

**Hendrik Adriaan van Reede tot Drakenstein
and his Committee of redress in Coromandel (1687-1690)**

Lucas Ausems

S0621455

Leiden University

MA(res) Colonial and Global History

Supervisor: dr. Lennart Bes

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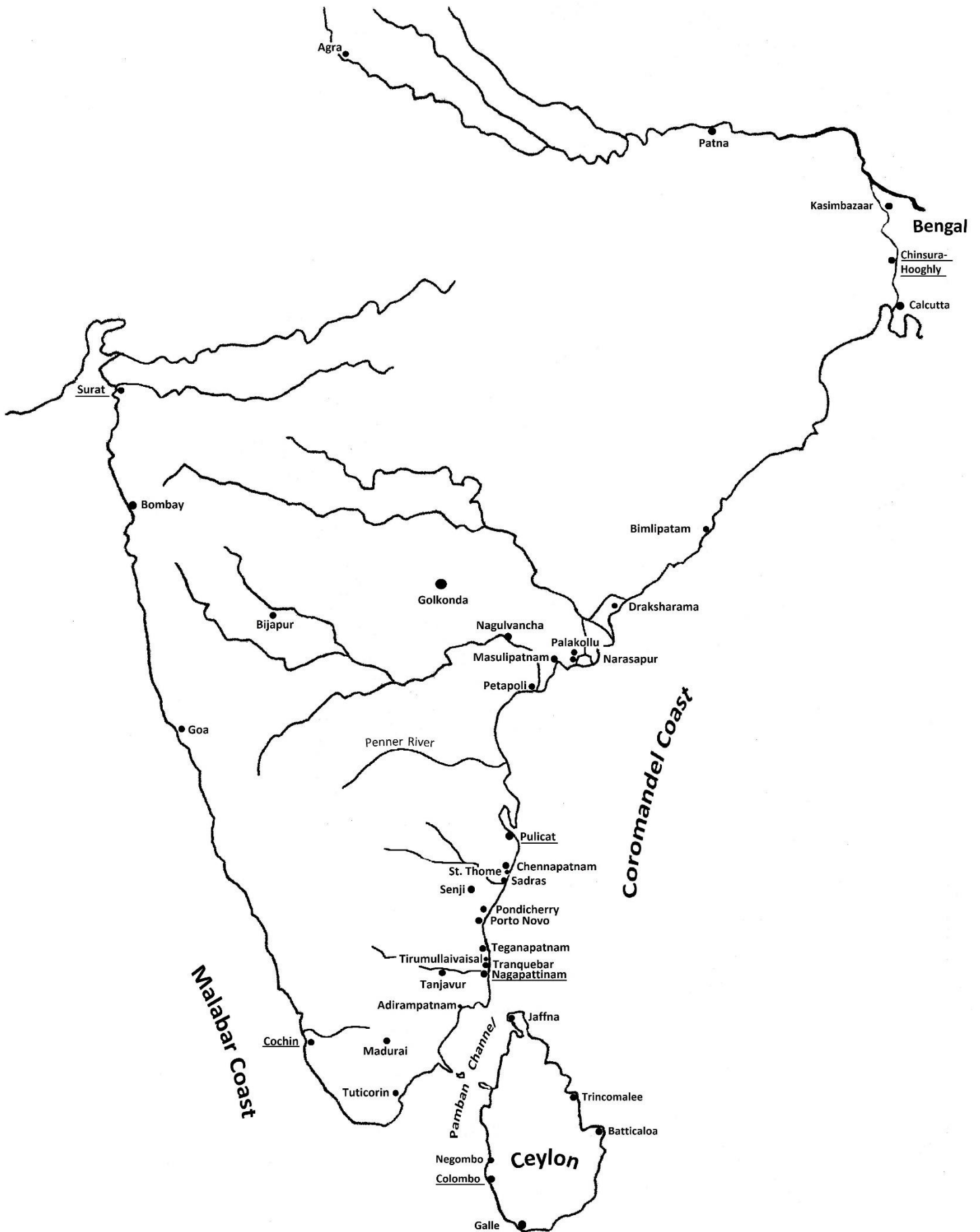
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Contents

Acknowledgements	i
Contents	1
Map of the Indian subcontinent and Ceylon	3
Introduction	4
Corruption in the time of the VOC.....	5
Historical background of the VOC in Coromandel.....	6
Historiography.....	9
Primary and contemporary sources.....	13
Methodology and chapter outline.....	14
Chapter 1: the formation of the Committee of redress and the 1684 Instruction to Van Reede ...	16
1.1 The VOC's priorities following the Disaster Year of 1672: patria and Batavia.....	16
1.2 Forming the Committee of redress.....	19
1.3 The 1684 Instruction to Van Reede.....	21
1.4 Human assets and material assets.....	25
1.5 Conclusion.....	27
Chapter 2: Van Reede's investigations into VOC servants	28
2.1 Michiel Janszoon and Theunis Carstenszen.....	28
2.2 Nicolaas Clement.....	29
2.3 Lambert Hemsinck.....	32
2.4 Jacob Jorisz. Pits.....	33
2.5 Conclusion.....	35
Chapter 3: the role of factionalism	36
3.1 The connections and networks of those whom Van Reede targeted.....	36
3.2 Replacing the Old Guard and the role of Laurens Pit Jr.....	39
3.3 The independent fiscaal.....	43
3.4 Conclusion.....	44
List of the Old Guard and the new in Coromandel	45
Chapter 4: controlling the population	46
4.1 The colleges.....	46
4.2 Wives, widows and other people deemed unnecessary.....	47
4.3 Conclusion.....	49
Chapter 5: fort De Vyf Sinnen and Nagapattinam as the new capital	51
5.1 Planning the construction of fort De Vyf Sinnen.....	51

5.2 Van Reede's arrival in Nagapattinam and his impression of the city.....	53
5.3 Van Reede's journey to Pulicat and his impression of fort Geldria and the city.....	55
5.4 Why Nagapattinam was made the new capital of Coromandel.....	57
5.5 Conclusion.....	61
Chapter 6: aftermath.....	62
Conclusion.....	64
Summary and conclusions.....	64
Appendix A: transcript of the 1684 Instruction to Van Reede.....	68
Appendix B: list of Governors in Coromandel (1612-1698)	79
Appendix C: list of Opperhoofden in Coromandel (1685-1690)	80
Appendix D: family and patronage links in Coromandel.....	83
Bilbiography.....	84

The Indian subcontinent and Ceylon



Introduction

*position Omtzigt, job elsewhere*¹

These four words were part of the briefing notes of Home Affairs minister Kajsa Ollongren, one of the coalition negotiators following Dutch parliamentary elections in March 2021. Ollongren accidentally exposed the briefing note when she hurriedly left the parliament building after testing positive for COVID-19. Pieter Omtzigt is a popular MP who played an instrumental role in bringing to light the Dutch childcare benefits scandal, prompting the previous government to resign.² The document showed that the negotiators were discussing a position “elsewhere” for Omtzigt, which was interpreted as implying outside parliament. The Dutch caretaker PM Mark Rutte initially denied having discussed Omtzigt’s position, but transcripts proved otherwise, prompting a vote of no confidence by the Dutch parliament which he barely survived.³ Earlier rumours that Omtzigt’s own political party, the Christian Democrat party (CDA), attempted to keep him out of the election campaign and had started a whisper campaign against him,⁴ were confirmed in June 2021.⁵ In short, the public had gotten a rare glimpse of what might have been an attempt to settle scores within the highest echelons of the Dutch political elites. Omtzigt has since resigned from the CDA but will retain his seat as an independent, which has made it more difficult for Rutte to form a new government.⁶ According to the latest reports, Omtzigt’s departure has further destabilised his position in the Dutch parliament, however, polls suggest that he has a large support base among the Dutch public and there is speculation whether or not Omtzigt will start his own political party.⁷ For now, it is unclear how this will affect caretaker PM Rutte’s plans to form a new coalition government.

While political powerplays such as the one described above presently cause an outcry from the public whenever they break the surface, they have been a common occurrence throughout the history of the Netherlands and remain relevant today. The Omtzigt-scandal is but a small event on the world scale, but there was a time when the ramifications of Dutch political powerplays were felt far beyond its borders. Therefore, it could be informative to zoom in on one such event from a time when personal, familial, and political networks had a far larger influence on life than they do today,

¹ In the original Dutch: *positie Omtzigt, functie elders*.

² “Coalition scouts quit after Ollongren accidentally reveals explosive notes,” *DutchNews*, 25 March 2021, <<https://www.dutchnews.nl/news/2021/03/coalition-scouts-quit-after-ollongren-accidentally-reveals-explosive-notes/>>.

³ “Dutch PM Rutte survives no-confidence vote despite censure,” *Aljazeera*, 2 April 2021, <<https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2021/4/2/dutch-pm-rutte-survives-no-confidence-vote-despite-rebuke>>.

⁴ “Fluistercampagne van partijtop tegen ‘labiele’ Omtzigt bedreigt stabiliteit CDA,” *HP De Tijd*, 23 March 2021, <<https://www.hpdetijd.nl/2021-03-23/fluistercampagne-van-partijtop-tegen-labiele-omtzig-bedeigt-stabiliteit-cda/>>.

⁵ “MP Omtzigt reviled as “psychopath”, “unstable” by CDA members, he says,” *NL Times*, 11 June 2021, <<https://nltimes.nl/2021/06/11/mp-omtzig-reviled-psychopath-unstable-cda-members-says>>.

⁶ “Dutch political gridlock deepens as key lawmaker quits Christian Democrat party,” *Reuters*, 13 June 2021, <<https://www.reuters.com/article/uk-netherlands-politics-idUKKCN2DP0AJ>>.

⁷ “Als Omtzigt nieuwe partij opricht, zien peilers gouden kansen: ‘Hij is bijna een heilige’,” *Algemeen Dagblad*, 14 juni 2021, <<https://www.ad.nl/binnenland/als-omtzig-nieuwe-partij-opricht-zien-peilers-gouden-kansen-hij-is-bijna-een-heilige~ab5e5c8b/>>.

when the repercussions of exposed scandals did not simply stop at a general public outcry and a continued career as an independent politician, but went much farther.

Corruption in the time of VOC

Today, the Cambridge dictionary defines corruption as: illegal, bad, or dishonest behaviour, especially by people in positions of power.⁸ However, in the time of the Dutch East India Company (*Vereenigde Oostindische Compagnie*, henceforth VOC) the idea of corruption was somewhat different. In her PhD dissertation “Keeping Corruption at Bay: A Study of the VOC’s Administrative Encounter with the Mughals in Seventeenth-century Bengal”, Byapti Sur perceives the VOC’s definition of corruption as “(dis)loyalty’ of the administrators to their authority and its rules with specific uses of its allegations in a given seventeenth-century political structure.⁹ In practice, this meant that corruption in the VOC was ‘described mainly as the violation of the Company’s monopoly. This was applied in combination with the general prohibition against the use of bribery and favouritism in making appointments and executing duties.’¹⁰

To form this definition, Sur uses a case study from the late seventeenth century. In the 1680s, the Amsterdam-based directors of the VOC, also known as the *Heeren XVII* (Gentlemen Seventeen), had received many disturbing messages about illegal practices such as private trade, smuggling, and fraud committed by its servants in Asia.¹¹ They resolved to form a Committee of redress to inspect a number of VOC trade posts, factories, and territories west of Malacca, also known as the Western Quarters. For this purpose, they appointed Hendrik Adriaan van Reede tot Drakenstein, Lord of Mijdrecht as Commissioner General, making him the second-most powerful VOC official outside of the Dutch Republic, outranked only by the Governor General in Batavia (modern-day Jakarta, capital of the Republic of Indonesia). He set sail from the small Dutch island of Texel on 24 December 1684. Over the next couple of years, Van Reede and his Committee were charged to inspect the Cape of Good Hope in Africa, the factories on Ceylon and those on the Indian subcontinent (Bengal, Coromandel, Malabar, and Surat).¹² Focusing on Van Reede’s inspections in Bengal specifically, Sur argues that his mission was not only meant to battle corruption, but it used corruption allegations to remove individuals from certain posts and replace them with people belonging to the patronage network, or faction, of Van Reede. In doing so, the dominant factions in

⁸ “Corruption,” Cambridge Dictionary, accessed 14 June 2021, <<https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/corruption>>.

⁹ Byapti Sur, “Keeping Corruption at Bay: A Study of the VOC’s Administrative Encounter with the Mughals in Seventeenth-century Bengal” (unpublished PhD Diss., Leiden University, 2019), 289.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 291-292.

¹¹ Femme Gastra, *Bewind en Beleid bij de VOC 1672-1702* (Zutphen: De Walburg Pers, 1989), 151.

¹² *Ibid.*, 156-157.

these settlements would be realigned with the *Heeren XVII* in the Dutch Republic.¹³ Sur's claims are an expansion on an earlier claim by Pamela McVay that corruption allegations helped 'Company elites dislodge rivals while maintaining the appearance of concern for VOC interests.'¹⁴

This thesis intends to build on McVay's and Sur's findings and use them to study Van Reede's inspections in Coromandel from 1687 to 1690. The focus of this thesis lies on Coromandel, where Van Reede not only inspected the settlements and its servants, but he also decided to relocate the VOC capital of Coromandel from Pulicat in the north, to Nagapattinam in the south. This relocation happened in the wake of the construction of a large and expensive fort there, named De Vyf Sinnen (The Five Senses), which Van Reede oversaw. All of this significantly increased the VOC's expenditures, seemingly in contradiction to his orders to reduce them.¹⁵

This raises suspicions about Van Reede's own motivations and leads one to wonder to what extent his actions were for his personal benefit. The personage of Van Reede and his integrity has been debated much by his contemporaries and historians alike.¹⁶ However, so far, Van Reede's controversial decisions in Coromandel, such as his accusations against VOC servants, his far-reaching measures to decrease VOC expenditures, constructing the fort and relocating the capital, have not been satisfactorily explained within the context of the Committee he led. This thesis intends to remedy that by formulating the main research question as follows: can Van Reede's actions and decisions be justified within the framework of the original objectives of the Van Reede Committee? In order to answer this question, this thesis will also focus on researching the local networks and familial links among the VOC servants to discover who Van Reede targeted in his investigations, who he did not, and why. Through the points raised in this thesis, this will then allow for a better-informed judgement on Van Reede's own integrity.

Historical background of the VOC in Coromandel

All dealings of the VOC in Asia were coordinated by the *Hooge Regering en Raad* (High Government and Council) in Batavia. However, they were subordinate to the *Heeren XVII* in the Dutch Republic, whose governing structure was divided over six chambers, of which the largest was Amsterdam. Each chamber had its own administrative body and each selected deputies to represent their

¹³ Sur, "Keeping Corruption at Bay," 256-257.

¹⁴ Pamela McVay, "Private Trade and Elite Privilege. The Trial of Nicolaas Schaghen, Director of Bengal," *Itinerario* 20, no. 3 (1996): 69.

¹⁵ Daniël Havart, *Op- en Ondergang Van Coromandel* (Amsterdam: Jan Claesz ten Hoorn, 1693), 15.

¹⁶ For example, Havart, *Op- en Ondergang*, 15; François Valentijn, *Oud en Nieuw Oost Indiën, Vol. 5* (Dordrecht, Amsterdam: Joannes van Braam, Gerard onder de Linden, 1726), 5-6; Johannes Heniger, *Hendrik Adriaan Van Reede Tot Drakenstein (1636-1691) and Hortus Malabaricus: A Contribution to the History of Dutch Colonial Botany* (Rotterdam: Balkema, 1986), 65; Jos Gommans, "South Asian Cosmopolitanism and the Dutch Microcosmos in Seventeenth-Century Cochin (Kerala)," in *Exploring the Dutch Empire: Agents, Networks and Institutions, 1600-1800*, ed. Catia Antunes and Jos Gommans (London: Bloomsbury, 2015), 15-20.

interests. These deputies together formed the *Heeren XVII*. The Amsterdam chamber quickly became the VOC's dominant centre of power within the Dutch Republic.¹⁷

The Coromandel Coast stretches along India's east coast from point Calimere, near Nagapattinam, in the south of the modern Indian state of Tamil Nadu, to Bimlipatam, in the north of the modern Indian state of Andhra Pradesh.¹⁸ It also included some factories in the interior such as Golkonda (now Hyderabad, capital of the Indian state of Telangana) and Nagulvancha.¹⁹

Dutch ships had made first contact with settlements along the Coromandel Coast in 1603. Two years later the VOC established its first factory in Coromandel at Masulipatnam. This factory served as the chief settlement for the northern Coromandel Coast.²⁰

In 1610 the VOC acquired a factory in Pulicat located in the centre of the Coromandel Coast, which became the seat of authority and command for their activities along the entire Coromandel coast in 1612.²¹ That same year the VOC had already realised the potential and importance of Coromandel when Hendrik Brouwer, later Governor-General of the VOC, observed that 'the Coromandel Coast is the left arm of the Moluccas, because we have noticed that without the textiles of Coromandel, commerce is dead in the Moluccas'.²² The Coromandel trade thus came to play a key role in the intra-Asian trade network of the VOC.²³

In 1658 the VOC took the major port of Nagapattinam from the Portuguese.²⁴ The reason for capturing Nagapattinam had been a strategic one: to protect their assets on Ceylon from invasion.²⁵ Whether the settlement of Nagapattinam should fall under the Ceylon or Coromandel Government was a matter of debate in the subsequent decades. Initially, it fell under Coromandel's supervision, but it was transferred briefly to the Ceylon Government between 1673 and 1680.²⁶ The VOC's restrictive commercial policies meant that the port town's flourishing trade there was severely constricted.²⁷

Coromandel was home to a variety of local powers whose territories and alliances tended to shift on a regular basis. North Coromandel was part of the Sultanate of Golkonda, its territory

¹⁷ Femme Simon Gaastra, *De Geschiedenis Van De VOC* (Zutphen: Walburg Pers, 1992), 20-21.

¹⁸ Please see the map of the Indian subcontinent and Ceylon on page 3.

¹⁹ Jos Gommans, Lennart Bes and Gijs Kruijtzter, *Dutch Sources on South Asia c. 1600-1825 (Vol. 1), Bibliography and Archival Guide to the National Archives at The Hague (The Netherlands)* (New Delhi: Manohar, 2001), 299.

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ Sinnappah Arasaratnam, *Merchants, Companies and Commerce on the Coromandel Coast 1650-1740* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1986), 64.

²² Heert Terpstra, *De Vestiging van de Nederlanders aan de Kust van Koromandel* (Groningen: M. de Waal: 1911), 1.

²³ George Davison Winus and Macus Paulus Maria Vink, *The Merchant-Warrior Pacified: the VOC (the Dutch East India Company) and Its Changing Political Economy in India* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1991), 11-20.

²⁴ Lennart Bes, "The Heirs of Vijayanagara: Court Politics in Early-Modern South India" (unpublished PhD diss., Radboud University Nijmegen, 2018), 19.

²⁵ Odegard, *The Company Fortress*, 119.

²⁶ NA, VOC, inv. nr. 696, Resolutions of the Governor General and Council, 8 September 1681, f. 276.

²⁷ Arasaratnam, *Merchants, Companies and Commerce*, 28-29.

extended roughly from the frontiers of the modern-day Indian state of Orissa to beyond the Penner River in the south. The Sultanate of Bijapur was not originally situated in Coromandel but made successful inroads towards the middle of the seventeenth century. To the south of Golkonda were the so-called successor Nayaka states of the once mighty Vijayanagara Empire. Three of these kingdoms, Madurai, Tanjavur and Senji, covered wide tracts of south Coromandel.²⁸ In the last quarter of the seventeenth century large swaths of Coromandel became increasingly destabilised because of the rivalry and expansion of the Mughal Empire in the north, and in the west by the newly established Maratha Empire, which had broken off from Bijapur. In the south, after having been engaged in costly warfare with Madurai, Tanjavur was taken over by the Maratha general Ekoji Bhonsle in 1676.²⁹ Further north, Bijapur and Golkonda bore the brunt of the Mughal invasions and finally both had to surrender to the Mughal Emperor Aurangzeb in 1686 and 1687, respectively. The effects of these wars were disastrous for the entire trade of Coromandel.³⁰

Besides the local powers, the VOC had to compete with other European powers. The Portuguese had reached the Indian subcontinent over a century earlier in 1498. By the 1600s, they had a vast network of settlements, trading posts and forts spread out over the entire Indian coastline and Ceylon. However, in a matter of decades the VOC replaced the Portuguese *Estado da India* as the most powerful European force in the subcontinent, pushing the Portuguese out from most of their settlements along the Coromandel Coast and elsewhere, and dominating the sea trade in the Bay of Bengal and beyond.³¹

The English East India Company (EIC) had arrived on the scene in 1639. They established a factory near the village of Chennapatnam (then also known as Madrasapattinam, however, it is now called Chennai, the capital of Tamil Nadu), which they soon fortified with the construction of Fort St. George in 1641. The fort became the residence of its Governor, from which they directed all their trade of the Bay of Bengal and eastwards.³²

The Danes had arrived early in seventeenth century as well, and had secured the cession of the port of Tranquebar (present-day Tharangambadi) in 1618, around thirty kilometres north of Nagapattinam, where they too built a fort and installed a governor.³³

²⁸ Tapan Raychauduri, *Jan Company in Coromandel, 1605-1690. A Study in the Interrelations of European Commerce and Traditional Economies* ('s-Gravenhage: Nijhoff, 1962), 3-4.

²⁹ Bes, "The Heirs of Vijayanagara," 45.

³⁰ Raychauduri, *Jan Company in Coromandel*, 70-71.

³¹ Arasaratnam. *Merchants, Companies and Commerce*, 70.

³² *Ibid.*, 64.

³³ *Ibid.*

The French were the latest to arrive in 1672. After some setbacks, Bijapur granted them a site to settle in the port of Pondicherry (present-day Puducherry), situated midway between Nagapattinam and Chennapatnam.³⁴

Thus, maintaining good relations with the local powers, competing with rival Compagnies, all the while balancing the political and commercial alliances amidst the recurring cycles of warfare, made conducting trade in Coromandel challenging, to say the least. The VOC was facing some tough decisions in the wake of this rapidly changing political landscape. Van Reede will undoubtedly have thought the same when he disembarked in Nagapattinam on 27 April 1687.³⁵ As mentioned in the previous section, the following chapters intend to examine and explain these decisions.

Historiography

For literature on factionalism and networks within the Dutch Republic, a good starting point is Johan Engelbert Elias' *De Vroedschap van Amsterdam, 1578-1795*, which presents a genealogy of the different members of the council of the city government of Amsterdam.³⁶ Research on how family interests influenced the actions of the members of powerful elites in the Dutch Republic has been done by Julia Adams in her study: *The familial state. Ruling Families and Merchant Capitalism in Early Modern Europe*.³⁷ The importance of patronage and the close interconnectedness between family and friendship are also discussed in Luuc Kooijmans' *Vriendschap en de Kunst van het Overleven in de Zeventiende en de Achttiende Eeuw*.³⁸

There is a lot of literature on the idea of corruption within the VOC. One reason for this is that it has been generally thought that corruption eventually caused the downfall of the VOC.³⁹ However, Chris Nierstrasz has argued that corruption ran just as deep within other companies, such as the EIC, and that corruption is not solely responsible for its collapse in the 1790s.⁴⁰ While corruption has been discussed in relation to Bengal, not only by the aforementioned McVay and Sur, but also from an economic viewpoint by Om Prakash and Femme Simon Gaastra,⁴¹ this thesis has

³⁴ Ibid., 92.

³⁵ NA, VOC, inv. nr. 1435, Van Reede to the Governor General and Council in Batavia, 16 June 1687, f. 249v.

³⁶ Johan Engelbert Elias, *De Vroedschap van Amsterdam, 1578-1795* (Amsterdam: N. Israel, 1963).

³⁷ Julia Adams, *The Familial State: Ruling Families and Merchant Capitalism in Early Modern Europe* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2005).

³⁸ Luuc Kooijmans, *Vriendschap en de Kunst van het Overleven in de Zeventiende en de Achttiende Eeuw* (Amsterdam: Uitgeverij Bert Bakker, 1997).

³⁹ Chris Nierstrasz, *In the Shadow of the Company: the Dutch East India Company and Its Servants in the Period of Its Decline (1740-1796)* (Leiden: Brill, 2012), 27.

⁴⁰ Nierstrasz, *In the Shadow of the Company*, 27-28.

⁴¹ Om Prakash, *The Dutch East India Company and the Economy of Bengal, 1630-1720* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1985); Femme Simon Gaastra, "Constantijn Ranst en de corruptie onder het personeel van de VOC te Bengalen, 1669-1673," in *Bestuurders en geleerden: Opstellen over onderwerpen uit de Nederlandse Geschiedenis van de zestiende, zeventiende en achttiende eeuw, aangeboden aan Prof. Dr. J.J. Woltjer bij zijn afscheid als hoogleraar van de Rijksuniversiteit te Leiden*, ed. Simon Groenveld, Marianne Elisabeth Henriette Nicolette Mout and Ivo Schöffer (Amsterdam: De Bataafse Leeuw, 1985), 126-136.

not found research on corruption by the VOC in Coromandel specifically. Therefore, this thesis can be viewed as a step towards filling that gap.

While the main time period of this thesis focuses on the late 1680s and early 1690s, they are but a chapter in a story arc that started long before. For the purposes of this thesis, the *Rampjaar* (Disaster Year) of 1672 is a good place to begin. In that year, the Dutch Republic was nearly overrun by the combined forces of France, England, Cologne and Münster.⁴² In his dissertation, Daniel Jeen Roorda argues that the crisis and its aftermath were directly responsible for the reshuffling of political power between major factions in the Dutch Republic.⁴³

This directly affected the VOC, since many of the *Heeren XVII* also served as *burgemeesters* (mayors) of the cities they represented for the Company. As such, they were political leaders. This was particularly so for the directors representing the Amsterdam chamber, which will be further discussed in Chapter 1. In *Bewind en Beleid bij de VOC 1672-1702*, Gaastra has analysed the financial history and the policy of the directors of the VOC in that period. He gives a clear account of how and why the directors decided to form a Committee of redress and of the different stages that led up to the choice of Van Reede as Commissioner General,⁴⁴ which will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 1.

Two contemporary accounts relating Van Reede's actions in Coromandel provide us with a window through which we can see how the Committee was viewed at the time. The first account is *Op- en Ondergang van Coromandel* by Daniel Havart, published in 1693.⁴⁵ He was a former VOC servant who had been stationed in north Coromandel from 1673 to 1685.⁴⁶ It must be noted that Van Reede's inspections targeted many of Havart's personal friends, and this publication should therefore be viewed as biased against Van Reede and his measures.⁴⁷ The second contemporary account was compiled between 1693 and 1706 when the *Heeren XVII* ordered their secretary and senior lawyer Pieter van Dam to put together a comprehensive description of the Company.⁴⁸ The five volumes called *Beschrijvinge van de Oostindische Compagnie* consisted of a combination of knowledge about administrative practices the Company used to manage its operations and

⁴² Jonathan Israel, *The Dutch Republic. Its Rise, Greatness, and Fall, 1477-1806* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995), 796-797.

⁴³ Daniel Jeen Roorda, *Partij en Factie: De oproeren van 1672 in de steden van Holland en Zeeland, een krachtmeting tussen partijen en facties* (Groningen: J.B. Wolters, 1961), 255-260.

⁴⁴ Gaastra, *Bewind en Beleid*, 247-54.

⁴⁵ Havart, *Op- en Ondergang*.

⁴⁶ Marion Peters and André de la Porte. *In Steen Geschreven: Leven en Sterven van VOC-dienaren op de Kust van Coromandel in India* (Amsterdam: Uitgeverij Bas Lubberhuizen, 2002), 65.

⁴⁷ Peters, *In Steen Geschreven*, 41.

⁴⁸ Pieter van Dam, *Beschrijvinge van de Oostindische Compagnie, 1639-1701*, ed. Frederik Willem Stapel and Carel Wessel Theodorus van Boetelaer (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1927-1954). part 2.2, 110.

chorographic surveys. Here, too, it should be mentioned that Van Dam extensively used Havart's publication for information on Coromandel,⁴⁹ and is therefore also biased to an extent.

So far there have only been a few academic studies with a primary focus on the Van Reede Committee and their dealings in Asia. At the moment of writing, the author of this thesis is aware of four such studies, two of which the author was unable to access: an unpublished bachelor's thesis dealing with the creation of the Van Reede Committee and its actions on Ceylon by Jos Gommans, and an unpublished master's thesis regarding the Van Reede Committee in Bengal and north Coromandel by K. Laurijnssens. The other two are the previously mentioned article by Pamela McVay and the unpublished PhD dissertation by Byapti Sur.⁵⁰

In order to find more information on the actions and consequences of the Van Reede Committee, the various biographies written about Van Reede contain additional information related to the Committee and its actions. The first biography written exclusively on Van Reede's life has been done by Pieter Johannes Veth in 1887. In this biography, Veth devoted a sizable portion to the actions of the Committee in Coromandel.⁵¹ Unfortunately, the study is not very straightforward in revealing its sources, except when he has taken information directly from the earlier-mentioned Daniel Havart. The next biography is by Samuel Kalff in 1905.⁵² This study focuses on Van Reede's time as Commander of Malabar between 1670 and 1677. It provides almost no sources and is sometimes based on Havart as well. Next is a diary of Van Reede's actions as Commissioner General at the Cape of Good Hope. This account was published by Abraham Hulshof in 1941.⁵³ In 1986, a biography was published by Johannes Heniger.⁵⁴ The biography came with an analysis of Van Reede's renowned publication *Hortus Malabaricus*, an extensive study of the botanical world of the Malabar Coast in southwest India,⁵⁵ which Van Reede co-authored. Heniger's biography was written within the context of Van Reede's connection to the *Hortus Malabaricus* and focuses only marginally on his time in Coromandel.

Additional research on the Van Reede Committee in Coromandel is found in historical works written about the region and the VOC in general. For example, a significant study was

⁴⁹ Peters, *In Steen Geschreven*, 65.

⁵⁰ Jos Gommans, "Malo Mori Quam Foedari. Een onderzoek naar het ontstaan van de commissie van Reede tot Drakesteijn en haar verrichtingen op het eiland Ceylon (1684-1691)" (unpublished Bachelor thesis, Nijmegen University, 1984); K. Laurijnssens, "'Dit vuile Nest gesuijvert', het correctief en diplomatiek optreden van de Commissie van Reede tot Drakestein in Bengalen en Noord-Coromandel, 1686-1691" (unpublished Master thesis, Leiden University, 2001); McVay, "The Trial of Nicholaas Schaghen"; Sur, "Keeping Corruption at Bay."

⁵¹ Pieter Johannes Veth, "Hendrik Adriaan van Reede tot Drakestein," *De Gids* 51, no. 3 (1887): 423-475 (part 1), *De Gids* 51, no. 4 (1887): 113-161 (part 2).

⁵² Samuel Kalff, "De Maecenas van Malabar," *Elsevier's Geïllustreerd Maandschrift* 15 (1905): 241-257, 312-322.

⁵³ Abraham Hulshof, H.A. *Van Reede Tot Drakestein: Journaal Van Zijn Verblijf Aan De Kaap* (Utrecht: Kemink, 1941).

⁵⁴ Heniger, *Van Reede and Hortus Malabaricus*.

