iran: Diplomacy, Ideas and Commerce, 1518-1687* (Poona, 1976).
[13] A few paragraphs in these works are devoted to discussing trade with the English. Shakeb, for example, references Dutch trade via the works of Raychaudhuri and Terpstra.
[14] Simpkins, R. *The Road to Golconda: European Travelers' Routes, Political Organization and Archaeology in the Golconda Kingdom (1518-1687)* (Doctoral Dissertation) (Wisconsin-Madison, 2011).
[15] Sardar, M. *Golconda through Time: A Mirror of the Evolving Deccan* (Doctoral Dissertation) (New York, 2007) and Weinstein, L. S. *Variations on a Persian Theme: Adaptation and Innovation in Early Manuscripts from Golconda* (Doctoral Dissertation) (Colombia, 2013).

Courtly encounters and diplomacy

One area which has seen a renaissance is the study of courtly encounters. Within the traditional historiography, scholarly work tends to focus on two different types. The first highlights cross-cultural encounters that take place within the confines of the court. The second focuses on interactions that take place between commensurate courts. While the former emphasizes difference, adaptation, and transmission between two different cultures, the latter establishes how such interactions draw upon established commonalities and mutual intelligibility between similar cultures.

For the first case, much attention is devoted to studying the history of European reception at Asian courts.[16] A very popular study is the embassy of Thomas Roe to the Mughal Court which is seen as the quintessential example of the limits of cross-cultural interaction.[17] Although scholars have used the archives fruitfully to study Dutch, and more broadly European, encounters with Asian courts, no work, to the best of my knowledge, has studied the European relationship with the Golconda court.[18] This is despite the existence of archival materials to write such a history.[19] Gijs Kruijtzer's work, *Xenophobia in Seventeenth-Century India*, comes closest to such an endeavor. In this pioneering study, Kruijtzer elucidates a fascinating history of loathing and distrust between Brahmin and Muslim elements at the court of Abul Hasan.[20]

The second case tends to pick up the theme developed by Sanjay Subrahmanyam on cultural commensurability.[21] Two scholars that look into the shared worldviews of local courts in pre-colonial India are Subah Dayal, who has looked at the "stratigraphy of cultural encounters and negotiations between imperial and regional courts", and Emma Flatt, who examined the shared courtly skills and practices across the Deccan Sultanates.[22] Another variation upon this theme focuses primarily on the artistic interactions between these local courts which has been the subject of many popular studies and

[16]There are few studies of Asians received at European courts because they are hampered by a lack of sources. I think here of the three early Asian embassies made to the Dutch Republic but also the famous Thai embassy to the Court of Louis XIV, about which more has been written about.

[17] See Subrahmanyam, S. "Frank submissions: the Company and the Mughals between Sir Thomas Roe and Sir William Norris" in Bowen, H.V., Lincoln, M. and Rigby, N. eds. *The Worlds of the East India Company* (Woodbridge, 2002). Some recent examples are Chida-Razvi, M.M. "The Perception of Reception: The Importance of Sir Thomas Roe at the Mughal Court of Jahangir", *Journal of World History* (2014): 263-84; Mishra, R. "Diplomacy at the Edge: Split Interest in the Roe Embassy to the Mughal Court", *Journal of British Studies* 53, 1 (2014): 5-28 and Das, N. *Sir Thomas Roe: Eyewitness to a Changing World* (London, 2018).

[18]See Loscher-Scholten, E.B. and Rietbergen, P. eds. *Hof en handel: Aziatische vorsten en de VOC, 1620-1720* (Amsterdam, 2004); Van Goor, J. "De koopman als diplomaat: hofreizen als spiegel van Europees-Aziatische verhoudingen" in Parmentier, J. and Spanoghe, S. eds. *Orbis in Orbem. Liber amicorum John Everaert* (Ghent, 2001), pp. 513-538. For a published monograph, see Ruangslip, B. *Dutch East India Company Merchants at the Court of Ayutthaya: Dutch Perceptions of the Thai Kingdom, c. 1604-1765* (Leiden, 2007).

[19] Gommans, J., Bes, L. and Kruijtzer, G. *Dutch Sources on South Asia, c. 1600-1825, vol. I.* (New Delhi, 2001), p. 30.

[20] Kruijtzer, G. *Xenophobia in Seventeenth-Century India* (Leiden, 2009). This constitutes the only work that I have found.

[21] Subrahmanyam, S. *Three Ways to be Alien: Travails and Encounters in the Early Modern World* (Waltham MA, 2011); idem. *Courtly Encounters: Translating Courtliness and Violence in Early Modern Eurasia* (Cambridge MA, 2012).

[22] Dayal, S. *Landscapes of Conquest: Patrons and Narratives in the seventeenth-century Deccan, c. 1636-1687* (Doctoral Dissertation) (California, 2016); Flatt, E.J. *The Courts of the Deccan Sultanates: Living Well in the Persian Cosmopolis* (Cambridge, 2019). For a potential work that could be done with Dutch sources see Bes, L. *The Heirs of Vijayanagara: Court Politics in Early Modern South India* (Doctoral Dissertation) (Nijmegen, 2018).

successful exhibitions in the past decade.[23] These two types of courtly encounters described above have been focused on, as the name suggests, encounters in court.

By looking at these current trends, it is not surprising that historians have yet to make use of these two encounters that, although deal with Court and Company, fall outside the frameworks traditionally used. Recent work has begun to challenge this preponderance of court-based meetings by looking at encounters that take place outside of court. Guido van Meersbergen, in studying the Company's interactions with the local authorities in Bengal and Orissa, has argued that "political negotiations between Company agents and lower-tier officials … make or break diplomatic arrangements."[24] So has Byapti Sur, who looks at the diversity of social relations between the Dutch and the locals.[25]

In sum, I argue that this work is well placed to fill the gap in these three different but interrelated types of historiography. First, it addresses a little-known encounter for a relatively understudied kingdom in India. In examining this account, it contributes to our understanding of a lesser-known early modern kingdom and its engagement with the wider world. Second, it acts as a corrective to the economic-biased historiography of the Companies with its emphasis on studying cross-cultural interactions that have been hitherto neglected. Third, by studying informal encounters on the coast and the strategies of the Companies to accommodate the court, it challenges us to rethink diplomatic and courtly encounters in global early modernity.

Methodology

Since this study focuses on the deeds and conversations of men, I have chosen to use a micro-historical approach. I propose to show, through a close study of the two encounters and the interactions between people, larger social themes and historical processes. There are three reasons why such an approach makes sense. First, a micro approach, as its proponents tend to argue, can help illuminate larger social, political, cultural and social processes through the prism of the individual(s).[26] Human personalities often act in situations not of their choosing, in reference and in relation to those around them. By studying the individual subjects, we are able to explore not only how the historical "mind meets the world" but also how the mind is emblematic of its world and its

[23] A few such exhibitions include: The Arts of India's Deccan Sultans (2008); Sultans of the Deccan: Opulence and Fantasy (2015); Nauras: The Many Arts of the Deccan (2015). The monographs published as a result of these exhibitions are: Haidar, N.N. and Sardar, M. eds. *Sultans of the South: Arts of India's Deccan Courts, 1323-1687* (New York, 2011), idem. *Sultans of the Deccan: Opulence and Fantasy* (New York and London, 2015) and Singh, N. ed. *Scent upon a Southern Breeze: The Synaesthetic Arts of the Deccan* (Mumbai, 2018). For cross-cultural artistic encounters, see also Natif, M. *Mughal Occidentalism: Artistic Encounters between Europe and Asia at the Courts of India, 1580-1630* (Leiden, 2018). Natif posits that the Mughals repurposed and recoded European elements and techniques in painting, fashioning themselves in the process as both cosmopolitan and at the same time culturally superior. Ibid., pp. 7-9.

[24] Van Meersbergen, G. "Diplomacy in a provincial setting: The East India Companies in seventeenth century Bengal and Orissa" in Clulow, A. and Mostert, T. eds. *The Dutch and English East India Companies: Diplomacy, Trade and Violence in Early Modern Asia* (Amsterdam, 2018), pp. 55-78.

[25] Sur, B. "The Dutch East India Company through the Local Lens: Exploring the Dynamics of Indo-Dutch Relations in Seventeenth Century Bengal", *Indian Historical Review* 44, 1 (2017): 62-91.

[26] Finkelstein, B. "Revealing Human Agency: The Uses of Biography in the Study of Educational History" in Kridel, C. ed. *Writing Educational Biography: Explorations in Qualitative Research* (New York, 1998), p. 45.

interactions.[27] Second, that this scale, when applied to individuals who traverse multiple boundaries, "best portray the entanglement of cultural traditions produced by the growing contacts and clashes between different societies that followed … European geographical expansion."[28] Such an approach shows clearly the strategies employed to facilitate comprehension and accommodation but also the existence of misunderstanding and difference. Third, it helps add extra biographical detail on rather elusive persons and is a corrective for a historiography that has thus far been focused on exceptional individuals.[29] This is especially useful for a history that knows comparatively little about the region and its personalities.[30]

Sources

The most important source for this study is the *Dagh-Register* of the Masulipatnam Factory from the *Overgekomen Brieven en Papieren* (Received Letters and Papers, hereafter OBP).[31] This is a detailed day-by-day breakdown of the visit of the Sultan and his retinue from the 24th of January to the 15th of February 1676. Although these records once circulated throughout the offices of the Dutch East India Company, few today remain. This three-week document is therefore especially valuable not only because it survives but also because it contains unparalleled insight into this moment between court and company. This record is complemented by other missives in the OBP. These are usually letters sent from the local factories to Batavia containing monthly summaries of the outstanding events, political disturbances, and trading conditions. Because of the special visit of the Sultan, we have at least three different reports speaking of the same event between 1676 and 1677. For this research, I have looked as well at the missives between 1676 and 1679 in the OBP, with occasional references to other missives between 1672 and 1675. This is not exhaustive and I had to be selective. These missives constitute the main bulk of my research. I have not been able to use the extant archival documents of the English East India Company except for one, the Diary of William Puckle.[32] For other English perspectives, I rely mainly on two compendium volumes. The first is *The English Factories in India*, which details English activity according to location and summarizes the conditions

[27] Thompson, E.P. *Witness Against the Beast: William Blake and the Moral Law* (New York, 1993), xix; Kessler-Harris, A. "Why Biography?", *The American Historical Review* 114, 3 (2009): 625-630. The best account thus far is Eaton's *A Social History of the Deccan* in which he used eight historical Deccan figures not only to show them as 'vivid personalities' in their own right but also to illuminate larger social themes such as 'colonialization, factional strife, elite mobility, slavery, inter-caste relations, and social banditry.' Eaton, R. *A Social History of the Deccan* (Cambridge, 2005), pp. 4-5.
[28] Trivellato, F. "Is there a Future for Italian Microhistory in the Age of Global History?", *California Italian Studies* 2, 1 (2011): 1-24. This has been convincingly shown by Spence and applied recently by Aslanian. See Spence, J.D. *The Question of Hu* (New York, 1989); Aslanian, S.D. "Une vie sur plusieurs continents : Microhistoire globale d'un agent arménien de la Compagnie des Indes Orientales, 1666-1688", *Annale*s 73, 1 (2018): 19-56.
[29] Renders, J.W. and de Haan, B.B.J. "The Limits of Representativeness: Biography, Life Writing and Microhistory" in *Storia della Storiografia – History of Historiography* 29, 59-60 (2011): 32-42. Some volumes which discuss biography or 'life histories' in India include Arnold, D. and Blackburn, S. eds. *Telling Lives in India: Biography, Autobiography and Life Histories* (Delhi, 2004) and Brown, J.W. *Windows into the Past: Life Histories and the Historian of South Asia* (Indiana, 2008).
[30] Eaton, *A Social History of the Deccan*, p. 4.
[31] NA VOC 1316: 530-546.
[32] BL IOR G/26/12 Diary of William Puckle, while at Masulipatam and Fort St. George, June 1675 to Jan 1676.

year-on-year. These visits to Masulipatnam are detailed in the second volume, 1670-77 and the fourth volume, 1678-84.[33] These two sources not only provide a counterpoint to the perspectives of the Dutch, they are also valuable when they speak about occurrences Dutch sources are silent about. Finally, the work of Daniel Havart is especially important.[34] Havart's three-volume work, *Op-en ondergang van Coromandel* is an important source that covers many aspects of Golconda and the Dutch presence there.[35] This work is especially noteworthy since the archival missives from October 1678 to February 1679 contain few references to the second visit.[36] I have also looked at Havart's other notable work, *Persiaanse secretaris*.[37] Finally, it was also instructive to look at the tangible benefits of these encounters, the *farmans* issued to the Dutch in 1676 and 1678.[38] These concluded contracts can be found in Havart's account but also in the *Corpus Diplomaticum*, a book of collected treaties that the Dutch secured with a variety of rulers across Asia.[39]

Other sources reference these visits from a much later period. Three works here are especially important. The first is the *Mémoires de François Martin*, the overseas director of Pondicherry, who gives us a contemporary French perspective of the visit in 1676 that can be cross-referenced with Dutch and English accounts.[40] The second is an eighteenth-century work, *Vies des gouverneurs généraux* that writes about the visits in question, with, however, some new information.[41] A third source is François Valentijn's *Oud en Nieuw Oost-Indien,* which is very much indebted to Havart's account.[42] Besides looking at these visits, I look at other missives that have to deal with general developments and other courtly encounters. First, I had to study the ascension of Sultan Abul Hasan and the revolution at court, for which ample materials can be found.[43] Second, I look particularly at

[33] Fawcett, C. ed. *The English Factories in India. Vol 2. The Eastern Coast and Bengal, 1670 -1677* (Oxford, 1952) and idem. *The English Factories in India. Vol. 4. The Eastern Coast and Bengal, 1678-1684* (Oxford, 1655). Hereafter abbreviated to *EFII, vol. II.* and *EFII, vol. IV.*

[34] Daniel Havart served the VOC as treasurer and secretary in Hyderabad. For a brief biographical sketch, see Kruijtzer, G. "Daniel Havart" in Thomas, D. and Chesworth, J.A. eds. *Christian-Muslim Relations. A Bibliographical History. Volume 12 Asia, Africa and the Americas (1700-1800)* (Leiden, 2018), pp. 493-504. Besides practicing medicine, he was also an accomplished grave-poet in India and the Dutch Republic. See Havart, D. *Hondert en Vyftig Grafschriften* (Rotterdam, 1718). His friend Pieter Rabus calls him a very learned gentleman. "*Den zeer geleerden heere, den heere Dr. Daniel Havart, arts en digter*…" Rabus, P. *De Boekzaal van Europe, deel 9* (Rotterdam, 1700), p. 387.

[35] Havart, D. *Op en Ondergang van Coromandel, vol. I-III* (Amsterdam, 1693). This work discusses the country and its rulers, its climate and its people, but also the Dutch factories and its personnel, even the embassies made to the royal court.

[36] The Dagh-register of Masulipatnam for 1678 is also absent.

[37] Havart, D. *Persiaanse secretaris* (Amsterdam, 1680). In this work, Havart shows himself as a man who is not only fluent in the languages, but also a man who is able to dabble in high literature and politics in two very different cultures, offering examples of the practices common to the period. It is perhaps this work that Havart comes closest to expressing the commensurability of the cultures and his role in facilitating a common understanding. For a study of the role of a *munshi* in the Mughal world, see Alam, M. and Subrahmanyam, S. "The Making of a Munshi", *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East* 24, 2 (2004): 61-72.

[38] *Farmans*, simply described, are royal decrees of law through which the East India Companies obtained trading privileges or concessions. See also glossary.

[39] Heeres, J.E. *Corpus Diplomaticum Neerlando-Indicum* ('s-Gravenhage, 1907-1955).

[40] Martineau, A. ed. *Mémoires de François Martin, fondateur de Pondichéry (1665-1696), tomes I-III.* (Paris, 1931).

[41] Dubois, J.P. and Van Imhoff, G.W. *Vies des gouverneurs généraux, avec l'abrégé de l'histoire des établissemens hollandois aux Indes orientales* (La Haye, 1763).

[42] Keijzer, S. ed. *François Valentijn's Oud en Nieuw Oost-Indien* ('s-Gravenhage, 1856-1858).

[43] NA VOC 1302: 457-525. The circumstances surrounding the ascension of Sultan Abul Hasan seems to be a popular trope and is also covered in at least three other places. The first is in the account of Abbé Carré, who also comments extensively on the Dutch-Golconda campaigns against the French at St. Thomé. The second, by the English curate Ovington, who

the *hofreis* (embassy) accounts, made by the Dutch to the Golconda court in 1672 and 1686.[44] Third, I locate in the OBP the *Memories van Overgave*, reports made by the governor or factory chief to brief his incoming successor.[45] A similar type of document was given to Lauren Pits as ambassador to the Golconda court in 1686.[46] These sets of sources are mined for contextual information but also for their perspectives on courtly protocol, allowing me to juxtapose them with the Sultan's visit to the coast. Finally, another relevant source here is The *Diaries of Streynsham Master*.[47] Master was one of the distinguished servants of the English East India Company. In 1675, he was invested as Agent of Madras to undertake a commission for 'Regulating and new Methodiseing their Factorys and Accounts upon the Coast and Bay.'[48] As a personal record, Master's diary is particularly useful in contextualizing the state of English activities in Masulipatnam and elaborating English attitudes to the Sultan's visit vis-à-vis the Dutch.

The last category of sources employed is used to provide peripheral contextualization. I have used mainly European travelogues such as the works of John Fryer, Jean-Baptiste Tavernier, and Niccolo Manucci among others because they provide first-hand observations of the kingdom, its surroundings, and its personalities.[49] These records tell us about Masulipatnam, travel routes within the kingdom but also European perceptions of the court and other Europeans. Finally, I looked at the *Dagh-Register Batavia* for the later perceptions of Abul Hasan Qutb Shah.

Even though Golconda has a rich variety of indigenous sources, ranging from official chronicles and edicts to poetry and fables, I rely on the secondary literature for two reasons. First, indigenous sources say little about the reign of Abul Hasan. Only one Persian chronicle was compiled during his reign and it deals primarily with prominent personages of its past. After the kingdom fell to the Mughals, its literary society was largely dispersed. Therefore, these works have little to say about this period in

attaches an appendix about the later 'revolution' in the court of Golconda. Third, a mid-eighteenth-century collection of entertaining tales. See Fawcett, C. ed. *The Travels of the Abbé Carré in India and the Near East, 1672 to 1674, vol. I-III.* (London, 1947); Ovington, J. *A Voyage to Suratt In the Year, 1689* (London, 1696); and Anon. *Winter Evening Tales* (Dublin, 1733).

[44] During the first embassy, the Dutch ambassador, Pieter Smith managed to be present during the kingly succession. The second embassy, made in much pomp and ceremony by Lauren Pits, give us insights into the court protocol and character of the Sultan.

[45] Two such documents here are relevant: from Wilhelm Hartsuijcker to Hendrick van Outhoorn on his departure from Masulipatnam in 1679 and from Hartsinck to his successor Janszoon in 1683. NA VOC 1348: 1189-1209; NA VOC 1387: 1377-1382.

[46] NA VOC 1411: 536-549.

[47] Temple, R.C. ed. *The Diaries of Streynsham Master, 1675-1680, and other contemporary papers relating thereto, vol. I-II.* (London, 1911). For a study of Streynsham Master's office in the creation of order and authority, see Ogborn, M. "Streynsham Master's office: accounting for collectivity, order and authority in 17th-century India", *Cultural Geographies* 13 (2006): 127-155.

[48] Temple, *The Diaries of Streynsham Master, 1675-1680*, p. 2.

[49]Cummins, J.S. ed. *Travels and Controversies of Friar Domingo Navarrete, 1616-1686, vol. II* (Farnham, 2010); Tavernier, J.B. *The six voyages of John Baptista Tavernier* (London, 1678); Lovell, A. ed. *The Travels of Monsieur de Thevenot into the Levant in three parts into I. Turkey, II. Persia, III. The East Indies* (London, 1687); Fryers, J. *New Account of East India and Persia, vol. I* (London, 1672) and Irwin, W. tr. *Storia do Mogor or Mughal India, 1653-1707, vol. I-IV* (London, 1907). For some problems regarding the veracity of his account and his biography, see Subrahmanyam, S. "Further thoughts on an enigma: The tortuous life of Nicolo Manucci, 1638-c. 1720", *The Indian Economic and Social History Review* 45, 1 (2008): 35-76.

time. Second, according to Sherwani, Indo-Persian chronicles 'practically ignore the European settlements.'[50] It is therefore unlikely that they tell us about Indo-European encounters, especially these particular visits that occur close to the end of the kingdom.

Problematizing Source Use

Using archival materials to do history can be a contentious affair since the "historical archive" is not merely a collection of documents, but is now seen as an indispensable mechanism for the perpetuation of colonial power. Company history is not free either from ethnographical assumptions. Dutch accounts frequently use stereotypical labels and derogatory descriptions in describing Indians.[51] All this begs the question whether using these archival sources tells us more about the Europeans themselves than the Indians they interacted with on a daily basis. In reply, I proffer three reasons why it still can be done.

First, it can be argued that much more has been done on reporting than on encounters. As mentioned, studying the East India Companies has "tended to favour social histories that largely eschew cultural analysis."[52] Networks, cross-cultural exchanges, and imperial partnerships remain largely unexplored subjects. This comparative lack of cultural discourses naturally presupposes one to believe that the archive merely perpetuates the negative discourse and imbalance in power. However, to judge that these archival materials as wholly depreciative of the ethnographic other is patently inconclusive. As Gommans argues, "in order to properly decolonize history, we [first] need more research into the colonial past."[53]

Second, that these labels used to classify Indian and other Asian communities, often break down upon closer inspection.[54] The corporate nature of communication does not always reflect the true nature of relationships that were present in contextual circumstances. Thinking in terms of monolithic blocks such as the 'Indians' versus the 'Company' prevents us from seeing the differentiated elements that were present in cooperation and conflict.

Third, that it is possible, through careful attentiveness to the pulse of the archive, to discover the voices that inhabit it. The Dutch archival records are plural, occupying many histories. The Dutch East India Company was not in a position to dictate terms and conditions in most places in Asia. On the contrary, the cultivation of relationships was often essential to its commercial objectives. It is this

[50] Sherwani, *History of the Qutb Shahi Dynasty*, p. 669.
[51] Subrahmanyam, *Forcing the Doors of Heathendom,* 5-14*;* See also Kuruppath, M. *Dutch drama and the Company's Orient: A study of representation and its information circuits, c. 1650-1780* (Leiden, 2014), p. 20.
[52] Van Meersbergen, "Writing East India Company History after the Cultural Turn": 10-36.
[53] Gommans, J. "Rethinking the VOC: Two Cheers for Progress", *BMGN – Low Countries Historical Review* 132, 2 (2019): 142-152.
[54] Das Gupta, A. *Indian Merchants and the Decline of Surat, c. 1700-1750* (Wiesbaden, 1979), pp. 15-16.

very breadth of written records that talk about these relationships that allow us to notice the polyphony of voices and to seek new ways to interpret and express them.[55]

Structure

The first chapter of this thesis sets the scene of the visit by recreating the political, social and physical conditions of Masulipatnam, which form the background to this study. I focus here primarily on Masulipatnam, the town and its historical development in the seventeenth century, the rise of Sultan Abul Hasan, who comes to power in 1672, his important courtiers and the two European groups, the Dutch and English East India Companies. I also look at mutual perceptions between Court and Company and between Companies. This aims to create a sense of the world as it appeared to them in the early seventeenth century.

The second chapter opens with the first encounter between the Sultan and his moving retinue and the Companies on the coast of Masulipatnam in 1676, beginning first by presenting the unexpectedness of the encounter. It follows by unpacking in detail the varied interactions and events that take place between Court and Companies. It then attempts to make three broader arguments by analyzing the events in detail.

The third chapter continues the chronological progress established in the second chapter by sketching the historical developments in court and the travails of the Companies from 1676 to end-1678, before the Sultan's next visit to Masulipatnam. The standout event for his second sojourn is the Sultan's visit to the churches. It then tries to examine in detail the new developments that arise.

The fourth and final chapter is devoted to making sense of these encounters by trying to pick out three themes that determined the success of the encounter. It then moves on to examine in detail the three themes stated above as a way to problematize commensurability, namely, intimacy, diplomacy, and uncertainty. Finally, it ties it up by situating these encounters within the larger historiography and poses some questions for further research.

[55] "Archival records, in other words, open up rich ethnographic spaces that do not simply mirror the European mindset." Roque, R and Traube, E.G. eds. *Crossing Histories and Ethnographies: Following Colonial Historicities in Timor-Leste* (New York, 2019), p.14. For the typologies of records prevalent in the archives see for example, Hagerdal, H. "The colonial official as ethnographer: VOC documents as resources for social history in eastern Indonesia", *Wacana* 14, 2 (2012): 405-428. Mikhail Bakhtin argues in his work *Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics* (Minneapolis, 2013) that the reader of Dostoyevsky is faced with a 'polyphony' of voices that are heard as one. This linguistic term is being applied to other spheres such as history. We must recognize the archive as a subject for the inequality and silence that the archives can create but still as a source, that the archives are also places of inequality and silences for the historian to make meaning from. Stoler, A. "Colonial Archives and the Arts of Governance", *Archival Science* 2 (2012): 93.

Chapter 2: Context, Characters and Perceptions

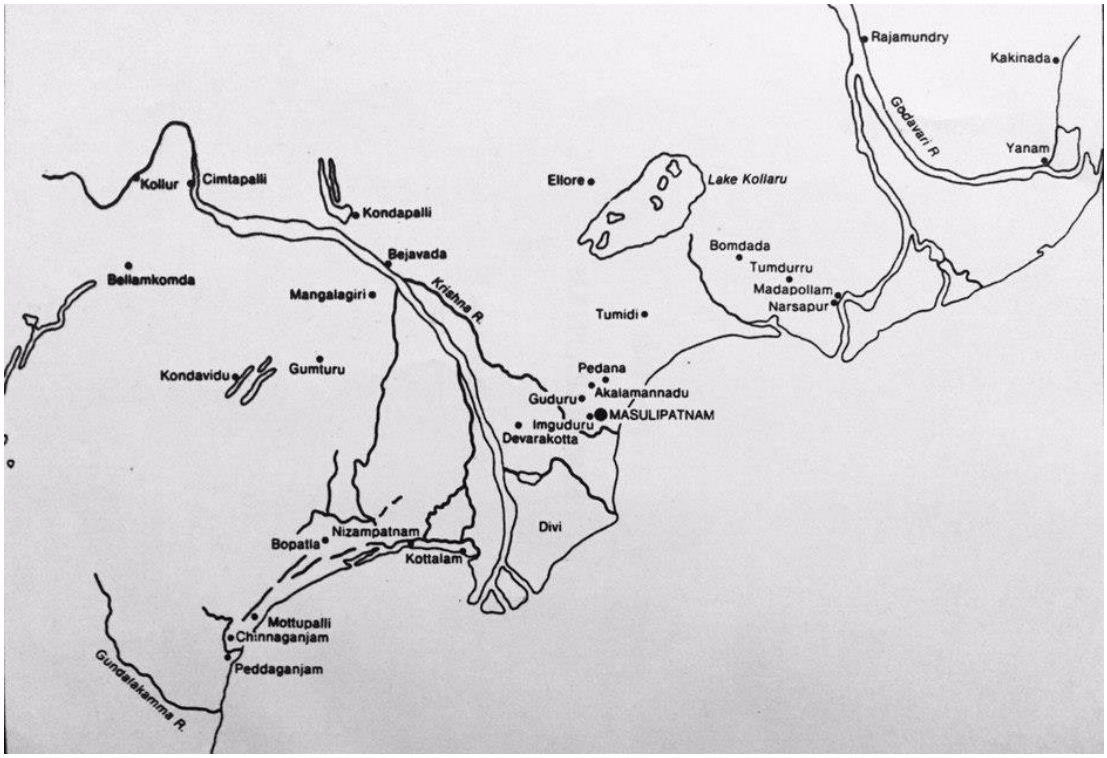
This chapter sets out to give a historical background to this study of cultural encounters and is built around four principle concerns. First, I give a brief description of the geographical and historical conditions of Masulipatnam. Second, I look at the establishments of the Companies in Coromandel and their trade. Third, I relate the main changes in the court of Golconda from mid-1672 to 1675, a period of about three years, which saw the rise of the Sultan Abul Hasan and a new courtly faction, as well as the prevailing perceptions they had of European merchants. Finally, I round up by examining the social and cultural world of the Europeans on the coast, briefly describing the personnel but also their perceptions of each other and the Indians. These sections aim to situate the reader in seventeenth-century India and familiarize one with the people involved and their implicit understandings.

