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THE IMPERIAL STATE, POLITICS, AND THE TRANSFORMATION OF BOMBAY

c.1665-1750

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Abstract

This work examines Bombay's early growth through the lens of political, economic, and ideological contestation across the early modern English/British empire. In so doing, I demonstrate Bombay's evolution into a durable site of an ideologically and politically specific model of British empire in Asia. This model and its influence in Bombay challenge the hegemonic interpretations of the history of English/British imperialism in South Asia from both the perspective of South Asian history and British imperial history. Bombay's regionally, materially, and temporally specific contexts in the period under study demonstrate the limits of currently dominant narratives of early modern British empire in South Asia. The responses of East India Company corporate directors, employees, and South Asian interlocutors to those contexts show the definitive importance of ideological contestation and transforming political cultures to the development of English/British empire in South Asia.

Bombay came into King Charles II's personal possession in 1661 as a condition of his marriage contract with Catherine of Braganza, joining a diverse portfolio of Crown imperial possessions. But unlike some Crown colonies, Bombay in 1661 was impoverished, malaria-stricken, and suffused by regional conflict, giving little immediate prospect for enlarging the royal treasury. Charles II quickly leased Bombay to the English East India Company in 1668 for a nominal annual rent of £10. Clearly, the Company's new possession commanded little excitement. But in the eighteenth century, Bombay became one of the most prosperous sites of the East India Company and the British empire as a whole. In 1753 it was remade one of the East India Company's four official presidency cities in Asia, alongside Calcutta, Madras, and Bencoolen. This work utilizes four roughly chronological case studies of change in Bombay ranging between its initial possession by the East India Company and the presidency reorganization of 1753. Through these studies, I argue that, in contrast to dominant

historiography, Bombay was always seen as a part of the English/British imperial state, rather than belonging to an overlapping but distinct Company-state. Furthermore, I show that Bombay's early imperial development was only rendered effective when pursued as an alternative to territorial growth of English/British power, rather than a preparation for militaristic and territorial expansion in the subcontinent. My work acknowledges that Bombay's early modern transformation was partly influenced by unique geographic and political-economic conditions, such as its location without an easily accessible, export-productive hinterland; its legal status as a nominal crown colony leased to a chartered trading company; and its ecology as a swampy, estuarial prospect redeemed only by an exceptional harbor. However, I argue these particularities were never the determinants of Bombay's trajectory. Rather, they combined, as unique constraints on Bombay's transformation, with the efflorescence of diverse ideas of political economy throughout the English/British empire during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. It was this combination which generated highly specific goals for Bombay in the minds of East India Company Directors, employees in western India, and key South Asian interlocutors for those employees. Working together in a politically contested arena of policy-making, these historical stakeholders established Bombay as a site of alternative British imperial activity in South Asia when compared to the Company's other factories (and later presidencies). This alternative form privileged capital- and labor-intensive infrastructural investment and the growth of a new administrative apparatus.

Such commitments in Bombay therefore contrasted strategies used by the East India Company elsewhere in South Asia, where the Company co-opted local systems of wealth production and administration and asserted power through military supremacy. Between 1665 and 1765, actors in India and England contested Bombay's future and successfully crafted an impactful, different version of English/British imperial expansion and state-making in the region. I contend that version ultimately served as a viable model for future port cities of imperial commerce from Durban to Singapore.

My project, using a variety of archival sources, thus revises our understanding of Britain's "commercial empire" as something purely Atlantic, and possibly purely modern. It furthermore challenges the idea of early modern English/British imperialism in Asia as meaningfully distinct from the holistic study of change across the empire due to the suggested importance of the overlapping sovereignty of the Company-state. By identifying some clear limits of the Company-state analysis, I help in the much-needed de-siloing of the history of early modern English/British empire in South Asia. My cases reintegrate changes taking place in the administration of English/British imperial sites in western India with changes taking place across the metropole and other imperial locations, rejecting the notion that the Company exerted an apolitical, profit-seeking state sovereignty over its parts of the subcontinent in contrast to the politically and ideologically contested English/British empire elsewhere.

Speaking of that political and ideological contestation, my work is often able to tie frequently anonymized employees of the Company over the early modern period to specific groups of people and movements contesting the politics and ideologies of the English/British empire as a whole, shedding new light on the comprehensive political and ideological beliefs which often guided decision-making in London and in India about the trajectory of the East India Company's various factories. In so doing, this project makes an invaluable contribution to the burgeoning historiography of trans-imperial political and ideological movements and identities in the early modern period. It cuts through the layers of internecine interpersonal conflict which have so often stumped historians seeking to make sense of the administration of Company-controlled parts of South Asia to help clarify the drivers behind what I see as a set of far more cohesive ideological projects for Bombay and South Asia more generally.

At the same time, this work provides further context for the increasingly troubled teleological narratives of South Asian history. Given the focus of so much South Asian historiography on the modern conflict over colonialism and national identity, it has been all too easy for South Asian historians to accept a simple narrative of English/British goals for their control of their Asian territories. Despite a wealth of evidence to the contrary, historians focused on South Asia have been content to assume a static hunger for land and its wealth on the part of the English/British actors in the region over vast swaths of time and space. In so doing, they have struggled to incorporate the history of western India into the pre-nineteenth century narratives of South Asian history. As a part of the subcontinent where the colonizer mostly didn't expand territorially or militaristically until much later and subsequently impacted the local population in a much different way, Bombay and western India more generally have been presented as practically lacking a premodern imperial/colonial history. This project emphatically rejects that supposition, and, I hope, fully demonstrates how critical challenging the dominance of that land-and-taxes narrative of early modern imperialism in South Asia is for a fuller understanding of the history of the subcontinent.

Finally, this work makes what I consider a key methodological claim. While I utilize a variety of source material, the vast majority of my primary analysis is generated from the records of the East India Company. I hope to show how these voluminous records may allow social scientists to uncover varied and contentious political-economic and ideological positions of actors and factions within the chartered company. While typical assumptions about the Company's documents privilege stability, unity and apolitical focus in the Company's positions on key questions of empire, political economy, and state-making across institutional hierarchies and over time, I have found something quite different in my own research. By focusing so intently on what are genuinely contested narratives between historical actors within the Company's own documents, I challenge common perspectives on the use of this source base in the history of English/British imperialism and the history of South Asia. I contest that I have done some work to disaggregate what many historians have treated as a monolith of an institutional actor into some of its constituent parts and shed light on how policymaking and state-making worked at the complex intersection of state, nation, and chartered company. I encourage future work to take these methodological interventions seriously and read the Company's archive for the politically rich and contested database it is, rather than as a straightforward record of the Company's unitary positions in the early modern period.

This project thus intervenes in several hegemonic and crucial historiographic bodies across common spatial and periodic boundaries within the discipline of history. It utilizes novel research on understudied moments of change in English/British imperialism in Bombay over the period c.1665-1750 to re-integrate the story of English/British activities in western India with broader claims about early modern British imperialism and the development of the modern South Asian historical context. It claims that challenging unified and siloed narratives of British empire and South Asia is both possible and important. Through privileging political and ideological contestation among Company actors and their interlocutors regarding western India, it finds a method for crafting a more explanatory, regionally and temporally engaged, and importantly more holistic picture of change over time for both the British empire writ large and the trajectory of that empire in South Asia.

Dedication

For Leslie J. Roberts and Patrick R. McCord

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Note on Quotations, Transliteration, and Nomenclature

I have modernized the orthography of all primary source quotations and expanded abbreviations to aid readability. When possible, I have altered the transcription of words taken from South Asian languages to render them closer to modern transliterations. Hopefully this improves the text's readability. In this, I have followed the model of venerable scholar of Maharashtra Rosalind O'Hanlon, using a modified version of the Library of Congress Catalogue system.[1] I omit diacritics, which may be helpful to other speakers of South Asian languages but are likely to distract those who do not speak or read them. I have furthermore transcribed the Devanagari letters च and श as "ch" and "sh" rather than "ca" and "sa." While not formally correct, such a transliteration is closer to the standard pronunciation to aid the reader. If a word borrowed from a South Asian language is now commonly used in English-language historical study or popular language (for example, "shampoo") I have kept its common English spelling (rather than rendering it according to the transliteration system as "cāmpū"). When quoting from peer-reviewed secondary source material, I have maintained the choices of the original author and publisher. Dates in this study are given as written by the historical actors, although the year is always taken to begin on January 1 and end on December 31. This decision means a date written in the Old Style as "18 February 1732" will be rendered here as "18 February 1733." This does not completely align the Old Style of my actors with our contemporary New Style dating in all cases but it alleviates the majority of possible timeline confusion.

The East India Company's nomenclature referring to itself and its bureaucracy changed over the period under study here. For continuity, I have consistently referred to it as "the

[1] See Rosalind O'Hanlon, *Caste, Conflict, and Ideology: Mahatma Jotirao Phule and Low Caste Protest in Nineteenth-Century Western India* (Delhi: Ashoka University/Orient Blackswan, 2016 [1985]), xii.

Company," the "EIC," and "the East India Company," save for the period when there were multiple chartered East India Companies in the 1690s and early 1700s. Rather than referring to those as the "English East India Company" and the "London East India Company," as some historians do, I refer to them as the "Old East India Company" and the "New East India Company," in keeping with the perceived preferences of my historical actors and for clarity. I refer to the Company's corporate administrative body as the "Court of Directors," or "the Directors" throughout, and the head of that body as "the Governor," although the body and its leader were known by various terms at different times. Reflecting the changing terminology and changing privileges accorded the Company's administrators in Bombay and western India during the period under study, these figures are variously referred to as "the Council," the "President," the "Deputy Governor," the "Governor," the "General," and the "Second of Council," or "Third of Council," and so on, as the stipulations of the specific time required within the hierarchy of the East India Company.

Furthermore, during the period under study, England itself became Great Britain after the 1707 Act of Union. When I am referring to the pre-1707 period, I will use the terms "England" and "English." When I am referring to the post-1707 period, I will use the terms "Britain" and "British." When I am referring to the entire period, or to a timespan which bridges the pre-1707 and post-1707 periods, I will use the terms "England/Britain" and "English/British." Similarly, the concepts of "India" and "Pakistan," as well as their constituent states as we know them today were not in operation in the early modern era. In western India and Bombay, where the linguistic states movement was heavily and violently contested, being careful about when and where

"Gujarat," "Maharashtra," and "Karnataka" are becomes particularly important.[2] I have therefore used the terms "India" and "South Asia" interchangeably throughout this work to mean the subcontinent in general, and "western India," to refer to the complete region under study. When more specificity is needed, I have utilized a variety of historically specific and contemporary regional terms including "Gujarat subah," "the Konkan/the Konkan littoral," "the Deccan," "the Deccan plateau," "the Arabian Sea coast," "the Malabar coast," "the western ghats," and "the Sahyadris." I made these geographic naming choices attempting to balance reflecting historical usage and providing maximum clarity for the reader, who is not presumed to have extensive geographic knowledge of South Asia in general or the region under study in particular.

A final point: Bombay today is called Mumbai. This decision itself was heavily contested and represents, for many, a regressive, anti-cosmopolitan strain in Maharashtra politics. For others, it is an anticolonial point of regional and linguistic pride. As I personally think Bombay/Mumbai's identity should not purely be defined by its 20th century myth-making as the great, modern, cosmopolis, I don't myself have a strong position one way or the other. However, it is true that Mumbai is an "invented traditional" name without clear historical antecedent. Here, the site is referred to as Bombay, as it was until the 1990s.[3] To clarify publication data where needed, [Mumbai] is placed in brackets when citing published material.

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[2] See Y.D. Phadke, *Politics and Language* (New Delhi: Himalaya Publishing House, 1979); Robert D. King, *Nehru and the Language Politics of India* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1998); Ramchandra Guha, *India After Gandhi: the History of the World's Largest Democracy* (New York: Ecco, 2007), 189-208; and Neera Adarkar and Meena Menon, *One Hundred Years, One Hundred Voices: The Millworkers of Girangaon, an Oral History* (New Delhi: Seagull Editions, 2004), 219-264.

[3] See Thomas Blom Hansen, *Wages of Violence: Naming and Identity in Postcolonial Bombay* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2001).

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Yan, and many others whose names are no longer legible in my years of notes from conferences, workshops, and seminars. I am further grateful for the funding I have received in support of this project. At the University of Chicago, I have been the recipient of funding from the Department of History; the Brenda and Earl Shapiro Fund; the Committee on Environment, Geography, and Urbanization, and the Nicholson Center for British Studies. I have also received funding from The History Project at Harvard-CHEP.

I am deeply appreciative of the hard work of archivists, librarians and other staff at the various archives and libraries I have visited and utilized over the course of my project. Although he had long since left the British Library by the time I began my dissertation, thanks are especially due to Martin Moir. Martin's *A General Guide to the India Office Records* from 1988 prepared me better than any other finding guide or bibliography for the extensive IOR archival material which is the backbone of my dissertation.

The Department of History administrators at the University of Chicago, especially Sheena Finnegan, David Goodwine, and Sonja Rusnak, have been a welcome source of institutional and departmental expertise for me over the years. Further gratitude is due to Vanessa Armand, Anna Berlekamp, Samuel Harris, Karin Maxey, and all the staff at the Chicago Centers for Teaching and Learning, where I have been incredibly lucky to find a community of like-minded pedagogues. Courtney Wiersema at the UChicago GRAD Career Development office has been an incredible resource as I prepare for the next phase of my professional life. Finally, thanks are owed to my students at Chicago over the years. Their thoughtfulness, attention, and creativity encourage me every day to be a better scholar and teacher.

On a more personal note, I am honored to thank my community of mentors and friends from my days at Wellesley College. My experiences at Wellesley made me into the woman who would go on to earn her doctorate at the University of Chicago, and I am so fortunate to have had the opportunity to study there. I would like to particularly thank faculty members Christopher Candland, Richard Delacy, Susan Ellison, Lidwien Kapteijns, Liza Oliver, Ryan Quintana, Nikhil Rao, Neelima Shukla-Bhatt, and Adam Van Arsdale for their unconditional belief in me and encouragement from the day they met me.

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Building on our shared cultural backgrounds, I am incredibly happy to be able to thank my family for their friendship and support throughout these years. Thank you to my aunt, Michelle McCord; my aunt and uncle, Letty Lozano and Jeff Roberts; Jason and Jay; and Amanda, Alan, Liv, and Jack. Thanks to my mother- and father-in-law, Aruna and Vinay Nalawade; my brother-in-law, Shubhankar Nalawade; and the rest of the Nalawade, Shinde, Gaikwad, Ratakonda, and Lankipalli families. And, of course, thank you to Gupshup. You've been there through it all, screeching, biting, shedding, and scratching with impunity. But I never saw another mouse after you moved in, so it was worth it.

Thanks to my parents, Leslie and Pat, to whom this dissertation is dedicated. They have been here with me and for me every step of the way. They have driven between Ann Arbor and Chicago endless times, cleaned the apartment when I was too stressed about deadlines to keep up

with it, cat-sat while I was gone in the archives, cooked for me, helped me move, and treated me to countless nights at the movies and afternoons at the ballpark when I needed a break. All that after they survived 18 years of living with me! Thank you so much.

Which brings me to the one person who signed up for untold years of cohabitation: Pratik Nalawade. From the day I met you, I knew you were a special one. But I would be lying if I said I predicted just *how* special you would be *to me*. Having you beside me for the past five years has brought me joy, laughter, caring, contentment, and the truest sense of home I have ever known. In the words of John Prine: “The years went by like sweet little days/With babies crying, pork chops, and Beaujolais.

Introduction

Thane, Maharashtra, November 2025

A gray filter of exhaust and construction dust lightly blurs my view of the Eastern Express Highway. I think there's supposed to be eight lanes, four going north, and four going south, but I can't really be sure. Along the western side of the highway, where I'm standing, there's shade from the elevated rail tracks. They're for the new Mumbai Metro Green Line, which hasn't opened yet, and their massive pylons which jut into the sky are decorated with pixelated gradients of shocking-lime paint. The Green Line snakes along the arterial route of the EEH in this part of Thane, narrowly avoiding the pedestrians' freeway overpass which used to define this neighborhood's highway access. Some kind of ambitious Thane Metropolitan Corporation planner has quirkily planted one of those "outdoor gyms" along the pedestrian path which tracks under the Green Line. I'm not sure who the intended audience for the gym is, as I can imagine little less pleasant than exercising in a haze of smog, in full view of bumper-to-bumper commuter traffic. But every morning, there are elderly community members out on the Thane equivalent of an over-improved traffic island, swinging their legs on the mechanical elliptical. The uncles wear cotton pants and sweatshirts; most of the aunties are in fully draped saris.

Thane is a major suburb northeast of Mumbai (known until 1995 as Bombay), and it's where my husband grew up.[1] My mother- and father-in-law still live in a 700-square-foot, two-bedroom condo a five-minute walk from the scene I've described. A couple weeks after observing this scene for the first time, I got married (well, Hindu-married; our legal wedding was over Zoom via the Cook County Marriage Court a year prior) in a banquet hall at this intersection. It encapsulates everything India's

[1] For a discussion of the name change and a description (albeit somewhat outdated) of Thane, see Thomas Blom Hansen, *Wages of Violence: Naming and Identity in Postcolonial Bombay* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2001), 1-6, 101-103.

biggest metropolis has become to observers in the 2020s: crowded, noisy, polluted, and built up to the point of teetering back into the sea from whence it came.

Bombay/Mumbai's place in India's popular conception is dominated by its understood connection to modernity and excess. *Maximum City*, the Indian writer Suketu Mehta called it. The novelist Jeet Thayil preferred *Narcopolis*. The American journalist Katherine Boo famously used *Behind the Beautiful Forevers* as the title of her book-length exploration of the city. Each of these 21st century works—creative nonfiction, fiction, journalism—created its Bombay through dichotomy. They all drew sharp comparisons between vast wealth and extreme poverty, the constant scramble of capital-B "Business" and the languorous pace of the heroin addict, the long gun-equipped Indian Army soldier outside the state Capitol building in the city's urban core and the internationally-wanted gangster sliding through the by-lanes of suburban Dongri, scattering crowds with only his shadow.[2]

Much of the academic writing on the city has presupposed the same epistemological field. Bombay was "the ultimate modern Indian city;" it was "in a Baudelairean way, beautiful—degrading, freeing, mysterious, corrupting rustics by its freedom."[3] It emerged as "the hub or organized capitalism, working-class culture, trade unions, and modern institutions of all kinds," despite being "marked by an intrinsic restlessness…swamped by the all-pervasive logic of money and business."[4] Partha Chatterjee described remembering "my first visit to Bombay in the early 1970s[,] feeling envious of what I took to be a wonderfully modern" city, though he also wrote that "the history of Bombay soon disabused me of

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[2] See Katherine Boo, *Behind the Beautiful Forevers: Life, Death, and Hope in a Mumbai Undercity* (New York: Random House, 2012); Suketu Mehta, *Maximum City: Bombay Lost and Found* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2004); *Narcopolis* (New York: Penguin Books, 2012).
[3] Thomas Blom Hansen, *Wages of Violence: Naming and Identity in Postcolonial Bombay* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2001), 37; Sudipta Kaviraj, "The Culture of Representative Democracy," in *Wages of Freedom: Fifty Years of the Indian Nation-State*, ed. Partha Chatterjee, 147-175 (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), 152-153.
[4] Thomas Blom Hansen, *Wages of Violence: Naming and Identity in Postcolonial Bombay* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2001), 39.

the idea."[5] Even when describing it as "semi-urban, or even rural" in the first part of the 19th century, the city had a "cosmopolitan character," which marked "the roots of that process which enabled Bombay to become the main center of Indian cinema" that "could communicate in a national idiom."[6]

Rajnarayan Chandavarkar, the undisputed master of modern Bombay history, described the 19th and early 20th century city as possessing "perennial modernities," characterized by "diversity and hybridity." He wrote that Bombay was "marked by its secularism, its equidistance from the particularisms of caste and religious community and often its transcendence of their differences. In the Indian imagination," Chandavarkar explained, "the city had acquired from the late nineteenth century onwards an almost mythic significance as a major metropolis." Even "its inhabitants" were likely to identify "with the modern." These "residents took it for granted that they were a part of the vanguard that would pull India kicking and screaming into the modern world."[7] Recent work by scholars such as Sandip Hazareesingh, Nikhil Rao, and Liza Weinstein has traded on this notion of Bombay's quintessential modernity, building on and complicating the narrative initially popularized by Chandavarkar and others.[8]

By the time I first arrived in Mumbai in 2016, I was completely bought in to this dominant historical narrative. I had just finished my sophomore year of college, and during an internship in the city

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[5] Partha Chatterjee, "Are Indian Cities Becoming Bourgeois at Last?" in *The Politics of the Governed: Reflections on Popular Politics in Most of the World* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2004), 134.
[6] Amar Farooqui, *Opium City: The Making of Early Victorian Bombay*. Gurgaon, UP: Three Essays Collective, 2016 [2006], xii-xiii.
[7] Rajnarayan Chandavarkar, *History, Culture and the Indian City: Essays*, ed. Jennifer Davis and David Washbrook (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 12, 16. See also Chandavarkar's *Origins of Industrial Capitalism in India: Business Strategies and the Working Classes in Bombay, 1900-1940* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2002 [1994]); and Meera Kosambi, *Bombay in Transition: the Growth and Social Ecology of a Colonial City, 1880-1980* (Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell International, 1986).
[8] See Sandip Hazareesingh, "Colonial Modernism and the Flawed Paradigms of Urban Renewal: Uneven Development in Bombay, 1900-1925," in *Urban History* 28, no. 2 (2001): 235-255; Nikhil Rao, *House, But No Garden: Apartment Living in Bombay's Suburbs, 1898-1964* (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 2013); Liza Weinstein, *The Durable Slum: Dharavi and the Right to Stay Put in Globalizing Mumbai* (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 2014).

that summer, I was captivated by so much of that romantic and tragic world laid out by the writers and academics. Mumbai in 2016 felt a microcosm of everything anyone had ever professed to be true about India, and yet somehow it was a microcosm on steroids. It was intoxicating and overwhelming all at once, and the varied textures scholars and creatives had used to try and capture the city felt to me like the only possible summary of its nature and past. As a result, I was drawn to different questions about Bombay and its previous lives. The path I took to exploring them upended what I thought I knew about Bombay and Mumbai, past and present.

The Historical Problem

For all their focus on the 19th and 20th centuries, historians have been conspicuously uninterested about Bombay in the 17th and 18th centuries. To someone just developing an interest in Bombay's past, it can feel as though Mumbai is a city without a pre-modern history. We might be forgiven for thinking a high-volume shipping complex and commercial center sprung fully formed from the land in time to meet the coming of the railroad and industrialized textile mill, like Athena from the head of Zeus. Chandavarkar summarized the pre-1800 history of the city in this way: "British power established itself late in western India and expanded slowly. The Company's political weakness and the relative poverty of its merchants increased its dependence on Indian merchants and dubashes."[9] Amar Farooqui said it maintained a "peripheral position" until "well into the 19th century," and was a "liability in a…fundamental sense" before the 1800s.[10]

Scholars of the British Empire in South Asia, rather than modern South Asia specifically, have often maintained this lack of interest about pre-modern Bombay. While whole forests have died to print reams of text about English and British imperialism in Bengal and South India during the 1600s and

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[9] Rajnarayan Chandavarkar, *History, Culture and the Indian City: Essays*, ed. Jennifer Davis and David Washbrook (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 16. "Dubash" was a commonly used term among early English residents in India for a translator; it is a corrupted version of (in Hindi; though similar in many other vernacular languages) the phrase *do bhāśāė*, literally "two languages."

[10] Amar Farooqui, *Opium City: The Making of Early Victorian Bombay*. Gurgaon, UP: Three Essays Collective, 2016 [2006], 4, 10.

1700s, comparatively little has been produced on western India, or Bombay in particular. P.J. Marshall largely dismissed it, described Bombay as an "impoverished backwater" throughout the 17th and 18th centuries.[11] Pamela Nightingale, who is often cited as a 20th century expert on the rise of English and British control in western India, stated that "for most of the eighteenth century Bombay…remained the unhealthiest, the poorest, and the most despised of all the English settlements." English residents there were "locked on their swampy peninsula…[and] the tight little Bombay society lived a dull and demoralized life throughout most of the eighteenth century."[12]

Over the second half of my undergraduate degree and the early years of my doctorate, I started to find this lacuna confusing, and maybe a bit suspicious. If not creating some kind of imperial apparatus in Bombay throughout the early modern period, what was the English East India Company (EIC) doing there? How and why did Bombay go from its acquisition by the English Crown to its position as a future center of South Asian industry and modernity? Could it really be a story that only started sometime in the "early Victorian" period? Bombay's historical narrative was obviously different from the widely accepted story about the Company in Bengal, but what were the reasons behind that? Was it even possible to answer such a question? Maybe there was a complete dearth of pre-19th century documents about the EIC's activities in the area. Maybe they had all rotted away because of the endemic swampiness most of the secondary texts found space to mention.

I decided to find out. Why did historians care so little about early modern Bombay? What was its role in the early modern East India Company? In the early modern English/British empire? Why did it transform precipitously—despite what appeared to be many obstacles—into the site that would become the home of modernity, industry, and the concept of the urban in modern South Asia? I explore these questions, and several more, over the course of the following work.

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[11] P.J. Marshall, *The Making and Unmaking of Empires: Britain, India, and America c. 1750-1783* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), 241.
[12] Pamela Nightingale, *Trade and Empire in Western India, 1784-1806* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1970), 12, 14.

Historiographic Approaches and the Bombay Lacuna

The reason for early modern Bombay's status as the ugly duckling of East India Company factories in the 1600s and 1700s does not, in fact, result from a lack of source material; I think the existence of this dissertation demonstrates the richness of data historians have for this fascinating place during the period under study. Rather, the lack of interest in diving deeper into Bombay's pre-1800 story springs from its uncomfortable place in the dominant historiographic narratives of South Asia and the early modern British empire.

Among historians of South Asia, the problem of national teleology has driven every trend over the last 100 years. For early postcolonial writers, it made sense to cluster historical inquiry around the question of India's (and Pakistan's) newfound national identity. Widespread access to the colonial archive was newly available after 1947, and the story of how and why independence (and its evil twin, partition) came to pass was the greatest question of moment. In answering that question, attention was initially given to the growth of liberal political institutions, such as the Indian National Congress, which eventually morphed into the political party to which Gandhi and Nehru, the heroic fathers of the Indian nation, belonged. In that context, colonial history before the mid-19th century was unimportant. Liberal political institutions and anticolonial activism were products of the 1800s, when certain South Asian actors gained access to economic capital with which to fund "modern" political activity. Access to such capital was itself a function of the development of industry in colonial India, a transformation pegged at the mid-19th century. Funnily enough, this narrative does highlight Bombay. But in doing so, it reinforces the idea that the city had no pre-industrial history.[13]

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[13] Examples of this style include D.A. Low, ed. *Congress and the Raj: Facets of the Indian Struggle, 1917-1947* (London: Heinemann, 1977); Anil Seal, *The Emergence of Indian Nationalism: Competition and Collaboration in the Later Nineteenth Century* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1968); Amiya Kumar Bagchi, *Private Investment in India, 1900-1939* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1972); the debate over Morris D. Morris' theory of South Asian economic history held in the pages of *The Indian Economic and Social History Review* 5, no. 1 (1968). There are many more articles and monographs which accept some of the basic propositions expressed by this historiographic movement even when they do not focus on the question of the Indian independence movement.

A second wave of South Asian historiography came along in the 1970s, seeking to displace the "top-down" history of the nationalist writers with a narrative that privileged the development of class conflict in South Asia under colonialism. These historians often took as read the ontological floor on which the nationalists had based their own narrative. After all, a Marxist knows that one cannot have class and class conflict without industrialization. As such, much of the work these historians did was focused on seeking out the proletariat, or proto-proletariat. There was none in Bombay before the arrival of the textile mills, whereas in Bengal, for example, there was a system of extensive landlordism shaped by the British, which could be explored long before the arrival of the jute mills. In comparison to the nationalist school, these historians also rekindled interest in the pre-colonial period, but primarily out of a desire to understand the economy of the Mughal state.[14]

Even the most recently influential school of South Asian historiography, the Subaltern Studies Group (which sought to refocus historical attention on those subjected by colonialism), is likely to downplay pre-1800 history, especially outside of Bengal. While these historians are therefore primarily interested in foregrounding a new historical actor, their analytical lens remains firmly set upon the nation. Ranajit Guha, the *doyen* of Subaltern Studies, framed the goals of the historical project as oriented toward the "*historical failure of the nation to come to its own*, a failure due to the inadequacy of the bourgeoisie as well as of the working class to lead it to a decisive victory over colonialism and a bourgeois-democratic revolution of either the classic nineteenth century type…or a more modern type under the

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[14] Marxist historians of colonial India reacting against the national movement include Bipan Chandra, *Communalism in Modern India* (New Delhi: Vikas, 1984) and Sumit Sarkar, *The Swadeshi Movement in Bengal, 1903-1908* (Ranikhet, UT: Permanent Black, 2010 [1973]). For Marxist historians working on the Mughal era, prime examples include Tapan Raychaudhuri and Irfan Habib, especially in their co-edited work, *The Cambridge Economic History of India, Volume I: c. 1200-1750* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1982); and in particular importance to this work, the highly influential article by Karen Leonard, "The 'Great Firm' Theory of the Decline of the Mughal Empire," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 21, no. 2 (1979): 151-167.

hegemony of workers and peasants, that is, a 'new democracy.'"[15] As such, these historians have little interest in digging deeper than the 19th century, as the theory of the nation was not well-established before then.

What all these historiographic schools studying South Asia share is the problem of national teleology. Even when scholars have attempted to respond to perceived lacunae in this scholarly narrative, they do so from the same teleological vantage point, privileging the coming of modernity and what is seen as a great rupture with the past. This is why South Asian scholars of 17th and 18th century European imperialism in the subcontinent are so focused on Bengal. It is in Bengal that the East India Company first began extending the British imperial state further and further into the lives of everyday Indians, and thus first brought "modernity" in its most recognized sense to India. For a historiography which revolves so exclusively around the telos of the nation and its discontents as a function of modernity, therefore, Bengal has been privileged.[16]

Historians of the British empire face a different set of problems when it comes to examining South Asia and Bombay. British imperial historians have long been enamored of positioning the "free trade" empire against the empire of "extractive colonialism," but they tend to see these two dueling forces as trajectories of different periods and/or trajectories of different regions. For example, J.R. Seeley's *The Expansion of England*—which David Armitage has called the ur-text of British imperial historiography—famously quipped that "we [Britain] seem, as it were, to have conquered and people half the world in a fit of absence of mind." This was due to Britain's focus on what Armitage has summarized as "Protestant, commercial, maritime, and free" global politics, in which trade and the struggle with France (or maybe Iberia, depending on who you ask) in the Americas produced an Atlantic empire of trade. This empire,

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[15] Ranajit Guha, "On Some Aspects of the Historiography of Colonial India," in *Selected Subaltern Studies*, ed. Ranajit Guha & Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988), 43 [italics in original].
[16] See, as examples, Ranajit Guha, *A Rule of Property for Bengal: An Essay on the Idea of Permanent Settlement* (Paris: Mouton, 1961); and the work of C.A. Bayly, especially *Rulers, Townsmen, and Bazaars: North Indian Society in the Age of British Expansion, 1770-1870* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2012 [1983]).

centered on the Atlantic world, rejected the influence of the "weak" central state.[17] For these historians, Bombay was uninteresting because the East India Company was uninteresting—a sideshow to the main events in the Atlantic world. Because none of the Company's activity in India could be defined as "free trade" empire, India was not included in the imperial story until much later, when the EIC was formally disbanded and the state-controlled Government of India took its place in 1858.

By contrast, the focus on "extractive colonialism" argued that the free trade empire was not constrained to the Atlantic littoral. Rather, it was temporally constrained to a first movement of English/British imperialism. At some point (and much of the debate is about when that point is) the empire transitioned from being one of free trade to one of economic extraction and territorial control, which required state apparatus. While the early advocate of this position was Vincent Harlow, it has many modern advocates, a number of whom came up through the "Cambridge School" of British imperial historiography. Many of these historians have been compelled by the history of the Company in India, with its 18th century subsummation of Mughal administrative state apparatus in Bengal. However, even this historiography leaves Bombay out in the cold. After all, Bombay doesn't have a true hinterland, let alone a Mughal administrative state to take control over.[18]

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17 J.R. Seeley, *The Expansion of England: Two Courses of Lectures* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1971 [1883]), 12; David Armitage, *The Ideological Origins of the British Empire* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 17, 195. See also J.H. Elliot, *Empires of the Atlantic World: Britain and Spain in America, 1492-1830* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2006); Karen Kupperman, *Providence Island, 1630-1641: The Other Puritan Colony* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1993), Stephen Saunders Webb, *The Governors-General: The English Army and the Definition of Empire, 1569-1681* (Williamsburg, VA: Omohundro Insitute, 1979), Brendan Simms, *Three Victories and a Defeat: The Rise and Fall of the First British Empire* (New York: Basic Books, 2008), Bernard Bailyn, *The Ideological Origins of the American Revolution* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1967), Jack Greene, *Peripheries and Center: Constitutional Development and the Extended Polities of the British Empire and the United States, 1607-1788* (Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press, 1986), James Henretta, *Salutary Neglect: Colonial Administration Under the Duke of Newcastle* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1972).