⁵⁵ Reede tot Drakenstein, Hendrik Adriaan van, *Hortus Indicus Malabaricus, Continens Regni Malabarici apud Indos celeberrimi omnium generis Plantas rarioris*, 12 vols (Amstelodami: Joannis Van Someren, 1678-1693).

performed by Tapan Raychaudhuri in 1962.⁵⁶ He was one of the first scholars who showed the enormous potential the VOC archives had in uncovering information not only about the VOC, but about Indian history and its commercial economy as well. In 1986, Sinnappah Arasaratnam published *Merchants, Companies and Commerce on the Coromandel Coast 1650-1740*, which is one of the first works that attempted to bring together the vision of more than one European power or Company on a single region and to confront one picture with another.⁵⁷

Finally, there is a variety of studies the topics of which are relevant to this thesis. Marion Peters published a study in 2002 that focuses on the life and death of VOC servants, primarily in Coromandel and largely in the period surrounding the inspections of Van Reede, for which she extensively used Havart's publication.⁵⁸ Another relevant topic to take into consideration regarding Van Reede is his close relationship to, and falling out with, with Rijckloff van Goens Sr. Under his patronage, Van Reede had climbed the ranks of the VOC in his younger years. This relationship was carefully analysed in an unpublished PhD dissertation by Erik Odegard in 2018,⁵⁹ and will be further discussed in Chapter 1. Odegard's recent publication: *The Company Fortress*, which researches military engineering of the VOC in South Asia should also be noted.⁶⁰ In this publication, Odegard has devoted a few paragraphs to Van Reede and his involvement in the design and construction of the new fort, which will be discussed in Chapter 5. The network of Van Reede and his ties to the VOC directors in Amsterdam, as well as the shift of the capital from Pulicat to Nagapattinam were discussed briefly in *The Merchant-Warrior Pacified* by George Davison Winius and Marcus Paulus Maria Vink.⁶¹ More recently, this topic has been mentioned by Professors Pieter Emmer and Jos Gommans in *The Dutch Overseas Empire*. They claim that the aftermath of the 1672 crisis caused a need for reform and that, similar to McVay and Sur, 'the instrument par excellence for this was the so-called 'redress commission''.⁶²

Based on the above-mentioned academic research, one could conclude that there is a lot of information available on Van Reede and his Committee. However, an in-depth study of the Van Reede Committee in Coromandel specifically, which takes all of this information into account and puts it into the larger context of the VOC's Committee of redress, has not yet been done.

⁵⁶ Raychaudhuri, *Jan Company in Coromandel*.

⁵⁷ Arasaratnam. *Merchants, Companies and Commerce*.

⁵⁸ Peters, *In Steen Geschreven*.

⁵⁹ Erik Odegard, "Colonial Careers: Johan Maurits Van Nassau-Siegen, Rijckloff Volckertsz. Van Goens and Career-making in the Seventeenth-Century Dutch Empire" (unpublished PhD Diss., Leiden University, 2018).

⁶⁰ Odegard, *The Company Fortress*.

⁶¹ Winius and Vink, *The Merchant-Warrior Pacified*.

⁶² Pieter Emmer and Jos Gommans, *The Dutch Overseas Empire, 1600-1800* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2021), 20

Primary and contemporary sources

The core of this thesis will be based on the primary sources available in the VOC archives in The Hague, the Netherlands. Firstly, there is a large collection of correspondence between Committee members and local VOC servants, ranging from interrogations, statements, missives, instructions, and reports. Of note are Van Reede's instructions to local VOC servants, which are quite informative. Then there is the correspondence between the Committee members and the Governor General and the High Government in Batavia. Of special interest are Van Reede's letters to the *Heeren XVII* in *patria* (fatherland, i.e., the Dutch Republic), which contain a wealth of information. Treaties with (non-) European actors in Coromandel, often designated as *inlandse* or *vreemde natien* (native or foreign nations) have also been used to some extent. Another notable collection is the correspondence of the *independent fiscaals*, officials in the VOC settlements in Asia who were charged with the juridical inquiry into the abuses and crimes of the VOC servants, placed under the immediate authority of the *Heeren XVII*.⁶³

When dealing with any source, a historian always has to consider any personal biases the author might have had, as well as the purposes of the document. For example, in his *Op- en Ondergang van Coromandel*, Havart not only relied on his own experiences but was supplied with information on south Coromandel and on what had happened since he had returned home, by his old friends who were still there.⁶⁴ This immediately exposes some problems. As mentioned previously, many of these old friends had been targeted in Van Reede's inspections. Had Havart remained in Coromandel, he even might have found himself implicated. Subsequently, Havart's book devotes large parts towards exonerating his friends and questioning the quality of Van Reede's decisions.⁶⁵ In addition, in his introduction Havart promises not to reveal any Company secrets as a condition for access to the VOC archives.⁶⁶ According to Gijs Kruijtzter, the same held true for Van Dam's publication.⁶⁷ His *Beschrijvinge*, in addition to Havart's earlier-mentioned influence on the work, was intimately connected to the same internal discourse of crisis that prompted the VOC to send Van Reede to Asia, which had considerable influence on the contents of the *Beschrijvinge*.⁶⁸

The people who produced these papers were often part of the elites of society: a select group of educated Dutch men. In short, the VOC documents are generally to be regarded as subjective and colonial in nature.⁶⁹ Therefore, the first thing to take into account when dealing with

⁶³ Femme Simon Gaastra, "The Independent Fiscaals of the VOC. 1689–1719," *Itinerario* 9, no. 2 (1985): 93.

⁶⁴ Peters, *In Steen Geschreven*, 65.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶⁶ Havart, *Op- en Ondergang*, part 1, 9.

⁶⁷ Gijs Kruijtzter, *Xenophobia in Seventeenth-century India* (Leiden: Leiden University Press, 2009), 243.

⁶⁸ Susanne Friedrich, "Caveat from the Archive: Pieter van Dam's *Beschrijvinge van de Oostindische Compagnie* and Crisis Management," *Journal for the History of Knowledge* 1, no. 1 (2020): 2.

⁶⁹ Michael Karabinos, "Decolonisation in Dutch Archives: Defining and Debating," *Low Countries Historical Review* 134, no. 2 (2019): 130-131.

the VOC archives is its 'decolonisation'. Besides being a trading company, the VOC was also a colonial power, and much of its administration was set up within this context. While this is not necessarily the case for Coromandel, it remains essential to place the documents within the larger political setting of where they functioned.

Moreover, when taking a bottom-up perspective, the VOC servants who wrote them were often just that: servants. They wanted to please their superiors, to present themselves in the best way possible and, especially in Van Reede's case, to be regarded as honest, law-abiding employees who had nothing but the Company's best interests at heart.⁷⁰ If one were to look at it from top-to-bottom, however, other questions must be considered. In the case of interrogations and accusations one has to wonder why a particular person was charged: was he truly corrupt or were there other motivations in play?⁷¹ In addition, even those in leadership positions had to justify the soundness of their decisions: how do their reports compare to the reality in the field?⁷² These are just some of the considerations to be kept in mind and it shows how careful these sources have to be approached, though it also gives the historian a great opportunity to read between the lines, and by doing so, extract the information 'hidden' within them.

The challenge lies in how to find that hidden information. One way is to discover more about the creator of a specific source. What is their background? Who were their friends or enemies, or, in other words, which familial or patronage networks did they belong to?⁷³ The same holds for the individuals mentioned in the sources, and for whom the sources were originally meant. Answers to these questions will contextualise the information available in the sources and explain why the sources are written the way they are. Additionally, sometimes the sources provide other clues such as comments in the margins and underlined sections that imply greater importance.

Methodology and chapter outline

While the lion's share of this thesis consists of archival research, a significant part will also concern biographical research of the accusers' backgrounds and those of the accused, which allows one to read between the lines. Another part will be akin to a historiographical review intended to structure and then analyse the various claims made to explain Van Reede's actions in Coromandel. Each chapter will therefore have variations in methodology tailored to the chapter's subject.

⁷⁰ See, for example, the segment on Jan Corte in Chapter 3.2.

⁷¹ See, for example, the case of Jan Jorisz. Pits in Chapter 2.4.

⁷² See, for example, the results of Van Reede's measures in Chapter 6.

⁷³ Helpful sources have been: Havart, *Op- en Ondergang*; Philipp Christiaan Molhuysen and Petrus Johannes Blok, *Nieuw Nederlandsch Biografisch Woordenboek* (Leiden: A.W. Sijthoff's Uitgevers-Maatschappij, 1911); Willem Wijnaendts van Resandt, *De Gezaghebbers Der Oost-Indische Compagnie Op Hare Buiten-comptoiren in Azië* (Amsterdam: Liebaert, 1944); Peters, *In Steen Geschreven*.

The first chapter of this thesis will explain the formation of the Committee of redress and the 1684 Instruction to Van Reede, in order to understand the processes which preceded his mission in Coromandel and to put his decisions discussed in the later chapters in the right context. Chapter 2 will describe Van Reede's investigations into the VOC servants, and serve as a lead-up to the discussion of the individual networks in Coromandel and the role of factionalism in Van Reede's investigations in Chapter 3. Chapter 4 aims to provide context to Van Reede's handling of the *collegien* (colleges, or, groups of local merchants), his decision to reduce the number of VOC servants and to move most of the non-VOC personnel from Coromandel to Batavia or elsewhere, while examining in what manner these decisions are reflective of the orders in the Instruction to Van Reede. Chapter 5 intends to put the construction of fort De Vyf Sinnen and the relocation of the VOC's regional capital from Pulicat to Nagapattinam into the context of the 1684 Instruction, while also highlighting other measures which were motivated by the Instruction. Chapter 6 will briefly discuss the aftermath of Van Reede's decisions. The Conclusion will then summarise all the findings of the preceding chapters, after which a definitive answer to the research question and a sound judgement of Van Reede's integrity can be given.

Chapter 1

The formation of the Committee of redress and the 1684 Instruction to Van Reede

Before studying the actions of the Committee of redress in Coromandel, it is necessary to understand the processes behind the formation of the Committee, as well as the 1684 Instruction of the *Heeren XVII* to Van Reede, and place them within the historical and regional contexts of the Dutch Republic and Coromandel. The process of the Committee's formation by the *Heeren XVII* has been studied in great detail by Gaastra.⁷⁴ This thesis has identified three levels at which the *Heeren XVII* worked to improve the VOC's standing and finances. Sur has researched the Committee's formation and Instruction within the context of Bengal.⁷⁵ Building on their findings, this chapter will examine the Instruction with a special focus on references which are applicable to Coromandel, and by listing the thirteen directives within the Instruction.⁷⁶ Additionally, this thesis has found that there can be a differentiation between 1) directives with a focus on human assets and 2) directives with a focus on material assets, which will then serve as a framework for the chapters that follow.

1.1 The VOC's priorities following the Disaster Year of 1672: patria and Batavia

By the early 1670s, the English had firmly entrenched themselves on the Indian subcontinent and increased their import of textiles and pepper to Europe, which put the price of Asian goods on the Dutch Republic's market under pressure.⁷⁷ The sudden onslaught of the *Rampjaar* (Disaster Year) in 1672 brought more trouble. The crash of the Amsterdam stock exchange was the greatest of early modern times, paralysing Dutch commerce and finance. At the height of the crisis, only the towns of the provincial states of Zeeland and Holland remained in the hands of the Dutch Republic, whose populations 'were gripped by a mixture of fear, pandemonium and popular fury'.⁷⁸ Apart from external threats, the Republic was also divided from within. For years, the Republic's political landscape had been split in two by the States party-faction, who stood for greater sovereignty of the provinces, led in the early 1670s by the brothers De Witt. Opposed to this were the Orangists, then led by William III of Orange, who sought to create what today would be called a federal government.⁷⁹ During the *Rampjaar*, this division deepened further and culminated in the infamous slaughter of the brothers De Witt, whose corpses were 'mutilated, parts being roasted and eaten in a frenzy of cannibalistic hatred.'⁸⁰

⁷⁴ Gaastra, *Bewind en Beleid*, 99-157.

⁷⁵ Sur, "Keeping Corruption at Bay," 212-246.

⁷⁶ A complete transcript of the original Dutch text of the 1684 Instruction can be found in Appendix A.

⁷⁷ Gaastra, *Bewind en Beleid*, 110.

⁷⁸ Israel, *The Dutch Republic*, 799.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, 608-609.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, 803.

With regards to the VOC, the crisis of 1672 and its aftermath drove the price of Asian goods further down because of reduced demand.⁸¹ As a consequence, the *Heeren XVII* and the other VOC directors had to suspend their payment on the Company's bonds to its shareholders. The provincial states of Holland and Zeeland at this time, which were filled with men from the VOC boards of directors, took over the financial burden themselves. The *Heeren XVII* forwarded the provincial governments a loan of two million guilders, which would protect them from protests by the shareholders. In 1673, when the disastrous events from the previous year had been overcome, these state-owned bonds were returned to the shareholders who were eager to obtain their dividends again.⁸² Unable to pay back everything at once, the *Heeren XVII* would have to find ways to improve the VOC's financial standing.⁸³

However, there was more to it than that. Behind the scenes of the official institutions in the Dutch Republic existed a complex web of patronage networks. Patronage networks existed between direct family members, in-laws and friends. These clans determined the politics of the cities, which determined the politics of the Dutch Republic as well as the politics of the VOC.⁸⁴ After the *Rampjaar*, with the return of the William III as Stadtholder, a pro-reform group came back to power, consisting mainly of friends and cousins of Gilles Valckenier, who was also a powerful VOC Director. His network included the family of Joan Huydecoper van Maarsseveen, another extremely influential VOC Director. Additionally, they were in alliance with the Van Reede family in Utrecht.⁸⁵

This thesis has identified three different levels at which the *Heeren XVII* worked to improve the VOC's reputation and finances: firstly, to improve their situation in *patria* (fatherland). Secondly, to align the composition of the High Government and Council in Batavia to their factions and, thirdly, to form a Committee to inspect the settlements and VOC trading posts in the rest of Asia. The first order of business was to secure the stability and continuity of the Company in the Dutch Republic.⁸⁶ In the years immediately following the *Rampjaar*, the efforts of the *Heeren XVII* were primarily spent on competing with the English in the markets and winning back the trust of the Dutch merchants.⁸⁷ By pursuing sound and resourceful policies, they succeeded to pull themselves out of the crisis of 1672.⁸⁸

⁸¹ Gaastra, *Bewind en Beleid*, 110.

⁸² Sur, "Keeping Corruption at Bay," 83.

⁸³ Gaastra, *De Geschiedenis van de VOC*, 27.

⁸⁴ Emmer and Gommans, *The Dutch Overseas Empire*, 19.

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, 20.

⁸⁶ Gaastra, *Bewind en Beleid*, 117.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, 110.

⁸⁸ Femme Simon Gaastra, "Succesvol ondernemerschap, falend bestuur? Het beleid van de bewindhebbers van de VOC, 1602-1795," in *Kennis en Compagnie. De Verenigde Oost-Indische Compagnie en de moderne wetenschap*, ed. Leonard Blussé and Ilonka Ooms (Amsterdam: Uitgeverij Balans, 2002), 59.

Having settled affairs in *patria*, the *Heeren XVII* now began to deliberate on launching reforms and installing a Committee in order to settle affairs abroad as well.⁸⁹ Starting with the position of Governor General in Batavia, Valckenier put forward his own patron, Rijckloff Volckertsz. van Goens Sr., the reputable military commander and former Governor of Ceylon.⁹⁰ In him, the *Heeren XVII* saw an able commander capable of fighting corruption in Asia. However, he was not backed by all the Directors, such as Huydecoper.⁹¹ To properly explain this, it is necessary to go back a few more years in history.

Van Goens Sr. used to be Hendrik Adriaan van Reede's patron in the 1660's during the conquests of Ceylon and Malabar. Under Van Goens Sr.'s patronage, Van Reede climbed the ranks, and he was eventually awarded with the governorship of Malabar in 1670. However, that promotion came with a price. Before that time, Malabar had been under the control of the Ceylon government, at the head of which was Van Goens Sr. The High Government and Council in Batavia appointed Van Reede with the condition that from then on Malabar was to become a separate command, independent from Ceylon. This caused the relationship between the patron in Colombo and his client in Malabar to sour quickly.⁹² In 1677, when the *Heeren XVII* ordered Van Reede to take a seat on the High Government and Council in Batavia, he found Van Goens Sr. already there. The *Heeren XVII* had sent him to Batavia and made him Director General a few years before. The clash between Van Goens Sr. and Van Reede caused the latter's early return to *patria* in October that same year. Huydecoper, whose family was allied with Van Reede's family, supported him. Van Reede would add more fuel to the fire when he produced a highly critical and damaging report of Van Goens Sr.'s policies on Ceylon in 1678.⁹³ Vink has argued that this rivalry was 'more a clash of personalities than policies.'⁹⁴ This thesis has found this to be true with regards to Coromandel. The following chapters will illustrate how Van Reede's measures often aligned with earlier plans and measures by Van Goens Sr.

Van Goens Sr. continued to be at odds with the Council in Batavia, in particular with his second in command, Cornelis Speelman. This was further exacerbated when the *Heeren XVII* tried to order his son, Rijckloff van Goens Jr., to inspect the trading posts on the Indian subcontinent in 1679. Van Goens Jr. refused to accept the role. Then the *Heeren XVII* decided to send him to Batavia as an extraordinary member of the Council. This failed as well, because Speelman and other council members denied him access to the Council. Following all these difficulties, Van Goens Jr. returned to

⁸⁹ Sur, "Keeping Corruption at Bay," 218.

⁹⁰ Gaastra, *Bewind en Beleid*, 123.

⁹¹ *Ibid.*, 125.

⁹² Odegard, "Colonial Careers," 182-183.

⁹³ Gaastra, *Bewind en Beleid*, 125.

⁹⁴ Marcus Paulus Maria Vink, *Encounters on the Opposite Coast. The Dutch East India Company and the Nayaka State of Madurai in the Seventeenth Century* (Leiden: Brill, 2016), 497.

patria in 1680.⁹⁵ Valckenier died the same year and with his patron among the *Heeren XVII* gone, Van Goens Sr.'s power in Batavia further declined.⁹⁶ His request to return to the Dutch Republic was granted, and he left Batavia in 1681 to be succeeded by Speelman.⁹⁷ That same year, the *Heeren XVII* attempted to install Frederik Lambertsz. Bent as Commissioner General,⁹⁸ but he, too, was unable to perform his duties as such, due to his declining health.⁹⁹ In early 1684, Van Goens Jr. was sent back to Batavia to retake his seat and acquire a high position, if not the highest, on the High Government and Council. However, fate decided differently. Before he arrived in Batavia, Speelman had died. The vacant position of Governor General had, therefore, already passed to Johannes Camphuys,¹⁰⁰ with whom the *Heeren XVII* became quite pleased.¹⁰¹ Van Goens Jr.'s behaviour and criticism of the High Government and Council met with disapproval from the *Heeren XVII*. Further accusations from Van Reede led to the *Heeren XVII* deciding to dismiss and recall Van Goens Jr. back to *patria*.¹⁰²

While the above is a concise description of events, it shows the challenges the *Heeren XVII* faced trying to control the two levels of *patria* and Batavia, and the difficulties they experienced in appointing a Commissioner General to start work on the third level. In addition, Batavia had its own power struggles with which had to contend. Even the *Heeren XVII* themselves did not form a unified block, as it was Valckenier on whose patronage Van Goens Sr. relied on the most. With Valckenier gone, others were quick to take his place and put forward their own plans.

1.2 Forming the Committee of redress

Following the death of Valckenier, the political grip on the States of Holland and the VOC shifted to leaders such as Coenraad van Beuningen,¹⁰³ Joannes Hudde and Joan Huydecoper.¹⁰⁴ For Van Reede, this proved to be fortuitous. The unfortunate circumstances under which he had left Batavia had not followed him home. On the contrary, upon his return he had become a member of the knighthood of Utrecht.¹⁰⁵ He found a new patron in Huydecoper and both men combined their powerful positions with a love of botany. Together they had at their disposal a global patronage network of like-minded individuals.¹⁰⁶ They knew that in the minds of the public, the VOC was a corrupt

⁹⁵ Ibid., 126.

⁹⁶ Sur, "Keeping Corruption at Bay," 237.

⁹⁷ Gaastra, *Bewind en Beleid*, 126.

⁹⁸ Ibid., 144.

⁹⁹ Matthijs Antonius van Rhede van der Kloot, *De gouverneurs-generaal en commissarissen-generaal van Nederlandsch-Indië 1610-1888* ('s Gravenhage: W. P. van Stockum & Zoon, 1891), 261.

¹⁰⁰ Gaastra, *Bewind en Beleid*, 154.

¹⁰¹ Ibid., 159.

¹⁰² Ibid.

¹⁰³ Ibid., 148.

¹⁰⁴ Sur, "Keeping Corruption at Bay," 241.

¹⁰⁵ Prakash, *The Dutch East India Company and the Economy of Bengal*, 87.

¹⁰⁶ Emmer and Gommans, *The Dutch Overseas Empire*, 77.

organisation whose servants in Asia lived increasingly lavish lifestyles.¹⁰⁷ To repair the VOC's credibility, its reputation, and to prove to the public that they were capable administrators, the *Heeren XVII* had to do something about the third level, combatting corruption in the VOC trading posts and settlements in Asia. With renewed vigour, they began the work of setting up a Committee of redress to make it happen.¹⁰⁸

It is important to note that such Committees were nothing new. Earlier attempts of redress had been attempted since 1626 when the High Government in Batavia first began appointing Commissioners to inspect VOC assets in Asia.¹⁰⁹ Those earlier attempts, however, were deemed a failure since these Commissioners had been unable to subdue 'the evil that continued to crawl forward more and more and took ever deeper root.'¹¹⁰

For their new Committee, the *Heeren XVII* needed 'a highly regarded and qualified gentleman of knowledge and experience, in whose loyalty and integrity we [*Heeren XVII*] can trust'.¹¹¹ Van Reede's reputation and status, his earlier activities within the VOC and Huydecopers' patronage made him the perfect candidate for the job. His second was to be Isaac Solmans, who had been sent ahead from Batavia to the Indian subcontinent to visit the factories in 1683.¹¹² However, Solmans' appointment created some conflict between the Amsterdam chamber and the other chambers of the VOC. Deputies from the other chambers preferred the Governor of Ceylon, Laurens Pijl.¹¹³ A compromise was reached that saw Solmans appointed as second, but in the event of Van Reede's untimely death, Pijl would succeed him and take charge of the inspection.¹¹⁴ Interestingly, after inspecting Bengal prior to Van Reede's arrival there, Solmans excused himself from his duties.¹¹⁵ The third member of the Committee was to be Johannes Bacherus.¹¹⁶ According to Sur, Bacherus was in alliance with Huydecoper as well.¹¹⁷

The formation of this Committee of redress was significant, among other things, because it was a) equipped with extraordinarily special powers, since, as stated previously in the Introduction the rank of Commissioner General made Van Reede the second-highest ranking VOC official in Asia; and b) organised with extreme care and years long deliberations behind the planning, besides the

¹⁰⁷ Sur, "Keeping Corruption at Bay," 216.

¹⁰⁸ Gaastra, *Bewind en Beleid*, 148.

¹⁰⁹ NA, Collectie Hudde, inv. nr. 38, Instruction for Hendrik van Rheede Lord of Mijdregt, going as Commissioner of Bengal, Coromandel, Ceylon etc. 1684, December 1684, f. 7vvv (the folios of the Instruction are only numbered every fourth page. This makes it difficult to track all the pages. The author of this thesis has aimed to solve this by adding an additional 'v' [verso] for every page following the folio number. In this case, 7vvv means the third page after folio 7).

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*, f. 1v-1vv.

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*, f. 1vv.

¹¹² *Ibid.*, f. 7vvv-8r.

¹¹³ Gaastra, *Bewind en Beleid*, 156.

¹¹⁴ NA, Collectie Hudde, inv. nr. 38, Instruction, December 1684, f. 8v-8vv

¹¹⁵ Van Dam, *Beschrijvinge*, part 3, 134.

¹¹⁶ *Ibid.*, f. 8r.

¹¹⁷ Sur, "Keeping Corruption at Bay." 244.

high expectations the *Heeren XVII* had of it.¹¹⁸ Another important factor is that c) instead of being appointed by the Governor General and Council in Batavia, Van Reede and his team were the first Commissioners to be directly installed by the *Heeren XVII* in *patria*.¹¹⁹

1.3 The 1684 Instruction to Van Reede

Two copies of the Instruction remain in existence today. One is found in the VOC archives.¹²⁰ The other is found in the personal archive of Joannes Hudde.¹²¹ Hudde's copy appears to be the older one because it contains a few scribbled edits, whereas in the other copy, they are neatly written and part of the main body of text.¹²² Interestingly, certain sections are underlined in Hudde's personal copy, as shown in image 1 below. For example, the first sentence goes as follows (in translation): 'As we [the *Heeren XVII*] have seen and experienced for many years, that everywhere in the Indies and mainly in the nominated regions and especially in Bengal, many different faults and misuses have crept in over time...'.¹²³

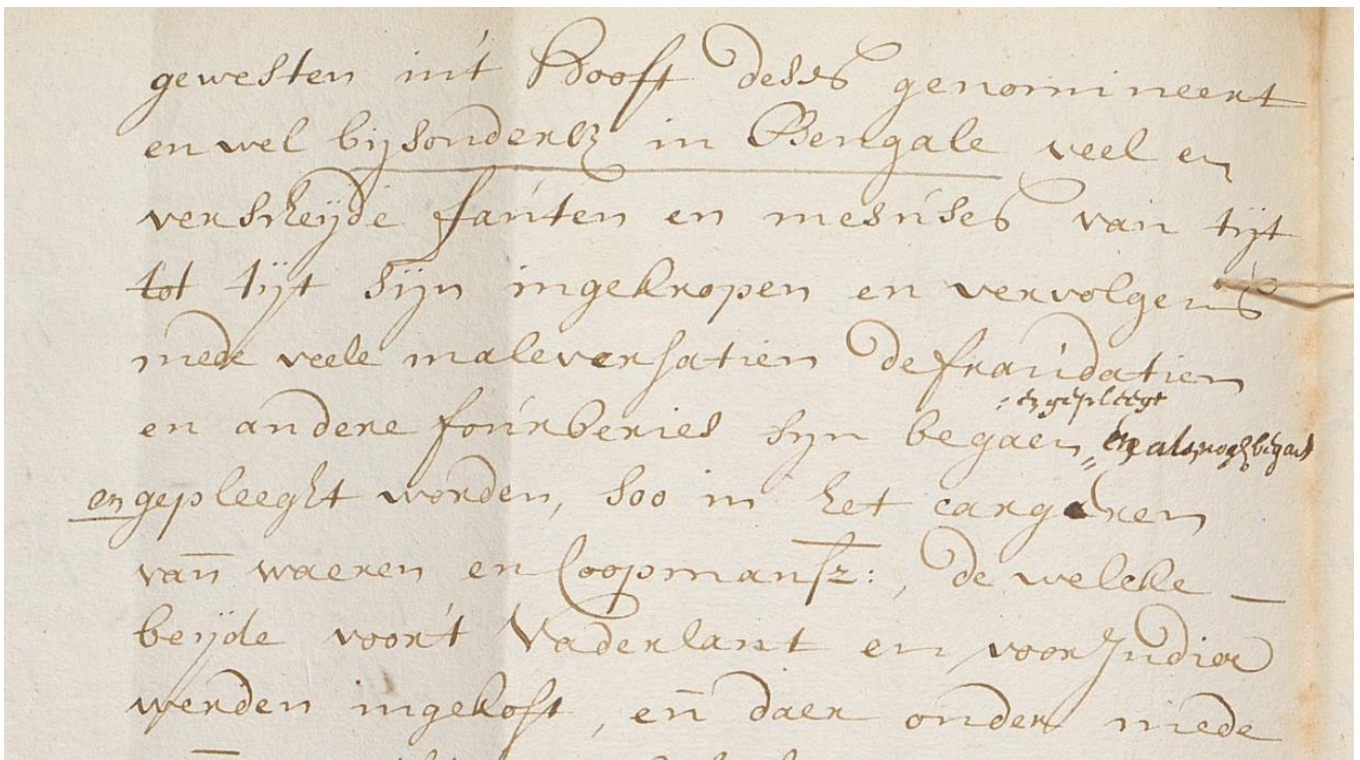


Image 1: example of an underlined section and scribbled edits in Hudde's copy (NA, Collectie Hudde, inv. nr.38, Instruction, December 1684, f. 1v.)

¹¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 216.

¹¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 221.

¹²⁰ NA, VOC, inv. nr. 321, Instruction for the Lord of Mijdrecht, December 1684, f. 243v-255r.

¹²¹ NA, Collectie Hudde, inv. nr. 38, Instruction, December 1684, f. 1r-8vv.

¹²² See image 1 above and image 2 on the next page.

¹²³ NA, Collectie Hudde, inv. nr. 38, Instruction, December 1684, f. 1r-1v.

The underlined sections have also been noted by Sur.¹²⁴ However, her reading of these sections might give the impression that they are of increased importance to the *Heeren XVII* as a whole. It is important to consider that these lines do not occur in the copy present within the official VOC archives, as shown in image 2 below.

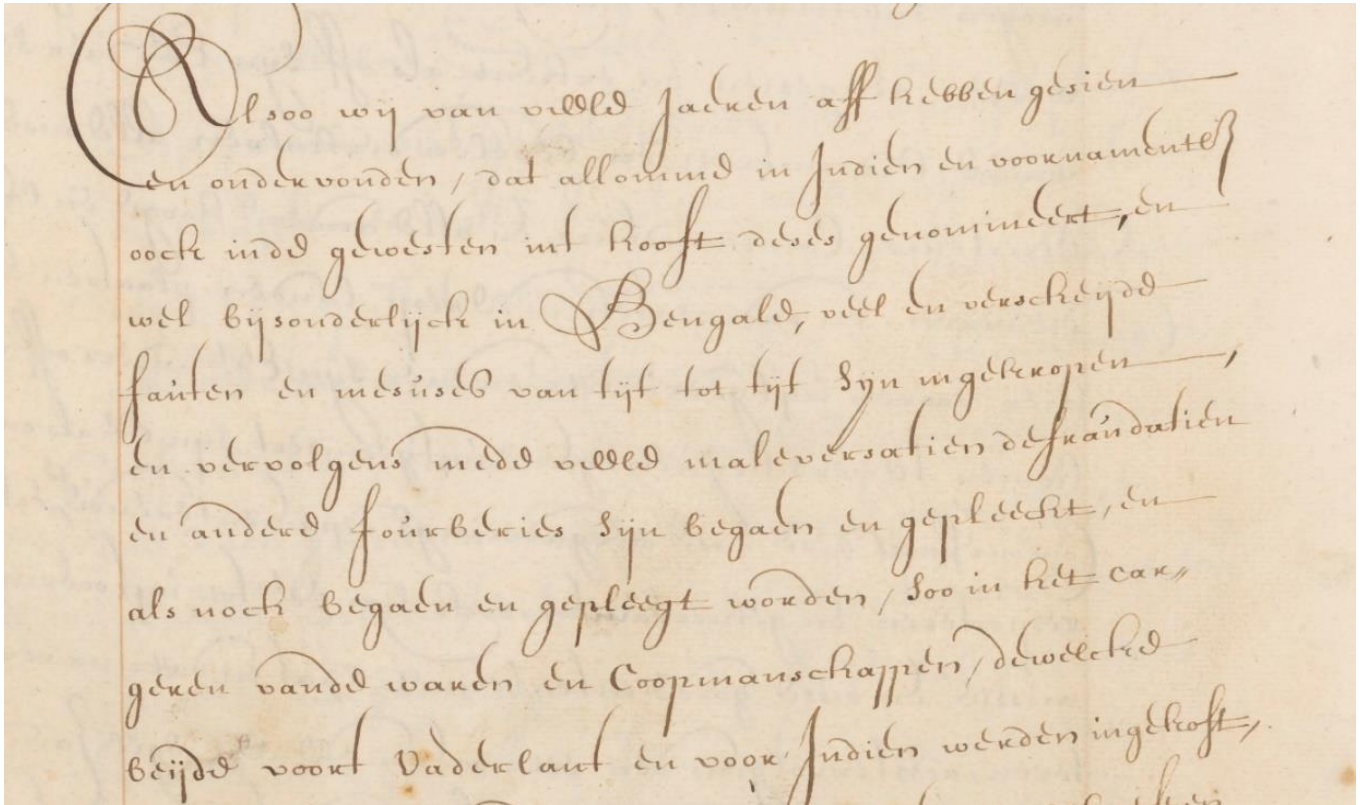


Image 2: example of the same section in the copy of the official VOC archives which is neatly written and not underlined (NA, VOC, inv. nr. 321, Instruction for the Lord of Mijdregh, December 1684, f. 243v).