Masulipatnam

Masulipatnam is located on the delta of the Krishna River, sitting at the mouth of one of the tributaries. Here the coast is low, the shore flat, and the waves swell mildly. In the seventeenth century, it had an open roadstead port like many other Indian ports of the region and was reputed to be the best anchoring ground. This was due to its shore being an admixture of sand and mud, coupled with the low surf that allowed loading and unloading to be done safely.[56]

The seasons in the country were dictated by the monsoons, with particularly strong winds from October to November. A much-commented aspect was the land breeze, which sometimes alleviates the traveler of the heat and other times fills them with distempers.[57] The air was humid and unhealthy, and the water in the city was brackish and stagnant with many foul-smelling swamps causing much sickness and discomfort.[58] Besides, there was no drinkable water; it had to be retrieved outside the city.[59] An observer even noted that it could be desiccated into submission.[60]

[56] Arasaratnam and Ray, *Masulipatnam and Cambay*, pp. 4-5.
[57] Methwold mentions the cool breeze in the mid-afternoons that help against the 'intolerable heat'. Moreland, W.H. ed. *Relations of Golconda in the Early Seventeenth Century* (London, 1931), pp. 6-7. According to an instruction on navigation, the warm winds begin blowing from inland in June, lasting for 14 days in which it becomes extremely hot and insalubrious, causing many ships to depart for Aceh or Batavia. Anon. *La Colonne éclairante de la navigation, servant d'instruction pour les maistres des navires et pilots navigeans vers les Grands-Indes* (Amsterdam, 1665), p. 10.
[58] Arasaratnam and Ray, *Masulipatnam and Cambay*, pp. 5-6; Moreland, *Relations of Golconda*, p. 6.
[59] Arasaratnam and Ray, *Masulipatnam and Cambay*, p. 9. Water was retrieved 5 miles inland, principally north of the town. Even then, Europeans were accustomed to boiling it with spices before drinking. Peters, M and de la Porte, F.A. *In Steen Geschreven: Leven en sterven van VOC-dienaren op de kust van Coromandel in India*. (Amsterdam, 2002), p. 53.
[60] NA VOC 1254: 657.



Map of Masulipatnam and its dependencies.[61]

The long and hot dry season, the winds and the dwellings of thatch and wood made the city a veritable tinderbox, prone to catching fire from time to time.[62] Besides fire, the area was also affected by the relative frequency of cyclonic storms and floods which ravage the coast and cause huge damage to the city.[63] Perhaps due to these conditions, buildings tended to be small and simple, joined by narrow streets on the coast. By contrast, there were many more private residences in the Bar Town further inland.[64] Two bridges connect it to the suburbs and the main road to Golconda, with one of the bridges achieving some renown for its size.[65]

[61] Arasaratnam and Ray, *Masulipatnam and Cambay*, p. 2.
[62] Ibid., p. 13; Tavernier, *The six voyages*, p.70. "The Houses whereof are only of wood, built at a distance one from another." For this reason, the Dutch kept requesting permission to build fireproof houses (*brandvrij huizen*).
[63] Storms and floods were an ever-present hazard. A particularly heavy storm that hit in 1679, sweeping away goods and lives, was described in some detail by Havart. The approximate death count reached 25,000 persons. Jordan, C. *Voyages historiques de l'Europe, tome II* (Paris, 1693), p. 255. See Havart, *Op en Ondergang, vol. I.*, pp. 196-207; Martineau, *Mémoires de François Martin, tome II*, pp. 176-178. For the following two years in January 1680 and November 1681, heavy storms also damaged their goods. The total calculated losses due to said storms can be found in NA VOC 1364:267-274; NA VOC 1378: 2077-2080; NA VOC 1360: 1577-1580.
[64] Arasaratnam and Ray, *Masulipatnam and Cambay*, pp. 8-9; Bowrey, T. *A Geographical Account of Countries Round the Bay of Bengal, 1669 to 1679* (Cambridge, 1905), pp. 62-63; Pyrard, F. *Voyage de François Pyrard* (Paris, 1679), p. 111.
[65] This was a large wooden bridge built in 1638 by Sultan Abdullah Qutb Shah. For a description of the bridge, see Havart, *Op en Ondergang, vol. II*., pp. 4-5; Fryer, *New Account, vol. I*, p. 81 and Nieuhof, J. *Joan Nieuhofs Zee en Lant-Reizen door verscheide gewesten van Oostindien* (Amsterdam, 1682), pp. 113-114.

As for its population, no clear consensus emerges (Fryer puts it about 200,000) but it is clear that it was very mixed, a city of novelty where new strangers appeared and new tongues can be heard.[66] This no doubt is due to the variety of traders, servants, slaves, and brokers in the city. There was a noticeable Persian presence among the higher classes. The local populace was mostly Hindu and although present in many trades, largely belonged to the poorer segments of society.[67] Compared to other port towns, it was relatively well-run with established standards of law and the absence of large-scale communalism.[68]

The major strength of Masulipatnam was that it functioned as the only outlet port on the eastern side, allowing the Kingdom of Golconda to participate in the trading networks in the Bay of Bengal and further west, the Arabian Sea. This helped the port become a major transshipment entrepot between different regions. As the country's only seaport, Masulipatnam developed direct linkages with the royal capital. This not only allowed the local market to patronize both royalty and nobility, it also led to the growth of inland markets.[69] Two key exports of the port frequently mentioned are its painted chintzes, which were produced in the weaving villages in its hinterland, and diamonds, retrieved from Golconda's plentiful mines.[70]

As a result of these qualities, travelers tend to have mixed feelings towards it, on one hand extolling its virtues on the other complaining of its flaws. Despite its fame, there are not many extant depictions of Masulipatnam in the seventeenth century.[71]

[66] Fryers, *New Account, vol. I*, p. 90; Cummins, *The Travels and Controversies of Friar Domingo Navarrete, vol. II.*, pp. 321, 325; Arasaratnam and Ray, *Masulipatnam and Cambay*, p. 19. An abbreviated list of the main groups include Chinese, Mongols, Turks, Persians, Arabs, Tamils, Armenians, Jews, Parthians, Portuguese, Siamese, Arakanese, Peguans, Acehnese, Malays, Javanese, English, Dutch, Danes, and French.
[67] Fryers, *New Account, I*, p. 86; Arasaratnam and Ray, *Masulipatnam and Cambay*, p. 15.
[68] Arasaratnam and Ray, *Masulipatnam and Cambay*, p. 20.
[69] Arasaratnam, *Merchants, Companies, and Commerce*, p. 15.
[70] Arasaratnam and Ray, *Masulipatnam and Cambay*, p. 23; Olearius, A. *Relation du voyage d'Adam Olearius en Moscovie, Tartarie et Perse II* (Paris, 1666), p. 292; Asher, C.B. and Talbot, C. *India Before Europe* (Cambridge, 2006) p. 173.
[71] There are two famous works although they are also sketchy at best. The first is an anonymous map attributed to Michiel Gerritsz Bos NA Leupe: VELH0116 *Kaart van de kust van Coromandel van Octacar tot Mazulipatnam*. A facsimile can be found in Gommans, J., Bos, J. and Kruijtzer, G. eds. *Grote Atlas van de Verenigde Oost-Indische Compagnie VI: Voor-Indië, Perzië en Arabisch Schiereiland* (Voorburg, 2010), p. 365. This map shows the positions of the Danish and Dutch factories including as well a clear relief of the coastline. The other is the frequently reproduced sketch found in Baldaeus' travel account, titled *Gezicht op Masulipatnam*. Rather than it being an accurate depiction, it seems to encapsulate instead prevailing ideas about Masulipatnam for a European audience. See Gussé, E. *"Een Naauwkeurige Beschryvinge" een studie naar de beeldvorming in het reisgeschrift van Philippus Baldaeus (1672)*(Doctoral Dissertation) (Gent, 2007).

"Gezicht op Masulipatnam" (View of Masulipatnam), 1676.[72]

The Companies and their Trade

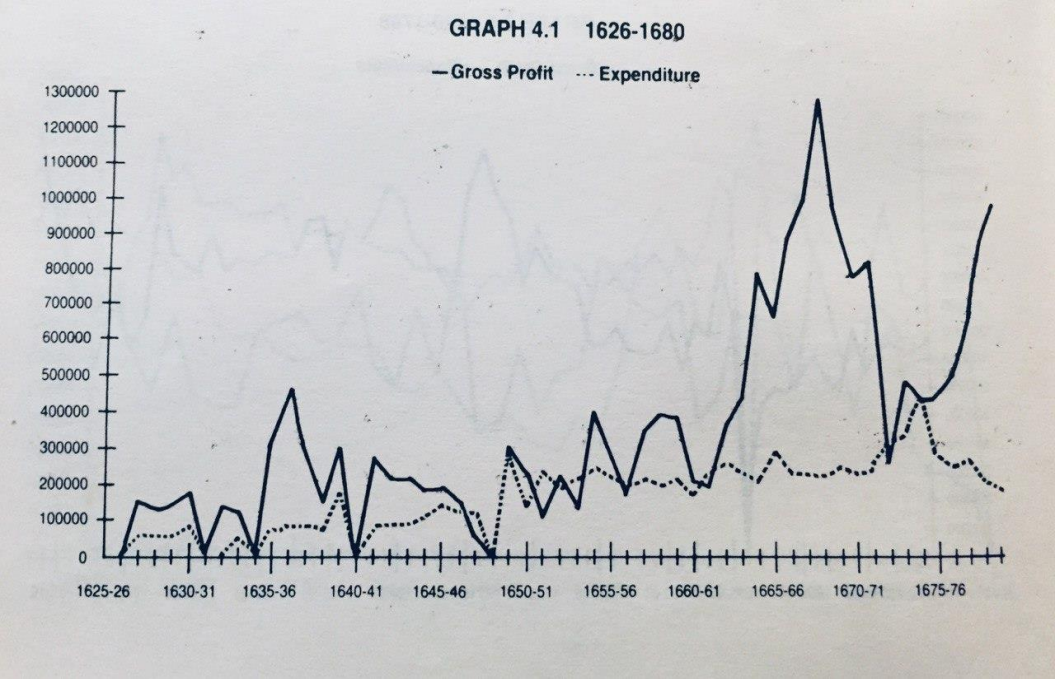
The Europeans arrived in Masulipatnam in the early seventeenth century and began to contribute to its development as a port in the Coromandel economy. There were three main chartered companies, the Dutch, the English, and the Danish.[73] All three established an institutional presence to manage its commercial activities. In this section, I only concentrate on the first two.[74]

The Dutch East India Company

The Dutch presence in Masulipatnam can be dated back to 1605-6 when it obtained a *farman* for the establishment of a factory.[75] In its initial years, the role it was to play was unclear, but it gradually evolved into an important arm that complemented the spice trade in the Moluccas. The Dutch Company's initial strategy was to acquire textiles for its eastern market, concentrating on its

[72] Baldaeus, P. *Naauwkeurige beschryvinge van Malabar en Choromandel, der zelver aangrenzende ryken, en het machtige eyland Ceylon* (Amsterdam, 1676).
[73] For the Danish East India Company, see Subrahmanyam, S. "The Coromandel Trade of the Danish East India Company, 1618-1649", *Scandinavian Economic History Review* 37, 1 (1989): 41-56.
[74] The reason for this choice is that the Danish presence was no longer as important during this period.
[75] Terpstra, *De Vestiging van de Nederlanders,* pp. 33-35. The full text of this *farman* is summarized on p. 42. See also Raychaudhuri, *Jan Company in Coromandel*, p. 16.

development in the intra-Asian network.[76] However, as Company control and trade developed, textiles became an important product in its own right. In Masulipatnam and Golconda, the Dutch traded in a large variety of products, ranging from indigo, diamonds to saltpeter. However, by and large, its main commodity was spices. As a result of its control of the spice market, it was able to import and re-export moderate quantities of spices in order to offset the outflow of bullion.[77] Spices were traded in Masulipatnam, and much of it was consumed in the capital, giving the Company an advantage over its competitors.[78] For twenty years, between 1665 and 1685, the Dutch Company began operating on an extensive scale, led by European demand for Indian textiles. This, in turn, encouraged Dutch expansion into Golconda territory in search of more producing markets.[79] By the 1670s, Company trade in Masulipatnam was booming. Its tightly organized and centralized operations were crucial in its pursuit of profits, and it enjoyed as well a high prestige with the court.[80]



Gross profits of the Dutch East India Company in Coromandel, 1626-1680.[81]

[76] Winius, G. and Vink, M.P.M. *The Merchant-Warrior Pacified: The VOC (The Dutch East India Company) and its Changing Political Economy in India* (Delhi, 1991), p. 13; Raychaudhuri, *Jan Company in Coromandel*, p. 2. It was noted by Matelief de Jonge that in the Indies, people bought Indian cloth, "no matter what it cost".
[77] Arasaratnam, *Merchants, Companies and Commerce*, pp. 136-139; KB KA 144: 23. The principle goods were: mace, cinnamon, pepper, copper, tin, zinc, quicksilver, vermillion and other goods of lesser importance.
[78] Arasaratnam, *Merchants, Companies and Commerce*, pp. 138-139. The Dutch had an advantage in copper and a smaller involvement in the tin and pepper trade which was also traded by other Asian merchants.
[79] Ibid., pp. 134-135, 139. Arasaratnam claims that this period was the best period for the Dutch in Coromandel in terms of export and import trade.
[80] Raychaudhuri, *Jan Company in Coromandel*, pp. 66-67. The prestige was accrued through their involvement in the war against the French on behalf of Golconda. The signs of decline, however, were said to be present.
[81] Winius and Vink, *The Merchant-Warrior Pacified*, p. 160.

The English East India Company

Compared to the Dutch, the English East India Company was in a far weaker position financially and organizationally. The Honorable Company had a factory in Masulipatnam from 1611. English trade in Coromandel before 1658, however, was said to be 'sporadic and inconsistent'.[82] This changed with the founding of Fort St. George at Madras and the establishment of a Presidency in 1652 which gave it further impetus. That said, the English never achieved the same prominence in the seventeenth century, primarily due to its trouble controlling its servants. Private aspirations often came up against the Company's discipline, usually to the detriment of the latter. However, this also brought a sense of dynamism as Englishmen were able to discover new trading outlets and associations.[83] English trade similarly centered on the export of textiles, although they did trade in other products such as slaves, diamonds and other produce. English investment grew from 1660 onwards, reaching a ten-year peak between 1678-88 by taking advantage of the same expanding European market for Indian textiles.[84] This, however, was significantly lower due to the private trade conducted by its merchants. In the 1670s, the English were expanding their institutions and private participation, with increased investment in factories and the search for goods bringing them often into direct competition with the Dutch.[85]

The Court and their perceptions

The revolution at the Golconda Court

Masulipatnam in the seventeenth century belonged to the Kingdom of Golconda, one of five Deccan Sultanates that emerged after the collapse of the Bahmani Sultanate. However, Golconda had by this time lost most of its prerogatives as an independent power. In 1636, the Sultan of Golconda, Abdullah Qutb Shah, was forced into signing an acknowledgement of Mughal overlordship, paying an annual tribute of two million *huns* to the emperor in exchange for the preservation of its territorial integrity.[86] This, however, bought the kingdom time and ushered in a period of expansion further southwards into the Carnatic. Abdullah was said to be a timid and gloomy man. He had no sons but three daughters. Without a male heir, the succession seemed to be initially uncomplicated. The kingdom was expected to lapse into Mughal hands, with his first daughter married to Muhammad Sultan, the eldest son of

[82] Arasaratnam, *Merchants, Companies and Commerce*, p. 139.
[83] Watson, I.B. *Foundation for Empire*: *English Private Trade in India, 1659 to 1760* (New Delhi, 1980), p. 17.
[84] Arasaratnam, *Merchants, Companies and Commerce*, pp. 140-141.
[85] KB KA 144: 30-31. The English were said to have been doing a brisk business in Coromandel.
[86] Sherwani, *History of the Qutb Shahi Dynasty*, pp. 433-438. A *hun* was a gold coin roughly worth about three rupees in this period. Under the terms of the treaty, it was also to abolish Shia practices and promise help if Bijapur attacked among others. Burn, R. *The Cambridge History of India, vol. IV* (Cambridge, 1962), pp. 196-197. Its reduced status can also be seen in the gold and silver coinage issued which bore Mughal coin legends. Joshi, P.M. "Coins Current in the Kingdom of Golkonda" in Nayeem, M.A., Ray, A. and Mathew, K.S. eds. *Studies in the History of the Deccan: Medieval and Modern – Prof. A.R. Kulkarni Felicitation Volume* (Delhi, 2002), pp. 146-155.

Aurangzeb. However, this son fell foul in the Mughal war of succession and lost his life. The second daughter was married to Nizamuddin Ahmad, who managed to make himself so odious that he alienated the court who conspired against him. Thus it came to be that when Abdullah passed away on the 1st of May 1672, Abul Hasan became the unexpected successor to the throne of the Qutb Shahi Sultanate, thanks to the intrigues of the minister Syed Muzaffar.[87]

Abul Hasan was, from the beginning, an outsider and hence not much was expected of him. However, he soon took matters into his own hands by seizing control of the government. The reason for this coup d'état is unclear but it is speculated that it had to do with the tight-fistedness of Muzaffar over the Sultan's expenditure.[88] The Dutch reported that this revolution occurred on the 27th of December 1673, when the Sultan became emboldened in the absence of his minister and seized power with the whole army on his side.[89]

Abul Hasan and Madanna

A few portraits of Abul Hasan and Madanna exist and a few words must be said of their likeness and their characters. Madanna is a controversial figure for he is often seen as the cause of the rise of the Brahmin faction in Golconda.[90] Madanna came to prominence in the service of Syed Muzaffar and played a leading role in the downfall of his patron. After that, he won the confidence of the Sultan who gave him far-reaching powers to govern his kingdom. He was a known Brahmin and is often seen as an intelligent administrator, ably managing the complicated affairs of the state.[91] Some of these capabilities were undoubtedly honed from his earlier years as a *peshkar*.[92] For example, he was able to identify and parse the contexts of letters at a glance and was adept at revenue matters, often acting as the Sultan's collector or bookkeeper.[93] The Dutch admit that he is respectable and trustworthy, a man who fulfills his promises.[94] Even in his portrait, he appears as a serious-minded man. However, he was also known to be nepotistic, appointing relatives and associates within the

[87] Sherwani, *History of the Qutb Shahi Dynasty*, pp. 601-602.
[88] Ibid., pp. 625-526.
[89] NA VOC 1302: 424; Kruijtzer, *Xenophobia in Seventeenth-Century India*, pp. 229-230. According to the report from the Dutch factor in Golconda, the Sultan assembled them on the side of the river where the tower stood, directly across the court and calling all the captains, officers and chiefs to attention, gave them betel out of a golden box and told them they knew on whose side their loyalties lay. In the first instance, he summoned Syed Muzaffar to the palace, and when he appeared with his two sons, they were captured. Madanna was in on this plot for he was sent to capture another of his sons from his house, and he delivered him, his hands, foot, and neck bounded. The reported nobles were then kept under a very strict and watchful house arrest, and throughout the city, no one dared to speak a word or to rebel against the Sultan. In the next few days, Muzaffar was stripped of his treasury consisting of records, elephants, horses, cushions, and tents which were all taken from his house.
[90] Known also as Surya-Prakesh Rao, some biographical information about Madanna and his brother, Akkana, can be found in Kruijtzer, *Xenophobia in Seventeenth-Century India*, pp. 226-230. See also Sarkar, J. "Appendix: Madanna, prime minister of Golkonda" in idem. *History of Aurangzib, vol. IV.* (Calcutta, 1930), pp. 420-421; Duarte, A. "An Estimate of Madanna from the French Records", *Journal of Indian History* 11, 1 (1932): 298-310; and Siddiqui, *History of Golcunda*, pp. 232-233, 244-246.
[91] Rocco, S. *Golconda and the Qutb Shahs* (Hyderabad, 1929), p. 30.
[92] Bilgrami, S.A.A. *Landmarks of the Deccan: A Comprehensive Guide to the Archaeological Remains of the City and Suburbs of Hyderabad* (New Delhi, 1992), p. 77.
[93] Kruijtzer, *Xenophobia in Seventeenth-Century India*, pp. 229, 233.
[94] NA VOC 1373: 849.

kingdom.[95] This alienated many Persianate Muslims and also earned the ire of the Mughal Emperor himself.

Two Portraits: Sultan Abul Hasan Qutb Shah (left) and his Minister Madanna (right).[96]

By contrast, Sultan Abul Hasan was a much more vivacious personality. In his portraits, he is often depicted in showy dress, with a fur coat that paid homage to his central Asian lineage.[97] In his adolescent, he was said to have spent time in the service of the Shah Raju II, an eminent saint, who recommended his candidature to the court.[98] Both in his likeness and textual witness, he appeared to be a man in his mid-thirties.[99] In many accounts, Abul Hasan is shown to possess a latent curiosity and a dainty spirit. Although he made valuable contributions to luxury and song, as a king, he showed

[95] This is remarked upon by almost every historian of the Qutb Shahis. Sherwani claims Madanna's home policy was "to man the government by his own kith and kin". In a study of *farmans* issued after he took power, it is argued that there is a tendency to favor Hindu officials and gentry. Sherwani, *History of the Qutb Shahi Dynasty*, pp. 626-629, 627.
[96] BNF MS *Smith-Lesouëf 232, Recueil de portraits de sultans et grands personnages de l'Inde*, f.18v, 19v.
[97] Becherini, M. "Effigies in Transit: Deccan Portraits in Europe at the end of the 18th Century", *Albums* 6 (2018). See also Goswamy, B.N. and Smith, C. *Domains of Wonder: Selected Masterworks of Indian Painting* (San Diego, 2005), p. 170.
[98] Shah Raju II was a Sufi saint from the line of Gesu Daraz. Shah Raju, from Bijapur, was highly revered and had a close association with the court, notably with Abdullah Qutb Shah, but also Abul Hasan, who served as his disciple. Siddiqui, *History of Golcunda*, p. 305.
[99] NA VOC 1320: 648.

his inexperience for rule.[100] The vicissitudes of his life and his Sufi upbringing seems to have cultivated in him a stoical spirit.[101] It is this quality that has led to many later negative perceptions of him by many observers throughout his reign, from Havart to Aurangzeb.[102]

Painting the court in broad strokes, the next three years seemed to be a period of consolidation of Abul Hasan's power, despite the constant parrying against the numerous forces besieging him on all sides. Two major themes ran through his reign in this early period, the first, a reorganization of his court, which had begun with the removal of Syed Muzaffar and his faction. As mentioned, in his place came Madanna, who begun a process of installing Hindus and associates into higher positions of power.[103] This in part can be attributed to the fall of the faction associated with Muzaffar but also the communalist tendencies of the said trustee of the kingdom.[104] One of the beneficiaries was Muhammad Ibrahim, who was raised to the position of *sarkheyl*.[105] The second was external conflict with France over San Thomé from 1672-74, which was brought to a successful conclusion.

Court/Indian perceptions of the Europeans

For Golconda and the court in particular, Europeans were particularly valued for their trading ties, which they used to help maintain their religious and commercial ties with Safavid Iran.[106] This is exploited by both the local and royal governors. As merchants, they paid toll duties and freight rates and were also used as proxies to regulate the peripheral or coastal regions of the kingdom.[107] Like many other Indian kings, the Golconda elite considered them as purveyors of luxuries, requesting

[100] Manucci writes that he was 'devoid of experience of the world', not knowing whether there were horses in Europe or how battles were fought on the sea. Aurangzeb is noted here to have labelled him a buffoon, who feigns to wear a crown and imagine that he was governing. Irwin, *Storia do Mogor, vol. III.*, p. 231.
[101] Sarkar, *History of Aurangzib, vol. IV,* pp. 401-404, 454-455.
[102] He was said to be "indolent and luxurious", Burns, *The Cambridge History of India,* p. 274. Sarkar called him a 'slothful voluptuary' who 'sought distraction or oblivion by plunging into unrelieved sensuality'. See Sarkar, J. *Shivaji and His Times* (Calcutta, 1952), p. 289; *History of Aurangzib, vol. IV*, p. 403. Khafi Khan remarked that Abul Hasan "exceeded all his predecessors in his devotion to pleasure." Rocco, *Golconda and the Qutb Shahs,* p. 30. According to Manucci, Abul Hasan was said to be a poor relation of the royal line, who passed his life in taverns and shops, looking on dancing and listening to music" Irwin, *Storia do Mogor, vol. II.,* pp. 131-132. A recent book published continues to perpetuate this stereotype, see Pillai, M.S. *Rebel Sultans: The Deccan from Khilji to Shivaji* (New Delhi, 2018), pp. 195-196.
[103] His brother, Akkana, was installed as general, his nephew, Podili Lingappa as a governor, another nephew, Yenganna as commander in the army, and another relative, Gopanna as revenue officer in Bahadrachalam. See Kruijtzer, G. "Madanna, Akkanna and the Brahmin Revolution: A Study of Mentality, Group Behavior and Personality in Seventeenth-Century India", *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* 45, 2 (2002): 231-267; Lach, D.F. and van Kley, E.J. *Asia in the Making of Europe, vol. III: A Century of Advance, vol. 2. South Asia* (Chicago, 1998), p. 1092.
[104] It seemed that the Court thus became a site of Hindu-Muslim tensions with the appointment of Madanna, who expressed his views over Hindu superiority over the Muslims. Kruijtzer, *Xenophobia in Seventeenth-Century India,* pp. 224-225. See Irwin, *Storia do Mogor, vol. III.*, pp. 131-132. In Manucci's account, however, Madanna is shown as an arbitrator between Hindu-Muslim conflicts. Golconda has a long history of rebellions and defections running from Muhammad Sa'id Mir Jumla II (defected 1656), Latif Shah (defected 1677) to Muhammad Ibrahim (defected 1686).
[105] This Muhammad Ibrahim was a Persian known as *qamar baz* (the gambler). Beveridge, B.C.S. and Prashad, B. eds. *The Maathir-Ul-Umara, vol. II, I* (New Delhi, 1979), p. 5. He was known as a "time server and a hypocrite" and obtained the position in exchange for money. See Lach and van Kley, *Asia in the Making of Europe, vol. III: A Century of Advance, vol. 2. South Asia*, p. 1092. See also Richards, J.F. *Mughal Administration in Golconda* (Oxford, 1975), p. 35; and Aiyangar, S.K. "Abul Hasan Qutb Shah and His Ministers, Madanna and Akkanna", *Journal of Indian History* 10, 2 (1931): 109.
[106] Shakeb, *Relations of Golkonda with Iran*, pp. 18, 58. The local governor, for example, asked the Dutch to help ship items to his family in Persia.
[107]Arasaratnam and Ray, *Masulipatnam and Cambay*, pp. 30, 54, 59.

from them certain gifts, commissioning various playthings and hiring European personnel.[108] Abul Hasan, in particular, seems to have taken a more favorable view of the Dutch. Towards the end of his reign, he could be heard commenting that the Dutch were "people who told no lies".[109] At the same time, he also acknowledged that he cannot always accomplish what they ask of him, showing a modicum of frustration with their affairs.[110]

The Golconda elite seems to have a reasonable grasp of how the Companies operated and the benefice of their trade.[111] From a very early stage, the Golconda court also found out that European, particularly Dutch, mercantile activities could be backed by a military force.[112] The Sultan of Golconda also appreciated their manpower, employing many gunners and troopers, which were seen as status symbols.[113] Besides their military capabilities, they valued European medical expertise which they made use of from time to time.[114] Although the cosmopolitanism of the kingdom made it easier for Europeans to integrate, it did seem that the Court found it difficult at times to distinguish one from another. Other learned opinions have commented as well about the perceptions Asians generally have of Europeans as unclean, deceitful, troublesome and religious bigots.[115]

[108] NA VOC 1236: 90; NA VOC 1316:512, 521. Abdullah, for example, expressed his tiredness with elephants and asked for some dogs with long hair. From the Dutch, Abul Hasan requested a trumpeter (George Snyder) and a carpenter (Gerrit Pietersz.) to build a playship (*speel-jacht*) for him.
[109] NA VOC 1424: 979. "*dat hij de Hollanders altyd hadde bevonden luyden te zijn, die zig met geen leugenen behielpen*".
[110] NA VOC 1424: 978-978v."*dat hij* [the Sultan] *eens bij de heer ambassadeur zoude gaan en hem te kennen geven dat hij immers niet konde voldoen, het geen door onse dienaren deurgebragt was*."
[111] When the French attempted to establish a presence in Coromandel, they reasoned that they were establishing a Company 'just like the English and the Dutch' and that their trade would be beneficial for the Court as well. From this short extract, we can surmise that the court had a rough idea of the kind of presence the Europeans offered. BNF MS. Fr. 8972, f. 68v, *Factum contenant l'histoire tragique, pour le sieur Martin Marcara Avachins, de la ville d'Ispahan* (1676), p. 18. A translated copy of the *farman* to the French can be found as well in the missives of the Dutch East India Company. See NA VOC 1277: 526.
[112] This occurred when the Dutch were involved in the wars against other Europeans in San Thomé, first against the Portuguese in 1662 and then the French in 1674. Not much has been done on the Portuguese war, see Aranha, P. "From Meliapor to Mylapore, 1662–1749: The Portuguese Presence in São Tomé between the Qutb Shāhī Conquest and Its Incorporation into British Madras" in Jarnagin, L. ed. *Portuguese and Luso-Asian Legacies in Southeast Asia, 1511-2011, vol. 1* (Singapore, 2011), pp. 67-82; also, Raychaudhuri, *Jan Company in Coromandel*, p. 101. An account of the Dutch-French war can be found in the narratives of the Abbé Carré. See Fawcett, C. *The Travels of the Abbé Carré in India and the Near East, 1672 to 1674, vol. I-III.* (London, 1947). Towards the end of Golconda as an independent sultanate, the Dutch also conducted an unsuccessful war against the Kingdom. See Subrahmanyam, S. "Masulipatnam Revisited, 1550–1750", pp. 52-53.
[113] Bowrey, *A Geographical Account of Countries Round the Bay of Bengal, 1669 to 1679*, p. 111. According to Puckle, Abul Hasan had about 80 European soldiers in his ranks, which he took great pleasure in acquiring. See IOR G/26/12: 55.
[114] Tavernier, *The six voyages*, pp. 103-104. Tavernier mentions a Dutch surgeon by the name of Peter de Lan who helped to let blood during the reign of Abdullah Qutb Shah. Manucci was also requested to do so for a Georgian woman in Abul Hasan's harem. Irvine, W. tr. *A Pepys of Mogul India, 1653-1708: Being an abridged edition of the "Storia do Mogor" of Niccolao Manucci* (New York, 1913), pp. 193-194.
[115] Subrahmanyam, S. "On the Hat-Wearers, Their Toilet Practices and Other Curious Usages" in Chatterjee, K. and Hawes, C. eds. *Europe Observed: Multiple Gazes in Early Modern Encounters* (Lewisburg, 2008), pp. 45-81;