18 See Vincent Harlow, *The Founding of the Second British Empire, 1763-1793: Volume I, Discovery and Revolution* (New York: Longmans, Green, 1952); C.A. Bayly, *Imperial Meridian: The British Empire and the World 1780-1830* (London: Longman, 2002 [1989]), P.J. Marshall, *The Making and Unmaking of Empires: Britain, India, and America c. 1750-1783* (New York: Oxford

Finally, I would be remiss not to acknowledge the intellectual debt I owe to Philip J. Stern, who sparked my interest in this early period of English activity in India more generally. The historiography of the EIC, and of English involvement in South Asia, has almost entirely accepted Stern's suggestions about the nature of the Company in India. He has argued that the East India Company was a unitary early modern state formation operating alongside and beyond traditional conceptions of the state. Its singular goal, acted upon at all times in all places by all manner of people affiliated to the Company, was to accumulate capital. After all, it was a joint stock company. As such, the Company's late 18th century consolidation of wealth in Bengal, through their accession to the *diwani*, is represented by many as the zenith of the Company's statist ambitions. Stern's formulation seemingly exists transhistorically, in every English/British possession and factory in the Indian Ocean, throughout the entire Company period, with very little change in its unitary political economic ideology over time. In this vision, the *diwani* and the beginning of direct land tax collection is merely the culmination of a 150-year project of extractive, mercantilist political economy which has slowly, through diplomacy, conflict, and trade, sought to establish its sovereignty and thus assume the most commercially profitable possible form in the world of early-modern European empires. It's like a really sustainable rentier state.[19]

Naturally, I appreciate Stern's powerful remaking of the prior assumptions about sovereignty, India, and English/British empire in the early modern period. Clearly, the Company-state idea had legs. And, unlike the historiographies summarized above, Stern has a lot to say about pre-1800 Bombay. In many ways, Stern's approach has been the best one available for the past fifteen years. But just because

University Press, 2005); Robert Travers, *Ideology and Empire in Eighteenth Century India: The British in Bengal* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007); Daniel Baugh, *The Global Seven Years' War, 1754-1763: Britain and France in a Great Power Struggle* (London: Longman, 2011); and many scholars of the East India Company in South Asia, including K.N. Chaudhuri, William Dalrymple, Holden Furber, Om Prakash, and Lakshmi Subramanian.

19 Philip J. Stern, *The Company-State: Corporate Sovereignty and the Early Modern Foundations of the British Empire in India* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011); Ibid, *Empire, Incorporated: The Corporations that Built British Colonialism* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press, 2023); also Andrew Phillips and JC Sharman, *Outsourcing Empire: How Company-States Made the Modern World* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2020).

it's the best one out there doesn't mean that it's perfect, or something historians should continue following blindly. Stern's framework flattens the politics *in* and *about* the Company to the politics *of* the Company-state, with that unitary political and intellectual framework which can be analyzed as a single entity. Hence, a rich and colorful history of debate and disagreement becomes, in Stern's narrative, so many examples of the Company's quest to protect their state power through military might.

My own conception of the East India Company, while certainly indebted to Stern, is meaningfully different, as will become evident below. What this brief historiographic overview has tried to show is that pre-1800 Bombay has always received little attention from scholars from scholars because it has always appeared, at first glance, a causally unimportant outlier; something odd, different, and irreconcilable with the triumphal story of Company wealth extraction in Bengal (whether that is seen as the first step towards nationalism or the transition point of English empire). But in fact, I believe Bombay's irreconcilability is exactly why we need to read Bombay back into the history of the Company and the empire. Bombay's difference and oddity is a sign of something important, of the key role Bombay plays in foiling dominant historiographies. We should see the complex of factors that often define Company-era Bombay as a sign of competing political, economic, and ideological goals for Bombay, and by extension the Company and English/British empire more generally. These competing goals and factions existed everywhere, at every level of the empire in the 17th and 18th century. Recognizing that truth is an exciting turning point in historical understanding.

My Claim and my Approach

What I found upon examining the historical record for myself was quite different from all those historiographic trends. Rather than a place without pre-1800 history, I found early modern Bombay to be a rich site of ideological, political, and economic contestation such as that which characterized every other site of British/English empire in the 1600s and 1700s. Specifically, I argue here that Bombay's early modern transformation began as soon as the Company took possession of the site in 1668. In contrast to the dominant historiography discussed above, Bombay was always a part of the English/British imperial state. Furthermore, I argue that Bombay's early imperial development was only effective when it was pursued as an alternative to the Bengal-centric model of territorial, militarized growth of English/British power, rather than as preparation for it. In so doing, I acknowledge the role of unique geographic and political-economic contexts in Bombay's early modern growth and change. It is true that Bombay does not have an easily accessible and export-productive hinterland in the way Madras and Calcutta did. Similarly, only a fool would ignore the impact of Bombay's liminal legal status as a nominal crown colony leased to a trading company chartered by the crown. And the ecological reality of Bombay, which truly was swampy and estuarial, played and important role in its trajectory. However, these particularities combined with a radical efflorescence of ideas and debates over political economy throughout the English/British empire during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, rather than determining anything by themselves. It was the combination of both factors—constraining context and expanding arena of possible responses to it—which generated highly specific goals for Bombay in the minds of East India Company Directors, employees, and interlocutors in South Asia and across the empire.

These figures, working in conversation across a politically contested space of policy-making, created Bombay as a site of alternative British imperial activity in South Asia, compared to the Company's other factories. This activity in Bombay was defined by a capital- and labor-intensive infrastructural investment policy, rather than the territory- and extraction-oriented policies of the other factories. This dissertation therefore argues that historical stakeholders across empire contested Bombay's future between 1665 and 1750, successfully crafting an impactful, distinctive version of English/British imperial expansion and state-making in the region. This work therefore examines Bombay's history under the East India Company. In contrast to earlier historiographic approaches, I argue that Bombay's early modern trajectory is crucial to our understanding of English/British imperial development in South Asia and a broader geographical context.

In this work, I therefore follow the influences of several other historiographic movements, not inherently related to the history of South Asia or early modern Britain and its empire. Chief among these is a movement in the history of state-making which has turned away from the classical, bellicist understanding of states making war and wars making states. For decades, historians and historical sociologists traced this crucial relationship between conflict and the "sinews of power."[20] But in recent years, scholars have challenged this dominant narrative, frustrated (as I was) by historical cases which didn't fit the dominant narrative. Instead, they have searched for evidence of "developmental" state making, or state making in the "public interest." It is this work which has helped me think through the connections between governance and infrastructural development which are key to the second half of this project.[21] Relatedly, I find myself drawn to historiography which challenges common geographic boundaries and temporal periodizations. Most useful has been Steve Pincus, Tiraana Bains, and A. Zuercher Reichardt's call to "think the empire whole," and trace connections across sites of British imperialism.[22] Relatedly, I have been inspired by explanatory narratives which are applied to only domestic change in England, or only the Atlantic World, and have sought to consider those ideas' implications for the English/British imperial project in India.[23] Ultimately, I seek continuities across common breaking points in the history of British imperialism and South Asia and find that my work is much the richer for it.

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[20] See Charles Tilly, *Coercion, Capital, and European States, AD 990-1992* (Cambridge, MA: Blackwell, 1992); Ibid, "Reflections on the History of European State Making," in *The Formation of Nation States in Europe*, ed. Charles Tilly (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1975); John Brewer, *The Sinews of Power: War, Money, and the English State 1688-1783* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1988); James Henretta, *Salutary Neglect: Colonial Administration Under the Duke of Newcastle* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1972); Michael J. Braddick, *State Formation in Early Modern England, c.1550-1700* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2000).

[21] Steve Pincus and James Robinson, "Wars and State-Making Reconsidered: The Rise of the Developmental State," *Annales Histoire, Sciences Sociales* 71, no. 1 (2016): 5-36; A.G. Hopkins, "Back to the Future: From National History to Imperial History," *Past and Present* 164 (1999): 198-243; and Wenkai He, *Public Interest and State Legitimation: Early Modern England, Japan, and China* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2023), have been particularly helpful.

[22] Steve Pincus, Tiraana Bains, and A. Zuercher Reichardt, "Thinking the Empire Whole," *History Australia* 16, no. 4 (2019): 610-637.

[23] Notable here are the historiographies of the financial revolution and growth of the stock market in England which crop up frequently in the following pages. Also the work of H.V. Bowen, Robert Brenner, Bill Bulman, Alison Games, Henry Horwitz, Sarah Kinkel, William A. Pettigrew, Craig Rose, Brent S. Sirota, Paul Slack, Abigail L. Swingen, Amy Watson, Kathleen Wilson, and Koji Yamamoto cited in the bibliography.

Finally, I want to call attention to the methodological approach I've taken here. Despite my quibbles with Philip Stern's approach to the study of the early history of the EIC, I've long been drawn to a point he makes in the introduction to *The Company-State*. Stern writes that he seeks to move the EIC, "along with companies, corporations, and a variety of non-national political communities more generally," into "the center of its own political and intellectual history." Stern encourages us to take "the early Company as a body politic on its own terms, neither tethered to supposedly broader national histories nor as an imitation, extension, or reflection of the national state." Therefore, Stern wants to explore "neither a model of state and empire formation that is a projection of the will of a pre-formed, imperial center outward nor a discussion of the ways in which the British state and national identity emerged through the imperial experience."[24] It is such a shame that Stern's own work doesn't fully capitalize on this idea, because I believe it is key to my own project here. To grapple with the ideas and claims I've set out below, I have immersed myself in the records of the East India Company. Those corporate records form the vast bulk of this project's source base. Following the call of Stern, I wanted to emphasize this rich documentation after understanding just how powerful and important the history of pre-1800 Bombay really was. This emphasis is especially important because the EIC archive in this period is a deeply political-ideological source base, with much to say about the lives and beliefs of the Company's historical actors. It is not a dry collection of business records. I made a conscious decision, following Stern's heartfelt plea, to treat the Company seriously as an object of political historical study. Though I still think I bring some nuance to his perspective, which unfortunately emphasizes uniformity over the time, space, and hierarchy differences in political, economic, and ideological opinions of the actors within the Company's own archive.

[24] Philip J. Stern, *The Company-State: Corporate Sovereignty and the Early Modern Foundation of the British Empire in India* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), 6.

There is a clear heuristic to this project, taken from the EIC's own corporate overlords: "there can never be so much smoke without some fire."[25] The assumption not only applies to the idea that Bombay before 1800 had a story to tell despite what prior historiography might lead one to believe, but also to where in the voluminous records of the city's early years one might look for insight. A remarkable quality of nearly all early modern East India Company records produced in India lies in their paranoid, sniping, scandalous patterns. In the small community of EIC employees who lived and worked full-time in India for periods of years, resentments and disagreements blossomed and spread alongside a Company policy of striving for unanimous decision-making and peaceable harmony among their employees. Such an environment frequently produced corruption scandals and summary dismissals of employees, challenging the Company's growth as an administrative and merchanting body through disrupting long-term projects and institutional memory. In the past, this reality has been examined as a function of self-interest and the demand for personal enrichment in South Asia.[26] It was also commonly seen by historians as a problem which only needed analysis in the later 18th and 19th centuries, when the Company was formally under the oversight of Parliament and responsible for the extraction of wealth from large swathes of Indian land.[27] Such an approach broadly followed the perspective historians took on questions of corruption and self-interest in the metropole and the Atlantic colonies.[28]

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[25] British Library (hereafter BL) India Office Records (hereafter IOR) E/3/105, "Court of Directors in London to President and Council of Bombay," 12 March 1731, f. 243.

[26] Notable examples include Timothy Davies, "English Private Trade on the West Coast of India, c. 1680-1740," *Itinerario* 38, no. 2 (2014); Holden Furber, *Bombay Presidency in the Mid-Eighteenth Century* (New York: Asia Publishing House, 1965); P.J. Marshall, *East Indian Fortunes: The British in Bengal in the Eighteenth Century* (Oxford, UK: Clarendon Press, 1976); and Ian Bruce Watson, *Foundation for Empire: English Private Trade in India, 1659-1760* (New Delhi: Vikas, 1980).

[27] Especially Nicholas B. Dirks, *The Scandal of Empire: India and the Creation of Imperial Britain* (Boston: Belknap Press, 2006); Nicholas Hoover Wilson, *Modernity's Corruption: Empire and Morality in the Making of British India* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2023).

[28] Mark Knights' *Trust and Distrust: Corruption in Office in Britain and its Empire* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2021), is an exceptional primer which furthermore includes a remarkably thorough bibliographical essay.

By contrast, I seek moments of scandal and alleged corruption in the early modern history of Company Bombay as a record of deeply held disagreements about the role of the city in the Company's (and the British empire's) approach to holistic imperial growth and development. I have found that the appropriate boundaries of self-interest and personal enrichment were a point of ideological contention within and outside the Company in the early modern era about which reasonable people could disagree. Furthermore, within the EIC, opinions about what did and did not constitute corruption and appropriate behavior appear highly variable across the Company's hierarchy, across geographic locations, and across time. The positions held by individuals within the Company on issues of private trade, "interloping," and even the right way to write correspondence or compute accounts rarely fell out along straightforward lines in my research. I struggled to clearly identify Bombay-Bengal divisions on such issues (at least before 1750), let alone employee-director divisions. On the contrary, my examination into individuals' positions on such topics showed they tended to cleave along more ideological lines across regions and hierarchies. As such, disagreements on such issues helped me illuminate debate over the role and importance of a specific factory to the Company, the Company to England/Britain, or even the India trade and imperial expansion to the Enlightenment project of man. I find careful examination of specific instances of scandal, cover-up, explosive disagreement, and intra-Company conflict within and around Bombay has enabled me to uncover the distinctive and hitherto unrecognized constellation of early modern Bombay's impacts on the East India Company and English/British imperialism *tout court*. I encourage future work in the study of the early modern trading companies to take such squabbling and wars of words seriously and consider mining them for genuine insight into the complex management of a new and powerful imperial venture, as I have.

This Work

This project comprises this introduction, four argumentative chapters, and a conclusion. The argument is largely chronological and examines varied case studies which seek to illuminate my claims. Chapter Two, "Keigwin's Rebellion: Imperial Politics and Policy Contestation in Bombay," situates us in early Company-controlled Bombay. I demonstrate the earliest EIC plans for Bombay in this chapter and trace their ideological alignment with emerging proto-Whig ideas of wealth generation focused on manufacturing, freer trade, and population growth rather than land. I move from these early years to explore how the Company's plans for Bombay changed as the political makeup of the EIC's staff and corporate Directors changed and locate Tory opponents to the initial idea of Bombay's place in the English imperial project. These Tories themselves found opponents within and without the Company's employees and corporate decision-makers, leading directly to Keigwin's Revolt in 1683-1684. Though the rebellion was put down and Bombay's administration returned to Tory officials, this chapter shows how its existence demonstrated the influence of alternative political economic and ideological theories of empire and growth, and how those theories could have a genuine impact of Company policy. The rebellion left behind a roadmap for ongoing resistance to Tory policy and politics, right as western India entered a crisis-ridden period.

Chapter Three, "The Bombay Theater of the Anglo-Mughal War and the Crisis of Monopoly," examines the staying power of that roadmap in that period of crisis. The chapter is primarily a demonstration of the geographically differentiated outcomes of the Anglo-Mughal War (1686-1690) in South Asia, with special attention to how the conflict unfolded on the west coast. This chapter thus shows how contextual factors and the Company's employees' response to them created a disastrous outcome in Bombay and Surat, despite the conflict being seen as generally successful from the viewpoint of Madras or Bengal. I also do some work linking heavily siloed historiographies, showing how the war in Bombay and Surat contributed directly to the loss of the Company's monopoly in the metropole between 1690 and 1698. I end by gesturing to the long aftermath of the conflict, particularly in western India, and suggesting its role in perpetuating the viability of an alternate model of imperial development in Bombay.

In Chapter Four, "Building Bombay's Church: Religion, Governance, and Infrastructure," the text shifts gears, moving from tracing the political, economic, and ideological dimensions of political acts in the subcontinent to examining the politics of actual infrastructural development in Bombay. The first piece of "civic infrastructure" I examine is Bombay's Anglican Church. Begun in the 1670s, the church wasn't finished until 1718. As a result, tracing its construction is a useful lens on how the Company's governmentality (and that of the English/British empire in general) shifted with the political and ideological changes within and without the Company. The history of the movement to build Bombay's church is the history of this relationship and allows exploration of the religious aspect of early modern English/British imperial politics.

Finally, in Chapter Five, "The Politics of Bombay's 18th Century Dockyards: Western India and Partisan Imperial Policy," I explore the long history of attempts to build Bombay's shipping infrastructure. Rather than focusing on the materiality of the dockyard as an infrastructure project, this chapter examines the complex debates which swirled around Bombay's docking and shipping infrastructure. These debates changed over the course of Bombay's first six decades of Company control, leading to investment in Bombay's infrastructure around the mid-18th century. It ends with a short meditation on the role of the Parsi minority community in Bombay's early history, illuminating a complex political field in the region which extends well beyond the politics in and of the Company.

This dissertation began as a question about the lack of histories of pre-1800 Bombay. I hope what I present here has, at the very least, shown how crucial the history of early modern Bombay is, both on its own merits and as a key case of early modern English/British imperial expansion and change. Furthermore, I contend that it advances a specific methodological approach, taking seriously the politics of the Company's various factions and interlocutors. I look forward to continuing to grow the scholarship and contentions I make below, and offer them in the spirit of ever-growing, holistic understanding of our world and its endlessly varied human past.

Keigwin's Rebellion: Imperial Politics and Policy Contestation in Bombay

Introduction

In many ways, Captain Richard Keigwin led an ordinary life for an English imperial subject in the 17th century. Born in Cornwall, probably in the 1630s or early 1640s, he served in the Royal Navy for most of the 1660s and 1670s. He earned his promotion to captain from Prince Rupert at the start of the Third Anglo-Dutch War.[1] He was among the small fleet of English who surprised the Dutch East India Company at St Helena in 1673, leading a dramatic landing of men in Prosperous Bay. Keigwin then stayed on in St. Helena briefly as a planter, and eventually Company governor. He formally joined the Company's service in 1674 and was assigned to the military garrison at Bombay, with the privilege of being a member of the governing Council.[2] While serving Bombay he engaged in military skirmishes, adjudicated disputes as a Justice of the Peace, and ultimately reached the position of third in the Council. When he died in 1690, it was once again as a naval captain, leading an attack on St. Kitts in the War of the Grand Alliance on the same ship, the *Assistance*, which first brought him to St. Helena.[3] Despite this record of imperial engagement and military service, sailing the Atlantic and Indian Oceans on behalf of crown and Company, Keigwin is primarily known to historians as the leader and namesake of an uprising in Bombay, begun in late 1683 and ended, after much negotiation, almost a year later. It's a surprising disjuncture. Who was the true Richard Keigwin? Was he a dedicated agent of

[1] The National Archives (henceforth TNA): PRO, PROB 6/66, 167f.

[2] British Library India Office Records (henceforth BL IOR) E/3/37, "Gerald Aungier and Council at Suvālī to East India Company in London," 22 January 1677, f. 165v; BL IOR/E/3/89, "East India Company in London to President and Council at Surat," 15 March 1681, f. 180v.

[3] TNA, CO 28/1, "James Kendall in Barbados to Charles Talbot, Earl of Shrewsbury," 26 June 1690, f. 67r; Ibid, "Admiral Lawrence Wright to James Kendall," 24 June 1690, f. 83v.

empire, or a charismatic, rabblerousing malcontent seeking personal fame and fortune? Was it possible to be both?

To answer these questions, scholars need to understand why Keigwin's Rebellion happened. Why did Richard Keigwin, with the "unanimous" support of Bombay's residents, seize control by force of the factory's governing body, its military power, and its finances? Why did he declare Bombay a free port, and set about rapidly changing its modes of administration and commerce? These questions remain unanswered because Keigwin's Rebellion received shockingly little historical inquiry for decades. This historiographic lacuna stemmed from the misguided assumptions of earlier scholarship on the nature of the early modern English empire. These assumptions included the belief that the East India Company was a mere corporate body of traders, pursuing profits.[4] As a result, discontent among Company employees was explained by late wages, or the personal unpopularity of individual administrators. There was nothing political or debatable about the Company's praxis, only complaints about its individual executives.[5] 21st-Century scholarship did give some ideological shrift to Keigwin's Rebellion, and to early modern Bombay more generally, but it still struggled to accurately represent the trajectory of English Bombay's earliest history. This work continued to ascribe the true reason for the rebellion to the Company's "attempts to reduce military expenses…declining real pay…brute force and personal retribution." While it acknowledged that Keigwin and his

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[4] See KN Chaudhuri, *The English East India Company: The Study of an Early Joint-Stock Company, 1600-1640* (London: F. Cass, 1965); Holden Furber, *Rival Empires of Trade in the Orient, 1600-1800* (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1976, 31-78; Vincent T. Harlow, *The Founding of the Second British Empire, 1763-1793*, Vol. I (New York: Longman, Green 1952; and others.

[5] For the account of Keigwin's Rebellion which follows these conventions, see Ray Strachey and Oliver Strachey, *Keigwin's Rebellion, 1683-1684: An Episode in the History of Bombay* (Oxford, UK: Clarendon Press, 1916).

colleagues' writings were "fundamentally disputing the Company's vision" for Bombay and contained some "ideological position," it failed to understand why such positions on the part of the rebels were important. Since the government established by Keigwin and his colleagues "did not in fact look all that different" to the one described in 1671 by the Company's then-Governor, Gerald Aungier, the reason for rebellion could not be a real dispute over the Company's policies and administration.[6]

This second historiographic explanation for Keigwin's Rebellion comes much closer to the truth, rejecting the claim that the Company was merely a joint stock of merchants, and emphasizing that it was doing serious imperial work. However, it still places early modern English imperial affairs in India in a vacuum, and neglects the highly contested trans-imperial political-economic disagreements which drove changes at all levels of East India Company administration in the 1670s and 1680s. Keigwin and his allies were not narrowly coopting a legalistic argument based in "the language of English subjecthood" to resist "local colonial authority."[7] They were broadly challenging the political-economic trajectory of English empire in India, as numerous other political conflicts around the English imperial sphere challenged ascendant visions of the English empire throughout the late Stuart period.[8] Keigwin's rebellion

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[6] Philip J. Stern, *The Company-State: Corporate Sovereignty and the Early Modern Foundations of the British Empire in India* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), 64-67.

[7] Ibid, 65.

[8] For discussion of these conflicts within the island of Britain, see Tim Harris, *Politics Under the Later Stuarts: Party Conflict in a Divided Society, 1660-1715* (New York: Longman, 1993), 80-116; and Steve Pincus, *1688: The First Modern Revolution* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2009), 93-94, 104-116, 150-153, 413; for discussion of similarly-inspired rejections of colonial policy in the Atlantic region (most notably Bacon's Rebellion), see Edmund S. Morgan, *American Slavery, American Freedom* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2003 [1975]): 250-292; and Stephen Saunders Webb, *1676: The End of American Independence* (New York: Knopf, 1984); for the contemporaneous 1684 anti-East India Company revolt on St. Helena, see British Library India Office Records (henceforth BL IOR), MSS Eur D 300, Elizabeth Colton et. al, "The Most Deplorable Case of the Poor Distressed Planters in the Island of St. Helena" (n.p., after 1684), ff.

was, like so many revolutions and rebellions of its age, a reaction to a reaction, another step in a political-economic ideological conflict over the future of English empire. Scholarship has used the similarity of Keigwin and Aungier's policy proposals regarding Bombay to discredit the meaningful ideological content of Keigwin's actions. But the presence of such similarity proves the *opposite* point, showing how contestation over the imperial future had swung the visions and policies of Bombay's administrators between diametrically opposed poles in the late Stuart period. Aungier's vision and policies during his time in control of Bombay reflected the political-economic, ideological priorities he and his allies had for India in the 1670s. It privileged a Whiggish model of imperial expansion based on capital investment in infrastructure and the attracting of a productive residential population to a previously sparsely and irregularly inhabited island. It promised friendship and fair treatment to all the other regional polities and nations, secure in its belief that the land on which Bombay itself sat was rightfully the suzerainty of the Company under the aegis of the English crown. Zero-sum political economy was unnecessary in this vision, as there was potentially unlimited imperial growth, development, and wealth available in Bombay.[9]

But Aungier's government, the first formal administration introduced in Company Bombay, was not the same as the administration against which Bombay's residents rebelled in 1683. By the time of Keigwin's rebellion, the imperial political-economic model which underpinned Aungier's decision-making had been rejected in favor of a different direction. For the new Company regime of the 1680s, led by Josiah Child in London and John Child in western

1-2; BL IOR E/3/44, ff. 208-209, 211-218, 221-222, 225-226, 254-255, 264-269, 274-275; BL Add. MS 22185, f.15; Stephen A. Royle, *The Company's Island: St. Helena, Company Colonies and the Colonial Endeavor* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2007), 103-126.

[9] See Steve Pincus, *1688: The First Modern Revolution* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2009), 368-372.

India, the Company's imperial role was to extract wealth from India, focused on a zero-sum game of specie accumulation. In this vision, there was a limit on potential wealth which required vicious cost-cutting and competition between regional polities and actors instead of collaboration. Capital outlay for Bombay's infrastructure and the reinvestment of Company revenues in India for growth promotion were ideas incompatible with this model[10]. For people like Keigwin, who had served under both Aungier and his successors, the increasingly cheap and autocratic turn the Company was taking in Bombay was shocking and wrong. Not only did it disrupt contemporary legal understandings about English subjecthood, but it more importantly foreclosed on the opportunities for regional growth and personal enrichment Company servants had worked for within Aungier's model. It was the realization that the future they had seen for Bombay in the 1670s was slipping away in the 1680s which caused the rebellion. Keigwin and his colleagues were attempting a forced reversion to their preferred vision of English imperial activity. In a sense, they were creating themselves new bosses, same as the old bosses—but only because the interim bosses had been so radically, unpalatably different.

"As the People and Trade Augments, so doth the Revenue in Proportion:" 1670 -1677[11]

Gerald Aungier lies at the heart of early English Bombay's story. Born in Ireland in the later 1630s, he first arrived in western India as a Company servant around 1661.[12] At that time,

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[10] Steve Pincus, *1688: The First Modern Revolution* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2009), 372-382.

[11] IOR/E/3/34, "Gerald Aungier at Bombay to the East India Company in London," 15 Jan 1674, f. 340r.

[12] See TNA PRO PROB 11/357, sig. 82; BL Landsdowne MS 823, ff. 218, 241, 263, 289, 295; BL IOR/B/26, "Court Minutes," 11 July 1660, f.275r; BL IOR/E/3/27, "Commission and Instructions from Sir George Oxenden to Gerald Aungier," Johanna, 7 October 1662, ff. 133r-136r, "George Oxenden aboard HMS Dunkirk to Sir George Oxenden at Surat," 26 Sept 1662, 145r-146r, "James Ley, Earl of Marlborough at Bombay to Sir George Oxenden at Surat," 26 September 1662, 147r; C.J.B. Aungier, "Gerald Aungier of the East India Company," *Notes & Queries* 146 (1924): 147-151, 165-168, 185-187, 204-208.

Aungier had few personal connections on the Company's London-based corporate board, known as the Court of Committees. However, he was quickly taken under the wing of the well-connected, long-time Company servant George Oxenden. By October 1661, Oxenden was the Company's Governor in Surat, the highest-ranked Company employee in Western India.[13] In this role, Oxenden advanced a policy of opportunities for Company servants to engage in personally enriching "private trade," and presided over the transfer of Bombay from the crown to Company administration in 1668. He entrusted Gerald Aungier with sensitive trips between Surat, Bombay, and Goa during this time, and believed Aungier shared and would advocate his policy position about the political economy of Company trade in India.[14]

Few scholars have seriously engaged the extent to which the Company's imperial policies were a topic of debate within the Company itself during the later Stuarts, preferring to see the Company as a univocal body without internal politics.[15] Careful attention to the details of the

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[13] BL IOR/B/26, "Court Minutes," 25 October 1661, f. 417.

[14] BL IOR/E/3/27, "Commission and Instructions from Sir George Oxenden to Gerald Aungier," Johanna, 7 October 1662, ff. 133r-136r; Ibid, "Diary of Transactions by Henry Gary and Gerald Aungier at Goa," 10-27 October 1662, ff. 165r-168r; BL Add MS 40701, "Sir George Oxenden at Surat to Henry Gary in Bombay, 6 September 1667, ff. 21r-21v; BL Add MS 40707, "Sir George Oxenden at Surat to Jonathan Ashe," 10 September 1666, ff. 33v-34r; Ibid, "Sir George Oxenden at Surat to Sir George Smith," 10 September 1666, ff. 44v; Ibid, "Sir George Oxenden at Surat to Sir William Rider," 10 September 1666, ff. 45v-46r; Ibid, "Sir George Oxenden and Gerald Aungier at Surat to Alderman John Jolliffe in London," 10 September 1666, f. 63r.

[15] The historiographic impact of scholarship on Restoration-era imperial absolutism is partly to blame for this lack of interest. See Gabriel Glickman, "Empire, Popery, and the Fall of English Tangier, 1662-1684," *The Journal of Modern History* 87 (2015): 247-280; Stephen Saunders-Webb, *The Governors General: The English Army and the Definition of the Empire, 1569-1681* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1979), 447-459; Steve Pincus, *1688: The First Modern Revolution* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2009), 372-381; James M Vaughn, "John Company Armed: The English East India Company, the Anglo-Mughal War and Absolutist Imperialism, c.1675-1690," *Britain and the World* 11, no 1 (2018): 101-137; Robert Brenner, *Merchants and Revolution: Commercial Change, Political Conflict, and London's Overseas Traders, 1550-1653* (London: Verso, 2003), 51-91, 638-716; Abigail Swingen, *Competing Visions of Empire: Labor, Slavery, and the Origins of the British Atlantic Empire* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2015) 56-81.

Company's voluminous 17th-century records do not support this belief. The Company's Court of Committees members following the Stuart restoration included people from "old merchant" families which supported the crown like Anthony Bateman, Thomas Bludworth, and Stephen Langham. However, they shared the Court with "new merchants" and their scions who largely made their initial wealth through the high-risk, high-reward American trade before gaining acceptance in the Companies. This group included people like George Smith, the Thompson brothers, and the Willoughby family. The Court of Directors at the Restoration was therefore a site of convergence for merchants of different backgrounds with decidedly different experiences of the immediate past. This was the era of Clarendon's chancellorship, when many influential voices in English imperial politics were religious nonconformists and former parliamentarians, sharing the sphere of political debate with lifelong royalists. The makeup of the East India Company's governing body was much the same.[16]

George Oxenden was also a site of convergence regarding possible imperial futures in India. Though it earned him many enemies, in the mid-1660s he fought against growing calls for a stricter monopoly of Company business among the EIC's employees in India. Many on the Court of Committees in the 1660s were men who had already made their personal fortunes and were now seeing the political-economic expediency of cracking down on opportunities for others to do so while abroad. This turn towards more absolute and extractive empire was an important component of Restoration imperial politics.[17] During the Restoration, the crown found itself

[16] For a thorough examination of the prevalence of formerly Parliamentarian leanings in the Clarendon administration, see Steve Pincus, *Protestantism and Patriotism: Ideologies and the Making of English Foreign Policy, 1650-1668* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1996).
[17] See footnote 13, as well as Bruce G. Carruthers, *City of Capital: Politics and Markets in the English Financial Revolution* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1996) 137-159; C.D. Chandaman, *The English Public Revenue, 1660-1688* (Oxford, UK: Clarendon Press, 1975), 9-

wary of parliament's power over the English imperial state's wealth. In the absolutist monarchies where the Stuarts had found refuge during the interregnum, the monarch was fully in control of the state's wealth. The same could not be said for England, where the parliament traditionally controlled most forms of taxation and expenditure. This had been one of the flashpoints which led to the English Civil Wars, and the end of the first Stuart era. Charles II's workaround, already ideologically present in the 1660s if not fully implemented until the 1670s, was to accrue as much taxation as possible to the crown-controlled office of customs and excise. This office controlled import taxes (customs) and sales taxes (excise). As such, one of the crown's natural political-economic allies became the East India Company, which imported by far the largest quantities of foreign goods, as well as the most valuable ones. While the Company had always derived much of its legitimacy and influence from the crown-issued joint-stock charter and letters patent which incorporated it, it did not always commit clearly to the goals of the crown when those goals diverged from the opinions of parliament.[18] Starting in the 1660s, however, the Company found itself deeply divided over the crown's increasing interest in forging a political-economic alliance. Some of the Company's corporate heads in London and employees abroad wanted to throw in their lot with the renewed power of the crown. Others rejected the alliance, believing that the crown's plan to assert a more powerful Company monopoly would irreparably damage the prospects of the Company's growth and opportunities for sustainable imperial wealth generation in India.