As stated in the previous paragraphs, the Directors did not always represent a united front. Therefore, it is possible the underlined sections in Hudde's copy might have been of increased importance to him personally, but not to the *Heeren XVII* as a whole. This thesis has opted to use Hudde's copy for its research, since, as explained above, the extra scribbles and lines increase its informational value.

Apart from the above-mentioned events ahead of the formation of the Committee of redress, the Instruction itself shows how much preparatory work preceded Van Reede's mission as well. Attached to the original Instruction was a large number of documents and extracts from other Company officials such as Commissioner Bauckes and *Oppercoopman* (chief merchant) Lense who had gone on fact-finding missions a few years before. Additionally, it included a journal and a report of a Captain Willem Hagendoorn which was found to be of use to the Committee.¹²⁵ Specifically for

¹²⁴ Sur, "Keeping Corruption at Bay," 222.

¹²⁵ NA, Collectie Hudde, inv. nr. 38, Instruction, December 1684, f. 4r-4v.

Coromandel, the instructions from Batavia to Commissioner Jacob Joriszoon Pits were attached, who was sent from Malacca to inspect the Coast of Coromandel and take over its governance in 1681. Pits' reported findings had been attached as well, so that upon arrival, Van Reede could determine how well Pits had performed the duties stipulated in those instructions.¹²⁶ Pits will be further discussed in Chapters 2 and 3.

The instructions are summarised in thirteen concise directives. They are preceded by the comment that 'a well-regulated trade and frugality' are the two main points in light of the increasing strength of European and Indian nations, and that Van Reede should go to Coromandel when he has finished his inspection in Bengal.¹²⁷ This signifies that while settling affairs in Bengal was deemed a priority, Coromandel's importance to the mission is not to be under-estimated.

The thirteen directives are listed in English below and are introduced as follows:

'In Bengal, on the Coast of Coromandel and elsewhere His Lordship shall principally pay attention and take into consideration.

1. That no more than the necessary number of European and native servants are used and kept under employment.¹²⁸
2. That no other than necessary serviceable and unavoidable gifts are given.¹²⁹
3. That no other than necessary construction will be taken on.¹³⁰
4. That to the passing or arriving ships no other or further provisions are given than those that are necessary.¹³¹
5. That a frugal and appropriate household is kept, and that everyone receives no more than his proper ration, including the Governors, Directors and some lesser servants who may not receive more than required, as stated in the regulations stipulated by the General and Council.¹³²
6. That the commodities bought there are burdened with no other than necessary expenses and that the Company is not billed more than their purchasing price, either directly or indirectly.¹³³
7. As said before, that the wares offered there by the Company may be sold for the highest price possible, and are made cost-effective, without tolerating that the wares which are exchanged or given to the suppliers in payment, are billed higher than is proper. Because of

¹²⁶ Ibid., f. 4vv.

¹²⁷ Ibid.

¹²⁸ Ibid., f. 4vvv.

¹²⁹ Ibid., f. 5r.

¹³⁰ Ibid.

¹³¹ Ibid.

¹³² Ibid.

¹³³ Ibid.

deceitful attempts to make profits, high purchase prices and low selling prices occur. Consequently, we [*Heeren XVII*] are kept in uncertainty regarding the true prices of the wares we acquire here, leaving us in doubt about how much we should demand of each commodity, or if we should demand anything at all. Therefore, only true prices should be given and billed.¹³⁴

8. That the actions and behaviour of the European nations, primarily regarding trade, are carefully observed, and that which can be of service or can be used to the Company's advantage is noted.¹³⁵
9. That there may be thought of ways on how to best prevent and counter the continual efforts by the European nations to debauch our people on the Coast [of Coromandel] and in Bengal, and to pull them away into their service.¹³⁶
10. That the Company's different weights and measurements in the aforementioned trade posts should not be tampered with, especially when it concerns money. For this purpose, a large quantity of copper money has been brought from the Coast of Coromandel to Ceylon. But now that whole country has gotten filled and saturated with them, which has created high inflation. This has damaged the Company greatly. It must become clear from His Lordships' investigation how this situation can be redressed.¹³⁷
11. That in all places and trade posts may be investigated what the actual intrinsic value of the money is, with which purchases are made in those places, and if they conform to our standard penny [standpenninck] being the rixdollar [Rijksdaelder] or province-dollar [Provintiedaelder], which in our books is allocated or valued at sixty stuivers [stuijvers], with indications of the difference if there are any, and how much that might actually be.¹³⁸
12. That in addition to the visitation and investigation of all Company warehouses, the commodities and the physical well-being of people should be inspected, as well as of those of war, ammunition, and those things which should be in stock, to see if everything is looked after properly, and to see which items are overstocked and which items are scarce. What should also be investigated is the shipbuilding and which [ships] are in need of repair or are on hand. It is said and particularly complained about, that their defects are the reason why many ships fall short and are lost. If beneficial remedies for this can be devised, as well as pointed out where they originate from, it would greatly please us. Cochin comes highly recommended for the construction of small sailing vessels, pilot boats, sloops and similar

¹³⁴ Ibid., f. 5r-5v.

¹³⁵ Ibid., f. 5v.

¹³⁶ Ibid., f. 5v-5vv.

¹³⁷ Ibid., f. 5vv.

¹³⁸ Ibid.

workmanship. Especially when a capable carpenter is sought who, after closer investigation, can give a pertinent report about it.¹³⁹

13. That cordial relations may be kept with both Indian and European nations present in India. Were offence to be given or further inflicted to the same, we might meet with injustice and be removed as a consequence, which could have similar consequences here in Europe.¹⁴⁰

For the purposes of this thesis, this study will differentiate between directives with a focus on 1) human assets: concerning the actions and behaviour of people; and 2) material assets: concerning commodities, inventory and monetary value. The directives relate to either human assets or material assets in varying degrees, respectively. It should also be noted that the value and worth of the VOC's material assets are depended on the actions and behaviour of the people handling them, i.e., the human assets. As will be shown in the following chapters, Van Reede's actions and decisions are, therefore, mostly aimed at increasing control over the VOC's human assets, the people, in attempt to maximise output to benefit the material assets.

1.4 Human assets and material assets

Many of the measures which made Van Reede so unpopular among the VOC servants, were those with a pure focus on human assets, and have their origin within directive 1. For example, Havart heavily condemned Van Reede's decree that all widows and spouses, barring those of the chief servants, had to be sent to Batavia.¹⁴¹ However, a thorough analysis on this decree has not yet been done. This thesis aims to discuss this in further detail in Chapter 4.

In addition, several directives with a main on focus human assets, such as directives 2, 5, 6 and 7, come together in the investigations which Van Reede launched into various VOC servants. Their alleged private trading and other corrupt practices are mentioned on three separate occasions in the Instruction, which highlights the seriousness of such crimes.¹⁴² Directive 2 will most likely also refer to the payment and receiving of bribes, which in turn can be grouped together with a form of private trade. Further, while these directives do not explicitly advocate the removal of specific persons, Van Reede is authorised earlier in the Instruction to appoint and move people around as he sees fit.¹⁴³ Chapters 2 and 3 discuss this in further detail.

Concerning the construction mentioned in directive 3, it is the author's view that the construction of the fort in Nagapattinam, a material asset, preceded and contributed to Van Reede's

¹³⁹ Ibid., f. 5vvv.

¹⁴⁰ Ibid., f. 5vvv-6r.

¹⁴¹ Havart, *Op- en Ondergang*, 34-35.

¹⁴² NA, Collectie Hudde, inv. nr. 38, Instruction, December 1684, f. 1v, 3r and 3v.

¹⁴³ Ibid., f. 3v.

eventual decision to relocate the capital and most of its people, human assets, from Pulicat to Nagapattinam. This will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 5.

Directives 4, 10 and 11 are related to each other in the sense that VOC servants were suspected to tamper with weights, measurements and denomination of coins to their own advantage. The Instruction specifically mentions the forging of ship manifests in order to make room in the holds for their private trade.¹⁴⁴ Such matters are briefly discussed in Chapter 5.

Directive 8 is connected to directive 9 in the sense that if European nations are trying to influence human assets belonging to the VOC, it can be a safe bet that the VOC was trying to do the same to human assets of rival Companies. Directive 9 itself is further elaborated on in the Instruction, stating that after having finished the inspection of a trade post, Van Reede had to have every VOC servant swear an oath of loyalty to the Company.¹⁴⁵ In Coromandel, the VOC servants did this shortly before Van Reede's departure to Jaffna on Ceylon in June 1689.¹⁴⁶ Elements of these directives are discussed throughout the rest of this thesis.

Directive 12 concerns the inventories and assets present in the VOC trade posts. As per the directive's recommendation, Van Reede had two or three ships built in Cochin for use in Coromandel.¹⁴⁷ Other elements of this directive are discussed throughout the following chapters.

Directive 13 is specifically geared towards maintaining good relations with foreign human assets such as other European and non-European nations, but earlier in the Instruction it is made clear that Van Reede's mandate goes much further, namely, that he is authorised to 'visit kings and lords of high quality' and give them gifts 'as long as this benefits the VOC's trade'.¹⁴⁸ In south Coromandel Van Reede would, for example, negotiate new treaties with the ruler of Tanjavur,¹⁴⁹ while he sent Johannes Bacherus on an Embassy towards to Golkonda in north Coromandel after it had been taken over by the Mughal emperor Aurangzeb.¹⁵⁰ In the Instruction, Golkonda and the other trade posts in north Coromandel are deemed of less importance than those in south Coromandel, and the *Heeren XVII* want Van Reede to personally oversee the inspections of the southern trade posts such as Sadras, Teganapatnam, Porto Novo and Nagapattinam, while they authorise him to send one of the other Committee members to inspect north Coromandel.¹⁵¹ Chapter 5 will study these matters in further detail.

¹⁴⁴ Ibid., 1v.

¹⁴⁵ Ibid., 7vv-7vvv.

¹⁴⁶ NA, VOC, inv. nr. 1477, Van Reede's Instruction to the Governor and Council of Coromandel. 16 June 1689, f. 684v-685r.

¹⁴⁷ NA, VOC, inv. nr. 1478, Secret letter Van Reede to Governor General and Council in Batavia, 10 April 1689, f. 50.

¹⁴⁸ NA, Collectie Hudde, inv. nr.38, Instruction. December 1684, f. 2vv.

¹⁴⁹ Jan Ernst Heeres and Frederik Willem Stapel, *Corpus Diplomaticum Neerlandico-Indicum: Verzameling Van Politieke Contracten En Verdere Verdragen Door De Nederlanders in Het Oosten Gesloten, Van Privilegebrieven Aan Hen Verleend, Enz. Deel 3* ('s-Gravenhage: Martinus Nijhoff, 1907), 17 March 1688, 446.

¹⁵⁰ Ibid., 28 August 1689, 509.

¹⁵¹ NA, Collectie Hudde, inv. nr. 38, Instruction, December 1684, f. 6r-6v.

1.5 Conclusion

The aim of this chapter was to understand the processes behind the formation of the Committee of redress, as well as the Instruction of the *Heeren XVII* to Van Reede, and place them within the historical and regional context of the Dutch Republic and Coromandel.

This thesis found that after the *Rampjaar*, the *Heeren XVII* worked on three consecutive levels to improve the VOC's reputation and financial situation: 1) to improve the VOC state of affairs in *patria*; 2) to align the composition of the High Government and Council in Batavia to their factions; and 3) to form a Committee to inspect the settlements and VOC trading posts in the rest of Asia. This was a challenging task since there were other factions at play and death always lurked around the corner to remove key players from the board with little to no warning.

The Instruction and its thirteen directives concern the management of human assets and material assets to varying degrees. This thesis will show that the lion's share of Van Reede's measures aimed at increasing control over the VOC's human assets in an attempt to maximise output to benefit the material assets.

Chapter 2

Van Reede's investigations into VOC servants

*For I would rather say little, or remain silent completely, than to speak too much of Folks known to me only through rumours and the mouths of others.*¹⁵²

Although written in the final decade of the seventeenth century, these words remain as true today as they were then. What is known to us about the men, women and children of Coromandel when Van Reede made his inspections comes from the few remaining and often biased second-hand or third-hand accounts that have survived the test of time. This chapter aims to examine and provide context surrounding the major cases that Van Reede started against several human assets: the VOC servants.

2.1 Michiel Janszoon and Theunis Carstenszen

The earliest case concerns that of Michiel Janszoon and Theunis Carstenszen, who were the *Opperhoofd* (chief) and his second, respectively, of the VOC trade post at the capital city of Golkonda.¹⁵³ Golkonda had been an important and lucrative place for business to the VOC, but from the mid-1680s that was about to change. The two VOC servants ran a successful illegal trade in Japanese copper and Ceylonese elephants with the help of Sirum Chodenda, a local merchant.¹⁵⁴ However, trouble arose in 1685 when the Janszoon and Carstenszen accused Akkana, brother of the prime minister of Golkonda, of having illegitimately extorted goods such as copper. In 1686 Laurens Pit Jr. was sent as a Commissioner to patch up relations with Golkonda. Some documents were discovered in Chodenda's house, revealing that it was in fact Janszoon, Carstenszen and Joan van Nijendaal, the previous *Opperhoofd* in Golkonda, who had lost the money in their private trade enterprises.¹⁵⁵ The matter escalated into a short war between the VOC and the Golkonda Sultanate in which the VOC temporarily occupied the town of Masulipatnam and trade was halted for a year.¹⁵⁶ Therefore, Pit had Janszoon and Carstenszen arrested.¹⁵⁷

Van Reede, who was in Bengal at the time, was informed of the situation through his correspondence with the then Governor of Coromandel Jacob Jorisz. Pits. In these letters, Van Reede judged the situation so dire he would have preferred to set sail to Coromandel as soon as possible to

¹⁵² Havart, *Op- en Ondergang*, part 1, 11.

¹⁵³ Peters, *In Steen Geschreven*, 41.

¹⁵⁴ Emmer and Gommans, *The Dutch Overseas Empire*, 319.

¹⁵⁵ Kruijtzter, *Xenophobia in Seventeenth-century India*, 242-243.

¹⁵⁶ Willem Philippus Coolhaas et al, *Generale Missiven Van Gouverneurs-generaal En Raden Aan Heren XVII Der Verenigde Oostindische Compagnie, Deel V: 1686-1697* ('s-Gravenhage: M. Nijhoff, 1975), 13 December 1686, 57-58.

¹⁵⁷ Havart, *Op- en Ondergang*, part 2, 188.

take charge of the situation, but he was ‘hindered by the seasons which made it impossible to travel south in that time of the year.’¹⁵⁸

According to Van Reede, Chodenda had incriminated another VOC servant, Willem Carel Hartsinck.¹⁵⁹ However, Van Reede did not prosecute him. Hartsinck had been *Opperhoofd* of Golkonda and was promoted to provisional Governor of Coromandel before Pits’ arrival. After this governorship, he became *Opperhoofd* of Masulipatnam in 1680, but he had repatriated to the Dutch Republic in 1685.¹⁶⁰

In 1688, Van Reede decided to send Janszoon and Carstenszen to Batavia where their case could be continued, ‘especially now that Jacob Jorisz. Pits was there, whose governorship had damaged the Company immensely.’¹⁶¹ Their case would drag on until 1696, a decade after their arrest, when they were convicted and banished for seven years to the Banda Islands in the Moluccas. In 1693, Chodenda was sent to Batavia to testify in the case.¹⁶² He was released in 1695 and allowed to go back to Coromandel.¹⁶³

2.2 Nicolaas Clement

The second case of interest for this thesis concerns that of Nicolaas Clement, the *Opperhoofd* of first Porto Novo and then Teganapatnam, to whom Havart devoted almost an entire chapter in his publication, describing in great detail his arrest by Johannes Bacherus, his incarceration and the fate of his wife, Geertruyd van Dalen, and his mother-in-law, Catharina Rombouts.¹⁶⁴ Remarkably however, Havart makes no mention of what crime Clement may have committed. A letter, ostensibly written by Clement, which Havart featured in his book, states that he was ‘never accused of any crime’.¹⁶⁵ Havart made his own thoughts concerning Clement’s arrest quite clear. After introducing Clement as an upstanding individual and loyal VOC servant, Havart claimed that his beloved friend had been set up.¹⁶⁶

However, it should be noted that Van Reede described Clement’s alleged crimes in great detail in multiple letters to the *Heeren XVII* in *patria* (fatherland) and to the Governor General in

¹⁵⁸ NA, VOC, inv. nr. 1421, Van Reede (at Bengal) to Governor Jacob Jorisz. Pits and Council, 9 August 1686, f. 413r.

¹⁵⁹ NA, VOC, inv. nr. 1449, Van Reede to the *Heeren XVII*, 1 December 1688, f. 138r-138v.

¹⁶⁰ W. Wijnaendts van Resandt, *De Gezaghebbers*, 102.

¹⁶¹ NA, VOC, inv. nr. 1449, Van Reede to the *Heeren XVII*, 1 December 1688, f. 139r-139v. Van Reede’s criticism of Jacob Jorisz. Pits will be discussed in paragraph 2.4.

¹⁶² Peters, *In Steen Geschreven*, 41.

¹⁶³ ANRI, GG&C, inv. nr. 2514, Diary in Castle Batavia, 12 April 1695, f. 244-245.

¹⁶⁴ Havart, *Op- en Ondergang*, part 1, 58-81.

¹⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 76.

¹⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 56-57.

Batavia.¹⁶⁷ Additionally, some thirty documents remain in the VOC archives, with witness statements concerning Clement's actions.¹⁶⁸ While this may seem a large amount of evidence, their legitimacy can be called into question. This was not the first time one of Van Reede's prosecutions provided a high number of witness accounts. According to Pamela McVay, he had applied the same tactic earlier in Bengal in the case against Nicolaas Schaghen, Director of Bengal, against whom he brought in thirty witness statements.¹⁶⁹ Schaghen was held responsible for the illegal private trading of his wife, but he managed to convince the Council of Justice in Batavia that the evidence, mainly from European sailors and marines, was inherently flawed.¹⁷⁰ In Clement's case, most witness accounts came from local non-Christian merchants. According to the Instruction, such accounts were already predetermined to be of less value and had to be corroborated by statements from credible Christians or others who were deemed trustworthy.¹⁷¹ It remains a matter of debate how much these statements might have been biased, or later altered, in order to strengthen the case against Clement. To illustrate, Van Reede had received a lot of assistance with Clement's prosecution from the accountant Willem Witmond. According to Havart, Witmond energetically worked to turn everyone against Clement and his family, seeking to become *Opperhoofd* himself.¹⁷² Witmond's help in the case against Clement likely stems from the fact that in the past, according to Van Reede, Clement had mistreated Witmond and had chased him back to *patria*.¹⁷³

Concerning the alleged crimes of Clement, some background is required. It had been common practice for VOC *Opperhoofden*, both in Bengal and in Coromandel, to auction and sell all commodities to certain colleges [*collegien*] of local merchants, as well as to demand and receive from them all textiles the Company could acquire. Together they could pool their resources and share the profits or damages.¹⁷⁴ Van Reede accused Clement of misusing these colleges for his personal gain.¹⁷⁵ He also accused him of fixing prices,¹⁷⁶ setting up his own 'little Company' [*kleijne Compagnie*],¹⁷⁷ using false pretences to burn the accounts of Teganapatnam until 1680 and attempting but failing to burn those of Porto Novo shortly before Van Reede's arrival.¹⁷⁸

¹⁶⁷ NA, VOC, inv. nr. 1435, Van Reede to the *Heeren XVII*, 16 June 1687, f. 254v-255v; *ibid.*, 15 December 1687, f. 49v-51r, f. 77r-85v, 126r-127v; NA, VOC, inv. nr. 1449, Van Reede to the *Heeren XVII*, 1 December 1688, f. 87r-89v; NA, VOC, inv. nr. 1478, Secret letter Van Reede to Governor General and Council in Batavia, 10 April 1689, f. 10-28.

¹⁶⁸ NA, VOC, inv. nr. 1435, f. 449-645; NA, VOC, inv. nr. 1450, f. 825-867, 995-1022.

¹⁶⁹ McVay, "The Trial of Nicolaas Schaghen," 71.

¹⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, 80.

¹⁷¹ NA, Collectie Hudde, inv. nr. 38, Instruction, December 1684, f. 3r.

¹⁷² Havart, *Op- en Ondergang*, part 1, 69. While Witmond would not become an *Opperhoofd* in Coromandel, in 1694 he would go to Java to oversee the farming of indigo, in: Frederik de Haan, *Priangan: de Preanger-Regentschappen onder het Nederlandsch Bestuur tot 1811. Part 3* (Batavia: G. Kolff & Co., 1912), 390.

¹⁷³ NA, VOC, inv. nr. 1435, Van Reede to the *Heeren XVII*, 15 December 1687, 85r.

¹⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, f. 49v. Please see Chapter 4.1 for more information on the colleges.

¹⁷⁵ NA, VOC, inv. nr. 1478, Secret letter Van Reede to Governor General and Council in Batavia, 10 April 1689, f. 19.

¹⁷⁶ NA, VOC, inv. nr. 1435, Van Reede to the *Heeren XVII*, 15 December 1687, f. 78v.

¹⁷⁷ NA, VOC, inv. nr. 1449, Van Reede to the *Heeren XVII*, 1 December 1688, f. 89v-90r.

¹⁷⁸ NA, VOC, inv. nr. 1478, Secret letter Van Reede to Governor General and Council in Batavia, 10 April 1689, f. 20.

It needs to be noted that this was not the first time Clement had been in trouble. In 1683 the EIC had complained that they had outstanding bills with Clement, which he had denied. It was decided that it was probably an attempt of the English to damage Clement's reputation and have him removed from Porto Novo. Governor Jacob Jorisz. Pits took Clement's side and kept him on because he had generated high profits in 1682 and 1683.¹⁷⁹ It is likely that Van Reede used these old allegations to strengthen his argument that Clement was a criminal who had already gotten away with prosecution once. Whether or not Clement truly had dealings with the English remains debatable, but there is good reason to believe he had been involved in, or at least known about, deals with the French. François Martin, the French Commander in Pondicherry, recorded in his journal that they had procured pepper 'by underhand means through local merchants at Teganapatnam [*Devenapatnam*], Porto Novo and even Nagapattinam [*Negapatnam*]', against which Van Reede promptly acted after he 'came to know of these transactions'.¹⁸⁰ This is reflective of directive 9: counter efforts by foreign nations to debauch people.

Besides accusing Clement, Van Reede decried Jacob Jorisz. Pits for failing to investigate the matter further.¹⁸¹ He accused Pits of accepting considerable bribes from Clement, which made Pits complicit to these crimes.¹⁸² The alleged complicity of Pits, who was near Batavia at this time,¹⁸³ will likely have increased Van Reede's worries that Clement might have nothing to fear in Batavia and that 'his crimes would be laughed at'.¹⁸⁴ Therefore, Van Reede requested the *Heeren XVII* to send those he accused to *patria*, where he had stronger alliances, instead of sending them to Batavia, where his allegiances were less certain.¹⁸⁵ His worries were not unfounded. For example, Schaghen's case in Batavia was concluded only with a fine, after which he continued his career with the VOC.¹⁸⁶

Van Reede ordered Clement and his family to Batavia on 25 February 1689.¹⁸⁷ The efforts of Clement's friends and relations eventually convinced the *Heeren XVII* to request Batavia for a swift conclusion of his case and those of others.¹⁸⁸ Havart goes on to state that in the preceding month the *Heeren XVII* had decided to allow Clement and his family to repatriate to the Dutch Republic, and to refrain from further lengthy trials which were a strain to everyone.¹⁸⁹ What happened to Clement after his arrival in Batavia is unclear. According to a Dutch genealogy website, Nicolaas Clement

¹⁷⁹ Coolhaas, *Generale Missiven*, part 4, 31 December 1683, 634.

¹⁸⁰ François Martin, *India in the 17th Century (Social, Economic and Political): Memoirs of François Martin (1670-1694)*, Vol. II, part 1, ed. Lotika Varadarajan (New Delhi: Manohar, 1984), 1149.

¹⁸¹ NA, VOC, inv. nr. 1449, Van Reede to the *Heeren XVII*, 1 December 1688, f. 87v-88r.

¹⁸² *Ibid.*, f. 90v.

¹⁸³ See paragraph 2.4 for more information on Pits' whereabouts after his return to Batavia.

¹⁸⁴ NA, VOC, inv. nr. 1435, Van Reede to the *Heeren XVII*, 15 December 1687, f. 83r.

¹⁸⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁸⁶ McVay, "The Trial of Nicolaas Schaghen," 80.

¹⁸⁷ Havart, *Op- en Ondergang*, part 1, 74.

¹⁸⁸ NA, VOC, inv. nr. 322, *Heeren XVII* to Batavia, 17 December 1690, f. 612; Havart, *Op- en Ondergang*, part 1, 78.

¹⁸⁹ Havart, *Op- en Ondergang*, part 1, 79. However, this specific passage could not be found in the VOC archives.

and his wife had a daughter in Batavia in 1692, and he allegedly died there in 1701 when he was 54 years of age.¹⁹⁰

2.3 Lambert Hemsinck

Another name of interest concerns Lambert Hemsinck.¹⁹¹ He was the *Opperhoofd* of Sadras until 1686, when he had requested and received permission to sail to Batavia. According to Van Reede, Hemsinck's crimes were no lesser than those of Porto Novo and Teganapatnam.¹⁹² He too was part of a college,¹⁹³ and it was only after threats of violence that the local merchants who were involved handed over the accounts.¹⁹⁴

In a possible attempt at character assassination, Van Reede wrote of an unfortunate event from 1675/1676 which involved Hemsinck as well. One night the trade post was raided by a group of around 100 to 150 men, who had plundered Hemsinck's house, tearing apart everything they could find and taking with them the contents of the Company's coffers which were stored there.¹⁹⁵ It was believed the raid had been an act of revenge by Hemsinck's concubine whom he had abused. After she had run away from him, she found refuge with a local high ranking officer who commanded his own cavalry unit, garrisoned within the nearby castle of Senji, seat of the local ruler.¹⁹⁶ She must have convinced him to avenge her in this manner,¹⁹⁷ which is supported by the fact that they completely ignored the valuables in other homes and warehouses within the compound, as well as refrained from hurting anyone save the guardsman who had tried to stop them at the gate.¹⁹⁸ Hemsinck had been unsuccessful in fully repaying the damages, which left him with outstanding debt to the Company.¹⁹⁹

Moreover, this debt, when added to the illegal profits Hemsinck and his college had made, was viewed by Van Reede as another blemish on Jacob Jorisz. Pits' increasingly questionable record, whose inspection had seemingly overlooked these events, and had kept Hemsinck in the clear.²⁰⁰ Van Reede went on to speculate that Hemsinck's departure to Batavia, which was a short time before his arrival in Coromandel, was made possible after having bribed Pits with a sum of gold. In

¹⁹⁰ Genealogie Online, West-Europese Adel, Nicolaas Clement (1647-1701), accessed 1 May 2021, <<https://www.genealogieonline.nl/west-europese-adel/l41933.php>>.

¹⁹¹ Twelve witness statements in the case against Hemsinck are found in: NA, VOC, inv. nr. 1450, f. 1028-1059.

¹⁹² NA, VOC, inv. nr. 1449, Van Reede to the *Heeren XVII*, 1 December 1688, f. 91r.

¹⁹³ *Ibid.*, f. 91v.

¹⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, f. 93v.

¹⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, f. 91v.

¹⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, f. 92r.

¹⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, f. 92v.

¹⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, f. 92r.

¹⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, f. 92v-93r.

²⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, f. 94v.

addition, Van Reede suspected he had secretly traded with the English in Chennapatnam, although he could not prove it.²⁰¹

No further record is found on the matter. According to Havart, Hemsinck was still alive and well in 1691.²⁰² Hemsinck's son, whom he must have taken with him to Batavia, got married to one Joanna Wilhelmina Klenck. She was the daughter of Herman Klenck van Odessa, a distinguished veteran with a long track record within the VOC, who the *Heeren XVII* had appointed a seat in the Council of Justice in Batavia in 1682.²⁰³ Since the Council of Justice was where Van Reede's suspects ended up standing trial after they had been sent to Batavia, it could be assumed Van Reede's accusations did not follow Hemsinck there. If they had, it would be unlikely Klenck van Odessa would have permitted the marriage. It is possible that Van Reede might have used Hemsinck's case primarily as another example of Jacob Jorisz. Pits' ineptitude, seeking to further break down Pits' reputation, rather than to bring Hemsinck to justice.

2.4 Jacob Jorisz. Pits

Jacob Jorisz. Pits had come to the Coromandel Coast in 1680. He had already had a long career behind him, joining the VOC in 1643 and climbing the ranks over time. In 1666, he had been made Commissioner at Palembang, Djambi and Indragiri on Sumatra, and became *Opperhoofd* of Sumatra's Westcoast until 1677. In 1678, when Van Goens Sr. was Governor General, he was promoted to extraordinary member of the Council in Batavia, though he spent most of his time in Malacca where he was Governor from 1677 to 1680. In that year he was again appointed Commissioner and sent to inspect Bengal and Coromandel, and to take over the governorship of the latter.²⁰⁴ However, no records could be found in the VOC archives, of Pits ever having visited Bengal in the capacity of Commissioner. Havart spoke positively of the work Pits did in Coromandel and made special mention of the trade post in Masulipatnam. Pits' inspection there 'had been so thorough, that many still felt its after-effects'.²⁰⁵

Van Reede claimed he had uncovered more wrongdoings by Pits', adding to his inaction with regards to Clement's and Hemsinck's crimes, his own alleged complicities, and taking bribes. However, Van Reede did not target Pits directly right away. Rather, his accusations were first targeted at his Chinese servant Adam.²⁰⁶ In a missive to Batavia from June 1687, Van Reede states that after having arrived in Nagapattinam, he received complaints that this servant had stolen a

²⁰¹ Ibid., f. 94v-95r. Van Reede refers to Chennapatnam as '*Madrast*'.

²⁰² Havart, *Op- en Ondergang*, part 1, 95.

²⁰³ Wijnaendts van Resandt, *De Gezaghebbers*, 134.

²⁰⁴ Ibid., 103.

²⁰⁵ Havart, *Op- en Ondergang*, part 1, 127.