The Europeans in Masulipatnam and their perceptions[116]

The Dutch and English factors

By the 1670s, Masulipatnam was staffed by seasoned veterans of the Dutch East India Company. Jacques Caulier was the *opperhoofd* of Masulipatnam, living there with his second wife, Joanna Eling, and his six children. He was a man of experience, having served on the Coromandel Coast since 1659.[117] Another old hand was the second-in-command Hendrik van Outhoorn, who came from a well-established family serving in the East and was formerly Caulier's secretary.[118] Besides the other junior merchants and the various staff that circulated around the various factories in Coromandel, two other notable personages are the clerk, Joannes Kruyf, and the accountant, Jan Duryn, who arrived in India in the 1630s.[119] Another figure that deserves to be mentioned is Willem Carel Hartsinck, a most colorful personality. Born in Hirado, Hartsinck made his name in India, obtaining successive promotions at a young age.[120] Hartsinck was a talented man of much learning and tact, earning himself much esteem. Together with Jan van Nijendaal and Daniel Havart, he acquired an intimate knowledge of the Golconda court, the Dutch trade in Coromandel, and India as a whole.[121]

If the Dutch conveyed stability and familiarity, it would be no surprise to say that the English provided a less than harmonious picture. The English were plagued by dissension among themselves due to excessive private trade.[122] In 1675, it was decided that the post of chief governor would be replaced by a group of commissioners without any distinction in rank.[123] However, it was Matthew Mainwaring who was nominally in charge. Yet with the lack of a clear structure, resentment soon bubbled over, leading to conflict with George Chamberlain over peculation of Company money and squabbles over seniority, again involving Chamberlain and the third commissioner, Christopher

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[116] The living conditions of the Europeans can be found in Appendix A.
[117] NA VOC 1231: 665v-666. Caulier took over from the merchant Ludolph van Coulster in June 1659.
[118] Brommer, B. *To My Dear Pieternelletje: Grandfather and Granddaughter in VOC Time, 1710-1720* (Leiden, 2015), p. 213.
[119]Joannes Kruyf is best remembered for his tragic love story. The tragedy of their love can be found in Havart, *Op en Ondergang, vol. I.*, pp. 26-30 but also on their gravestones. See Peters and de la Porte, *In Steen Geschreven*, pp. 163-164 and also Cotton, J.J. *List of Inscriptions on Tombs or Monuments in India, vol. II.* (Madras, 1946), pp. 149-150. Their romance even inspired a novella. See Van Wagenvoort, M. *Het Stijfhoofdig bruidspaar. Roman uit de tijd der O.-I. Compagnie* (Amsterdam, 1912).
[120]Between 1660 and 1663, he served as second-in-command in Datcheron and from 1663 to 1677, headed the Dutch establishment in Hyderabad, Golconda. Molhuysen, P.C. and Blok, P.J. eds. *Nieuw Nederlandsch Biografisch Woordenboek, dl. I.* (Leiden, 1911), p. 703.
[121] Hartsinck was a close associate and a patron of Havart. Havart, *Op en Ondergang, vol. I.*, pp. 170-173; Peters and de la Porte, *In Steen Geschreven*, pp. 70-71. Together they formed a circle of Dutch personnel who were intimate with Golconda.
[122] Mohun had come in as Chief of the English Factory in 1670 with Mainwaring as a second. Mohun was one of the leading diamond merchants with connections in London. In order to aggrandize his personal fortune, he soon began investing in private Asian shipping, forbidding other English merchants to do the same, and acquiring his own private merchant vessels. However, mounting difficulties soon created debt and disagreement, ending with the eruption of scandal. In 1674, Mainwaring brought charges of dishonesty against Mohun, who retaliated by depriving him pay and allowance. This squabble led to an inquiry, which ended with the suspension of Mohun in 1675 and brought inspection by Puckle and Master. Mentz, S. *The English Gentleman Merchant at work: Madras and the City of London, 1660-1740* (Copenhagen, 2005), pp. 165-166; Mackenzie, G. *A Manual of the Kistna District in the Presidency of Madras* (Madras, 1883), pp. 93-94.
[123] Fawcett, *EFII, vol. II.*, p. xviii.

Hatton.[124] The fourth was Robert Fleetwood, around since 1661, who was plagued with issues of insolvency.[125] The friction between them undoubtedly contributed to a hostile and disruptive atmosphere. Other notable personages in and around the area include Nathaniel Cholmley, a diamond dealer, William Puckle, who was sent to investigate Company affairs and died soon after in 1677, and Streysham Master who took up the mantle.[126]

Perceptions of each other

Anglo-Dutch relations vacillated between friendship and rivalry, competition and cooperation. English sources speak of parties held in the gardens with families and priests in attendance.[127] Similarly, Dutch sources refer from time to time to their 'English friends' (*Engelse vrunden*). As fellow traders, both sometimes empathized with the obstacles each other faced in dealing with local authorities. The English expressed their sympathies when they had trouble with the local governor and even organized joint trips to Golconda for additional security.[128] Another example was when war between England and the Dutch Republic broke out in 1672, there was a tacit agreement on both sides to conceal or ignore it and avoid hostilities.[129] Even though this did not succeed entirely, it did show how local bonds can sometimes transcend larger political developments.

However, it must be said there were also occasions when trouble proved too much to bear and outright animosity was the order of the day. War, conflict, and squabbles speak of the complications of life on the coast. When these occur, it is not surprising to see disparaging terms being used against each other. The English have been known to vocalize their dislike of certain Dutch governors and deliberately encourage a pamphlet-driven 'Hollandophobia' during times of open conflict.[130] The Dutch tend to be more direct with their insults and venomous with their pen.[131] An interesting trend is how often they resort to stereotypes in order to castigate the other. The Dutch consider the English their inferiors in trade and war, rapacious, bullying and constantly jealous. The English themselves think the Dutch parsimonious, coarse, uncultured, and undignified, a republican rabble.[132]

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[124] Mainwaring, Mohun, and Chamberlain also participated in a private trade partnership venture based on 4/9, 3/9 and 2/9 share respectively. Prakash, *European Commercial Enterprise in Pre-Colonial India*, p. 246.
[125] Robert Fleetwood had joined the Honorable Company in 1661, on the recommendation of William Jearsey. In 1674, he was discovered to have farmed revenue from some rented towns. Threatened with dismissal, he surrendered these rights to the Company and returned to the fold. Fawcett, EFII, vol. II., pp. 274-275.
[126] Ogborn, M. *Indian Ink: Script and Print in the Making of the English East India Company* (Chicago, 2008), p. 75. See their diaries, BL IOR G/26/12, and Temple, R.C. ed. *The Diaries Of Streynsham Master 1675-1980, vol. I-II.* (London, 1911).
[127] Fawcett, *EFII, vol. II.*, pp. 281-282.
[128]BL IOR G/26/12: 48.
[129] Fawcett, *EFII, vol. II.*, p. 225.
[130] De Bruin, L. *Defaming the Dutch: the discourse of Hollandophobia in early modern England (1652-1690)* (Unpublished Master's Thesis) (Leiden, 2018), p. 11.
[131] Slot, B. "At the backdoor of the Levant: Anglo-Dutch Competition in the Persian Gulf, 1623-1766" in Hamilton, A. and de Groot, A.H. eds. *Friends and Rivals in the East: Studies in Anglo-Dutch Relations in the Levant from the Seventeenth to the Early Nineteenth Century* (Leiden, 2000), pp. 131-132.
[132] Schama, S. *The Embarrassment of Riches: An Interpretation of Dutch Culture in the Golden* Age (London, 1987), pp. 229-230, 258, 270.

European perceptions of the Indians and the Court

Generally speaking, Europeans tend to cast Indians in a negative light. Europeans in the seventeenth century had, by and large, the mentality of the "merchant-priest".[133] This stems from the role they played in the East but also the implicit worldviews they brought along. It is not surprising that the views expressed tend to be more disapproving in light of their experiences and perceptions. Tavernier, for example, calls Asian Kings "Idolators, including even Golconda and Java though they are Muhammadans".[134] Thevenot was also equally vitriolic about local religion, calling Hindu temples "full of lascivious Figures of Monsters… that one cannot enter them without horrour".[135] He is equally disparaging of their *Muharram* celebrations, terming them "fopperies and masquerades".[136] The English surgeon, Fryer, who passed Masulipatnam, calls the Moors "grave and haughty", never demeaning to speak without a *dubash,* jealous creatures who cloister their wives, and timorous in war compared to the Europeans and tyrannous when they get the advantage.[137] This last point is also emphasized by the Dutch, even while they fought alongside them against the French, complained at the same time about their ungratefulness and their great timidity.[138]

Although contact with the Court was limited, the state of government also came in for bad press. When they faced obstructions to trade, they are apt to view the Kingdom as a den of thieves, "being nothing but to robb and spoyl …from the highest to the lowest."[139] Other pejorative terms were also explicitly mentioned or hinted at; that they were corrupt, disrespectful, disloyal and unfaithful, wasteful, sensual and pleasure-seeking. In a reply to one of the questions about the Golconda courtiers, the Dutch factor gave a brutal assessment – they were greedy, foolish, feeble, clean on the outside but stinky on the inside, more or less like plastered graves![140] Other general perceptions perpetuated in European travel writing are also applicable for perceptions of Golconda. Brahmins were knowledgeable but cunning, full of occult practices, Moors, evil and domineering, the locals were dirty and slavish, women were lewd if not oppressed.[141]

However, one positive observation in this cloud of antagonistic perceptions has to do with the succession crisis of 1672-3. It must be stressed that the ascension of Abul Hasan and removal of Syed

[133] See Vink, "Images and Ideologies" pp. 26-147 for a larger range of general perspectives, from the Calvinist preacher to the common soldier.
[134] Tavernier, *The six voyages,* p. 163.
[135] Lovell, *The Travels of Monsieur de Thevenot*, p. 105.
[136] Ibid., p. 106. *Muharram* is a festival that is celebrated by Shia Muslims that commemorates the anniversary of the Battle of Karbala in which Imam Hussein ibn Ali was killed.
[137] Fryers, *New Account I*, p. 88. For *dubash*, see glossary.
[138] NA VOC 1291: 513.
[139] Fawcett, *EFII, vol. II.*, p. 289.
[140] NA VOC 1373: 849.
[141] This seems to confirm the view that Europeans practiced ethnographical violence with language, that they had "little sense of cultural relativism; they took themselves as the absolute standard, generally rejecting out of hand anything that deviated from their own views and moral precepts." Subrahmanyam, *Forcing the Doors of Heathendom*, p. 14.

Muzaffar was initially seen as a positive one and pleased almost all.[142] The Dutch remark that the Sultan is now wiser than before and has begun to rule by himself.[143] Ovington is also lavish in his praise, calling him among other things "a wise and most excellent King".[144] This positive opinion begins to diminish with contact, alongside the troubles they faced, so much so that by the end of the kingdom's reign, it was highly critical and negative.

[142] NA VOC 1302: 457-525. The Dutch and the English had much trouble with Sultan Abdullah and Muzaffar, who were much more restrictive of their trade. The general tone, therefore, was that Sultan Abul Hasan had done well in removing this erstwhile knave, full of treasons, stratagems, and spoils.
[143] NA VOC 1324: 554. "*de coninck nu wiselyker dan tevoren en selfs begint te regeren."*
[144] Ovington, J. "The History of the Late Revolution in the Kingdom of Golconda" in idem. *A voyage to Suratt in the year 1689 giving a large account of that city and its inhabitants and of the English factory there* (London, 1696), p. 552. This sentiment is also captured in a translated Arabic manuscript belonging to the late John Van Brugh and included in a copy of oral tales. See "*The History of Abdallah, King of Golconda; and the Remarkable Fall of Moula-Kan, Amir-Zafer and Sidi-Moushuc Chief Ministers of State to that Prince, 1737*" in Anon. *Winter evening tales, being a collection of entertaining stories.* (Dublin, 1733-34), pp. 219-253.

Chapter 3: The Sultan visits Masulipatnam, 1676

Having laid out the historical context, this chapter now sets out to examine the first visit of the Sultan to the coast.[145] This chapter is hereby divided into three parts. First, I attempt to show the unexpectedness of the visit and the different approaches taken by both the Dutch and English to the Sultan's arrival. Second, I describe the actual encounters that took place on the coast.[146] Third, I demonstrate how these preparations and encounters illustrate three themes, which I unpack in further detail, viz. intimacy and familiarity, Anglo-Dutch rivalry and the uncertainties that they had to deal with during the encounter.

Local obstructions, frantic preparations, and differing receptions

By all accounts, the visit of the Sultan came as a surprise.[147] In the months leading up to the visit, much attention was given to commercial concerns. The Dutch complained of trade being hindered by the Masulipatnam *Havaldar*, Aqa Jalal, of the lack of trade in Golconda and the ensuing trouble with setting up a warehouse for Persian trade.[148] The English themselves were equally vocal, complaining of daily obstructions by the governor.[149] These hindrances displeased them and were seen as his capricious whims in order to "engross the whole trade of town and country".[150] At the beginning of December, a very heated encounter took place between the Dutch fiscal officer, Jan Duryn and Aqa Jalal. When Duryn was presented betel, he spectacularly defied him by throwing it to the ground and wished that "the Divell would take him and his beetle nutt too."[151]

Definitive news only came in December, when the English were informed by the local authorities that the Sultan was paying a visit, that he was going to take to the sea, and that they should prepare a gift.

[145]The Dutch East India Company used the Gregorian Calendar while the English used the Julian Calendar. These differences were only resolved in the eighteenth century. Differences in dates have been corrected to the Gregorian, as much as it is possible. That said, some inconsistencies still exist. See Carlbach, E. *Palaces of Time: Jewish Calendar and Culture in Early Modern Europe* (London, 2011), pp. 42-43; Clulow, A. "Note to the Reader" in idem. *Amboina, 1623: Fear and Conspiracy on the Edge of Empire* (New York, 2019).

[146] This account draws mainly from the *Dagh-register* Masulipatnam, for which an extract was found in the OBP, and supplemented by other sources. Due to the lengthy nature of the journal, which tends to be rather repetitive, I summarize and emphasize the key events that occurred.

[147] NA VOC 1307: 516, 604-605; NA VOC 1291: 516. There were however definite hints. From as early as 1673, the Dutch had noted that the noble Sjaffer Beg had indicated for the third time that the court might visit Masulipatnam and that a sufficient lodge, grains, and gifts be provided for him. Although earlier Dutch missives had mentioned that the Sultan was touring his kingdom, they had refrained from singling out his visit to Masulipatnam.

[148] NA VOC 1313: 223; BL IOR G/26/12: 49, 54. The Dutch were prevented from sending spices to Golconda and that the Governor said that he would buy it all 'at his owne price'. The same issue was also with their shipment of timber. Aqa Jalal was a *Havaldar* of great ability and influence, serving for five years and a tough administrator. See Arasaratnam and Ray, *Masulipatnam and Cambay*, pp. 60-61. For *Havaldar*, see glossary.

[149] IOR G/26/12: 49. This ranged from stopping merchants bringing in cloths and oxen, chasing washers away due to his unusual demands, to price-fixing. At times, the governor sent his peons to overtake the merchants and stop them from trading in the towns.

[150] Fawcett, *EFII, vol. II.*, p. 287. The Governor similarly wanted to obtain silver at a lower rate than the prevailing rate. It must be noted that the English made the same accusation of the Dutch.

[151] Ibid., p. 288. The conflict was provoked by the Governor who had disallowed carpenters to work in the Dutch garden. This defiance was remarked with great satisfaction by the English.

This occurred towards the close of the year, by which time the Dutch were said to be already making great preparations.[152] At receiving the news, the English also began frantically preparing, calling for a hundred peons and as many palanquin boys as necessary, trying to obtain as many drums, trumpets, silk, staff and curios… "anything that would make for the honor of the Company" so that they might "appear in as much splendor as the Dutch."[153] At the turn of the year, the Sultan was approaching Kondapalli, six leagues away from Masulipatnam, and was said to be marching with "so numerous a traine that he devours all the country up where he comes."[154] The Dutch factor of Golconda, Hartsinck, arrived in person on the 7th of January in order to receive the Sultan and prepare a throne for him in Caulier's house.[155] Meanwhile, the governor instructed all the people of the town to have their doors open so that the Sultan might enter any house should he so please.[156]

English and Dutch merchants took differing approaches to receive the Sultan. According to instructions from Madras, the English were supposed to receive the Sultan at Bezvada (Vijayawada), a journey of two days. This was couched in relative terms: pre-empt the Dutch or lose the privileges granted to them under their *farman*.[157] Yet they were rather disinclined to do so. Though the English decided to present a "bar of silver clean washed… not exceeding 150-pound sterling", the main English chief factors had sought to leave for Madras and were only stopped by the threat that this might bring the Sultan much displeasure and endanger their privileges vis-à-vis the Dutch.[158] Finally, they avoided making the trip entirely, sending a *dubash* to the moving court in their stead. The *dubash* was expected to pledge the Company at the service of the Court, but also claim the 'right hand' of the Dutch.[159] This claim to precedence was received and admitted.

The Dutch on their part took the initiative to march out to receive the Sultan and present their gifts at the first instance. A Dutch welcome party consisting of staff, merchants and peons set out in the afternoon on the 25th of January and arrived in Cauterom in the evening.[160] There they passed the night, setting their palanquins in wait. In the middle of the night, they witnessed an incredible number of horsemen, coolies, wives, camels, oxen, horses loaded with baggage and other goods passing them by. The next day, the Dutch entourage caught sight of the royal retinue, who came with the beating of the drums and the waving of flags on elephants. The Sultan was seated in a golden palanquin covered

[152] Ibid., p. 289; Havart, *Op en Ondergang, vol. I.*, p. 183. The Dutch prepared staff, servants, drinks and food, peons, carpenters, even clothes for the sailors on the ships, and fireworks. The preparations alone cost them 1166 pagodas.
[153] Fawcett, *EFII, vol. II.*, p. 290.
[154] Ibid.
[155] NA VOC 1320: 647. He was sent for because of his language abilities and knowledge of the court. See Havart, *Op en Ondergang, vol. I.*, p. 183.
[156] BL IOR G/26/12: 58.
[157] Fawcett, *EFII, vol. II.*, p. 290.
[158] Ibid., p. 291. The factors were namely Mainwaring, Hatton, and Chamberlain.
[159] Ibid., p. 290. The right hand, besides all the positive connotations that are associated with being right, righteous and rightful, also conveys a social position within the hierarchy. The right is seen as 'most worthy to receive', 'favourable and legitimate'. See Hertz, R. "The pre-eminence of the right hand: A study in religious polarity", *HAU: Journal of Ethnographic Theory* 3, 2 (2013): 335-57.
[160] NA VOC 1316: 530. It was explicitly explained that this was done so that they might steal a march before the English and the other nations in receiving the Sultan.

in *lançols* with a retinue of two to three hundred horsemen and eight to ten elephants in train. This he called to a halt and greeted them according to the Moorish custom. The Dutch immediately presented their gift of 50 *kobangs* on a silver plate to the Sultan and 25 *kobangs* in a box to Madanna. The Sultan was very pleased. He asked after the Dutch Captain of Masulipatnam, and recognizing Hartsinck, greeted him in a very friendly manner, laughing, "I know you well, you are our Golconda Captain!"[161] After this, the Dutch were forced to rush back to Masulipatnam in order to receive the chancellor Ibrahim.[162] When they returned in the evening, they found him seated on a stool in the middle of a street near the Dutch lodge.[163] Caulier and Hartsinck stepped out of their palanquins and gifted him a box of 20 *kobangs*. After having presented themselves, stools were brought for them and they sat in the middle of the street, exchanging pleasantries and asking after his satisfaction before handing over the keys to the Dutch lodge.[164]

The Sultan arrives in Masulipatnam

The Sultan arrived the next day in Masulipatnam and both the English and the Dutch factors marched out of town to meet him.[165] He appeared as before, seated in a small golden house atop an elephant. He had a regal appearance, looking between 35-36 years of age, and let it be known that he wished to view the houses and the Dutch lodge.[166] The whole town presently allowed the Sultan to venture into the city with great welcoming.[167]

A private audience with the Cauliers

The Sultan arrived with his ministers Madanna and Ibrahim at the Dutch lodge where they were hurriedly welcomed by Caulier.[168] He first made a tour of Caulier's house, with which he was pleased, making a survey of all his chambers, going up the stairs into a small room to look at the sea. While he was conducting his inspection, Dutch trumpeters stood blowing continually in his honor. When Sultan

[161] NA VOC 1316: 530v. "*u ken ik wel, ghij bent onsen Golcondaesen Capitein."*
[162] Ibid. Ibrahim had taken another route to arrive in Masulipatnam in order to prepare for the arrival of the Sultan. Among the early arrivals, a group of eighty Frenchmen and eight Englishmen in the employ of the Sultan had also reached the town.
[163] Ibid: 531v. By him were the Masulipatnam governor Aqa Jalal, the Englishman Cholmley, and a few accompanying *chobdars* among others.
[164] Around evening at about six, the Company servants were all chased out of the Dutch lodge and gardens, the doors and the windows and the warehouses were all sealed.
[165] BL IOR G/26/12: 59. They probably were joined by the Gentile and Moor merchants of great estates to present their presents to the Sultan.
[166] NA VOC 1320: 647v-648.
[167] We can imagine this welcoming as a very decorated and lively affair. According to Babaie, this *pishbaz* or *esteqbal* (welcoming) was a widespread practice in the Persianate world. Writing of the royal visit in Isfahan, "the urban guilds and notables of the city put up a spectacular show along a predetermined route; they decorated the streets through which the Shah would pass, every skilled craftsman and guild master created, even invented, new objects of wonderment for display along the route; the urban elite, all decked out, and the denizens prepared to welcome the Shah." Babaie, S. "Sacred Sites of Kingship: The Maydan and Mapping the Spatial-Spiritual Vision of the Empire in Safavid Iran" in Babaie, S. and Talinn, G. eds. *Persian Kingship and Architecture: Strategies of Power in Iran from the Achaemenids to the Pahlavis* (London, 2015), pp. 202-203. This practice was still in use in Qajar Iran. See Wright, D. *The English amongst the Persians: Imperial Lives in Nineteenth-Century Iran* (London, 2001), p. 33.
[168] NA VOC 1316: 496. The Sultan stayed at the Dutch lodge but also the great house of the old *Nawab*.

Abul Hasan came down again, he sat down on the throne made specially from gold and silver velvet cloths. Caulier approached in order to honor the Sultan. As he came close, he heard a courtly tune played by princes experienced in the art.[169] Then the Sultan demanded tobacco to smoke. All the while, the trumpeters and musicians continued playing and singing, so much so that the poor performers had no time to adjust their strings, turn a page of their music books or catch properly their breaths. This scene pleased the Sultan very much. And when the Sultan discovered that the son of Caulier, Willem, was among the musicians, he called him close to him and requested him to play a few beautiful pieces on his flute. This also made him very pleased. Thereafter Sultan Abul Hasan asked Caulier whether his son, still a young lad, was married.[170]

Caulier replied that he was not, that he was still too young and can only marry when he was about twenty years of age. The Sultan disagreed, and said that the young man must marry, for it will improve his health. Then the Sultan embraced him strongly and requested his daily attendance.[171] During this conversation, the Sultan was seated, dressed in golden clothes and covered with precious treasures of unusually large pearls and refined stones with which even his arms, hands and body were adorned. Madanna stood on his right side, Ibrahim on his left.[172] Despite the formality of the audience, the conduct was as if between private people. The Sultan asked about everything, touching on the manners and laws of the Dutch. The interpreter, Narsa, stood beside the Sultan and translated directly all the questions and answers. The Sultan also wanted to know about the "Shah of Holland" (*Sjabaas Hollandaar*) and desired to see his counterpart, the Prince of Orange, after which a portrait or image was shown to him. All the while, the Sultan found great pleasure in conversation and there was nothing that he did not speak or inquire of. There was nothing else he did but entertained himself with the hearing of sundry things.[173]

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[169] NA VOC 1316: 532. "*met het gehoor van eenige musicale instrumenten door enige vorsten in de konste ervaren gehanteert*."

[170] Willem Caulier was born, according to the dates on his gravestone, in 1658, making him about eighteen years of age when the Sultan visited in 1676. He was described as a '*mooi perzoon, vaardig en net ter pen*' and he also knew the local language (*kennis van de 'Jentiefse' taal*), presumably Telegu. See Peters and de la Porte, *In Steen Geschreven*, p. 183. At this time, he was probably a handsome youth. The preoccupation of the Sultan with the young boy of Caulier is a subject of some speculation. This is possibly a case of 'playing the witness', in which gazing at handsome young boys is a way of seeking union with God, the ultimate beloved. In the Chishti Sufi tradition, (to which Abul Hasan and his mentor Shah Raju belonged) this special kind of gazing is also known as '*nazar-i 'ibrat*' (gaze of transcendental contemplation). See Kugle, S. "Sufi Attitudes toward Homosexuality: Chishti Perspectives from South Asia" in Raziuddin, A. and Curtley, D.L. eds. *Literary and Religious Practices in Medieval and Early Modern India* (London, 2017), pp. 40, 42. An exploratory book that tries to uncover such 'undocumented emotional histories' albeit in the Ottoman Empire is Andrews, W.G. and Kalpalki, M. *The Age of Beloveds: Love and the beloved in early-modern Ottoman and European culture and society* (Durham and London, 2005).

[171] NA VOC 1316: 532v. "*zeide de vorst dat moeste trouwe, dewijl sulx d'jongmant tot gezontheid was strekkende, halende hem magtigh aen, en begeerde dagelyk bij zoude komen…"*

[172] This seems to be a feature of the Golconda court. See chapter 5 on the spatial arrangements of the embassy in 1686 and also Havart, *Op en Ondergang, vol. II.*, p. 157-158.

[173] NA VOC 1316: 532v. "*en waer in groot behagen schepte, daer was geen tyd ergens van te spreken, dewijl niet anders deed, als sig int gehoor va 't een en 't ander te vermaken…*"

The Sultan takes to the sea

Finally, after a good two hours, the Sultan and his courtiers left with a great retinue of 500 men and entertained himself at sea accompanied by Hartsinck.[174] He was very content, spending the time rowing in the river and firing the ship's cannons. He liked sailing so much that even though evening fell, he wanted still to sail in the sea. All the while, the Sultan did nothing but ask about this and that and about what rose and fell with the waves.[175] It was only due to strong winds at sea that the Majesty decided to turn back to land.[176]

The flag incident

On the morning of the next day was to occur the 'flag incident'.[177] The day had begun early at dawn, with Hartsinck and the other company servants, Sultan Abul Hasan, Shah Raju with his five sons, the chancellor Ibrahim and other nobles planning for a trip out at sea. The Sultan was seated on a throne on board the ship and beside him sat the holy ascetic Shah Raju. The accompanying retinue was divided into eight groups, sailing behind in smaller vessels. Along the way, the musicians sang and played. While they were thus sailing, shots rang out from the other ships and there was great merriment to be had by all.