76; P.G.M. Dickson, *The Financial Revolution in England: A Study in the Development of Public Credit, 1688-1756* (New York: St. Martin's, 1967), 3-39.

[18] See Rupali Mishra, *A Business of State: Commerce, Politics, and the Birth of the East India Company* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2018), 17-34, 149-177, 242-302.

George Oxenden was a powerful example of the latter position. He was comfortable engaging his ideological allies and opponents in India and England, utilizing a trans-imperial network of friends and relatives to push his side of the political-economic debate. He wrote impassioned letters to members of this community defending himself and his view of the importance of freer trade to imperial growth in India. Some in the Company in London "lay a heavy charge on me for a great private trader," he wrote to Christopher Willoughby in December of 1665. These people were "setting out how destructive it is to them in the carrying of it on, as the loss of ships, the taking up of…minds and time, the neglect of the Company's affairs…which…might redound to their prejudice." But Oxenden defended his "particular trade," writing "it's true I made some voyages to Persia and Basra…but all these vessels were laden upon freight with goods received from the merchants of this country." Moreover, his ventures were not universally profitable. "Wherefore," Oxenden wrote, "those that have thus wronged me cannot make it out [as true], except they suggest to the Committees that those goods I laded on my ships upon freight were not really so, but properly belonging to myself, than which nothing is more false." Even with this stringent defense, Oxenden was sure to note that he *would* have made great personal profits, had not the market in the Indian Ocean been depressed: "it was not for want of liberty from the Company or a desire in myself that [prevented] me from making an honest improvement of my time," he wrote.[19]

Oxenden expounded much further on the same topic in a letter to the great Whig merchant and politician Thomas Papillon in September of 1666. He noted that Papillon was "one that did take some pains in the confirming me in this employment, when my ill-wishers

[19] BL Add MS 40707, "Sir George Oxenden to Christopher Willoughby," 30 December 1665, ff. 3r-3v.

would have deposed me after [their Court of Committees] election, and I hope you will continue to vindicate me 'til I shall give just cause by any unworthy action prejudicial to the Company's interest." He then listed off the same "backbiting slander[s]" he wrote to Willoughby about and insisted that he had "never meddled with a farthing of your [the Company's] estate since I came abroad, and if I had your books must have showed [it], and your accountant known it." Oxenden reminded Papillon that "as I have formerly told you, I have not traded by reason of the badness of the markets, and for no other cause. For I need not trade privately, or will but openly when I do, because in me, it is neither breach of promise [n]or indentures, for I am free to do it." Furthermore, Oxenden claimed that "my labors herein have not been fruitless, but redounded to your profit and the nation's honor, which also helps to the better and thriftier carrying out your affairs amongst these people." Such offenses, Oxenden noted, hastened his desire to quit the Company and retire.[20]

While advocating a freer trade agenda in his letters, George Oxenden was an old-fashioned Company employee. He saw the work of the company as the work of distinct investments in trade in foreign goods and felt that the best way to accomplish that work was in the promotion of freer trade for Company employees. Rather than presuming that the Company would serve as a regional administrative body constitutive of part of the global English imperial structure, Oxenden framed the importance of his position in terms of the Company's employees. For example, in a letter to Sir Arthur Ingram, Jr, who seemed to be well-known to Oxenden, the governor of Surat wrote of the "sad condition of these young men now in your [the Company's] service." Oxenden believed that "both they and their parents are very much deceived in their

[20] BL Add MS 40707, "Sir George Oxenden to Mr. Thomas Papillon," 10 September 1666, ff. 30v-31r.

expectations" of advancement in the Company's employ. "If there be not some course taken for the enlargement of trade whereby these young men may find preferment," Oxenden wrote, "it is better they were at plough at home…for in the condition the Company now stands, there is no considerable employment of above four or five persons at most." Oxenden felt that "as the case is now, [our business] shall not persuade any gentlemen to enlist his sons in the Company's service could he either give or procure him any the most inferior employment at home."[21] He wrote to an old friend in the Company's employ, Gyffard, that he hoped the Second Anglo-Dutch War might help alleviate this lack of opportunity for English merchants by opening new markets for them. This would "give good an honorable employment to…many younger brothers of good families whose portions are in the land of the living," Oxenden claimed. "there are brave and worthy employments to enter upon in these parts of the world," Oxenden averred, and "my greatest ambition was that I might have seen the trade settled and enlarged for the future flourishing of our nation, and preferment of young men, and so returned with peace and contentment to my native country (and wait the hours that none of us shall escape) to be laid with my fathers in peace."[22]

George Oxenden's brother Henry told him his biggest supporters on the Court of Committees back in London in 1666 were "Samuel Barnardiston, Sir William Thompson, [Christopher] Boone, [William] Rider, [John] Mascall, [Thomas] Papillon, [Francis] Clarke, Sir Andrew Riccard, yea, and [John] Jolliffe too." As Henry Oxenden framed the list in his letter, "I recommend none but Presbyters." Here, "Presbyter" was a shorthand for individuals who tended toward a proto-Whiggish politics focused on expanding and liberalizing the Company's trade,

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[21] BL Add MS 40707, "Sir George Oxenden to Sir Arthur Ingram, Jr" 10 September 1666, ff. 41r-41v.
[22] Ibid, "Sir George Oxenden to [unstated] Gyffard," 10 September 1666, ff. 47r-47v.

rather than making its monopoly ever more explicit and enforceable. Henry took care to remind his brother in India that he had many "friends of another stamp," or different religious background, who were at that point "the ruling men" of the Company. Though these actors were not obvious allies for George Oxenden, a diehard Church of England man and devout royalist, they were the best choice to support and advance George's ideas about Bombay and Western India. At the end of Oxenden's long career with the Company, his opinions on the corporation's best policy for the region now matched more with men who shared little else in common with him.[23] Many of the men Henry listed fell under the label of "new merchant," marking them as men who had made their money by skirting the boundaries of crown authority and backing Parliament in the English Civil Wars.

Though it was apparently difficult for George Oxenden to accept, it makes sense to historians that such men would side with a pro-growth in trade position on the best policy for western India. After all, in the immediately preceding 1650s the imperial interests of the expanded, stronger English state finally aligned with the complex of new merchants who privileged investing money and time in risky imperial ventures.[24] While the English imperial

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[23] British Library Add. MS 40712, Henry Oxenden to George Oxenden, 1 April 1666, 8r. In fact not every man on Henry's list has been consistently identified as a Presbyterian by later historians, and not every man on the list was hugely powerful in the Company at the time, but as a united coalition of Court members, linked by political economic commitments, they still wielded significant influence; cf. Steve Pincus, *Protestantism and Patriotism: Ideologies and the Making of English Foreign Policy, 1650-1668* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 327n63, which takes the assertions of the Oxendens in England about the makeup of the Company by religious persuasion at face value.

[24] For the fullest explanation of this process, see Robert Brenner, *Merchants and Revolution: Commercial Change, Political Conflict, and London's Overseas Traders, 1550-1653* (London: Verso, 2003). The best specific example of this new alignment was the Cromwellian invasion of Jamaica known as the "Western Design," which was championed by the Protectorate Committee for the Western Design, a body which included Andrew Riccard, Maurice Thompson, and Sir William Rider. See Carla Gardina Pestana, *The English Conquest of Jamaica: Oliver Cromwell's Bid for Empire* (Cambridge, MA: Bellknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2017), Leslie

state of 1649-1660 was rejected in the return of the house of Stuart, the merchants aligned with it did not vanish in the Restoration. They did not even lose their positions of power and influence within the City's important livery Companies after the return of Charles II. They remained and remained as a continuity between the imperial politics of the Protectorate and the imperial politics of the Restoration. And while they were obviously men able to accommodate themselves to many different governments, they never lost their commitment to the form of empire advanced in the 1650s. Instead of locating the inheritors of the interregnum empire solely with the later Stuart monarchy and its crown colonies, we must also locate them in the men who brought about Cromwell's vision of empire. Those men were still active in the politics of empire after 1661. The primary difference was simply their advancing their imperial vision within an alternative institution: the East India Company and, especially, the colony they leased from Charles II in 1668: Bombay.

Gerald Aungier became another inheritor of the novel vision of empire focused on state-sponosored development and freer trade. He acceded to the post of Surat President and Bombay Governor on the death of George Oxenden, who never made it home to be laid to rest alongside the graves of his forefathers. Despite his relatively brief period as a Company servant, and his relative lack of personal connections in London, his ascension was supported by the Court of Committees in London. Specifically, Thomas Papillon supported his appointment, and it drew his brother, the influential Irish Earl of Longford, into the Company's orbit for the first time.[25]

Theibert, "Making an English Caribbean, 1650-1688," (doctoral dissertation, Yale University, 2013), 24-181; *Calendar of State Papers, Domestic Series, 1655,* ed. Mary Anne Everett Green (Burlington, ON: 2010), 240.

[25] BL IOR/B/31, "Court Minutes," 6 January 1670, f. 88v; Ibid, "Court Minutes," 22 February 1671, f.102r. Longford was, interestingly, also a proponent of investment and developing the built environment of English colonies. He sponsored a significant construction development in Dublin in the 1660s, and still has a street named after him. See Nuala T. Burke, "An Early

Oxenden had advocated passionately for freer and more expansive Company trade in the Indian Ocean world, without explicitly tying that growth to the growth of an English imperial project. Aungier made that leap. For him, the idea of spending Company time and money developing Bombay was key to the all-important sustainable growth of the Company's free and open trade in the region. It was his advancement of Bombay as a site of deliberate English imperial expansion, in word and deed, which extended the debate over the Company's role in western India, and English imperial growth more broadly, to a much wider segment of the Company's employees. In so doing, he ignited the broad base of ideological investment which would ultimately result in Keigwin's Rebellion.

The strongest example of the comprehensive, growth- and investment-oriented plan Aungier and his allies conceived for Bombay comes from Aungier's "Proposals Touching Bombay Island," a document sent to London in January of 1672. The recommendations contained in the "Proposals" fell primarily into two categories. The first were policy measures intended to grow the wealth and sustainable development of Bombay through the growth of its population and manufacturing opportunities. These were the clearest assertion yet of a Whiggish political-economic policy advocated within the ranks of the EIC, and a rejection of an absolutist, crown-supported political-economic policy of exporting goods purchased as cheaply as possible for taxation in England, to the exclusion of all else. In fact, the "Proposals" return to the political-economic battle gripping administrators in the EIC since the time of Oxenden, advocating a number of policies where individual, self-enriching "private trade" would be of political-economic advantage to the Company. Aungier's second suggestion under the heading

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Modern Dublin Suburb: The Estate of Francis Aungier, Earl of Longford," in *Irish Geography* 6, no. 4 (1972): 365-385.

"For the Encouragement of Trade" was an argument that residents of Bombay should have regional trading liberties. This policy was not exclusive to English residents, as demonstrated by Aungier's phrasing that "liberty be granted as a particular privilege to those that *inhabit* on the island of Bombay." Aungier recommended that this free trade policy be extended not only to the subcontinent of India but also the far more controversial trading routes within the southern Pacific, including to and from the port of Bantam in Java. The policy did restrict the "English freeman," telling Englishmen not to "settle their families and trade in those places where the Company's factories are settled," or to "deal in any of the Company's [listed as restricted] commodities." However, the same prohibition was not extended to non-English "inhabitants" of Bombay.[26]

Aungier generally proposed policies which would grow Bombay's population, a project he saw as key to growing its potential as a wealth-generator. Therefore, he advocated further extended free trade privileges to new residents whose specific skills were desired on the island. For example, Aungier considered it "indispensably necessary" for all "proceedings in [the] Courts of Judicature" to be conducted in English and lamented the lack of English legal officers available to do that work. Instead, much was done in Portuguese, which Aungier felt "expose[d] the government and proceedings of the said courts to many" potential legal errors. Aungier proposed that the "Company…please send out yearly a convenient number of persons well-qualified for such offices." In addition to a salary paid out of court fees and fines (as was typical in England), these highly sought-after professionals, "justices, constables, and [holders of] other public offices," would have "freedom of trade to improve their [personal wealth] to the most advantage." This policy, Aungier perceived, would have the added benefit of "strengthen[ing]

[26] BL IOR/E/3/32, "Proposals Touching Bombay Island," January 1672, f. 147r.

the English interest on the island, which is…not so much esteemed by the natives as it ought to be."[27]

Even when advocating for a policy which did not inherently rely on population growth, Aungier focused on its potential to grow trade in goods to and from Bombay. An example was his plan for improving the frequency of shipping in Bombay, a hitherto rarely-used port. Aungier wanted "a particular privilege in customs, or otherwise, for so many years" to be granted to individuals building shipping in Bombay. In return, ships' owners would "be not suffered to [sell the ship] to any other place." Instead, a ship built at Bombay with this tax incentive would be "employed in voyages for ten years or more, and…when any such vessels are sold to other parts, double custom [will] be paid for them."

One of the most significant examples of Aungier's commitment to a policy of growth in wealth through investing in population and manufacturing, rather than through a mere extraction of goods, was his commitment to specifically encouraging the settlement of "artificers and handicraftsmen of all sorts to come out and live on the island with their families." Aungier suggested the Company might "allow whole pay for their present maintenance" for one or two years after arrival, provided the families "be bound to settle on the island, or at least to continue there for so many years." After the craftsman or -woman was "settled in their way of trade," the Company could gradually reduce their supplementary payments, as the new residents developed "means to live and maintain their family by their trades." Aungier further provided a detailed list of the sorts of skilled laborers who would be most valuable in Bombay: "husbandmen and gardeners, who understand planting and improving of grounds, the ground of Bombay being apt to receive and bring forth any seed or plant whatsoever, [once] the times and seasons of planting

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[27] Ibid, f. 148v-149r.

are sufficiently understood," were the number one request. "Weavers, both of silk and cotton, etc. who in a short time may procure themselves a very comfortable livelihood," were also high on the list, alongside "carpenters for building houses as well as ships….smiths…gunsmiths, locksmiths, armorers, bakers, cooks, shoemakers, tailors, dyers, barbers, button-makers, ribbon-weavers, butchers, haberdashers of small wares," and others.[28] It was clear that Aungier saw these individuals as contributing to a laboring population which would foster wealth production through growth in markets. While bakers, barbers, and butchers primarily worked to support a local community, 17th-century silk weavers, and button-makers were already operating in industrializing spaces, creating consumer goods. Even farmers were likely viewed by Aungier as producing trade crops, as evidenced by his proposal that everyday foodstuffs be bought and regulated by the administration. "For the most constant and secure supply of the island with corn, grain, and provisions of all sorts," Aungier wrote, the farmers should not grow rice. Rather, "a stock [should] be employed yearly…of the island's [money], for the supplying the island with wheat, rice, oil, wood, and other provisions." Furthermore, maintaining stored staples would allow for "set prices [to] be appointed on all provisions, regulated in weight and measure," which would tend to "justice and the public good." To insure this, Aungier further proposed that the administration appoint officials to visit shops and "examine the quality of said provisions…and if on examination it [proves] not good, to take it away and burn it; and also lay some severe fine on the offender."[29]

The importance of growing and developing Bombay's commodities manufacturing economy as a means of growing the Company was further advocated by Aungier in his plan that

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[28] BL IOR/E/3/32, "Proposals Touching Bombay Island," January 1672, ff. 147r-147v.
[29] Ibid, f. 148v.

"public liberty be granted to all persons, to bring in cotton weavers and silk weavers on their own accounts, for the employing their own private stocks." These private manufacturers could focus on producing "goods…proper for European markets," and the EIC could buy those commodities "at certain reasonable rates to be agreed on, whereby [manufacturers] may have a competent livelihood." This proposal would allow the Company to cut out the middlemen who brokered their deals for commodities with artisan production communities, which were concentrated outside of the major trading centers on the western Indian coast. However, Aungier refused to advocate for a monopsonistic agreement with these private manufacturers. Rather, he suggested the market would be stronger if they were "left at liberty" to "dispose of said goods…to their most advantage," even if manufacturers left Bombay and got "a better price from others than from the Company." The same was true for lead oxide. "Red lead" was "of great expense" in India, with its manufacturers carefully controlled by local polities. If Bombay became the "only" site of its manufacture, "it might be sold much cheaper" and accrue a greater market share to the Company, as well as allow for residents who needed lead oxide for their own commodity manufacture to produce goods with an unbeatable market price, which Aungier tied to growing the Company's profits.[30]

The "Proposals" expanded on these policies to grow Bombay's population and manufacturing economy by suggesting the development of early modern institutions that were proven to turbo-charge the commodities market. Aungier first recommended the establishment of livery companies like those in England, "for the better and more able carrying-on of any trade." These "fellowships" would be endowed with "certain privileges and immunities…for their

[30] BL IOR/E/3/32, "Proposals Touching Bombay Island," January 1672, ff. 149r-149v.

greater encouragement," as their counterparts in London were.[31] Aungier then pushed for the somewhat novel institution of a Company-backed bank, with an "order for the lending out certain sums of money to the said [livery companies] and other honest merchants, they paying interest for the same, and giving sufficient security, either in land pawns or otherwise." Not requiring loans to be backed in land marked further alignment with 17th-century Whiggish, new merchant claims about the value of labor and trade over real estate. Aungier backed up his proposal for a bank, one of his more radical suggestions, with specific reference to its historical success. "This course and policy was practiced formerly by the Dukes of Florence," he wrote. Their lending policies garnered them "very remarkable success to the raising of the trade, and much enriching of the port of Leghorn, and consequently…the great increase of [state] customs and revenue."[32]

The most elaborate institution Aungier suggested was a form of representative government for Bombay. This body would firstly collect important political-economic data on the site and its inhabitants, including "the number of the persons inhabiting and settled, with their increase and decrease; as also of the voyagers, coming in and going out;…as well for security as for an orderly [and] exact knowledge [of] how the island increaseth or diminisheth, in trade or inhabitants." Acknowledging his plans for Bombay as tending towards a highly populated, ethnically diverse city, Aungier wrote that representational government would furthermore keep the community "free from the confusion which a body composed of so many nations will be subject to." Representatives of Bombay's "so many orders and tribes" would "represent the grievances which any of the said nation shall receive…from any other" and "answer for the

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[31] BL IOR/E/3/32, "Proposals Touching Bombay Island," January 1672, 147r.
[32] Ibid.

faults any of the said nation shall commit, that the offenders by brought to punishment." This kind of representative arbitration would not only keep the city peaceable but encourage residents of all stripes to advance the administration's policy goals. While representatives of different community groups might seek redress and punish the guilty, they were also to find "such who merit well by…advancing of trade, inhabitants, or shipping, or bring[ing] any considerable profits and emoluments to the island." These individuals were to be "rewarded and encouraged" through the representative government, "that others also might be invited to deserve…the same."[33]

Given all these proposals committed the Company to fiscal and administrative outlay in the name of growing trade and therefore profit, Aungier made sure to spell out how the Company would extract wealth from his political-economic vision. He advocated a new tax, which would defray all "charges of what nature soever." Aungier listed these expenses as including, alongside his other proposals, several infrastructural expenses. He wanted "fortification for the new town [which is] to be built, building a mole, and docks for shipping." The "Proposals" further imagined a new, centralized administrative building, with "chambers for [the] Courts of Justice, warehouses or granaries…[and] also prisons." The tax would pay these, the expenses of the trade policies, and the wages of public offices, including city governor, deputy governor, treasurer, accountant, city council, secretary, courts, a notary public, a sheriff, and "such other offices as shall upon serious consideration be thought necessary." Again showing his ideological commitment to growth of trade, manufacturing, and consumption, Aungier's tax was levied on land only, "and not on any goods or merchandise." A land tax was conceived by Aungier as "least burdensome to the people," and a policy which "may not discourage strangers from

[33] BL IOR/E/3/32, "Proposals Touching Bombay Island," January 1672, 148r-148v.

coming to live with us." This was because he knew it would not discourage profit from commodity manufacturing and trade, which he saw as a far more growth-oriented enterprise than the land it took place on.[34]

While Aungier recognized allies for his plan in the Company's "new merchant" members of the Court of Committees, many of whom had made their fortunes in the cash crops of the Atlantic world, other factions in London would take convincing. He had seen through the experience of his mentor, Oxenden, that seeming to advocate the growth of trade generally over cash profits for the EIC specifically could result in a personal downfall. At the same time, Aungier had personally overseen the Company's affairs in western India for two years at the time of writing the "Proposals." He had kept track of times the Company's Court in London was willing to spend money to make money and made mention of a particularly powerful one at the beginning of the "Proposals" text. In the very first proposal, Aungier began by acknowledging that "the general charges of the island are great, and do far exceed the revenue now that the customs are given free."[35] This clause hearkened back to 1670, when the Company's employees in western India received instructions from the Court of Committees to remove all customs charges at Bombay, on all goods, for five years. Aungier made sure to register concern about the move at the time. He wrote with his councilmen that "though we conclude [free customs] a most prudent, judicious resolve for encouragement of trade," the way the Court had ordered it showed a lack of knowledge about the specifics of regional trade. "We wish you had not been pleased to have been so positive," the Surat council's letter in March 1670 read. "Your end might have been gained with less charge and loss to you, [could we] obey your order after some consultations

[34] BL IOR/E/3/32, "Proposals Touching Bombay Island," January 1672, 146r-146v.
[35] Ibid.

thereon." Aungier then used the opportunity to demonstrate his policy skills and slightly amend the Court's order, writing that Bombay would preserve customs, albeit at a lower rate, on the export of coconuts, rice, wine, tobacco, and opium. "We thought good to reserve the old custom with some abatement" regarding these goods, the council wrote, "because these commodities have little respect to the encouragement of trade which is your sole design, but rather tend to the increase of expense and nourishment of ill-husbandry."[36] In beginning his call for expensive investment by referencing a similarly fiscally profligate decision initiated by the London Committees, Aungier subtly reminded his audience that not every expensive political-economic policy was against the Company's interest. He advanced his plan to grow Bombay according to his own ideological and political-economic position while he referenced his unimpeachable record as a diligent and profit-oriented Company employee. Aungier thusly strengthened his position on the political-economic validity of expenditures reinvested in India. Where his mentor Oxenden continued to see the growth of the Company's stock and the growth of its trade as separate concerns, Aungier effectively linked them together.

More than a simple statement of intent, Aungier quickly got to work on implementing his plans. He already had approval for setting up a court and for constructing defensive works. However, the problem remained that a land tax in a trade and manufacturing-oriented site of empire was not likely to generate sufficient administrative revenues to pay for everything Aungier hoped to implement. As such, his actions started with the most fiscally defensible (fortifications and courts).[37] He also moved to Bombay from Surat, to begin negotiating

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[36] BL IOR/E/3/31, "Aungier and Council at Surat to Court of Committees in London," 30 March 1670, f. 3r.

[37] BL IOR/E/3/33, "Aungier and Council at Bombay to East India Company in London," 12 July 1672, f. 62v; BL IOR/E/3/34, "George Wilcox to East India Company in London," 15 January 1674, ff. 345r-345v; BL Add MS 39255 E.

additional revenue streams and defend his spending in correspondence with London. Aungier's largest success in the project of finding more revenue was a carefully negotiated public levy agreed upon in November 1672. After several rounds of negotiations with local Indian residents, variously referred to as "tedious," Aungier and the "natives" agreed to a tax of approximately one quarter of the value of the produce of coconut and rice fields of the island yearly. It was stipulated that this money would be used only "for the bearing of the public charge," which the residents felt was an "easy and moderate" trade-off. For Aungier's part, not only did it save him from some potential heat for spending so much on Bombay, but he also suggested it would "highly advance" the "fame and reputation of [the Company's] government" and compel locals to "continue firm to [our] interest in the utmost extremity."[38]

Regarding the second goal of persuading members of the Court of Committees, Aungier waged a wordy war of persuasion, enlisting many of his subordinates to help. In 1672, Aungier tried to head off criticisms of his spending. "The oath which we have taken requires us to give you our advice with freedom of spirit," Aungier wrote, though his bosses may "condemn [him] as extravagant, and not so good [a] husband for you as [he] ought to be." As a result, Aungier hoped in a short time to "draw out and present to your Honors a scheme and establishment for necessary public charge." Though this expense would be "constantly…maintained for a few years, until your island is thoroughly settled, and until your name is become considerable to your neighbors," Bombay's president felt that "then you [the Company] may retrench said charge as you please."[39] It was to be expected because cloth, which was beginning to be woven at Bombay,

[38] BL IOR/E/3/33, "Aungier and Council at Bombay to East India Company in London," 7 October 1672, f.158r-158v; Ibid, "Articles of Agreement Between Gerald Aungier and the Inhabitants of Bombay," 201r; Ibid, "Gerald Aungier and Council at Bombay to EIC in London," 21 December 1672, ff. 276r-276v.
[39] Ibid, 280r.

was already "as to its quality, good," though it was expensive compared to comparable items from other areas. In later years, Aungier grew more persuasive about the importance of spending, rather than insistent that the charges would quickly be recouped. In 1674, he wrote that "so vast a sum of money [is] expended in the public charges of [Bombay] since my coming…and for that I was myself dissatisfied therein." However, he noted that "first…the worst of the expense is over." Secondarily, he had "begun already and shall proceed to reduce them all so much as possible, by retrenching your house[hold] expenses, disbanding unnecessary soldiers…and easing the general charge so far as prudence and necessity of the time will admit." Most important of all, though, Aungier explained though "your charge [at Bombay] hath been so great, it hath brought great good to your island…the people are thereby multiplied, as now judging themselves secure." Moreover, "the trade is advanced beyond imagination of what it was," and "revenue [was] settled and augmented, and will yet increase more, for as the people and trade augments, so doth the revenue in proportion." Aungier finished by saying, "when you…weigh all circumstances, I hope you will esteem your money not lost or ill laid-out, seeing that a certain benefit doth accrue therefrom; and for the future, my great design and hope is that the…profits of your shipping and trade will more than satisfy all other necessary disbursements."[40]

As late as 1676 Aungier was using similar arguments to defend his projects in letters written to London, referring to a rebuke from the Court of Committees that he had run up "great charges" and used too much "grandeur…on your island Bombay." He began by arguing for the value of spending EIC money in India. "Monies disposed of at Bombay, or any other factory in the course of your trade cannot be said to be dispersed, seeing you have returns from the said places," Aungier wrote. He further resorted to biblical paraphrase in his attempt to convince his

[40] BL IOR/E/3/34, ff. 339v-340r.

superiors of the importance of investment in Bombay, writing "there is a time and season for all things under the sun: a time to plant, to build, to fortify, to defend in war, to be liberal, to show the solemnity of government…and as there is a time, so there are proper means to be used, according to number, weight, measure, and place." Aungier claimed to have "observed the rule of time, measure, and place to the best of his judgement," and "by God's blessing much improved your interest…to the hazard of his life and fortunes." Aungier further leaned on his comparatively humble background, noting that "if he hath erred through want of experience, it will appear no wonder, when it is considered that his calling is a merchant." After all, Aungier wrote, "he never professed himself a soldier, lawyer, philosopher, [or] statesman," and "much less a governor."[41]

Nevertheless, Aungier felt "it becomes" the Company's Court of Committees' "wisdoms" to "think the worst of, and keep a jealous eye over a servant whom few of you do know." Rather than appearing an "inconsiderate Sancho Panza," Aungier was therefore willing to "answer conscientiously" to God and the Company, "for what monies shall be found so vainly expanded." He claimed to have never acted alone, and always taken the advice of his appointed councilmen. He further argued that "though the gross sum at first may appear heavy," it made sense in terms of its own context. Some expenses were "inevitable and indispensable," such as those of building defensive fortifications and defending Bombay in times of regional unrest. These were "reduced as low as could be contrived," and "husbanded to the best." Many of these expenses were also "defrayed," in Aungier's argument, by his agreements with local populations driving up certain taxation returns. "Money expended in public appearance" and "outbuildings"

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[41] BL IOR/E/3/36, "Gerald Aungier and Council at Suvālī to East India Company in London," 26 January 1676, f. 147r-147v.

were more debatable, but as such they were “made by serious debate in Council,” and “judged absolutely necessary.” Finally, he redelivered his earlier point of defense in no uncertain terms, writing “that as your charge was increased by your President…so your revenue was much more increased thereby.” Aungier provided specifics, arguing that land titles in Bombay were better settled than they had been in fifteen years, and as a result the site’s public revenue had more than doubled.[42]

Unfortunately, Aungier never had an opportunity to implement his “grand design and hope.” He died in Surat on 30 June 1677, having been “sickly for at least three years’ time.”[43] Perhaps because of his illnesses, in later years he delegated much more to his trusted lieutenants, including John Petit (Deputy Governor of Bombay at the time of Aungier’s death), Henry Oxenden (the nephew of his mentor), and Phillip Gifford (until his own death Deputy Governor at Bombay). In many ways, Aungier’s death marked something of a changing of the guard within the Company’s corporate organization. He still had a few of his own favorite subordinates in Western India, like John Petit and Henry Oxenden, but many had predeceased him. They were replaced by men with decidedly different political-economic and ideological sensibilities, like Thomas Rolt in Persia and John Child, who was often embroiled in interpersonal conflicts with other employees. Aungier’s closest allies on the Court of Committees in London were threatened by virtue of City politics, especially given the extremity of the ongoing Exclusion Crisis.[44] King Charles II had given a speech to the Committees at the beginning of their year in April, warning

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[42] BL IOR/E/3/36, “Gerald Aungier and Council at Suvālī to East India Company in London,” 26 January 1676, 147v-148r.
[43] BL IOR/E/3/38, “Charles James and Council in Surat to EIC in London,” 31 August-21 October 1677, f. 27r.
[44] See Steve Pincus, “’Coffee Politicians Does Create:’ Coffeehouses and Restoration Political Culture,” in *Journal of Modern History* 67, no. 4 (1995); Ibid, *1688: The First Modern Revolution* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2009), 100-101.

them to "for the future have a care to those such as were agreeable to him, and that the Company would be kind to them that are kind to him." Charles furthermore obliquely threatened the Company's crown charter should they continue to challenge him in any way.[45] By 1681, Josiah Child was the Company's new Governor in London, and he wasted no time appointing his protégé, the fractious John Child (no relation) Governor and President in Surat.[46]

"The Company Have Got a Madman for their President and a Parcel of Parasites to their Council:" 1681-1684

Josiah Child was a prominent political-economic pamphleteer and merchant in Restoration London. In the early 1680s, when he rose to power as the leader of the East India Company in London, he had caught the tune of the increasingly reactionary King Charles II. The king resented Whigs, who he believed had destabilized the Stuart state for three years between 1678 and 1681, a period known as the Exclusion Crisis. Due to concerns about the increasingly authoritarian nature of the crown's policies, the rapidly developing Whig party in English politics had begun a fight to exclude the king's brother and heir, James, Duke of York, from succeeding to the throne. Even more than Charles, James was perceived by Whigs as a dangerous absolutist due to his ties to France. While the Whigs were unable to rewrite England's succession laws and successfully bar James from the throne, they held English politics captive for three years, and Charles was out for revenge. Josiah Child was all too happy to lend the resources of the East India Company to the cause.