²⁰⁶ Around 17 statements regarding Adam are found in: NA, VOC, inv. nr. 1435, f. 449-487; NA, VOC, inv. nr. 1450, f. 984.

large amount of money by threatening his alleged victims with imprisonment and torture. Adam claimed that he had been following the orders of his master, Jacob Jorisz. Pits, because those people had committed crimes. Adam stated he had handed over the money to Pits, but he was unable to provide any substantial proof to back up his claims, nor could he confirm if Pits had ever questioned any of those people himself.²⁰⁷ Further investigations uncovered that Adam had a pillory in his house which he used to chain and torture his victims.²⁰⁸ There were also some missing funds in the books which had to be accounted for. Van Reede was worried by the case and believed Jacob Jorisz. Pits 'had been too trustful of his servant'. However, he gave Pits the benefit of the doubt for now, on account of 'his good reputation and the good work he had done as Commissioner.'²⁰⁹

Half a year later in December 1687, this time in a letter to the *Heeren XVII*, Van Reede is a lot less understanding, and stated that 'Jacob Jorisz. Pits had been too careless'.²¹⁰ Now that people in Coromandel knew that a mere servant had managed to deceive his Dutch master, and a Commissioner at that, 'the reputation of the Dutch nation [*Nederduijtsche natie*] was at stake.' Van Reede had therefore confiscated all of Adam's goods, while reinstating and compensating the victims of his crimes.²¹¹

By the end of 1688, Van Reede's understanding had disappeared completely. In contrary to his earlier letters, in which he maintained Pits had been unaware of the crimes of his servant, Van Reede now spoke of 'the money extorted from them by Jacob Jorisz. Pits'.²¹² Additionally, he complained that he had received no word from the High Government in Batavia yet on how to proceed with the case.²¹³ Later in the same letter, even though he suspected that it might cause a great stir in Batavia, Van Reede explicitly accused Pits for the first time, stating that Pits owed the Company a large sum of money and that some servants' practices and misused authority, including that of Pits, 'had laid the groundwork for what would have surely led to the ruin of the Company.'²¹⁴

It does not appear Pits ever got into trouble by Van Reede's accusations. After Pits' return to Batavia, he had been sent to the Court of Bantam, which was in close proximity to Batavia.²¹⁵ However, if it had been Van Reede's goal to remove Jacob Jorisz. Pits from the playing field, he got his wish when the latter died on 5 February 1689.²¹⁶

²⁰⁷ NA, VOC, inv. 1435, Van Reede to the Governor General and Council in Batavia, 16 June 1687, f. 255v-256r.

²⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, f. 259v.

²⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, f. 258v-259r.

²¹⁰ NA, VOC, inv. nr. 1435, Van Reede to the *Heeren XVII*, 15 December 1687, f. 75v.

²¹¹ *Ibid.*, f. 76r-76v.

²¹² NA, VOC, inv. nr. 1449, Van Reede to the *Heeren XVII*, 1 December 1688, f. 50r.

²¹³ *Ibid.*, f. 50v.

²¹⁴ *Ibid.*, f. 121v-122v.

²¹⁵ Wijnaendts van Resandt, *De Gezaghebbers*, 103.

²¹⁶ Coolhaas, *Generale Missiven*, part 5, 27 February 1686, 282.

2.5 Conclusion

This chapter has examined the four major cases against VOC servants found in the VOC archives. The case against Janszoon and Carstenszen had already commenced before Van Reede arrived in Coromandel. It would have been a simple task of taking over the lead of the investigation upon his arrival. Clement's case was the only one that involved someone who was present and in active service in Coromandel. The cases against Hemsinck and Pits are noteworthy, because even though both were no longer in Coromandel, Van Reede spent a lot of time and energy in building cases against them and trying to convince Batavia to act on them. It could therefore be argued Van Reede's targets were not limited to those physically present in Coromandel, which is significant because despite clear indications of complicity in Janszoon's and Theunissen's schemes, he chose not to target Willem Carel Hartsinck, who had also left Coromandel before Van Reede's arrival.

In addition, the process of how Van Reede grew increasingly critical of Pits over time, makes it possible to argue that Van Reede had not planned to accuse the former Commissioner cum Governor Jacob Jorisz. Pits at first, but as more incriminating suspicions and evidence piled up, it is likely Van Reede had changed his mind.

Even though the Instruction clearly states that suspects should be sent to Batavia for further trial,²¹⁷ Van Reede took his time in doing so. The alleged complicity of Pits might help to explain why Clement, Janszoon and Carstenszen had been kept imprisoned in Coromandel for as long as they did. If Pits and Clement had been in cahoots, Van Reede might have believed this to be true of Janszoon and Carstenszen as well. If they were sent to Batavia before building up a convincing case to prove their guilt, Pits might have been able to secure their release. It is quite likely that Batavia's silence on the cases of Hemsinck and Pits would have further increased these worries. This could further explain why Van Reede had appealed to the *Heeren XVII* to send the suspects directly to *patria* instead of Batavia, where his allegiances were less certain. It is important to note that while in Coromandel years went by before anyone was sent on to Batavia, Van Reede had already sent Schaghen from Bengal to Batavia mid-November 1686,²¹⁸ only seven months after his arrival in Bengal.²¹⁹ By the time Van Reede arrived in Coromandel, he had already dealt with prosecutions for over two years. He would have used these previous experiences to maximise the chances for a successful outcome of his actions in Coromandel.

To properly determine the motivations behind the cases Van Reede started against the above-mentioned VOC servants, as well as the reasons for not prosecuting other suspects, it is necessary to examine the networks of these servants. This will be done in the next chapter.

²¹⁷ NA, Collectie Hudde, inv. nr.38, Instruction, December 1684, f. 3v.

²¹⁸ Coolhaas, *Generale Missiven*, part 5, 28 February 1687, 87.

²¹⁹ NA, VOC, inv. nr. 1421, Van Reede (at Bengal) to the Governor General and Council in Batavia, 7 February 1686, f. 233v.

Chapter 3

The role of factionalism

The human assets discussed in the preceding chapter are a mix of former and present (as of 1687) senior VOC servants, often with long and established careers in Coromandel or elsewhere. This chapter aims to explore the role of factionalism in the accusations of Van Reede. The first paragraph aims to show how these people were connected to each other. Next, it will be examined if from these connections a pattern can be drawn that might explain why Van Reede targeted specific men, and if they can be linked to the Van Goens family. Then the role of the newly appointed *independent fiscaal* will be considered. The concluding paragraph will summarise the findings and explain how exactly factionalism might have played a role in Van Reede's actions.

3.1 The connections and networks of those whom Van Reede targeted

An important clue to these connections is in a small temple from the 6th century A.D., devoted to Shiva and located on a mountain close to the Dutch trade post in Sadras. The mountain and the temple were a popular destination for VOC servants and their families, who had marked their visits by chiselling their names and initials into the inner walls of the temple.²²⁰ Havart visited this temple on 3 January 1681, accompanied by ten '*Hollanders*' to watch the feeding of two sacred birds who had made their nest on the mountain.²²¹ Peters, who visited the temple in the early 1990s, was able to identify most of the *Hollanders* in that party, because they had left their names and the date engraved in the walls. Among them were: 1) Willem Carel Hartsinck; 2) Anna Andrea van Dale, Nicolaas Clement's sister-in-law; 3) her mother, Catharina Rombouts; 4) Michiel Janszoon; 5) another Anna without a last name, though it is likely that this was Anna van Nijendaal, Daniel Havard's 15 year-old fiancée, daughter of Joan van Nijendaal, but in the care of Willem Carel Hartsink, who was her guardian; and 6) Jan Corte, a good acquaintance of Havart.²²² The reason for their trip can be spied from Havart's words elsewhere in his book, for he writes that in the year 1679 there was a great dispute in Teganapatnam between Clement and another *Opperhoofd*. Around the beginning of 1681, Hartsink, Janszoon and some assistants visited that place to look into the matter.²²³ According to Peters, it can be safely assumed the party visited nearby Sadras along the way, spending the night at *Opperhoofd* Lambert Hemsinck's house.²²⁴ Considering the above, it could be argued that this group of people were part of the same clique.²²⁵

²²⁰ Peters, *In Steen Geschreven*, 24.

²²¹ Havart, *Op- en Ondergang*, part 1, 91.

²²² Peters, *In Steen Geschreven*, 26.

²²³ Havart, *Op- en Ondergang*, part 1, 83.

²²⁴ Peters, *In Steen Geschreven*, 26.

²²⁵ See Appendix D for a list of family and patronage networks in Coromandel.

To determine these connections better, a closer look at each individual respectively is warranted. Starting with Theunis Carstenszen, who was based in Masulipatnam at the time of the outing to the temple. His career was progressing well. Masulipatnam's *Opperhoofd* Hendrik van Outhoorn highly recommended Carstenszen to Pits, who then send him to Golkonda in October 1681, 'for reasons that mostly benefited Pits personally'.²²⁶ However, Havart stays silent on what those reasons may have been. Nonetheless, he considered Carstenszen too young for the important position in Golkonda at the time, and that it was mostly because of Joan van Nyendaal's good example and reputation which allowed him to learn and rise to become Golkonda's second.²²⁷

Michiel Janszoon had been in Coromandel since the early 1670s and had been serving as secretary for Hartsinck,²²⁸ and later as *fiscaal* for Pits. When Joan van Nyendaal died in 1682,²²⁹ Pits promoted Janszoon to *Opperhoofd* of Golkonda.²³⁰ Janszoon's patron had been Joannes Huysman,²³¹ who had married Anna Andrea van Dale, Clement's sister-in-law.²³²

Nicolaas Clement had been summoned from Teganapatnam to Pulicat in 1679 in the wake of the earlier-mentioned dispute. As such, it is likely Clement and Pits met each other in Pulicat, when the latter arrived in Coromandel in 1680. It can be assumed they had positive relations, because as mentioned earlier, Pits protected Clement from prosecution in 1683. In addition, Van Reede claimed that the earlier-mentioned Adam was a familiar and trusted servant not only of Pits, but of Clement as well,²³³ which could explain why Adam stayed behind in Coromandel when Pits left for Batavia.

Lambert Hemsinck had come to Coromandel with his parents as a child. In 1654 he started his career with the VOC as an assistant in Petapoli, near Masulipatnam. He would become *Opperhoofd* of Sadras in 1666 and remain there for the next twenty years. His alleged hosting of Havart's party when they visited the Shiva temple in 1681 and Havart's comment that he was 'friendly to everyone',²³⁴ combined with his long residence and service in Coromandel, must have meant he was a respected individual among the VOC servants in Coromandel.

Jacob Jorisz. Pits was the only 'new arrival' in Coromandel among Van Reede's targets. While Van Goens Sr. was Governor General in Batavia in 1680, according to Havart, it was Van Goens Sr.'s second-in-command Cornelis Speelman, his biggest rival in the Council of Batavia, who had ordered Pits to go to Coromandel.²³⁵ In addition, Sur claimed Jacob Jorisz. Pits was related to the Pit family

²²⁶ Havart, *Op- en Ondergang*, part 2, 182.

²²⁷ *Ibid.*

²²⁸ *Ibid.*, part 1, 83.

²²⁹ *Ibid.*, part 2, 175.

²³⁰ *Ibid.*, 184.

²³¹ *Ibid.*, part 2, 185.

²³² *Ibid.*, part 1, 176.

²³³ NA, VOC, inv. nr. 1449, Van Reede to the *Heeren XVII*, 1 December 1688, f. 90v.

²³⁴ Havart, *Op- en Ondergang*, part 1, 95.

²³⁵ *Ibid.*, 126.

and therefore linked to the Van Goens family.²³⁶ However, there must have been some confusion due to the similarity of the family names, Pits, and Pit, because they are, in fact, not related. On the contrary, Jacob Jorisz. Pits came from humbler origins. His father was a bricklayer from the Dutch port of Flushing. Pits was married to Mechteld Sloot (Sloet) and, interestingly, through her sister's marriage to Frederik Lambertsz. Bent, mentioned in Chapter 1 as one of the earlier candidates of the *Heeren XVII* for Commissioner General, Pits shared a familial connection to that family.²³⁷ All these things considered, it is unlikely Pits' ties to Van Goens Sr. were as strong as Sur implied. Pits' alleged shortcomings as Commissioner and the alleged bribes make for a stronger motivation. What may also have been a factor, was his dispute with the Governor of Ceylon, Laurens Pijl, in the early 1680s, which became so heated that Batavia forbade them both to continue it further.²³⁸ The dispute arose because Pits had accused Pijl of withholding shipments of areca nut at Galle, and letting the ships depart with their holds empty. This infuriated Pijl.²³⁹ He was a good friend of Van Reede, they had fought together during the siege of Tuticorin in the Madurai War in 1669.²⁴⁰ Governor Pijl had visited Van Reede in Nagapattinam in May 1687.²⁴¹ It could be possible that Pijl used this opportunity to convince his friend to settle an old score.

A special mention should be made of Willem Carel Hartsinck. According to Emmer and Gommans, Hartsinck was 'the pivot of this deeply rooted and integrated society of 'White Mughals' in Golkonda'.²⁴² Considering his track record, he was indeed a heavy-weight among the VOC servants in Coromandel as whole, a great number of whom went to see him depart when he and Havart set sail for Batavia in October 1685.²⁴³ In addition to being the guardian of Havart's wife, he was also Havart's patron.²⁴⁴ More importantly, however, Hartsinck had a familial link to Rijckloff van Goens Sr. Hartsinck's father was married to Sara de Solemne, sister to Van Goens Sr.'s second wife, Esther de Solemne.²⁴⁵ While not related by blood, Hartsinck was born in 1638 to a Japanese mother in Hirado,²⁴⁶ he had a good relationship with Van Goens Sr., who spoke highly of him and personally appointed him as President of north Coromandel in 1680.²⁴⁷

²³⁶ Sur, "Keeping Corruption at Bay," 256. The familial link is also stated in: Joost van der Baan et al, *De Navorscher: Een Middel Tot Gedachtenwisseling En Letterkundig Verkeer Tusschen Allen, Die iets Weten, iets Te Vragen Hebben of iets Kunnen Oplossen, Elfde Jaargang* (Amsterdam: Frederik Muller, 1861), 133. The Pit family connection to the Van Goenses will be discussed in paragraph 3.2.

²³⁷ Wijnaendts van Resandt, *De Gezaghebbers*, 103.

²³⁸ Coolhaas, *Generale Missiven*, part 4, 19 March 1683, 568.

²³⁹ NA, VOC, inv. nr. 1364, Governor Pijl of Ceylon to the *Heeren XVII*, 09 January 1682, f. 7r.

²⁴⁰ Heniger, *Van Reede and Hortus Malabaricus*, 28.

²⁴¹ Coolhaas, *Generale Missiven*, part 5, 23 December 1687, 138.

²⁴² Emmer and Gommans, *The Dutch Overseas Empire*, 318. 'White Mughal' refers to the term used by William Dalrymple in his book *White Mughals: Love and Betrayal in Eighteenth-Century India* (London: Flamingo, 2003).

²⁴³ Havart, *Op- en Ondergang*, part 1, 171.

²⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 172.

²⁴⁵ Molhuysen and Blok, *Nieuw Nederlandsch Biografisch Woordenboek*, part 8, 699.

²⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 703.

²⁴⁷ Havart, *Op- en Ondergang*, part 1, 170.

Because of Hartsinck's multiple direct links to the Van Goens family and his senior status among the VOC servants in Coromandel, it could be assumed that the individuals mentioned above, i.e., Van Reede's suspects, might belong to the Van Goens faction by extension. This would make it plausible, indeed, that Van Reede targeted and removed individuals linked to the Van Goens faction. However, this thesis argues against such a view. Firstly, those links are either implied or weak at best. Secondly, the only individuals with strong direct linkages to that family were Willem Carel Hartsinck and Laurens Pit Jr., both of whom were not targeted in any of Van Reede's investigations. More importantly, as the next paragraph will show, there is a pattern to these investigations which hints of other goals Van Reede will likely have had.

3.2 Replacing the Old Guard and the role Laurens Pit Jr.

This pattern can be observed when one combines the individuals Van Reede and Bacherus targeted and removed from office, with those *Opperhoofden* who had either left Coromandel or died: by 1688, almost no *Opperhoofden* from before 1686 remained.²⁴⁸ Hartsinck left Masulipatnam in 1685. Francois van der Bol left Nasarpur in 1685.²⁴⁹ Floris Bolwerk, *Opperhoofd* of Bimlipatam, died on 31 March 1686 before he could be removed.²⁵⁰ At Golconda, Janszoon and Carstenszen had been arrested in 1686. Hemsinck had left Sadras in 1686. Pits left Pulicat on 28 March 1687.²⁵¹ Adriaan Blokkeel, *Opperhoofd* of Draksharama, died in May 1687.²⁵² Joannes Huysman died in August 1687, he had been *Opperhoofd* of Masulipatnam only three months.²⁵³ His provisionally appointed successor, Jacob van Almonde, was deposed by Johannes Bacherus in 1688.²⁵⁴ Nicolaas Clement, of Teganapatnam, was arrested by Bacherus in June 1687.²⁵⁵ The trade post in Nagulvancha was closed in November 1687,²⁵⁶ its former *Opperhoofd* Nicolaas Dankwaard was significantly demoted by Bacherus.²⁵⁷ Willem van Dielen, *Opperhoofd* of Nagapattinam, died in 1688.²⁵⁸ The Old Guard of senior VOC servants in Coromandel had almost completely gone, except for three: Jan Corte, Bruyning Wildeland, and Laurens Pit Jr.²⁵⁹ Of most other VOC servants Van Reede wrote that 'none were found to be loyal' to the Company.²⁶⁰

²⁴⁸ See Appendix C for the list of *Opperhoofden* in Coromandel between 1685 and 1690.

²⁴⁹ Havart, *Op- en Ondergang*, part 3, 19.

²⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 81.

²⁵¹ NA, VOC, inv. nr. 8814, Governor Laurens Pit to the Governor General and Council in Batavia, 31 May 1687, f. 54r.

²⁵² Havart, *Op- en Ondergang*, part 3, 65.

²⁵³ *Ibid.*, part 2, 176.

²⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, part 1, 177.

²⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 61. The date Havart reports, 25 June 1686, is probably a typo. It should be 25 June 1687.

²⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, part 2, 46.

²⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, part 1, 180.

²⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 20.

²⁵⁹ See the end of paragraph 3.4 (page 45) for a concise list of the Old Guard and the new in Coromandel.

²⁶⁰ NA, VOC, inv. nr. 1435, Van Reede to the *Heeren XVII*, 15 December 1687, f. 85v.

Jan Corte had been housemates with Havart and secretary to Hartsinck,²⁶¹ who was his patron as well.²⁶² In 1684 he became Clement's second in Teganapatnam and *Opperhoofd* in Porto Novo.²⁶³ While Van Reede did interrogate Corte about inconsistencies in the accounts, Corte claimed ignorance and that he had been acting on the verbal orders of Pits and Clement.²⁶⁴ Corte would later testify against Clement,²⁶⁵ and Van Reede claimed Corte had prevented Clement from burning the Porto Novo accounts.²⁶⁶ It's plausible that this meant that Corte's allegiances had shifted to Van Reede, especially considering the rapid development of his career from 1687 onwards. Corte became *Opperhoofd* of Teganapatnam after Clement's arrest,²⁶⁷ and Van Reede had intended him to become *Opperhoofd* of Pulicat, as soon as the relocation of the capital to Nagapattinam had become a reality.²⁶⁸ Instead, by the time of Havart's publication, Corte had become the chief accountant of Coromandel.²⁶⁹

Bruyning Wildeland had come to Coromandel in 1668 and he was married to Helena Hemsinck, Lambert Hemsinck's sister. After a long stint in Pulicat as an accountant and secretary, he became second in Draksharama in 1679. Then, 'after many squabbles, efforts, and attempts', he became *Opperhoofd* in Palakollu in 1683.²⁷⁰ In 1686 he declined a position as second in Masulipatnam, because, allegedly in his own words: 'he would rather be rat's head than a lion's tail.'²⁷¹ Havart's sentiment toward Wildeland is ambiguous. On the one hand Havart praises his various abilities, on the other he says Wildeland had 'visible flaws, which we shall cover with the mantle of friendship, because we know that everyone is flawed, most of all those who imagine themselves to be flawless.'²⁷² This information is significant, because it hints at some sort of discord between Wildeland and his colleagues. That might explain his extended stay and his difficulties to get a promotion in the smaller VOC trade posts of Draksharama and Palakollu. It could therefore be argued that Wildeland was not included in the same clique as the others. However, things were looking up for him when Bacherus promoted him to *Opperhoofd* in Masulipatnam in October 1690.²⁷³

²⁶¹ Havart, *Op- en Ondergang*, part 1, 22-23.

²⁶² Peters, *In Steen Geschreven*, 175.

²⁶³ Havart, *Op- en Ondergang*, part 1, 23.

²⁶⁴ NA, VOC, inv. nr. 1450, Statement Jan Corte on Van Reede's accusations against him, 18 July 1688, f. 865v.

²⁶⁵ NA, VOC, inv. nr. 1477, Three copies of statements about the trade of Nicolaas Clement, 26 January 1689, f. 4r.

²⁶⁶ NA, VOC, inv. nr. 1478, Secret letter Van Reede to Governor General and Council in Batavia, 10 April 1689, f. 20.

²⁶⁷ Havart, *Op- en Ondergang*, part 1, 80.

²⁶⁸ NA, VOC, inv. nr. 1478, Van Reede's Instruction to the Governor and Council of Coromandel. 16 June 1689, f. 570r.

²⁶⁹ Havart, *Op- en Ondergang*, part 1, 22.

²⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, 178.

²⁷¹ *Ibid.*, 179.

²⁷² *Ibid.*, 178-179.

²⁷³ NA, VOC, inv. nr. 1486, Bacherus to Wildeland, 8 October 1690, f. 353r.

Laurens Pit Jr. is the odd man out, for his name is often conspicuously absent in Van Reede's letters to the *Heeren XVII* and Batavia, even though he was the highest-ranking VOC servant in Coromandel after Van Reede. Moreover, the Pit family name was well-established throughout Asia.²⁷⁴ Additionally, Pit Jr. was the only remaining VOC servant in Coromandel with strong ties to the Van Goens family, for his father, Laurens Pit Sr., had worked with Van Goens Sr. to plan an attack by sea against the Portuguese town of St. Thome in 1661.²⁷⁵ In 1683, Van Goens Jr. had recommended to the *Heeren XVII* that Pit Jr.'s brother, Marten Pit, should be appointed a seat in the Council in Batavia.²⁷⁶ There was also a familial link to the Hartsinck family. In 1675, Maria Pit, Laurens Pit Jr.'s alleged sister, was married to Willem Hartsinck, Willem Carel Hartsinck's half-brother, who had served with his uncle, Van Goens Sr.²⁷⁷ Therefore, it can be concluded that the Pit family very much belonged to the Old Guard of VOC servants, whose family members were linked to the Van Goens family in multiple ways. However, for Laurens Pit Jr. things might have been different. He had spent the better part of his life outside of Coromandel, from at least 1667 to 1685.²⁷⁸ This could have loosened his ties to the Old Guard.

Interestingly, Pit Jr. had another brother by the name of Johan Pit, who was provisional *Opperhoofd* of the factory at Kassimbazaar and second in command in Bengal.²⁷⁹ When Van Reede visited Bengal in 1686, he had accused Johan Pit of violating several Company rules including embezzlement, the conducting of illegal, private trade and of making friends with the English.²⁸⁰ This was the end for Johan Pit's career, for he was fired and sent back to *patria* (fatherland).²⁸¹

This stands in stark contrast to Van Reede's demeanour towards Laurens Pit Jr., whom he seemed to have purposefully kept clear of any charges whatsoever. When Van Reede arrived in Pulicat for the first time in 1688, he had the most prominent chiefs and accountants there thrown in jail because they initially did not want to hand over their accounts.²⁸² Later he had that entire college dissolved in order to 'destroy their evil practices and render them powerless'.²⁸³ It would be very remarkable if Laurens Pit Jr., as Governor of Coromandel, who kept his seat of power in Pulicat, did not have any ties to, nor have any dealings with, this particular college. Indeed, a few years later the newly appointed *independent fiscaal* George Ploos van Amstel would accuse Laurens Pit Jr. of

²⁷⁴ Ulbe Bosma and Remco Raben, *Being "Dutch" in the Indies. A History of Creolisation and Empire, 1500-1920* (Singapore: NUS Press, 2008), 61.

²⁷⁵ Molhuysen and Blok, *Nieuw Nederlandsch Biografisch Woordenboek*, part 1, 1416.

²⁷⁶ Sur, "Keeping Corruption at Bay," 256.

²⁷⁷ Molhuysen and Blok, *Nieuw Nederlandsch Biografisch Woordenboek*, part 8, 702-703.

²⁷⁸ Wijnaendts van Resandt, *De Gezaghebbers*, 103-104.

²⁷⁹ Molhuysen and Blok, *Nieuw Nederlandsch Biografisch Woordenboek*, part 1, 1416.

²⁸⁰ Sur, "Keeping Corruption at Bay," 259.

²⁸¹ Molhuysen and Blok, *Nieuw Nederlandsch Biografisch Woordenboek*, part 1, 1416.

²⁸² NA, VOC, inv. nr. 1449, Van Reede to the *Heeren XVII*, 1 December 1686, f. 95v.

²⁸³ *Ibid.*, f. 115r-115v.

dealing in private trading.²⁸⁴ Yet, Van Reede himself did not utter a single negative word about him. This leaves the question: why?

According to McVay, Laurens Pit Jr. had been one of Van Reede's closest friends. She claims Van Reede had envisioned him to become Governor of Bengal instead of Coromandel. The appointment of the earlier-mentioned Schaghen to that position had gotten in the way of Pit's promotion. To support her argument, McVay quotes a letter Van Reede ostensibly wrote to Batavia, in which he protests against Schaghen's appointment in favour of his 'brother' Laurens Pit Jr.²⁸⁵ Other examples in which Van Reede refers to Pit as his 'brother' were not found during this thesis. However, he did sign off his letters to Pit Jr. with 'your good friend' [*uE. Goeden vrund*].²⁸⁶ McVay concludes that although Pit Jr. did not actually replace Schaghen, with his departure Pit Jr. and Van Reede became the highest-ranking VOC servants in the Western Quarters.²⁸⁷ The findings in this thesis seem to support this. With the removal of the Old Guard from Coromandel, there was no one left to challenge the authority of Laurens Pit Jr., which significantly strengthened Pit Jr.'s position.

But if so, when did Van Reede and Laurens Pit Jr. become such good friends that, barring an extreme case of sibling rivalry, Laurens was apparently willing to accept the fact that Van Reede had ruined the career of his baby brother Johan? One possibility when Van Reede and Pit could have befriended each other, was on Ceylon between 1667 and 1669. At that time, Pit Jr. was a merchant and Chief of the fort of Negombo,²⁸⁸ while Van Reede was First Captain and Sergeant-Major of Ceylon, based in Colombo, around 40 kilometres to the south.²⁸⁹ Another possibility is in 1677, when Pit Jr. was bailiff [*landdrost*] of the Eastside of Batavia,²⁹⁰ Van Reede had his short stint as a Council member in the High Government of Batavia. An additional unifying factor could have been Pit Jr.'s marriage to Maria Hustaert, daughter of Jacob Hustaert, who had been Governor of Ceylon in Van Goens Sr.'s absence between 1663-1664.²⁹¹ After Hustaert's return to Batavia in 1664, he and Van Goens Sr. had a falling out, which became so heated that Batavia had to order Van Goens Sr. to further avoid using any offensive remarks towards Hustaert.²⁹² Therefore, Hustaert's daughter Maria would not likely have thought kindly of the Van Goens family, a sentiment of which she might have

²⁸⁴ Gaastra, "The Independent Fiscaals," 99. The *independent fiscaals* and George Ploos van Amstel's accusations of Laurens Pit Jr. will be discussed in greater detail in paragraph 3.3.

²⁸⁵ McVay, "The Trial of Nicolaas Schaghen," 76. However, the source McVay refers to for this quote (ARA, VOC 1422, page 1292: Letter from Hendrik Adriaen van Rheede to Batavia, December 28, 1686), contains a different document. Her claim could therefore not be verified.

²⁸⁶ NA, VOC, inv. nr. 1435, Van Reede at Nagapattinam to Laurens Pit Jr. and Council in Pulicat, 7 May 1687, f. 706v.

²⁸⁷ McVay, "The Trial of Nicolaas Schaghen," 80.

²⁸⁸ Wijnaendts van Resandt, *De Gezaghebbers*, 103.

²⁸⁹ Heniger, *Van Reede and Hortus Malabaricus*, 27.

²⁹⁰ *Ibid.*

²⁹¹ Wijnaendts van Resandt, *De Gezaghebbers*, 99.

²⁹² Jacobus Anne van der Chijs, *Dagh-Register gehouden int Casteel Batavia vant Passerende daer ter plaetse als over geheel Nederlands-India. Anno 1665* (Batavia & 's Gravenshage: Landsdrukkerij & Nijhoff, 1894), 7 April 1665, 75.

convinced her husband as well. This means that Laurens Pit Jr. and Van Reede could have found common ground in their dislike towards the Van Goens family, which might have further solidified their friendship. Considering the above, it could be concluded that Van Reede was the patron of Laurens Pit Jr.

3.3 The independent fiscaal

When the *Heeren XVII* appointed Van Reede as Commissioner General, they also sought to strengthen the position of the *fiscaals*. This eventually led to the institution of the *independent fiscaal* in 1687.²⁹³ The earlier *fiscaals* had previously not been very effective against combatting private trading and other abuses. The newly appointed *independent fiscaals* would no longer be subject to the local Governor and Council, but they were placed directly under the authority of the *Heeren XVII*, just like Van Reede had been. It was hoped and expected that this independency would make them more effective.²⁹⁴

Therefore, the *Heeren XVII* sent George Ploos van Amstel to Nagapattinam in 1689. Like most of the *independent fiscaals* selected by the *Heeren XVII*, he came from a well-connected patrician family, he had a degree in law, and he had been mayor of Amesfoort.²⁹⁵ It is important to stress that the institution of *independent fiscaals* was not presided over by Van Reede himself, nor did Van Reede appoint Ploos van Amstel personally. The arrival of an *independent fiscaal* would not be helpful towards strengthening Pit's position, yet Van Reede will have had no choice but to follow the *Heeren XVII*'s orders and announce Ploos van Amstel's appointment. Van Reede did so in his instructions to Laurens Pit Jr. on 16 June 1689, as well as the appointment of two subordinate *fiscaals* who were to be stationed in Masulipatnam and Pulicat.²⁹⁶ Another point of note is that in an appendix to the instructions for Pit Jr. written some months later, Van Reede admits that, initially, he was unaware that the position would be 'independent from the Government in India' and that they would instead be appointed with 'a singular instruction' by his 'Lords and Masters' [*Heeren en Meesters*].²⁹⁷ Van Reede then states that Pits Jr. and his Council should therefore 'not provisionally appoint' new *fiscaals*, but that 'the most senior *fiscaal* would take charge' until a suitable replacement was found.²⁹⁸ From the above it can therefore be argued that Van Reede had not planned on having Pit's Jr.'s authority undermined in this manner.

²⁹³ Gaastra, "The Independent Fiscaals," 92-93.

²⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, 93.

²⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, 96.

²⁹⁶ NA, VOC, inv. nr. 1477, Van Reede's Instruction to the Governor and Council of Coromandel, 16 June 1689, f. 624v.

²⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, Appendix for elucidation of the Instruction, 29 November 1689, f. 690r.

²⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, f. 693v.