The party now boarded the Dutch ship *de Winnerum*, when suddenly there appeared three to four other vessels, one of which belonged to the English, who boarded the ship. Three of the crew were said to be 'drunk' and they jumped towards the foremast in order to take down the English flag which was blowing underneath the Dutch flag.[178] This arrangement was decided upon by the skipper, Harmen van Haren, without foreknowledge by the Dutch authorities. The English and the French were much affronted by this. According to the English, besides "their gallantry, they had the impudence to putt ours and the French Kings Flag under theirs in the fore and mizzen top, thereby to render us low and contemptible in the King's eyes."[179] Tensions were rising fast. The French also fired shots at the flags in anger.[180] Now the sailors of *de Winnerum* received orders to remove the

[174] Ibid., 533. They were joined by Mohammad Ibrahim, Jan Duryn, Willem Caulier, and the musicians on board the small ship.
[175] Ibid. "*en de vorst deed niet anders als hier en daer na te vragen, naer dat zo wat in zee gehogt en getogt had…*"
[176] NA VOC 1320: 648. The Dutch state that he is a man who had never seen the sea before. "*dat [hij] een man is die noyt bevorens de zee gesien heeft*."
[177] English sources date it three days after the arrival of the King, on the 18th of January. Dutch sources put it on the 28th of January. Although this discrepancy in time is explained, it occurred on the third day of the Sultan's arrival for the English and the second day for Dutch. A third source, the memoirs of Francois Martin, puts it at the beginning of February.
[178] Fawcett, *EFII, vol. II.*, p. 292. The French flag was also placed below the Dutch flag.
[179] Ibid. This similarly was condemned by Martin. "*Les Hollandais en avaient en rade; ils firent apparemment appareiller le plus beau pour recevoir ce prince où il fut conduit en chaloupe. Leur insolence qui paraît toujours dans les lieux où ils sont les maîtres, leur fit arborer leur pavillon au-dessus du pavillon anglais, quoiqu'ils fussent pour lors en paix avec cette nation, le pavillon blanc était au-dessous des deux*." Martineau, *Mémoires de François Martin, tome II.*, p. 36. Both the English and the French saw this as intentional and typical of Dutch hubris.
[180] Martineau, *Mémoires de François Martin, tome II*., p. 37. Later the Frenchmen threw insults at Hartsinck.

three Englishmen.[181] A great commotion erupted on board. Although no one was killed or flung overboard, the three Englishmen were helped out of the ship with a great many punches and blows.

This incident was forgotten for a short while. The Sultan now saw the ship *de Hoeker* sailing, firing shots for his pleasure. The Sultan was extremely pleased, praising the Dutch around his nobles for 'the honor that they give was more than other nations'.[182] The Sultan continued to praise them, saying that when a man of Holland rode out on a horse or in a palanquin from the garden into the city, or even to be heard passing in a street, a cry of "*Siabab Hollandaar*" would be raised and they would immediately make way for him.[183] Such was the esteem he was said to hold them in his eyes.

When the Sultan was returning back to land, a great number of French and Englishmen sailed forth to meet them. The English wanted redress over the flag incident and to request the Sultan to sail in their ship.[184] They were much agitated and threatened to revenge the affront they suffered. Hartsinck asked defiantly, "why had they put the Dutch flag underneath the English flag?" To this, the English replied that the Dutch themselves had first done so.[185] The air was heavy with the scent of anger and the English asked furiously, "are you friend or foe, of war or peace?"[186] The Sultan who was witness to the brewing trouble, and assuming this to be out of jealousy over the ship visitation, now said to the English chief that he would come aboard their ship.[187]

With calm, the Sultan turned to Hartsinck and said, "Do not think about it any longer, let us be happy. This is why I came out."[188] And as if that concluded the matter, the musicians began playing. Five of the Sultan's dancers could be heard singing! The tensions now defused perhaps by this show of light-heartedness in the face of drama, the Sultan and his party now passed over to the *Loyall Subject*, the English ship, upon which he continued for two hours, ordering the English to fire several guns.[189] Thereafter he returned to land saying that he must strengthen his constitution having eaten nothing the whole day.[190] Meanwhile, while everyone was out at sea, ninety palanquins with his sixty concubines arrived in Masulipatnam with great pomp and were led to the Sultan's lodge.

[181] The Englishmen were said to be in the employ of the Sultan of Golconda.
[182] NA VOC 1316: 533v. "*voor de eer die ze hem meer als andre vreemde natie aen deden".*
[183] Ibid. "*wanneer ijmand van d'onze met paerd of pallinquin uit de thuyn comende in de stad, de straten passerend, en door de ruiters … gehoord werd, dat er een hollander comt, maken aenstont ruymte met gemeene geroep van Siabab Hollandaer"*
[184] Hartsinck tried to prevent him from going over and beginning an inquest. Hartsinck now took up the matter of a missing hat of a Dutch trumpeter, which was said to be taken by an Englishman in the earlier fracas.
[185] That is, put the English flag under the Dutch flag.
[186] Ibid. 534. *"…met t vragen, of we vrunde of vijanden waren, en of het oorlog, of vrede was*."
[187] Ibid. The Sultan's exact words (in the Dutch record) were: "*vaert naer u schip, ik zal daer aen boort komen*." Hartsinck later called for the Dutch skipper of *de Winnerum* who came on a barge, and charged him to haul the English flags down to prevent further trouble.
[188] Ibid. "*u moet daer niet meer omdenken, laet ons vroelyck wezen, daer toe ben ik uit gegaen."*
[189] NA VOC 1316: 534v-535; Fawcett, *EFII, vol. II.*, pp. 292-293.
[190] Such was his amour for the sea that he returned in the evening and stayed till midnight.

The festival

The next three days were of relative calm. The Sultan took to the sea again with the ship, sailing to the island of Divi and generally camping at the mouth of the river. The Sultan, having learned of the facts of the flag incident, took it upon himself to order that the Dutch ships should not have any other flags other than their own.[191] And although the English seethed that the Sultan did not deign to board their ship that they had specially made for his pleasure, all was peaceful.[192] The Sultan spent most nights out at sea, sometimes independently, other times in company, with much music and merrymaking. He entertained himself with sailing, fishing, fireworks and elephant hunting.[193] His habits were most irregular; at times, he did not return for the evening and he often spent nights out at sea, such that no one knew what he did and when he slept.[194]

On the 2nd of February, due to inclement weather, Sultan Abul Hasan devised for himself a new amusement, indicating to Hartsinck that it would be a great pleasure to see the other children of Caulier. Caulier then allowed his youngest son and one of his daughters to visit him. The Sultan, on his part, was delighted with them, taking great pleasure in seeing them so white, beautiful and sweet.[195] After playing with the children, he honored each with golden *lançols* and requested that they be sent to amuse his harem. The Sultan then turned to Hartsinck and said that the evening was a festival of lamps (*een feest der lampjes*) and invited Caulier and his company to join him. At eight in the evening, a *diduan* appeared in the name of the Majesty requesting their presence.

The Dutch party consisting of Caulier, Hartsinck, van Outhoorn, and Duryn among others were invited on the barge, where the celebrations were being held.[196] The Sultan, upon seeing them, called the four senior merchants to ascend a platform and eat by his side. The lesser individuals of the party were directed to sit elsewhere. The meal was conducted, according to the Dutch, sloppily or slovenly, following the customs of the Moors, and which they did not enjoy.[197] However, there was much cheerfulness and merrymaking which consisted of playing of music, diverse amusements, the dancing of women and a bevy of fireworks during the course of dinner. An hour after having consumed the meal, the principal English merchants appeared at the party. It must have been of great chagrin to them, for evidently not only were they not invited to the meal, they were chased away with

[191] NA VOC 1316: 535. Duryn later interrogated the skipper, asking why he had put the English flag below the Dutch's. He replied that it was merely to decorate the ship and also because the English had first put the Dutch flag below the English flag.
[192] Martin speaks of a plot to kidnap the Sultan and bring him to Pondicherry. This however was foiled by the lack of cohesion among the French soldiers. Martineau, *Mémoires de François Martin, tome II.*, p. 37.
[193] NA VOC 1316: 535. On the 31st of January, he sighted a big fish (probably a whale), two miles south of Masulipatnam.
[194] Ibid. On one of the nights, Hartsinck, Willem Caulier, and the translator, Narsa spent the whole night together at sea.
[195] Ibid. "*waer in groot behagen schepten zo in de blank-, mooij- als soetighheid…*"
[196] This barge was probably the special ship made for the Sultan by the Dutch.
[197] Ibid. "*dat wat slordigjes na de moorze wijse."*

presentations of silver betel. To add to their insult, they were not even granted the presence of the Sultan who had left for his prayers.

The business side to things

During these incidents, one man has been rather conspicuous in his absence, the minister Madanna. While Abul Hasan was out at sea, amusing himself with the children of Caulier, shooting elephants, exciting himself with the wrestlers on land and getting seasick on his trips to the sea, Madanna was not involved. Yet Madanna was working on the *farmans*, which were of concern to the Company.[198] Eventually, he appeared before the Sultan and having presented his gifts, presented the affairs of the Dutch, promising him a good tribute from them. This discussion over the *farmans* went back and forth, via the interpreter, with only minor points of disagreement. By the 6th of February, Narsa reported that Madanna had received all the *farmans* for the Company as well as the necessary rates and toll fees to be paid in the various places.[199]

Around five on the same day, the Sultan summoned Hartsinck to the barge again. Hartsinck found the Sultan entertaining himself watching wrestlers fight. Thereafter Abul Hasan had a private discourse with him, indicating among other things, that he was very content with the ship made for him, and that he could explain to Madanna that the English and the French were merely braggarts.[200] Upon such a claim, Hartsinck recommended earnestly that the Company always enjoy the Sultan's good favor.

Khil-at Ceremony

We pass over the events of the next few days, which mainly had to do with receiving the *farmans* and the presentation of gifts. On the 11th of February, Caulier and his boy, Duryn, Hartsinck, Seroyen, and van Outhoorn, were all summoned to the barge of the Sultan. Having waited for about an hour, the English chief factors appeared, namely Mainwaring, Hatton, Chamberlain but also the Danish chief,

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[198] Madanna was not mentioned for a few days until the 30th of January when Hartsinck, on returning from one of his accompanying trips, passed a village where Madanna was residing. After the proper greetings, Madanna told him that he was engaged in difficult requests as well as religious matters but that he desired to give them a written confirmation the day after tomorrow. This came to pass exactly as Madanna had said it would, on the 2nd of February, presumably before the circumstances described above.

[199] NA VOC 1316: 539v. The Dutch received their *farmans* on the 7th of February. The *farmans* received were as such: (1) no hindrance of trade in Golconda, Palicol, Daetserom, Bimilipatnam, Nagelwanze, (2) an order restoring the transportation of rice to Bimilipatnam, (3) the keeping of the treasure of the wreck of a French ship during the St. Thome conflict, (4) permission to build houses in Ponnepilly, (5) freedom from tolls in Bimilipatnam, (6) changes to taxes on ships, (7) fixed prices for payment for two villages Golepalam and Gondewaron, (8) protection of the Company's weavers, (9) freedom from tolls in Sadraspatam. Heeres, J.E. and Stapel, F.W., eds. *Corpus diplomaticum Neerlando-Indicum, deel. III.* ('s-Gravenhage, 1907), pp. 14-23. A summary of the gifts and the *farmans* received can be found in Havart, *Op en Ondergang*, *vol. I.*, pp. 183-189. The most important concession was the exemption of tolls in Sadraspatam and Bimillipatnam, which meant that they were guaranteed freedom from paying tolls throughout Golconda. See Raychaudhuri, *Jan Company in Coromandel*, p. 67.

[200] NA VOC 1316: 539. "*dat de engelsen en francen, maer een deel blaffers sijn*." The term *blaffer* comes from the French word *blafard*. The exact meaning of the term is unclear, but it seems that it was a term later used to indicate a sub-human specimen (usually in America). They are often described as physically defect and incapable of thinking. See Webb, D. ed. *Selections from Les Recherches philosophiques sur les Américains of M. Pauw* (London, 1795), pp. 96-97. I have chosen to use the term braggarts instead because it better fits the situation.

Willem Wijgberg.[201] When everyone arrived, the Sultan began a private discourse with Caulier, in which he narrated his pleasurable time on Divi and his hunting. Having done so, he called Caulier and Mainwaring to come close to him because he wished to honor them with robes. The said Mainwaring took three heavy steps in order to be the first to receive the honor before Caulier. But the Sultan turned to Caulier and presented him first with the gifts of robes. This consisted of a golden threaded surcoat or long tunic of muslin *(cabaya*) with a fur collar, a long golden cloth, a waist-scarf (*kamarband*), a covering cloth (*chailau*), and a silk-cloth (*tussah*) with small black feathers and inlaid with pearls and diamonds.[202] He also presented him with a brown stallion, that although unremarkable, was one of his five best gift horses. Mainwaring himself received a *cabaya* with accessories, worth about a hundred pagodas. Having presented the gifts and the recipients having thanked him in the Moorish way, the Sultan said, "you Hollanders and English from now on, always keep each other in friendship. Live no longer in contention."[203] The two Europeans now dressed in the fashion of the Moors were dismissed and the Sultan went on to present robes to Hartsinck and Fleetwood and the other merchants. So too were the musicians, the Masulipatnam Governor and the Dutch translators, Amam and Narsa, given gifts.

The women visit the harem

On the same day, a request came from the Sultan's queen and concubines that they wanted the women and the children of Caulier to visit.[204] Caulier immediately sent a servant to the Company's garden to fetch them in covered palanquins with instructions to dress up. It was decided that a large silver dish with golden caskets would be prepared for the ladies of the Court. For the Sultan was projected two beautiful paintings (of the Prince of Orange), decorated with small diamonds and rubies and filled with small patriotic Dutch flowers, twigs and crowns.[205]

At five in the evening, covered palanquins brought Anna Caulier, her four daughters and her youngest son, Maria Lobs, the wife of van Outhoorn, the wife of Jan Duryn, Hillegonda and their daughter who bore the same name, to the Sultan's harem. The English women were also informed so that when the Dutch arrived, they were already in place. There in the lodge, they saw the Sultan, his Queen, and the Sultan's sister. He was seated on a superb throne.[206] Beside them were three of the Sultan's daughters

[201] Fawcett, *EFII, vol. II.*, p. 276. The Danish had re-established a factory there and had three ships trading with Pegu, Mocha, and Bantam.
[202] The terms can all be found in Hobson-Jobson, except *chailau*. See Yule, H. and Burnell, A.C. *Hobson-Jobson: Being a Glossary of Anglo-Indian Colloquial Words and Phrases* (Cambridge, 2015), pp. 137, 279, 945. See also the glossary.
[203] NA VOC 1316: 540v. "*ghij Hollanders en engelsen moet althoos vrundschap met den and'ren houden, en niet in twist leven."*
[204] This was initially refused modestly with diverse pretexts although it was later accepted. Du Bois and van Imhoff, *Vies des gouverneurs généraux*, p. 206. The Sultan had to promise not to commit any mischief or friskiness, but that they be treated with honour and respect according to his royal word. Havart, *Op en Ondergang, vol. I.*, pp. 189-190.
[205]NA VOC 1316: 541v; See also Havart, *Op en Ondergang, vol. I.*, p. 183.
[206] Du Bois and van Imhoff, *Vies des gouverneurs généraux*, p. 206.

who were standing and his other wives who were seated.[207] When Abul Hasan saw the women, he beckoned and greeted them as they passed respectfully.[208] With great joy he brought the children close to himself, holding and kissing them, and sitting them on his knees.[209] The lady Caulier offered the prepared gift to the Queen. Then small silver stools were brought and the women were ordered to sit before the Sultan.

Now the Sultan spoke to the missus Caulier about the great honor the Dutch had given him, saying he was satisfied and content and that he would always look upon them favorably. Further, he asked about the age and names of the children. Then the Sultan had golden *lançols* and jewels be brought. The Sultan called Mrs. Caulier and put round her neck the jewelry. This he did too to her children and the other women. He then stood up and made to leave, bestowing upon them betel and recommending that the women stay longer.[210]

After the Sultan had left, the Queen's sister asked whether Mrs. Caulier had any other request. She replied that she had no special wish but only to live in the Sultan's land in peace and the Company's business to prosper. The Queen appeared ill. At this, the Queen's sister asked for a Dutch doctor to visit and propose some remedy. Mrs. Caulier replied that she would do so. In reply, the Queen's sister said that if there was anything they desired from Golconda, all she had to do was to write to her and she will fulfill. Thereafter, a eunuch announced that the ladies must leave, and the party had to obey despite it being against their wishes.

Having returned, the discussion revolved around questions of propriety, by which it was established the Sultan did not touch any of the European women besides putting the jewels around their necks and playing with the children. Later, the women also paid a visit to Shah Raju's wife, presenting her with a similar gift covered with flowers and twigs, and three gold chains. They were received amicably and also met Shah Raju who came to see them.[211] He assured them of his extraordinary contentment with the Dutch and gave the women and children golden cloths. Such was his pleasure, that a little over a quarter of an hour later they found him again sitting in the home of Jan Duryn.

[207] Du Bois and van Imhoff relate in their footnote that two concubines were of white skin who could not help but shed a few tears upon seeing the Dutch. They said they were formerly of the same habits. The authors suspect that they were taken by corsairs and sold in Mocha before being sold into the harem of the Sultan of Golconda. See Du Bois and van Imhoff, *Vies des gouverneurs généraux.*, p. 206a.
[208] Ibid., p. 206.
[209] Ibid; NA VOC 1316: 541v.
[210] The English women had felt slighted and requested permission to leave.
[211] Then the men, Caulier, Hartsinck, and van Outhoorn, arrived to present him with gifts. Shah Raju showed himself to be very pleased and promised to be helpful in all things to the Company. They presented him with quantities of cloves, cinnamon, maces, and nuts as well as two bottles of rose water and five pieces of Chinese golden cloths. In return, he gave them a roll of Persian fabric and a golden cloth. They presented him with quantities of cloves, cinnamon, maces and nuts as well as two bottles of rose water and five pieces of Chinese golden cloths.

The departure of the Court

Having now spent the better part of two weeks in Masulipatnam, the court prepared to leave. First to leave was Madanna, who departed for Kondapalli. The wives of the Sultan also left town, followed by Shah Raju. Both the Dutch and the English sent a retinue to send the Sultan on his way.[212] The Dutch caught up to him on the 15th of February and when the Sultan heard the approach of their palanquins, he stopped the entire moving retinue and said very amicably how extraordinarily happy he was over the treatment and pleasure that they had given him.[213] During this conversation, the Sultan asked whether Willem Caulier (who was also present) was willing to travel with him to Golconda. This son replied that it was for his Majesty to decide. This merely elicited a short laugh from Abul Hasan. They then watched as the palanquins receded into the distance, bobbing along the way as the road was very uneven. As the Dutch turned to return to the village, they saw the English accosting the Sultan. Afterwards, they found out how the English had received a cool reception in contrast to theirs.[214]

The last to leave was the chancellor Ibrahim. Hartsinck had prepared gifts, which were accepted except the wine.[215] As he prepared to leave, he turned to Aqa Jalal, exhorting him to maintain a friendship with Caulier, not to hinder the Company's trade nor complain about it.[216] The Governor then stood up and embraced Caulier. In reply, the Governor said that he never had an issue with him but words with Hartsinck and the fiscal officer (Jan Duryn)."[217] He went on saying that these difficulties were within reason. To this Ibrahim replied that he had to fulfill all that was written to him from Golconda, to hold the Dutch in friendship and uphold the *farmans* that were issued.

Thus ended the first visit of the Sultan to Masulipatnam.

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[212] They arrived in the afternoon on the 14th of February in a village named Kauza where the Sultan and his entourage were resting. They also found under a few trees, the English gentlemen Mainwaring, his secretary, Fleetwood, and Chamberlain. There they passed the night in transit. The English had set up a shabby tent at sunset with three drummers, five flagbearers, flute players and peons. The Dutch had no such tent, but presented themselves before a eunuch and rested quite comfortably in his garden.

[213] Caulier replied by wishing him all health, prosperity, and longevity and for the Almighty to preserve him. With all courtly courtesy, the Sultan acknowledged the honor given and in turn recommended in most friendly terms that the Company always try to overflow his country with gold, silver, and other trading goods.

[214] NA VOC 1320: 663v. The Dutch remarked that the Sultan did not stop for the English.

[215] NA VOC 1316: 545. This was a Persian horse, two pieces of cloth, cloves, nuts, mace, rosewater and Persian wine. Ibrahim rejected the wine because they were in the presence of other Moors. Later he remarked silently to them that they could always present it to him in Golconda.

[216] Ibid. 545v. "*gij vrundschap met hem maekt en hare comps negotie niet meer sult verhinderen nog over haer klagen, maer laat se alles tot voortgank van deselve doen."*

[217] Ibid.

A successful visit

'Seer vrundelyk'

The most remarkable facet of the encounter is the incredible level of friendship, familiarity, and intimacy. Two things must first be made clear. First, that this intimacy is most evident between the Court and the Dutch, although the English were also beneficiaries of this atmosphere of goodwill.[218] Second, much of this friendliness and lightness of heart seem to be worked primarily through the Sultan, who is always shown to be the prime mover in these encounters. Although there seems to be a consensus that Madanna held the government and was on friendly terms with them, they still found it most congenial with the Muslim factions at court, with Mohammad Ibrahim, Shah Raju, but above all with Sultan Abul Hasan.[219]

An overwhelming sense of this encounter is that there was a learned familiarity, especially with the courtly rituals that were part and parcel in dealing with the local elites. When we look at the *khil-at* ceremony that accompanied the granting of the *farmans*, the honored persons, in receiving and putting on the robes, Caulier and Mainwaring, understood that it signified acknowledgement of authority and honor.[220] Similarly, both Dutch and English factors understood that the gifts of betel (*pan*) symbolized polite departure and conveyed honor and status. In accepting these gifts, they showed as well acceptance of a particular command or assignment from the ruler.[221] Even in defiance do the Europeans show that they understood its larger significance. Jan Duryn, for example, in his pointed rejection of betel from Aqa Jalal certainly showed a degree of familiarity with it to convey this well-placed insult, a great piece of rudeness which was still remembered by the governor in his remarks to Mohammad Ibrahim.[222] Both the English and the Dutch were also familiar with the practice of gift-giving, which they took pains to present the various courtiers and generals, Madanna, Ibrahim but also Shah Raju, whose favor they were eager to obtain. Other incidents such as the familiarity with reception and courtly protocol, all spoke of familiarity with the customs of the court.[223]

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[218] Fawcett, *EFII, vol. II.*, p. 293f3. However, they say little of their friendship with the Sultan, even though they acknowledged that they saw a 'great piece of lightnesse in him.'
[219] Ibid., p. 135.This was acknowledged by 1675, during which the English state that he manages as a 'second King'.
[220] Robe giving and receiving, also known as *khil-at*, was a practice of old roots widespread across Eurasia. There already exists ample literature on this. See Gordon, S. ed. *Robes of Honour: Khil'at in Pre-Colonial and Colonial India* (New Delhi, 2003); Gordon, S. "Robes of honour: A 'transactional' kingly ceremony", *The Indian Economic and Social History Review* 33, 3 (1996): 225-242. Emmers and Gommans concluded that they might have acknowledged the authority of the donor without noticing themselves becoming subjects of the Shah (Persian). See Emmer, P.C. and Gommans, J. *Rijk aan de rand van de wereld: de geschiedenis van Nederland overzee, 1600-1800* (Amsterdam, 2012), colophon. This is modified by Van Meersbergen, who argues that they did know these facts but that it was ambiguous enough for them to distance it from 'effective claims of sovereignty over the Companies or state which they served.' Van Meersbergen, G. *Ethnography and Encounter* (Doctoral Dissertation) (London, 2015), p. 181.
[221] Curley, D.L. "'Voluntary' Relationships and Royal Gifts of Pan in Mughal Bengal." in Gordon, S. ed. *Robes of Honour: Khil'at in Pre-Colonial and Colonial India* (New Delhi, 2003), p. 71.
[222] Subrahmanyam, *Courtly Encounters*, p. 35; Irwin, *Storia do Mogor, vol. I.*, p. 62.
[223] All this was primarily because of Hartsinck. See below.

As mentioned, the friendship that existed between the Company and the Sultan is rather exceptional, and this is partly reinforced by the extant commensality. Although the Europeans and the Persianate-Muslim court of Abul Hasan are located at two ends of the world, they share a common ecology of food production and trade across Eurasia.[224] Thus an Englishman finds no problem drinking with a Mughal Emperor, nor a Dutchman in breaking bread with the Sultan of Golconda.[225] Commensality also forms what Nile Green calls 'ethnography at the high table', in which the sharing of food proved a medium for cultural adaptation and exchange.[226] Indeed, sitting at another's table, learning etiquette and incorporating cuisine are powerful ways to encounter and learn about other societies, and in a very enjoyable manner as well.[227] The Dutch certainly had the opportunity to witness for themselves sitting at the high table with the Sultan, sharing a meal with him. They might not have particularly enjoyed the meal, but their main gripe was always with the manners that the Moors presented rather than with the food itself.[228] Europeans felt a closer sense of culinary association with the Muslims compared to the Brahmins because Hindu societies had stricter rules with regards to food and table companions.[229]

The close sense of intimacy is felt most keenly when we observe that it is not purely a man's world; the women too played an important role in facilitating this atmosphere.[230] European women in Coromandel showed a large degree of involvement. They participated or assisted in economic activities, visited other factories and even entered Hindu temples.[231] To this list, we can add that they also met the court women of Golconda. This was brought about by the insistence of the Sultan, who wanted the women to come together. Through this encounter, we get a glimpse of feminine sociability (in a feminine space) which was, for the most part, strictly inaccessible. As it is described, this was not only a social amusement for them but also an avenue for communication, in this case, diplomacy and gift-giving. As the dialogue demonstrates, such interactions were focused on creating goodwill towards each other that reinforced the existing good relations. Second, it was also a site of exchange

[224] Green, N. "Kebab and Port Wine: The Culinary Cosmopolitanism of Anglo-Persian Dining, 1800-1835" in MacLean, D.N. and Ahmed, S.K. eds. *Cosmopolitanisms in Muslim Contexts: Perspectives from the Past* (Edinburgh, 2012), p. 107.
[225] Eraly, A. *Emperors of the Peacock Throne: The Saga of the Great Mughals* (New Delhi, 2000), p. 283.
[226] Green, "Kebab and Port Wine", p. 112.
[227] Power, B.E. *Commensality and De-othering: Muslims, Christians and Jews in Dialogue through Foodways* (Doctoral Dissertation) (Arizona, 2018), p. 17.
[228] Similarly, when they shared a meal with the Sultan in 1686, for example, the Dutch complained about the royal cook being disrespectful rather than the incomprehensibility of the dishes. NA VOC 1424: 1015v.
[229] Kruijtzer, *Xenophobia in Seventeenth-Century India*, p. 40.
[230] Commentators have often remarked that colonial contact was largely masculine, a homo-social affair that reinforced dominance and authority. Yet there is a growing acknowledgement that women, despite their inconspicuousness, played a crucial role in constituting the larger social fabric and determining the politics of the 'domestic order'. Ghosh, D. *Sex and the Family in Colonial India: The Making of Empire* (Cambridge, 2004), p. 79. See also Suleri, S. *The Rhetoric of English India* (Chicago, 1992). The Dutch East India Company for example prohibited employees from marrying native women. Peters, M. "VOC-vrouwen op de Kust van Coromandel in India", *Jaarboek van het Centraal Bureau voor Genealogie* 58 (2004): 68-105. Women were also part of a larger politics of marriage and alliances in the Company. See the Pitt family for example in Bosma, U. and Raben, R. *Being "Dutch" in the Indies: A History of Creolisation and Empire, 1500-1920* (Singapore, 2008), pp. 61-62. Women were seen as integral in creating rigid racial, class and ethnic boundaries between Europeans and Indians. See Jhala, A.D. *Courtly Indian Women in Late Imperial India* (New York, 2016), p. 79.
[231] Peters, "VOC-vrouwen op de Kust van Coromandel in India": 80-85. For a work that looks at Dutch women in the Dutch East India Company, see Ketelaars, M. *Compagnies dochters: Vrouwen en de VOC (1602-1795)* (Amsterdam, 2014).

of information. The Dutch were able to find out about the illness of the Queen and to render service. The Queen's sister's offer to fulfil any special request also demonstrated the existence of reciprocity and hinted at the role the harem played in the politics of the court.[232] Through this encounter, their shared status on the margins of societies, sisterly bonds and support for their menfolk cemented their relationship.[233]

Finally, the encounter gives us a sense of the intermingling of worlds, especially if we focus on Willem Carel Hartsinck and Abul Hasan Qutb Shah.[234] Hartsinck was a man of mixed origins, a half-Japanese who also spoke Telugu and Persian, arranged the affairs of the Dutch East India Company but at the same time, could easily chat with French and Hindu doctors, drink *cha* at home and entertain himself with his Portuguese minstrels, living as he did in the marketplace of Golconda.[235] Abul Hasan was said to be of Arab stock but also from a Central Asian lineage.[236] At the same time, he was a disciple of Shah Raju who hailed from Bijapur. He ruled over a court of Persianate Muslims and Hindu Brahmins, employed English and Frenchmen in his army, and took wives from as far afield as Mocha. Through their encounter, we see an evident cosmopolitanism, the blurring of boundaries and the fluid intersections of cultures in late seventeenth-century Golconda.[237]

Anglo-Dutch rivalry

The reception and accommodation of the court and Sultan in Masulipatnam, as well as the resulting imbroglio over the position of the flags, reveal the tangled nature of the Anglo-Dutch presence in Asia. I argue that through a close examination of these events, the dilemmas that both Companies' struggled with can be parked under two particular themes – Hierarchy and Identity.