While most scholarship doesn't demonstrate the influence of Josiah Child's theories of political economy before the ascension of James in 1685, that's just because it isn't looking at

[45] BL IOR/B/34, "Court Minutes," 21 April 1676, ff. 1r-1v; Ibid, 24 April 1676, ff. 2r-2v
[46] BL IOR/B/36, f. 111; BL IOR/E/41, "Thomas Rolt, Caesar Chamberlain, John Child, John Petit, and George Bowcher at Suvālī to EIC in London," 23 January 1682, f. 205r.

political economic debate and policy within the East India Company in the period. Already in 1681 we see Child and his Tory allies dominating the decision-making of the Company in London and pulling back from the policies advocated and implemented in western India in the Aungier period. Child's most important concern was not to maximize manufacturing at the expense of cash profit, and it certainly wasn't to expand trade. Child believed in finite wealth, measured in specie and land, and as such privileged monopoly and territorial control. He discouraged the growth of manufacturing industries within the Company's Indian factories and pushed for fierce zero-sum conflict with other European traders in the region. It was key to Child that the Company crack down on employees making money for themselves through trade in the Indian Ocean region, which inherently took wealth out of the Company's pockets.[47]

Given the direction Aungier had taken in Bombay, the impacts of Child's policy on western India were therefore potentially significant. But, for Child's influence to be felt, he would need a loyal subordinate—someone not beholden to Aungier's "eminent perfections and care of [Company] affairs," which so well "commend[ed] his worth." Luckily for Josiah Child, a perfect candidate was present in the form of his protégé, John Child. John had been personally beholden to Josiah since at least 1675. Before that time, John had served as a factor in western India for several years and married into the family of John Shaxton, who first came to Bombay with the crown's fleets. Child had occasionally fought with Gerald Aungier, but Aungier had also equivocated regarding him in a letter to London, describing his "humor" as "not a little troublesome," though he was "otherwise reasonably experienced to serve you."[48] But in 1675,

[47] For a thorough discussion of Josiah Child's political economic beliefs and his rise to power, see Steve Pincus, *1688: The First Modern Revolution* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2009), 372-377.
[48] BL IOR/E/3/36, "Gerald Aungier and Council at Suvālī to East India Company in London," 26 January 1676, f. 149r.

despite his prior negative reputation as one without “prudence or moderation” who did “not behave [himself] as [he] ought,” John had gotten his “freedom of the Company,” an important step toward promotion normally requiring a large cash payment, “gratis,” on the “request of Mr Josiah Child.”[49] In 1678, in response to the death of Gerald Aungier, he was promoted to a member of the Council for Bombay *and* Surat, paving the way for his eventual promotion to the President/Governor position.

Finally, in 1682, upon the retirement of his politically similar senior Thomas Rolt, John Child got his promotion.[50] That made it possible to collaborate with Josiah Child and his faction among the members of the Court of Committees. John Child’s contribution was embarking on a program of fiscal austerity in Bombay and authoritarian crackdown on any suspicious-seeming trade conducted by his subordinate employees. “We hope the considerable abatement of expenses and charges in all your factories here…will evidence to your Honors there hath been no want of our real endeavors to bring them exactly to your [fiscal] establishment,” Child wrote in his first letter in charge. In particular, he complained of Bombay, which he considered “a much greater burden upon us, than all your other affairs besides.”[51] Three months later, Child noted his supervisors in London had “just reason to be concerned at the great expense Bombay hath put you to.” But rather than advocate for why those outlays were important, Child wrote that “all things considered, you will be satisfied frugality hath been used [there], and [I] really concerned [myself] for your interest.” In this, Child contrasted himself not only with Aungier but with his immediate predecessor Rolt, who had written in 1680 that while he “did proceed to retrench

[49] BL IOR/E/3/36, “Gerald Aungier and Council in Suvālī to East India Company in London,” 26 January 1676, f. 149r; IOR/B/33, “Court Minutes,” 13 August 1675, f.144v.
[50] BL IOR/E/41, “Thomas Rolt, Caesar Chamberlain, John Child, John Petit, and George Bowcher at Suvālī to EIC in London,” 23 January 1682, f. 205r.
[51] Ibid, f.135v, 197r.

[expenses] in all such particulars as would most conveniently bear," he could not "promise" enough savings to reach "so sudden and low a reducement as you are pleased to require."[52] Child was much happier to cut costs, whether the austerity measures could be born "conveniently" or not. At the same time Rolt had written from Surat, Child had written from Bombay, saying that he would "clear…out of your service" as "many Portuguese, Topazes, Lascars, and coolies" as possible given they "cost you [the Company] a great deal of money, to our hearty sorrow."[53]

In the minds of his subordinates, an even larger policy change than the austerity measures was John Child's crackdown on private trade. Starting in 1681, and intensifying throughout 1682, the Company's employees in western India began to investigate all the personally enriching trade their subordinates were engaged in. While previously this kind of trade had been the subject of some debate, in Aungier's time it was largely permitted, so long as no great quantities of illicit goods were sent home to England on ships operating for the EIC. In fact, Aungier had previously defended John Child against aspersions which suggested he had defrauded the Company, writing that though John had "expressed an irreconcilable antipathy against him" it was "unjust" to "proceed severely against him," as there was not sufficient evidence of his supposed crimes.[54] Now, the Company's definition of "interloping," which was previously understood to be trade between England and India on ships not sanctioned by the EIC, was dramatically expanded so it could be used to persecute employees hoping to invest their own

[52] BL IOR E/3/40, "Thomas Rolt and Council at Suvālī to EIC in London," 24 January 1680, f. 217r.
[53] Ibid, "John Child and Council in Bombay to EIC in London," 31 December 1679, 207v-208r. "Topazes" are Indo-Portuguese soldiers; "lascars" are South Asian sailors, often those hailing from the eastern Indian Ocean littoral; "coolie" is a derogatory term for a South Asian manual laborer.
[54] BL IOR/E/3/36, "Gerald Aungier and Council in Suvālī to EIC in London," 26 January 1676, f. 149v.

money in regional trade ventures.[55] In the eyes of Josiah Child, because trade was a zero-sum game, even this small amount of "private" trading was lessening the potential returns of the East India Company and needed to be stopped.[56]

This change, John Child enthusiastically implemented his benefactors' policy in western India, whatever his past with private trade was. He earned himself few friends doing so; the crackdown was deeply unpopular with most of the Company's employees. As Oxenden had hinted at 15 years earlier, most men who took EIC employment in India were hoping to make a fortune, and they couldn't do that on their salaries alone. They relied on small but steady returns on regional trade in "unprohibited" items. While some research suggests that in the eastern Indian Ocean, this trade really could negatively impact Company profits, in the western Indian Ocean, such regional trade was in goods genuinely lacking a European market.[57] That reality caused many long-serving Company employees to reject the underlying justification for the rules change. John Petit and George Bowcher were two such old Company hands, who in 1681 broke with the Company entirely over the issue. Their fight with John Child and his loyalists revealed fault lines in Child's attempted revision of EIC rules in western India. It ultimately led to a

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[55] See for example BL IOR/H/42, "Home Miscellaneous," 1684, ff. 415-421; BL IOR/E/3/43, "John Child and Council in Suvālī to EIC in London," 30 November 1683, ff.195-202; BL IOR/E/3/89, "EIC in London to John Child and Council in Surat," 1 May 1682, f. 295v.

[56] Josiah Child, *A New Discourse of Trade: Wherein is Recommended Several Weighty Points Relating to Companies of Merchants, the Act of Navigation, Naturalization of Strangers, and our Woolen Manufactures, the Balance of Trade…*(London: printed and sold by John Everingham, 1693), 135-164.

[57] For the argument that regional private trade negatively impacted Company business which relies on data from the Bay of Bengal, see, notably, Emily Eriksen, *Between Monopoly and Free Trade: The English East India Company, 1600-1757* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2014), especially 77-124. An interesting companion piece, focused more on the Company's actions as an institution, see Tiraana Bains, "The Making and Unmaking of a Presidency: Envisioning Empire in British Bencoolen, 1685-1825," *Journal of British Studies* 63, no. 3 (2024), 521-541.

rejection of John Child, Josiah Child, and their zero-sum theory of imperial wealth generation by Richard Keigwin and his allies in December of 1683.

Before John Child had ever ascended to power in the Company's administration in Bombay and Surat, John Petit had had a long career under George Oxenden and Gerald Aungier. In 1672, Aungier had given him a good character reference in a letter to London, noting he had been employed by the EIC for 10 years, five as the chief of the Malabar Coast factories. Aungier felt he had "discharged his trust with prudence and faithfulness," making him "deserving to succeed in your Council at Surat, when a vacancy offers," with a raise in the meantime.[58] Philip Giffard, at the time the Deputy Governor in Bombay, trusted John Petit to lead negotiations with the Portuguese in 1676, declaring himself "satisfied in whatever you act, knowing the regard you have to the honor of our nation, and government."[59] By 1677, Aungier had appointed him Deputy Governor at Bombay, delegating his cherished projects to Petit. Petit repaid his kindness in letters reporting on Bombay's development for London. "We often wondered how so considerable a custom could annually be raised" in Bombay, Petit wrote, continuing, "we can attribute it to nothing but the justice, freedom, and security people enjoy here above all other places." According to Petit, "many families of Brahmins daily" moved to Bombay, and more "of the chiefest, who still live at Vasai [about 44 kilometers northwest] and other places, build them[selves] houses here, therein placing their wives and children against a time of danger." Echoing Aungier, Petit wrote that Bombay's harbor, which was "most excellent" in all seasons, was a "great inviter of merchants." The plan to weave cloth on the island was continuing apace

[58] BL IOR E/3/33, "Gerald Aungier and Council at Bombay to East India Company in London," 21 December 1672, f. 274v.
[59] BL IOR/E/3/36, "Philip Giffard at Bombay to John Petit, Stephen Ustick, Francis Day, Thomas Nichols, and John Hornigold in Mahim," 10 March 1676, f. 205r.

in Bombay, Petit noted, "though we find it difficult to induce weavers to leave their ancient habitations, it being inbred in all people to esteem no place like home."[60]

However, upon Gerald Aungier's death, John Petit requested to return to Surat, citing ill health.[61] Perhaps he recognized he was likely to face some blowback from other Company employees who disagreed with the direction Aungier had taken, like John Child and the garrulous old hand Mansell Smith, and wanted to be well-placed to defend himself. If so, he was quite prescient. As part of the Company's growing interest in persecuting private trade and any form of fraud committed by their employees, Mansell Smith had found himself in some hot water regarding a complicated deal in ambergris which had taken place in Calicut. Smith pled with Petit, who had been his direct supervisor at the time, to "take care" he "be no sufferer" by the investigation. "God knows," Smith wrote Petit, "if I did not do as much [for you] as could be done for a father or the best friend in the world."[62] A general letter from the Company's President at Surat glossed the entire matter as a "long and intricate dispute between [Mansell Smith] and Mr. John Petit about the affairs of [Calicut]," and left it up to their bosses in London to decide.[63] Recognizing Petit's connections to Aungier, the Josiah Child wing of the Company's Court of Committees sprang into action, working with the Company's auditors to develop a chargesheet of exaggerated claims regarding Petit's private trade concerns and self-dealing. Petit would be required to make a complete justification of his decision-making regarding each case in front of the council in Surat. This was not perceived by anyone to be overly difficult for Petit to

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[60] BL IOR/E/3/37, "John Petit and Council at Bombay to East India Company in London," 24 January 1677, f. 180r-181r.
[61] Ibid, "Thomas Rolt at Surat to the East India Company in London," 6 February 1678, f.132f.
[62] Ibid, "Mansell Smith at Bombay to John Petit in Persia," 21 February 1678, f. 165r.
[63] BL IOR/E/3/39, "Thomas Rolt at Suvālī to East India Company in London," 24 January 1679, f .337r.

do, as there was no direct evidence to stick any specific instance to him. But it bought Josiah Child and his protégé John some time, especially as Petit's star had been on the rise for much of the 1670s, and Thomas Rolt was preparing to retire. It was crucial that an employee linked to Aungier and his policies not gain the appointment as President of Surat.

Over the course of 1681, a long investigation into Petit took place. As expected it came to naught, with the Surat councilmen writing to London that "after a serious examination of the several articles of the said charge [against John Petit], it appeared to us to consist partly of errors and partly of misinformations." Petit's "answers to [the Court of Committee's] papers relating to it we presume will make [the issues] clear to the honorable Company's satisfaction," the council wrote.[64] John Thorburne, one of the later "rebels" at Bombay, wrote two personal letters to Petit during the investigation, expressing in one his frustration "to see the ingratitude of these [employees] that endeavor to ruin the reputations of their superiors, which will in the end bring confusion to themselves and their fomenters, whom I may suspect but neither know not desire to know…from wicked and malicious men, good God deliver us." In the other he informed Petit that he "did declare, though not upon oath, yet [I] think no less effectual" Petit's innocence. "But," as he concluded, "*qui inimum sapient et que unconcessa sequente decipiunt cohibit qui sua vota sapit*, and I had rather demonstrate myself by deeds than words."[65]

[64] BL IOR/E/3/41, "Surat Extracts Relating to John Petit's Affairs," 25 April-31 December 1681, f. 35r.

[65] Ibid, "John Thorburne at Bombay to John Petit in Surat," 3 June 1681, f. 45r; Ibid, "John Thorburne at Bombay to John Petit in Surat," 20 June 1681, f. 53r. The "fomenter" whom Thorburne suspected but did not know was likely John Child. Neither John Thorburne nor I were or are flawless users of Latin, but his phrasing translates to something along the lines of "those who are wise in their heart and who deceive by following unconceded things restrain those who are wise in their vows."

In his self-defense, Petit raised numerous issues with the complaints made regarding his conduct in private trade. "Why am I charged with what [was] acted in another's government?" Petit asked. It was Aungier's and Philip Giffard's making him so responsible for Bombay which "gives the force to these articles [of accusation]. For supposing they were all really true (as they are most really false), if I had been in a private or inferior capacity, they could never have amounted to a criminal charge." After all, he argued, "any of the Company's factors may buy their [the Company's] goods if their superiors will sell them," so any private trade Petit engaged in was really the "neglect in my superiors in permitting it." The entire time of Petit's service in Bombay, he wrote, he had been a subordinate, with "the porter's part of the government, but not any of the directive part." In suggesting he had defrauded the Company, Petit wrote that his accusers were using "a little of Bombay malice," making up "false debts" and then "clap[ping them] on another's head, which they Company esteem the greater crime." Though the compilation of complaints sent by the Company's head auditor was mostly anonymous. Petit argued that "positively to tell a man he is a cheat," which fraudulent private trade allegations were seen as, "without so much as naming his informer, or how he grounds his surmises, is no better than downright railing."[66]

By October of 1681, it was clear to the English in western India that Petit would be able to escape the trumped-up charges, but it was also too late for him to resume his influential role in the Company's administration, as John Child had been appointed to succeed the retiring Thomas Rolt. Petit addressed this coup directly in a letter to the Court of Committees, noting that "a man must have a great deal of charity to believe there is not some malice in the case, or something as bad." He claimed to have obtained insufficient justice, for "what I suffer in my private concerns

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[66] BL IOR/E/3/41, "John Petit's Answer to the Auditors' Charges," 2 July 1681, ff.55r-57r.

is not small….In this uncertain state I can neither fit myself for England, nor for Persia, nor to stay here." But, Petit added, "as misfortunes somehow ring together…I find your Honors have appointed Mr. Child absolutely to succeed [President Rolt], without so much as any provision for me." He didn't expect to have gotten appointed no matter what and agreed that if he had been guilty of defrauding the Company he should not have gotten to be President. But to be left without a job, when the man he suspected of driving him out had just gotten promoted, was "deplorable." He felt as if "sense itself will not clear" him of the scandal, and "if my inferior [in seniority] be placed above me, what shall I say? Can your Honors act otherwise than with all justice?" Petit concluded that "I will rather think my misfortune has caused some misapprehension of things…I can safely say that my four years' sickness and all my misfortunes put together never went so near me as this, and I must confess I never had so much necessity of the virtue of fortitude as now."[67]

Petit seemed to settle into his new role as the second of council at Surat under John Child at the beginning of 1682, cosigning letters to London. But the experience of Child's control and the full-throated implementation of austerity policy and anti-interloping crackdowns proved too much for him and his ally Bowcher. The relationship between Petit, Bowcher, and Child rapidly deteriorated between May 1682 and January of 1683. On 16 January, only four days after Petit had co-signed a report in Council, John Child sent an un-cosigned letter from Surat to London. In it, he declared Petit and Bowcher had been summarily fired for conspiring with interlopers, and the Council had seized their movable estates. "Mr. Petit and Mr. Bowcher have behaved themselves very ill and forced us to the last extremes with them," Child wrote. Petit and

[67] BL IOR/E/3/41, "John Petit at Surat to East India Company in London," 29 October 1681, f. 100v-101r.

Bowcher were described as having "appealed against [the Company] to all principal officers of the town," and considered "such enemies to the prosperity that [they] are glad to see his Majesty condemned, the nation dishonored, and [the Company] prejudiced in [its] interest." The other European factories in Surat were seen by Child to be on the side of Petit and Bowcher, which was particularly dangerous in a world of zero-sum trade where the Dutch were the Company's biggest competitors.[68]

Petit, for his part, did not mince words about his own interpretation of the new crackdown on private trade in a letter to a former colleague in April 1683. He rejected outright that Child "hath a sufficient authority for his actions," especially when it came to firing him and seizing his property. Petit wrote that "the king's proclamation" about private trading was misunderstood by Child. In Petit's reading, the order was "only to prohibit ships from coming out of England to India, which the words so plainly show." It had no impact on "persons that trade to and fro in India," which Petit and many other employees had done over the years. "If they [John Child and his allies] will argue that likewise to be part of the Company's charter," John Petit claimed, "then all the English in India that are out of the Company's service are as much interlopers as I, for they have no more leave than I have. Nay, some positively sent [goods] for home, which is more than I [have done]." However, he noted that such logic had little influence in the Company of the 1680s, which ran on patronage and politics more clearly than ever before. "Perhaps it will be objected they [other Englishmen outside Company employ] have the President's leave for staying," Petit wrote, "But that is no strange action in him, for that proclamation…he can make invalid, when the keeping of it is of no advantage to him." Petit

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[68] BL IOR E/3/42, "John Child at Suvālī to East India Company in London," 16 January 1683, f.174v.

proceeded to refute the idea that his “crime so unpardonable” was “my design to assist actually interlopers, and my endeavors to make way for them, that is the *unum magnum* that merits no less than death or the confiscation of my estate.” In Petit’s view, seeing as no interlopers had yet come to Surat, “all that can be laid to my charge is intentions, and if they were acquainted with any law they might know that intentions in nothing but high treason is condemnable.” These intentions, in Petit’s view, were anyway “only surmises hatched by the buzzing of some idle persons,” lacking evidence. Otherwise, Child would “acquaint me with what was laid to my charge,” Petit wrote, but the President was too afraid “I should answer it.”

Petit returned his defense, finally, to the idea that the Company’s employees lacked the authority to punish or protect employees against the charge of interloping. “They will find it the hardest task they ever undertook in their lives to indemnify themselves,” Petit wrote, before asking “from whence have they their commission…? I am sure not from the king, for he never gave any, and not from the Company, for they have not the power to give such a commission.” Petit claimed the Company’s charter was “but a monopoly to restrain others from trading to India,” and “not more than if the king should give a charter to a certain merchant in London to monopolize all the tobacco.” In such a case, “if any person broke that charter, the monopolizer must complain to a Justice of the Peace for remedy, but ha[s] not power to correct the party himself.” Even the Company’s special charter powers as governors of the king’s land at Bombay weren’t enough to give them the power to fire employees for the supposed crime of interloping, let alone seize their effects. “Bombay, being crown land,” Petit wrote, the Company “are his Majesty’s justices on the island, but not one mile out of it…all the commission they have is the Company’s for barely the government of the island and nothing else.” In Petit’s view, “they will find it difficult to prove that the accession of Bombay hath created a power over all India, and indeed it is against all sense to think that a parcel of merchants congregated by their own call should be able to give any magistratical power to their servants."[69] In another letter co-written with George Bowcher, Petit wrote that John Child's accusations were "a parcel of threatening stories, made to frighten children," and that "the Company have got a madman for the President and a parcel of parasites to their Council who echo all his actions with applause."[70]

For all their full-throated defenses and supposed support from other European traders, Petit and Bowcher were no match for their opponents in Surat. With John Child and the Company's Council hanging onto the men's estates, their local trading partners got nervous about recouping their investments. These Surat-based merchants approached the city's Mughal governor and asked him to help secure their funds from the Petit and Bowcher estates. With no access to their own funds, and with their trading goods being confiscated by the Company before they could land them at Surat, Petit and Bowcher were unable to pay off their creditors, and the governor proceeded to imprison them. Even as John Child wrote that he intended to pay off their debts and send them home as soon as the Company had recovered enough of the men's goods, there was a utility in leaving them to languish in the town's prison, keeping out of the EIC's affairs.[71]

Such conflicts about the rights of individual Company employees were not only being inflamed by Petit and Bowcher in Surat. In Bombay, too, 1683 saw an intra-Company conflict erupt over the actions of individual Company employees, presaging the actions of Keigwin and his colleagues. For decades, the *sidī* of Janjira had enjoyed the right to keep his fleet of ships in Bombay's harbor during the monsoon. The *sidī* was the Mughal-appointed ruler of a small

[69] BL IOR/E/3/43/1, "John Petit at Surat to Captain Hilder," 18 April 1683, 37-38.
[70] Ibid, "John Petit and George Bowcher at Surat to Captain Hilder," 16 April 1683, 35.
[71] BL IOR/E/3/43/2, "Consultation at Surat," 4 April 1683, f. 5v-7r.

polity, Janjira, south of Bombay. His main job, in exchange for this prestigious courtly appointment, was always to provide sea power to the Mughal state in the form of his fleet. The ships the *sidī* commanded were active from their base of Janjira during the shipping season, convoying Mughal ships across the Arabian Sea and protecting Mughal interests along the western coast of India. However, Janjira was a heavily fortified naval outpost, not a sheltering harbor. As a result, from the establishment of the Mughal rule over parts of the Arabian Sea littoral in the 15th Century, the *sidī* had held the negotiated right to utilize Bombay's deep and sheltered natural harbor to lay his ships up during the dangerous monsoon season. The Company's employees had written extensively on their resentment of the *sidī*'s annual appearance, which often negatively impacted the delicate economy in food, drinking water, accommodation, and social and political harmony in Bombay. However, the EIC was loathe to provoke the Mughal state at a time of trade uncertainty. In no uncertain terms, Bombay's governing council, led by Deputy Governor (and John Child's brother-in-law) Charles Ward, was instructed to keep the peace with the *sidī* and his men.[72]

Such a policy was deeply unpopular with many of the Company's Bombay employees, especially after Charles Ward refused to use force to compel the *sidī* to send ashore a Pathan soldier accused of killing an English soldier in Bombay's marketplace. Ward was seen as Child's lackey because of their familial relationship, among other things, and the favor shown to the *sidī*

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[72] BL IOR/E/3/40, "Governor and Council at Surat to EIC in London," 8 April 1680, f.255r; Ibid, "John Child at Bombay to EIC in London," 1 January 1681, 287v-288r; BL IOR/E/3/41, "Thomas Rolt at Surat to EIC in London," 11 April 1681, f. 30v; BL IOR/E/3/43/1, "Charles Ward and Council at Bombay to John Child and Council at Surat," 22 September 1683, f.140v; BL IOR/G/3/2, "Bombay Consultations," 1677-1678, f. 24-26; Ibid, "Bombay Consultations," 1680-81, f. 13, 18-19; BL IOR/G/3/6, "Gerald Aungier and Council at Bombay to Surat," 26 April 1673, f. 113; Ibid, "Aungier and Council at Bombay to Surat," 14 May 1673, f. 117-119; Ibid, "Gerald Aungier and Council to Surat," 20 September 1673, f. 195-197; Ibid, "Aungier to Surat," 12 October 1673, f. 216-217; Ibid, "Aungier to Surat," 17 October 1673, f. 220-221.

was consistently justified by Child and Ward as necessary to preserve the Company's trade. Such a justification irked employees like Richard Keigwin and Bombay's Second-of-Council, Henry Smith. These men felt their own trading liberties were curtailed in favor of not only their bosses, but their neighbors. The same neighbors drove up costs for everyone and caused great regional instability by picking fights with other local polities, like the Marathas.[73]

The discontent came to a head on 30 June 1683. In response to an order from Surat, Ward had proclaimed on the 29th (with the consent of all members of Council except for Henry Smith) to prevent the buying and selling of enslaved South Asians by Company employees in Bombay. Ward told Child the impetus to forbid the trade in people was both a moral imperative a practical matter, as all members of Bombay's council "knew how prejudicial the suffering such things to be done would be to the island."[74] According to depositions, Smith, Bombay secretary John Burnison, member of council John Jessop, garrison commander Richard Keigwin, EIC ship's captain Stephen Adderton, garrison captain Thomas Niccolls, and garrison lieutenant Henry Fletcher attended a lunch the next day aboard the Company's ship the *Berkley Castle*, commanded by John Consett. John Burnison claimed that after the meal, Smith returned to his already long-running "discourse concerning a proclamation, which was set forth by the Deputy Governor, forbidding all the inhabitants of the island whatsoever to buy any of the people that the *sidī*'s men did daily force away from [the mainland], upon the penalty of having them taken

[73] BL IOR/E/3/40, "Letter from Council at Surat to East India Company in London," 8 April, 1680, f. 255r: "his men in great numbers coming ashore are so insolent and abusive…if it be not suddenly remedied, some dangerous consequences will ensue;" BL IOR/E/3/43/1, "Letter from Charles Ward, John Burniston, and John Jessop at Bombay to John Child and Council in Surat," 22 September 1683, f.140v: "The *sidī*'s fleet constantly wintering with us doth much exhaust all manner of provisions, that unless some speedy remedy may be used…our soldiers will never be able to live on their pay, having already often made several complaints."
[74] BL IOR/E/3/43/1, "Charles Ward at Bombay to John Child in Surat," 17 November 1683, f.177r.

from them, besides a forfeiture of 50 larees to the Honorable Company." In Burnison's view, as he told Smith, such a proclamation was "absolutely necessary, it being very unnatural in anyone to buy those people, who were forced away from their relations and dwellings as they were."[75] In contrast, Smith was claimed to have said he "'value[d] not his proclamation a f[uck].'"[76] In his own response, Henry Smith confessed he had rejected the proclamation, "and believe [I] had reason so to do," as it was issued out without adequate debate, discussion, and agreement from the Company's local stakeholders. It was particularly galling to Smith that Ward had merely used his "ill nature to hinder others from" purchasing people. Smith wrote that Ward "was guilty of in particular," the purchase of enslaved South Asians from the *sidī*, and "in general had winked at" situations where his own local allies had done so.[77]

According to the allies of Ward who were in attendance, it was Smith's intention to break the rules contained in the proclamation which made him and Captain Consett go aboard the *sidī's* own ship that afternoon. According to Smith and his allies, it was not the intention to buy enslaved people from the *sidī*, but a plan to search out the accused Pathan murderer which inspired them to board the ship. Regardless, Consett, who was a "stranger" to India, managed to instantly offend the *sidī* by lacking deference upon boarding. He was called "*bahanchod*," which "the English [in] general take it for 'son of a whore,'" by one of the *sidī*'s men.[78] At that point, Captain Thomas Niccolls, "knowing [Consett] to be…ignorant of the language," boarded the

[75] BL IOR/E/3/43/1, "Depositions Regarding the *Berkley Castle* Firing," August 1683, f. 96r.
[76] Ibid, "Extracts of Letters Regarding the *Berkley Castle* Firing," 22 August 1683, f. 116r.
[77] Ibid, "Henry Smith's Response," 27 October 1683, f. 166r.
[78] IOR B/3/43/2, "The Grievous Complaints and Grievances of His Majesty's Most Loyal Subjects the Inhabitants and Soldiers of His Majesty's Island Bombay," f. 369v-370r; the literal translation of this word, still one of the most common insults in use in India today, is "sisterfucker."

sidī's vessel as well, and "asked why they gave such base language to strangers."[79] The scrape of sword against scabbard was heard as every Mughal on the ship drew arms. Chaos ensued. By the end of the afternoon, Consett had been injured and thrown overboard, Niccolls and Smith had ordered the *Berkley Castle* to fire ordnance, and Charles Ward was forced to pacify the Mughal forces, "passing by all such affronts and injuries by the means of some silver-tongued messenger of the *sidī*."[80]

The aftermath of Petit and Bowcher's actions in Surat, and the *Berkley Castle* incident in Bombay, subsumed the Company's western Indian administrators for the rest of 1683. Recriminatory letters, lengthy self-vindications, and all matter of underhanded dealing abounded. John Child and his allies, notably Charles Ward, had no interest in finding common ground with the likes of Henry Smith or John Petit. Rather, the strategy became to obstruct the movement of the disgruntled men while those loyal to the Company's new direction built cases against them to send home to London. All the while, those sympathetic to the old strategy, embodied by men like Gerald Aungier, found themselves increasingly alienated and their longest serving Company employees ignominiously stripped of employment. Pressure built. Something would have to give, and soon.

To "Give Liberty of a Free Trade, and Suffer no Monopolizing"[81]

By December of 1683, the local opponents of the Company's new political economic strategy were reaching a breaking point. John Petit and George Bowcher remained in India, but a

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79 IOR B/3/43/2, The Grievous Complaints and Grievances of His Majesty's Most Loyal Subjects the Inhabitants and Soldiers of His Majesty's Island Bombay," 370r.
80 Ibid, 370r-370v; BL IOR/E/3/43/1, "Depositions Regarding the *Berkley Castle* Firing," August 1683, f. 96r; Ibid, "Extracts of Letters Regarding the *Berkley Castle* Firing," 22 August 1683, f. 116r; Ibid, "Henry Smith's Response," 27 October 1683, f. 166r.
81 BL IOR/E/3/43/2, "Articles Between the Inhabitants of Bombay and Richard Keigwin," f. 178f.

year's worth of their strategizing and risky communications had failed to free them from either the demands of the Mughal state or the Company's Council in Surat. Henry Smith, who had been one of the leaders of the anti-Child contingent in Bombay (and the only civilian opponent on the Company's Council there), had been made the scapegoat for the *Berkeley Castle* incident and was gone to Surat with his pregnant wife. It was unclear to his allies in Bombay if he would continue to advocate for their position there, or if he would reconcile with Child. Even the Surat council were unsure of his plans and loyalties, ordering him both to attempt to double-cross John Petit and to remain within the town of Suvālī so they could keep him under watch.[82] Without an actor on the Bombay Council who could continue to stand up for the commercial, trade-oriented, development-oriented policies pioneered under President Aungier, and with the sense that time was running out for Petit and Bowcher, the moment to act radically had come.

It helped that the soldiers in the Bombay garrison, whose support was necessary, were on edge. As we have seen, the *sidī*'s fleet had spent the monsoon in Bombay harbor that summer. As well as providing the conditions for the *Berkeley Castle* incident, the presence of a larger-than-usual Mughal fleet had driven up local prices on everyday items. Furthermore, those from the fleet who went ashore regularly received what English residents perceived as special treatment from Charles Ward, and his allies.[83] Soldiers and residents were uncomfortable about

[82] BL IOR/E/3/44, "A Narration of Misdemeanors Committed by Henry Smith, When the Honorable John Child, President, and Council were Against the Island Bombay," 24 February 1684, signed John Gladman, John Hornigold, John Shaxton, and Reuben White, f. 8r; Ibid, "Consultation at Suvālī," 9 April 1684, present John Child, Charles Zinzan, John Hornigold, and John Gladman, f. 12r.
[83] BL IOR/E/3/43/1, "Extracts Relating to Henry Smith from Bombay Letters," 22 August-11 October 1683, f.116v; BL IOR/E/3/43/2, "Letter from Charles Ward at Bombay to John Child and Council in Surat, 17 November 1683," f. 177v; BL IOR/E/3/43/3, "The Grievous Complaints and Grievances of His Majesty's Most Loyal Subjects the Inhabitants and Soldiers of His Majesty's Island Bombay," 27 December 1683, ff. 369v, 371v, 373v-374r, 375r.

the *sidī's* perceived influence and still feared the possibility he would continue to engage nearby Maratha and Portuguese forces, which could put Bombay amidst an armed conflict. Residents were even more concerned about John Child's cost-cutting measures. The two issues—Mughal presence and fiscal austerity—were increasingly related to local observers. The *sidī's* fleet drove up prices as wages were being reduced. Locals saw Gerald Aungier's hard-won military and civic infrastructure on the island rotting away and accurately ascribed the decay to the new administrators' fiscal policies.[84] There was no refuge should a conflict break out among their neighbors. Child had even argued for the Company to sell defensive materiel kept on the island, because it was more expensive to repair and protect from rust than it was useful.[85]

Because John Child had (with the blessing of London) cracked down hard on Company employees who wanted to maintain Aungier's policies in the Company's western India factories, many Company personnel had been shifted between posts in 1681, 1682, and 1683. Petit and Bowcher were not the only ones fired, and others were demoted.[86] Richard Keigwin and Henry Fletcher, though associates of Smith, Bowcher, and Petit, remained in command of the EIC's two

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[84] BL IOR/E/3/39, "Henry Oxenden at Bombay to East India Company in London," 6 January 1679, f. 312r; BL IOR/E/3/89, "Letter from the East India Company in London to the President and Council at Surat, 28 February 1679, f.49v; Ibid, "East India Company in London to Deputy Governor and Council at Bombay, 28 February 1679, f. 57r; BL IOR/E/3/43/3, "The Grievous Complaints and Grievances of His Majesty's Most Loyal Subjects the Inhabitants and Soldiers of His Majesty's Island Bombay, 27 December 1683, f. 370f.