Ploos van Amstel uncovered a lot of evidence on private trade conducted by Pit Jr. and other senior VOC servants, among whom were Pit Jr.'s brother-in-law Rijkloff de Bitter,²⁹⁹ and the aforementioned Jan Corte.³⁰⁰ But Ploos van Amstel indicated how challenging it was to break through the closed ranks of senior VOC servants and by the time the *fiscaal* died in 1692, the cases had not proceeded very far.³⁰¹ In the end, Pit Jr.'s position was robust enough to withstand Ploos van Amstel's accusations, and he continued his career in the VOC. He became an extraordinary member of the Council in Batavia in 1693 and would eventually take his seat there in 1699.³⁰²

3.4 Conclusion

This chapter explored the role of factionalism by showing how the VOC servants in Coromandel were connected to each other and to determine if these connections would link them to the Van Goens family. Such connections could explain why Van Reede targeted specific individuals, while keeping others in the clear. Based on the findings in this chapter, it could be concluded that the priority of Van Reede did not lie in targeting those linked to the Van Goens family specifically. Van Reede did not target Willem Carel Hartsinck and Laurens Pit Jr., whose families had strong direct links to the Van Goens family. Moreover, the linkages of Van Reede's suspects to the Van Goens family were only implicit or indirect at best and existed mostly because of their acquaintance with Hartsinck. In addition, Jan Corte's apparent shift of allegiance and subsequent growing career illustrates that it was possible for some to become favoured by Van Reede. Bruyning Wildeland's alleged discord with the rest of the Old Guard could have been reason for Van Reede to favour him too. On the other hand, the case of Jacob Jorisz. Pits, of whom it was unlikely that he belonged to the Van Goens faction, shows what happened once an individual fell out of Van Reede's good graces.

Moreover, this chapter has shown that while the Pit family might have been allied to the Van Goens family, Laurens Pit Jr. himself was not. Instead, he was likely to be Van Reede's protégé. Seeking to support and strengthen Pit Jr.'s position within the VOC, Van Reede's investigations enabled them to become the most powerful VOC servants in Coromandel, assisted by *Opperhoofden* that had been hand-picked by Van Reede. Ultimately this meant that Pit Jr.'s position was strong enough to withstand Ploos van Amstel's accusations against him and he continued to rise in the ranks of the VOC. Pit Jr. would occupy the position of Governor of Coromandel until 1698, making him one of the longest-sitting governors of Coromandel.³⁰³

²⁹⁹ NA, VOC, inv. nr. 1508, Ploos van Amstel to the Governor General and Council in Batavia, 8 October 1691, f. 260r.

³⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, f. 263v.

³⁰¹ Gaastra, "The Independent Fiscaals," 99.

³⁰² Wijnaendts van Resandt, *De Gezaghebbers*, 104.

³⁰³ See Appendix B for a list of Governors of Coromandel.

Thus, Van Reede's motivations lay primarily in maximising his authority and control over Coromandel, and less with removing corrupt individuals linked to the Van Goens family. With the departure and death of a sizable portion of senior VOC servants in the second half of the 1680s, as well as the arrest of most of those remaining, Van Reede had successfully replaced Coromandel's Old Guard with his own favourites and strengthened the position of Laurens Pit Jr., which by extension meant that the senior VOC leadership in Coromandel was now more in line with that of the *Heeren XVII* in *patria*.

The Old Guard and the new in Coromandel

Willem Carel Hartsinck (left)	Hendrik Adriaan van Reede
Lambert Hemsink (left)	Johannes Bacherus
Jacob Jorisz. Pits (left)	Laurens Pit Jr.
Francois van der Bol (left)	Bruyning Wildeland (promoted)
Michiel Janszoon (arrested)	Jan Corte (promoted)
Theunis Carstenszen (arrested)	Willem Witmont (promoted)
Nicolaas Clement (arrested)	
Jacob van Almonde (deposed)	George Ploos van Amstel
Nicolaas Dankwaard (demoted)	
Floris Bolwerk (died)	
Joannes Huysman (died)	
Adriaan Blokkeel (died)	
Willem van Dielen (died)	

Chapter 4

Controlling the population

This chapter aims to provide context to Van Reede's handling of the colleges [*collegien*], his decision to reduce the number of VOC servants and to move most of the non-VOC personnel from Coromandel to Batavia or elsewhere, while examining in what manner these decisions are reflective of the orders in the Instruction to Van Reede.

4.1 The colleges

In Chapter 2 and 3 it has been discussed how colleges were one of the main sources of private trade, especially in Teganapatnam, Porto Novo and Pulicat. These colleges resembled what Raychaudhuri has described as '*gezelschappen*' (companies), set up in the 1660s by Laurens Pit Jr.'s father, in which the chief suppliers were organised and bound by contract to supply the VOC with particular varieties of cloth.³⁰⁴ This method had been put into place to regulate the prices of commodities.

Van Reede claimed that over time the colleges had become 'a Rapsody of all kinds of people' [*een Rabsodije van alderhande mensen*] who only used their affiliation to the VOC to get tax exemptions from the local rulers and their governments.³⁰⁵ This led Van Reede to completely reorganise the colleges, to strengthen their loyalty to the Company and to make them less inclined to engage in private trade. Van Reede wanted to put 'all native servants per trade post under a single account', so that their wages would collectively suffer from damages and expenditures the Company might encounter in the future. He hoped this would incentivise them to increase profits for the VOC in the future.³⁰⁶ Van Reede also did not want the colleges to be managed by the *Opperhoofden* anymore, who had been using the colleges to demand bribes.³⁰⁷ Instead he placed them under the 'absolute authority' of the Governor.³⁰⁸ This can be seen as another example of Van Reede's aim to strengthen Pit Jr.'s position as much as possible. With regards to the directives in Van Reede's 1684 Instruction, the above-described reorganisation of the colleges seem to be directly reflective of directives 1) to employ only necessary VOC personnel; 2) to give only necessary gifts; 6) to keep costs low; 7) to keep selling prices high; and 9) to find new ways to prevent misbehaviour.

³⁰⁴ Raychaudhuri, *Jan Company in Coromandel*, 146.

³⁰⁵ NA, VOC, inv. nr. 1477, Van Reede's Instruction to the Governor and Council of Coromandel, 16 June 1689, f. 424v.

³⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, f. 611v.

³⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, f. 425r.

³⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, f. 435r.

4.2 Wives, widows and other people deemed unnecessary

One of Van Reede's better-known decisions, and reflective of directive 1, was sending all widows and spouses, barring those of the *Opperhoofden*, and all those people who were deemed 'surplus and unnecessary', to Batavia 'with the first available ships'.³⁰⁹

Havart stated that this order was very damaging to the affected VOC servants, because they were not allowed to sell their homes to the native population, nor could they sell them to those Dutch that remained.³¹⁰ However, this thesis has found that this prohibition only applied to those who had illegally acquired or built their homes 'against orders'.³¹¹ Raychaudhuri, using Havart's account in his own study on Coromandel, stated that the speed with which this measure was carried out was to blame for the failure to sell their houses.³¹² This could be based on what Havart might have meant when he wrote 'with the first available ships' [*met de eerste scheeps gelegtheyd*].³¹³ Quoting both Havart and Raychaudhuri, the element of speed returns in Peters' analysis of Van Reede's order.³¹⁴ However, while the first reference to the order stems from 1687,³¹⁵ the order is still to be carried out by 1689.³¹⁶ Considering this two year waiting period, it is unlikely Van Reede's orders would have come as a surprise.

Moreover, it is important to note that this was not the first time the VOC servants of Coromandel were confronted with restrictions and reductions in personnel. In 1678 the newly appointed Governor General Van Goens Sr. had ordered a number of men in Coromandel to be laid off, reduced in salary or reassigned, leading to some of them taking passage to Batavia.³¹⁷ Additionally, when Van Reede was still in Bengal in 1686, he had ordered all wives and unmarried women in Bengal to leave.³¹⁸ From there, Van Reede had sent orders ahead to Governor Jacob Jorisz. Pits in Pulicat which prohibited all VOC servants and those under the jurisdiction of the Company to buy, sell or transport any slaves for their own ends or someone else's.³¹⁹ The famine that ravished Coromandel at the time forced many people to sell themselves into slavery to survive. Batavia, which needed more slaves, sought to benefit from this by purchasing as many slaves as possible and transport them there.³²⁰ Therefore, this thesis argues that the VOC servants in Coromandel should at

³⁰⁹ Havart, *Op- en Ondergang*, part 1, 35.

³¹⁰ Ibid.

³¹¹ NA, VOC, inv. nr. 1477, Van Reede's Instruction to the Governor and Council of Coromandel, 16 June 1689, f. 630r.

³¹² Raychaudhuri, *Jan Company in Coromandel*, 207.

³¹³ Havart, *Op- en Ondergang*, part 1, 35.

³¹⁴ Peters, *In Steen Geschreven*, 47-48.

³¹⁵ NA, VOC, inv. nr. 1435, Van Reede to the *Heeren XVII*, 15 December 1687, f. 88r-89r.

³¹⁶ NA, VOC, inv. nr. 1477, Van Reede's Instruction to the Governor and Council of Coromandel, 16 June 1689, f. 615v-616r.

³¹⁷ *Records of Fort St. George. Diary and Consulation Book, 1678-1679. Vol 2* (Madras: Printed by the Superintendent, Government Press, 1911), 118.

³¹⁸ Nicolaus de Graaff, *Reysen van Nicolaus de Graaff, Volume 1* (Hoorn: Feyken Ryp, 1704), 189.

³¹⁹ NA, VOC, inv. nr. 1438, Notice against the buying and transporting of serfs on the Coromandel Coast, 23 January 1687, f. 1093v-1094r.

³²⁰ Coolhaas, *Generale Missiven*, part 5, 13 December 1686, 57.

least have been aware of some warning signals over the years, which ultimately culminated in Van Reede reducing the number of people associated with the VOC in Coromandel.

Van Reede is quite clear regarding his motivations for this reduction. Firstly, he believed that the VOC servants 'were inclined to live an easy and lazy life when burdened with wives, children and slaves', which was damaging the Company's trade.³²¹ Additionally, to protect them in times of war, the Company was forced to keep a higher number of militia and soldiers.³²² Moreover, should they need to seek shelter, Pulicat's fort Geldria would only be able to accommodate 25 percent of them. Then there was the issue with the costs of maintaining a full household with wives, children and slaves, Van Reede did not understand how the VOC servants were able to afford their upkeep with their small wages.³²³ Lastly, he stated that the primary function of the walls of fort Geldria was 'to protect the Company's trade', not just its people.³²⁴

But he did not stop there, like his rival Van Goens Sr., he reassigned and laid off many lower-ranking VOC servants residing in Coromandel. He was worried Pulicat was becoming overcrowded with 'visiting Batavian friends' [*overkomende vrunden van Batavia*], for whom there was not enough work, and therefore were a burden for the Company.³²⁵ In addition, Van Reede stated that they tended to fill up the scant positions that were available, so that servants hired by the *Heeren XVII* in *patria* (fatherland) were unable to get a position themselves after they arrived in India. This too, Van Reede argued, added to the Company's expenses, as the newcomers would need to be looked after even if they did not occupy any position.³²⁶

In addition, Van Reede tied the matter of employability of Dutch-born VOC servants sent from *patria* to the matter of VOC servants who were born in India. He saw the latter as second-rate people who lacked Dutch values and norms, especially those of mixed heritage who had 'native mothers' [*inlandsche moeders*]. He feared that soon these children would become 'the downfall of India', who harboured an 'innate envy and resentment' [*inwendige nijd en afgunst*] towards the Dutch nation and who would try to keep out the 'true Dutch capable lads of good stock' [*regte Nederduidsche [...] bequame luijden en van goeden huijsen*], sent from *patria* by the *Heeren XVII*.³²⁷

Local and mixed marriages tie into an additional measure Van Reede pushed forward, when he prohibited soldiers and sailors in Coromandel to marry.³²⁸ In addition to his arguments mentioned above, Van Reede stated that these marriages tied the soldiers and sailors to the land, and since

³²¹ NA, VOC, inv. nr. 1435, Van Reede to the *Heeren XVII*, 15 December 1687, f. 88r.

³²² *Ibid.*

³²³ *Ibid.*, f. 88v.

³²⁴ *Ibid.*, f. 88v-89r.

³²⁵ *Ibid.*, f. 104v-105r.

³²⁶ *Ibid.*, f. 105r.

³²⁷ *Ibid.*, f. 107v.

³²⁸ NA, VOC, inv. nr. 1449, Van Reede to the *Heeren XVII*, 1 December 1688, f. 128v.

VOC wages increased yearly, they became more expensive every year they extended their stay.³²⁹ He went on to argue that these marriages were mostly a result of the narcotic effects of ‘the areca nut and alcohol’ [*den arrack en stercken drank*], leading to ‘troublesome and shameful households which led the men to ruin, the wives to run away and burdened the Company to take care of widowed families.’³³⁰ He closed his argument by stating that while prohibiting marriage might be an unchristian thing to do, he believed that ‘whoremongering is less [of a sin] than adultery’ [*hoererijs [...] minder is, dan overspel*].³³¹ Much of Van Reede’s letter found its way into in Van Dam’s *Beschrijvinge*, who added to it that requests for marriage could be judged on a case-by-case basis.³³²

Van Reede’s Eurocentric and sexist views were not out of place within the prevailing discourse of that time. There was a general idea that the morals and behaviour of Dutch and Eurasian women in Asia usually left something to be desired and this was further exacerbated through the chronicles of European travellers to the East.³³³ Nicolaus De Graaff, for example, could not be clearer about his feelings regarding women in Asia when he summed up a list of pejorative terms to describe them.³³⁴ Throughout the history of the VOC the *Heeren XVII* attempted to regulate the flow of European women towards Asia.³³⁵ It is a possibility that this not only had to do with what is mentioned above, but also with the fact that ‘distinguished women’ [*voorname juffrouwe*] could engage in private trade themselves.³³⁶ They were ideally positioned for it, since the law stated that men were held responsible for any private trade that their wives engaged in.³³⁷ Making use of their husbands as a shield and a cover, some of them became very successful businesswomen with their own personnel.³³⁸

4.3 Conclusion

This chapter has provided context to the matter of colleges and to Van Reede’s decision to reduce the number of VOC servants, as well as moving most of the non-VOC personnel from Coromandel to Batavia or elsewhere. It has also examined in what manner these decisions are reflective of the orders in the Instruction to Van Reede.

³²⁹ Ibid., f. 126v-127r.

³³⁰ Ibid., f. 127r-127v.

³³¹ Ibid., f. 128r.

³³² Van Dam, *Beschrijvinge*, part 2.2, 118.

³³³ Charles Ralph Boxer, *The Dutch Seaborne Empire, 1600-1800* (London: Hutchinson, 1965), 226.

³³⁴ Marijke Barend-van Haften and Hetty Plekenpol, *Nicolaas de Graaff. Oost-Indise Spiegel (Hoorn, 1701)* (Leiden: Brill, 2010), 81-82. Some of the pejorative terms De Graaff used were ‘*Venus diertjes*’, ‘*schootbeesten*’, ‘*spinhuis hoeren*’, ‘*dronke straatvarkens en diefeggen*’.

³³⁵ Peters, *In Steen Geschreven*, 45.

³³⁶ Barend-van Haften, *Nicolaas de Graaff*, 89.

³³⁷ Jacobus Anne van der Chijs, *Nederlandsch-Indisch Plakaatboek, 1602-1811* (Batavia & 's Gravenhage: Landsdrukkerij & Nijhoff, 1885), 585.

³³⁸ Peters, *In Steen Geschreven*, 48.

While Van Reede's handling of the colleges in Coromandel seems reflective of the Instruction on the surface, putting them under the direct authority of Governor Laurens Pit Jr. can be viewed as another example to strengthen Pit Jr.'s position within the VOC.

In general, the VOC's attitude towards Eurasians was often condescending or openly contemptuous.³³⁹ Van Reede seemed to share such sentiments. However, it can be argued that Van Reede's larger aim was to increase the Company's control over its European and Eurasian servants. His orders to send the people to Batavia, combined with the prohibition for the soldiers and sailors to marry, must have completely changed the make-up of the VOC trade posts. By severely limiting their ability to put down roots, Van Reede attempted to break their ties to the land and to their families. Freed from those responsibilities, the remaining VOC servants would have less reason to engage in private trade to cover expenses. Additionally, there would be less Asian-born children in need of jobs in the future. In so doing, Van Reede could have sought to maximise the availability of positions in the VOC trade posts for Dutch born-and-bred servants, which would have removed an extra barrier for the *Heeren XVII* to appoint their own favourites to preferred positions, as well as prevent Coromandel from becoming overcrowded with Batavian friends.

In addition, sending the women to Batavia would remove another potential source of private trading. However, it is noteworthy to mention, that the removal of these women would significantly increase opportunities in private trading for those who were allowed to stay, such as the wives of the senior VOC servants. On the surface this might seem ironic, but with an increased ability to appoint people to specific posts in Coromandel, Van Reede and the *Heeren XVII* would also be in a better position to control which servants would be allowed to bring their families along which, by extension, increased opportunities for them to make a little extra on the side.

While these actions adhered to the directives in the Instruction, their implementation was challenging. As mentioned in the preceding paragraphs, in 1701 the restrictions to marry had already loosened when Van Dam stated that the permission for soldiers to marry was judged on a case-by-case basis. Throughout the history of the VOC different tactics and regulations would continue to show that the Company never really came up with a solid policy on such matters.³⁴⁰ With regards to combatting private trade, McVay stated that Van Reede's actions in Bengal showed that he was carefully balancing between serving the interests of the *Heeren XVII* and protecting private trade.³⁴¹ From the examinations in this thesis so far, this appears to be the case in Coromandel as well.

³³⁹ Boxer, *The Dutch Seaborne Empire*, 230-231.

³⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 210.

³⁴¹ McVay, "The Trial of Nicolaas Schaghen." 75.

Chapter 5

Fort De Vyf Sinnen and Nagapattinam as the new capital

This chapter intends to put the construction of fort De Vyf Sinnen (the five senses) and the relocation of the VOC's regional capital from Pulicat to Nagapattinam into the context of the 1684 Instruction, while also highlighting additional measures Van Reede took with regards to the material assets. It will argue that Van Reede's decision to move the capital is the result of a process involving multiple factors. Additionally, some historians argue that the fort was built primarily to facilitate Nagapattinam's new status as capital.³⁴² This thesis argues the opposite, namely, that the construction of the new fort was one of the factors which contributed to the decision to relocate the capital. This chapter will conclude by reviewing all this information to determine if these decisions can be placed within the context of the Instruction.

5.1 Planning the construction of fort De Vyf Sinnen

Fort De Vyf Sinnen is one of Van Reede's biggest legacies. Contemporaries such as Havart viewed the fort as an attempt by Van Reede to make an everlasting name for himself,³⁴³ while others alluded to ulterior hidden motives,³⁴⁴ or failed to see the necessity of it.³⁴⁵ The costs of its construction were so high that according to historians it was nicknamed 'the fort with the golden walls'.³⁴⁶ Indeed, on the surface, the construction of the fort seems to be in blatant contradiction to directive 3: to keep construction to a minimum. A short history of Nagapattinam's fortification plans in the past and placing Van Reede's plans within the context of his mission will provide more clarity on the matter.

Plans for improving the old Portuguese fort in Nagapattinam date back to 1665.³⁴⁷ In 1673, when Van Goens Sr. had placed the city under Ceylon's government, he dispatched two VOC servants to inspect the existing works and suggest improvements, because he saw the city as a weak point and in need of new fortifications.³⁴⁸ However, these plans were never carried out. It was only in 1680, when Nagapattinam and its old fort were severely damaged after a storm, that it was

³⁴² The view that the fortress was primarily constructed to facilitate Nagapattinam's new status as capital is alluded to by Veth, "Hendrik Adriaan van Reede," part 2, 143; Raychaudhuri, *Jan Company in Coromandel*, 73; Vink, *Encounters on the Opposite Coast*, 512; and it is argued by Heeres and Stapel, *Corpus Diplomaticum*, part 3, 451-452; Odegard, *The Company Fortress*, 121.

³⁴³ Havart, *Op- en Ondergang*, part 1, 15.

³⁴⁴ Valentijn, *Oud en Nieuw Oost Indiën*, Vol. 5, 6.

³⁴⁵ Martin, *Memoirs*, Vol. II, part 1, 1060.

³⁴⁶ Hulshof, *H.A. Van Reede Tot Drakestein*, 9; Winius and Vink, *The Merchant-Warrior Pacified*, 51; Peters, *In Steen Geschreven*, 67; Vink, *Encounters on the Opposite Coast*, 512; Odegard, *The Company Fortress*, 122. It should be noted that this thesis has not been able to locate the actual historical source of this nickname. Around the year 1900, two historians mentioned 'silver walls', also without referencing their source: Veth, "Hendrik Adriaan van Reede," part 2, 144; Kalff, "De Maecenas van Malabar," 315.

³⁴⁷ NA, VOC, inv. nr. 1382, Extract of Resolution by Governor Cornelis Speelman and Council at Nagapattinam, 2 and 3 May 1665, f. 641r.

³⁴⁸ Odegard, *The Company Fortress*, 1.

decided it should be properly rebuilt.³⁴⁹ However, these plans were delayed as well, due to erosion of the coastline.³⁵⁰ Erik Odegard claims that upon Van Reede's arrival in Nagapattinam in 1687, he 'forced through a new plan on a much more massive scale'.³⁵¹ However, this thesis has found that this plan was less 'forced through' than previously argued, and is the result of deliberations that started long before Van Reede arrived in that city.

Firstly, in their Instruction, the *Heeren XVII* wrote that Nagapattinam's reconstruction would be halted until his arrival, especially since Batavia had begun to consider downscaling the city 'to only a small affair'. Van Reede was instructed 'to give his view on the matter and take charge of the reconstruction.'³⁵² As such, Van Reede and Governor Jacob Jorisz. Pits wrote letters to each other in which the prospected fort was discussed in detail. When Van Reede was still in Bengal in July 1686, he wrote to Coromandel that the new fort should be able to withstand a siege from local powers as well as from Europeans.³⁵³ With that in mind, he envisioned the fort to become pentagonal-shaped.³⁵⁴ It is this pentagonal shape which associated De Vyf Sinnen with a similar fort recently built in Naarden in *patria* (fatherland), in which it is believed the Van Reede family had been involved.³⁵⁵ In addition, he wanted the fort to provide shelter for everyone, i.e., human assets, in times of need and have plenty of room to store Company goods, i.e., material assets.³⁵⁶ Van Reede expected Nagapattinam's revenues would be sufficient to cover construction of fort De Vyf Sinnen.³⁵⁷ Batavia informed the *Heeren XVII* of Van Reede's plan in their missive from December 1686.³⁵⁸ Van Reede would eventually report to the *Heeren XVII* that 'the first stone of the castle had been laid on 26 July 1687, with approval of the pentagonal design by the High Government' in Batavia.³⁵⁹ All in all, Van Reede's plans seem to have met with the approval of both Batavia and *patria*.

The above has shown that the construction of fort De Vyf Sinnen fell within the framework of the 1684 Instruction, and that Van Reede had already started planning its construction at least a year before arriving in Coromandel. What sets this fort further apart is that it was the first time any plan for a new VOC fort in Nagapattinam was executed.

³⁴⁹ NA, VOC, inv. nr. 1414, Concerning a new fortress at Nagapattinam, 25 February 1685, f. 411r.

³⁵⁰ Ibid., Pieter van Ommen in Nagapattinam to Governor Pits, 6 september 1684, f. 399r.

³⁵¹ Odegard, *The Company Fortress*, 121.

³⁵² NA, Collectie Hudde, inv. nr. 38, Instruction, December 1684, f. 6v.

³⁵³ NA, VOC, inv. nr. 1421, Van Reede to Governor Jacob Jorisz. Pits and Council, 29 July 1686, f. 404v.

³⁵⁴ Ibid., f. 406v. For more information on the design of the fort and its flaws, see Odegard, *The Company Fortress*, 118-128.

³⁵⁵ Odegard, *The Company Fortress*, 122-125.

³⁵⁶ NA, VOC, inv. nr. 1477, Van Reede's Instruction to the Governor and Council of Coromandel, 16 June 1689, f. 484r.

³⁵⁷ NA, VOC, inv. nr. 1435, Van Reede to the *Heeren XVII*, 15 December 1687, f. 93v.

³⁵⁸ Coolhaas, *Generale Missiven*, part 5, 13 December 1686, 58.

³⁵⁹ NA, VOC, inv. nr. 1435, Van Reede to the *Heeren XVII*, 15 December 1687, f. 47r.

5.2 Van Reede's arrival in Nagapattinam and his impression of the city

Van Reede had not planned to arrive in Nagapattinam as early as he did. He had set sail from Bengal on 26 February 1687 and sailed all the way down to the east coast of Ceylon.³⁶⁰ He had initially planned to inspect the VOC trade posts of Batticaloa, then work his way back up north to Trincomalee and Jaffna. Only then had he planned to sail up to Nagapattinam.³⁶¹ However, just as he had begun his inspection of Batticaloa, he received word from Nagapattinam that the garrison there had committed a 'most horrible treason', which prompted Van Reede to set sail for that city post-haste, arriving there on 27 April 1687.³⁶² The revolt had happened on 2 April 1687 and was over within two days, the most prominent mutineers had been swiftly executed.³⁶³ Therefore, Van Reede did not end the revolt himself.³⁶⁴ But he still worried that the revolt would inspire mutiny in 'the whole of India' and 'even on the ships'.³⁶⁵ Therefore, Van Reede requested Batavia to 'have the entire garrison replaced.'³⁶⁶

Since he had arrived ahead of schedule, he decided to remain in Nagapattinam for the time being and start his inspection 'in the South, where there were still people to trade with, where it was still peaceful, and which was located close to Ceylon in case of need.'³⁶⁷ Van Reede stated that Nagapattinam could serve as a 'backdoor' [*agterdeure*] for the Governor of Pulicat in case that city needed to be abandoned. It was feared that the Mughal forces, which were besieging Golkonda at the time, would move on to Pulicat if they broke through.³⁶⁸

Van Reede also started work on combatting the tampering with weights and measurements, as well as investigating and standardising the coins in use by the Company, as he had been ordered in directives 10 (to prevent tampering) and 11 (to investigate coin value). Van Reede discovered that tampering with the weights happened mostly within the holds of the ships, and therefore forbade to unload nor load any commodities that had been weighed or counted on board.³⁶⁹ Many wrongdoings were discovered concerning the coins as well.³⁷⁰ In response, Van Reede called the mint masters to order,³⁷¹ and reorganised the mint's production and distribution system.³⁷²

³⁶⁰ NA, VOC, inv. nr. 1435, Van Reede to the *Heeren XVII*, 15 December 1687, f. 41v.

³⁶¹ *Ibid.*, f. 100v.

³⁶² *Ibid.*, f. 41v-42r.

³⁶³ NA, VOC, inv. 8814, Governor Pit to the Governor General and Council in Batavia, 31 May 1687, f. 66r-67r.

³⁶⁴ The incorrect view that Van Reede put the revolt down himself is argued by: Havart, *Op- en Ondergang*, part 1, 34; Veth, "Hendrik Adriaan van Reede," part 2, 143; Peters, *In Steen Geschreven*, 267.

³⁶⁵ NA, VOC, inv. nr. 1435, Van Reede to the *Heeren XVII*, 15 December 1687, f. 42v.

³⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, f. 43v.

³⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, f. 45r.

³⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, f. 45v.

³⁶⁹ NA, VOC, inv. nr. 1449, Van Reede to the *Heeren XVII*, 12 December 1688, f. 85r-85v.

³⁷⁰ NA, VOC, inv. nr. 1477, Van Reede's Instruction to the Governor and Council of Coromandel, 16 June 1689, f. 505v-506r.

³⁷¹ NA, VOC, inv. nr. 1435, Notice concerning the mint in Nagapattinam, 24 July 1687, f. 668r-669r.

³⁷² A detailed description of the production and distribution system is found in Van Dam, *Beschrijvinge*, part 2.2, 111 and 122-123.

In August 1687 he wrote to Batavia that he wanted to give Nagapattinam more prestige and support by placing the VOC factories in the villages of Adirampatnam in the south and Tirumullaivaikal in the north under the city's jurisdiction. The first would be a good addition to strengthen the areca nut palm trade, while the second was a good region for grain and the weaving of textiles.³⁷³ He had also begun to look for ways to improve the stagnated textile production in Tanjavur, which he believed he could acquire there for a cheaper price than in Pulicat.³⁷⁴ For this to be successful, he secured the cooperation and approval of Shahaji, the ruler of Tanjavur, to whom these villages belonged. Van Reede used this opportunity to review all the old contracts with Tanjavur from the early 1600s onwards and have them renewed.³⁷⁵ These steps are reflective of directives 6) to keep costs low; 7) to keep selling prices high; and 13) to keep cordial relations with Indian nations, in the Instruction.

In addition, he argued against Batavia's plans to abandon the outer city of Nagapattinam and return it to the care of Tanjavur's landlord. He stated the inner city could be better defended if the Company remained in control of the outer city as well, especially after the new fort had been completed. Most importantly, Van Reede argued, who was to say that Tanjavur would not give another European nation permission to settle in the outer city?³⁷⁶ Van Reede would later argue to the *Heeren XVII* that contrary to the other trade posts, which were situated in lands belonging to a local ruler, Nagapattinam was the VOC's own property by right of conquest from the Portuguese,³⁷⁷ making it the Company's only foothold on the Coromandel Coast without any ownership disputes.³⁷⁸

Van Reede was very positive about Nagapattinam's strategic position. It was situated at an estuary, enabling ships to dock in the city itself. According to Van Reede 'its wealth and trade had made it grow into a great city and one of the primary trade posts in Coromandel, filled with big and beautiful churches and buildings.' Additionally, because of its proximity to Ceylon, Tanjavur's fertile plains could be made into a 'granary' [*koorn schure*] for Ceylon and Coromandel. Not to speak of the 'thousands of weavers and painters' working to clothe 'so many millions of people' and consuming 'many commodities brought from other districts'.³⁷⁹ Furthermore, its proximity to Porto Novo, Tenganapatnam, Sadras, but especially to Ceylon, made it an ideal hub for the distribution of the VOC's imports and exports. Therefore, Van Reede envisaged Nagapattinam to become a 'profitable

³⁷³ NA, VOC, inv. nr. 1435, Van Reede to the Governor General and Council in Batavia, 13 August 1687, f. 286r-286v.

³⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, f. 288v-289r.

³⁷⁵ Heeres and Stapel, *Corpus Diplomaticum*, part 3, 17 March 1688, 446; *ibid.*, 18 June 1688, 451.

³⁷⁶ NA, VOC, inv. nr. 1435, Van Reede to the Governor General and Council in Batavia, 13 August 1687, f. 290r-291r.

³⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, Van Reede to the *Heeren XVII*, 15 December 1687, f. 121v.

³⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, f. 48r.

³⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, f. 47v-48r.

location' and proposed to the *Heeren XVII* that the city would come to serve as the Company's chief establishment of south Coromandel.³⁸⁰

The above shows that at this point Van Reede had not yet decided to make Nagapattinam the capital of the whole of Coromandel, but it may be clear that he had grown very fond of the city and that he sought to increase its stature significantly. It is quite possible that these positive views of the city would have influenced Van Reede's first impressions of Pulicat, which are discussed in the next paragraph.

5.3 Van Reede's journey to Pulicat and his impression of fort Geldria and the city.

Van Reede would remain in Nagapattinam for almost one and a half years before he would move on north towards Pulicat. On his way up, he visited Porto Novo. Reflective of directive 3 in the Instruction, he ordered to have the VOC-lodge there to be repaired, blaming its poor conditions on Nicolaas Clement's poor management.³⁸¹ He then travelled to Teganapatnam, where he gave a detailed description of its production processes of indigo, the quality of which had left much to be desired. Van Reede sought to improve this to increase its value,³⁸² which is reflective of directive 6 and 7. Then he travelled onwards to Sadras, where, in contrast to the other places he visited, he judged the VOC trade post to be too heavily fortified and defended, which he viewed as a waste of money. In addition, the overly fortified trade post had made the VOC servants there, likely including Lambert Hemsinck, victims of hubris, presenting themselves to the locals as the 'General of India', using lots of gold and presenting the Company with unnecessarily high bills.³⁸³ Van Reede's reaction to this is reflective of directive 5 in the Instruction: to keep a frugal household.