Hierarchy

References to hierarchy are a constant feature in the study of Anglo-Dutch relations. On the ground, the English Company seems to have acknowledged the practical intelligence of the Dutch, their

[232] See also Clancey-Smith, J. "Where Elites Meet: Harem Visits, Sea Bathing, and Sociabilities in Precolonial Tunisia, c. 1800-1881", in Booth, M. ed. *Harem Histories: Envisioning Places and Living Spaces* (London, 2010), pp. 177-210.
[233] The subject raises important questions, as Ivy Schweitzer asks, 'can women's cross-cultural friendships sidestep or even undo the effects of male domination and western imperialism, or do they reinscribe them?' Schweitzer, I. "Making Equals: Classical *Philia* and Women's Friendship", *Feminist Studies* 42, 2 (2016): 337-364.
[234] This is remarked upon by Emmers and Gommans, who feel that the Hartsinck circle was similar to the English 'white Mughals' in terms of their affective liaisons and warm relations, what they categorize under the term *gezelligheid* in Golconda. See Emmers and Gommans, *Rijk aan de rand van de wereld*, pp. 352-354.
[235] His looks were enough to draw comments from Navarrete who spent some time in the Dutch lodge in Golconda. See Cummins, *The Travels and Controversies of Friar Domingo Navarrete, vol. II.*, p. 316; Fawcett, *The Travels of the Abbé Carré in India and the Near East, vol. II.*, pp. 345, 350. An account of the Dutch lodge can be found in this account. Ibid, p. 348. This lodge was a short distance away from the Hyderabad Charminar. Wagenvoort, M. *In het voetspoor der Vaderen: Indrukken van Modern Hindoestan* (Santpoort, 1929), p. 101.
[236] Goswamy, B.N. and Smith, C. *Domains of Wonder: Selected Masterworks of Indian Painting* (San Diego, 2005), p. 170; Zebrowski, M. *Deccani Paintings* (Berkeley, 1983), p. 191.
[237] However this evocation of hybridity, mingling, and tolerance must also be balanced with difference, intolerance and fear, which will be dealt with in the last chapter.

extensive commercial presence and their well-endowed settlements.[238] They also feared their military power, even if they tended to overestimate their potencies.[239] Because of the imbalance in terms of military power and finance, as well as their relative inexperience with the trading circuits of Asia, the English tend to travel in the footsteps of the Dutch and rely on their knowledge and expertise which caused the Dutch much annoyance.[240]

In Masulipatnam, the English similarly seemed to be aware that they were no leaders and were content to depend on the Dutch and follow their lead. This can be seen as well through the whole proceedings of the encounter, which consisted of a mimetic strategy – what the Dutch did, the English did as well. Both the Dutch and the English presented *kobangs* to the Sultan and the courtiers, both vacated their lodges. When the Sultan went on a Dutch ship, the English tried to induce him to board theirs; when the Sultan invited the Dutch for a feast, the English tried to invite themselves too! There were also times in which the English were content to let the Dutch raise threats on their behalf.[241] Generally speaking, this strategy served them well. At the same time, it can also be gleaned that the English were concerned with their reputation. They chaffed mostly at being inferior to the Dutch, swelling often from patriotic consciousness of their superiority.[242] They feared that cooperation also meant potential encumbrances and surrender of rights, and were thus constantly seeking to obtain written confirmations of favor and rank.[243]

The flag incident that occurred shows quite succinctly how imagined hierarchies could often spill over into conflict. The passions of the English were inflamed because they felt that the Dutch, merchants from a mere Republic, were impudent in putting the Prince's flag above the King's flag, which was seen as a gross "indignitie" to the British Crown.[244] The English were also clearly displeased that the Sultan bestowed more trading privileges to the Dutch, despite them claiming 'the right hand'. The Dutch, although disturbed by English threats, emphasized the great jealousy of the English. They made it a point to reiterate that they were foremost in the thoughts of the Court, eagerly conveying

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[238] Temple, *The Diaries of Streynsham Master, vol. I.*, p. 19. Master, for example, was said to have remarked on the Dutch factory in Hugli 'as a large well-built house …much like to a Country Seat in England …[and] which farre doth Exceed ours… carryinge the name of the largest and compleatest Factorie in Asia, and noe more then in my Judgement it deserveth.'
[239] Slot, B. "At the backdoor of the Levant", p. 128.
[240] Clulow, *Amboina, 1623*, pp. 99-101; Coen was said to have remarked that "there is no place in the Indies that they do not follow us." In the text of the *Dialogues in the English and Malaiane Languages*, English writers write over the 'Dutch East Indian' with 'Indian', thus putting the Dutch as competitors. See, Walter, M. "Translation and Identity in the *Dialogues in the English and Malaiane Languages*" in Harris, J. ed. *Indography: Writing the "Indian" in Early Modern England* (New York, 2012), pp. 85-104. Some of the cooperation and conflict is summed up in Games, A. "Anglo-Dutch Connections and Overseas Enterprises: A Global Perspective on Lion Gardiner's World", *Early American Studies: An Interdisciplinary Journal* 9, 2 (2011): 435-461.
[241] Such as the quarrel between Jan Duryn and Aqa Jalal, which they remarked with great approbation. Puckle had hoped that the Dutch would deal with the Governor, by which they would also stand to benefit. See Fawcett, *EFII, vol. II.*, p. 288.
[242] Haley, K.H.D. *The British and the Dutch: Political and Cultural Relations through the Ages* (London, 1988), pp. 108, 123.
[243] Raychaudhuri, *Jan Company in Coromandel*, p. 104.
[244] The aftermath of the incident perhaps showed the seriousness of the incident. As Master relates, in October 1676, the English lodged a complaint to the Directors to the Dutch East India Company but without success. Temple, *The Diaries of Streynsham Master, vol. I.*, p. 298f1. The Dutch commander responsible, Harmen van Haren, apologized later. See Fawcett, *EFII, vol. II.*, p. 292f4.

their position vis-à-vis the English and disputing competing claims.[245] Similarly, in every situation described, the Dutch claimed that they had a special pride of place and affection. The Dutch stressed constantly that their prestige and favor with the court far outranked what the English had.

Identity

The close proximity and similar strategies of the Companies often meant that the distinction between the two groups of Europeans is not always clear to the Asian observer. Although it was at times convenient to pass off one as another, this perceived interchangeability of identity also created problems and made it imperative that they learned how to create new signs of difference.[246] This took place not only in writing but also in action.[247]

Whether the Golconda monarchs understood the difference between the Europeans is up for debate, although the question seems to be in terms of degree rather than discovery.[248] Based on incidents throughout the course of the sojourn, it seems that Abul Hasan was well able to tell them apart. Nevertheless, it was evident that the Europeans themselves found it imperative to acquaint the Sultan of their national differences.

The flag incident allowed the English a chance to, as it were, acquaint the Sultan with the impeachable offences of the Dutch, who were acting, in their opinion, with much hubris.[249] This evidently rankled deeply in the hearts of the English for even later Master remarked that the English must prepare well for his second visit in 1678 so that the Sultan might "learn the difference between them."[250] The Dutch referenced not only the fact that the Sultan had thought the English and the French braggarts, they also thought poorly of their European friends. They wrote that the English were of shameful behavior, acting objectionably and idiotically in front of the Sultan and other senior merchants. Besides, the English soldiers' use of violence during the flag incident shamed the Sultan

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[245] As they wrote, "that King was in *our* lodge and *not* the English, that we were the *first* to greet the Majesty, that [he] was in *our* crafted royal ship and first sailed on *our* ships". NA VOC 1316: 533v-534. "*dat den koning in onse logie, en niet in de Engelse geweest, dat we den majesteit eerst hebben begroet, dat met onse toegemaekte koninkelyke thouij eerst aen ons schip is gevaren."*

[246] Rubright, M. *Doppelgänger Dilemmas: Anglo-Dutch Relations in Early Modern English Literature and Culture* (Philadelphia, 2004), p. 194.

[247] For this reason, English officials in Banten, for example, celebrated the King's coronation by dressing up in 'Scarfes of white and red Taffata' and decorating their lodge with 'a Flagge with the red Crosse through the middle' so as to distinguish themselves from the Dutch. Clulow, A. and Mostert, T. "Introduction: The Companies in Asia." in idem. eds. *The Dutch and English East India Companies: Diplomacy, Trade and Violence in Early Modern Asia* (Amsterdam, 2018), p. 16. This was said to be a spectacular success and the children were said to be crying in the streets, "*Oran Engrees bayck, oran Hollanda iahad*: which is, the English-men are good, the Hollanders are naught." Walter, *Indography: Writing the "Indian" in Early Modern England,* p. 95; Within early travel accounts to the East Indies, the Dutch are often portrayed as ambiguous and unsettling figures – a 'dangerously unstable signifier'. Rubright, *Doppelgänger Dilemmas,* p. 193.

[248] Manucci has, for example, a strange story in which the then Sultan of Golconda, Abdullah Qutb Shah, assessed the character of four different European nations through the cut of venison, demonstrating in the process a keen awareness of difference among them. Irwin, *Storia do Mogor, vol. IV*., pp. 93-94.

[249] The hubris of the Dutch is also remarked upon by the French. Roques state that, "*tout leur donne de l'ombrage, méme dans les terres dont ils ne sont pas les maitres, poussés par une démesurée ambition d'interdire, si faire se pouvait, le négoce à tout le monde pour le retenir pleinement en leurs mains*." See Georges Roques, *La manière de négocier aux Indes, 1676-1691* (Paris, 1996), p. 173.

[250] Fawcett, *EFII, vol. IV.*, p. 95.

who did not even know what was going on.[251] They also accused the English of betraying their plans and for spreading falsehoods.[252] Such was the conflict that a great chill fell upon their relations and 'noe message or correspondence of any nature passed' for a time.[253]

Clulow and Mostert playfully note that the Companies are locked together in an intimate embrace across Asia.[254] And like all couples, they are apt to bring up old scores in arguments. These strategies and flashpoints not only highlight how entangled the relations between the English and the Dutch were but also how they constantly revolved around the same long-standing tensions and issues that came repeatedly to the fore whenever conflict arose.[255]

Uncertainties in the face of the unexpected

There was no doubt that this visit fell outside the usual state of affairs, not only for the Dutch and English but also for the whole kingdom.[256] The uproar in town was touched upon earlier, and the whole narrative spoke of the inconveniences everyone had to put up with. Not only did they all have to vacate their lodges, waste gunpowder for the pleasure of the Sultan, relocate their womenfolk, most importantly, trade came to a standstill, with merchants in the know trying to flee from fear and uncertainty.[257] The English were rather upset and their commissioners complained that they could do 'no business, nor anything else' because all their thoughts were occupied with 'seremonious attendance'.[258]

The Dutch complained that the Sultan's visit cost them a pretty penny.[259] As it turned out, both sets of Europeans paid quite a sum to entertain the whole entourage in Masulipatnam.[260] Although the merchants were authorized to spend lavishly, this was only justified by the privileges that they were able to obtain. After the visit, it transpired from the later missives that the Dutch felt at loss at handling the large number of people that had arrived in Masulipatnam. They wrote that it felt like two

[251] NA VOC 1320: 662.
[252] This concerned the grant of the island of Divi, which the Dutch accused the English of poisoning the minds of the nobles against ceding it to them. This fact is also remarked upon by Martin. As for falsehoods, the Dutch accused the English for stating that the Sultan was never in their lodge, which they argued vehemently against. NA VOC 1320: 650v; Martineau, *Mémoires de François Martin, tome II*., p. 36
[253] Temple, *The Diaries of Streynsham Master, vol. I.,* p. 298.
[254] Clulow and Mostert, "Introduction: The Companies in Asia", p. 16.
[255] Games, "Anglo-Dutch Connections and Overseas Enterprises": 459.
[256] Not since 1634 when Abdullah Qutb Shah toured his realm had the country witnessed such a spectacle. Brennig, *The Textile Trade of Seventeenth Century Northern Coromandel,* p. 167.
[257] NA VOC 1316: 530; BL IOR G/26/12: 58. Persian shipping came to a stop, as seen in the introduction. Puckle also noted how merchants tried to leave Masulipatnam for fear of losing all that they had. According to Puckle, "that they shall be necessitated before he (the Sultan) comes to fly away lest all they have be taken from them."
[258] Fawcett, *EFII, vol. II.,* p. 293.
[259] NA VOC 1320: 628v. "*De E Comps een treffelycke schenckagie zal moeten kosten..."*
[260] The English paid 6149 pagodas. The visit of the Sultan was said to have cost the Dutch 66, 568 florins. For a breakdown of the English accounts, see Bowrey, *A Geographical Account of Countries Round the Bay of Bengal, 1669 to 1679,* p. 90*;* Raychaudhuri, *Jan Company in Coromandel*, p. 67. For the Dutch breakdown of the accounts, see Havart, *Op en Ondergang, vol. I.,* p. 183.

million people had suddenly descended upon the town, all the Majesty's women, horsemen, foot-soldiers, eunuchs and servants – both men and women.[261] They were also very much offended by the obsequious behavior of some court nobles, thus betraying their unfamiliarity with court politics. As they note, 'they were always pretending to affect great respect before the Sultan but to all intents and purposes, always ready with a lie.'[262] The final point touched upon was how indebted they were to Hartsinck, who had made the special trip down to Masulipatnam to arrange matters for the arrival of the Sultan. Only Hartsinck, it seemed, knew the customs of the court. He was the one who enlightened them on various points all the more so because he was the only person who can and was allowed to speak directly with the Sultan.[263]

Despite all these uncertainties, both groups of merchants were initially content with the *farmans* that they received. However, as the next chapter will show, the effectiveness of these *farmans* would also come to affect the reception of the Sultan when he visited again in 1678.

[261] NA VOC 1320: 649. "*de wijl den konink met meer als twee melioenen menschen is afgecomen, waer onder begrepen zijn, alle sijne vrouwen, ruyterije, voetvolk, kapados, dienstbodem… zoo mens als vrouws persoonen…*"
[262] Ibid. 649v-650. "*sullen we nogh groote aenstoot te lyden hebben van eenige sijner andere grooten, die ook ten respect van den koninck ijets sullen pretendeeren, dogh in alle dese gelegentheden, zal zoo veel als t immers practicabel is, de mesongie werde betragt…*"
[263] Ibid. 650. "*den oppercoopman W Hartsinck die als gesegt afgecomen is, wetende hoedanigh de costumen ten hove moeten onderhouden werden, heeft ons seer verligt in verscheijde saken te meer omdat hij met de koninck selve kan, en mag spreecken…*"

Chapter 4: The Sultan visits Masulipatnam, 1678

Having examined the events of 1676, and with it fresh in memory, this chapter now turns to the events of 1678. This chapter is similarly divided into three sections. The first section sketches very briefly the historical developments in Court and Company in the three half-years, from 1676 to end-1678. The second deals with the actual encounter itself, looking at the preceding preparations of the Companies and the visit of the Sultan to the coast. Because of the comparative lack of documentation, I concentrate mainly on the notable visit of the Sultan to the Dutch and English churches. The last section tries to draw some preliminary conclusions from this second visit.

The intermediate years

Madanna tightens his hold

Immediately after the return of the Sultan to court, trouble began brewing, which mainly had to do with war in the Deccan. In 1676, Madanna began a campaign to support Abdul-Karim Khan in Bijapur, leading the troops alongside Ibrahim.[264] This situation was compounded in 1677 when Bijapur was invaded by the Mughal army. An expedition was also sent to Golconda, with the Mughal Emperor, Aurangzeb himself paying a visit. There was much unrest and rumors of an imminent invasion were thick in the air.[265] In the south, the Marathas under Shivaji moved into the Carnatic, laying siege to Vellore and going up to Tanjavur. In the same year, 1677, Shivaji appeared in Hyderabad.[266] Sultan Abul Hasan was persuaded to form an alliance with him at the insistence of Madanna. In exchange for financial assistance, Shivaji was supposed to aid the Qutb Shahi conquest of Bijapur's possessions.[267] So busy was Madanna with war and appeasement, traveling up and down the country that it was commented that the Dutch resident in Golconda could not even be granted an audience with him.[268]

This, however, was not all. Madanna and his brother, Akkana now sought to bind themselves to royalty. The Dutch reported that in January 1678, the Sultan, at the request of the two brothers, took

[264] Kruijtzer, *Xenophobia in Seventeenth-Century India*, p. 236; NA VOC 1324: 496. On the 13th of September, the Dutch reported that 2000 horsemen and 20,000 foot-soldiers and 30 metal cannons were dispatched towards the war front. See also Gommans, J. *Mughal Warfare: Indian Frontiers and Highroads to Empire, 1500-1700* (London and New York, 2002), p. 79; and Archambault, H.L. *Geographies of Influence: Two Afghan Military Households in 17th and 18th Century South India* (Doctoral Dissertation) (California, 2018), pp. 53-63.
[265] NA VOC 1324: 484v; NA VOC 1324: 569-570. The Court was forced to pay a hundred thousand rupees as a tribute to prevent the outbreak of war.
[266] Shivaji also met the Dutch factor Jan van Nijendaal. See Bellarykar, N. "Of traders, trade and politics: What did the VOC and Shivaji say to each other?", Presentation at the 77th Indian History Congress at Thiruvananthapuram, 2016.
[267] However, despite this accord, it was a game of realpolitik with each suspicious of each other's motives. Kruijtzer, "Madanna, Akkanna and the Brahmin Revolution": 259; Seshan, R. *Trade and Politics on the Coromandel Coast: Seventeenth and Early Eighteenth Centuries* (Delhi, 2012), pp. 34-35; Sherwani, *History of the Qutb Shahi Dynasty*, pp. 636-638.
[268] NA VOC 1324: 484v. "*zo druk dat de resident geen audience moght hebben."*

each of their daughters as bride. It was a great ceremony with much noise and activity coming from the houses that only ended at three in the afternoon.[269]

Personnel Changes

On the coast, there were also many changes. A few months after the events of 1676, Caulier was promoted to the Director of all Coromandel, taking up his new role in Pulicat.[270] Hartsinck was appointed chief of Masulipatnam in his place. He was joined with Joannes Huysman and Daniel Havart, who was employed as treasurer in Hyderabad. The English themselves also faced a huge turnover of personnel. The squabbles and conflicts that had impeded the English administration were finally resolved with the suspension of Chamberlain and Mainwaring by Master and his Council in March 1678.[271] Fleetwood died a man in great debt.[272] In their places, Hatton was raised to chief, although he was touched by personal tragedy and bad health, and was joined by Field, Tivill and Wynn. Streynsham Master and his council made plans to tighten the administration, such as implementing rules regarding factory expenses, the keeping of accounts and diaries, and the holding of meetings which undoubtedly helped to reorganize the English Company on more coordinated and disciplined lines.[273]

Growing Frustrations

Despite the contentment that seems to mark the first encounter, troubles soon began looming for the Companies. Already touched upon was the war in the country which proved a great hindrance to trade. In 1676, the Dutch were pillaged by unknown marauders from Bijapur and their complaints to the Court only resulted in vague promises of investigation.[274] However, most of their growing frustrations stemmed principally with disputes with local governors over trade and the inefficacy of the *farmans* issued by the Sultan in 1676 to effect resolution. The Dutch complained that although the

[269] NA VOC 1339: 990-990v. The Dutch observed how the daughter of Akkana was led out the gate of the houses, seated on an elephant, escorted by four other Brahmin nobles, Madanna, Pulepilli Wengana, Outchaarlae, and Piespati Wenkati. Thereafter, they saw them entering a small garden (where the Sultan was praying). There was a richly decorated pavilion in the middle, full of valuable carpets and adornments of gold and silver. Around the pavilion stood 9 elephants and 9 horses. In the pavilion were the royal clothes, a set of five pieces. Underneath a cover were various precious objects and plates, all inlaid with valuable jewels. And placed before the clothes was a marvelous jewel of four fingers breadth, inlaid with other large emeralds and rubies among other inestimable stones. By afternoon, the Sultan having seen to all the formalities, returned to his palace decked now all in gold. He was seated in a covered carriage, with four dancers in tow, a whole entourage of elephants and horses with three adorned young *kasters* leading the way. En route, he dispensed money liberally. Later seated on a horse and following in similar fashion was his new concubine from Madanna being transported to the palace.
[270] NA VOC 1316: 521v.
[271] Fawcett, *EFII, vol. IV.*, pp. xvii; 90-91.
[272] Temple, *Diaries of Streynsham Master, vol. I.*, p. 58. Fleetwood's remaining effects were seized by Aqa Jalal as compensation for the money that he owed to him.
[273] Fawcett, *EFII, vol. IV.*, p. 91.
[274] Raychaudhuri, *Jan Company in Coromandel*, p. 68.

Sultan had bestowed on them so many privileges and concessions, the local governors were not obedient to the letter of the law.[275]

Towards the end of 1677, their exasperation had reached a point that it was acknowledged that despite the successive complaints done to the Court according to the customs of the land, the Company still faced unending trouble.[276] It was also doubted that Madanna would care to give a thought to it.[277] With no restitution, it was contemplated that coercive measures be taken. Such was their vexations, that the Dutch now wrote angrily that it can be thus considered that the regent was not trustworthy and that nothing can be made of his promises.[278] This applied to the entirety of the Company's trade, with confirmation from the Masulipatnam, Golconda and Bimilipatnam factors that the Sultan's commands were not heeded nor the implied threat of force able to resolve matters satisfactorily.[279]

In concluding these years, we see an increasing disconnect between Sultan and his Court and Court and Company. In Court, real power was gradually being usurped by Madanna and his brother Akkana. The activities of the Sultan seem to grow even further removed from the prevailing troubles that plagued his Kingdom.[280] At the same time, the authority of the Court found little effect in the regions that the Companies were trading in. While they were initially content with the *farmans,* they were starting to realize the limits of the Sultan's word on the ground, which caused them to revise their perception of the Sultan and his rule.

The second visit of the Sultan

Preparations for the arrival

In May, the Dutch mentioned that both their resident in Golconda and their translator, Narsa, had informed them very unexpectedly that Sultan Abul Hasan had left with his whole family towards Petapoli in order to take his pleasure in the river and sea. He was to do so at Narsapur as well as Masulipatnam. The same rumors had reached English ears. Despite the Sultan telling both the English and the Dutch not to prepare any presents, trouble was taken by the Dutch to write to Madanna and the Sultan that they be allowed to give honor and pleasure by doing so.[281]

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[275] NA VOC 1324: 571v. "*hoewel den coninck alle voornoemde privieligen met een goede weijning in oprechtigheyt heeft verleent, zoo synder noch eenige zaken die door sijne subalterne regenten niet werden gehoorsoem te weten...*"
[276] For some of the troubles, see Appendix B.
[277] NA VOC 1324: 471v.
[278] Ibid. "*geconsidereert dat dien regent niet te vertrouwen is".*
[279] NA VOC 1324: 469; Raychaudhuri, *Jan Company in Coromandel*, pp. 67-68.
[280] NA VOC 1328: 592. Jan van Nijendaal reported that even though the court was in turmoil (*in rep en roer*) regarding the war with Bijapur, Sultan Abul Hasan spent many days with Shah Raju, who had been made a saint, and had nothing to do with it.
[281] NA VOC 1339: 1081-1082; This point, that the Sultan had said no gifts were necessary, was also raised by Havart. See Havart, *Op en Ondergang*, *vol. I.,* p. 192. The same ships that had entertained the Sultan in 1676, *De Hoeker* and *Het Korkoer*, relieved from shipping duties, were sent to Petapoli with other smaller sloops and tugboats.

However, towards the close of the month, it was learned that the trip was postponed. It was now delayed until the rains were over, due to an attack on Madanna by two Golconda commanders who had a grievance against him.[282] Still, the Sultan's visit was readily expected. The Dutch were convinced that he would eventually visit and that they would not only request the city of Pulicat but also the villages Golepalem and Gondewaron.[283] English preparations were equally sanguine. Streynsham Master, who had arrived from England to inspect the factories and based in Madras, gave detailed instructions to the agents in order to right their attitude towards the Sultan. It was known that the Dutch intended to give 'a handsome present and to ask for various privileges in return', and they were encouraged to do the same.[284] Furthermore, they showed similar ambition in seeking concessions, such as asking for the exemption from all custom and duties for all English trade in [the Sultan's] dominions and a lower rent at several prominent towns.[285]

Now that the Sultan's arrival was to be expected, preparations could be done in a much more organized way. The English readied their shipping activities before the advent of the Sultan and they were able to secure labor such as packers, coolies and palki boys.[286] The Dutch must have done the same. Master urged that the factory not be vacated for the Sultan's use and that 'on no occasion to give place to the Dutch so that the King might know the difference between them.'[287]

The banquet with Aqa Jalal

In October, Aqa Jalal, related to the interpreters that the Majesty would arrive as before to take pleasure. In the ensuing discourse, he told them as well that Ibrahim had robes to bestow to the Dutch and English chief factors and that he would like to invite them both to a banquet.[288] Hartsinck wanted to excuse himself for it would involve an outlay of gifts but the English chief factor, Hatton, had already given his word, and thus they could not refuse.

At five in the evening, the Dutch made their way through the light mist that had fallen at sunset towards the Governor's house. Present was Hatton who was sitting in a room with three other Englishmen. Chairs were brought for the Dutch without any display of jealousy as they seated themselves on the right side of the *Havaldar*.[289] After a short wait, Aga Jalal told them of the visit of

[282] Fawcett, *EFII, vol. IV.*, p. 94; NA VOC 1333: 549v-550. These two commanders were probably Latif Shah, a colonel of nine thousand horses and Sidi Mussut, a prominent noble. Both had defected to Bijapur and were setting themselves up against Golconda. The Sultan had no choice but to send Mirza Senjaar, the son of Mohammad Ibrahim to war. The wishes of the Dutch had come to pass but they were upset that war meant the disruption of trade.
[283] NA VOC 1333: 614.
[284] Fawcett, *EFII. vol. IV.*, p. 95.
[285] Ibid., pp. 94-95. Among the requests were (1) a *farman* granting liberty to the Agent and Council to coin silver rupees and copper pice at Madras; (2) a *farman* granting freedom from all customs and duties for all English goods and trade in the Carnatic and elsewhere in his dominions; (3) Viravasaram, Petapoli and/or Madapollam settled on the Company rent-free or at moderate rent, never to be raised; and (4) the same for three towns near Madras, Trivatore, Egmore and St Thome.
[286] Fawcett, *EFII. vol. IV.*, p. 95.
[287] Ibid.
[288] NA VOC 1348: 1128v-1130v.
[289] See chapter 3 on the jealousy caused by being on the right hand side.

the Sultan, telling them that they had to prepare for his entertainment, that they were to wait on him at Masulipatnam, Narsapur and other places and prepare grain for his use.[290] Then they all shared a meal.

After the meal, two bundles of robes were brought and the *Havaldar* honored both sets of Europeans by getting his assistant to dress them in the golden clothes and its accessories. Thereafter the English requested leave, presumably because of Hutton's indisposition. Hartsinck was urged to stay under the pretext of conversation though the Dutch suspected he wanted a gift. True to form, the *Havaldar* requested that a present must be forthcoming for his patron, Ibrahim, but also the Sultan.

This short affair was instructive for a few reasons. Because of this encounter, the Dutch decided on a contrary course. The Dutch write, that they do not have to do as the English do and that they must know for themselves, through experience, what to do and what to have.[291] Thus while the English presented the governor with gifts, the Dutch refrained from doing so.[292] Hartsinck was said to have related that such courtesies of giving and return-giving was of no advantage since the Moors had always tried to extract as much as possible to the detriment of the company and that they had no communion with them.[293] On the contrary, it was recommended avoiding giving gifts as much as it is practical to do so, and in this way, extricate themselves from any damaging obligations. It was decided then to avoid giving too valuable a present to the Sultan when he arrived unless they were able to gain some sort of recompense.

The arrival of the Sultan

The Sultan was said to have left Golconda in October, taking along in his retinue his family but also the Fort Envoy, Vira Raghava.[294] Like the previous visit, the Dutch entourage left Masulipatnam to receive and welcome the Sultan, traveling four miles out into the country. And like the previous occasion, the Dutch presented their gifts of 25 golden *kobangs* to the Sultan and 15 to Madanna.

Having returned, we assume that the conduct went along similar lines, with both Companies welcoming the Sultan and his retinue into Masulipatnam. The English waited until the Sultan had arrived before offering their gifts. Field and Colborne made the usual present of 10 *kobangs* to the Sultan in place of their chief, Hatton, who was laid up with fever.