[85] BL IOR/E/3/42, "Letter from John Child, Francis Day, John Hornigold, Bartholomew Harris, and John Gladman at Suvālī to the East India Company in London," 26 January 1683, f.195v.

[86] The case of Mansell Smith is illustrative. In 1672, he was earning £25 per year in the Company's employ in Surat. By 1678 he was on the Bombay council and was elected Deputy Governor there in 1681. But because of his well-known affiliations with John Petit, Henry Smith, and other Aungier-affiliated servants during the 1670s, after Petit's firing Child selected Mansell Smith to be agent of the Persia factory in Bandar Abbas in 1682. Charles Ward, John Child's brother-in-law, took his place as Deputy Governor in Bombay, and Mansell Smith died in Persia in 1683. See BL IOR/B/32, f. 72r; BL IOR/E/3/38 ff. 163r-165r, 182r, 205r; BL IOR/E/3/39, ff. 296r, 314v, 322r, 327-328r, 337r, 406r.

garrison companies in Bombay and had fought to keep their handpicked subordinates.[87] But they feared Child's fiscal policies would soon endanger them personally, as Child had ordered all military officers to pay backpay into the Company's treasury for "mustered servants" which the Company administration had declared an unnecessary expense. For Keigwin and Fletcher, the amounts Child set as their debts on this account were substantial; the Bombay officers estimated "some" impacted by this policy would owe "nigh £300 more than any every got in their service."[88] Despite all this, Child and his allies argued that the revolt was purely a get-rich-quick scheme. They claimed in 1684 that Henry Smith had arrived in Surat and managed to tip off his allies in Bombay that the *Return*, a ship laden with 40,000 rupees of stock, was calling in Bombay harbor in early 1684, knowledge which served to touch off the entire affair. But the Surat Council themselves admitted in a consultation that "we cannot just now prove," the allegation, though "it has been so hourly reported and affirmed by several that in our own thoughts we may give some credit to it."[89] Given that the king's emissary, Sir Thomas Grantham, ultimately recovered all the money taken out of the ship by the end of November 1684—before the rebellion was formally over—Child's allegation seems unlikely.[90]

From this circumstantial evidence alone one might accept that the "rebellion" (Keigwin and his supporters called it a "voluntary revolution") in Bombay at the end of 1683 was about more than simple backpay and disgruntled soldiery. Disputes and ideas about East India

[87] BL IOR/E/3/43/3, "The Grievous Complaints and Grievances of His Majesty's Most Loyal Subjects the Inhabitants and Soldiers of His Majesty's Island Bombay, 27 December 1683, ff. 371v, 373v.
[88] Ibid, 373v.
[89] BL IOR/E/3/44, "Consultation at Suvālī," 9 April 1684, present John Child, Charles Zinzan, John Hornigold, and John Gladman, f. 12v.
[90] Ibid, "Letter from Sir Thomas Grantham at Bombay Harbor to John Child at Surat," 11 November 1684, f .272r.

Company policy which circulated in western India during the prior decade demonstrate that the men and women of the Company were attuned to its politics and the role they played in a larger political economy of English empire. However, observers needn't rely on that evidence alone to support the claim of trans-imperial political economic positions as drivers of Keigwin's rebellion. The documents of the rebellion themselves make this case, plainly and simply, and bring Keigwin's rebellion into alignment with other trans-imperial rejections of absolutist political economy in the 1680s.

Crucially, Richard Keigwin and his allies established their right of revolt by drawing on previous successful rejections of administrative overreach in the English imperial state of the 17th century. In their "Proclamation for the Liberty, Felicity, and Tranquility of the Inhabitants and In-Dwellers of Bombay" the rebels were careful to note that they were "justly" revolting "from their unjust government," and seeking "the refuge and protection of our most gracious sovereign." They asserted that the East India Company had committed many faults, including "intolerable extortions, oppressions and injustices." The Company's "despicable condemning and maliciously ruining his Majesty's subjects" was but one example of its failure; ultimately, the rebels stated that the Company "have not conserved, observed, nor performed the injunctions and articles of his Majesty's most royal charter and patent."[91] In staking their claim on their adversary's failure to follow the charter and patent, Bombay's residents demonstrated an understanding of previous successful campaigns against agents of the state in 17th century imperial England, and connected their cause to one of the most hot-button political issues of the day.

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[91] BL IOR/E/3/43/3, "A Proclamation for the Liberty, Felicity, and Tranquility of the Inhabitants and In-Dwellers of Bombay," 28 December 1683, f. 277r.

The Company's charter and royal letters patent were their legitimacy, in legal and political economic terms. While they granted certain rights and privileges to the entity known as the "East India Company," they also extended responsibilities to it, devolved out of the ultimate rights, privileges, and responsibilities of the state. During the 17th century, as the early modern English administrative state grew more complex and the crown and Parliament were locked in battle after battle for supreme legitimacy, charters and letters patent proliferated, as did legal challenges to them, which typically came in the form of a writ of *quo warranto*, or "what warrant?" In these cases, exercisers of chartered or patented authority would be asked to prove the legitimacy of that authority; if they weren't convincing, England's Court of King's Bench could revoke their charters and patents, at which point all authorities devolved within the charters and patents would reinvest in the crown. Even for non-lawyers and men with little formal education, like those who led the Bombay revolt, the relationship between establishing the crown's authority and challenging charters and patents was clear, as it was regularly in the news across the empire. King Charles II was at the very moment of Bombay's revolt engaged in a two year-long *quo warranto* case against the City of London corporation, wherein he demanded the corporation produce evidence of their local government's legitimacy. Similar campaigns had been leveraged against North American and Caribbean colonies in the 1670s as part of Charles II's pivot toward absolutist empire and diversification of crown rents. Even more famously, James II, Charles II's successor, would embark on a widespread *quo warranto* onslaught on imperial and English governing bodies in 1684-85. The overstepping of royal authority which the English imperial public saw in these legal battles between sovereign and administrative state tended directly to the overthrow of the Stuart regime in 1688-89.

At first glance, one may look at the affinities of Keigwin and his associates and place them in a more natural alliance with the defenders of charters and patents, who were mainly civic bodies and local authorities who wanted greater self-governance. But, as their proclamation makes clear, their goal in challenging the Company's execution of its charter and patents was firstly to legitimize their locally chosen representative, Richard Keigwin, who was governing in the name of King Charles II. Secondly, it's not clear that the rebels had access to the literal terms of the East India Company's charter or letters patent. Their documents did not refer to specific clauses, rights, or responsibilities enumerated therein, referring instead to the Company's vague doing of "several things to the indignity of the king."[92] They further asserted the Company had an obligation, theoretically stemming from their role as the representative of the English imperial state (although certainly not clear in the language of charter), to allow debate and disagreement over policies which impacted western India's political economic trajectory. The rebels used this sense of obligation to further legitimize their "voluntary revolution and joyful acclamation," accomplished "without the least combustion or molestation (as is usual in such cases)."[93] Without "his most loyal subjects' revolt from the East India Company to his Majesty's government and protection," there was no opportunity for "any redress." The Company's "obstructing all complaints, and exposing even particular letters to burglary, lest their known oppressions and other rigidly unjust actions should be no less known to his Majesty," forced the hand of the dissenting residents of Bombay.[94] However, these legitimizing statements were not specifically about the terns of the Company's charter. The Company's actual, newly negotiated

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[92] BL IOR/E/3/43/3, "Articles Between the Inhabitants of Bombay and Richard Keigwin," December 1683, f. 278f.
[93] Ibid, "The Grievous Complaints and Grievances of His Majesty's Most Loyal Subjects the Inhabitants and Soldiers of His Majesty's Island Bombay," 27 December 1683, f. 371r.
[94] Ibid, f. 375v.

charter in place at the time of the revolt (though not received in India until 1684) dramatically expanded the Company's powers to persecute (and later prosecute) those deemed interlopers in the Indian Ocean region. It firmly established the king's perspective that the Company's role in India was to extract as much value for the crown's customs coffers as possible and monopolize the trade in India goods within England. It never hurt that Josiah Child's EIC was willing to pay large "gifts" and "loans" of cash to the crown to get charter deals done. Had they had knowledge of the active charter, one doubts that Keigwin and his allies would genuinely desire to enforce it, as their grievances and goals will make clear. Yet such a rhetorical device further strengthens the claim that Keigwin's rebellion was not about simple disputes. Rather, it was an assertion of the right to debate and contest trans-imperial political economic policy, even (or especially) when that policy was enacted by a chartered Company. This rejection of the Company's unilaterally chosen political economic direction was couched in a rejection of the Company's legitimacy over solitary enforcement, at least on crown lands inhabited by subjects of the English imperial king. The language of legitimating grievance in the rebel documents demonstrates that the EIC's presence in western India at the time was neither that of a mere merchant nor that of a state in its own right. Instead, it operated as a form of local administration, one with a legally defined need to attend to the bottom line and fiscal prosperity. But when there was disagreement about what that attention to prosperity entailed, across and within layers of the Company's bureaucracy and subjects of the English crown, individuals felt their views mattered. They were willing to break with their "unjust" and "tyrannical" administrators over it, for the ultimate good of English subjects and English empire. As such, the assertion of their position was rooted in their sense of participation in the English state's imperial project.

The claim that Keigwin's rebellion was an instance of trans-imperial political economic policy disagreement rather than a local dispute over pay and petty personal disagreements is further supported by the remainder of the revolutionary documents. Keigwin's first action as governor is to make an agreement with the "inhabitants of Bombay" who raised him to the position. The articles of this agreement make clear that this revolution includes *all* of Bombay's inhabitants, not just the English ones. The English and Portuguese swore to the articles "by the trinity, baptism, and passion," the text noted, while the Muslims and Hindus swore "by their most rigid oaths." These English, Portuguese, Muslim and Hindu inhabitants legitimated their new administration by unanimous consent of the governed, rather than the Company's flimsy charter or letters patent. They then signed over all the rents, revenues, and other incomes made in the Company's name to the king and expected Keigwin to use the money to better Bombay, according to their own beliefs about the future of imperial prosperity. As such,. Keigwin agrees that these incomes will be used to "make good all fortifications, and repair all his Majesty's houses, and make conveniences in the Fort for the soldiers and inhabitants, and always to have a store of provisions in the Fort," assuaging some of the concerns which had mounted over the summer of 1683. To specifically benefit Bombay's future political economy, Keigwin raised soldiers' pay by 17% and promised to "give liberty of a free trade, and suffer no monopolizing."[95] Doubling down on this assertion, the rebels' proclamation stated that "all English or other his Majesty's subjects, howsoever distressed or wheresoever dispersed" were free to come to Bombay. This included East India Company employees, assuming their "due obedience to his Majesty's government." These individuals, along with "all nations who own

[95] Ibid, "Articles Between the Inhabitants of Bombay and Richard Keigwin," December 1683, f.278r-278f.

themselves his Majesty's friend and well-wishers," would "have free egress and ingress" into Bombay, and "peaceable and free liberty of commerce and friendly converse with his Majesty's most loyal subjects in his Majesty's port and island of Bombay."[96] Keigwin and his allies were reverting Bombay to the status it had largely occupied in Gerald Aungier's era. Free trade, freedom of movement, and infrastructural investment would trend toward political quietude and economic growth. As the rebels stated, their policies would soon reverse Bombay's fortunes. After all, the site was "the best port, and in time will be the key of India for traffic and trade." Therefore, with policies aimed at promoting trade and industrious settlement, "what the Company could not keep without reported great expense, shall now be kept by his Majesty's most loyal subjects, free from all expenses, excepting what its own produce will maintain."[97]

All this aside, the clearest and most specific evidence for the rebellion attempting to re-implement the earlier political-economic policy of capital- and labor-intensive free trade and commerce in Bombay comes in the longest revolutionary document. The dramatically titled "The Grievous Complaints and Grievances of His Majesty's Most Loyal Subjects the Inhabitants and Soldiers of his Majesty's Island Bombay" served as a compendium of all the Company's wrongs, and therefore also painted a picture of what the rebels took to be their past and future right actions. While much of this 12-page manuscript contains complaints about the behavior of specific administrators (notably John Child and Charles Ward), its focus is always on how those behaviors tended to the diminishment of Bombay as a site of imperial growth and prosperity. A different course of action, the authors were confident, would produce a far different result. By

[96] BL IOR/E/3/43/3, "A Proclamation for the Liberty, Felicity, and Tranquility of the Inhabitants and In-Dwellers of Bombay," 28 December 1683, f. 277f.
[97] Ibid, "The Grievous Complaints and Grievances of His Majesty's Most Loyal Subjects the Inhabitants and Soldiers of His Majesty's Island Bombay," 27 December 1683, f. 371r.

claiming to be mere merchants, and privileging sending profit to England, the rebels argued the Company was forgoing profit on Bombay itself. The loss of the small islands Undherī and Kānherī at the entrance to Bombay port cost Bombay customs revenue, for example. The Marathas' seizure of those islands kept local trade from entering the harbor at times of dispute between the Marathas and the Portuguese or Mughals. Sambhaji, the Maratha crown prince, claimed a right to the islands because they were unmanned and uninhabited. "A small charge might have remedied" this situation, the rebels argued, if the Company had only been willing to staff those outposts with a regular guard, but instead the Company practiced "parsimonious avariciousness" and "regard avarice more than…the welfare of the port they have the honor to govern."[98] Similar complaints were levied at Company deference to the Mughal fleet led by the sidī of Janjīrā, as discussed already. In their own telling of the *Berkley Castle* incident, Deputy Governor Charles Ward cared more about making money for his Company superiors than supporting the rights and liberties of his own people. The rebels reported that any complaints about the behavior of the "Moors" were met with dismissive replies. "Ward most degradingly….replied to one who said, 'though we are the Company's servants, yet we are the king's subjects, and it is for the king's honor where his laws are established, that we should have justice," the rebels wrote. Ward reportedly "swore bitterly and furiously," and said "'what do you tell me of the king? The Company is our master and we must mind their concerns, and not his honor.'" Keigwin and his allies attested that the Company's current representatives passed

[98] BL IOR/E/3/43/3, "The Grievous Complaints and Grievances of His Majesty's Most Loyal Subjects the Inhabitants and Soldiers of His Majesty's Island Bombay," 27 December 1683, f. 369f-369v.

"by all such affronts and injuries, by the means of some silvertongued messengers" of the Mughal state.[99]

It was not only in their outright dealings with the other regional polities that the Company's current policy diminished Bombay's potential, according to Keigwin and his allies. The Company's newfound policy of expense retrenchment and reduction, alongside cash extraction, was tending to the ruin of an imperial site with significant potential. John Child, they wrote, "always adhere[d] to his proposition of gain, first moved by him to Sir Josiah Child, the Company's emperor whose advice and counsel is approved and confirmed no less than the laws of…Persia." The Company's new austerity was "forfeit[ing]" the "Company's interest, and his Majesty's subjects' lives" under the guise of "good husbandry for the Company." The Company's leaders in London were reported to badmouth Bombay at home, "slighting and condemning it as not worth their acceptance," words which reportedly were "spoke by the East India Company oracle Sir Josiah Child," who afterwards supposedly stated "'that the Company did not care if Bombay were as far under as above water,' or that 'the Turk Moor Shivājī or any other had possession of Bombay, if the king or any other European had not possession thereof.'" In the writings of the rebels, they acknowledged this quote to be hearsay, but claimed the Company's "known base, penurious, and avaricious actions and irregular government" in Bombay would "confirm the report."[100]

More serious than the rhetoric of John and Josiah Child was their action. Bombay's residents asserted that the Company was intentionally devaluing Bombay for their own fiscal

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[99] BL IOR/E/3/43/3, "The Grievous Complaints and Grievances of His Majesty's Most Loyal Subjects the Inhabitants and Soldiers of His Majesty's Island Bombay," 27 December 1683, f. 375r, 370v.
[100] Ibid.

reasons. As “is known to all that ever entered into contract with them both at home and abroad,” the Bombay residents wrote, the Company made “what fair promises” in England and “what foul performances” in India. The Company was accused of taking money orders for Bombay at Surat and discounting them at 12 ½ percent, “so that they may cheat others,” though “none must or dare cheat them.” John Child, referred to as “Mr. Save-Charges,” would “use all means imaginable to insinuate himself in the Company’s favor [in London], no matter how unjust he raised himself, were it by the ruin of others, and gained the applause of being the Company zealot and grand promoter of their interest.”[101] As a result, despite “neighboring parts abound[ing] with plenty,” in Bombay goods were bought cheap and sold dear, “and that the price may not fall, nor we be gutted with plenty,” Bombay’s administrators exported much of their food, and set prices on goods which residents deemed arbitrarily high, from rice to hens to goat by the pound. By pursuing these policies of cash at all costs, the Company had gained a local reputation for “pestilent corruption,” known as “monopolizing [liquor] and all other commodities.” “All provisions [are] raised to that height poor soldiers and families that diet them cannot reach it…the poor curse [the Company], and soldiers justly hate them,” Keigwin and his allies wrote.[102]

The rebels attested that the money made from Bombay never stayed in Bombay, writing “money, the nerves and sinews of war which is the produce of the island’s rents, revenues, and customs, hath never been continued here…these seven years.” Seven years was a key temporal marker, as it had been seven years since Gerald Aungier’s death. Instead, Bombay residents claimed that money “which ought to be employed here for…the public welfare” was moved to

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[101] BL IOR/E/3/43/3, “The Grievous Complaints and Grievances of His Majesty’s Most Loyal Subjects the Inhabitants and Soldiers of His Majesty’s Island Bombay,” f. 371r, 374v.
[102] Ibid, 371v-372r.

Surat. The writers of the complaint had no interest in what the money might do in Surat, focusing on its value in Bombay, where it kept the residents in food and work; cash infusions in Bombay would be, and previously had been, “well employed to the Company’s advantage and the inhabitants’ encouragement, and would in a short time double their customs.” As with their manipulation of rates on bills of exchange at Surat, the Bombay residents accused the Company of “purposely keep[ing Bombay] its debtor,” by exporting money. The goal of the Company, they wrote, was to “keep [Bombay] still in extreme poverty…that his Majesty may imagine it an expensive, which they find to be a profitable place, purposely to deter his Majesty from ever countenancing it, or taking it to his government.”[103] The residents further argued that the Company’s impositions on “a quarter part of the inhabitants’ estate,” were an intentional misreading of an agreement Gerald Aungier made with the residents to collect a yearly sum “for keeping the island in a defensive posture always (without further exactions or impositions)…which was performed during his government here.” The new political-economic direction of the Company “look[ed] upon that money as their own, [and] would not be further at that charge, and now to procure more they pretend that…they favored [the inhabitants] much to suffer them so long under this contract.” The Company’s demands for extraction of Bombay’s wealth were examples of “their insatiable avarice,” which required them to “violate all contracts, were they never so solemnly given. This is a state’s stratagem…in order to please the Company’s avaricious desires.”[104]

Keigwin and his allies connected the Company’s new political-economic impetus to extraction directly to the treatment of John Petit and George Bowcher in their complaint. They

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[103] BL IOR/E/3/43/3, “The Grievous Complaints and Grievances of His Majesty’s Most Loyal Subjects the Inhabitants and Soldiers of His Majesty’s Island Bombay,” 370v-371r.
[104] Ibid, 371v.

argued that “the ruins of others” like the “worthy gentlemen, Mr John Petit and George Bowcher,” served as a pretext of “zealous[ness] for the Company’s interest,” allowing for the removal from influence of people who disagreed with the Company’s anti-free trade direction. The complainants concluded their discussion of the issue by asking, “How many officers and others have been discharged the Company’s service for no known crime, [and never] brought to public trials?”[105] This claim was extended to a broad criticism of the Company’s silencing of dissent regarding the right strategy for political-economic prosperity. Though the Company wrote from London “encouraging all to marry, build, and purchase what [land] they could, that the natives might be bought out,” on Bombay, John Child’s complaints about the residents’ rejection of the new Company direction led to later orders to only keep employed “such as shall have their sole dependence on them, to be kicked out at pleasure and kept in thralldom and poverty.”[106] Residents claimed to be “slighted” by the Company “like Bond Pharaoh with the poor Israelites…menacing such as do go to beg their bread, for if they are not contented, [the Company] can have enough to serve them.” Aggrieved residents were “penned up where they cannot serve others without [the Company’s] license,” and directions to promotion within the Company’s structure were closed to them. Those who complained were “condemn[ed],” and told “they are, shall, or must be liable to [the Company’s] uncontrollable wills, or [the Company] will expel them, and put [in] their footboys, coachmen, or any that shall.”[107] They finished their discussion with the claim that the Company and its representatives believed their “authority cannot consist without” locals being “spitefully and maliciously used.”[108] In all, the Company’s

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[105] BL IOR/E/3/43/3, “The Grievous Complaints and Grievances of His Majesty’s Most Loyal Subjects the Inhabitants and Soldiers of His Majesty’s Island Bombay,” 372v.
[106] Ibid, 373v.
[107] Ibid, 372r.
[108] Ibid, 372v.

new masters were "ruining the island and inhabitants thereof" only to "purchase…unordered fame…more to be prized for its obdurateness than its worth," making them "the only fatal enemy the Company ever had, under palliated pretenses."[109]

In a definitive statement of politics, Bombay's rebels finished their complaint with an attestation that the Company itself was not to blame, merely those members who had steered it in its current direction. Josiah Child and John Child, they wrote, "have established themselves sole governors of the East India society." They were "neither…advising or adhering to or with their current council, but only for formality's sake, to inure them, *nolens volens*, to subscription of their own propositions." Such individuals were "the men that devise mischief, and give ill counsel to the Company, possessing them with hopes of gain and thoughts of great advantages they should reap by the oppression and extortion of his Majesty's subjects." The policies of these new impolitic drivers would "terminate in the Company's ruin…[as] since the Company have given ease to such, God hath never prospered them." In contrast, "before, when such perverse Children were not amongst them, and [the Company] did what was just, and were not intermeddler[s] with other matters than merchandise, encouraging and countenancing their servants to serve them, God blessed them and their endeavors, and their servants were happy under good masters."[110] Because of these previous halcyon days under Gerald Aungier, the authors of the complaint were confident that "there are many honorable and worthy gentlemen in that society who did not only dissuade them from such…courses but disapproved and condemned them."[111] It was to that dissenting group that Keigwin and his allies cleaved, trusting

[109] BL IOR/E/3/43/3, "The Grievous Complaints and Grievances of His Majesty's Most Loyal Subjects the Inhabitants and Soldiers of His Majesty's Island Bombay," 371v.
[110] Ibid, 374v.
[111] Ibid, 375r.

that their radical action would affect positive change and reinscribe the effective, free trade- and investment-oriented policies which had made Bombay a site of great potential and future prosperity not ten years before.

Conclusion

Any analysis of Keigwin's actions will be guided by the reality that John Child and his allies retained control over the Company's holdings in western India. However, one can't say that the rebellion "failed." John Petit may have died ignominiously in a doomed attempt to reach the rebels at Bombay. But Richard Keigwin and his allies largely escaped consequence. Once news of the rebellion reached London, Charles II sent the famous lawyer Sir Thomas Grantham to India at the head of several ships to subdue the rebels. He was accompanied by the distant scion of a famed lawyerly family, John St. John. While John Child and his colleagues had spent most of 1684 attempting to play hardball with Keigwin and his men, Grantham took a far more pragmatic approach upon his arrival at the end of October. Within the week he had sent a cordial letter to Keigwin, who invited Grantham ashore with the promise of "propositions that shall be so reasonable that you cannot in honor deny [them]."[112] The whole matter was settled by the end of the year. Richard Keigwin and his "commissioned officers, with all other officers and soldiers of the said island," alongside "every of them their heirs, executors, and administrators" were "forever indemnified for all and all manner of…acts whatsoever relating to the last revolution made on the island on the 27th day of December aforesaid, although it shall be deemed treason or otherwise." To cover their bases, Grantham and Keigwin further agreed that "notwithstanding it

[112] BL IOR/E/3/44, "Sir Thomas Grantham at Suvalī to John Child at Surat," 30 October 1684, f.240r-241r; Ibid, "John Child and Council at Suvalī to Sir Thomas Grantham, John Gladman, and John Hornigold at Bombay," 3 November 1684, ff. 248r-249r; Ibid, "Richard Keigwin et al at Bombay to Sir Thomas Grantham at Bombay," 8 November 1684, f. 262r.

wholly be pardoned to them," Keigwin and his allies would see the "said action be forgiven and buried in oblivion, and never to be prosecuted by the Honorable English East India Company, their successors, or servants whatsoever." Keigwin and his allies were allowed to keep the entirety of their estates, and any pay received during the revolt. They were further indemnified against "any…person in the Honorable Company's service" from bringing them court on pretenses of "false imprisonment, or any other force whatever." Keigwin secured freedom of movement for himself and his allies, either to remain in India "if he please" or to go to Europe on a free passage. They negotiated "no impediment for our letters coming from England or going," giving the rebels "liberty to converse without relations."[113] In the ultimate text of the pardon, the agreed upon indemnities were extended not only to Keigwin and the Company's soldiers, but to "all his abettors, as also to all the inhabitants of the said island," including non-Europeans.

Unsurprisingly, Grantham and Keigwin's agreements went over like a lead balloon with John Child. Charles Zinzan, Child's representative who had accompanied Grantham from Surat to Bombay, tried to get out ahead of Child's reaction in a letter sent from Bombay to England in January of 1685. "It was unanimously agreed," Zinzan wrote, "that there was no other expedient for the preservation of the island" other than to settle such terms with Keigwin and his allies. "The government was surrendered without the least molestation, but rather to the satisfaction of all in general," Zinzan noted, and several of the men who had participated in Keigwin's revolt were continuing in the garrison.[114]

By contrast, John Child wrote that he merely "seem[ed]" to be alright with the plan, "being forced awhile to conceal and dissemble our real resentment," particularly that not

[113] BL IOR/E/44, "Propositions for the Surrender of Bombay Fort to Sir Thomas Grantham," 18 December 1684, ff. 288-289.
[114] Ibid, "Charles Zinzan and Council at Bombay to London," 19 January 1685, f. 383r.

everyone who participated had been fired. "We have seriously considered the ill circumstances the island lies still under, by conceding so far to the rebels' proposals," Child wrote.[115] He described Keigwin as "impudent as hell, glorying in his roguery being secure under Sir Thomas' protection." While it was "ten thousand pities he should escape the halter," Child acknowledged he had slipped the Company's justice. Child took care to defend the new interpretation of the Company's goals and power against Keigwin's beliefs throughout his complaints. "All your charters, do what we can, [are] looked upon as of no validity" by men like Keigwin, Child wrote. If such believers were not brought to heel, Child feared that "your powers will be wholly weakened, and the English in these parts not to be governed, and apt to revolt." It was only the "hope" of new "orders…what may give a check to such growing evils" that would protect the Company, Child believed.[116] There were also complaints about personnel. "There are too many of the old officers," Child wrote alongside his council. "Your Honors may see by the proposals made by Keigwin &c. how impudently naughty they are and have no thoughts that they have been guilty…their consciences are cleared and they are ready for another mutiny and have come off so well with this last that they are encouraged to it." As such, "it is with no small regret that we are constrained to sign the pardon Sir Thomas Grantham gave the Bombay rebels…yet could not refuse it, since he did oblige himself to procure it."[117]

However much Keigwin may have negotiated for himself and his supporters, it still must be said that he merely won an ideological battle, rather than a war over political economy among the Company's employees. He and many of his allies were leaving India for good, while John

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[115] BL IOR/E/44, "John Child and John Gladman at Suvalī to EIC in London," 20 January 1685, f. 387r-387v.
[116] Ibid, "John Child and Council at Suvalī to EIC in London," 13 January 1685, f. 368v.
[117] Ibid, "John Child and Council at Suvalī to EIC in London," 31 January 1685, f. 399v-400r, 402r.

Child and his collaborators remained in charge. Josiah Child stayed at the helm of the East India Company for many more years. While Keigwin's actions had proven the rejection of the Child policies on the parts of many Company employees, they failed to prevent the Childs pursuing their preferred policies from 1685 onward. Those policies, of zero-sum trade and short-term commercial profit at all costs, led directly to the disastrous Anglo-Mughal War of 1686-1690. It would take the failure of Josiah Child and John Child to win their war of choice, alongside the disastrous implications of the conflict at home, to finally curtail the ideological position the Childs advanced. Ultimately, Keigwin's revolt's biggest impact was its demonstration of the power of the alternative visions of East India Company trade and imperialism. It took another decade of crisis at home and abroad to truly unsettle the dominance of the Child model Keigwin and his allies were reacting to. The crises of the 1690s gave the advocates of the investment- and labor-oriented development plan for Bombay another opportunity to advance their position. They were finally going to log some wins in the political economic conflict over the future of English/British imperialism in India. But without the ongoing influence of Keigwin's revolt, and the ideas that drove it, their model may have died out for good years before.

The Bombay Theater of the Anglo-Mughal War and the Crisis of Monopoly

Introduction: Commerce and Conflict in Company South Asia

What was the Anglo-Mughal War? Of all the imperial conflicts English and British actors engaged in between 1600 and 1800, this war is surely one of the most forgotten. For one thing, it suffers from an uneasy periodization. Stretching from 1686 to 1691, it spanned five years of great upheaval in England and for the metropolitan East India Company. Analyzing an event which began at the height of King James II's power and ended at a transitional time in William and Mary's rule requires historical thinking comfortable with both the pre-Glorious Revolution imperial political context and the early years of the post-1688 world. Few historians specializing in South Asia, who consider the European imperial powers as and when those imperial projects impacted the subcontinent, have the training in British trans-imperial politics and political economy of the late 17th century to dive deeply into this conflict. Similarly, scholars of early modern England and its empire have overlooked the conflict entirely, or else treated it as an ultimate folly of James II's absolutist vision.

Simply put, the Anglo-Mughal War proved the most important turning point for the East India Company between the leasing of Bombay from the Crown in 1668 and the accession to the *divānī* in 1765. It was more consequential to English imperial visions in South Asia than the Battle of Plassey. It had a greater impact on the East India Company at home than the arrival of Robert Walpole as Prime Minister. If that is the case, why has it been so overlooked?

Leaving aside the problem of periodization, the biggest reason why the Anglo-Mughal War's impact has been misunderstood lies in its geographically differentiated trajectory. The war had three major theaters: a largely naval conflict in the Arabian Ocean and the waters around Bombay, a war of conquest in Bengal, and a short-lived retaliatory campaign in Siam (now Thailand). While most scholarship has focused on the Bengal theater, little attention has been paid to the seagoing conflict and attendant disputes in Surat and Bombay on the western coast.

Perhaps this is because the EIC's stated goal of expanding Company-controlled territory in Bengal fits so neatly with the typical understanding of authoritarian, tory empire building under James II. Perhaps it is because of the national teleology of South Asian history, which marches inexorably toward the *divānī* in the 18th century in order to set up the extractive, territorial nature of modern British imperialism in South Asia and the end point of Indian (and Pakistani, Burmese, Sri Lankan, and eventually Bangladeshi) independence.

Furthermore, the story of the Bengal theater of the Anglo-Mughal War *is* a relatively straightforward one. A failed war of conquest led to the movement of the Company's factory in Bengal from the town of Hugli to a small village downriver named Sutanuti, where the EIC were able to build the heavily fortified Fort William, named after the new English king William III. Eventually, the Company solidified their control over the surrounding area, merging Sutanuti with several other villages to create Calcutta. Their fortified position helped give them the upper hand in regional trading when compared to other European merchant factories. It also may have contributed to the development of an increasingly territorial vision of EIC power in Bengal.