Van Reede arrived in Pulicat on the last day of July 1688. From the onset, his impression of the city and its fort was notably negative. He stated that the fort, named Geldria, would be incapable of withstanding an attack, neither from Europeans nor from local powers.³⁸⁴ He found that the fort did not have its own water source, save for buckets that collected rainwater. In addition, the fort was over encumbered with soldiers and sailors and their families, as discussed previously in Chapter 4. Van Reede goes on to state that he 'could not believe how it had ever been conceived to design a colony on this tiny corner of land [*op dit kleijn hoekxken land*], which was so much against the interest of the Company'.³⁸⁵

³⁸⁰ Ibid., f. 94v.

³⁸¹ NA, VOC, inv. nr. 1449, Van Reede to the *Heeren XVII*, 12 December 1688, f. 53v-54r.

³⁸² Ibid., f. 57r-57v.

³⁸³ Ibid., f. 68r-68v.

³⁸⁴ Ibid., f. 125r.

³⁸⁵ Ibid., f. 127r-127v.

This stands in contrast to a few years earlier in 1686, when Governor Jorisz. Pits had seriously considered an offer by Golkonda to take full ownership of that city.³⁸⁶ Van Reede had advised against this, stating that its upkeep would be too costly. Additionally, he worried that a formal take-over of the city would enable the English to convince many native Company servants to switch allegiances.³⁸⁷ This argumentation reflects directive 9 of the Instruction: preventing European nations from pulling away servants. Golkonda's demise at the hands of the Mughal Empire on 2 October 1687,³⁸⁸ was the final nail in the coffin and Van Reede argued that 'now that the times have changed any thoughts of acquiring Pulicat should be completely abandoned.'³⁸⁹

Golkonda's fall meant that Pulicat and the trade posts in north Coromandel now fell under Mughal rule. Johannes Bacherus, who Van Reede had sent ahead to inspect the north on his behalf, was called upon to secure the old treaties and contracts with the Mughal Emperor Aurangzeb. For this reason, Van Reede promoted Bacherus to Commander to boost his prestige when negotiating with the Mughal Emperor. This was going to be an expensive embassy and the Company would have to use 'external means' to finance it.³⁹⁰ Fortunately, though it took the better part of two years, Bacherus' mission would be successful.³⁹¹ However, Van Reede worried that this alone would not prove enough to ensure Pulicat's position. The well-fare of the city was now depended on its Mughal governors, whose fair conduct towards the Company could not be taken for granted. Van Reede was not enamoured by the current one, who was already making it difficult for them to load and unload their ships and who wielded strict control over anyone outside the fort.³⁹²

By April 1689 Van Reede informed Batavia via a secret letter that he was seriously reconsidering fort Geldria's usefulness as VOC capital in Coromandel, and he wondered if it would not serve the Company better as a simple fortified trade post.³⁹³ A few months later, in his instructions to Laurens Pit Jr., he gave three main reasons why Pulicat was unfit as capital:

1. Seasonal winds caused many difficulties, which not only prevented many ships from docking at Pulicat during the busy season but made many of them avoid Pulicat all-together. This was further exacerbated by Pulicat's lack of a decent port, which not only slowed down the loading and unloading of ships, but also weighed on the city's ability to swiftly send orders and receive missives to the other trade posts in Coromandel, effectively nullifying the advantages of Pulicat's central location on the Coast of Coromandel.³⁹⁴

³⁸⁶ NA, VOC, inv. nr. 1421, Van Reede to Governor Jacob Jorisz. Pits and Council, 9 August 1686, f. 411v.

³⁸⁷ Ibid., 29 July 1686, f. 403v-404r.

³⁸⁸ Coolhaas, *Generale Missiven*, part 5, 27 December 1688, 233.

³⁸⁹ NA, VOC, inv. nr. 1478, Secret letter Van Reede to Governor General and Council in Batavia, 10 April 1689, f. 13.

³⁹⁰ NA, VOC, inv. nr. 1435, Van Reede to the *Heeren XVII*, 15 December 1687, f. 123v-124r.

³⁹¹ Heeres and Stapel, *Corpus Diplomaticum*, part 3, 24 October 1689, 516.

³⁹² NA, VOC, inv. nr. 1477, Van Reede's Instruction to the Governor and Council of Coromandel, 16 June 1689, f. 535v-536r.

³⁹³ NA, VOC, inv. nr. 1478, Secret letter Van Reede to Governor General and Council in Batavia, 10 April 1689, f. 13.

³⁹⁴ NA, VOC, inv. nr. 1477, Van Reede's Instruction to the Governor and Council of Coromandel. 16 June 1689, f. 566r-567v.

2. Fort Geldria could not be defended against canon fire. Its walls and bastions could easily be overrun by Indian and European armies in less than half a day. In addition, over time the Governors had allowed houses to be built on the ground between the walls and the moat, further reducing its effectiveness. Nor did it protect the Company's commodities, because most had been stocked in warehouses outside the fort, while space inside the fort was used to accommodate the VOC servants' families.³⁹⁵

3. While Pulicat's business was conducted right under the Governor's gaze, this had not prevented signs of 'fun' [*vertier*] to show up in the accounts there. Nor was its trade very diverse, for it was mostly limited to assorted high-quality textiles. Therefore, Pulicat was not necessarily more desirable than other places where 'one could find everything'.³⁹⁶

This paragraph has illustrated how Van Reede's opinion of Pulicat was veritably negative from the moment he arrived. Pulicat's position had become increasingly unstable now that it fell under Mughal rule. He was critical of the city's port and the trade that was being conducted. To top it off, he was thoroughly unimpressed by fort Geldria, which was too small and too weak, especially compared to the new fort being constructed in Nagapattinam. It is noteworthy that Van Reede chose to inform Batavia of Pulicat's unsuitability via a secret letter in April 1689, which indicates that he did not want that information widely available just yet. On the other hand, it appears he did not wait for Batavia's response on the matter, for he publicly announced the move to Nagapattinam only two months later in his instructions to Laurens Pit Jr.³⁹⁷ The next paragraph intends to illustrate how Pulicat's alleged shortcomings combined with the other factors that contributed to Van Reede's decision to make Nagapattinam the new capital.

5.4 Why Nagapattinam was made the new capital of Coromandel

As the above paragraphs have shown, Nagapattinam's fort and its new status as capital have been the subject of debate by many of Van Reede's contemporaries and historians alike, often referencing each other and relying on the same sources. However, studies that have attempted to rationalise the move from Van Reede's perspective, or within the context of Van Reede's mission, have been few and incomplete. This paragraph will summarise their findings with the intent to give a complete picture of Van Reede's motivations to move the capital.

The 19th century historian Pieter Johannes Veth is one of the first ones who attempted an explanation from Van Reede's perspective. He acknowledged Van Reede's predisposition towards Nagapattinam as opposed to Pulicat, highlighting Nagapattinam's advantages and potential

³⁹⁵ Ibid., f. 567v-568r.

³⁹⁶ Ibid., f. 568r-568v.

³⁹⁷ Ibid., f. 531r.

regarding its port, its river which could become an important trade route inland, and its geographical position compared to the Coromandel trade posts to the north, Ceylon to the south and Malabar to the west. As such, Nagapattinam could be regarded as the centre of all VOC assets in the Western Quarters, not unlike Batavia in the East.³⁹⁸ Interestingly, according to Van Dam, Van Goens Sr. had similar motivations for making Nagapattinam the capital years earlier, and Van Reede had allegedly agreed with him.³⁹⁹ In addition, Veth suggested that Van Reede was of a mind to direct the Company away from expansionistic ambitions and focus instead towards 'settling only in favourable locations in such ways that would hold local rulers and European enemies in awe.'⁴⁰⁰

This is in line with what Emmer and Gommans have defined as a 'changing reception of overseas cultures [which] was reflected in different generations of Dutch overseas administrators.'⁴⁰¹ Emmer and Gommans juxtapose the generation of Van Reede against the earlier expansionist generation of Jan Pieterszoon Coen (c. 1587-1629). Rijckloff van Goens Sr. can be viewed as one of the last members of this generation, seeing as he is responsible for the Company's expansion into Ceylon and the southern Indian subcontinent. Emmer and Gommans go on to state that Coen's generation, 'was a generation of doers', raised in the Eighty Years' War, and 'standing face to face with the 'other' on overseas battlefields whose drive inspired awe in the hearts of people far and wide.'⁴⁰² According to them, this controversial generation stood in stark contrast to Van Reede's more cosmopolitan and contemplative post-war generation which 'relied more on the beneficial effects of trade' rather than warfare and which had a greater awareness of the overseas world in which they lived.⁴⁰³ Indeed, in his plans for Nagapattinam, Van Reede wrote about the diversity of its prospected population, which included advocating freedom of religion and tax-exemption for non-Christian temples.⁴⁰⁴ It should be noted however, that such notions did not necessarily originate out of the goodness his heart. Ultimately, Van Reede would have sought to safeguard and improve the Company's reputation and its position as much as possible according to his own vision, just like his predecessors Coens and Van Goens Sr. had attempted to do.

Sinnappah Arasaratnam took another approach when he explained the move to Nagapattinam in geo-political terms, combining Nagapattinam's new capital status with the Company's aims to increase their power in and around the Pamban Channel, between the southern tip of the Indian subcontinent and Ceylon, and to establish these coastlines as their exclusive

³⁹⁸ Veth, "Hendrik Adriaan van Reede," part 2, 143.

³⁹⁹ Van Dam, *Beschrijvinge*, part 2.2, 109.

⁴⁰⁰ Veth, "Hendrik Adriaan van Reede," part 2, 143. Please note that Veth wasn't very forward in revealing his sources, therefore, apart from what this thesis has confirmed in paragraph 5.2 and 5.3, not all of his claims could be verified.

⁴⁰¹ Emmer and Gommans, *The Dutch Overseas Empire*, 121.

⁴⁰² *Ibid.*, 121-122.

⁴⁰³ *Ibid.*, 122.

⁴⁰⁴ NA, VOC, inv. nr. 1477, Van Reede's Instruction to the Governor and Council of Coromandel, 16 June 1689, f. 488v.

preserve. With powerbases already set up in coastal Ceylon and Malabar, the addition of a new supposedly impregnable stronghold in Nagapattinam would allow them to dominate and police the seas between Ceylon and the Indian subcontinent. Another factor to increase their power was the lucrative pearl and chank fishery along the Madurai Coast. Then there was the importance of the supply line to Ceylon in textiles, rice and other foodstuffs which originated in many of the Madurai ports. Lastly, there would also be less competition with other Europeans who had not yet established themselves as much in that vicinity.⁴⁰⁵ While most of these factors are not mentioned specifically by Van Reede in his letters, they are nonetheless factors which were very beneficial to the VOC's geo-political power balance in the area. Indeed, though still unfinished at the time, Nagapattinam's fortress already proved its worth in the summer of 1691, when a dispute arose between Tanjavur and the VOC regarding the payment of tributes. Tanjavur's forces besieged Nagapattinam and harassed the surrounding villages. Reinforcements quickly arrived from Jaffna and after seven sorties Tanjavur was forced to retreat and sued for peace.⁴⁰⁶ This, at least, can be seen as one instance where the location of the city and the strength of its fort functioned precisely as Van Reede had intended.

Emmer and Gommans have recently put forward several reasons in which they have justified moving the VOC capital. In addition to some of the reasons Arasaratnam put forward, they claim that 'the almost-permanent southern campaigns by successive Deccan sultanates, the Marathas and Mughals, together with the extremely volatile relations between the Nayaka regional courts, made the political situation in Southern India extremely fluid. For the VOC it meant that it was necessary time and again to have trade privileges reconfirmed by yet another new regime, based in yet another capital city.' According to them, this made the move of the capital quite understandable. In south Coromandel 'it was possible to enjoy the benefits of the lull in military activities', the 'fertile rice-growing region which made it less susceptible to famines', and they were less dependent on local rulers.⁴⁰⁷ While Van Reede did worry about what would happen in the event Pulicat would come under the control of an 'unreasonable Governor',⁴⁰⁸ this thesis found no specific mention of a quick succession of regimes during Van Reede's time in Coromandel. Batavia eventually reported that the local regents in Coromandel tended to change 'almost every week', causing the Company to lose track of which privileges were owed to them and by whom, but they reported this only in 1692,⁴⁰⁹ and again in 1694,⁴¹⁰ years after the move to Nagapattinam was completed.

⁴⁰⁵ Arasaratnam, *Merchants, Companies and Commerce*, 79-80.

⁴⁰⁶ Coolhaas, *Generale Missiven*, part 5, 31 January 1692, 478.

⁴⁰⁷ Emmer and Gommans, *The Dutch Overseas Empire*, 313.

⁴⁰⁸ NA, VOC, inv. nr. 1477, Van Reede's Instruction to the Governor and Council of Coromandel, 16 June 1689, f. 536r.

⁴⁰⁹ Coolhaas, *Generale Missiven*, part 5, 11 December 1692, 543-544.

⁴¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 30 November 1694, 710.

Other historians limited themselves to a single explanation, for example, Raychaudhuri cites Nagapattinam's potential as a 'most profitable centre of trade',⁴¹¹ while Vink and Winus state that Van Reede attempted 'to protect commercial interests and move away from areas disrupted by combat'.⁴¹² In a later study, Vink cites a different reason: Van Reede's decision 'was prompted by the consideration that Nagapattinam was under the direct jurisdiction of the Dutch unlike Pulicat, where the Company would be subject to the whims of the local indigenous officials.'⁴¹³

All these above-mentioned reasons are factors which either disqualified Pulicat or promoted Nagapattinam to varying degrees, and most of them will likely have played a role in Van Reede's decision-making process. However, this thesis has found that his primary rationale was Golkonda's defeat by the Mughal Empire, which had put Pulicat in Mughal territory. Van Reede did not trust the new Mughal leaders of the city and if they should ever decide to attack, fort Geldria would not be able to resist them.⁴¹⁴ In Nagapattinam, the Governor would be able 'to conduct all affairs of trade, police and service to the General Company in Coromandel with more decency, respect and security than in Pulicat, where one could tease and obstruct him in his duty, by demanding a tribute or bribe, which has happened frequently in Bengal and Surat.'⁴¹⁵ Indeed, with the exception of Cochin, three out of the four VOC regional capitals on the Indian subcontinent, namely, Pulicat in Coromandel, Surat on the northwest coast and Chinsurah in Bengal, were now inside Mughal territory and apparently this was very much to Van Reede's dissatisfaction.

His secondary rationale for moving the capital to Nagapattinam was his persuasion of the unsuitability of Pulicat for the role. The three reasons Van Reede listed, previously mentioned in paragraph 5.3: the unfavourable winds and port of Pulicat which effectively nullified the advantages of its central position; the weaknesses of fort Geldria; and the lack of diverse and properly supervised trade in Pulicat, are problems which he believed could be remedied by relocating the capital to Nagapattinam.⁴¹⁶

More than a year after the relocation had been announced, Governor Laurens Pit Jr. sailed from Pulicat to Nagapattinam on 28 July 1690 with a small fleet of ships carrying supplies, cash, a canon from fort Geldria and several families.⁴¹⁷ The journey afforded him extra fame, because he encountered a small fleet of French ships with which he did battle, and he was victorious.⁴¹⁸ Nagapattinam would officially become the new seat of the Governor on 16 September 1690.⁴¹⁹

⁴¹¹ Raychaudhuri, *Jan Company in Coromandel*, 73.

⁴¹² Winus and Vink, *The Merchant-Warrior Pacified*, 51.

⁴¹³ Vink, *Encounters on the Opposite Coast*, 512.

⁴¹⁴ NA, VOC, inv. nr. 1477, Van Reede's Instruction to the Governor and Council of Coromandel, 16 June 1689, f. 536r.

⁴¹⁵ *Ibid.*, f. 536v.

⁴¹⁶ *Ibid.*, f. 568v.

⁴¹⁷ NA, VOC, inv. nr. 1480, Ploos van Amstel to the *Heeren XVII*, 30 September 1690, f. 52v.

⁴¹⁸ Havart, *Op- en Ondergang*, part 1, 22.

⁴¹⁹ Coolhaas, *Generale Missiven*, part 5, 26 March 1691, 418.

5.5 Conclusion

The data discussed in the preceding paragraphs, are reviewed in this conclusion to determine if Van Reede's decisions to construct fort De Vyf Sinnen and relocate the capital of Coromandel, can be placed within the context of the 1684 Instruction.

As the previous paragraphs have shown, the idea to construct a fort in Nagapattinam was not a new one. However, it is noteworthy because it was the first plan to get executed in over twenty years. In a way, Van Reede was carrying out what Van Goens Sr. had long since desired: to erect a strong fort and transform Nagapattinam into a powerful base for the VOC.⁴²⁰ Van Reede's original plans to construct a fort fit well within the framework of the Instruction, considering he was specifically ordered to take charge of the project. In addition, paragraph 5.1 has shown that the strong pentagonal design precedes Van Reede's decision to move the capital. Therefore, this thesis argues against the claim by some historians that the fort was constructed because Van Reede wanted to relocate the capital of Coromandel. Instead, one of the reasons relocating the capital to Nagapattinam became more attractive was *because* a new strong fort was already under construction there.

Van Reede's early arrival in Nagapattinam gave him ample time to explore the potential of the city and increase and diversify its trade opportunities, while performing his other duties as Commissioner. Messages from the troubles in north Coromandel must have contributed to his growing fondness of the peaceful city of Nagapattinam. In Pulicat, on the other hand, his freedom of movement would have mostly been limited to the courtyard and outer walls of fort Geldria, for the Mughals controlled the rest of the city. There would have been less options for improving the fort and the port, for they would have to be coordinated closely with the Mughals.

Van Reede saw great potential in Nagapattinam's superior accessibility by sea, in comparison to Pulicat. Van Reede might have hoped as well that the navigability upriver into Tanjavur's heartlands could serve a similar function as the Hooghly river in Bengal with regards to collecting trade goods.⁴²¹ In short, according to Van Reede, relocating the capital to Nagapattinam would remedy the problems, disadvantages and the risks the VOC encountered in Pulicat. With no certainty of what other troubles the future might bring, moving the capital south appears to have been the safest and most stable course of action to take. This would have been in the spirit of the 1684 Instruction, which advocated 'a well-regulated trade and frugality' as its two main objectives,⁴²² a safe and stable capital would have contributed to such aims. The future would tell if Van Reede's expectations would be met. This is discussed in the next chapter.

⁴²⁰ NA, VOC, inv. nr. 1288, Van Goens Sr. to the Governor General and Council in Batavia, 28 October 1672, f. 365v-366r.

⁴²¹ Holden Furber, *Rival Empires of Trade in the Orient, 1600-1800* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1976), 13.

⁴²² NA, Collectie Hudde, inv. nr. 38, Instruction, December 1684, f. 4vv.

Chapter 6

Aftermath

Unfortunately, Van Reede's expectations, discussed in the preceding chapters, would not materialise exactly as he had hoped. In the next couple of years, the wars plaguing north Coromandel would spread further south.⁴²³ By 1692, most of the Company's laborers in Pulicat had defected to the English in Chennapatnam, despite Van Reede's efforts to prevent just that.⁴²⁴ Trade suffered and Nagapattinam's yearly revenues, which Van Reede had expected to exceed 6 to 7000 guilders, would fall short.⁴²⁵ In addition, the costs for the fort's construction would far surpass its prospected budget and the fort would require more defenders than Van Reede had estimated.⁴²⁶ By 1697 the costs would have risen to above one million guilders.⁴²⁷ It was also discovered that the fort had some serious design flaws.⁴²⁸ Lastly, Van Reede's aims towards reorganising the areca nut trade, the textile trade and other commodities did not meet expectations as well, though Batavia acknowledged that his intentions, at least, had been good.⁴²⁹

Van Reede seemed to have enjoyed the full support of the *Heeren XVII* when he was in Coromandel. However, the first cracks in their trust in him started to show around 1690 when they wrote to Van Reede that they regretted not having received any letters from him which kept them in the dark about his affairs.⁴³⁰ While they attribute the cause of the lack in letters to the delayed arrivals of the ships carrying them, the tone of the letter is decidedly less cheerful than their earlier correspondence. Van Reede died 15 December 1691, allegedly poisoned, while sailing from Cochin to Surat.⁴³¹ Because of his high stature, he was given a grand and expensive funeral and was entombed in an impressive mausoleum,⁴³² which still stands tall in Surat today.⁴³³

But public opinion of Van Reede would start to turn sour. Some of the VOC servants appointed by Van Reede and his Committee turned out to be very disappointing. Johannes Bacherus, who had remained in north Coromandel to continue his inspections,⁴³⁴ had already complained in 1690 about the VOC servants there,⁴³⁵ some of whom had even been appointed by himself.⁴³⁶ As the

⁴²³ Winius and Vink, *The Merchant-Warrior Pacified*, 51.

⁴²⁴ Coolhaas, *Generale Missiven*, part 5, 11 December 1692, 549. Chennapatnam is referred to as 'Madras' in the text.

⁴²⁵ *Ibid.*, 19 January 1697, 798.

⁴²⁶ *Ibid.*, 8 December 1693, 637.

⁴²⁷ *Ibid.*, 30 november 1697, 847.

⁴²⁸ Odegard, *The Company Fortress*, 125.

⁴²⁹ Coolhaas, *Generale Missiven*, part 5, 11 December 1692, 545-547.

⁴³⁰ NA, VOC, inv. nr. 322, *Heeren XVII* to Van Reede, 17 December 1690, f. 625.

⁴³¹ Veth, "Hendrik Adriaan van Reede," part 2, 155.

⁴³² Kees Zandvliet, *De 500 Rijksten van de Republiek* (Zutphen: Walburg Pers, 2018), 99.

⁴³³ Bauke van der Pol, *De VOC in India. Een Reis langs Nederlands Erfgoed in Gujarat, Malabar, Coromandel en Bengalen* (Zutphen: Walburg Pers, 2011), 98.

⁴³⁴ NA, VOC, inv. nr. 1477, Van Reede's Instruction to the Governor and Council of Coromandel, 16 June 1689, f. 682r.

⁴³⁵ Coolhaas, *Generale Missiven*, part 5, 14 March 1690, 366.

⁴³⁶ Peters, *In Steen Geschreven*, 42.

bills resulting from Van Reede's endeavours kept pouring in, and expected revenues failed to materialise, his decisions were gradually pulled more into question. To illustrate, Batavia decided against erecting stone walls for another fort in Ambon, in the Moluccas, because it was 'too expensive, as Nagapattinam, Ceylon and Cochin have proven'.⁴³⁷ On 9 December 1692, disappointed about the Committee's results, the *Heeren XVII* decided to abolish the Committee altogether.⁴³⁸ The new status of Nagapattinam as capital was criticised as well, most notably by Havart.⁴³⁹ In 1701, Nicolaus de Graaf wrote about Van Reede that 'no great gentlemen who already own great capital and wealth would expose themselves to a thousand dangers at sea solely to provide a service to others without looking after their own interests; the whole objective is rather to attain immeasurable wealth and power'.⁴⁴⁰ Finally, five years after Laurens Pit Jr.'s death in 1700,⁴⁴¹ the *Heeren XVII* would order an investigation into his conduct as well.⁴⁴²

However, recently historians have begun to look at the events mentioned above from other perspectives. Emmer and Gommans put forward that in 'view of the increasing lack of political stability in the region, a more interesting question may be why trade continued, rather than why it declined'.⁴⁴³ For in some respects, even though it is not often mentioned in the historiography, considering the state of chaos Coromandel was in at the time, the VOC could have done a lot worse. The fact that 'in spite of various increases in textile prices, investments and profits were maintained at a somewhat reduced level during the eighteenth century',⁴⁴⁴ illustrates how the VOC continued to weather through, despite its above-mentioned setbacks. Moreover, soon after the capital's relocation some major gains were achieved, when it further solidified its dominance over the Pamban channel from 1690 onwards,⁴⁴⁵ and even captured Pondicherry from the French in 1693.⁴⁴⁶

⁴³⁷ Coolhaas, *Generale Missiven*, part 5, 19 January 1697, 780.

⁴³⁸ Gerart Lauts, *Geschiedenis van de Nederlanders in Indie, Vol 2* (Groningen: W. van Boekeren, 1856), 186. This specific passage could not be found in the VOC archives and could, therefore, not be verified in this thesis.

⁴³⁹ Havart, *Op- en Ondergang*, part 1, 15.

⁴⁴⁰ Barend-van Haeften, *Nicolaas de Graaff*, 100.

⁴⁴¹ Van Dam, *Beschrijvinge*, part 2.2, 109.

⁴⁴² Coolhaas, *Generale Missiven*, part 6, 30 November 1705, 366.

⁴⁴³ Emmer and Gommans, *The Dutch Overseas Empire*, 314.

⁴⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 320.

⁴⁴⁵ Arasaratnam, *Merchants, Companies and Commerce*, 81-82.

⁴⁴⁶ Coolhaas, *Generale Missiven*, part 5, 8 December 1693, 636.

Conclusion

Four words, ‘*position Omtzigt, job elsewhere*’, were enough for a public outcry when it exposed backroom politics and powerplays within Dutch political society. However, apart from Omtzigt continuing his political career as an independent, all it has done is spice up an otherwise uneventful government formation while briefly making the hashtag #Ruttefunctieelders a ‘trending topic’.⁴⁴⁷ Put next to Van Reede’s time when political and factional power struggles could make or break someone’s entire career and even ruin lives, present-day politics in the Netherlands pales in comparison.

Van Reede’s inspections and actions against corruption in Coromandel can be regarded as a turning point in VOC history, for not only did his inspections sweep through the Coromandel trade posts completely reorganising its composition, but he also supervised the construction of fort De Vyf Sinnen (the five senses) and relocated the Coromandel capital from Pulicat to Nagapattinam. Because these were very costly endeavours, the question arose if any of his actions were perhaps more for his own benefit than for the VOC. So far, the historiography had not yet satisfactorily explained these questions within the context of his mission. Therefore, the main research question of this thesis was: can Van Reede’s actions and decisions, including but not limited to, moving the capital to Nagapattinam and building an expensive fortress, be justified within the framework of the original objectives of the Van Reede Committee? Within the scope of this research question, this thesis examined the local networks and familial links among the VOC servants as well, to discover who Van Reede targeted in his investigations, who he did not, and why. The data collected in the preceding chapters will now allow for a better-informed judgment on Van Reede’s integrity. In addition, this thesis can be perceived as a historiographical review intended to structure and analyse the various claims made to explain Van Reede’s actions in Coromandel.

Summary and conclusions

To properly understand the processes which preceded his mission in Coromandel and to put his decisions in the right context, the first chapter of this thesis explained the formation of the Committee of redress and the 1684 Instruction by placing them within the historical and regional contexts of the Dutch Republic and Coromandel. After the *Rampjaar* the *Heeren XVII* worked on three levels to increase the VOC’s reputation and financial situation: 1) they sought to improve the state of affairs in *patria* (fatherland); 2) they intended to align the composition of the High

⁴⁴⁷ In English: #Ruttejobelsewhere. Roos Ravensbergen. “Volgens Twitter moet niet Omtzigt, maar #Ruttefunctieelders” *Metro*, 27 March 2021. < <https://www.metronieuws.nl/in-het-nieuws/binnenland/2021/03/volgens-twitter-moet-niet-omtzig-maar-ruttefunctieelders/>>.

Government and Council in Batavia with that of *patria*; and 3) they formed a Committee to inspect the settlements and VOC trading posts in the rest of Asia.

Controlling these processes was challenging and, as this thesis has shown, it was not always successful. That is why the *Heeren XVII* sent Van Reede and his Committee on their way with an elaborate Instruction in which they had included thirteen directives for Van Reede to keep in mind during his inspections. These directives can roughly be divided in human assets and material assets. Consequently, Chapters 2, 3 and 4 of this thesis have focused on Van Reede's actions mostly concerning human assets, i.e.: Van Reede's investigations into VOC servants; his attempts to increase control over the population through prohibitions against marriage; and sending 'unnecessary persons', such as spouses and widows, away to Batavia. Chapter 5 focused more on the material assets and paid special attention to the processes behind the construction of fort De Vyf Sinnen and Van Reede's decision to relocate the Coromandel capital from Pulicat to Nagapattinam. Chapter 6 briefly discussed the aftermath of Van Reede's decisions.

This thesis has found that Van Reede had his doubts concerning Batavia's response to his investigations and whether they would take the allegations against the VOC servants he targeted seriously. It is likely that his earlier experiences in Bengal had made him more hesitant to send the suspects onwards to Batavia, which would explain why the suspects in Coromandel were held there for years. In addition, Van Reede's accusations of Lambert Hemsinck and Jacob Jorisz. Pits have shown that Van Reede did not limit himself to VOC servants who were physically present, but also included some of those who had left Coromandel before his arrival.

The research performed for this thesis on the role of factionalism in Coromandel allows one to argue that, at least in Coromandel, Van Reede's priority did not specifically lie in removing individuals linked to Van Goens Sr. Those with the strongest links to the faction of the Van Goens family, Willem Carel Hartsinck and Laurens Pit Jr., he had left alone, while the accused VOC servants only had implicit or indirect connections to the Van Goens family at best. For some VOC servants it had been possible to get into Van Reede's good graces. Bruyning Wildeland was likely an outsider, whose career leaped forward after the arrival of Van Reede. Others testified against suspects or actively helped in the investigations to advance their own career, like Willem Witmond and Jan Corte. Additionally, it was also possible to fall out of grace with the Commissioner, as was the case with Jacob Jorisz. Pits. In opposition to what has been argued by Sur, this thesis argues that Jacob Jorisz. Pits was not related to the Pit family, and that it is unlikely his ties to the Van Goens family were as strong as Sur implied. Moreover, this thesis has found evidence which makes it possible to argue that while the Pit family may have been linked to the Van Goenses, Laurens Pit Jr. was not an

ally of them. Instead, he was allied to Van Reede, who was likely his patron as well. Van Reede kept him in the clear despite strong indications that Pit Jr. was quite active in private trading himself.

Based on the findings in this thesis, it can be argued that with regard to the human assets, Van Reede's primary goals lay in maximising his authority and control over Coromandel in the following ways: 1) replacing Coromandel's Old Guard to strengthen the position of Governor Laurens Pit Jr. to such an extent that even the accusations against him by George Ploos van Amstel did little to bring him down; 2) breaking the VOC servants' ties to the land and their families by limiting possibilities to put down roots; 3) maximising the availability of VOC positions in Coromandel for Dutch born-and-bred servants, enabling Van Reede and the *Heeren XVII* to better control the flow of VOC servants to Coromandel.

Through an increased control over the human assets the VOC would also be better able to control its material assets, or so they would likely have hoped. The measures and decisions regarding these material assets discussed in this thesis, are shown to at least have been intended to function within the framework of the Instruction. Van Reede was explicitly instructed by the *Heeren XVII* to take charge of the reconstruction of Nagapattinam, a material asset, and to decide what should be done with the place in light of Batavia's considerations to reduce its status. The fort De Vyf Sinnen, as well as upgrading Nagapattinam's status to capital, can be viewed as a result of Van Reede carrying out those orders, which could therefore be argued to fall within the framework of the Instruction as well.