We pass lightly over the events of the next few days, where the Dutch entertained the Sultan on board their ships and vessels. The Sultan's visit was ostensibly again to take to the sea but the Dutch remark that this amusement did not cost them much. The Sultan did not sail with too many nobles this time in

[290] Fawcett, *EFII, vol. IV.*, p. 94.
[291] Ibid. The English presented five pieces of cloths (worth 560 pagodas for the Sultan), 128 pagodas to his attendants and town officers, and 300 pagodas in cash. NA VOC 1348: 1128v-1130v. "*want wij moeten zelfs weten, door experientie wat we te doen of te laten hebben."*
[292] Ibid.
[293] NA VOC 1348: 1128v-1130v. "*dat daar bij geen voordeel te behalen is"/ "geen geemschap heeft".*
[294] English sources put his arrival on a Sunday, the 11th of December 1678 whereas Dutch sources say he arrived on the 15th of December.

the two ships prepared for him. The Dutch also remarked that the presence of Hartsinck was greatly preferred, and he spent long hours with the Sultan. Hartsinck showed the Sultan three notable Company ships. The Sultan sailed in person on the flotilla *Delfshaven* and got on two other ships, the *Swartsluijs* and the *Aardenburg*, firing cannons with great pleasure.[295] Such was his joy at sailing that the Dutch call him an 'uncommon lover of sea and ship'.[296]

Among the English, some back and forth over expected gifts began. Hatton, who presented 10 *kobangs* as well to Madanna, was told to refer to Aqa Jalal over business matters. However, when they met, the Governor did not blink in telling him that the Sultan expected to receive a present equal to the one given him on his previous visit. Hatton was unwilling to make such an expense and urged that the Dutch 'who … have ever and still carry the preeminence before the English' should present first before they did.[297] The Governor responded saying that the English held the first place in his esteem and were not to dispute in such a manner. The English now became wary of acquiring privileges for they feared that they might lose all that they currently enjoyed. Accordingly, they decided to wait, replying that they were ready to present but desired that Aqa Jalal take up their cause and promote their interest and that the Dutch present first, so that 'they might better judge how to proceed.'[298]

While the Sultan amused himself in Masulipatnam, Palicol and Datserom, the Dutch reported that Madanna did not come to set up tent with them due to sickness but retreated to Ibrahimpatnam, a distance of 36 miles away, in order to wait till the Sultan was ready to take his leave.[299] Mohammad Ibrahim was not present either, being engaged in campaigning.[300]

The Sultan visits the church

The most celebrated account of the Sultan's second visit is his attendance in the churches in Masulipatnam.[301] The Sultan did not just visit the Dutch church; he also attended an English service. Although Havart's account of the event is the most accessible narration, it nevertheless emerges that Havart had deliberately overlooked an aspect which was faithfully recorded in other sources.[302]

[295] NA VOC 1348: 1191-1192. There was an issue with the yacht *Geldria* whose defect they hid from the Sultan but privately remarked that it was made of ordinary wood and would be a major expense to repair and keep it afloat.
[296] Ibid. "*een ongemeen lieffhebber om op zee en 't schip te sijn."*
[297] Fawcett, *EFII, vol. IV.*, p. 96.
[298] Ibid.
[299] NA VOC 1333: 656v-660v; BL IOR G/26/12: 43. Puckle calls Palicol '*a very large populous towne the Dutch is governor of that part of the country … whereof the people gitt under their protection to free themselves from the intolerable tyranny of the Governors that are mostly Persians*.'
[300] NA VOC 1348: 1160-1160v.
[301] Havart ostensibly thinks that the reader might take pleasure from it. Havart, *Op en Ondergang, vol. II*., p. 191.
[302] There exist a manuscript of 24 pages and well-known. Du Bois and van Imhoff, *Vies des gouverneurs généraux*, p. 206. Unfortunately for our purposes, they do not deem the other events worthy of the readers' attention and thus only summarily relate what Havart has himself written. The original manuscript is most probably lost.

According to English sources, visiting the church was first broached by Shah Raju, who asked Hatton to satisfy his curiosity regarding the Christian way of worship. This was purported to have taken place on the 18th of December 1678, where he attended service, staying for the whole session, including the reading of the sermon, with which he 'seemed to be pleas'd'. After a fishing outing with a drag-net, he took Hatton and the others to the Sultan's tent where they were given betel. Shah Raju showed them great courtesy and friendship and declared his 'favorable regard and kindness for the English nation than the Dutch.'[303] He must have found it sufficiently amusing for he later related this visit to the Sultan so that he too desired to see it. Thus on the 25th of December, the following Sunday, the Sultan was in attendance and stayed for the whole service.[304] Having seen the English way of worship, he was most intrigued by the women who used books, presumably for prayer or song, and inquired whether it was so that women could read. At his wish, both Mrs. Field and Mrs. Mainwaring read passages from the church Bible and the Prayer Book.[305] Having done so, English records said that the Sultan was not content with what he had seen, and went on to the Dutch factory to attend their service. This presumably passes on to Havart's account.

According to Havart, the Sultan arrived at ten in the morning. Accompanying him were the two sons of Shah Raju and ten courtiers.[306] Du Bois and van Imhoff also state that he was present with his six principal concubines. Upon entering the church, he sat down on a throne that was made of golden cloths and silk. Sultan Abul Hasan was dressed from head to foot in golden robes and was covered in precious stones, diamonds, rubies, sapphires, and emeralds. He wore a turban with valuable diamonds with the crowning piece a large stone worth 250 karat. So were his hands too sparkling with jewelry. He was of such value that Havart stated no European king could equal. And so bedecked in jewelry and valuable stones that it was said to be difficult for one to look at him when he shone and glittered so brightly.[307]

Being comfortably seated, he began by putting a pipe to his mouth, smoking tobacco like a Persian noble from a *gorregor* that was placed on a golden plate.

[303] Fawcett, *EFII, Vol. IV.*, p. 97.
[304] This was the 15th of December according to the English Calendar, and thus they did not have a special Christmas service.
[305] Ibid.
[306] Valentijn says that they were both married to his daughters, thus making them his sons-in-law. See Keijzer, *François Valentijn's Oud en Nieuw Oost-Indien*, p. 56.
[307] Ibid.

Koning van Golkonda bezoekt Hollanders in hun kerk (The King of Golconda visits the Dutch in their church), 1693, Rijksmuseum.[308]

The preacher's chair was directly opposite him, and due to the absence of a pastor, it was up to *Ziekentrooster* Johannes Koekebakker to give the sermon.[309] However, the preaching was choppy for it was constantly stopped at intervals in order to give Havart time to translate it into Persian for the

[308] Rijksmuseum, RP-P-1896-A-19368-967. Illustratie uit: Havart, *Op en Ondergang van Cormandel* (Amsterdam, 1693).
[309] This Koekebakker later became a jeweler in Amsterdam according to Havart. Havart, *Op en Ondergang, vol. II.*, p. 192. The sermon chosen was the Christmas sermon from the selection of evangelical homilies written by the famous preacher Justus Bulaeus, *Huis postil.* This is a sermon that was divided into two parts and covers the passage in the book of Luke 1:1-1:15 that deals with the Birth of Jesus. See Bulaeus, J. *Huis-postille, ofte Predikatien, over de zondaagsche evangelien, die men in de christelyke kerke 't geheele jaar door van ouds gewoon is te verklaren* (Amsterdam, 1710), pp. 47-80.

Sultan. Clearly the Sultan was distracted.[310] Sometimes, the Sultan would give his approval, other times he would smile but he spent most of his time chatting with the other nobles, notably the sons of Shah Raju, without paying much attention to the sermon or Havart.

When the sermon had ended and the prayer concluded with the word 'Amen', the Sultan himself echoed in a loud voice 'Amen' and asked Koekebakker for its particular meaning. Havart intervened and gave an explanation which the Sultan approved. After the singing had ended, the assistants and the soldiers left the gathering place, and the Sultan requested to see the 'Book of Laws' (*Wet-boek*), referring to the Bible. Koekebakker brought it to him in three or four steps. The Sultan, upon his approach, rose from his throne, and standing, bowed deeply, motioning with his hands to show respect to the Bible as though it was the Qu'ran. Thereafter, the Sultan asked what was written inside. It was explained to him the prophets, judges, and kings of the book of Moses were similar to what was written in the Shar'ia. Then he asked whether it contained the Law of Jesus, meaning the four gospels, which they replied in the affirmative. Upon returning the Bible, the Sultan showed the same reverence when he had first received it, and sat down, taking up his pipe to smoke as before.

Here Havart leaves out a detail commented on by other sources. Now that only the higher-ranking officers and the women were left, the Sultan desired to see the women dance before him, primarily for his amusement. This was a source of embarrassment for they were still within the sanctuaries of the church. However, despite them feeling loathed to do so in a place of worship, they feared displeasing the Sultan and thus obligingly obeyed.[311] Thus, the English snidely commented that the Dutch, "where after their prayers were ended, they entertain'd him with musick and dancing wenches, belonging to their Chiefes lady, in the very place where just before they had peform'd their devotions."[312]

After the performance, the Sultan expressed a wish to see how the Dutch eat, according to their manner. This they did so as well, and preparations were made to convert the church into a dining hall. The table in the church was decked with cloths and cutlery was brought. Then the food was served and everyone ate and drank, toasting to the longevity of the Sultan and the concubines, to which he found particularly charming.

During the meal, the Sultan discoursed with them over a few points of the Christian religion, asking in particular about the Ten Commandments of the Lord, which were explained to him by Koekebakker.[313] When they came to the Seventh Commandment, the Sultan gave a slight grin, saying that it is sad that a man should be so reduced to find contentment with only one wife.[314] Koekebakker

[310] This was presumably his second service of the morning.
[311] Du Bois and van Imhoff, *Vies des Gouverneurs généraux,* p. 207.
[312] Fawcett, *EFII, vol. IV.*, p. 97.
[313] Similarly, Havart was the translator at hand.
[314] The seventh commandment is "Thou shalt not commit Adultery." (*Gij zult niet echtbreken).*

cleverly answered that this dealt primarily with adultery, specifically that no man should take the wife of another man. This tactful reply satisfied the Sultan.

Later events and the departure of the Sultan

After this visit, the Sultan was said to have spent three consecutive days with the English, sailing to the island of Divi, where he set up tent and 'took his pastime'. This included cruising on the English boat and a hunting excursion of 'wild cowes' with hawks and Persian dogs.[315] On the third day, he took a day trip to Kallepalli. Evidently, he was much pleased. The English commented that he was "very cheerfull and spent his time on the water in mirth, turning a Zentue [Hindu] song into a Persia[n] or Moores song, which he performed very readily."[316] After this pleasure trip, the Sultan left for Narsapur and Madapollam, where he was joined by both the English and Dutch factors and their interpreters.

The Sultan stayed on the coast until the turn of the year before returning to Golconda. Madanna now arrived to receive the Sultan and the Dutch and English merchants hurried to meet him, for they knew all business matters were in his hands.[317] Madanna asked the Sultan whether they had offered him presents which the Sultan replied in the negative. The Dutch now pressed their cause to offer a good gift and made their requests – that they might obtain Pulicat and that they might be allowed to give 3000 pagodas as the English. However, Madanna dismissed their request, desiring to speak only with their translators.

This negotiation proved to be difficult and they were made to wait for a long time. Finally, the replies proved inconclusive. Their requests were flatly deferred until the Sultan had returned to Golconda.[318] Both Hartsinck and Field were summoned, presented with robes, and paid their greetings to the Sultan. However, as the Sultan made to depart, Hartsinck was called to his side and the Sultan said that they should write to their resident in Golconda. He also promised that everything would be done there and said that he had made the Company a priority.[319]

Unhappiness on all sides

Despite the cordial departure, it soon emerged that all was not well. The Sultan and Madanna were both displeased that they had not received gifts from the Dutch and would not see them.[320] Abul Hasan was said to have moaned miserably, "See, there I was in my village, Palicol and the

[315] Ibid.
[316] Ibid.
[317] NA VOC 1348: 1191-1192.
[318] Fawcett, *EFII, vol. IV.*, p. 101.
[319] NA VOC 1348: 1191-1192. " *dat de Compagnie tot haar oogmerck geraakt."*
[320] The reason being that the English had offered a gift to the Sultan while he was visiting while the Dutch had not.

Hollanders, have not even done me honor with a hundred pagodas!"[321] In Masulipatnam, they feared that this might sully the name of the Company.[322]

Almost a full year after the visit, the Dutch complained that their request indeed was not fulfilled nor would there be any follow-up.[323] This was a failure, all because the Dutch had not presented a gift to the Sultan and Madanna. In Golconda, the Dutch excused themselves saying they could not offer gifts in the hope of few benefits when he (Madanna) was kept away with a cold and tried to appease him with words.[324]

The English were unhappy as well, primarily because their gifts did not bear fruit. None of the requests were granted despite their dispensation of money. It was also revealed that Master had refused to pay for this tribute and their own merchants were forced to pay out of their own purse.[325] The Council saw the presentation of gifts manufactured out of 'forced consent' and they chaffed all the more by the misapprehension that the Dutch, in return for their 6000 pagodas, had obtained all they wanted.[326] Master wrote especially to Vira Raghana claiming it as 'a great peece of injustice done [to] our nation' and pressed him to take up their requests.[327] In reply, Raghana raised doubts about the honesty of their *dubash* claiming that the interpreter had obtained certain privileges in return for extracting the payment of 3000 pagodas.[328]

The growing chasm

Old intimacies

In detailing the encounter above, what is again apparent is the familiarity with the proceedings of the encounter and the lingering closeness and intimacy between both sides. The conduct of the whole visit was arranged upon similar lines, and both groups of merchants knew how to receive the Sultan into

[321] Ibid: 1213v-1214. "*Ziet daer ben ik in mijn dorp palikol geweest en de hollanders hebben mij van de inkomst geen hondert pagoden vereert."*
[322] Ibid; Raychaudhuri, *Jan Company in Coromandel*, p. 67.
[323] NA VOC 1343: 478-479.
[324] Ibid. The Golconda resident, provided two examples to justify their disappointment. First, of the English, who did not even manage to extend their privileges despite the gifts given and Second, the embassy of Pieter Smith in 1672, for which they paid at least a hundred and thirty thousand guilders to both the old and current Sultan and ended up returning home empty-handed. Thus, it was doubted that this 3-4000 pagodas would have been sufficient either way for them to give up Pulicat or compensate them for the attack by bandits in Sadragapatnam. Rather, it was advised that other methods be taken, via violence, such as taking the [Moorish] ships.
[325] NA VOC 1343: 478-479.
[326] Fawcett, *EFII, Vol. IV.*, pp. 101-102. This rather angry reaction to the English situation vis-à-vis the Dutch was later clarified in a council meeting that took place on the 27 February 1679. As it was discovered the Dutch had carried out their negotiations in secrecy, making information difficult to obtain but they too had obtained nothing in return for their presents. The English argued that the Dutch had gone round claiming that they did not give any presents but upon Field returning from the negotiations in Bezvada, the Dutch had switched tack and argued that they had obtained much success in what they wanted. All this the English saw as an attempt to 'exalt their credit and cast blemish on the English factory'.
[327] Fawcett, *EFII, Vol. IV.*, pp. 102.
[328] Ibid. He was rumored to have obtained a barren piece of land. The Dutch translator was also suspected of obtaining an even greater gratification.

their town and make sure that he was royally entertained. The telling absence of the minister Madanna and Muhammad Ibrahim raises the idea that a great degree of trust was given to the foreign merchants to host him without the watchful eye of his two most important courtiers. To judge based on the second visit, the Sultan was merely there with his family and close intimates, such as Shah Raju, while the attention of his important nobles was on other matters of state. This seems thus to suggest the continued existence of intimacy between the inner, private circles of the Sultan and the foreign merchants operating in his Kingdom.

Like the first visit, a great deal of time was passed out at sea with the constant accompaniment of Hartsinck, whom the Sultan had affectionately called 'my Golconda Captain' and with whom he was very familiar with. Although we do not have details of the conversations that took place, we can be certain that they were conducted on most friendly lines. Similarly, the invitation to dine together after the church service and the constant attendance of the Europeans and their translators while he traveled to Madapollam and Narsapur, are remarkable because they reveal much about the intimacy that the Sultan had with them. A special mention must also be made to the occasion of the Sultan's departure from Masulipatnam, which highlights the especial familiarity between the Sultan and Hartsinck, so much so that the Sultan promised to keep an eye over their affairs. This encounter, therefore, continues to fit our understanding of conviviality and commensality.[329]

Religious encounter

The visit of the Sultan to the churches introduces a new motif into the picture, that of religious encounter.[330] Like many of his contemporaries in India and elsewhere in Asia, Sultan Abul Hasan showed a remarkable keenness for foreign religion. Although he showed no inclination to convert nor to debate, he showed himself to be relatively curious about aspects of Christianity and revealed a certain penetration to the contents of Holy Writ, even if it was first initiated by seeking out a new source of entertainment.[331] What is most striking is perhaps the sacredness that the Sultan recognized in the Bible. That the Sultan might bow before the Good Book might seem comical, but it is a visceral display of respect and reverence for another religion. In looking closely at the explanations given by Havart, we also see the painstaking attempts to offer transcultural equivalents. Havart not only furbishes an Islamic equivalent for the Sultan, he also, in writing his account, explains to the reader or provides an interpretation of what the Sultan is asking when he uses certain terms such as the 'Book

[329] Kruijtzer, *Xenophobia in Seventeenth-Century India*, pp. 39-41.
[330] See Appendix C.
[331] A certain familiarity if not tolerance of the practice of other religions existed in Golconda in this period, even though there was undoubtedly sectarian and religious conflict. An example of a religious disputation produced in Golconda can be found in *Dabistan-i-Mazahib*, which has a chapter on Christianity, although of the Roman Catholic variant, which Athar Ali claims is "impartiality of a very high order". Athar Ali, M. "Muslims' Perception of Judaism and Christianity in Medieval India", *Modern Asian Studies* 33, 1 (1999): 243-255.

of Laws' or the 'Law of Jesus', both of which are not traditionally used in Christian terminology. In this respect, Havart is consistently laboring to elaborate and explain cultural similarities between the Muslim elite of Golconda and his European audience.[332]

Another point gleaned is the patient even cautious attitude taken to the visit of the Sultan to their churches. It is obvious that this encounter was engendered, not from a positive desire to demonstrate the power and glory of the holy religion but from fear of causing displeasure. From the compliance to the Sultan's requests and the tactful replies to the Sultan's questions, both European groups conducted themselves with great circumspection and apprehension rather than outright refusal and disputation. Perhaps the most dramatic example is the dialogue over the commandment on adultery, detailed by Havart, which reveals the implicit understandings characterized by both sides. The teasing remark made by the Sultan in response to the commandment reveals that he is thinking about his own situation and his bevy of wives. The Dutch, in their place, showed that they had perfectly understood that the hidden implication of the remark was a reference to the Sultan himself, and sidestepped it cleverly by providing a perfectly valid, if not selective, interpretation of the commandment. Thus, it was so that a potential disagreement was smoothed out in the most congenial of ways.

In looking at this exceptional case, it is possible to classify this religious encounter under the term "fortuitous convergences", where even though there were points of confluence, each also had to attempt to build bridges in order to come to a mutual understanding.[333] This had to be negotiated because of certain ideas and assumptions shared by both communities involved. This improvisation of understanding explains the dialogues in the encounter. Even though they understood each other as 'People of the Book' and recognized the sacredness of holy worship, each had to take steps to find a religiously commensurate example while at the same time providing and accommodating certain interpretations in order to avoid conflict and clash. This encounter certainly illustrates that religious interaction in the early modern world was far more complex and inconclusive than it was traditionally thought.[334]

The problem of trust

The Companies were most concerned about getting what they wanted and getting it to work, both of which were undergirded by notions and institutions of trust. That said, the overall picture painted through the sources is an overall shortage of trust. Recent studies have shown that the inability to trust

[332] See Havart, *Persiaanse Secretaris*, pp. a8, 9, a11, 26. in which Havart offers many examples – for example how the letters are similar to Latin or French words in notarial pieces and clichés such as '*s lands wijse is 's lands eer'*. Havart encourages that his work should be used. '*gebruik dan mynen arbeid ten goede*'.
[333] Wagoner, P.B. "Fortuitous convergences and essential ambiguities: Transcultural political elites in the medieval Deccan", *International Journal of Hindu Studies* 3, 3 (1999): 241-264.
[334] Parker, C.H. "Converting souls across cultural borders: Dutch Calvinism and early modern missionary enterprises", *Journal of Global History* (2013): 61-62.

was not only far-ranging, applying to a wide category of people and places, but also deep-seated, reflecting a persistent and consistent rhetoric of suspicion and judgment.[335] Encounters with the kings and governors in Golconda were no different.[336]

In looking at the events of 1677 and 1678, it is evident that the inefficacy of the *farmans* issued in 1676, the conflicts and disputes that they had with local governors in the realm, most of all, the unwillingness of local authority to recognize the *farmans* issued, shaped the perception of an untrustworthy and ineffectual Sultan, which directly contributed to the relative coolness of the encounter between Company and Court.

Yet the question must be asked, if the *farmans* were ineffective, why do the Companies still petition for privileges via the issuances of *farmans*? It has been argued that the *farman* was a legitimizing mechanism which elevated the Companies legal standings to the equivalent of the various *Nawabs* and Governors with whom they were habitually embroiled. At the same time, it also solidified the ongoing working relationship between the Companies and the interlocutors.[337] Thus, for the Companies, the *farman* was taken to be a form of special dispensation, an inherited property with an inherent source of power.[338] Seen in this light, this insistence on obtaining *farmans* is intertwined with their sense of powerlessness and distrust of the Indian officials that they habitually dealt with.[339]

Another key event that emerges is the duplicity of the *dubashes*, which also represents another obstacle to the Companies' ability to trust. It has long been acknowledged that the Companies were dependent on brokers to function within Indian societies. Especially, for these courtly encounters, most of the dialogues were conducted with the help of their interpreters, not to mention the all-important business negotiations. As it turns out, the English *dubash*, Kola Venkatadri, was found guilty and imprisoned for 'minding more his own Interest than the Honble. Companys.'[340] Such incidents not only served to confirm the pervading religious and cultural prejudice that the Europeans already had of their untrustworthiness, such bias also makes the logic of violence even more likely.[341]

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[335] Van Meersbergen, G. "Dutch and English Approaches to Cross-Cultural Trade in Mughal India and the Problem of Trust, 1600-1630" in Antunes, C. and Polónia, A. eds. *Beyond Empires: Global, Self-organizing, Cross-imperial Networks, 1500-*1800 (Leiden, 2016), pp. 69-81.

[336] Nabil Matar, for example, has argued that the image of the Moor was shaped by a feeling of awe and frustration at an inability to subdue them rather than through actual experience. This view however patently fails to consider that ethnographical perceptions were as much rooted in and shaped from daily colonial experiences on foreign shores as well as reproduced in their reports. See Matar, N. *Turks, Moors and Englishmen in the Age of Discovery* (New York, 1999), pp. 8, 106, 129.

[337] Keay, J. *Honourable Company: A History of the English East India Company* (London, 1994), p. 222; Good, P. "The East India's Company's Farmān, 1622-1747", *Iranian Studies* 52, 1-2 (2019): 181-197.

[338] Stern, P.J. ""A Politie of Civill & Military Power": Political Thought and the Late Seventeenth-Century Foundations of the East India Company-State", *Journal of British Studies* 47, 2 (2008): 253-283.

[339] Van Meersbergen, *Ethnography and Encounter*, p. 98.

[340] Temple, *The diaries of Streysham Master, vol. I.*, p. 81. An inquiry revealed that the Venkatadri had indeed received from the Sultan a grant of 'so much good ground as 30 Candy of seede paddy may be sowen thereon'. Even though it was later discovered that the land was barren making the grant worthless, Master disbelieved his claims and kept him under lock and key in the Factory 'under a guard of soldiers.'

[341] Subrahmanyam, *Forcing the Doors of Heathendom*, p. 8. As Subrahmanyam notes, the logic of violence is bound to affect the logic of political ethnography. Van Meersbergen, *Ethnography and Encounter*, p. 117.

As Neild-Basu reckons, complaints about the *dubashes'* chicanery and duplicity inevitably reflect inherent fears in the colonial psyche in handing over control of lives and businesses to these assertive strangers.[342]

Taken together, problems with the *farmans* and *dubashes* reflected the Companies' fragility and dependence on strangers but at the same time, evoked also entrenched mentalities and anxieties that continued to shape commercial transactions in the early modern period.

[342] Neild-Basu, S. "The Dubashes of Madras", *Modern Asian Studies* 18, 1 (1984): 1-31. The *dubash* was the representative of the European's first view of India and very often the primary source of contact with the country.

Chapter 5: Conclusion

In November 1680, reports that the Sultan was in Warangal, ninety miles from Masulipatnam, raised fears that he might pay another visit.[343] This, however, did not come to pass, and he returned to Hyderabad, much to the relief of all the merchants. Till the end of his reign, Abul Hasan did not visit again though he often expressed a wish to do so.[344] This, therefore, marks the end of two very extraordinary encounters and allows us to close with a few conclusions. I begin first by picking out three themes that determined the success or failure of an encounter. Second, I try to problematize the concept of commensurability by revisiting the three themes discussed in the introduction. Finally, I attempt to situate these Indo-European encounters within the larger historiography and raise potential questions for further research.

What determines the success or failure of a courtly encounter?

These two encounters in 1676 and 1678, taken together, reveal a few things about the practice of courtly encounters. Studying them allows us to draw out three themes that were crucial in shaping possible differing outcomes. They are: gift exchange, courtly protocol, and cultural mediators.

Gift exchange

It has long been remarked that without gifts, nothing was to be successfully obtained in India. Bernier and Tavernier, for example, stressed that 'the great are never approached empty-handed'.[345] The importance of giving and counter-giving was apparent and acknowledged.[346] With greater familiarity came also greater specificity. Recommendations for suitable presents, often in the form of "rarities", began to enter the accounts of traders and merchants in their offerings to the court.[347] However, as the two encounters show, the growing repertoire of experiences accumulated over time did little to

[343] Fawcett, *EFII, vol. IV.*, p. 116.
[344] The Sultan wanted to visit Petapoli and Pulicat in 1681 but was seemingly stopped by an outbreak of pestilence in Golconda. See de Haan, F. ed. *Dagh-Register gehouden int Casteel Batavia, vant passerende daer ter plaetse als over geheel Nederlandts Inida, Anno 1681* (Batavia, 1919), p. 681. This however did not mean that contact had ceased, but rather returned to the more conventional courtly encounters, such as the embassy of Lauren Pits to the Golconda Court in 1686, and occasional interactions with local Governors such as with the Governor of the Carnatic, Lingosie Sangeroesoe and his other ministers in 1681 at Tripety, thirty miles from Pulicat. See Ibid., p. 431.
[345] Bernier, F. *Travels in the Mogul Empire, vol. I.* (London, 1826), p. 224; Tavernier, *The six voyages*, pp. 113-114. Similarly, Barent Pietersz. wrote from Surat in 1638 that by "offering them trifles once in a while, we draw the hearts and feelings of the grandees more towards us when one needs them on occasion than one would by presenting them thousands of rupees." Vallé, C. ""To Capture Their Favor": On Gift-Giving by the VOC." in Kaufmann, T.D. and North, M. eds. *Mediating Netherlandish Art and Material Culture in Asia* (Amsterdam, 2014), pp. 292-293.
[346] Gifts create cohesion, facilitate shared values and consolidate hierarchies of power in the early modern world. Biedermann, Z., Gerritsen, A. and Riello, G. "Introduction: Global Gifts and the Material Culture of Diplomacy in Early Modern Eurasia" in idem, eds. *Global Gifts: The Material Culture of Diplomacy in Early Modern Eurasia* (Cambridge, 2017), pp. 1-2; Van Meersbergen, *Ethnography and Encounter*, pp. 171-195.
[347] Swan, C. "Dutch Diplomacy and Trade in Rariteyten" in Biedermann, Z. Gerritsen, A. and Riello, G., eds. *Global Gifts: The Material Culture of Diplomacy in Early Modern Eurasia* (Cambridge, 2017), p. 171; Vallé, C. "To Capture Their Favour", pp. 293, 298-299. See also the specification of gifts offered by Roe in Foster, W. ed. *The Embassy of Thomas Roe to India, vol. II* (London, 1926), pp. 487-488.

determine its outcome. Instead, it was intercultural competencies, financial resources and diplomatic attitudes that were the make-or-break factors.[348]

This is most evident with regards to gift-giving, which is the most conspicuous point of difference between the two encounters. While the first visit saw the tailoring and presentation of gifts, some of an almost personal and meticulous nature, the other was marked by an absence of gifts, especially if we ignore the customary presentation of *kobangs*. A second key difference was the frequency of gift-giving. While the first encounter saw the Europeans taking pains to present the Sultan, his family and his courtiers with various gifts, there was little mention of a commensurate expense for his second visit.