That might sound important, but probably not on par with "more consequential than the Battle of Plassey," let alone "the most important turning point for the East India Company" in an entire century of history. But if we turn our attention to the western theater, a far more complicated and far more influential trajectory of the conflict unfolds. The war in Bombay, Surat, and the Arabian Sea always had a wider variety of aims compared to Bengal and Siam. It functioned as an attritional trade war, with concomitant prize taking on the high seas and delicate diplomacy across several sites of Mughal and English control. Because the intended fortification of Bombay was never carried out as envisioned at the beginning of the conflict, it culminated in a humiliating Mughal siege of English Bombay and the capitulation of the Company to the Mughal ruler of Surat. As a result, instead of an increasingly fortified site from which to conduct highly leveraged trade, the Company found itself more enmeshed with the declining Mughal state than ever. The physical and fiscal impacts of the western India conflict were so severe that the EIC's entire system of business was questioned, not only in their factories in India but among voters and investors in the metropole.

The devastating and geographically specific outcome of the war in its western theater led directly to the crisis of the Company's monopoly, which had seemed impregnably secure only a few years before. The loss of the exclusive trading monopoly, and the creation of a competing joint-stock funded East India Company under the approval of the Williamite state may never have happened without the conflict. The 1690s' crisis of monopoly certainly would not have happened in the exact way it did without the western Indian outcome of the Anglo-Mughal War. And that crisis of monopoly, though resolved in the metropole comparatively quickly, had enormous fallout in the western Indian markets of the Company/Companies. Though it is not discussed as fully here, the unresolved and poorly resolved solutions to the Old East India Company/New East India Company competition in western India set Bombay firmly on the alternate path of imperial development Keigwin's Rebellion had so clearly hinted at. Far from accomplishing the extractive and authoritarian goals of the absolutist Tory imperial vision across the board, the Anglo-Mughal War's dramatically different consequences solidified the alternate trajectories of both Bombay and Bengal. Bengal was jolted toward territorial expansion and extraction of wealth through control over land; Bombay was shunted onto a path of civic infrastructural investment and development tied to the broader ideologically differentiated politics of the English/British imperial state. Therefore, the historical questions so often overlooked become clear. Why did Bombay have a distinctly different trajectory to Bengal during the Anglo-Mughal War? What can imperial policy of the time tell the historian about why western India became the site of so much contestation between the Old and New East India Companies between c.1694 and 1708?

I argue that Josiah Child's war of choice had the exact opposite effect to what he proposed back in 1685-1686. He wanted to apply the same typically Tory, absolutist policy of military fortification, territorial expansion, and compulsion of local polities across the board in his conflict in India. The only difference was that in Bengal, that would result in the capture and control of an extant urban center (Chittagong); in Bombay, it would result in the fortification of the land the Company already possessed by right alongside the capture of enough merchant ships as prizes that the Mughal state and Surati elite would be compelled to negotiate a far more favorable set of trading privileges with the Company. Both strategies failed, but their outcomes were different. In Bengal, the Company was able to consolidate and militarize around their fort at Sutanuti, helping direct their trajectory there toward increasing territorial power and land-based wealth extraction. In Bombay, there was instead a formal capitulation to the Mughal state, a massive reparative debt, and the collapse of merchant relationships—alongside a failure to effectively fortify or militarize the land the Company controlled. This chapter tells that story and serves as a bridge to the Bombay of the 18th century.

As previously alluded to, my claims are both a contradiction of certain historiographic assumptions and an addition to them. For the most part, the Anglo-Mughal War has been ignored in the historiography of both early modern England and its empire *and* early modern South Asia. On the South Asian side, the conflict is typically viewed as a sideshow, a weird bulging out of the emperor Aurangzeb's Deccan Plateau campaigns. The emperor spent at least the last 30 years of his reign, and his life, attempting to conquer smaller states in the subcontinent's southern plateau. This land was rich in mineral resources and far more resistant to drought than the Mughal heartland to the north. Regardless of the religion of regional rulers, Aurangzeb sought to conquer them and incorporate their productive lands into the growing Mughal imperial state. Many scholars specializing in the Mughal period have emphasized the mid-17th century Mughal state as a "contractually robust, bureaucratically complex, and fiscally sound polity" where the "emperor and his administration was the most influential source of public authority and social organization."[1] As a result of the Deccan's value, regional polities were potential challengers to the power of the central Mughal state, but Aurangzeb believed that state was strong enough to enable a war of conquest over these in the second half of the 17th century. Scholars continue to debate the reasons behind the long, drawn-out conflict, alongside why and how Aurangzeb's Deccani campaigns ultimately weakened his state and encouraged the Mughal decline of the 18th century. For this body of scholarship, hotly contested in its own right, the military conflict between the EIC and regional Mughal administrators is just one element of the changing context of Mughal administration during the Deccan Wars.[2]

For scholars of early modern England and its empire, the Anglo-Mughal War is largely ignored for analogous reasons. The conflict happened between 1686 and 1690, and so inconveniently overlaps the Glorious Revolution in English and English imperial historiography.

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[1] Sudev Sheth, *Bankrolling Empire: Family Fortunes and Political Transformation in Mughal India* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2024), 137-138.
[2] Sudev Sheth, *Bankrolling Empire: Family Fortunes and Political Transformation in Mughal India* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2024), 137-150; John F. Richards, "Mughal State Finance and the Premodern World Economy," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 23 (1981): 286; Ibid, *Mughal Administration in Golconda* (Oxford, UK: Clarendon Press, 1975), 173; Ibid, *The Mughal Empire* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1993); M. Athar Ali, *The Mughal Nobility Under Aurangzeb* (New York: Asia Publishing House 1966); Muzaffar Alam and Sanjay Subrahmanyam, "The Deccan Frontier and Mughal Expansion, c.1600," in *Writing the Mughal World: Studies on Culture and Politics* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2012): 165-203.

The most common response to this periodization problem is to simply describe the conflict as a problem of the Company and the Company alone, divorced from English politics and history. This is somewhat the approach of Philip J. Stern in *The Company-State*, where the EIC is presented as a unitary actor, "committed as an institution to a defensive expansion of its rights, jurisdiction, and government throughout Asia."[3] Instead of examining how this position came about, changed, or interacted with other political and economic positions across the English empire in the 17th century, Stern simply takes this position as the permanent goal of the Company across the time and space of its existence. Such an interpretation leads him to his assessment of the Anglo-Mughal War as "preemptive, to assert the Company's rights over refractory Englishmen and to protect its reputation against the threat posed by the seemingly intractable expansion of universal empire…the war, by [their] estimation, had not been one of aggression but of defense."[4] The postwar period was a period of continuity, rather than change, following "the same policy as before: diplomacy where possible, force when necessary."[5] The most Stern's argument engages in political debate or contention is when he discusses the postwar "piracy 'crisis'" as "an opportunity to test the Company's incipient but growing claims to independence and power in the region," and ultimately a "successful" attempt "to discipline English state resources to its purposes."[6]

Steve Pincus' *1688* challenged the common historiographic decision to divorce Company activity from English politics and demonstrated conclusively the connection between "the development of territorial empire in India in the reign of James II" by "mapp[ing] a land-

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[3] Philip J. Stern, *The Company-State: Corporate Sovereignty and the Early Modern Foundation of the British Empire in India* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), 121.
[4] Ibid, 125.
[5] Ibid, 134.
[6] Ibid, 135.

centered notion of political economy onto James II's notions of unrestricted sovereignty." As a result, "England and the East India Company pursued a belligerent policy towards their imperial competitors," especially the Dutch and the Mughals.[7] James M. Vaughn built out Pincus' contention in his tracing of the progress of "absolutist empire" through the Company's war program in Bengal.[8] However, both scholars emphasized the Company's territorial, militaristic, absolutist push across India between 1680 and 1690, without recognizing what I view as the crucial difference in regional outcomes in South Asia.

While I largely support Pincus and Vaughn's contention that the Company's 1680s leaders' goal of militaristic, territorial, absolutist empire in India drove their war of choice in South Asia, I do not see this goal as fully unifying of the Company's various leaders and employees. Nor do I see it as a universalizing turning point in the Company's politics of empire in Asia. My point of departure lies in my focus on Bombay, where the war's outcome was distinctly different to the outcome in Bengal. This is more in keeping with Stern's research focus regarding the war, but I do not support Stern's contentions, rather arguing that the war severed any possibility of Bengal and Bombay developing along the same vision, and forced the Company to adopt an increasingly factional and divided policy of growth in Asia. Territory-oriented conservatives within the Company supported the extractive and expansionist policies best evidenced by Bengal as the eighteenth century progressed. Manufacturing- and commerce-oriented radicals coalesced around Bombay and its developmental trajectory, setting the

[7] Steve Pincus, *1688: The First Modern Revolution* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2009), 378.
[8] James M. Vaughn, "John Company Armed: The English East India Company, the Anglo-Mughal War and Absolutist Imperialism, c.1675-1690," in *Britain and the World* 11, no. 1 (2018): 101-137.

boundaries of the Company's internal, as well as external, political-economic conflicts for the rest of its existence.

Choosing Commercial Conflict: War in India, 1685-1691

In 1685, Josiah Child was riding high. He was the Governor of the East India Company and his grandson, the future Henry, Duke of Beaufort, had been born just under a year before. The rebellion on Bombay had been quelled with rhetorical support from the crown. Like that rhetorical relationship suggested, Child was rapidly becoming the new King James II's go-to political-economic adviser. As scholarship has convincingly demonstrated, Child was a key architect of James' increasingly authoritarian, crown-controlled economic policy. By this point in his career, after purchasing a sizeable country estate, Child had become ever more Tory in his political-economic perspective. Increasingly, he saw wealth as finite, and land, as the clearest example of finite wealth, became the base of all political and economic power. As discussed previously, the follow-on effect from this belief was the opinion that trade was inherently zero-sum. As such, he pushed hard for increasingly significant power and protection for the EIC's monopoly. In 1685, he won his greatest victory to date as the Company's Governor, enshrining the Company's monopoly powers in English case law.[9]

The case, *East India Company vs. Thomas Sandys,* is one of the best-studied in early modern English law. There is no need to expend more pages on the details of its ruling here. In the simplest terms, Judge George Jeffreys (of later, "Bloody Assizes" fame) ruled that the crown necessarily had the sovereign power to regulate England's trade with foreign, non-Christian communities as the crown saw fit. Such a ruling meant that the Company's monopoly was not

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[9] Steve Pincus, *1688: The First Modern Revolution* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2009), 372-374.

only safe from further possible legal challenges but strengthened by the unequivocal judgment. Jeffreys was, of course, expressing his own political views with his ruling, rather than simply "calling" anachronistic "balls and strikes."[10] It was his intention, as much as it was the intention of the Company's excellent Tory lawyers, to extend as much power over imperial and trade regulation as possible to King James, rather than parliament. Because James was dependent on the personal loans Child's Company made him, he was not only ideologically interested in promoting Child's views but personally compelled to support Child's Company.[11] All that remained was for Child to send out the Company's orders for their employees to secure that territory in the subcontinent.

Sandys was decided in January of 1685. In October of that year, Josiah Child and his fellow Company Directors began to issue instructions to John Child in Surat (alongside their administrators in Madras and Calcutta) that betray the Company's plan to start expanding their control in South Asia. They instructed John Child to stop asking for leniency for anyone caught interloping in Asia, first of all. "His Majesty hath entrusted us not only with the trade, but the government of the English in India," the Court of Directors explained. Rather than "mere merchants," the Company's men were now "entrusted with the political government of the English colonies in India," so they could never again "trust a traitor or treacherous person, though we may pardon him." Josiah Child and his allies also became increasing belligerent toward the other Europeans trading at Surat, complaining that interloping had caused the Surati

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[10] *Confirmation Hearing on the Nomination of John G. Roberts, Jr to be Chief Justice of the United States, First Session, Before the Comm. on the Judiciary*, 109th Cong. 158 (2005), (statement of John G. Roberts, Jr., of Maryland, Nominee to be Chief Justice of the United States).

[11] "The Argument of the Lord Chief Justice of the Court of King's Bench Concerning the Great Case of Monopolies," (London: Randal Taylor, 1689); see also Steve Pincus, *1688: The First Modern Revolution* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2009), 376-378.

officials to search "our servants…to their shirts, whilst the French Dutch, and Danes pass unmolested, deriding our submission and pusillanimity." The Mughals would never have "offered those insolence[s] to our nation," save that "they thought us a house divided against itself…but God be thanked, that case is now altered."[12]

It was increasingly important for the Company's employees to leave Surat altogether, so that they "may be always in a posture hereafter to vindicate our just rights against the Moors, and all other people." Therefore, the Court of Directors wanted "all ships" sailing to Europe to be laden at Bombay, not Surat, and for John Child to "keep his constant residence upon our island." If the Company's employees withdrew completely to the land they controlled, "your Banians, and the trade, we know must follow our money and our shipping." Focusing on Bombay would improve relations with all local polities in the end. Even if it would "cause a little sullenness at first in the Moors of Surat," the Maratha powers would be pleased, "and then you need not fear either the anger of the Mughal or Portuguese, hav[ing] Sambhaji's country and his arms always to friend."[13] In further evidence that the Company's London-based leaders were gearing up to expand their power in India, John Child was instructed to pay special attention to new military texts the Company was sending out. Their coverage of James II's modern techniques "may prevent many disorders committed by your soldiers, and probably preserve many of them from being poisoned by the natives for abusing their wives and families, a disorder so insufferable, that we require you forthwith to reform it by strict and severe discipline."[14] Furthermore, the Sidi

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[12] BL IOR/E/3/91, "Court of Directors in London to John Child and Council at Surat," 28 October 1685, f. 5r-5v.
[13] Ibid, "Court of Directors in London to John Child and Council at Surat," 28 October 1685, f. 5v.
[14] Ibid, f. 6r.

and his fleet, and “other ships of any nation whatsoever,” were to be banned from coming “within reach of your guns, or to have the freedom of our port Bombay.”[15]

By the end of March 1686, Josiah Child had found a pretense for starting a military conflict with the Mughal state. The issue was predicated on the behavior of the Nawab of Dhaka in Bengal, a regional power reporting to Mughal Emperor Aurangzeb.[16] The Nawab’s “intolerable injuries and oppressions,” including requiring high customs payments from the Company’s employees and attempting to restrict Company employees’ movements, were much more severe than the Company’s complaints in western India. There, the primary issue was that all European traders owed money to the Surati state but the Surat officials were only searching the English Company employees.[17] These searches were “such an indignity to our nation (which ought to be deemed superior to any Europeans trading in those parts) that we cannot bear, and therefore we must entreat your Majesty that it be forborne.” Child explained that only the orders of Aurangzeb could “restore peace,” and “oblige us to remain, as we have been for some ages, your imperial Majesty’s most friendly allies, and most humble servants.[18]

At the same time, the Company’s Directors sent secret instructions to all their chief administrators in India. In Bengal, Agent Job Charnock and his Council were told to load all the English in Bengal onto a well-armed ship, and then “make stay of all ships, salt vessels, and other vessels belonging to the Mughal.” This was to give the Company negotiating leverage, as the Company’s corporate heads were confident the issue would “come to an open war.”[19] Such

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[15] Ibid, f. 7r.
[16] BL IOR/E/3/91, “Court of Directors to the Mughal Emperor Aurangzeb,” 31 March 1686, f. 50r.
[17] Ibid, f. 50r-50v.
[18] Ibid, “Court of Directors to the Mughal Emperor Aurangzeb,” 31 March 1686, f. 50v.
[19] Ibid, “Instructions for the Agent and Council in Bengal from the Court of Directors,” 14 Jan 1686, f. 35r.

an outcome was likely as the Directors "would have our forces land, seize, and take the said town, fort, and territory" of Chattogram (a port city now in Bangladesh).[20] While "our natures are most averse to bloodshed and rapine, which usually attend [even] the most just wars," the Company's Directors said, "we have no remedy left, but either to desert our our trade, or we must draw that sword his Majesty hath entrusted us with, to vindicate the rights and honors of the English nation in India."[21] The letter was not only signed by the hardcore Tories on the Company's London Secret Committee—Josiah Child, Benjamin Bathurst, and Joseph Herne—it also received the specific approval of King James II via his Secretary of State the Earl of Sutherland.[22]

The Company sent similar instructions to Surat, albeit with different specifics. These initial directions were to play defense by playing offense. "Bengal is under the same great King's dominions as Surat is," the Company's Directors began.[23] "We have ordered all our captains to bring to Bombay any of the Mughal's or his subjects' ships…that they can meet with in their passage" to India, they continued. However, no Company employee was "to take the value of a penny from any of them as they will answer the contrary at the peril of his Majesty's displeasure, until they are condemned at Bombay, if it prove a war."[24] Overestimating the military knowledge of a gaggle of businessmen, the Directors refrained from giving too many further instructions. "We are so well satisfied of the fidelity and great abilities of our general, by his 30 years' experience of residence in India, that we shall give you no particular directions," they wrote,

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[20] BL IOR/E/3/91, "Instructions for the Agent and Council in Bengal from the Court of Directors," 14 Jan 1686, f. 35v.
[21] Ibid, f. 39r.
[22] Ibid, f. 40r.
[23] Ibid, "Committee of Secrecy in London to General and Council at Surat and Deputy Governor and Council at Bombay," 31 Mar-9 Apr 1686, f. 48r.
[24] Ibid, f. 48v-49r.

preferring to "leave all to his and your prudence, to whatever you think is most for the honor of our king and country, and for the Company's interest." The Directors' last piece of advice was a reminder that "we are merchants and must live by trade, and not by a long war."[25]

From the very beginning the Company's best-laid plans began to go awry. The arrival of the Company's ships in Bengal inflamed extant tensions there, and the Nawab "ordered down for the guard of [Hugli]," consisting of "two or three hundred forces and three or four thousand foot." Misunderstandings and bad tempers led to skirmishes in the streets, and on 28 October 1686 "the whole town was alarmed," and the population "immediately set fire to their own houses, more especially those near the English quarters, as well to bar them out as burn down their houses." The Company's factory was burned, and the Nawab's guns were trained on the EIC's ships. Retreating on board, Charnock and his men used the ships to fire on the town of Hugli for most of the next day. 60 Bengalis were killed, "amongst which we three eminent men," and between 400 and 500 houses in the town burned, along with shipping.[26] Thinking themselves unable to hold the town, Charnock and his Council were unsure what their next steps were. They calculated that over three years various conflicts with the Mughal state had cost the Company £620,000, "which they enforce us to insist upon, without the Nawab will willingly agree to give us the quiet possession and inheritance of [Chattogram] Form for the security of our trade for the future."[27] By the end of 1687, Charnock and his employees had left Bengal altogether and were "temporarily" the guests of the Madras factory. In John Child and his Council's words in the letter they sent to London in May of 1687, the Bengal employees should have "made a hog or a

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[25] BL IOR/E/3/91, "Committee of Secrecy in London to General and Council at Surat and Deputy Governor and Council at Bombay," 31 Mar-9 Apr 1686, f. 49r.
[26] BL IOR/E/3/46/1, "Job Charnock and Council at Hugli to Sir John Child and Council at Surat, 24 Nov 1686, f. 95v-96r.
[27] Ibid, f. 97v.

dog of it there before this time," and "if not, finding they could affect nothing well, patched up a peace with the Nawab, and by that lulled the Moors into security, with resolutions to go on with more resolutions and nimbleness in August [1687], at once to strike without noise."[28]

Perhaps acting on a more detailed letters received from the London Council over the intervening months, Child prosecuted the Company's war in western India by holding captured Indian-owned ships in Bombay harbor and issuing a 35-point list of "demands" to the *mutasaddi*, or Mughal governor, of Surat.[29] Most of the demands revolved around the Company's trade privileges, in keeping with the instructions the Company's Directors had given and Child's own political persuasions. Child complained of "our money" being "stopped in the customs house, [and] our goods stopped on the [Surat] Castle Green." He noted that they had endured "the loss of a year's trade, having (from being called and then publicly declared to be a pirate, thief, and rogue) made no investments."[30] Child demanded the return of the Company's two percent rate of customs payments on goods exported and imported at Surat port, in acknowledgement of "great and eminent services to the town of Surat." Furthermore, the extra one and a half percent the Company had been paying was to be repaid them by the Surati government.[31] Child also wanted the customs applied less universally. He demanded the *mutasaddi* put a stop to the Company's being forced to pay double customs on goods brought to Surat from other parts of Gujarat for export, which was in keeping with the Mughal's own customs laws, albeit hard to enforce. On

[28] BL IOR/E/47/1, "John Child and Council at Bombay to EIC in London," 18 May 1687, f. 43v.
[29] BL IOR/E/3/91, "Directors in London to General and Council at Bombay," 14 Jul 1686, ff. 79r-81v; Ibid, "Directors in London to General and Council of India at Bombay," 3 Feb 1687, ff. 131r-133v; Ibid, "Directors in London to General and Council at Surat," 23 Mar 1687, ff. 135-137.
[30] BL IOR/E/47/1, "John Child's Demands Against the Governor of Surat," Bombay, 7 Oct 1687, f. 115r.
[31] Ibid, f. 115v.

top of that, he wanted consumables imported for Company employees' use to be customs-free.[32] The most demanding of his demands was that the Company "pay custom but once for all goods imported…and if your occasion shall require to export again any goods imported, and it's done within 12 months from importation," the Company should "be allowed back" at least half of the custom on those goods.[33]

Outside of customs-related demands, Child also wanted more control over English people living under the Mughal state, and for the Mughal state to back up the Company's complaints against Mughal subjects. He took the opportunity to relitigate the issue of John Petit and George Bowcher, "two wicked naughty men, false merchants that have been protected by the government from me for some years." While Petit was admittedly dead, "the other" was "to be delivered up to my people at Surat on demand to be sent me" at Bombay, "with all other Englishmen and women in Surat."[34] This demand was widely extended, with Child writing "the government [of Surat] nor other officers" shall "lay no hands on our English or other servants of the country, upon pretense of speaking anything against Muhammad." Furthermore, "if any dispute or quarrel happen between Englishmen, Moors, Banians, or others in our service that we decide it ourselves and the government and *qazi* not meddle with it," even if "one party of our said servants should fly to the town justice."[35] Finally, "if any of our English or others in our service shall be refractory in being called to an account and fly to the Moors' protection," they should "be delivered up to us." For this demand, Child even gave some reasoning, writing that failure to do so would result in "our trade being wholly destroyed, and we shall not be able to

[32] BL IOR/E/3/47/1, "John Child's Demands Against the Governor of Surat," Bombay, 7 Oct 1687, f. 115v, 116v, 117r.
[33] Ibid, f. 117r.
[34] Ibid, f. 115v.
[35] Ibid, 116v.

keep our people in any order, and be in continual danger of being robbed and destroyed by our own servants."[36] Fascinatingly, Child was willing to portray Englishmen in quite a negative light in order to advance his claims to authoritarian imperial administration over English subjects abroad. The Company "had only their [servants'] honesty to depend on," Child wrote. And he claimed to the *mutasaddi* that Englishmen were so liable to running away, they needed to be "deliver[ed] up to us" on "demand," or else "it may ruin our trade for want of men to sail our ships and secure them home."[37] The "good" Company employees, on the other hand, should no longer "be detained in Surat town as prisoners on the humor of the governors and impudence of [their] porters and petty officers but have free liberty at all seasonable times to go out of the several gates we please without being…abused."[38]

As pertained to Mughal subjects, Child wanted the *mutasaddi* to "assist" in the getting in of bad debts, as "there are several [that] owe us money at Surat, whereof some are rich men, that we cannot get in."[39] Should the Company's debtors "that deceive us" manage to escape their financial responsibilities, Child demanded the "government on the place or…the king's cash" cover their debt, creating a strange extension of public credit to private merchants in Surat. If that could not be done, Child was content to take repayment "allowed us out of the account customs by the king's officers," which after all was what "we enjoy in other places."[40] Perhaps the

[36] BL IOR/E/3/47/1, "John Child's Demands Against the Governor of Surat," Bombay, 7 Oct 1687, f. 117r-117v.
[37] Ibid, f. 117v.
[38] Ibid, f. 118v.
[39] Ibid, f. 116r.
[40] Ibid, f. 116v.

Company did enjoy that sort of privilege in London, but *not* because of any legal principle; the king was simply too indebted to the Company to refuse them demands on customs remittances.[41]

The third major category of Child's demands related to greater Company control over their real and moveable property. The Company's trade goods were "much injured going into the customs house, being tossed and tumbled to and fro'," he complained. As a result, "many things [are] lost and great damage done to us." Therefore, the English "desire and reasonably hope that we may have a warehouse and waterside as the Dutch have," for "all our goods to be landed into that and thence be cleared without delay."[42] Land the Company had used for "our garden" had been "taken from us…about 15 years ago," Child wrote, and though it was "valued at Rs 25,000, for the which we were promised satisfaction," nothing had been paid. He expected that "satisfaction" for it.[43] He wanted the Company to have "free liberty to export and import what goods we please at any other ports" in Gujarat besides Surat, such as "Bharuch [and] Khambayat," rather than being "forced by the government of Surat" to "bring all goods to that port, which is no benefit to the king and extraordinary trouble, charge, and inconvenience to us."[44] Lastly, Child wanted redress for the common compelling of goods to be sold to the *mutasaddi* on credit, and then never paid for. For example, "some of our goods that come from England, as guns, lead, &c that the king has occasion for," he wrote, "are agreed on for the price current Surat. But when other governors come [to power], and the balance of the former governor's account is demanded by our broker (if those sorts of goods be then fallen in their

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[41] See PGM Dickson, *The Financial Revolution in England: A Study in the Development of Public Credit, 1688-1765* (New York: St. Martin's, 1967), 46-57.
[42] BL IOR/E/3/47/1, "John Child's Demands Against the Governor of Surat," Bombay, 7 Oct 1687, f. 116r.
[43] Ibid.
[44] Ibid, f. 117r.

price)," the new *mutasaddi* would "refuse to satisfy, and abuse our brokers." Therefore, "every governor" should "balance the king's accounts for his own time," and "no governor that comes after" should "trouble our brokers for what sold to former governors. And in case the king hath no occasion for our guns, lead, &c that we have free liberty to sell and transport them as we please without the least hindrance or imposition."[45]

It may, therefore, seem that Child was prosecuting his war of autocratic, territorial, militaristic empire more successfully than Charnock at the end of 1687. However, Child had repeatedly failed to hearken to one important command from London, and it would soon come back to bite him and his colleagues on the west coast. For months, the Company had been urging John Child not just to move to Bombay with the Company's stock but to fortify it. As early as October of 1685, within months of suppressing Keigwin's revolt, the Directors had been insisting Child move to and fortify Bombay, as discussed above. The Directors reiterated this direction a year later, noting that they "long[ed] to hear of our General's safe removal to Bombay," as "the chief persons in our employment, the best of our estate, our strength, and our treasure" should "abide upon our own land, under the protection of our own laws, and our guns, and that our own subjects under his Majesty may be enriched by the ingress and regress of our shipping." Moreover, "until we can arrive at this our station is precarious, and we build but with untempered mortar, in comparison to those wise master builders, the Dutch." As Josiah Child had always said, the Dutch were "the mirror of the East India policy, and the only pattern to be imitated by any that would lay secure foundations for a lasting East India trade." Despite the difficulties, the Directors urged Child that "this is the time to break through them all, while we

[45] BL IOR/E/3/47/1, "John Child's Demands Against the Governor of Surat," Bombay, 7 Oct 1687, f. 117v-118r.

have such a stock of goods upon our hands and such a strength of shipping and men in India." Bombay was the ideal site "if we should have any war in India," because the Company and the English state "can securely repair and refit our ships" there. "Therefore," the Directors wrote, "you will do very well to be mindful in time to make those conveniences for that purpose which we wrote you of formerly." There was no other option but for John Child to immediately "secure the transition" of his "own person, and the principal part of our stock, effects, and trade to Bombay, the resolved place of our intended principal strength and power of the English nation in India, and that you may be in good and full condition to perform all other services, which you shall be commanded by our Secret Committee."[46]

Yet John Child stubbornly dragged his heels. Even when he moved himself from Surat to Bombay in the spring of 1687, he did not take steps to move the Company's business there or build dry docks and fortifications.[47] He claimed to have "thoughts of seizing" the Mughal merchants' ships bound from Surat for Mocha and Jeddah at the beginning of the year, but "the design" of such a seizure the Council "could not reach."[48] By that fall, it seemed instead that "the Mughal hath given orders to expel the English out of Surat and to take Bombay," though "that would not have hindered our friends coming away" to Bombay. The Suratis seemed "lulled into a fancy that we would not leave Surat, and they acted politicly as may plainly appear, designing to get all their Jeddah and Mocha fleet in, and then come on us at once." Even though the Sidi of Janjira had "impressed money to men nearly two months" earlier, "and hauled off several ships,"

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[46] BL IOR/E/3/91, "Directors in London to General and Council of India at Bombay or Surat," 15 Oct 1686, f. 95v.
[47] His first letter from Bombay is almost entirely shipping and trade news, as if there was no conflict in the subcontinent; see BL IOR/E/3/47/1, "John Child and Council at Bombay to EIC in London," 9 Mar 1687, f. 32r-33v.
[48] Ibid, "John Child and Council at Bombay to EIC in London," 18 May 1687, f. 43r.

Child felt that "your Honors will be satisfied when you see what we shall send your Honors, that Surat was made too hot for us by the actions of our friends in the Bay, and if we had not given those orders…they might have been beforehand with us, and too hard for us, but now we trust in God to be too hard for them."[49] Three Company employees—Bartholomew Harris, Samuel Annesley, and Jeremiah Bonnell—were now being kept under house arrest at Surat.[50] Yet Child felt "we have now put our hands to the plow and shall not look back, and indeed see nothing else for us that way but utter ruin and destruction. Forward we must go and seek for safety and a good accommodation from our arms."[51]

Not everyone agreed that the time for conflict was right. Particularly in Madras, the Company's employees were less confident that the war would produce a good outcome. The Council there wrote John Child and his Council that the bad news coming out of Bengal would "much prejudice" the "great design…which will give [the Mughals] occasion of great preparations to defend themselves against us."[52] Furthermore, Aurangzeb's Deccan campaigns were advancing apace, and the employees in Madras warned that "in a short time [the Mughal emperor] will possess himself of all the king of Golconda's country, and then in such case our present differences in the Bay happens ill, if the Mughal will concern himself with the Nawab's unreasonable actions to us there," serious trouble could come to the EIC. The Madras Council hoped Aurangzeb would leave the Nawab of Bengal "to himself to answer for his own faults." And "the worst of it," they wrote, "is that the Right Honorable Company have ordered war to be

[49] BL IOR/E/3/47/1, "John Child and Council at Bombay to EIC in London," 26 Sept 1687, f. 98r.
[50] Ibid, 98v.
[51] Ibid, 99r.
[52] BL IOR/E/3/46/2, "William Gyfford and Council at Madras to John Child and Council at Surat," 20 Dec 1686, f. 115r.

proclaimed against the Mughal," which might draw Aurangzeb's attention to their undefended factory.[53] Later they wrote that "the truth is, as things have fallen out, this war in Bengal was evidently very unhappily begun at this time by reason of the Mughal being in these parts." Fighting on a second front in Siam was even worse. Yet "we can do no other now, than prosecute the war against both places and defend ourselves…in the best manner we are able, though we must needs say we run a great hazard of losing all, for we have few factories now out of the Mughal's dominions, and the rest soon likely to be so." Only Madras and Bombay were "in any kind able to resist."[54]

Robert Harbin, a former Company employee who had moved on to service at Siam and found himself back in Madras due to the conflict, had nothing but criticism for the war plan in a letter to Company servant George Cooke at Surat. "Without a doubt what happened there [at Siam] will enrage [John Child] and make him suspect I had a hand in it," Harbin wrote. "I cannot tell what the success will be," he continued, "but I am apt to believe your General's tall ships he designed to send thither [to Siam] will come back less than sloops, and with more shame than [even] our magnificent Bengal fleet, who let the Dutch run away with the prize [of Hugli] while they had sealed orders to fight, nor power to open" them "'til it was too late." Perhaps the plan for Bombay would be more successful as Child had brought "good store of money" with him from Surat, but Harbin still "reckon[ed] your swords are girded continually in these warlike times. If 'twere stick to something it would be a comfort, but betwixt peace and war, [there's] no money and but little credit."[55]

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[53] BL IOR/E/3/46/2, "William Gyfford and Council at Madras to John Child and Council at Surat," 20 Dec 1686, f. 115v.
[54] Ibid, "William Gyfford and Council at Madras to John Child and Council in Surat," 8 Mar 1687, f. 168v.
[55] Ibid, "Robert Harbin at Madras to George Cooke at Surat, 5 Feb 1687, f. 145r.