The decision of Van Reede to relocate the capital is argued to be the result of two consecutive decisions: 1) the decision to downgrade the status of Pulicat to a fortified trade post, which was followed by 2) the decision to upgrade Nagapattinam to become the VOC capital in Coromandel. In addition, even before visiting Pulicat, Van Reede had sent a proposal to the *Heeren XVII* to make Nagapattinam the main establishment for south Coromandel, putting it on par with Masulipatnam in north Coromandel. Therefore, it can be argued that Van Reede's decision-making process involved a combination of several factors that gradually built up to his ultimate decision, these factors are: 1) his early arrival in Nagapattinam; 2) the potential of fort De Vyf Sinnen, the construction of which predates Van Reede's decision to make Nagapattinam the new capital; 3) the amenities of Nagapattinam such as the potential of its port, its river and its geo-political position; and 4) the peaceful atmosphere of Nagapattinam, which will have contrasted with the troubles in Pulicat.

When Van Reede arrived in Pulicat, it had been under Mughal control for less than a year and they were still in the process of consolidating their power. It would have given Van Reede a good impression of the pros and cons of life within a small fort located in a city controlled by an

undependable foreign power, as opposed to life within an entire city administrated by the VOC itself, as was the case in Nagapattinam, where his freedom of movement would have been much greater than in Pulicat. Van Reede wrote down the following reasons disqualifying Pulicat as capital for Coromandel: 1) Golkonda's demise at the hands of the Mughal Empire had placed Pulicat within Mughal territory; 2) Pulicat itself was unsuitable to serve as capital. Van Reede listed three arguments to explain why: a) the advantages of its central position on the Coromandel Coast were negligible; b) fort Geldria was small and inadequate; and c) as a VOC asset, Pulicat was not necessarily more desirable than other places which had a greater variety of trade to offer.

However, as time progressed many of Van Reede's goals were not met. These disappointing results raise the question if perhaps a more viable alternative would have been Van Reede's earlier plan from 1687, to keep Pulicat on as capital while making Nagapattinam the main establishment of south Coromandel, to function as a 'back up' in case Pulicat became compromised. On the other hand, despite the setbacks, the VOC continued to weather through. The VOC's late seventeenth century successes around the Pamban Channel and Pondicherry's capture should be considered too.

So, what does all this evidence collected in this thesis say about Van Reede's integrity? Van Reede's investigations in Coromandel show that he was carefully balancing between serving the interests of the *Heeren XVII* and protecting private trade. In Coromandel, the case of Michiel Janszoon and Theunis Carstenszen was served to him on a platter and could easily be used by Van Reede to show the *Heeren XVII* that he was diligently carrying out his mission. In addition, the accusations against Jacob Jorisz. Pits are an interesting case that could be viewed as an attempt in character assassination, possibly designed strengthen his own image by pointing out the flaws in another, implying that he was better in his job than his predecessor. However, through his support of Laurens Pit Jr., whom he kept clear of any allegations, Van Reede ensured that private trade continued to exist. This behaviour is in line with what McVay concluded about Van Reede in Bengal.⁴⁴⁸

Yet, it is important to consider that it is entirely possible that, like Van Reede, the *Heeren XVII* were engaged in a delicate balancing act as well, by showing the public their diligence in fighting corruption through Van Reede and his Committee on the one hand, while looking after their own interests in the process. But that is a topic for a future study.

For now, perhaps Mark Rutte, Pieter Omtzigt, and his rivals in the CDA would do well to remember that even in the past, even with the power of the VOC behind them, the *Heeren XVII* had little to show for their efforts, except for an expensive bill. And in a world that is only just starting to recover from a global pandemic, more expensive bills are the last thing anyone is waiting for.

⁴⁴⁸ McVay, "The Trial of Nicolaas Schaghen," 75.

Appendix A
Transcript of the 1684 Instruction to Van Reede⁴⁴⁹

N 13 Instructie voor Henrick Van Rheede Heere van Mijdregt, gaende als Commissaris van Bengale, Cormandel, Ceylon enz. 1684

Instructie van de Heeren Bewinthebberen van de
Generale Nederlantse Geoctroyeerde Oostjnd. Compagnie
geCommitteert ter Vergaderingh van Zeventhiene
de gemelte Compagnie representeerende voor den Wel
Edel Gestrengen Heere Hendrick van Rhede heere van
Mijdregt sijnde van Ordre van Ridderschap en uijt die selve
ordre geCommitteert in de Ordinaris Gedeputeerden
van Ede Mogende Heeren Staten 's Lands van Utrecht gaende
als Commissaris representerende de Welgemelte Vergaderingh
nae Bengale, Cormandel, Ceijlon en verdere gewesten
hier ondergenomineert, om te dienen tot desselfs nae
rightingh.

Alsoo wij van veele jaeren aff hebben gesien en ondervonden, dat alomme in Indien en
voornamentlijk oock in de

1v

gewesten in't hooft deses genomineert en wel bijsonderlijk in Bengale veel en verscheijde fauten en
mesuses van tijt tot tijt sijn ingekropen en vervolgens mede veele maleversatien defraudatien en
andere fourberies sijn begaen (en gepleegt en alsnogh begaen) en gepleeght worden, soo in het
cargeren van waeren en Coopmansz., de welcke beijde voor't Vaderlant en voorIndien werden
ingekost, en daer onder mede van provisien en behoeften aen schepen op haer aenwesen aldaer
verstreckt wordende, als dat se de waren die daer aengebraght en gedebiteert worden tot lager
pysen de Compagnie in reeckening en op de boecken brengen, als die eijgentlijk sijn, verkost, men
verswijght nogh 't geene in andere saecken en gelegentheden daer omgaet, en Compagnie wort
ontrocken.

Voornamentlijk mede door het drijven van particulieren handel, het beslaen en belemmeren van
ruijmen van Compagnieschepen die haer soo duijr komen te staan en costelijk vallen, neffens meer
andere excessen, wandevoiren en uijtspoorigheden daeromme gaende en geCommitteert
wordende, met veele onnodige en onnutte onkosten, en sonder dat de remedien, die wij tot nogh
toe daertegens hebben gebruijckt off doen gebruijcken soo door Commissarisen

1vv

bij die van Regeringe tot Batavia op verscheijde tijden derwaerts afgesonden, als andersints tot nogh
toe van vereyschte operatie sijn geweest, maer dat men in tegendeel siet en ondervint, dat het
quaet nogh al meer en meer voortkruijpt en dieper wortelen schiet.

Alle 't welcke soo voortgaende en sonder dat daer tegens andere meest kragtige remedien werden
g'adhibeert en int werck gestelt, nootsaeckelijk de ruine en ondergangh van Compagnie soude
moeten tot haer trecken. 'Soo ist dat wij ampt en pligh halven gehouden sijnde alle bedenckelijke
middelen te excogiteeren en werck stellingh te maken, om voor soo veel in onse magt, en vermogen
is, dat voor te komen, te raden geworden sijn een aensienelijk en gequalificeert Heer van Kenisse en
ervarentheijt, op wiens probiteijt en integriteijt wij ons gerust kunnen stellen, derwaerts af te
senden, om in onse naeme, en als dese onse Vergaderingh representerende, een exact en

⁴⁴⁹ NA, Collectie Hudde, inv. nr.38, Instruction for Hendrik van Rheede Lord of Mijdregt, going as Commissioner of Bengal, Coromandel, Ceylon etc. 1684, December 1684, f. 1r-8vvv.

naeuwkeurigh ondersoek te doen, van alle 't geene op die Comptoiren en in voorsz. Landen, en gewesten passeert en omgaet, middelen tot weringe en uytroeiinghe van alle fouten maleversatien en defraudatien uijt te dencken en int werck te stellen, en ons sijne bevindinge en

1vvv

verrigtinge eerst en voor aff bij brieven en ingeschriften over te senden, en nader hant dat in persoon bij monde neffens overleveringh van sijn gehouden verbael te doen, waertoe onse gedagten op sijn Edelheijt gevallen sijnde die de Compagnie ongeveer vijff en twintigh jaeren met soo veel ijver, applicatie, en getrouwicheijt, en dat bij nae in alle functien van kleijne tot groote heeft bedient, en naederhant hier te lande in de voorverhaelde employen is gebruijckt nae dat ons versoek en gedane presentatie bij sijn Edelheijt met veele genereusheijt was ingewillight en aengenomen, en sijn bijgevolge aen den dienst van Compagnie 't eenemael hadt opgegeven, sal voor aff dienen geweten te worden dat wij 2 schepen hebben aengeleijt, 't eene de Purmer en 't andere Adrichem, afgeladen met goederen, provisien, en behoeften voor't Eijlant Ceijlon, neffens een considerable somme in contanten voor den handel in Bengale op de Cust van Cormandel en Madure, alles nader gespecificeert in de facture die sijn Edelheijt neffens desen ter handen wordt gestelt, welcke schepen tegenwoordigh ingereetheijt sijn gebragt, sijn onse gedagten wel geweest dat sijn Edelheijt sijn op de Purmer soude embarqueren

2r

en daermede in Compagnie van Adrichem seijlen nae de Cabo de Bonne Esperance. Maer alsoo 't selve seer kleyne en becrompen van Cajuijt is, hebben wij om sijn Edelheijt te beter accommodatie te doen hebben, tot desselfs transport, verstaen tot de Caep toe, genomen het schip Bantam, om daer gekomen sijnde op de Purmer over te gaen en daermede te seijlen nae Ceijlon, gelijk als Adrichem over de Caep mede nae Ceylon sal vertrecken om aldaer gekomen sijnde te lossen 't geene wij haer voordat Gouvernement hebben ingegeven neffens de soldaten en overige manschap, en weder inte nemen sodanige ladinge Camille, Areeck, siancos, en diergelijcke als daer beijde voor de cust en Bengale in voorraet sal wesen, waermede de Purmer soo haest doenelick sal seijlen nae Bengale, en Adrichem nae Cormandel.

Dan sal Sijn Edelheijt gelieven verdagt te wesen, dat wij tot verdeelinge van risico van F 300.000, die wij mette Purmer geresolveert hadden te senden genomen hebben F 100.000, de welcke met Bantam tot de Caep toe sullen overgaen, alwaer Sijn Edelheijt deselve in de Purmer sal moeten overnemen.

Soo haest sijn Edelheijt op Ceijlon en in Bengale mitsgaders de vordere gewesten hier nae

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uijtgedruckt sal wesen g'arriveert, sal Sijn Edelheijt sijn Commissie den volcke, en bediende aldaer doen voorlesen, om te weten hoedanigh en waervoor deselve sijn Edelheijt sullen hebben aan te sien, te erkennen, en te gehoorsaemen, mitsgaders voort daer op te treden tot het verrichten van't geene Sijn Edelheijt bij desen wort aenbevolen, en voor al, in Bengale aangekomen sijnde, met communicatie en advijs van den Directeur en den Raedt ordre te stellen, tot den incoop off aenbestedinge van't geene bij onsen opgestelden eijsch sijn Edelheijt neffens desen in handen gegeven, uijt Bengale wort gevordert, om dat metten eersten immers soo haer t doenlick gereet te doen wesen.

Sonder dat nochtans onse meijninge is, dat door de voorsz. communicatie met den Directeur en den Raed te houden, over de besorginge en bestellinge van onsen eijsch, Sijn Edelheijt soude werden benomen de faculteijt om geene waeren daer van affsonderlick te mogen inkopen off doen inkopen, ter contrarie wert Sijn Edelheijt daertoe bij desen gequalificeert en g'authoriseert, en dat

met allen in Bengale maer oocq op de Cust en elders, voor soo veel Sijn Edelheijt sal oordeelen tot recherche ende ondeckinge van saken en frauden nodigh te wesen.

2vv

In Bengale op de Cust van Cormandel en elders verschijnende bij Vorsten off heeren van hooge qualiteijt off genootsaect sijnde deselve te begroeten, sal Sijn Edelheijt om met des te meer aensien te komen sijn kunnen bedienen van die van Sijn Eds gevolgh sijn, soo oocq van bediende van Compagnie op die plaetsen en comptoiren, mitsgaders deselve na de wijze en 't gebruijck van 't Landt geschenken mogen doen, en sijn daer in reguleren naedat den handel van Compagnie in der selver Landen van min off meerder belangh off aengelegentheijt is.

In de plaetsen daer de Compagnie haere comptoiren heeft sal Sijn Edelheijt sijne intrede nemen in de hujsen en logementen van Compagnie en keure van verblijff plaetsen aldaar hebben doende de suypoosten voor soo veel nodigh sal wesen, daer uijt vertrecken, oocq sijn eijgen tafel tot koste van Compagnie houden alleenlijk met recommendatie van alle betamelijcke menagie.

In alle vergaderingen en beraetslagingen ter plaetsen van Sijn Edelheijt verblijft, sal Sijn Edelheijt kunnen en mogen present sijn, en in deselve in onse namen presideren, verstaende voor soo veel dat souden verkortinge van andere importanter saken sal kunnen geschieden, oock de tijt sal willen toelaeten, en sal voort om tot

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kenisse van saken te geraken, mitsgaders sijn op alles te informeren, soo oocq tot ontdeckinge van frauden en maleversatien, en alle andere onbehoorlijckheden sijn mogen bedienen van al sulcke personen in off buyten den dienst van Compagnie sijnde, als daer toe bequaem off dienstig sal oordeelen, oock aen deselve recompensen tot een matige somme mogen beloven, mitsgaders die penningen op Sijn Edeltheijt ordonnantie uijt Compagnie-cassa doen betalen, onder recommendatie nogtans van alle mogelijcke mesnagie, authoriserende Sijn Edelheijt wijders om aen dese en geene vande bediende toelegginge te mogen doen, dat de Compagnie niet sal nalatigh blijven haer in voorvallende gelegentheden verder ten goede gedagtigh te wesen.

Maer alsoo de intentie indesen, voornamentlijk is, niet so seer om gepasseerde saken verder te straffen, daer voor soo veel tot waarschouwinge en tot een exempel van het toekomende nodigh en dienstigh is, sal Sijn Edelheijt sijn egter over begaene frauden, maleversatien en andere vuijligheden exactelijk dienen te informeren, mitsgaders de informatie met te bescheyden daer toe dienende by de eerste gelegentheijt herwaerts oversenden, dogh ten opsigte van sodanige die in maleversatien, de fraudatien, soo

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oock in het drijven van particulieren handel en anders haer seer groffelijk hebben te buijten gegaan, sal Sijn Edelheijt deselve removeren, soo oocq mede alle soodanige de welcke door dese en geene defecten, mitsgaders debauches en andere ongeregeltheden, g'oordeelt sullen werden, tot den dienst van Compagnie te wesen onbequaem, mitsgaders de laeste dat is de onbequame, off herwaerts opsenden, off als soldaten in de militia gebruijcken en andere met de bescheijden tot haarlijk laste bekomen senden nae Batavia, om voor den Raet van Justitie aldaer te reghte gestelt en nae bevindinge en exigentie van saken gesententieert en gestraft te worden, verstaende bij aldien de informatie en bescheijden soo danigh sijn dat nae Syn Edelheijts oordeel bij den rechter daer op sententie gewesen en straffe gedecreteert sal kunnen worden, maar wanneer de voorz. informatie alleen soude bestaen ingetuijgenissen van Mooren en heijdenen, mitsgaders extracten uijt der selven boeken sonder dat die souden mogen sijn gecorroboereert door beedigde verclaringen van geloofwaardige Christenen off andere suffisante, en in regten aennemelijk bewijsen, soude onse

intentie daer heenen gaen, dat de sulcke met soodanige bescheijden als 't haeren lasten sullen wesen, gerecouvreert, alleen herwaerts

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sullen werden opgesonden buijten qualiteit en gagie.

Voort sal Sijn Edelheijt aen dese en geene den dienst van Compagnie dat requirerende impuniteit vermogen te beloven en vervolgens de luijden simpeljk herwaerts opsenden, off oock wel in haere functie laeten nae gelegentheijt en bevindinge van saken.

Omme reden voorsz. hebben wij niet kunnen goetvinden een regtbanck te doen opregten, maer liever gewilt dat de meest schuldige nae Batavia ten fine voorsz. opgesonden werden.

Oock sal Sijn Edelheijt redenen daertoe dienende vermogen dese en geene van bediende van Compagnie te verplaetsen, met verdere authorisatie om alle open vallende ampten bij provisie door de bequaemste en die van meeste probiteit sijn te suppleren daer van kennisse gevende aen die van regeringe tot Batavia, om bij deselve te werden g'aprobeert, off wel andere in haer te plaetsen gestelt off derwaerts gesonden, soo als dat sulle komen goet te vinden.

Soo sijn Edelheijt uijt bekome informatien claerlijk quam te bevinden aen eenige frauden en particuliere handel van belangh schuldigh en participanten

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te wesen persoonen buijten het resort en bereijck van dese commissie haer onthoudende, 't sijn van kleijne off grooten qualiteit, sal Sijn Edelheijt de bescheijden daer toe dienende herwaerts oversenden, om bij ons g'examineert en vervolgens gedisponeert te worden nae gelegentheijt van saecken.

't Comptoir in Pattena dat soo verre van de hant is gelegen, hebben wij neffens den Generael en Raden al voorlange seer int oogh gehadt wegen dese en geene vuijle handelingen, die voorgegeven worden daer om te gaan en gepleegt te worden, bijzonderlijk in het uijtsetten van gelden op leverantie van salpeter en groote agterstallen van dien, soo oocq wegen den amphioen en diergelijk indirecte wegen, 't welck dienvolgende een naeuwkeurige recherche sal requireren, dan dewijle dat om de verafgelegentheijt bij Sijn Edelheijt in persoon niet sal kunnen werden gedaen, sal het nodigh wesen, dat iemand van de ervarenste. daer men sigh int reguarde van fideliteit volkomentlijk op magh verlaeten, uijt die Sijn Edelheijt sijn g'adjungeert, off bij defect vandien andere van bequaemste ten fine voorsz. derwaerts gesonden wert.

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Soo oocq tot de visitatie van 't Comptoir tot Decca daer den Nabab sijn hoff hout, en den handel van Compagnie van soo heel grooten belang niet en is, en dat tot vermijdinghe van groote onkosten, die daer aen vast soude wesen, ingevallene Sijn Edelheijt sulcx in persoon quam te doen. Wij sijn dickmaels verwondert dat in dat wijt uytgestreckt en volckrijcke Landt soo weynigh waeren van die wij gewoon sijn daer aan te brengen, en daer onder mede onse specerijen incomparatie van Custe van Cormandel en Souratta verkost en gebeneficeert worden, en 't welck de winsten soo geringh doet wesen, en wenschen dienvolgende daer omtrent wel wat nader te mogen werden geesclairiiseert, dat wij daer neffens soo veel andere natien moeten traffiqueren, is waer, maer dat heeft op de Cust en in Souratta medeplaets. Bij aldien het soo soude wesen dat men de waeren die wij daer aenbrengen en beneficeren de Compagnie tot veel minder prijs goet doet, als die eijgentelijk verkost worden, soude het wel kunnen sijn, dat om de kleijne winsten 't sende van deselve derwaerts wort naegelaten, maer dat soude een diefstal wesen, die sijn straffe grootelijcx soude meriteren.

De sijde die tot Cassimabasar valt bestaet in diverse sortementen, wat wij daerover hebben geschreven. mitsgaders den Generael en Raden derwaerts g'ordonneert, sal Sijn Edelheijt

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cunnen sien uijt de bijgevoegde extracten uijt onse Generale brieven, soo oock mede by de memorie die de gemelte Generael en Raden aen den Commissaris Bauckes op sijn vertreck nae Bengale in qualite voorsz. ter handen gestelt hebben, gedateert den 17 Junij 1681 copielijk hier bij gevoeght, waer in sijn Edelheijt buijten dat verscheijde saken en punten van consideratie sal vinden daer van sigh in dese commissie sal kunnen bedienen, onder anderen mede klagten over den inkoop der sijde stoffen, en dat het daermede soo niet ontrouwelijk, ten minsten onagtsaem moet toegaen, dat deselve met alleen doorgaens sijn doff en dooff van couleur, maer oock seer slegt in vergelijkinge van die, de welcke particulieren daer weten te bekomen, aen die bij den oppercoopman Lense syn ingekost en herwaerts overgebracht, blijkt mede klaerlijk datter vrij beter goet te krijgen is, als men ons toesendt, sulcx moet de wagen daerin al mede geensints regt gaen, dat mede een naeuwkeurigh ondersoeck veryscht.

En off het moght wesen dat het geene bij den voorn. Lense in syne commissie is verricht, sijn Edelheijt eenigsints te staede soude mogen komen, sal Sijn Edelheijt onder de papieren, die hem ter hande werden gestelt, mede vinden desselfs journael en overgelevert rapport, neffens de boecken

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die hij van den handel heeft gehouden, van gelijcken het journael en het schriftelijk rapport van Schipper Willem Hagendoorn daerin mede al 't een en 't ander staet, dat sijn Edelheijt hem tot opmerckinge sal kunnen laeten strecken. En alsoo wij geresolveert sijn de voorsz. negotie boecken en journael van voorn. Lense mede in copie nae Batavia te senden om inde Generale boecken ingetrocken te worden, het welck vermits de opereusheijt van alle het geene te copieren en te schrijven valt voor tegenwoordigh niet heeft kunnen geschieden, sal UEdt. dienen te versorgen, dat sulx door dese off geene van scribenten bij UEdt. sijnde op de reyse magh werden gedaen, om aen Caep gekomen sijnde, 't selve over twee boodems nae Batavia te laeten voortgaen.

Wij sullen Sijn Edelheijt geensints bepalen in den tijt die tot de voorsz. visite in Bengale sal hebben te emploieren, maer sulcx aen Sijn Edelheijt eygen overlegh en goetvinden laten gedesereert, om daer in te doen nae bevindinge van saken, sijnde onse meijninge, dat alles op het naeuwkeurighste en met de meeste exactitude, evenwel met alle mogelijcke tijt Sparingen sal moeten geschieden, om van alles grondige kennisse te mogen erlangen en omtrent de directe van saken aldaer eenmael gerust te werden gestelt.

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Sijn Edelheijt is bewust dat een wel gereguleerde negotie en mesnagie twee hooftpunten sijn, daer het in Bengale, Cormandel, en de verdere negotie Comptoiren ten principale op aencomt, die men sigh met allen ernst moet laeten ter herten gaen om nogh door d'Europische natien oocq door de Indische die beijde hoe langer hoe stercker daer in't vaerwaeter komen, niet 't eenemael verkloecht te werden, 't welck alsoo door den Generael en Raden van tijt tot tijt soo serieuselijk is en wort gerecommandeert, sal exactelijk dienen ondersocht te worden off al wel gehoorsaemt en naegekomen wert.

Wanneer Sijn Edelheijt sijn Commissie in Bengale sal hebben verricht is onse meijninge dat sigh ten fine voorsz. sal vervoegen nae de Cust van Cormandel

In den Jaere 1681 is tot visitatie van Comptoiren op die Cust, en om met eenen het Gouvernement te bekleden, en waer te nemen van Malacca daer aangekomen den Raet Extraordinaris Jacob Jorisz. Pits met een pertinente Instructie bij den Generael en Raden tot desselfs naerichtinge opgesteld die wij dienstigh geoordeelt hebben Sijn Edelheijt neffens deser mede copielijcken ter handen te stellen, alsoo daerin verscheijde pointen en saken van opmerckinge vermeld staen, daer van Sijn Edelheijt sijn sal kunnen bedienen mitsgaders letten off en hoeddanigh die sijn opgevolgt gehoorsaemt en naegekomen

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en waer toe Sijn Edelheijt mede grootelijcx sal dienen, mitsgaders veel ligt geven, het rapport dat den selven Raet Extraordinaris van Sijn verrigtinge ingeschrifte heeft overgesonden mede Copielijcken hier bijgevoeght, gelijk als mede sullen doen de consideratien die den gewesen Gouverneur Pavilioen voor desen op't papier gebragt en den Generael en Raden heeft overgelevert, de Directie van Saecken aldaer betreffende,, en die bij desselve voor goet en dienstigh sijn gekeurt mede op t register te vinden.

Soo als ons dat te vooren komt, souden onse bediende op de Cust haere middelen en groote capitaelen tot een hoogen interest uytsetten onder de Inlantse voorkoopers, off leveranciers, en dat se die dan oocq in het priseren der lijwaeten voor deselve interest wat tegemoet komen en gunstigh sijn, wat daer van sijn sal insgelijcx op het exacste moeten werden geinquireert.

Dat isser van dat de lijwaten die particulieren weten over te brengen doorgaens veel minder komen te kosten en merckelijk beter sijn, als die van Compagnie immers soo als haer die in reecqening wort gebragt.

In Bengale op de Cust van Cormandel en elders sal bij Sijn Edelheijt ten principalen dienen geleth en in agtinge genomen te worden.

1. Dat geen meer als het nodige getal soo van Europische als Inlantse Dienaren wert gebruijckt en aengehouden.

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2. Dat geen andere als nodige Dienstige en onvermijdelijcke Schenckagie werden gegeven.
3. Dat geen andere als nodige Timmeragien bij der hant genomen werden.
4. Dat aen de passerende off aenkomende Schepen geen andere off verdere verstreckingen werden gedaen als die nootsaeckelijk sijn.
5. Dat allomme suijnigh en geschickt huijs wort gehouden, en een ieder niet meer als sijn behoorlijk randsoen toevoegt, mitsgaders dat de Gouverneurs, Directeurs en eenige mindere bediende, niet meer mogen genieten als het geene deselve bij 't reglement, bij den Generael ende Raden dienaenagaende gemaect, wort toevoeght.
6. Dat de Coopmansz. die aldaer worden ingekost met geen andere als onvermijdelijcke onkosten werden beswaert en voor al dat deselve de Compagnie niet hooger in reecqening werden gebragt als se die eygentlijk komen te kosten directelijk off indirectelijk.
7. Soo oocq gelijk hiervooren mede is geseijt dat de waeren die de Compagnie daer aenbrengt ten hoogsten prijse doenlijk mogen werden verkost, en aen deselve tot die prijs effective goet gedaen, en sonder mede te gedoogen dat om de waeren bijzonderlijk

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die daer worden getroequert off de leveranciers inbetalinge gegeven, haer hooger werden aengereeckent, als dat behoort, om de naem te hebben dat het geen men daertegens heeft gecontracteert, soo veel beter koop weet te bekomen, off wel datmen het ingekoste tot

hooge prijzen stelt, en 't andere nae advenant verlaeght, om quansuijs veel gelt van syn goet te maken, waardoor wij int reguarde van waren die wy hier bekomen in onseeckerheijt wegen de prijs worden gelaeten, mitsgaders in twijffel off en hoe veel wij daer van sullen komen te eijnschen sulcx sal die ordre moeten werden gestelt dat yder soort van goet sijn, waere prys wort gegeven ensoo in factura gebragt.

8. Dat het doen ende conduitie vande Europische natien principalijcken inden handel naeuwkeurigh magh werde g'observeert, mitsgaders geleth op het geen daer uijt ten dienste en voordeele van dese Compagnie sal kunnen werden getrocken.
9. Dat op middelen magh werde gedagt op wat wijse het debauchereren van ons volck op de Cust en in Bengale door d'Europische natien die geduijrigen toeleggh daer op maken, om ons het volck daer sy dickmaels om verlegen

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sijn, 't ontrecken, en in haer dienst te krijgen, best sal kunnen werden tegengegaen en geweert.

10. Dat de Compagnie in de gewichten en maten die inde voorsz. negotie Comptoiren seer verscheijde sijn, niet magh werden verkort off benadeelt, en specialijcken mede niet int gelt, voor desen isser een groote quantiteit koper gelt, van Cust van Cormandel naer Ceijlon gevoert en daer aengebragt, waer mede dat gantsche landt is vervult en overkropt geworden gaende verre boven sijn waerde, mogelijk dat het de helft van't geene waer voor het wort uijt gegeven niet kan haelen dat geen kleyne schade voor de Compagnie is, wat daer van sij en hoe dat sal kunnen werden gerepareert off geredresseert sal mede van Sijn Edelheijts ondersoek en overleggh moeten wesen.
11. Dat op alle plaetsen en Comptoiren magh werden ondersoght wat eijgentlijk is van intrinsique waerde van gelden daermede op desselve den inkoop wert gedaen, en die geconferereert met onse standpenninck sijnde den Rijksdaelder off Provintiedaelder die tegens sestigh stuijvers, in onse boecken uijtgetrocken off gevalueert staet, met aenwijsinge vant verschil soo der eenigh soude mogen wesen, en hoeveel dat eijgentlijk bedraagt.

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12. Dat boven de visitatie en ondersoek van maguasyenen die de Compagnie allomme heeft soo van waere tot de negotie en onderhout van 's menschen lighaem specterende, als van oorlogs, amonitie, en 't geene daer toe in voorraet soude mogen wesen, om te sien off alles wel en nae behooren wort gadegeslagen, wat daer van overigh ofte te weijnigh soude mogen wesen, mede sal dienen ondersoght 't geene tot de scheepsbouw en reparatie der selver van node off in voorraet is, voornamentlijk dewijle over de defecten vandien seer wert geklaegt, en geseijt dat veele schepen om die redenen soo kort komen afte gaen en ons 't ontvallen, waer in bij aldien eenige salutare remedien souden kunnen werden g'excogiteert, mitsgaders aangewesen waer uijt sulcx eijgentlijk voorkomt, soude ons 't selve seer gevalligh wesen. En alsoo tot het bouwen van kleijne vaertuigen, lootsboots, Chialoupen, en diergelijcke maecksels, Couchin ons seer wort aengepresen, oocq Specialijcken een bequaem meester Timmerman daertoe gevordert sal sulcx mede nader ondersoght en een pertinent bericht daer van dienen gegeven te worden.
13. Dat met alle soo Indiaensche als Europische natien in Indien wesende magh werden gehouden een beleefden ommegangh, souden dat aen deselve eenige offensie wert gegeven off

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naeder toegebragt, waardoor wij inguistie en verwijderingh met deselve, en dat wel bijsonderlijk hier in Europa soude kunnen geraken.

Het wort aen Sijn Edelheijts goetvinden gedefereert gelaeten om de visite op de Cust te beginnen 't sij tot Palleacatte of tot Maslupatnam soo als de gelegentheijt daer toe best sal komen te dienen.

Naer dat Sijn Edelheijt sigh ten fine voorsz. mede nae Golkonda soude transporteren houden wij om gelijcke redenen als van decca is geseijt, gansch ondienstigh, evenwel verstaen wij dat het Comptoir aldaer sijnde van geen cleijne importantie, mede door iemandt van gequalificeerste bij Sijn Edelheijt wesende, sal moeten werden ondersoght, soo oocq de vordere Comptoiren van Noorder Cormandel, 't sij dat Sijn Edelheijt dat in persoon komt te doen, voor soo veel sulcx gevolglijk kan geschieden, off tot eenige van deselve komt te gebruijcken, die hem in dese commissie sijn g'adjungeert.

Dogh wat belangt de Zuijder Comptoiren als Sadragapatnam, Tegenapatnam, Porto Novo, en Stadt Nagapattinam, souden wij geern sien dat, als van meerder importantie sijnde, door sijn Edelheijt in persoon wierden gevisiteert, mitsgaders op de huijshoudinge, met het geene verder daer omgaet, naeuwkeurigh geleth, en

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voort sodanigh gehandelt als hiervoore is geseijt.