These two encounters are also emblematic in demonstrating the difference in function and philosophy behind gifting and tribute. Despite the base idea of reciprocity, it was also shaped by cultural contexts.[349] In the courtly cultures of early modern India, gifts were *relational*. They created bonds of obligation and loyalty and incorporated the giver and receiver into the larger body politic.[350] However, the Companies see gifts as *transactional*. Each individual gift is an account on its own, dependent on the immediate objectives at hand and readily negotiable.[351]

Familiarity with courtly protocol

Gift-giving, of course, formed a part of a larger set of rituals that was prevalent in South Asian courts. In most of the Indian sub-continent, there was a strong sense of courtly ceremony and ritual with sets of norms and rules guiding behavior. *Khil-at* or the donning of royal robes, the dispensation of betel leaves (*pan*), the correspondence in *farmans* and greeting invocations, all of these ceremonial and symbolic words and gestures reflected a degree of familiarity with the structures and rituals of the court. Yet as Audrey Trushke has highlighted, this familiarity can also be deceptive as entrenched suppositions can sometimes fail to match the reality of the situation.[352]

As the encounters show, both the Dutch and English certainly understood how to behave when they came into contact with the court. This is perhaps facilitated by the relative openness of the Golconda court and the presence of insiders. The Dutch had established a factory in the capital, employed spies in the inner-court, and cultivated friendships with the Muslim elites which gave them a greater knowledge of the courtly protocol. Similarly, English agents, such as Cholmley and Fleetwood, also

[348] Siebenhüner, K. "Approaching Diplomatic and Courtly Gift-giving in Europe and Mughal India: Shared Practices and Cultural Diversity", *The Medieval History Journal* 16, 2 (2013): 530.
[349] Mauss, M. *The Gift: The Form and Functions of Exchange in Archaic Societies* (London, 1990); See also Leiberson, H. *The Return of the Gift: European History of a Global Idea* (Cambridge, 2011) and Algazi, G., Groebner, V. and Jussen, B. eds. *Negotiating the Gift: Pre-modern Figurations of Exchange* (Göttingen, 2003).
[350] Chatterjee, K. *Merchants, Politics, and Society in Early Modern India: Bihar, 1733-1820* (Leiden, 1996), p. 84.
[351] Van Meersbergen, *Ethnography and Encounter*, pp. 172, 186, 200. Thus, for the Companies, the presentation of giving was often seen as rapacity, greed, corruption or bribery.
[352] Trushke, A. "Deceptive Familiarity: European Perceptions of Access at the Mughal Court" in Raeymaekers, D. and Derks, S. eds. *The Key to Power?: The Culture of Access in Princely Courts, 1400-1750* (Leiden, 2016), p. 67.

interacted quite frequently with the court and established many trading agreements.[353] It is no wonder that they showed a greater degree of familiarity with courtly protocol which contributed to the success of the encounters. At the same time, there were also many occasions where they chose to subvert these norms as an insult or betrayed their unfamiliarity with courtly access. The jury is still out as to whether the Europeans fully understood the significance of these rituals and protocol and whether they noticed any 'familiarity' with their own.[354]

Cultural Mediators

The conduct of the two encounters, fascinating as it might be, would not have been possible without a third group, the translators. No matter how intimate the encounter, it was always mediated by a *dubash* or *munshi*. These third-parties negotiated and exploited zones of difference, and by their control of communication, shaped both perceptions and policy. They were cultural interlopers, central to cross-cultural processes of explanation and legitimation.[355]

Some of the more poignant and memorable scenes during these encounters were successful because of these middle-men who helped to facilitate understanding. For example, since the *dubashes* were said to be always by the Sultan, it also transpired that they were an important link between the court and company, constantly involved in the mutual correspondences and integral to the success of the business. Nowhere is this most evident than in the second encounter, when the discussions on behalf of the Companies took place entirely between the *dubashes* and Madanna. However, this last event also highlights a key difference between the two encounters, the problem of trust, touched upon in the previous chapter. In both cases, the fragility and dependence of the Companies upon these intermediaries are demonstrated.[356]

Besides these *dubashes*, other *munshi*-merchants such as Havart, the son of Caulier and Hartsinck were equally valuable for ensuring the success of the encounter. The importance of these people (*munshis*) who have linguistic capabilities cannot be understated. It has long been argued that linguistic differences, imposed by layers of interpreters and translators, often create distance in

[353] Haidar and Sardar, *Sultans of Deccan India, 1500-1700*, p. 325.
[354] See Brummett, P. "Introduction: Genre, Witness, and Time in the 'Book' of Travels" in idem. ed. *The 'Book' of Travels: Genre, Ethnology, and Pilgrimage, 1250-1700* (Leiden, 2009), p. 26; Kurruppath, M. "In the Company of Global History", *BMGN – Low Countries Historical Review* 134, 2 (2019): 103-114.
[355] Sutherland, H. "Treacherous Translators and Improvident Paupers: Perception and Practice in Dutch Makassar, Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries", *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* 53 (2010): 320. Compared to other places such as Makassar and Japan, where translators were able to convert expertise into status and carve out a liminal space for themselves between cultures, the role of the *dubashes* in India is less well-documented. Yet they were often employed and entrusted for negotiations with the Court and sometimes exploited this position for their own advantages. The Dutch translator Narsa Gapu was especially trusted because of his intimate knowledge of court politics and his long years of service. NA VOC 1378: 1380v; NA VOC 1424: 964. "*Dat hij narsa, genaamt en dat hij alvoor 40 jaren … als tolk in dienst van de E comps geweest was*." Similarly, the English *dubashes* Beri Timmanna and Kasi Viranna, were two prominent merchants, who achieved some fame for using the English network for their own advantage. David Veevers, "The Contested State: Political Authority and the Decentred Foundations of the Early Modern Colonial State in Asia" in Pettigrew, W.A. and Gopalan, M. eds. *The East India Company, 1600-1857: Essays on Anglo-Indian connection* (New York, 2017), pp. 175-192.
[356] Irschick, E.F. *Dialogue and History: Constructing South India, 1795-1895* (California, 1994), p. 73. *Dubashes*, as Irschick argues, stood simply as the symbol of bewilderment and powerlessness in the face of an inscrutable local system.

relations no matter how familiar the signs and gestures were.[357] The greater linguistic aptitude of the Dutch merchants may have enhanced the elective affinities felt by the court towards them. Undoubtedly, their presence helped a great deal in fostering an agreeable atmosphere of easy intimacy.

Questioning commensurability

Since Sanjay Subrahmanyam's successful book *Courtly Encounters*, it has become fashionable to consider the idea of commensurability as an essential basis for the writing of a truly 'global' history.[358] In order to explain cultural encounters as well as the complexities of individuals, the study of mediation becomes necessary, and this mediation involves the production of commensurability.[359] Instead of directly engaging with this concept, I invite the reader to form his/her own conclusions about commensurability by offering and unpacking the three themes postulated at the outset and gleaned from the two encounters.[360]

Intimacy and the fear of intimacy

Personal conversations, constant accompaniment, mutual visitations, the sharing of meals, the participation in celebrations, and the meeting of women, all of these were some of the events that passed in the course of the two encounters. As hinted at previously, these formed the larger tropes of conviviality and commensality that characterized the relationship the Europeans had with the Muslim elites.[361] How should we interpret this intimacy? Kruijtzer suggests that both Europeans and the

[357] The classic example here is Roe again, who despite being a drinking buddy of Jahangir, could only speak broken Spanish to an Italian interpreter, who translated into Turkish who then translated into Persian. Subrahmanyam, "Frank Submissions", p. 83.

[358] Subrahmanyam, "Introduction" in idem, *Courtly Encounters*: 1-33; Subrahmanyam, S. "Par-delà l'incommensurabilité : pour une histoire connectée des empires aux temps modernes", *Revue d'histoire moderne & contemporaine* 54-4bis, 5 (2007): 34-53; Juneja, M. "Circulation and Beyond – The Trajectories of Vision in Early Modern Eurasia" in Kaufmann, T.D. Joyeux-Prunel, B and Dossin, C. eds. *Circulations. Global Art History and Materialist Historicism* (Pennsylvania, 2014), pp. 59-77.

[359] Subrahmanyam, *Courtly Encounters*, p. 209. Kaufmann, T.D. "Ranges of Response: Asian Appropriation of European Art and Culture" in Savoy, D. *The Globalization of Renaissance Art: A Critical Review* (Leiden, 2017), p. 119. For the history of complex individuals, one already mentioned is Aslanian, S.D. "Une vie sur plusieurs continents": 19-55; See also Şahin, K and Schleck, J. "Courtly Connections*:* Anthony Sherley's Relation of His Trauels *(*1613) in a Global Context", *Renaissance Quarterly* 69: 80–115. Havart also fits this profile.

[360] Attention to these sites of mediation must be qualified by several caveats. First, that the challenges of alienation and fostering understanding is very much dependent on the specific contexts in which they were forged. Second, that commensurability is an ideological stance that needs to be repeatedly substantiated and sustained through its intermediaries. Third, one must also question the erasures and exclusions that are produced in the quest for commensurability. Subrahmanyam, *Courtly Encounters*, p. 30; Sartori, P. "On Strangers and Commensurability in Eurasia: A View from 'the North'", *The Indian Economic and Social History Review* 55, 1 (2018): 133-145; Rothman, E.N. "Afterword: Intermediaries, Mediation and Cross-Confessional Diplomacy in the Early Modern Mediterranean", *Journal of Early Modern History* 19 (2015): 245-259; 251; Leibsohn, D. "Introduction: Geographies of Sight", in Leibsohn, D. and Peterson, J.F. eds. *Seeing across Cultures in the Early Modern World* (Farnham, 2012), p. 5.

[361] Bevilacqua points to a larger sense of analogy and kinship as well in early-modern Europe from 1650-1750, what he terms the Republic of Arabic Letters. Bevilacqua, A. *The Republic of Arabic Letters: Islam and the European Enlightenment* (London, 2018), pp. 1-5,77, 200. Scholars have pointed out that affective bonds of friendship by Indian Muslims tended to be constituted along lines of hierarchy, service and kinship, intertwined with power and material interests and expressed by favors, shared experiences, and reciprocal obligations. This is contrasted with Europeans who tend to maintain a fictive equality in ethics and behavior. More deserves to be written about the subject of friendship and sociability which is still in its

Muslim elites shared similar consciousness of class distinctions based on a kindred attitude towards their inferiors, the Persianate Muslims of the Hindus and the Dutch and English of the Portuguese and their mestizos.[362] Another reason offered was that the Moors had less stringent dietary requirements compared to the Brahmins, who were more selective about what they ate and with whom.[363] A final possibility has been offered by Rosalind O'Hanlon, what she describes as 'masculine sociability.'[364] According to this view, shared codes of martial virtues shaped a common wider recognizable masculine identity that transcended racial and religious identities. Although this does not translate easily with merchants, the large presence of European soldiers and the military capabilities of the Companies might have something to do with enhancing this perception.[365]

infancy. See Ali, D. and Flatt, E.J., "Friendship in Indian History: Introduction.", *Studies in History* 33, 1 (2017): 1-16. See Richards, J. F. "The Formulation of Imperial Authority Under Akbar and Jahangir", in idem. ed. *Kingship and Authority in South Asia* (Wisconsin-Madison, 1978), pp. 252-277; Robb, P. *Useful Friendship: Europeans and Indians in Early Calcutta* (New Delhi, 2014), pp. 1-2, 12-13, 42-44, 48. For some studies, see "Friendship in Indian History: Introduction."; Kia, M. "Indian Friends, Iranian Selves, Persianate Modern", *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East* 36, 3 (2016): 398-417.

[362] Kruijtzer, *Xenophobia in Seventeenth-Century India*, pp. 38-39. See also Cannadine, D. *Ornamentalism: How the British Saw Their Empire* (New York, 2001).

[363] Ibid., pp. 39-40.

[364] O'Hanlon, R. "Masculinity and the Bangash Nawabs of Farrukhabad" in Burton, A and Ballantyne, T. eds. *Bodies in Contact: Rethinking Colonial Encounters in World History* (Durham and London, 2005), pp. 21-24, 34-35. See also Flatt, E.J. "Martial Skills" in idem. *The Courts of the Deccan Sultanates*, pp. 268-302.

[365] After all the Dutch did fight a war alongside Golconda against the French. Furthermore, Manucci relates the demand of the Sultan Abul Hasan who desired to know whether Europeans fought on horseback, upon which a large painting was sent to him of a battle between the Dutch and the Spanish. As the account relates, the Sultan wanted to 'see' the military valor of the Dutch. See Irvine, *Storia do Mogor, vol. III*., pp. 132-133.

A European soldier on horseback.[366]

However, it must also be stressed that intimacy was not always looked upon favorably.[367] The closeness between the court and company personnel was detrimental to the Company for three reasons. First, in order to maintain the style and pomp of the Indian elite (which found favor with the court), a commensurate expenditure was required. As Havart notes, some of the staff in Hyderabad go around "well-dressed, sitting in their palanquins, surrounded by followers, and adored like demi-gods by their inferiors."[368] This however impinged upon the Company's profit. Despite attempts to cut personnel and rein in expensive tastes, some senior company servants continued to let costs spiral out of control by lavishly living their lives.[369] Second, intimacy also gave rise to opportunities for

[366] *Kalamkari Hanging with Figures in an Architectural Setting, ca. 1640-1650.* Met Museum. 20.79. This is presumably a European soldier on horseback depicted in a Deccani Kalamari textile. The identity of the rider is not known but it bears a striking resemblance to the cavalry portrait of Maurits, Prince of Orange. See van de Passe, C. *Ruiterportret van Maurits, prins van Oranje*, RP-P-OB-15.807, Rijksmuseum. It could be based on portraits of the prince that were given by Company merchants to Indian rulers.

[367]Some of the personnel in Coromandel, notably Havart, Hartsinck, Nijendaal and to a larger extent Herbert de Jager and van der Murter were all part of a larger group, a circle of enthusiasts who were deeply interested in the Indian elite culture. Not only were they fluent in the language of the court, they also cultivate close relationships with the Muslim elite. Peters and de la Porte, *In Steen Geschreven*, pp. 70-74.

[368] Havart, *Op en Ondergang, vol. II.*, pp. 189.

[369] Kruijtzer, G. "Pomp before Disgrace: A Dutchman Commissions Two Golconda Miniatures on the Eve of Mughal Conquest", *Journal of the David Collection* 3 (2010): 160-182; NA VOC 1405: 1523. In one of the inquiries, the Director in Pulicat came to know that some chief merchants in Coromandel were not keeping the administration in good order and that

Company merchants to conduct private activities outside of the Company.[370] Gaastra notes that corruption was widespread as well among the Dutch Company servants, especially fraud and illegal private trade.[371] This too was present in Golconda.[372] This was possible because Company servants cultivate relationships with certain members of the court, allowing them to concoct schemes for their own enrichment. Third, a deeper psychological reason for this fear of intimacy has to do with religious identity. Benjamin Kaplan has observed that the internal dynamics of understanding religious differences often shaped their external perception of the wider world.[373] Even though the mercantilist (and imperialist) objectives were important, they were sometimes at odds with the theocratic visions that permeated the Companies.[374] While the previous chapter touched upon the sacred resonances between Christianity and Islam, there existed as well an inimical rhetoric against their Islamic counterparts.[375] Friendship and association with the Muslims were accepted and tolerated but one should keep as much distance as possible.[376] The cultivation of intimate friendship with the Moors evoked a larger fear that these Europeans would cross a boundary of the seventeenth-century self and become Muslims themselves. This was universally condemned and invoked feelings of anger and repugnance.[377]

Diplomacy

The previous two chapters touched upon the uneasy relationship between the two Companies, so alike but also so different in many ways. While the broad lines of friendship and rivalry are clear enough, these encounters bring into focus two aspects that have not yet been studied. First, that courtly encounters can also be the scene of conflict, in this case, between Companies. Second, that cross-cultural diplomatic strategies are at times interdependent; that they were not always conceived in the

some of the lesser members were obliged to steal and were being driven to extreme poverty. "*Ten anderen, dat sijn E noch mede te vooren gecomen was dat onder de hooftcoopluyden op verre na de beste administratie niet gehouden nog ook in verscheyde jaren geen reekeningen aan de mindere participanten gedaan souden sijn, tot groot nadeel van de selve, die …daerdoor niet alleen verkort en stoolen maar tot de uyterste armoede soude konnen gebracht werden*."

[370] This was already a problem with the English East India Company.

[371] Gaastra, F.S. "Constantijn Ranst en de corruptie onder het personeel van de VOC te Bengalen, 1669-1673." in Groenveld, S., Mout. M.E.H.N. and Schöffer, I. eds. *Bestuurders en Geleerden* (Amsterdam, 1985), pp. 126-136.

[372] One of the famous cases concerns a scheme that was concocted by three experienced staff, Nijendaal, Janszoon and his second, which involved supplying Mughals with elephants under Company's seal but intended for their own pockets. This hare-brained enterprise went awry and ended up costing the Company a gargantuan sum of over a million guilders. See Kruijtzer, "Pomp before Disgrace": 172.

[373] Kaplan, B. *Divided by Faith: Religious Conflict and the Practice of Toleration in Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge MA, 2007), p. 4.

[374] Vink, "Images and Ideologies", p. 129.

[375] Ibid. pp. 129-131. See also Anon. *Historie van den Oorsprongch, Geslacht, Geboorte, Opvoedinge, en Leere des grooten valschen Propheets Mahomets* (Amsterdam, 1627).

[376] Kruijtzer, *Xenophobia in Seventeenth Century India*, pp. 33-34; NA VOC 1378: 1380. "*Sijt weinig van woorden, beleeft in ommegang, spaarsaam in dranck, voornamelyk bij de mooren, want sulx wart kleynachting niet licht geloof staande, aan hare woorden of schoone belooften, om dat den aant den persianen, moren, gentijven, gewinst is, wiens grond men qualijk kan bepeilen…"*

[377] Ibid., p. 73. Kaplan B, *Muslims in the Dutch Golden Age: Representations and Realities of Religious Toleration* (Amsterdam, 2006), p. 26; BL IOR G/26/12*:* 55. Puckle, mentioned that the Englishmen who were in the Sultan's employ, "*none had turned moores but they meet every Sunday at Mr Wilkins' house*."

narrow sense between King and merchant, but were at times related and even contingent on other events and other actors.

Conflicts between Companies

At present, the study of courtly encounters has focused on interactions between one group of merchants and one court. Yet as the visit of the Sultan to Masulipatnam shows, these interactions were sometimes complicated by the fact that there was more than one party present which could give rise to much conflict and disputations. This can be seen through the 'flag incident' which was a matter of casting aspersions and sullying the honor of another. This is not mentioning as well that a great number of barbs, insults and ill rumors circulated about each other's intentions and activities as a result of the visit. Few, if any, such encounters in a courtly setting show such a level of conflict between different Company merchants vying for attention. It could be suggested that this was conditioned by the provincial nature of the encounter on the coast of Masulipatnam, which tended to be more informal, regular and characterized by proximity which also gave rise to more opportunities for conflict.[378] This joins some themes already mentioned in the first chapter of hierarchy and identity which were also facets of the Companies' interaction with foreign courts. Taken together, this issue of conflict in encounters and its causes can perhaps be a new way of thinking about Anglo-Dutch amity/enmity and courtly encounters.

Interdependence as a diplomatic tool

Guido van Meersbergen has shown that the Companies were remarkably similar in their approach to diplomacy.[379] What I wish to highlight here is rather different – that the diplomatic strategies of the Companies were interdependent on each other. This is most evident when we look at the English approach for privileges, which they modelled very closely on the Dutch. During the second visit, for example, Hatton was notably evasive about presenting, wanting the Dutch to present first before they did so, and resorting to working through the local governor in order to facilitate their cause. By contrast, the Dutch were most concerned about being preeminent, especially relative to the position of the English. This could be seen most evidently through the actions that they took and in writing. They constantly emphasized that they received the Sultan first, that they gave him place in their lodge and that they were first to welcome him on their ships. These two encounters show us that a great degree of contingency and juxtaposition with regards to each other was often a facet of their diplomatic approach.

[378] Van Meersbergen, "Diplomacy in a Provincial Setting", pp. 55-78.
[379] Both emphasized control of the seas and benefice of their trade, adapted to Indo-Persianate rituals and protocols and projected illusions of power whenever it was necessary. Van Meersbergen, G. "The Diplomatic Repositories of the East India Companies in Mughal South India, 1608-1717", *The Historical Journal* 62, 4 (2019): 875-898.

However, it must also be said that this juxtaposition is not unprecedented. When Roe visited the court of Jahangir for example, he used the difference between the Portuguese and the English as a diplomatic tool.[380] For the Qutb Shahi court, the fact that both the French and the English had secured freedom from tolls was one of the reasons that the Dutch decided to launch an embassy in 1672 to appeal for a better *farman*.[381] In these cases, we see clearly how the Companies used each other for their own diplomatic advantage.

These themes of conflict and interdependence are two threads in the larger web of global diplomacy that are illuminated through these encounters and are markedly different from traditional diplomatic interactions.

'Uncertainties' of Encounters

Finally, these visits to the coast open up a counterpoint to traditional courtly encounters and allow us to reframe our understandings about encounters as a whole. I argue that the visits of the court to the coast is instructive because it reveals the uncertainties that the Europeans felt with this form of encounter outside the precincts of the courtly space. I explore here two such uncertainties – the uncertainty of expense and the uncertainty of conduct and access.

Uncertainty of expense

For the Companies, gifts given to various rulers accounted for a significant portion of their outlay, as stated above, for the conduct and maintenance of good diplomatic relations. However, as a commercial concern, it always had to calibrate its costs and ensure equilibrium. When embassies were taken to royal courts, gifts were usually projected in advance and often tied to specific efforts to obtain certain grants. While undertaking such missions, they were advised to be careful with spending and to make sure expenditure keeps within the books.[382] Similarly, when an embassy fails, the Company is often very aware of the losses which had to be accounted for.[383] Sending an embassy, therefore, provides a modicum of control of the Company's necessary expenses. However, contrasted with the visit of the Sultan, the projection of expenses was less certain. The Dutch had to keep

[380] At the same time, he also acknowledged that the Mughals tried to play them off one another. Findly, E.B. *Nur Jahan: Empress of Mughal India* (New York, 1993), p. 132; Foster, *The Embassy of Thomas Roe to India, vol. II*., pp. 286-287.
[381] Raychaudhuri, *Jan Company in Coromandel*, p. 60. In the instructions given to Smith, he was to state that "the Company is in a very bad state, because the other foreigners, namely the French and the English, are so noticeably favored above them, that they could not exist without having the same business as them." NA VOC 1279: 73-73v.
[382] Hurdt, A. *Advijs van den directeur generaal Anthonio Hurdt, over de zake van de extraordinaire ambassade lasten bij den ambassaeur Paets in sijne rekeningen ofte boekjens opgebragt* (unknown, 1689), pp. 4-5. This was for the embassy to the Emperor of China. The ambassador was advised with the following "*Dan om UE aan de andere zijde evenwel niet te zeer te bepalen…dat'er, de zaken des vereisschende, en eenig apparent voordeel mede komende voorzien werden, noch boven dien een summa van 3000 a 4000. Gl. 't Zij aan eenige rijksgrooten of lievelingen des Keizers, in Peking na voorval zal mogen gespendeert werden, daar toe wij UE qualificeeren bij desen*." See also van Meersbergen, "The Diplomatic Repositories": 886.
[383] NA VOC 1302: 457-525.

assuaging fears about costs with their insistence that they would obtain benefits.[384] The English highlighted other preoccupations – they complained that the Sultan's arrival hampered their recruitment of labor and means of transport, that his presence got in the way of their investments, and that their gifts and special preparations were expenses without a commensurate return, some of which undoubtedly affected the Dutch as well.[385] As merchants, the uncertainty of expense was an important facet for their dislike of such encounters. The Sultan's visits reflected an inherent anxiety about incurred costs which cannot be controlled and interfered with the Company's commercial objectives.

Uncertainty of conduct and access

When embassies were made to Hyderabad, instructions were often given to ambassadors to guide their conduct and behavior during the audience. This was possible because of the innate familiarity of the local factors stationed in the capital with the court, their knowledge about the latest news in the country and the proper protocols to follow. For example, for the Dutch embassy to Court in 1686, the ambassadors were advised what topics to avoid, how to compliment the Sultan, and that while they request and complain, that they should also dissimulate and not be too insistent.[386] They were also given to understand whose patronage to seek.[387] A piece of similar advice was given during the 1672 embassy to the court.[388] Other types of reports such as the *Memories van Overgave* helped pass down standardized knowledge in terms of royal protocol and behavioral standards.[389] Contrasted with these embassies, no instructions were at hand for the visit of the Sultan, and much confusion reigned as to proper procedure and courtly protocol.[390] Besides Hartsinck, they were uncertain how to receive him, with much of their interactions governed by tact and improvisation.[391]

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[384] NA VOC 1320: 628v.

[385] This can also be seen in chapter 3. Fawcett, *EFII, vol. IV.*, pp. 95, 98, 101-102.

[386] NA VOC 1411: 536v, 538. "*dat hij van een zeer goedaardig, beleeft en liberale vorst is" ...*"*Daer is in rade verstaen dat bij soo een geval Uwe vant selve oock wel sult mogen afwijken en niet al te hard daer op blijven staen om niet te thoonen dat we voor hebben den coninck in sijnen ongelegentheyd nu noch mede met onreghtmatige pretenties te beswaren of iets anders te lyschen…"*

[387] NA VOC 1411: 674-674v; NA VOC 1411: 541-541v. "*en nodigh wesen dat men om de maniere der moorse hoven naer te volgen dese of gene van de grootste bewindthebbers en lieflingen des conincx in den arm neemt en door beloften van rumjme vergeldingh deselve t onswaert niet allen soelt gerege te maken maer daer door oock te persuaderen om onse reghtveerdige pretensies en klaghter ontrent den coninck nogh al meer te faciliteren en smakelyck te maken en waer toe ik voor tegewoordig niemand beter soude komen aenwijsen als den rijx cancelier ouseyn beeck en den meester den ceremonie…"*

[388] NA VOC 1279: 73-82. Smith was advised how to greet the Sultan (*te begroeten en hen lang gesond leven en vredige regeringh toe te wenschen*), whom to present gifts (*te bezoeken en te beschenken den heer Seid Moedsjaffer kansellier en den heer Nichnamchan, opperveld oversten van den selven koninck*) and whom to ask in the event of unexpected occurences. (*of eenig andere onverwaghte zake… zo zal uw e daar toe als raadsluyden bij een roepen de voornoemde residenten in Golkonda…*).

[389] NA VOC 1387: 1379-1379v. For example, if an audience with the Sultan was arranged, they must first excuse themselves twice or thrice and flatter the patron (in this case, Madanna). When they greeted the Sultan, they were expected to take off their hats, when they sat, they must sit cross-legged, and they must keep their eyes from shifting about. "*dit moet in d'eerste instantie 2 a 3 maal g'excuseert werden met het leggen niet voorsien te sijn van soodanige schenkagie die met de achtbare doorluchticheyt van sijn persoon over een komen, en dat de schaduwe van hem te weten madoena u genoech is*"/"*mede brengen inde eerste bij een comste geschiet de groete op sijn hollants met ongedeckten hoofde, tot wanneeer UW wert aangewesen te moeten mede sitten, set dan UE hoet op en na gedane aanspraak sit met de beenen onder t lyf krings wijs met deen vrolijk doch stemming wesen niet omdrayende van ogen…*"

[390] Hartsinck had to be sent especially down from Golconda in order to receive the Sultan for the first encounter.

[391] See chapter 3.

Courtly encounters were also usually rigid and limited, restricted by a variety of factors and modes of access. The spatial arrangements of the palace and courtly places were meant to create distance between the sovereign and his subjects so as to maintain the illusion of power and royal dignity.[392] When an audience is made, these are usually regulated by ceremonies and rituals.[393] Their access also lasted for a determinate amount of time and their requests were limited.

This is contrasted with the visits of the Sultan at the coast, which intruded into the almost enclave-like spaces of the Europeans. The Sultan moved about freely, set up court in lodges and on ships, and entertained himself without end. The Europeans also had to attend to the Sultan almost daily like courtiers, showing him about their ships, factories, and districts where they operated in, conversing and eating with him, and made to oblige his whims. There was also much discomfort with the level of intrusion by the court into their daily lives. For example, there was much unwillingness to perform for the Sultan in their churches and much uneasiness with the unclear boundaries between the Sultan and the women and children. The access to the Sultan and his court on the coast is very markedly different from their visits to the court in an officious capacity.

By comparing these two encounters with traditional court encounters, they not only reveal the preference of the merchants for a certain type of encounter, it also reveals the normativity of courtly encounters and its anxieties.

Situating these encounters

The last part aims to answer a deceptively simple question – how do we make sense of these encounters? First, I argue that these encounters reinforce and eventually anchor within the collective memory a Sultan that was inept as he was debauched. This is the formation of a perception that continues to be reiterated in present-day accounts. Second, that these encounters can be placed within the schema of larger developments within the kingdom. I offer here two views, one negative, one positive, by which we can understand the encounters.