Child's response to such concerns was to tell the Company that he was "sensible there is those that much dislikes and disapproves of the management of your Honors' affairs, but we hope they may find themselves much out."[56] After all, Child was in complete agreement with the Directors' political-economic justification for the war, writing that "we cannot but highly value your humble courage and resolutions and great love and zeal for the honor and interest of your king and country, which is most plainly shown." He and his Council asked that "God grant good success may crown all your designs. [Though] your force with us is not so great as your Honors might have expected from that provision you were pleased so prudently to make, to put in execution so great a design," yet they would "husband your force what we can, and employ it as may in our opinions be most advantageous to your Honors." Whatever success they may find, they wrote, "it must as most justly due, be attributed to the large, very wise and good instructions of the most loyal, most worth, and truly honored Sir Josiah Child." They desired that he "live forever in honor and prosperity, which he most justly deserves, for no man under the sun ever did, and we truly think ever can, design, direct, and provide better for the honor and interest of our king and country than he hath, and let all miscarriages be laid at our door on this side of India."[57]

Child's political-economic justifications for the war were also evident in the letters he wrote to the French Director General Louis Pillavoine in Surat to attempt to garner support from James II's favorite allies' representatives in India. In these, the war was again represented as "what I never desired nor never designed," as it was "account[ed]…a very heavy and great undertaking." However, it was "to the glory and good of all Christians, that they may live in the

[56] BL IOR/E/3/47/1, "John Child and Council at Bombay to EIC in London," 26 Sept 1687, f. 99r.
[57] BL IOR/E/3/46/2, "John Child and Council at Suvali to EIC in London," 10 Feb 1687, f. 150r.

Mughal's dominions with better accommodation than they have for many years, and with some small comfort of their lives." Already highlighting differences between the west coast strategy and the Bengal strategy, Child wrote that "my design is not to grow great by conquest or plunder, but for the general good even of all, to make trading better and persuade the Mughal's governors and officers to leave off their great oppressions and unhandsomeness." Therefore, Child requested Pillavoine and even the Dutch write with him to Aurangzeb, "sending your just complaints up." Child was "persuaded" that "by such ways of proceeding," the emperor would "soon order matters much better for all than it hath been and will not suffer his governor and officers to be so naughty as they have been." Drawing on the justification beloved by all authoritarians, Aurangzeb "very likely was never truly sensible of the baseness of this governor and officers. But when your, the Dutch, and my complaints come to him, [he] may be thoroughly satisfied, and give out his orders for the good of all three nations, and the good of his own subjects and all other merchants to the flourishing of his own parts."[58]

He wrote again to Pillavoine a little later, assuring him that "the embargo on [the] Moors' ship[s] and goods" at Bombay was justified by the Mughal officials' and merchants' behavior at Surat, which Pillavoine was "an eye and ear witness of," and that the embargoed shipping was not "meddled with" at all. However, Child was quite annoyed that some of the ships embargoed had traveled under French flags. He assured Pillavoine that he "should be mightily concerned the French king's colors or his East India Company should suffer in honor or interest from my behavior or any under me," but also requested that Pillavoine "take equal care of your side and not make your colors cheap, and think not that any will permit their enemies to be so concerned

[58] BL IOR/E/3/47/2, "Sir John Child and Council at Bombay to Director-General Louis Pillavoine at Surat," Oct 1687, f. 122r-122v.

from them." He closed with the hope that "peace may continue between" England and France, and that the French "shall not find only all justice from us but all the favors that possibly I can show you."[59]

By the end of 1687, Child had begun to get a little worried about the possibility of the Sidi of Janjira's involvement in any conflict. He regularly directed the Company's (under house arrest) employees in Surat to keep a close eye on any provisioning of the Sidi's fleet which may take place at the harbor. "We heartily wish the Sidi's fleet may not come out" of Suvali harbor that winter, Child wrote, "for to fight them will make the breach [with the Mughals] much wider, so that we have directed very cautiously in this affair so that if possible we will avoid it, without absolute necessity should require it, for the security of the whole." He instructed with his Council that the Company should attempt to "clip" the Sidi's "wings at the [Tapti] river's mouth as his great ships come out and pay him off at his own door."[60]

At the same time, Child assured his Surat employees that the Company "should certainly hazard much for your safety." The Council in Bombay thought that if the Sidi got out of Suvali harbor, the Surat-based employees should "make an address" to the *mutasaddi* in which "it may plainly appear we desire not the harm of any but being compelled by grievous oppressions and wrongs, took this course that the king's ear may be open to our just complaint and in hopes thereby to have redress, which is all we desire." By such a missive, the Company may "beg of him not to send the Sidi's fleet out" of the harbor "until our business is accommodated, for should it be we shall so take fleet to be [designed] against us and accordingly shall be forced to

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[59] BL IOR/E/3/47/2, "John Child and Council at Bombay to Director-General Louis Pillavoine at Surat," 12 Oct 1687, f. 126r.
[60] Ibid, "John Child and Council at Bombay to Bartholomew Harris and Counil at Surat," 24 Dec 1687, f. 165v.

deal with them sore against our wills." If the Mughal empire was "bent to present us with wars, and will not hear of any accommodation," then the *mutasaddi* should "not keep you any longer in expectation and hopes of peace but let you depart on board ship, or by land for Bombay." If that didn't work, the Surat employees should "remorse our actions, and blame us for bringing you into such troubles." On the other hand, Child held out hope that the employees (again, under house arrest) might forward the Company's investment for the year 1688, encouraging them that "if you find that all may go well, write away to Ahmedabad, and order to be got ready" investment, "such as lately we provided, of the several sorts as formerly directed."[61]

Throughout 1688, the Company's various employees communicated little with each other and with England, as their shipping was interrupted by the conflict. When they did write and deliver a letter amongst themselves, they often attempted to settle scores raised by differences of opinion about the war strategy. John Child did not appreciate the feedback he received from the Council at Madras and was happy to bicker with them about it. He accused them and the Bengal employees of acting "in haste," and "although it is not so well with us near as we expected," they were nevertheless frustrated to hear Monday morning quarterbacking from their colleagues on the southeastern coast. "We find you think, 'oh, this piece of work should have been otherwise managed,'" Child and his Council wrote in December of 1688. "Now our advices to you and the Bay [of Bengal] that were set so light[ly] off may be esteemed a little, we fancy. But would to God they had been considered on when sent," although "that is too late, and truly this much writ [on the affair] is needless…we are sure and we think none of you was in the Bay when this particular [letter] was writ…hither." Nevertheless, the Bombay Council wrote that Madras could

[61] BL IOR/E/3/47/2, "John Child and Council at Bombay to Bartholomew Harris and Council at Surat," 24 Dec 1687, f. 166r-166v.

"depend on this, that we will have an honorable and advantageous peace suitable to our demands formerly sent you or [we will] never submit. Believe not nor depend on idle stories brought you. A bare and mean peace we abhor mere thoughts of submitting to and think we shall rather choose death than that." They further wrote that Madras should "not hereafter complain to us." The Bombay Council promised that Madras "need not much fear your trade and liberties; we shall not be rash, nor act without consideration, you may be sure, nor [are we] willing to move further in this war at present, and we fancy you will be of our minds." Trade continued on the west coast, and while the Mughal state might "think to outwit us," John Child believed "they may be deceived," even though he scoffed at the Madras Council being "for a peace on any terms."[62]

In this defense of his behavior Child and his Council were largely following the instructions of the Company's Directors' most recent letters, which instructed them not only to invest heavily in "making Bombay as strong and defensible as you can," but to "unfeignedly seek and desire peace, [even though] most certainly the only way to obtain and conserve peace is to be in a strong posture of war, and rightly fixed under martial law and strict military discipline."[63] The Company's Directors reminded their employees that this conflict was a war for ideology and existence. "It would be thought by the vulgar" that it was "but a war for pepper," the Directors wrote, "but at the bottom, it will prove a war for the dominion of the British as well as the Indian seas, because if ever they come to be sole masters of that one commodity, pepper, being of general use, will be more to them, than all the rest, and in all probability sufficient to defray the constant charge of a great Navy in Europe."[64] Thus, the Directors defended their

[62] BL IOR/E/3/47/2, "John Child and Council at Suvali to Elihu Yale and Council at Madras," 5 Dec 1688, f. 200r, 202r.
[63] BL IOR/E/3/91, "Directors in London to General and Council at Bombay," 3 Aug 1687, f. 159r, 160r.
[64] Ibid, 160r.

conflict as a "national war," in which it was "next to impossibility" that anyone could predict the outcome. They challenged Child's concern over the Surat-based employees, writing that not "every individual subject" can be "brought out of the enemy's country before the war begins…at the beginning of the war is your best time to reprise satisfaction for our great damages, which opportunity [you] should not have lost upon any pretense of one single person's or two's being in the enemy's power, when we might reasonably expect in a very short time to get ten times that number of prisoners" to exchange "according to the law and customs of arms."[65]

It was also around this time that the Company's Directors began to speak openly of pursuing different policies in the west and the east of India, as Child had begun suggesting in his letters. "It will be prudent," they wrote, "if you can presently make a peace with the Mughal on good terms, at least for that side of India." In contrast, "on the other side, we shall never adventure to trust our estates again in the Bay, unless the Nawab will allow us a fortified place to secure our persons and estates from the violence of his unjust slavish governments."[66] These autocratic, militaristic, and variably territorializing justifications for the conflict led the Directors to insist on John Child's power over Bombay and the Company's employees. "In matters of war," the Directors wrote, "things are likeliest to succeed best when the entire command of military power is trusted in one person, which most effectually prevents the first approaches of faction, sedition, or distraction of councils."[67] Despite this rationale, John Child had little ability to ensure military success, lacking military experience. Furthermore, he had proven himself completely unable to prevent factionalism, as indicated by his ongoing sniping with Madras and

[65] BL IOR/E/3/91, "Directors in London to General and Council at Bombay," 3 Aug 1687, f. 161v-162r.
[66] Ibid, f. 163v.
[67] Ibid, f. 165-165v.

his past handling of Keigwin's revolt. Yet the Company's Directors, led by Josiah Child, were intent on sticking with John Child, because they knew his ideological and personal commitments would keep him loyal to their instructions to the end. As they wrote to Bombay in 1688, "we believe whatever fools may think and have said, [Child] will not be the poorer man at the last, besides the inconceivable content of a good conscience."[68]

The real turning point, however, would come in 1689. Though Child and his Surat-based employees were willing and ready to negotiate with the Mughal Surati state, as proposed by Surat governor Mukhtiar Khan in April 1689, matters were complicated by the Sidi of Janjira's decision to lay siege to Bombay in February of that year.[69] Mughal historians described the Sidi, Yakut Khan, as an African-origin slave and later regional potentate "distinguished among his people for benignity and dignity."

Sidi Yakut served the Mughal state, collecting a yearly retainer in return for defending the Mughal's shipping from Maratha naval power on the western coast. With the rise of the Maratha state under Shivaji in the second half of the 17th century, Sidi Yakut "strove more than ever to collect ships of war, to strengthen the fortress [of Janjira], and to ward off naval attacks."[70] As we have already seen, the English found themselves increasingly at odds with the Sidi over the 1680s, when he wintered his ships in Bombay harbor and his men got into scrapes with the

[68] BL IOR/E/3/91, "Directors in London to General and Council at Bombay," 27 Aug 1688, f. 272v.

[69] BL IOR/E/3/48/1, "Proposals by Mukhtiar Khan, Nawab of Surat, for a Peace Treaty with John Child," 27 Apr 1689, f. 7r-8v; James Hilton, *The Siege of Bombay: A Soldier's Diary*, in *The English East India Company at the Height of Mughal Expansion,* ed. Margaret R. Hunt and Philip J. Stern (New York: Bedford St. Martin's, 2016), 27. The original of Hilton's diary is preserved in BL IOR/G/3/3, "Bombay Consultation Book," 1684-1690. I have chosen to quote from this edited version to preserve peer-reviewed transcription choices.

[70] Khafi Khan, *Muntakab-al-Lubab*, in *The English East India Company at the Height of Mughal Expansion*, ed. Margaret R. Hunt and Philip J. Stern (New York: Bedford St. Martin's, 2016), 126-128.

Englishmen at Bombay. Child was concerned that the Sidi's ships, active in and around Surat in 1687 and 1688, would come to besiege Bombay as part of the war with the Mughal. Despite all this back-and-forth, we cannot exactly be sure why Sidi Yakut decided to lay siege to Bombay in 1689. After the siege was over, George Weldon, who had negotiated the end to the war, claimed that Sidi Yakut's "chiefest motive…was the knowledge he had [of] how unprovided we were to receive him, for he never came by the king's order…but voluntarily of himself, esteeming the purchase of the place through our weakness would be very feasible."[71] Alexander Hamilton, a Whiggish free trader and ally of interlopers in the region, argued otherwise, saying that John Child ordered the capture of Sidi Yakut's provisioning boats against the "opinion of most of his Council."[72] The daily records of the Council from the time are no longer extant, but it is notable that the letters drafted by Child and his Council around that time do not mention seizing any of the Sidi's ships. We do know from his correspondence, however, that Child's aim was to proceed cautiously in 1688 and early 1689, and avoid conflict with the Sidi as much as possible.

Whatever the reason, the Sidi arrived on February 15, 1689, and the Company was unprepared, with Child having largely forgone the instructions to fortify delivered by the Company in prior years. He landed at Sewri, on the inland, harbor side of Bombay, with 125 boats, supplies, and between 6,000 and 14,000 soldiers.[73]

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[71] BL IOR/E/3/48/2, "George Weldon and Council at Bombay to EIC in London," 15 Jan 1691, f. 232v.
[72] Alexander Hamilton, *A New Account of the East Indies, Being the Observations and Remarks of Captain Alexander Hamilton, who Spent his Time There From the Year 1688 to 1723*, 2 vols. (Edinburgh: John Mosman, 1727), 1:227.
[73] James Hilton reported 6,000 in his diary on the day the siege began; John Stevens, who served for a time in the Sidi's forces, estimated 14,000 later in 1689. See James Hilton, *The Siege of Bombay: A Soldier's Diary*, in *The English East India Company at the Height of Mughal Expansion,* ed. Margaret R. Hunt and Philip J. Stern (New York, Bedford St. Martin's, 2016), 27; BL IOR/E/48/1, "Deposition of John Stevens," 21 Dec 1689, f. 91v.

Luckily, the Company's soldiers were able to fully man their fort at Mazagaon, a high point to the south of the landing site of Sewri, within hours of the Sidi's arrival.[74] They were not able to prevent the landing, however, and the Sidi's men were able to not only haul all their boats and gear above the tide line, but also erect an initial fortification of their landing zone on Sewri Hill, complete with artillery.[75] The following day, the Sidi's men were able to take another high point at Dongri Hill, extending their line south and west and beginning to corner the Company's forces in the more densely populated southeast of Bombay.[76] This move also effectively cut Bombay Fort off from Mahim, the other major fortification the Company kept regularly manned in Bombay's far northwest, leading John Child to order its demolition and the repair of its forces to the Fort by the end of the 19th.[77] This move was the meaningful beginning of the siege, and the point at which most of Company's land at Bombay was effectively ceded to the Sidi and his forces.

Most of the siege was marked by desertion, disease, and the Company's lack of stores. On the one hand, Child likely wanted no one to know of his failure to fortify despite his bosses' firm insistence on it in many letters. Madras reported that Child had sent "a narrative of the beginning and continuance of their troubles," but insisted that he "desir[ed] no assistance from us, neither of men, ammunition, or provisions, and no ways complaining of the want of either."[78] James Hilton's diary, on the other hand, reported Child's order as early as the 20th to round up

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[74] James Hilton, *The Siege of Bombay: A Soldier's Diary*, in *The English East India Company at the Height of Mughal Expansion,* ed. Margaret R. Hunt and Philip J. Stern (New York: Bedford St Martin's, 2016), 30.
[75] Ibid.
[76] Ibid, 31.
[77] Ibid, 33.
[78] BL IOR/E/3/48/1, "Elihu Yale and Council at Madras to EIC in London," 21 Sept-15 Oct 1689, f. 56r-56v.

and kill off as many cattle as possible, and salt the meat down to supplement a ration of "rice, dal, and butter."[79] He further reported that the entire militia had "run away to the other side" within two days of the Sidi's landing.[80] Every day the English lost some few number of their white soldiers to the Sidi's firing or disease; despite the disappearance of the militia, the Bhandari and Maratha soldiers employed by the Company made regular sorties against the Sidi's forces and frequently dispersed groups of "the enemy" advancing down towards Bombay Fort. Within a month, all the wooden and palm-frond thatched buildings at Bombay were burned, either accidentally or intentionally. Each stone building outside the Fort became a bastion of artillery for either the Sidi or the Company's forces.

Throughout the siege, English, multiracial, and South Asian Company employees deserted the Company. Not all defected to the Sidi, but somewhere between 30 and 60 of the "European" men did. While we have no first-person accounts of these defectors from which to ascertain their motivations, the names of some of them match the names of men who served under Richard Keigwin and his allies during the revolt on Bombay.[81] The Company's Directors and their representative in western India, John Child, never addressed the complaints at the heart of Keigwin's revolt, even though most of the workaday men involved were kept on as Company

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[79] James Hilton, *The Siege of Bombay: A Soldier's Diary*, in *The English East India Company at the Height of Mughal Expansion,* ed. Margaret R. Hunt and Philip J. Stern (New York: Bedford St Martin's, 2016), 33.
[80] Ibid, 32.
[81] The best sourcing for my assertion comes from cross-referencing the original diary kept by James Hilton with the deposition of John Stevens. Hilton kept a fairly detailed list of "runaways" and deserters, and Stevens was questioned specifically on the "European" men he remembered from the Sidi's camp. Both men are moreover, in my view, reliable narrators. Hilton was a devoted soldier of the Company and Stevens, though he served the Sidi, was compelled to do so after being captured by one of the Sidi's patrol boats while serving on a Company vessel traveling up and down the west coast. See James Hilton's diary, BL IOR/G/3/3, "Bombay Consultation Book, 1684-90;" BL IOR/E/48/1, "Deposition of John Stevens," 21 Dec 1689, f. 91r-92v.

employees in Keigwin's negotiated settlement. While it is undeniable that material conditions in the Fort contributed significantly to the desertion rate, it is my contention that the data about the siege shows, alongside the debates present in the Company's employees' letters, ongoing ideological conflict over Bombay's role in the English imperial project. At least some of the deserters and defectors, I believe, left as a rejection of John and Josiah Child's plans for the island and the terrible head to which they had brought matters in the year-long siege. Men who believed they were in India to foster an empire of commerce, in which men's work was respected and well-compensated, were instead faced with a year without commerce, without pay, and full of disease and violent death. It was hard to maintain any kind of allegiance to the nation's chosen imperial administrators in that situation. Even John Child alluded to this motivation in a letter home to England, writing that "the strange reports from England, we believe, make naughty people show themselves more than otherwise it's possible they would."[82]

Thus, as we have seen, the same political, economic, and ideological conflicts persist among the English Company employees across India during the Anglo-Mughal War. Even with the news of the Glorious Revolution and the increasing precarity of the Company in London, employees in India stand by their positions regarding the war. The Company's Directors in London immediately dispatched letters to their employees in India as news of the Prince of Orange's sailing for England began to circulate in the city. "The Dutch fleet," the Directors wrote in October of 1688, "are daily expected to invite this island. Their pretenses are said to be to secure the Prince of Orange's succession to this crown, and the establishment of the Protestant religion, and other popular pretenses." The Directors clearly gave little heed to these assertions,

[82] BL IOR/E/3/48/1, "John Child and Council at Bombay to EIC in London," 26 Dec 1689, f. 100r.

however, noting that "the States General of the seven provinces pretend they will inviolably keep peace with his Majesty and his kingdoms, and that this invasion is only done by the Prince of Orange and at his single charge; however it is, and what may be the event, God only knows." As a result, there was "such a violent press in the river of Thames," that the Company couldn't find men to staff their ships for India. "If there be not a sudden pacification," the Directors wrote, "we know not when we shall be able to send you out any more ships for India." Of course, they believed that "you have so many [ships] there already that you will not want tonnage homeward for Europe, and to defend our interest in the country."[83] Later that year, the Directors wrote further, noting that William had arrived and "very many of the English, nobility and gentry flock into him with multitudes of the common people, and a great part of the king's army, by which the Prince of Orange is wonderfully increased and they are upon their march for London." Even the Directors were a little impressed by William's politics, noting that he did not "burden the country with free quarter or any other oppression in their march, but pay for all they have, not pretending to make any conquests or war upon England, but only to settle these three kingdoms upon a right Protestant foundation and upon their ancient laws and liberties, free from the danger of popery or slavery." As a result, the Directors predicted "a firm peace with Holland and war against France" by the spring of 1689, "for such seems to be the most general inclination of the English Protestants of all qualities and degrees." John Child and his allies were warned to manage their "carriage toward those nations abroad" accordingly, "notwithstanding we would have you continue in terms of amity until you have our further order."[84]

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[83] BL IOR/E/3/91, "Directors in London to General and Council of India at Bombay," 8 Oct 1688, f. 295v.
[84] Ibid, "Directors in London to General and Council of India at Bombay," 5 Dec 1688, f. 297r.

In spite of these letters, alongside “several gazettes and newspapers, and some…great noise” the Dutch had made of “their prince [taking] England and wholly [subduing] it to his obedience,” Child and his Council were “much disturb[ed]” by the news and prayed for the preservation of James II and his family, “preserv[ing England] from civil wars and foreign enemies.”[85] Showing their continued disagreement with the Tory Child faction of the Company’s administration in India, the Whiggish President of Madras Elihu Yale wrote that while his Council was “astonished by the strange news” of the Glorious Revolution, they prayed “God grant those troubles may soon end to his glory, and the peace and good of our nation,” without mention of anything more political.[86] A few months later, they dared to be a little more open in a letter to Child himself, writing that “we hope the *lucky* revolutions have secured us” from European depredations in South India.[87]

Regardless of the continuity of disagreement over the political, ideological, and economic policies of the Company in India through the period before and during the Anglo-Mughal War, it is undeniable that the news of the Glorious Revolution further destabilized John Child’s position in Bombay. Where previously he had been happy to wait out the Mughals, content in his theory that enough commercial pain would compel concessions in the Company’s official trade treaty with the state, he was by the end of 1689 longer certain of the Company’s backup from England and feared his inability to drive the Sidi off Bombay without reinforcements.[88] “We fear we will not have so honorable a peace with the Mughal as we once expected,” Child wrote in June of that

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[85] BL IOR/E/3/48/1, “John Child and Council at Bombay to EIC in London,” 7 Jun 1689, f. 17r.
[86] Ibid, “Elihu Yale and Council at Madras to EIC in London, 21 Sept-15 Oct 1689, f. 56r.
[87] BL IOR/E/3/48/2, “Elihu Yale and Council at Madras to John Child and Council at Bombay,” 20 Jan-17 Feb 1690, f. 151v; emphasis added.
[88] BL IOR/E/3/48/1, “John Child and Council at Bombay to EIC in London,” 26 Dec 1689, 99r-110v.

year. "But we shall do what we can for your Honors' interest, as becomes us."[89] He and his Council drew up new points for negotiation with the Surati representatives. They reduced their 35 "demands" to 20 much more reasonable requests, each backed with an "argument" reasoning why it was a good idea for the Mughals to agree to.[90] A few weeks after drafting it, Child and the Council wrote home that they "were all unanimously for peace on any terms." The ships' captains were "quite weary of wars, since they can get nothing by it." The 2,000 Indian soldiers employed in defending the fort were "as good as the enemy's" men, "but we cannot expect 2,000 should fight with 14,000 of the same color," especially when they were "four months' pay behindhand with them." It was "hard with us," they contended, "and our unhappiness is much the greater because of reports given out by the Dutch, French, Portuguese, and indeed also all over India concerning our native country."[91]

John Child did not live to see the peace he had bought "on any terms." Having been "very much indisposed," with "sickness increasing on him with our troubles," he died on 4 February 1690. The *farman*, or official trade treaty, negotiated by Child's emissaries and the Surati representatives, was "to our great amazement and sorrow" a "worse sham story" than the previous *farman*.[92] Much of the problem revolved around the onerous reparations the Company was expected to pay, both specifically into the Surati treasury and specifically to several wealthy Surati merchants who contended loss of trade under the embargo Child had instituted.[93] Bartholomew Harris, who had ascended to the role of chief administrator after John Child's

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[89] BL IOR/E/3/48/1, "John Child and Council at Bombay to EIC in London," 7 Jun 1689, f. 23v.
[90] Ibid, "Heads of a *Farman* to be Procured from Aurangzeb," 4 Dec 1689, f. 77r-84v.
[91] Ibid, "John Child and Council at Bombay to EIC in London," 26 Dec 1689, f. 99r-99v.
[92] BL IOR/E/3/48/2, "Bartholomew Harris and Council at Surat to EIC in London," 28 Apr 1690, f. 167r.
[93] Ibid, "Emperor Aurangzeb's Farman to Itimad Khan, Governor of Surat," Feb 1690, f. 159r-160v.

death, argued that the problem of these repayment expectations was exacerbated by the lack of specie sent from England to western India since 1687. The *mutasaddi* of Surat told Harris in person that the Company's lack of cash "persuaded" him that the English were "minded to play tricks with him," and would not represent the English in their frustrations about the *farman* any further before they "delivered all the treasure we had of the merchants', which we must contrive ways to bring up speedily." If they did produce cash, Harris wrote that the *mutasaddi* would convince Sidi Yakut to leave Bombay, "upon which we had many large disputes and again laid before him the propositions before mentioned, and further than that we argued was impossible for us to do, but nothing would be harkened to, he was obstinate and would come to no other terms." Eventually Harris consented to getting specie for the merchants. He did "see plainly before our eyes all your affairs, just upon the brink of an accommodation, would altogether vanish away from us," such that "we hope this our action will not be esteemed by your Honors weakness in us but a forceable compliance with the necessity of the times and through the greatest reliance we have for attaining our desires."[94]

By the beginning of May 1690, the Sidi had left Bombay much as he had arrived, without treating with the English or clarifying his own demands.[95] By the end of June, the most strenuous merchant clamorer for the EIC's money, Mir Nizami, had died.[96] A new *farman* for Bengal had been agreed, and in July Job Charnock was on his way to reestablish trade there.[97] But the demands on the Company's finances the "peace by any means" had required were stark. To begin

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[94] BL IOR/E/3/48/2, "Bartholomew Harris and Council at Surat to EIC in London," 28 Apr 1690, f. 169v-170r.
[95] Ibid, "Bartholomew Harris and Council at Surat to EIC in London," 6 May 1690, f. 173r.
[96] Ibid, "Bartholomew Harris and Council at Surat to EIC in London," 30 Jun 1690, f. 181r.
[97] Ibid, "Elihu Yale and Council at Madras to Bartholomew Harris and Council at Surat," 22 Jul 1690, f. 194r.

with, the EIC had to pay Rs 195,000 to the Mughal's treasury in Surat, specifically, even though all their cash was on the east side of the subcontinent and trade had been halted for years. They feared they would owe anywhere from Rs 35,000 more to Rs 150,000 more to individual Surati merchants, whose cases were being arbitrated by Mughal officials.[98] Within five years of war's end, Job Charnock and his fellow employees in Bengal would be embarking on a highly effective policy of controlling regional trade from their militarized fort at Sutanati, which James M. Vaughn has called an "urban citadel" from which to exert monopsonistic control over the market.[99] Within those same five years, the market in western India had cratered, two rival English companies were fighting over what little trade there was in Surat and Bombay, and the debts of the war were still on the Company's books. The outcomes were regionally differentiated on a total scale. From 1690 onward, the Company's western and eastern settlements were on different trajectories.

Creating the Crisis of Monopoly in the Metropole, 1690-1698

Meanwhile, in London, the Company Directors' decision to press their luck with a war of choice in India while in favor with James II was turning out to be a very unpopular one. The flight of King James and establishment of William and Mary's radically altered parliamentary regime rocked Josiah Child and his allies in the Court of Directors.[100] Within a few short years,

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[98] BL IOR/E/3/48/2, "Bartholomew Harris and Council at Surat to EIC in London," 2 Oct 1690, f. 215r-218v.

[99] James M. Vaughn, "John Company Armed: The English East India Company, the Anglo-Mughal War and Absolutist Imperialism, c.1675-1690," in *Britain and the World* 11, no. 1 (2018): 101-137.

[100] In a letter to John Child and his Council in October of 1688, Josiah Child and John Goodere wrote that the "Dutch fleet" was "exceeding strong," and sailing to England under "pretenses" of "secur[ing] the Prince of Orange's succession to this crown, and the establishment of the Protestant religion, and other plausible popular pretenses." The States General were said to "pretend they will inviolably keep peace," and Child "hope[d] this great alarm may have more of

the Company had gone from the high of winning Sandys' case to the low of the post-Glorious Revolution political environment.[101] Simultaneously, news began to circulate in the metropole of the EIC's military campaigns against the Mughal state.[102] Opponents of the Child-era vision of absolute crown-Company monopoly smelled blood in the water. England's public, newly freed from the press censorship of James' reign, consumed multitudes of pamphlets which questioned the Company's motives for the conflict and challenged its legal basis.[103]

The lack of details the EIC provided about the conflict prompted several former employees and participants to offer their own critical interpretations of the war. Samuel White, one of the main losers by the Company's targeting independent English merchants in Siam, returned to London and began publishing his own takes on the conflict in 1688. White argued that the Company's representatives were aggressors in Siam, demanding reparations from the Siamese state for the business the EIC had supposedly lost by the presence of independent

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noise than reality in it, or that it will end in a fair and quiet agreement." BL IOR/E/3/91, "Court of Directors to General and Council of India at Bombay," 8 October 1688, f.295.

[101] "The interlopers and other maligners of the Company are very busy," the Company wrote to their General and Council at Madras, "and pretend great matters they will do shortly by complaints of the Company's management…which they have always abounded in, especially upon ever change of the government or lesser change of ministers of state or favorites." It was important to share such news with the Company's administrators in India in case "any of you or oof our other servants" were "deceived or perverted by such advises as may be writ from hence by discontented men." IOR/E/3/92, "Court of Directors in London to President and Council at Fort St. George," 15 February 1689, f. 6v.

[102] The *London Gazette* was the publisher of choice for carefully placed EIC reports of the conflict. Beginning in the summer of 1688, the Company began printing descriptions of their victories in Bombay and Bengal, without details. They erroneously believed the conflict was over, as we saw, and wanted to advertise their success. See *London Gazette*, 7-11 June 1688, no. 2354, 4; Ibid, 23-26 July 1688, no. 2367, 2; Ibid, 6-9 August 1688, no. 2371, 2.

[103] For a discussion of press censorship and press freedoms in the later Stuart era, see Mark Knights, *Representation and Misrepresentation in Later Stuart Britain: Partisanship and Political Culture* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005). For a discussion of the paranoid state of the public sphere in Williamite England, see Rachel Weil, *A Plague of Informers: Conspiracy and Political Trust in William III's England* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2013).