Insonderheijt sal mede naeuw achtige dienen genomen te werden op de gelegentheijt van voorsz. Stad van Negapatnam, de welcke eenige weynige jaeren geleden door een hoogewaetervloet meest is geruineert geworden, en die de Generael en Raden voornemens sijn merckelijk te verkleynen en tot een beknopte gelegentheijt te reduceren. Konde sulx tot Sijn Edelheijt aenkomste aldaer en persoonle visite werden uytgesteld om sijne consideratien daer op mede te kunnen geven, 't soude ons niet onaengenaem sijn, van hierop Ceylon komende sal Sijn Edelheijt kunnen hooren hoedanigh het daermede is gelegen, mitsgaders ordre geven dat met den op bouw tot Sijn Edelheijt komste werden gesupersedeert. Verstaende soo dat sonder merckelijk naedeel die uijtstel kan lijden.

Van Cormandel overgaende nae Ceylon al Sijn Edelheijt als daer naest aengelegen sijnde, kunnen beginnen van Jaffenapatnam, en wort aen Sijn Edelheijts goetvinden gelaeten off Sijn Edelheijt sigh ten fine voorsz. mede sal vervoegen nae Trinequenemale en Battacalo, off wel Manaer, en soo voort over Calpintin nae Negombo, en eyntelijk na Colombo en Gale.

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Op Ceijlon laeten wij ons voorstaen dat Sijn Edelheijt sijn werck mede seer wel sal vinden, als sijnde in menigte jaeren geen Commissaris aldaer geweest, oock sijn door den Generael en Raden nae lange wijlige disputen, contestatien en gehoude meditatieen verscheijde redressen int bestier van saken aldaer beraemt, mitsgaders ordre gegeven tot het intrecken off verkleijnen van verscheijde fortificatien, wercken en besnoeiijnghe van ongelden. Hoedanigh dat alles bij deselve is gereguleert, sal Sijn Edelheijt kunnen sien, bij 't geene in November 1681 dienaengaende op 't papier is gebragt, neffens de consideratien daeromtrent van den Gouverneur Pijl en den Raet, en soo als dat werck bij ons sedert is begrepen, vervalth inde brieven die wij op dat subject nae Batavia hebben laeten affgaen, alle 't welcke Sijn Edelheijt neffens desen tot sijne speculatieen en onderrichtinge mede wort ter handen gestelt.

Wij hadden gemeynt met Sijn Edelheijt voor sijn vertreck daer over te besorg nemen, en desselfs consideratien en advijs te hooren en in te nemen, specialijcken mede hoedanigh wij ons ten opsigten van Radia Singa sullen hebben te gedragen, 't sij dat die vorst noch int levens soude mogen wesen, off bij sijn overlijden een ander

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in sijn plaets getreden, maer dewijle de tijt sulx niet sal willen lijden, sullen wij dat alles aen Sijn Edelheijts examinatie en ondersoeck moeten aenbevolen laeten.

Ondertusschen sullen wij 't geene ons dienaengaende in desen herbst soo van daer als van Batavia is toegekomen medelesen, en overwegen, mitsgaders ons gevoelen nae Ceijlon oversenden, alwaer Sijn Ed: op sijn wedercomste van Bengale en Cormandel 't selve sal vinden soo als wij dat mede sullen doen, raeckende de Cust van Mallabaer en plaetsen die de Compagnie aldaer besith, neffens ordre hoedanigh sijn Edelheijt sigh daer omtrent sal hebben te gedragen.

Wanneer Sijn Edele op Ceijlon alles sal hebben verrigt, sal sigh ten fine voorsz. vervoegen nae Souratta, dan alsoo de Cust van Mallabaer mede vereijst gevisiteert te werden, wort in keure gestelt dat te doen in de reijse nae Souratta, offwel naedat sijn Edelheijt uijt Souratta weder te rugge na Ceylon sal keeren, om van daer te repatrieeren.

Wij weten Sijn Edelheijt soo int reguarde van Souratta, als van Mallabaer, daer ondergereeckent Wingurla, en Canara niet anders aen te bevelen als het geene hier vooren raeckende de andere Comptoiren en in't brede staet aengehaelt.

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Dat het Comptoir in Agra bij Sijn Edele mede soude werden gevisiteert, alwaer den handel buyten den indigo van weijnigh belangh is, soude van te grooten langheyligheijt en te veel kosten wesen, en 't welck Sijn Edelheijt dienvolgende door een van habielste die dese Commissie sijn bijgevoegt, sal kunnen laeten geschieden, gelijk als mede aen Sijn Edelheijts goetvinden wort gelaeten het visiteren van Comptoiren in Broodera, Brootchia en Amadabath, naementlijk door Sijn Edelheijt in persoon, off mede door een vande gequalificeerste in sijn geselschap, op wien men sijn vertrouwen met gerustheijt magh stellen.

Gelijck als is geseijt, sal Sijn Edelheijt over Ceylon weeder herwaerts keeren, en tot dien eynde sigh aldaer embarqueren op een van Schepen die van daer in retour sullen komen, en dat gelijk als dat betamelijk is, met de vlagge van boven, om de gansche retourvloot en cheff te commanderen.

En alsoo wij verstaen dat de residentie van Compagnie aen Cabo De Bonne Esperance mede sal moeten werden gevisiteert, sal Sijn Ed. Sulcx kunnen doen, 't sij inde uijt reyse off inde thuijs reijse, off wel inde uijtreyse sulcx beginnende, en inde 'thuys reyse dat voltreckende, nae dat de tijt en gelegentheijt dat sal willen toelaeten off gedoogen.

7v

En sal sijn Edelheijt dienen te weten dat wij den Raet Ordinaris Rijckloff van Goens hebben gelast aen Caep gekomen sijnde, de visite aldaer mede te doen, en sigh te informeren op dese en geene saecken, en excessen, die daer om gaen en gepleegt werden, maer alsoo wij sedert bij examinatie van boecken ons inden voorlijk jaere van daer toegekomen, gesien en gelesen hebben, hoedanigh den Commandeur aldaer Simon van der Stel sigh int sthick van randtsoenen en't geene bij hem maendelijcx uijt het magasijn off packhuijs van Compagnie soo tot sijn tafel als anders is genooten, heeft te buijten gegaen, waer over niet hebben kunnen ledigh staen bij onsen brief den 24 july lestelijk derwaerts gesz. Copielijcken hier bijgevoeght, ons groot misnoegen te toonen, met last dat hij sijn doen daer in sal hebben te verantwoorden, en daer van redenen en reeckenschap te geven, sal sijn Edelheijt de boecken en daer onder die van ongelden en consumptie werden gehouden, naeuwkeurigh dienen nae te sien en te examineren, mitsgaders daer uyt trecken en formeren een relequentie van't geene hij seedert sijn aenwesen aldaer uijt het Magasijn en packhuijs van Compagnie als vooren heeft gehadt off genoten, met een pertinente aenwijsinge waer inde excessen bij hem geCommitteert eigentlijk bestaan, en hoeveel desselve in gelt somme soude komen te bedragen, wanneer men dese

7vv

soude reguleren nae het geene van ordre van Compagnie is, en sijne predecesseurs die ingelijcke bedieninge daer sijn geweest, gehad en genoten hebben, ons int vorder gedragende aen het geene wij bij onse voorsz. missive den voorsz. Commandeur en den Raedt hebben aengeschreven, mitsgaders wij te boecken van Caep is getrocken, om de nodige redressen daer in te brengen, mitsgaders te versorgen, dat nae verhoor van den voorn. Commandeur op het geene hij tot Sijne verschooninghe sal weten bij te brengen, de Compagnie restitutie erlangt van't geene sij bevonden sal worden daer door benadeelt te wesen, wort Sijn Edelheijt bij desen mede aenbevoolen, en sullen wij dan vervolgens bij rescriptie Sijn Edelheijt verrichten daer omtrent verwagten te staen.

Wanneer Sijn Ed. de visite inde voorsz. resp. Directien, Gouvernemenen en Commandementen sal hebben affgeleijt sal bij Sijn Edele voor sijn vertreck van daer en voor eerst van Bengale dienen overwogen, off en hoedanighe ordre en reglementen soo omtrent de Directie van Zaken en van negotie aldaer int Generael als van jder Comptoir int particulier sal dienen beraemt, waer nae de bediende haer in het toekomende sullen hebben te reguleren, te weten bij provisie, en tot dat bij ons daer omtrent naeder sal wesen gedisponeert, en soo vervolgens mede

7vvv

op de Cust van Cormandel, Ceijlon, de Cust van Mallabaer en Souratta, en sal voorts de bediende soo hooge als laege hoeft voor hoeft op een nieuw werden afgenomen den Eet daer toe staende, soo als die inden artijckelbrief is vervath.

In den Jaere 1626 is bij ons opgesteld een instructie van de Commissaris die door de Generael en Raeden jaerlijcx werden gesonden tot de visitatien van Gouvernemenen, Directien, Comptoiren en residentien van de Compagnie waer in door de veranderingh van tijdt in dese en geene punten wel correctie en redres soude dienen gebragt te werden, maer niettemin de wijle daer in verscheijde voorvallen en ordres staen vervath de welcke tot de Commissie mede applicabel sijn, off gemaect kunnen werden, sal Sijn Edelheijt sich daer van voor soo veel mede kunnen bedienen.

't Geene Sijn Edelheijt soude mogen voorkomen aen kennisse van t welcke de regeringh tot Batavia soude kunnen gelegen sijn, sal Sijn Edelheijt daerover mette selve corresponderen.

Bij onse missive vanden 29 November des voorlijk iaers hebben wij den Generael en Raden aengeschreven, dat als Commissaris tot visitatie van Comptoiren om de West en eerst in Bengale souden hebben te gebruycken en derwaerts af te senden den Commandeur Isaac Solmans die Sijn Edelheijt

8r

mits dien in Bengale soude kunnen aentreffen, sijnde dienvolgende onse intentie dat den selven Solmans sal wesen de Tweede van dese Commissie.

Wanneer Sijn Edelheijt op Ceijlon sal wesen aengelant, sal aldaer kunnen vernemen waer hij sal te vinden ofte beschryven wesen mitsgaders aen hem laeten aegaen den brief aen Sijn Edelheijt open behandelt, en waerbij Sijn Edelheijt de sijne sal kunnen voegen, om hem te laeten weten, dat soo hij in Bengale niet soude mogen wesen, dat hij niet sal hebben nae te laeten, hem soo veeldoeningh derwaerts te spoedigen, om gelijk geseijt, dese Commissie als Tweede by te wonen. En't welcke wij met dese althans gereet leggende schepen de Geneael en Raden mede sullen aenschrijven, oft' saecke waer dat hij, hoe wel bujten verwagten tot Batavia nogh soude mogen sijn verbleven, sich aenstonts op reijse derwaerts te begeven, dese sal in sulcken gevallen Sijn Edelheijt desselfs komste al besoigneerende in affwagten.

Tot een derde van dese Commissie hebben wij aengesteld Johannes Bacherus, bij ons voor Oppercoopman aengenomen, om beyde bij Sijn Edelheijt te werden gebruyckt daer en soo deselve int werck van dese Commissie den meesten dienst sullen kunnen doen, sulcx sal sijn Edelheijt in voorvallende gelegentheden derselver advijs mede kunnen hooren, en sijn daer van bedienen voor soo veel dat geraden sal oordelen.

8v

Dese Instructie sal Sijn Edelheijt aen deselve niet behoeven te communicereen dan indien, en voor soo veel dat sal komen goet te vinden.

Op alle Comptoiren daer deselve door sijn Edelheijts ordre sullen werden gesonden sullen sij Sijn Ed. aldaer representeren en indesselfs naem alles doen en verrichten, soo en gelijk Sijn Edheijt daer selfs present sijnde, volgens en conformite van de last die haer sal sijn gegeven, soude cunnen en mogen doen.

Wanneer Sijn Edelheijt sal goetvinden 't sij in Bengale, Cormandel, off waer het soude mogen wesen, den Raet te beroepen off daer inte verschijnen, verstaen wij dat de voorsz: adjuncten geen plaets off sessie daer in sullen hebben offnemen.

En sullen voort desselve adjuncten haer rangh hebben nae haere respc. Qualiteyten en bedieningen, dat is den voorn. Solmans naest den Commandeur die hem in outheijt van die bedieninge soude mogen voorgaen, en soo mede op deselve wijze den Oppercoopman Bacherus.

Soo Sijn Edt. dat Godt genadelijk verhoede iets menschelijcx mogte overkomen eerdad op Ceylon soude wesen g'arriveert off wel in Bengale off op de C. van Cormandel voor en alleer de saken sijn Edt. aenbevolen aldaer soude mogen sijn verrigt, verstaen wij dat insulcken cas dit gansche werck sal werde, opgenomen en

8vv

vervolgt by en door den Laurens Pijl die wij tot Raed Ordinaris hebben gevordert en aengesteld, mits bij provisie dat Gouvernement blijvende bekleeden, om sijn ten eynde voorsz., voort sonder uijtstel 't sij nae Bengale, 't sij na Cormandel te begeven, en dat mette selve magt en in gelijcke qualiteijt soo als wij die aen Sijn Edt. hebben gedefereert, en waerover wij aen den selven Gouvern. Pijl hebben gesz: den brief hier nevensgaende, om aen hem op Ceijlon gekomen sijnde, te werden overhandight.

Dese sullen den voorn. Command: Soolmans en Oppercoopman Bacherus by dat voorval in Bengale off op de Cust van Cormandel wesende, inmiddels mette saken, hebben voort te vaeren en comste van den voorn: Gouv: Pijl al gesoignerende inwaghten.

Dan den gem: Raet Ordinaris Pijl bij haer verschijnende sullen haereljk by denselven soodanigh werden geconsidereert gelijk als soude sijn geschiet bij aldien Sijn Edt: int leven waeren gebleven.

Aldus gedaen geresolveert en g'arresteert ter Gem: Vergaderingen in Amsterdam den Decemb: 1684

8vvv

Instructie van de
Vergadering van 17
voor de Heer van Rhede

Appendix B: List of Governors of Coromandel (1612-1698)

[1612-1615]	Wemmer van Berchem ⁴⁵⁰
[1616-1617]	Samuel Kind ⁴⁵¹
[1617-1619]	Hans de Hase ⁴⁵²
[1620-1625]	Andries Sourij ⁴⁵³
[1625-1632]	Marten Ijsbrandsz. ⁴⁵⁴
[1632]	Arent Gardenijs ⁴⁵⁵
[1632-1633]	David Pietersz. ⁴⁵⁶
[1633-1636]	Marten Ijsbrandsz. ⁴⁵⁷
[1636-1638]	Carel Reijniersz. ⁴⁵⁸
[1638-1643]	Arent Gardenijs ⁴⁵⁹
[1643-1650]	Arnold Heussen ⁴⁶⁰
[1650-1651]	Laurens Pit Sr. ⁴⁶¹
[1651-1652]	Jacob de Wit ⁴⁶²
[1652-1663]	Laurens Pit Sr. ⁴⁶³
[1663-1665]	Cornelis Speelman ⁴⁶⁴
[1665-1676]	Anthonij Paviljoen ⁴⁶⁵
[1676-1679]	Jacques Caulier ⁴⁶⁶
[1679-1681]	Willem Carel Hartsinck ⁴⁶⁷
[1681-1687]	Jacob Jorisz. Pits ⁴⁶⁸
[1687-1698]	Laurens Pit Jr. (relocated capital from Pulicat to Nagapattinam in 1690) ⁴⁶⁹

⁴⁵⁰ NA, VOC, inv. nr. 8686, List of Governors of Coromandel 1612-1707, 9 September 1707, f. 505.

⁴⁵¹ Ibid.

⁴⁵² Ibid., f. 506.

⁴⁵³ Ibid.

⁴⁵⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁵⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁵⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁵⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁵⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁵⁹ Ibid., f. 507.

⁴⁶⁰ Ibid.

⁴⁶¹ Ibid.

⁴⁶² Ibid., f. 507-508.

⁴⁶³ Ibid., f. 508.

⁴⁶⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁶⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁶⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁶⁷ Ibid., f. 508-509.

⁴⁶⁸ Ibid., f. 509.

⁴⁶⁹ Ibid.

Appendix C: List of Opperhoofden in Coromandel (1685-1690)

Nagapattinam:

- [1683-1688] Willem van Dielen⁴⁷⁰
[1688-1690] Floris Blom (transferred from Ceylon by Van Reede, back to Jaffna in 1690)⁴⁷¹
[1690-1698] Laurens Pit Jr. (took a seat on the High Government and Council in Batavia, 1699)⁴⁷²

Pulicat:

- [1681-1686] Jacob Jorisz. Pits (left for Batavia in 1687)⁴⁷³
[1686-1690] Laurens Pit Jr.⁴⁷⁴
[1690-1702] Adriaan de Visser (starting from after relocation of the capital to Nagapattinam)⁴⁷⁵

Porto Novo:

- [1684-1687] Jan Corte⁴⁷⁶
[1687-1691] Alexander Immens⁴⁷⁷

Teganapatnam:

- [1679-1687] Nicolaas Clement (arrested by Johannes Bacherus in 1687)⁴⁷⁸
[1687-1690] Jan Corte (left for Nagapatnam to become chief accountant for Coromandel)⁴⁷⁹
[1690] Johannes Bolwerk⁴⁸⁰
[1690-...] Evert Christoffel Launius (appointed by Van Reede)⁴⁸¹

Sadras:

- [1666-1686] Lambert Hemsink (left for Batavia in 1686)⁴⁸²
[1687-1688] Johannes Eduards (appointed by Van Reede, but recalled a year later)⁴⁸³
[1688-1690] Adriaan de Visser (appointed *Opperhoofd* of Pulicat by Van Reede in 1690)⁴⁸⁴

⁴⁷⁰ Havart, *Op- en Ondergang*, part 1, 20; Valentijn, *Oud en Nieuw Oost Indiën*, Vol. 5, 6.

⁴⁷¹ Ibid.

⁴⁷² NA, VOC, inv. nr. 8686, List of Governors of Coromandel 1612-1707, 9 September 1701, f. 509.

⁴⁷³ Havart, *Op- en Ondergang*, part 1, 126.

⁴⁷⁴ Ibid., 127.

⁴⁷⁵ Wijnaendts van Resandt, *De Gezaghebbers*, 107.

⁴⁷⁶ Havart, *Op- en Ondergang*, part 1, 23; Valentijn, *Oud en Nieuw Oost Indiën*, Vol. 5, 9.

⁴⁷⁷ Havart, *ibid.*, 43; Valentijn, *ibid.*

⁴⁷⁸ Havart, *ibid.*, 58; Valentijn, *ibid.*, 11.

⁴⁷⁹ Havart, *ibid.*, 80; Valentijn, *ibid.*

⁴⁸⁰ Havart, *ibid.*, 81; Valentijn, *ibid.*

⁴⁸¹ Havart, *ibid.*, 82; Valentijn, *ibid.*

⁴⁸² Havart, *ibid.*, 95; Valentijn, *ibid.*, 12

⁴⁸³ Havart, *ibid.*, 96; Valentijn, *ibid.*

⁴⁸⁴ Havart, *ibid.*; Valentijn, *ibid.*

[1690-...] Abraham Witmond (likely to be Willem Witmond's brother)⁴⁸⁵

Masulipatnam:

[1681-1685] Willem Carel Hartsinck (Hartsinck repatriated back to the Dutch Republic)⁴⁸⁶
[1685-1686] Laurens Pit Jr.⁴⁸⁷
[1686-1687] Jacob Corbisier (provisional appointment during Laurens Pit Jr.'s absence, died)⁴⁸⁸
[1687] Joannes Huysman (started May 1687, died in office August 1687)⁴⁸⁹
[1687-1688] Jacob van Almonde (provisional appointment, deposed by Johannes Bacherus)⁴⁹⁰
[1688] Willem van Dielen (died in Pulicat before his arrival in Masulipatnam)⁴⁹¹
[1688-1689] Johannes van Steland (provisional appointment by Johannes Bacherus)⁴⁹²
[1689-1690] Jan Faukonier (transferred from Ceylon by Van Reede, died in office)⁴⁹³
[1690-...] Bruyning Wildeland (appointed by Johannes Bacherus)⁴⁹⁴

Nagulvancha:

[1684-1687] Adriaan Blokkeel⁴⁹⁵
[1686-1687] Nicolaas Dankwaard (demoted by Johannes Bacherus, trade post closed)⁴⁹⁶

Golkonda:

[1682-1686] Michiel Janszoon (arrested by Laurens Pit Jr. in 1686)⁴⁹⁷
[1686] Nicolaas Cramfer⁴⁹⁸
[1686-1688] Cornelis van den Bogaarde⁴⁹⁹
[1688-1689] Aart Spender (appointed by Bacherus, defected, got caught, committed suicide)⁵⁰⁰
[1689-1691] Johannes van Steland⁵⁰¹

⁴⁸⁵ Havart, *ibid.*; Valentijn, *ibid.*

⁴⁸⁶ Havart, *ibid.*, 170; Valentijn, *ibid.*, 27.

⁴⁸⁷ Havart, *ibid.*, 174; Valentijn, *ibid.*

⁴⁸⁸ Havart, *ibid.*, 174; Valentijn, *ibid.*

⁴⁸⁹ Havart, *ibid.*, 175-176; Valentijn, *ibid.*

⁴⁹⁰ Havart, *ibid.*, 177; Valentijn, *ibid.*

⁴⁹¹ Havart, *ibid.*; Valentijn, *ibid.*

⁴⁹² Havart, *ibid.*; Valentijn, *ibid.*

⁴⁹³ Havart, *ibid.*, 178; Valentijn, *ibid.*; Coolhaas, *Generale Missiven*, part 5, 331.

⁴⁹⁴ Havart, *ibid.*; Valentijn, *ibid.*

⁴⁹⁵ Havart, *ibid.*, part 3, 65; Valentijn, *ibid.*, 30.

⁴⁹⁶ Havart, *ibid.*, part 2, 46; Valentijn, *ibid.*

⁴⁹⁷ Havart, *ibid.*, 184; Valentijn, *ibid.*, 35.

⁴⁹⁸ Havart, *ibid.*, 190; Valentijn, *ibid.*

⁴⁹⁹ Havart, *ibid.*, 191; Valentijn, *ibid.*

⁵⁰⁰ Havart, *ibid.*, 193; Valentijn, *ibid.*; Coolhaas, *Generale Missiven*, part 5, 331.

⁵⁰¹ Havart, *ibid.*, 194; Valentijn, *ibid.*

Palakollu:

[1683-1689] Bruyning Wildeland (declined position of second in Masulipatnam in 1686)⁵⁰²

[1689-...] Joannes Lampe (appointed by Van Reede)⁵⁰³

Narasapur:

[1676-1685] Francois van der Bol (repatriated to the Dutch Republic)⁵⁰⁴

[1690-1691] Jan van den Briel⁵⁰⁵

Draksharama:

[1682-1686] Adriaan Verbrugge (repatriated to the Dutch Republic)⁵⁰⁶

[1687] Adriaan Blokkeel⁵⁰⁷ (died)

[1687-...] Joan Vorwer (with Van Reede's approval)⁵⁰⁸

Bimlipatam:

[1673-1686] Floris Bolwerk (died before he could be removed from office)⁵⁰⁹

[1686-1691] Leendert van den Briel (deposed by Johannes Bacherus)⁵¹⁰

⁵⁰² Havart, *ibid.*, part 1, 178; Valentijn, *ibid.*, 39.

⁵⁰³ Havart, *ibid.*, part 3, 40-41; Valentijn, *ibid.*, 39.

⁵⁰⁴ Havart, *ibid.*, 19; Valentijn, *ibid.*, 38.

⁵⁰⁵ Havart, *ibid.*, 19-20; Valentijn, *ibid.*

⁵⁰⁶ Havart, *ibid.*, 64; Valentijn, *ibid.*, 41.

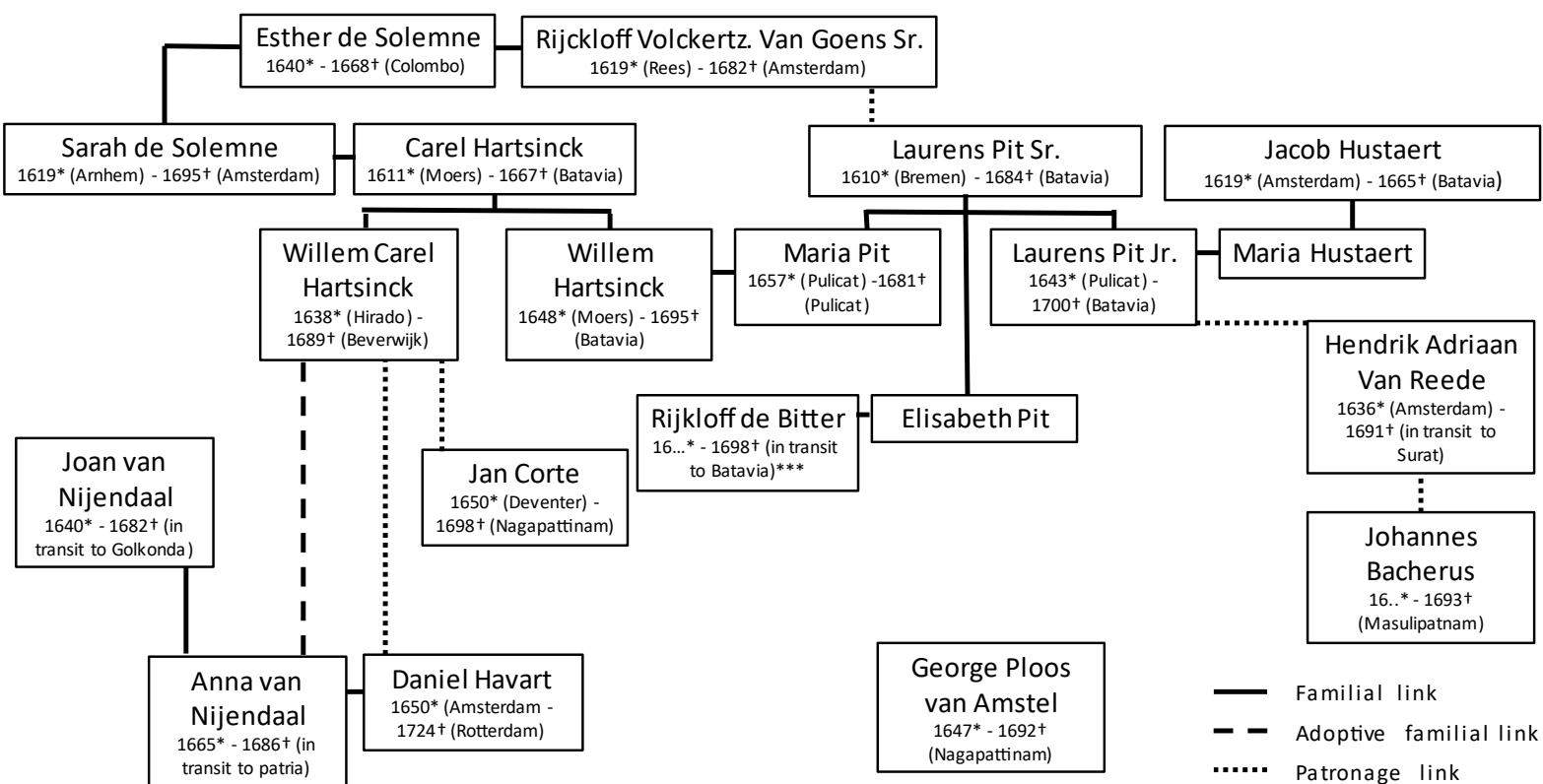
⁵⁰⁷ Havart, *ibid.*, 65; Valentijn, *ibid.*

⁵⁰⁸ Havart, *ibid.*, 67; Valentijn, *ibid.*

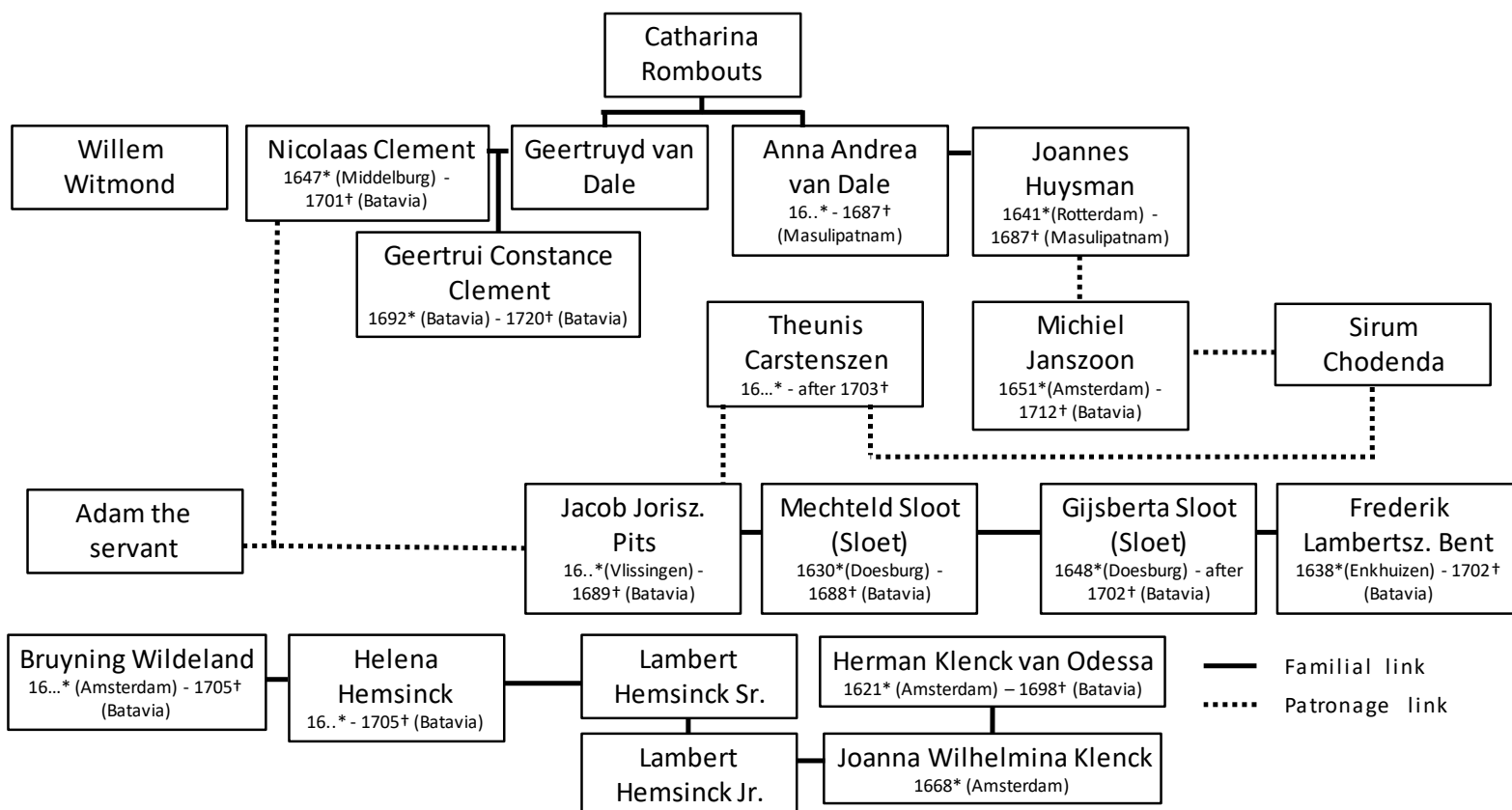
⁵⁰⁹ Havart, *ibid.*, 81; Valentijn, *ibid.*, 43.

⁵¹⁰ Havart, *ibid.*, 83-84; Valentijn, *ibid.*

Appendix D: family and patronage links in Coromandel



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