[392] Asch, R.G. "Patronage, Friendship and the Politics of Access: The Role of the Early Modern Favourite Revisited" in Raeymaekers, D. and Derks, S. eds. *The Key to Power?: The Culture of Access in Princely Courts, 1400-1750* (Leiden, 2016), p. 182. See also, Raeymaekers, D. and Derks, S. "Repertoires of Access in Princely Courts, 1400-1750" in Kaal, H. and Slootjes, D. eds. N*ew Perspectives on Power and Political Representation from Ancient History to the Present Day: Repertoires of Representation* (Leiden, 2019), pp. 78-93.

[393] NA VOC 1424: 974-978v; Havart, *Op en Ondergang, vol. II.*, pp. 155-159. The embassy of 1686 offers us a case in point. The embassy had to arrange an audience via an official intermediary, and wait until they could be summoned. When they were admitted, they were received by a *diduan* and brought into the Sultan's palace, where they had to ceremoniously greet the Sultan who was flanked by his ministers and servants and present their request in the form of a letter that was read by a translator.

The formation of perception

As previously mentioned, Abul Hasan does not have a good reputation in the historiography.[394] Yet these judgments were perceptions that developed over time, shaped inevitably by the crucible of these encounters and joined other prevailing perceptions faced by European merchants in Masulipatnam and Hyderabad. As the decade progressed, Europeans faced a greater number of clashes with local governors, who became even more defiant in refuting royal authority. At the same time, the Companies were writing constantly about conflicts in and around the region, the outflow of wealth paid to in order to stave off war with the Mughals and the disinterestedness of the Sultan in these affairs. Based on my own perusal of the documents, I find that negative observations about the Sultan tend to be present in later accounts, that is, after 1677. The constant refrain, that the Sultan was fickle and untrustworthy, that he took no part in ruling but indulged only in pleasure, is used constantly as an excuse or explanation for the crises and problems these Companies were facing.[395] These encounters, therefore, formed an important reference point that observers use to when highlighting the moral bankruptcy of the monarch and fit the larger negative perceptions that are being perpetuated in other writings.[396] Similar to the problem of trust, this formation of negative perception owes much to the meticulous recording practices of the Companies that anchor it in the larger collective memory.[397]

Two views

Placing these encounters in the history of the Qutb Shahis is tricky because most general histories say little, if any, about these events. A suggestion, albeit negative, is offered by François Martin, a contemporary observer. In his view, these trips to the coast of Masulipatnam were merely a power ploy, meant to numb the Sultan with pleasure so that he becomes ignorant of affairs of state, thus allowing Madanna to take sole charge of the running of the Kingdom.[398] Seen in this light, these

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[394] See Chapter 2 footnote 100 and 102.

[395] De Haan, *Dagh-Register gehouden in Batavia, 1681*, p. 564. *"… dien Coninq na 't scheen sigh met de regeeringh weynigh bemoeyde, volgende eenlyck syne hertstogten en syne vermaecklyckheden te besoecken";* Fruin-Mees, W. ed. *Dagh-Register gehouden int Casteel Batavia, vant passerende daer ter plaetse als over geheel Nederlandts Inida, Anno 1682. Vol. II.* (Batavia, 1931), p. 1402. "*Den Coninck van Golconda bemoeijde sig niets met de bestieringe des rijx, latende hetselve aan de Heeren Madoena en Ackena, hebbende geen andere zinnelijkheijt dan sig te vermaaken…"*; NA VOC 1405: 1371. *"Want wat aanbelangt den coning, die is een seer wispelturing vorst, op wiens woorden men geen vasten staat kan maaken".*

[396] Take for example the view of Havart, who claims that Sultan Abul Hasan "desired to dispose of the accumulated reserves of his predecessors and to spend on whoring and other debauches" and that he "had no royal bearings or noble dignity, but had a common manner, conversing with everyone, he laughs constantly and wastes his time in drink or with whores if not in sailing and riding without bothering himself with the serious matters of the kingdom." This impression undoubtedly comes partly from his encounter with Sultan. Havart, *Op en Ondergang, vol. II.*, p. 216.

[397] Van Meersbergen, *Ethnography and Encounter*, p. 94. See also Delmas, A. "Introduction" in Delmas, A and Penn, N. eds. *Written Cultures in Colonial Contexts* (Claremont, 2011), pp. xvi-xxvii.

[398] Martineau, *Mémoires de François Martin, tome II.*, p. 36. "*Le brahme Madena, premier ministre, qui s'était insinué dans l'esprit de ce prince, après avoir fait arrêter ou écarter les seigneurs persiens, patanes et autres, qui avaient été dans les charges principales qu'il avait remplis de brahmes, faisait former des parties de promenades et divertissements au roi pour l'éloigner de la connaissance des affaires…*"

incidents become secondary in the landscape of power and becomes almost an accessory to the string of negative perceptions mentioned above of a monarch only interested in fun and pleasure.[399]

Another view we can take of these encounters is a positive one, that they give us a window into the changing aspects of kingship under Abul Hasan. Joseph Brennig suggests that the Sultan's discipleship under Shah Raju and their continued close relationship exposed him to 'various elements of the heterogeneous culture of the Deccan' which diluted the influence of the Irani-Persianate factions at court.[400] Such a view cannot be ruled out, considering the great sway Shah Raju held over him.[401] The employment of Hindus in his administration and these encounters by the coast show that Sultan Abul Hasan was more open to other cultures during his rule.[402]

Brennig also postulates that this open, accessible, informal and intimate monarchial style, which is a hallmark of Abul Hasan's reign, finds strong parallels in the indigenous traditions and literature of South Indian kingship.[403] In this conception, the regent is generous, publically present, and accessible to all manner of men. It also allows the king to delegate royal authority to a subordinate, leaving the ruler free to participate in religious rites.[404] The Sultan's public display of kingship and patronage both by the coast but also the other activities of his reign appealed to a more expansive and open conception of kingship that was contrasted with the deeply Persianate and closed reign of his predecessor.

Last words

In summing up, these ethnographic moments between Court and Company seem to pose more questions than answers, not least because this lively negotiation in the 'contact zone' is a product of a cosmopolitanism remarkably reminiscent of our own.[405] As entertaining as the narrative has been, we must also acknowledge that at a certain point in time, this cosmopolitanism comes to an end and we

[399] Martin's view is debatable. Martin is said to have 'a positive and conscious hatred of Brahmins'. Kruijtzer, *Xenophobia in Seventeenth-Century India*, p. 43.
[400] Brennig, *The Textile Trade of Seventeenth Century Northern Coromandel*, pp. 166-167.
[401] Notwithstanding the fact that Shah Raju was also the one who incited in him an interest over the Christian way of worship.
[402] The Hindu-Muslim axial decade has been commented on by Kruitjzer but also Vink. "Images and Ideologies", p. 33f18.
[403] For some characteristics, see Nao, V.R., Shulman, D. and Subrahmanyam, S. *Symbols of Substance: Court and State in Nayaka Period Tamilnadu* (Delhi, 1992), pp. 180, 191, 216.
[404] Brennig, *The Textile Trade of Seventeenth Century Northern Coromandel*, pp. 168-169. Siddiqui and Sherwani state that Abul Hasan's trips about his kingdom was his way of keeping abreast of the political situation and plan for contingencies rather than delegation. They allowed him to observe the commercial activities of the Europeans, pay attention to the strengthening of sea fortifications and find places to shift treasuries in the event of war. Siddiqui, *The History of Golcunda*, pp. 234-235; Sherwani, *History of the Qutb Shahi Dynasty*, p. 627.
[405] Pratt, M.L. *Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation* (New York, 2008), p. 8. The anxieties of the age with dealing with each other (and expressed in paper and print), seems to be both particular and universal, and catches 'something of our need to ground our sense of mutuality in conditions of mutability, and to learn to live tenaciously in terrains of historical and cultural transition.' Breckenridge, C., Pollock, S., Bhahba, H. and Chakrabarthy, D. eds. *Cosmopolitanism* (Durham, 2002), p. 4.

start over with different actors and mentalities. Why and how this ends is a matter of debate.[406] Historians are apt to point the finger at Aurangzeb and van Rheede as oppositional forces to these interactions, which makes 1687-88 a convenient marker to say that things fall apart and that we revert to conventional modes of antagonism; back to seeing things in black and white.[407] I am however cautious of thinking in terms of absolutes although it is also a matter of personal inclination and shifting positions in the unsteady light of evidence.[408] What is evident is that this problem of pre-modern cosmopolitanism and exchange is not new but that we are only reacquainting ourselves with its variants.[409] Other questions take us deeper and wider. How typical or atypical were these cosmopolitan interactions?[410] And do these historical exceptions prove the rule? Much of these encounters were facilitated by a very select group of intermediaries, who had very close relations with the figurehead, Abul Hasan. Yet how much of our historical understanding is shaped by the views of these exceptional individuals?[411] How do we juxtapose this understanding with the fractures and violence that stems from the same anxieties?[412] After all, these concessions to cultural polyphony

[406] In 1706, for example, the Dutch East India Company sought to retrieve a Dutch woman from her Muslim lover in Indian territory, which marks the colonial violence and the delineation of boundaries that we are more familiar with. See Irwin, *Storia do Mogor, vol. IV.,* p. 270. We are therefore forced to ask ourselves what was the nature of this transgression and what did it represented in the light of our knowledge of Golconda post-1687? See Carton, A. "Historicizing Hybridity and the Politics of Location: Three Early Colonial Indian Narratives", *Journal of Intercultural Studies* 28, 1 (2007): 143-155.
[407] The Sultanate of Golconda fell to the Mughals and Aurangzeb in 1687. Hendrik Adriaan van Rheede was the commissioner-general who arrived in 1687 to stamp out corruption and implement cutbacks in India. Van Rheede made the decision to move the seat of the Coromandel government to Nagapatnam in 1690, which was seen as the beginning of the end for the Dutch in India. Raychaudhuri, *Jan Company in Coromandel*, pp. 73-74. For both men, the larger themes of orthodoxy and control seem to be their main concerns. See Gommans, J. *The Unseen World: The Netherlands and India from 1550* (Amsterdam, 2018), pp. 45, 81, 86-87. For van Rheede and corruption see also Sur, B. *Keeping corruption at bay: a study of the VOC's administrative encounter with the Mughals in seventeenth-century Bengal* (Doctoral dissertation) (Leiden, 2019); Aurangzeb is a polarizing figure. See Kulkarni, G.T. "Deccan Invasion (1682-1707) and a Psycho-Religio Analysis of Aurengzeb", *Bulletin of the Deccan College Research Institute 37, 1.4* (1977): 61-67. The Actonian belief in the corrupting influence of power and the need to divide the world into binaries is reminiscent of some of the tropes espoused by Foucault or Huntington.
[408] Truschke is one of few recent authors who have tried to rehabilitate Aurangzeb's reputation. See Truschke, A. *Aurangzeb: The Man and the Myth* (New Delhi, 2017). See also Sheikh, S. "Aurangzeb as seen from Gujarat: Shi'i and Millenarian Challenges to Mughal Sovereignty", *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* 28, 3 (2018): 557-581. Dalrymple highlights especially the period 1770 to 1830, in which "there was widespread cultural assimilation and hybridity." Dalrymple, W. *White Mughals: Love and Betrayal in Eighteenth-Century India* (London, 2003), p. 10. Gommans is of the view that Rheede's arrival and legacy put an end to the Indo-Dutch society that was flourishing in Golconda. Gommans, *The Unseen World*, p. 45.
[409] The renewed interest in the cosmopolitanism of the Deccan has already been referred to in the historiography. See Introduction. It is also possible to posit waves and variated modalities of cosmopolitanism. See Eaton, R. "The Persian Cosmopolis (900-1900) and the Sanskrit Cosmopolis (400-1400)" in Amanat, A. and Ashraf, A. eds. *The Persianate World. Rethinking a Shared Sphere* (Leiden, 2018); Delanty, G. "Not All is Lost in Translation: World Varieties of Cosmopolitanism", *Cultural Sociology* 8, 4 (2014): 374-391; and Gommans, J. "South Asian Cosmopolitanism and the Dutch Microcosms in Seventeenth-Century Cochin (Kerala)" in Antunes, C. and Gommans, J. eds. *Exploring the Dutch Empire: Agents, Networks and Institutions, 1600-2000* (London, 2015), pp. 3-26.
[410] There is also the idea that the axial decade of Hindu-Muslim conflict was exacerbated by this cosmopolitanism. Eaton, M.R. and Wagoner, P.B. *Power, Memory, Architecture: Contested Sites on India's Deccan Plateau, 1300-1600* (New Delhi, 2014), pp. 208-214.
[411] How much of our views are shaped by Havart? No critical study has been made of Havart yet, to the best of my knowledge, although we do know that Havart was very cautious about writing an account that would justify the position of the Dutch East India Company to van Rheede. See Gommans, *The Unseen World*, p. 45; Subrahmanyam, *Forcing the Doors of Heathendom*, p. 8. The English never had such a relationship with the Golconda court although Fleetwood was also remarkably close to Abul Hasan.
[412] As Beck argues, when borders are no longer congruent, contradictions open up as to the various principles of exclusion, which sets off an avalanche of questions regarding responsibility, legitimacy, and identity. See Beck, U. "The Cosmopolitan Society and its Enemies", *Theory, Culture and Society* 19, 1-2 (2002): 17-44, 19-20. This seems to account for the communal conflicts that arose towards the end of the Sultanate.

should not posit a new set of myths about encounter or society.[413] All these are questions that also seem to be eerily prescient for the travails of the modern age.

A final note has to do with the peculiarity of the encounter, which in essence, as reiterated in the introduction, is a reversal of encounter. The Indian court comes to town and they are here to stay. The Sultan boards the ships, he enters the lodges, he holds court in church. These places were all bastions of the Dutch and English world abroad, their garden in an alien world and this experience must have been profoundly bewildering and unsettling.[414] It is perhaps a reminder that when cultures come into contact, we are not only looking out at the world; the world is also looking in.

[413] Subramanian, L. "An Indian Affair – One love story does not mean the colonial encounter was any less brutal", *The Telegraph India* (2003). Accessed on 07 December 2019, from: https://www.telegraphindia.com/opinion/an-indian-affair-one-love-story-does-not-mean-the-colonial-encounter-was-any-less-brutal/cid/1016166

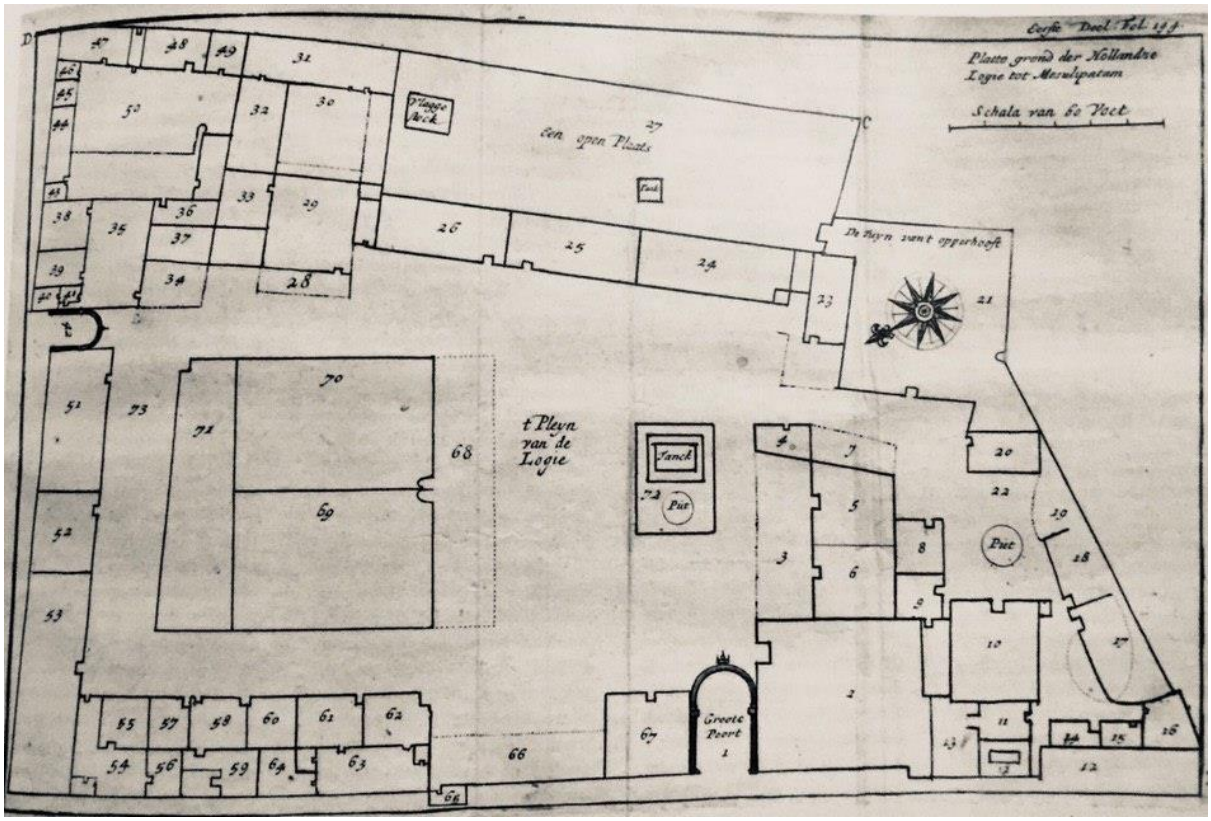
[414] Two such uncertainties were captured above. See also Vink, "Images and Ideologies", pp. 108-112. The siege mentality is a facet of the overseas enterprise. In later years, when the empires become fully mature, this tendency to build walls was also prevalent. The British were known to draw a clear boundary between themselves and the Indians. Similarly, Goudoever, chief editor of the *Semarang Locomotief* was said to remark of the Dutch abroad, "*het aantal Nederlanders, dat in Indië woont doch er niettemin in slaagt volkomen buiten Indië te leven, is groot*." Termorshuizen, G."'Indië is eigenlijk Europa geworden' Het briefverkeer tussen de kolonie en het moederland (±1845-1942)", *Indische Letteren, Jaargang 24* (2003): 165.

Appendixes

Appendix A: Living conditions of the East India Companies

The Dutch factory started from humble origins in 1606 with a small rented house and a small retinue of staff. In the 1640s, a large substantial house was acquired near the river on the north side of the city and they expanded it by renting neighboring houses and vacant yards.[415] By the 1670s, the Dutch had a large contiguous area which they fenced off, not dissimilar to a small trading fortress. Within this enclosed compound, they had two squares, one small, another large, a horse stable and a Company garden.[416] The main residence was a large elongated building with large godown space. The upper floor had a church, a sickroom, and some living quarters for soldiers and Company servants. The chief of the factory was able to live in the two-storey residence beside the garden, which overlooked the sea. Completing the picture is a surgical ward, which doubled up as a medicine shop, a secret toilet, rooms for slaves, open galleries for the inspection of goods, a series of warehouses for their goods and other smaller houses that they occasionally rented out to Indian brokers.[417] Most of these constructions were made from timber and plastered over with lime. They also had a garrison of troops, with numbers that fluctuated depending on their relationship with the English.[418]

[415] Arasaratnam and Ray, *Masulipatnam and Cambay*, p. 16.
[416] Ibid; NA VOC 1254: 654.
[417] NA VOC 1254: 654-654v; Peters and de la Porte, *In Steen Geschreven*, pp. 255-258.
[418] NA VOC 1254: 652.



Ground-plan of the Dutch lodge in 1689.[419]

The English factory was not as expansive. It was arranged in a small round compound with tall multi-storey houses looking inwards. From the very beginning, the English factory seemed to be almost always in need of repairs. It had cramped quarters, dark rooms, which not only lack privacy but were also ill-ventilated. It also leaked when it rained.[420] With such conditions, many preferred to rent houses outside the neighborhood, with some Company servants of private means able to own their own houses.[421] The English factory was located on the south side of the city, which spared it some of the damage experienced by the Dutch during times of heavy weather.

The Dutch sailor setting out for life in the East knows it to be nasty, brutish and short. Death came swiftly and unexpectedly, and epidemics and natural calamities were faced by all. The air was bad, the water unclean and many endured difficulties adjusting to the monsoon rains and unbearable heat. This was also compounded by occasional obstructions in trade, personal disputes, homesickness, and crime.[422] However, it was not without its fair share of eventfulness. In Masulipatnam, the Dutch began to affect the same public display of pomp and pageantry that the Muslim elites enjoyed, hiring for

[419] Peters and de la Porte, *In Steen Geschreven*, p. 257.
[420] Arasaratnam and Ray, *Masulipatnam and Cambay*, pp. 16-17.
[421] Ibid; Fawcett, *EFII, vol. IV.*, p. 98. Fleetwood's great house in Navarazpuram (a suburb of Madapollam) is often mentioned.
[422] For a broad overview of Dutch life in Coromandel, see Peters and de la Porte, *In Steen Geschreven*, pp. 51-63.

themselves a large army of servants, slaves, and retainers. They had palanquins, peons, trumpeters, rondels sometimes also traveling with the grandeur of noble life.[423] Foreign life also offered them opportunities to indulge their curiosity and acquire new skills and learn new languages.[424] Besides, the natural and human environment offered much to learn from. The merchant Herbert de Jager, who traveled around Golconda, was able to become an authority in oriental culture and botany.[425] The food was much varied, with notable remarks made about rice and tea.[426] Furthermore, as strangers in a strange land, they found themselves at times partaking in foreign festivals, observing strange practices and traveling through unfamiliar territories which satisfied their curiosity about the wider world.

English servants faced similar challenges but were as a whole more rumbustious. Their misdemeanors, of which there were many, are almost modern in their disorderliness, ranging the gamut from damaging trees in the gardens, swearing and blaspheming at and in the presence of their superiors, to unruly conduct, such as drinking punch from their bowls until they exceeded the bounds of sobriety.[427] There were also many instances of drunkenness, fighting, lying and causing a public nuisance, all of which were seen as "typical of the spirit of indiscipline and disagreement" that characterized English activity on the coast.[428] Another key difference already mentioned was that foreign life offered them much more leeway in terms of private trade, which many conducted to their own personal gain and even selling their talents and services to the local powers.[429]

[423] Arasaratnam and Ray, *Masulipatnam and Cambay*, p. 16; VOC 1339: 1190-1190v. The Dutch had a total of 71 persons in the factory by 1678, a chief, his second, a fiscal officer and a merchant in charge of the warehouses, a secretary, ten assistants, a nurse, two surgeons, a senior and a junior, one trumpeter, a corporal, seven soldiers, thirty peons, a translator, a Persian and Telegu writer, two house servants, a goods carrier, and eight palanquin carriers.
[424] Kruijtzer, "Daniel Havart", pp. 493-494. Havart writes about the competition he had with his circle trying to outdo each other in their mastery of Persian. Frequent contact with local merchants also meant that they had the chance to learn Tamil or Portuguese.
[425] Peters and de la Porte, *In Steen Geschreven*, pp. 59-60.
[426] Ibid., pp. 53.
[427] Fawcett, *EFII, vol. II*., pp. 279-284.
[428] Ibid., p. 270.
[429] Fryke, C. *A relation of two several voyages made into the East Indies by Christopher Fryke and Christopher Schewitzer* (London, 1700), p. 13. Fryke suggested that the English offered greater opportunities than the Dutch for personal wealth.

Appendix B: Trouble in Bimilipatnam

One of the incidents mentioned was to do with the delivery of rice on the 3rd of July 1677 that was being transported to Bimilipatnam (present-day Bheemunipatnam) by ship.[430] The convoy was instructed to escape the claws of the *Sarlaskar* Abdul Nabij, who had sent a group of peons to obstruct trade. However, the transport was later stopped by the *Sarlaskar* himself, alongside the *Sersamet* (Chief of District) of Keling and the *Havaldar* of Bimilipatnam. All three boarded the ship in order to dispute. When the Dutch brought up the matter of the *farman* and implored them to fulfil their request, they promptly refused and said they would not let them set a loose foot on land without an adequate resolution. The local regents asked then why they had attempted [to avoid paying the tolls], to which the resident replied that they were authorized by the Sultan's *farman.* To this, the merchants showed not only the Sultan's *farman* but also three distinct orders issued from Madanna. This alas was to no avail. Their display, they said, was met and refuted with great audacity and in great disrespect of the chief factor at Bimilipatnam in order to extract some payment for the shipment of rice.[431] Another more serious situation developed when the Caulier arrested the *Havaldar* of Pulicat as a result of disputes. Although this led to a reprisal and an unfavorable warning from Batavia, these were expressions of frustrations that they faced in conducting trade in the country.[432]

[430] NA VOC 1328: 571v-572. For a day-to-day report of the incident by the chief factor of Bimilipatnam, Floris Bolwerk, see NA VOC 1339: 1033-1071. The *Sarlaskar* made six demands to the Dutch. NA VOC 1339: 1126-1129.
[431] NA VOC 1316: 586-587.
[432] Raychaudhuri, *Jan Company in Coromandel*, p. 68.

Appendix C: The role of religion in the East India Companies

Compared to the Jesuits and other missionary groups, the East India Companies rarely propagate or propagandize their religion.[433] Company merchants seldom speak of religious matters nor master indigenous languages in order to convert souls to Christianity. The main task of the Calvinist minister was to administer to its flock, to serve the needs of the expatriate society.[434] A similar attitude characterized the English approach to religion on foreign soil. Sir Josiah Child, a prominent governor of the English East India Company, pointed out that English commercial success was due to keeping religion separate from trade, that it was down to allowing 'an Amsterdam of Liberty in our Plantations'.[435] This separation of religious and commercial objectives is often seen to explain the paucity of religious encounters of the East India Companies in early modern India.[436]

[433] Bitterli speaks of a fundamental difference in theology with Catholicism viewing the non-European as a potential convert and Calvinism with its concept of the elect. See Bitterli, U. *Cultures in conflict. Encounters between Europeans and non-European cultures, 1492-1800.* (Cambridge, 1989), p. 68. Stolte argues that the Dutch involvement was merely to counter the spread of Catholicism rather than Christianize for its own sake. Stolte, C. *Dutch Sources on South Asia, c. 1600-1825: Philip Angel's Deex-Autaers, vol. V.* (New Delhi, 2012), p. 34.

[434] On board their ships but also in their various posts. There was however a small ecclesiastical community established in Negapatnam by the Dutch proselytizing in the neighboring villages, see Baldaeus, P. *Nauwkeurige beschryvinge van Malabar en Choromandel*, p. 155; A list of preachers can also be found in Havart, *Op en Ondergang, vol. I.*, pp. 132-133; Pytlowany, A and van Hal, T. "Merchants, Scholars and Languages: The Circulation of Linguistic Knowledge in the Context of the Dutch East India Company (VOC)", *Histoire Épistémologie Langage* 38, 1 (2016): 19-38.

[435] Smith, H. "God shall enlarge Japheth, and he shall dwell in the tents of shem': The changing face of religious governance and religious sufferance in the East India Company, 1610-1670" in Pettigrew, W. and Gopalan, M. eds. *The East India Company, 1600-1857* (New York, 2017), p. 104.

[436] This is in comparison to the encounters between the Jesuits, who had a long tradition of debating with Islamic Courts. See Payne, C.H. tr. *Akbar and the Jesuits* (New York and London, 1926); Hoyland, J.S. tr. *The Commentary of Father Monserrate, S.J. On His Journey to the Court of Akbar* (London, 1922) and Payne. C.H. tr. *Jahangir and the Jesuits* (London, 1930).

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Glossary of terms, currencies and values[437]

Functions:

Chobdar: a stick-bearer; attendant of an Indian noble.

Diduan: a look-out, watchman, guard or messenger.

Dubash: an interpreter.

Farman: an order, patent or passport.

Halvaldar: one holding an office of trust/governor.

Nawab: a native governor.

Opperhoofd: chief of the Company's settlement.

Peshkar: court clerk.

Sarkheyl: chancellor.

Sarlaskar: chief of the army.

Sersamet: chief of the district.

Ziekentrooster: literally comforter of the sick.

Items:

Cabaya: surcoat or long tunic of muslin.

Farman: an order, patent or passport.

Gorregor: a bottle or glass used to contain liquid.

Kamarband: a loin-band or waist belt.

Lançol: cheap, printed cotton cloths from Golconda.

Pan: betel leaf.

[437] Definitions and currency values taken from Yule, H. *Hobson-Jobson: A glossary of colloquial Anglo-Indian words and phrases, and of kindred terms, etymological, historical, geographical and discursive.* (London, 1903); Kooijmans, M. and Oosterling, J.E. *VOC-Glossarium. Verklaringen van termen, verzameld uit de Rijks Geschiedkundige Publicatiën, die betrekking hebben op de Verenigde Oost-Indische Compagnie* (Den Haag, 2000); and Havart, D. *Op en Ondergang van Coromandel, vol. I-III* (Amsterdam, 1693).

Tussah: a kind of inferior silk.

Currencies:

Hun: a gold pagoda.

Kobang: a Japanese gold coin, issued occasional from 1580 to 1860. Until 1696, it was worth 21 karat of gold which was around 24 florins.

Pagoda: a coin current in South India, generally in gold. The value is difficult to determine since both old and new pagodas were in circulation. In Coromandel, it was worth 120 stuivers or approximately 6 guilders.