English merchants.[104] Even though the Company proposed a 60-day waiting period to begin negotiations with the Siamese, White claimed they began plundering the port within a week of arrival.[105] At first, White's complaint was simply that such aggression on the part of the Company would "be felt by posterity in an entire loss of that noble and beneficial commerce" to Asia, "unless some speedy and effectual course be taken to retrieve and preserve it."[106]

With pamphlets such as White's appearing, the Court of Directors responded by mounting a public defense against criticisms of their conduct of the war.[107] In various genres of pamphlet literature, they hammered home the contention that the war was occasioned by the depredations of interloping traders, and focused closely on the progress of the conflict in Bombay and Surat. The EIC's preferred printer, Samuel Tidmarsh of Cornhill, published a "true copy" of letters from Bartholomew Harris and Samuel Annesley in 1688.[108] In it, Harris and

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[104] Samuel White, "A True Account of the Passages at Mergen in the Kingdom of Siam after Captain Anthony Weldon Arrived at that Port in the *Curtana* Frigate, for Account of the East India Company" [hereafter "A True Account…"] (London: n.p., 1688), 2.
[105] Ibid, 3-4.
[106] Samuel White, "A True Account…," (London: n.p., 1688), 6.
[107] White's pamphlets are only dated 1688. The Company's initial response pamphlet is also dated 1688. However, the Company's secretary noted that the letter from which the text of their initial pamphlet was drawn arrived in London on 21 July 1688. White's pamphlet, "A True Account…" mentions "false and scandalous news" being published about him in the *London Gazette* issue of 26 July, which contains a long but featureless item about the Company's military successes on both coasts of India. Therefore, the tentative timeline for the beginning of the public debate over the Company's war is probably as follows. The Company first published a notice that they had achieved victory in their war in the *London Gazette* of 11 June, 1688. On July 26, the Company published its longer list of achievements in the war in the *Gazette*. White takes offense to the representation of the war in that *Gazette* piece and published his "True Account." Finally, sometimes later, the Company began publishing on the issue outside of the *Gazette* in their own pamphlets and broadsheets. Rather than settling the controversy, the appearance of such defenses only generated more responses. See *London Gazette*, 7-11 June 1688, no. 2354, 4; Ibid, 23-26 July 1688, no. 2367, 2; Samuel White, "A True Account…," (London: n.p., 1688), 7-8; BL IOR/E/3/47/2, "Bartholomew Harris and Council in Surat to John Child and Council in Bombay," 25 December 1687, f. 175v.
[108] The letter this pamphlet prints is also preserved in BL IOR/E/3/47/2, "Bartholomew Harris and Council in Surat to John Child and Council in Bombay," 25 December 1687, f. 172-175. The

Annesley tell John Child (the letter's intended recipient) of a visit they had with Mukhtiar Khan, the new Governor of Surat. Hunting for something which would bring Child to the bargaining table, Khan asked them for a recommendation for an initial goodwill gesture that would impress their boss. "We motioned the delivering up of [George] Bowcher," Harris and Annesley wrote, "which if he did, 'twould be a great inducement…whereupon we had long discourse upon that article, and…further representing to him of how great import and concern it was to the Right Honorable Company." Without the ability to control and punish the most infamous interloper on the west coast, Harris and Annesley explained to Khan, the Company "could not trade with any security, but were liable to be cheated and abused daily."[109] They went so far as to give Child their own impression: "most seriously…consider all, how far the king hath condescended to the redressing of all your Excellency &c's grievances."[110] And furthermore, "consider the great weight of your Excellency &c's 35 Articles…if under all these fair leaves, there doth yet lie some deadly snake it would be much to our wonder."[111] In the only commentary provided, the pamphlet stated that "upon the whole matter, the East India Company do conclude, there is an honorable conclusion made of that war, long since occasioned by the unnatural and pernicious

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text is the same. The EIC rarely published its internal communications as pamphlets. When the Court of Directors did publish letters like this one, it was to lend their own political communications veracity by way of "on the spot" reporting. They did the same between 1688 and 1689, publishing Francis Davenport's account of the conflict in Siam to directly contradict White's pamphlets. See Francis Davenport, "An Historical Abstract of Mr. Samuel White: His Management of Affairs, in his Shabandership of Tenaffery and Mergen, During Francis Davenport's Stay with him, in Quality of Secretary," (London: n.p., 1688).

[109] "The True Copy of a Letter from Mr. Harris and Mr. Annesley, two of the East India Company's Council, Left at Surat by their General, Sir John Child, Baronet, when he and the rest of the English Nation Departed the Indian Shore, and Retired to Bombay to Begin the late war Against the Great Mughal and his Subjects" [hereafter "Harris and Annesley…"], (London: Samuel Tidmarsh, after July 30, 1688), 2-3.

[110] Ibid, 3-4.

[111] Ibid, 4-5.

attempts of interlopers." The author signed off with a promise that "there will in a short time be published a brief history of the rise, progress, and success of the English East India Company's wars against the Great Mughal and the King of Siam and their subjects."[112]

Josiah Child himself published a "supplement" to his 1681 "Treatise Wherein is Demonstrated that the East-India Trade is the most National of all Foreign Trades" in 1689. He explained that when he had last written on the subject in 1681, "this Company had raised the English Navigation and Power in India, much beyond what it was in any former age." But then the "destructive trade of the English interlopers in India" began and drove "a general failure of credit in all public funds, caused very many adventurers to sell their stocks, and was sufficient to have discouraged any men." Without the courageous and altruistic decision of Child and his allies to "expose their whole stock to hazard, for recovery of the pepper trade to England…and to recover by arms…satisfaction for damages received, and also those inestimable privileges they had deprived the English of, in those interloping times," the entire trade to Asia would have fell "an irretrievable victim between the Dutch and French, to the irreparable loss of England, and consequently the very great abatement of the value of our English lands."[113] For good measure, he commissioned the publication of a pamphlet version of George Jeffreys' entire decision in *EIC vs. Sandys*.[114] Nathaniel Tench, another member of the Court of Directors, agreed, writing that the Company was "necessitated" to conflict with the Mughal state by "the breaking in of the interlopers upon them into their trade (which are now the greatest exclaimers against the war),

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[112] "Harris and Annesley…" (London: Samuel Tidmarsh, after July 30, 1688), 6.
[113] Josiah Child, "A Supplement, 1689, to a Former Treatise Concerning the East-India Trade, Printed 1681," (London: n.p., 1689): 1-2.
[114] The pamphlet is anonymous, but the prefatory remarks make it clear that the reason for publication is to support the Company in its present time of difficulty, so Child likely had a hand in ensuring it was produced. See "The Argument of the Lord Chief Justice of the Court of King's Bench Concerning the Great Case of Monopolies," (London: Randal Taylor, 1689): 2-3.

which breaking in upon [the EIC] by the said interlopers, and thereby the dividing of the English interest in India," drove the Company to conflict. If the EIC had not been "at the charge, and run the hazard, of a war," Tench wrote, interloping would "inevitably occasion…the breach of all the agreements made by their predecessors and themselves with the great Mughal, by and under which, they had enjoyed their trade with all peaceable and quietness from its first establishment."[115]

Tench's long pamphlet made the clearest connections between the "interlopers" of the earlier 1680s and the conditions which had forced the Company into a war in 1686. He went so far as to characterize interlopers as lazy "countrymen" who "made not the like advantage" the EIC made "in their particular trades, who though they might have come into the Company, and enjoyed a share of the trade with them, yet resolving to a shorter way….they fell to interloping." Interloping was so bad, Tench explained, because the EIC "had been at vast charges in the establishment of the trade and navigation of this kingdom." Even more importantly, as Child had suggested before him, "such a division of the English interest and nation in India…would be a means to lose all the English privileges in India…and the French, Dutch, and Danes would make their advantages of such a confusion."[116]

The real kicker in Tench's argument was that "the sole occasion" which led to "the depriving [the EIC] of their privileges, and putting such exactions upon them, by the Indians, and consequently of the war for regaining them, was the interlopers breaking in upon their trade…which rendered them contemptible in the esteem of the natives, and encouraged them to do…those injuries." As a result, "some of those persons, who now so much exclaim against that

[115] Nathaniel Tench, "A Modest and Just Apology for; Or Defense of the Present East-India Company Against the Accusations of their Adversaries," (London: n.p., 1690), 15-16.
[116] Ibid, 16-17.

war, were the sole occasion of it."[117] He wrote that "the two rebellions in the islands of Bombay and St. Helena" were caused by the actions of interlopers, and interlopers alone, which put the EIC at "vast charge…and…bloodshed" to regain control of their factories. Furthermore, Tench argued that the Company had gotten King James' approval for the war, so it couldn't be unjust or illegal, especially because they "did commit no act of hostility, until the Indians had made themselves the aggressors in this war, in the business of Hugli."[118]

The insistence of the EIC on independent merchants' responsibility for all their conflict in South Asia generated a flurry of responses in the press. One pamphlet began, "the unaccountable war made with the Mogul, was undertaken for private base ends and purposes" on the part of the Company, rather than any independent English traders. Rather than "sending up to the Mogul's court" with a "complaint of demand of justice," as they should have done, the EIC was "enticed by [the chance of] taking many millions from the Mogul and his subjects, upon return of their fleets from Mocha and other places." Despite having loaned the EIC "several hundreds of thousands of pounds to load their ships home for England (which most sums are still owing at interest)," the "innocent Banians and other merchants" had fallen prey to the Company's "robbing and spoiling all without the least notice or regard of their innocency." The author(s) contended that "the English nation [has] been made to stink in the nostrils of that people." Alongside "our burning, wasting, and killing on shore in Bengal," it was "not to be hoped we shall ever regain our lost credit in India; nor have we reason to believe that the Mogul and his people…will ever be heartily reconciled to the present Company, and those persons that have

[117] Nathaniel Tench, "A Modest and Just Apology for; Or Defense of the Present East-India Company Against the Accusations of their Adversaries," (London: n.p., 1690), 23.
[118] Ibid, 24.

actually committed violences upon them."[119] Most writings arguing against the Company's interpretation took a similar tack. "By hostilities and depredations unreasonably exercised towards the subjects of the great Mughal and other potentates…together with a continued series of unhappy, indiscreet conduct of their whole affairs (the fruits of ignorance, obstinacy, malice, and treachery)," the EIC had "deprived the nation of trade in Bengal, Surat, and other places, and put the rest and whole of that invaluable trade of East India upon the outmost hazard of being inevitably, utterly and irrecoverably lost to the nation," proclaimed one.[120]

Another popular tactic among critics of the war was to suggest that all was not as it seemed with the Company's finances. As a result, they were not simply prosecuting a war because they wanted to get even richer, but because they needed to shore up their joint stock's capital. It was a natural response to the Company's claim that the actions of independent merchants had so seriously damaged their trade to Asia. "Even many of the modest adventurers" in the EIC "will themselves confess, that upon the foot the Company now stands, they are an immense sum worse than nothing." Though "great subtlety and cunning will be used by the managers" in "dressing up plausible accounts, and making extravagant valuations of their forts," the truth would out in a parliamentary hearing.[121] "Their condition is so bad they are afraid and ashamed to have it known," since "if their condition be at all good it were easy to make it manifest and clear that it is so, to any judicious persons versed in mercantile affairs and accounts." Even if their stock was accounted correctly, their capitalization wasn't sufficient for

[119] BL IOR Shelfmark 85/Cup.645.b.12, "An Account of the East India Company's War with the Great Mogul," (n.p., n.d.), 1.
[120] BL IOR Mss. Eur. D 300, "Scheme or Model for Erecting and Establishing a New Rational East India Joint Stock or Company," 1690, f. 201-202
[121] HL, "Reasons Humbly Offered Against Grafting Upon or Confirming the Present East India Company," (London: n.p., 1690), 1.

the needs of the India trade: “as to what concerns the stock, it might be done by them or by the greatest bankrupts in the world” if Parliament allowed them to. But the trade with Asia was too big to fail, and “ought not to be secured to any so exceeding small number of people.”[122] George White, the brother of Samuel, complained that “such notorious frauds have been acted in underselling the Company’s goods by private contracts and unheard of deductions afterwards,” which cost the Company’s investors “above one hundred thousand pounds, in two or three years last past.”[123]

The EIC’s defenders, of course, saw it differently. “Certainly it cannot be supposed, much less believed,” wrote Tench, “that the Company should in the least desire the continuance of the war…since no one can receive more prejudice by the War, nor none reap greater advantages by the peace, than the present Company (and interest, you know, will not lie.” In fact, public complaints about the Company “needlessly continu[ing]” the conflict “have done as much as in them lieth to render it next door to an impossibility ever to obtain it.” The idea that Parliament should compel the Company to use its cash on hand to defray the reported “charge of making peace” were guilty of “calumny,” for “those Indian princes (if they should once come to the knowledge of such an obligation laid upon the Company, to buy their peace with them), would set a vast price upon.” Rather than questioning the inner workings of the Company, “the quickest and most effectual way of obtaining” peace in India was for “the present Company [to] be supported and not discountenanced by the present Government; for without that, all their endeavors will prove ineffectual.”[124]

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[122] BL IOR Mss. Eur. D 300, “Scheme or Model for Erecting and Establishing a New Rational East India Joint Stock or Company,” 1690, f. 211-212.
[123] George White, “An Account of the Trade to the East Indies,” (London: n.p., 1691): 17.
[124] Nathaniel Tench, “A Modest and Just Apology for; Or Defense of the Present East-India Company Against the Accusations of their Adversaries,” (London: n.p., 1690), 26, 30-31.

The public debate generated so much writing in part because interested parties began frequently petitioning Parliament for redress considering actions the Company had taken as part of the conflict and published their petitions as pamphlets or broadsheets. These went a long way towards convincing some commentators. "Such great havoc has been made of the lives and estates of the subjects of England," wrote George White, "as has been represented by numerous petitions to the Parliament in every session since the late happy revolution."[125] Some of these petitions were from the owners of ships which were operating in legal space that was gray at best, moving goods around the Indian Ocean and between Asia and England without charterparties from the EIC.[126] But others were from groups of mariners, for example, who had been forced into naval service for the Company during the war (they had agreed to voyage to India as merchant marines). They were promised prize money as remuneration for the more dangerous job but never received it.[127] The most dangerous ones, in the eyes of the EIC, were those like the Petition of Thomas Pilkington et. al in 1691.[128] It had 343 merchants' signatures, including those of many wealthy and powerful supporters of the new political regime.[129] In its

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[125] George White, "An Account of the Trade to the East Indies," (London: n.p., 1691): 17.
[126] BL IOR Mss. Eur. D300, "The East India Company's Answer to the Petition of Charles Price," (London: n.p., 1689).
[127] "The Case of the Mariners Which Served the East India Company in their wars in the East Indies, and of the Widows and Orphans of Those that Perished in the said ars, to the Number of Five-Hundred, and as many Widows, Humbly Presented to the House of Commons," (London: n.p., 1690); "To the Honorable Knights, Citizens, and Burgesses…the Humble Petion of Thomas Wright [and others]," (London: n.p., 1690).
[128] "A Petition Against the East India Company," (London: Thomas Braddyl and Robert Everingham, 1691).
[129] Examples: Pilkington himself, future Bank of England Governor John Houblon, Whig MP John Smith, wealthy tobacco importer George Richards, Barbados merchant John Eyles, banker Michael Godfrey, Gilbert Heathcote, political writer John Cary, future Bank of England Director Nathaniel Gould, anti-Stuart jurist John Powell, polemicist William Petyt, William III's gunmaker Thomas Western, erstwhile Canadian administrator James Knight, investor Theodore Janssen, Court Whig Benjamin Overton, two of King Wiliam's doctors (Richard Blackmore and

very short text, this petition opened with all the most common criticisms of the Company's handling of the Anglo Mughal War. The trade to India was extremely important but had been ruined by the Company's abuses and illegal actions. The Company's "managed" the trade "only for their private gain, without any regard to the public good." If something was not done by the government, the trade was "like to be utterly lost to this kingdom, and fall into the hands of foreigners."[130] The only proper response, the petition stated, was for parliament to dissolve the East India Company and make a new one.[131]

This petition was not the first time since the advent of the Anglo-Mughal War that the London public sphere had called for the Company's head; it was just one example of the phenomenon that a lot of people were willing to sign their names to.[132] Even though the early pamphlets critical of the EIC's handling of the war didn't go as far as to call for its dissolution, the rhetorical move towards that argument had begun by 1690. The Company's pursuance of the war "indispensably require[d] the immediate establishing of a new joint stock to restore and preserve that advantageous trade," wrote one.[133] "Disbanding the present company, and establishing another by an act of parliament," wrote another, "will be looked on with a good eye in the court of the Mogul; as a just censure inflicted on the said Company." It would "find [the

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George Howe), the banker Richard Hoare, Whig MP Jack Howe, the politician James Craggs Senior, future Board of Trade President Viscount Weymouth, former EIC deputy governor Robert Thomson, Daniel Defoe (potentially; there is a signatory under his birth name Daniel Foe, but he was not yet famous and it cannot be certain it was him), and even the famous actor James Nokes.

[130] A Petition Against the East India Company," (London: Thomas Braddyl and Robert Everingham, 1691), 1.

[131] Ibid, 1.

[132] For a broader discussion of these trends, see Gary S. DeKrey*, A Fractured Society: The Politics of London in the First Age of Party, 1688-1715* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985), 121-171.

[133] BL IOR Shelfmark 85/Cup.645.b.12, "An Account of the East India Company's War with the Great Mogul," (n.p., n.d.), 2.

English] so manifestly expressing their resentments of the unjustifiable war begun upon him," as to "prove a powerful method to recommend again the English nation, and to conciliate the favor and esteem of those people; which the present Company can never hope for."[134] Another noted that England was "now engulfed in war at home and abroad," and the "East India trade" was "in a most hazardous condition, a lamentable dark state of [it] appearing from India."[135] George White even went so far as to say that the Company's pig-headed war had given the lie to one of the greatest bugaboos plaguing the East India trade: the constant need to export bullion to Asia. White argued that "for these last…years, wherein our company have left off their good old trade of merchandise, and applied themselves to the art of war," the entire economy had suffered. When trade between England and India was circulating, "we all know money went about begging securities at five percent," although "the law allows the usurer to take six percent," and "vast sums" were even "let out at four percent." When the trade was stopped due to the war, there was "not the least appearance" of greater liquidity in the money markets; "but rather the contrary." As a result, the entire country had learned that trade with India "does not only in the least diminish our money, but contrarily…by the circulation of trade it much augments the treasure of the nation in the species of gold and silver."[136]

With this rhetorical move, it was increasingly possible for the Company's detractors to challenge the monopoly of the Company politically. The Company, already privileged, was moving closer to the crown as its detractors moved closer to the parliamentary opposition, setting

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[134] HL, "Reasons Humbly Offered Against Grafting Upon or Confirming the Present East India Company," (London: n.p., 1690), 2.
[135] BL IOR Mss. Eur. D 300, "Scheme or Model for Erecting and Establishing a New Rational East India Joint Stock or Company," 1690, f. 204.
[136] George White, "An Account of the Trade to the East Indies," (London: n.p., 1691): 9-10.

up a straightforward conflict between Tories and Whigs in the halls of Parliament.[137] The Whigs in parliament had already set up their investigatory committee about "making the East India trade more national" in 1689, and the Company's response was to propose enlarging their capital and expanding the stockholders. They were even willing to allow for new, more coercive powers on the part of parliament to oversee the EIC, and possibly even to expand decision-making within the Corporation.[138] Of course, their opponents were ready for such an argument and were busy raising money to propose a fully funded and subscribed new Company instead.[139]

Again in 1691 the Commons entered into debate on the Company and its privileges. And again, due to parliamentary wrangling, the debates reached a stalemate. It took two attempts on the part of the Whig majority in the Commons to petition William to dissolve the East India Company's charter: once in February of 1692, and again in February 1693. Paradoxically, the decision to send the Company's fate to the crown made observers think the Company would win the political battle. Of William's three major advisors, Daniel Finch, the Earl of Nottingham, was opposed to the EIC. The other two, the earl Sidney Godolphin and Laurence Hyde, the Earl of Rochester, supported the Company and its monopoly. While William granted a new, modified

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[137] See Gary S. DeKrey, *A Fractured Society: The Politics of London in the First Age of Party, 1688-1715* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985), 22-28, 121-171.
[138] BL IOR/B/39, "Court Minutes," 1687-1690; BL IOR Shelfmark 85/Cup.645.b.12, HL, "Reasons Humbly Offered Against Grafting Upon or Confirming the Present East India Company in a Letter to a Member of Parliament," n.d., n.p.; Henry Horwitz, "The East India Trade, the Politicians, and the Constitution: 1689-1702," *Journal of British Studies* 17, no. 2 (1978): 1-18; Ibid, *Parliament, Policy, and Politics in the Reign of William III* (Newark, NJ: University of Delaware Press, 1977).
[139] See Narcissus Luttrell, *A Brief Historical Relation of State Affairs, From September 1678 to April 1714* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 1857), six volumes, 2:7-8.

charter which was issued in 1693, the process led to further criticism and scrutiny as it was an open secret that the Company had bribed their way into the victory.[140]

Even with the EIC's money talking, the Company's opponents kept up their attacks on the monopoly in Parliament. In fact, the public outrage over the EIC's resort to bribery (previously a non-issue) has been seen by some historians as contributing to the dissolution of parliament in 1695 and the Whig rout of an election that year. This itself contributed to the dissolution of the Company by Act of Parliament. In 1696, there was no longer a chartered company trading to the Indies in England. All was chaos. The ultimate solution was the creation of *two* chartered companies trading to India in 1698. The Company—or the Old Company, as it was now called—had lost its monopoly.[141]

Conclusion: Thinking Bombay's Trajectory Whole

In this chapter I have told the story of the Anglo-Mughal War from the perspective of Bombay and western India, tracing the continuation of political-economic and ideological decision-making across levels of the Company's hierarchy even after the putting down of Keigwin's Rebellion. I then demonstrated how that war in western India, in particular, contributed to the Company's metropolitan crisis of monopoly in the early years of the 1690s, leading to the loss of the Company's exclusive trading privileges and the creation of the New and Old East India Companies, competing for trade in the subcontinent. While I contend that my work here has shown the presence of ideological conflict within the company, as well as the

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[140] Narcissus Luttrell, *The Parliamentary Diary of Narcissus Luttrell, 1691-1693*, ed. Henry Horwitz (Oxford, UK: Clarendon Press, 1972), 91-92, 173, 336-337, 351, 372; Henry Horwitz, "The East India Trade, the Politicians, and the Constitution: 1689-1702," *Journal of British Studies* 17, no. 2 (1978), 4-6.
[141] Henry Horwitz, "The East India Trade, the Politicians, and the Constitution: 1689-1702," *Journal of British Studies* 17, no. 2 (1978): 1-18.

company in the politics of empire at the dawn of the Williamite era, I believe the ultimate impact of this story extends even further. It ultimately solidified the differentiated trajectory of Bombay compared to the Company's other factories in India, pushing Bombay definitively towards a comparatively commercial, manufacturing- and trade-oriented model of imperial development even as the Company's other factories became increasingly extractive, militaristic, and territorial.

The story of the political-economic impact of this crisis of monopoly on the recovery of Bombay and western India from the war's disruption remains to be told. I believe that telling will show that the creation of two competing English companies was a far more serious challenge to the transoceanic trade in western India than in Madras or Bengal, because of the nature of the conflict in the Bombay theater. The Old Company still held massive debt owed to both the Mughal state and individual Surati merchants throughout the 1690s and into the first decade of the 1700s. While the New and Old Companies only competed in the metropole for a few short years—which economic historians often argue had little to no effect on the overall health of the trade because of the robustness of the stock market—the same cannot be said for western India.[142] Such a conflict could not happen in Madras or Bengal, where the Company had effectively militarized and territorialized their holdings, creating far stricter trade relationships with local producers and making it harder for New Company representatives to break into the market.[143]

By contrast, in western India, where the Old Company and New Company could each take a factory in either Bombay or Surat, conflict could go on virtually indefinitely. The New and

[142] See, among others, Anne L. Murphy, *The Origins of English Financial Markets: Investment and Speculation Before the South Sea Bubble* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009).
[143] James M. Vaughn, "John Company Armed: The English East India Company, the Anglo-Mughal War and Absolutist Imperialism, c.1675-1690," in *Britain and the World* 11, no. 1 (2018): 101-137.

Old Company's servants fought viciously over territory and responsibility for debt until at least 1708. The better trade connections were at Surat, especially because the Sidi's siege had virtually reduced Bombay to a smoldering pile of rubble. But the better control, and chance to escape the Old Company's debts, was at Bombay. As a result, the New Company's representatives, arriving in Surat, managed to trap the Old Company's employees in the city with their creditors, skipping down to Bombay and asserting New Company control there.[144] These conflicts, between the New and Old Company's employees in Surat and Bombay, ultimately lost the entire English trading contingent the trust of the Surati government and merchant elite. By 1708, when the Companies united again, the employees in western India found themselves virtually starting over, with all new allies and in a vastly different regional political and economic context—a situation I explore in Chapter Five.

The Company's western Indian business by 1708 had suffered over 20 years of upheaval, and newly promoted United Company admins were running a factory without local allies and saddled by debts to individual Surati businessmen. The only strategy to recover the factory's business was to invest in new alliances, and the development of Bombay as a site of manufacturing and increasingly free trade, in order to break away from the morass of problems they had created for themselves in Surat. Far from accomplishing the extractive and authoritarian goals of the absolutist Tory state across the board, the Anglo-Mughal War's dramatic fallout established the differential trajectories between Bengal and Bombay hinted at by Keigwin's rebellion. Bombay was set on its path to civic infrastructural investment and development tied to

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[144] See BL IOR/E/3/71, "Original Correspondence," 1704-1712, and BL IOR/P/341/2, "Bombay Public Proceedings," 1704-1707, for details of these conflicts between Sir John Gayer and his subordinates, employees of the Old Company, and Sir Nicholas Waite and his subordinates, representatives of the New Company.

broader politics of the English/British imperial state—the opposite of Josiah Child's goals at the beginning of the war. It is the politics of these civic infrastructural investments to which I turn in the following chapters.

Building Bombay's Church: Religion, Governance, and Infrastructure

Introduction

Richard Cobbe stood before the front door of Bombay's church on Christmas morning, 1718. Dressed to perform Anglican services, he met the settlement's governor, Charles Boone, the members of the governing Council, and Bombay's other English residents. Cobbe ensured the congregation would be greeted with an appropriately splendid Christmas scene. Making do with the limited materials available in the tropical winter, the building had been festooned with banana and palm leaves, and wreaths of local greenery. Six-pointed stars of palm stems hung from the ceiling. Cobbe wrote that the church had a "splendid echo," with "the roof of it being arched with three regular arches of stone, supported by two rows of pillars and pilasters on each side." At the end of the aisle, one was greeted by a half-domed apse holding the communion table. Cobbe described it, with no overt modesty, as "like that of St. Paul's, London, ascending by three steps, and a rail to separate it from the body of the church." The church builders clearly intended it to serve a reasonably significant congregation, as it was supposedly larger than the Anglican churches at Madras or Bengal, or the Catholic churches in Bombay. For Cobbe, it was "suitable, in some measure, to the dignity of our Royal Settlement, and big enough for a cathedral." Cobbe looked out over his congregation in front of the church, which had begun to attract "a whole crowd of black people standing round about, Rammagee and all his caste." After leading a rendition of the 24th Psalm and the *Gloria Patri* on the green, Cobbe opened wide the great door and led his flock inside the edifice, where "service began as usual on Christmas Day."[1]

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[1] Richard Cobbe, "Letter to Robert Adams at Calicut, 10 January 1718/19," in *Bombay Church: Or, a True Account of the Building and Finishing the English Church at Bombay in the East*

While this Christmas service was far from the first time Cobbe had led his congregation in prayer since his arrival at Bombay more than four years earlier, it was the most momentous occasion. This Christmas Day service was the first conducted in the new church, a church which had been nearly fifty years in the making. Seeing it completed was Richard Cobbe's singular goal throughout his eight years' time in Bombay, though the English community had been making do with a small chapel for decades prior. Why was Bombay's church built? Why did Bombay's influential early governor, Gerald Aungier, begin the church in the early 1670s? Why was the project stopped by his successor, John Child, in the 1680s? Why did later Governor Charles Boone and chaplain Richard Cobbe restart and complete the church building project between 1714 and 1718?

By 1718, the other two significant EIC outposts in India, at Fort William in Bengal and at Madras, had already completed building their Anglican churches. Bombay's had been built up to the roof plates long before Cobbe's arrival as part of Gerald Aungier's transformational governorship between 1669 and his death in 1677.[2] The decades-long contest over constructing (and finishing) Bombay's Anglican church shows how debate within the East India Company over Bombay policy permeated every aspect of governance and administration of the site, both in Bombay and in London. It further challenges the most common understandings of church policy

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Indies, with a list of the Benefactors Contributed Thereunto, From the Year it was Begun 1715, to the Year it was Finished 1718; Also the first Rise of the Charity School Proposed to be Erected there 1719 (henceforth *Bombay Church…*) (London: Oliver Bros, 1766), 57-59.

[2] John Burnell, *Bombay in the Days of Queen Anne, Being an Account of the Settlement Written by John Burnell*, (henceforth *Bombay in the Days of Queen Anne…*) ed. Samuel T Sheppard (London: Hakluyt Society, 1933), 21. See also BL IOR E/3/90, "East India Company in London to the President and Council at Surat," 2 July 1684, in which the Court of Directors note that "the Great Church [at Bombay]…we hear is carried up so far as the plates, wanting only a roof," ff. 198-199.

in pre-1800 English/British imperial South Asia, demonstrating how the Company, across space and time, was dynamically involved in the construction of a material practice of Anglican faith in Asia. Most scholars accept that the East India Company in the early modern period did the bare minimum to fulfill the chartered requirement of promoting the church abroad.[3] In Bombay, in contrast, the Company's Directors in London and employees in Bombay actively debated the value of tying the EIC, financially and socially, to the material and moral practice of faith embodied in the church construction project. In times of greater interest in the site's development, or in times of perceived ethical laxity and peril, the church project took on greater importance. It became a symbol and practice of social and moral policing, key to instilling in Bombay's population the important 17th- and 18th-century English/British imperial principle of "good government." Gerald Aungier, who began the church, and Charles Boone, the governor who completed it alongside Richard Cobbe, exemplified this position.

On the other side of the coin, when Company policy in Bombay, London, or both was focused on fiscal austerity, profitability, authoritarian governance, and power projection toward South Asian polities, the church project fell from favor. It was seen as a luxury, and a public charge lacking in mercantile or power projection benefits. The era of John Child's governance, alongside the period of turmoil during and after the merger of the "Old" and "New" East India Companies, demonstrated this position, when the church was left on the back burner, and some commentators even argued for the unfinished shell to be torn down.

[3] For example, see Brent S. Sirota, *The Christian Monitors: The Church of England and the Age of Benevolence, 1680-1730* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2014); Haig Z. Smith, *Religion and Governance in England's Emerging Colonial Empire, 1601-1698* (Cham, CH: Palgrave Macmillan, 2022); William J. Bulman, *Anglican Enlightenment: Orientalism, Religion, and Politics in England and its Empire, 1648-1715* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2015).

We have already seen how more clearly political-ideological projects, such as Keigwin's Rebellion, the role of Bombay in the Anglo-Mughal War, and the site's fortunes in the crisis of monopoly spurred by the "New" East India Company, led to the ultimate promotion of investment and development in Bombay (albeit in occasionally paradoxical ways). In the case of civic infrastructural investment in Bombay, such as the building of the church, the pro-development advocates within the EIC, both in London and in India, again carried the day. This reality makes the church, unexplored in the political economic history of Bombay and the East India Company, yet another tool for understanding Bombay's distinctive trajectory. The church project, with its victorious backers' emphasis on the expounding of "good government," moral development, and community building through the practices of the Anglican communion, became a valuable part of preserving Bombay's trajectory as a labor- and trade-oriented commercial entrepôt, even as the EIC's other factories became increasingly land-oriented and extractive over the course of the 18th century.

Beginning: English Bombay, Latitudinarianism, and "Good Government"

Unlike most other factories the English established east of the British Isles, Bombay largely lacked preexisting material infrastructure when Gerald Aungier became President in 1669. The Company had leased the holding from the English crown in 1668, which in turn received it from the Portuguese in 1661 as part of Catherine of Braganza's marriage contract with Charles II. The Portuguese had been in Bombay since the mid-sixteenth century, and before that it had been a Mughal possession under the administration of the Gujarat Sultanate. Neither the Portuguese nor the Mughals ever used Bombay as a site of permanent regional governance—or even frequent residence. For the Mughal empire, the primary western coastal province was always Gujarat, to the north and west of Bombay. It was there that commercial, and religious, infrastructural investments were made.[4] Bombay was at best the site of a deep natural harbor where the *Sidī* of Janjira, who collected a Mughal salary and plied a fleet of ships in defense of Mughal shipping and pilgrimage voyages, could harbor his ships safely during monsoons. Very little remained from the Mughal period in the area by the time the English arrived, and certainly nothing directly related to the state. The Muslim community in the area had "two places of their worship" in English Bombay, including at Mahim, "the tomb of one of their famous *pir*s or saints there buried, much frequented in the month of October."[5]

The Portuguese headquartered their *Estado da Índia* in Goa, down the coast from Bombay to the south and east. They had a viceroy in residence for the north, who administered Bombay. But his seat was in what is now Vasai, or Bassein. This was nearly thirty-two miles to the northwest of Bombay harbor, and took over a day to reach by boat, navigating the rocky coast and shallow estuarial creeks which rose and fell with the tides. In the Portuguese-controlled lands between Vasai and Bombay, local infrastructure was built by *fidalgo*s, lords of land grants received from the Portuguese crown.

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[4] It cannot be stressed highly enough that simply because material investments were made by the Mughals in Gujarat, particularly in Surat, such material infrastructure should not be seen as immediately analogous to that suggested as necessary by Gerald Aungier. The historiography of the Mughal imperial administration long stressed a rent-seeking central state, delegating significant power to regional nobles in exchange for the sums of cash needed to fund military campaigns and the lavish lifestyle of the *durbar*. This practice did not lend itself to significant infrastructural outlays. For example, see Ashin Das Gupta's discussion of Surat's defense infrastructure in *Indian Merchants and the Decline of Surat c.1700-1750* (Wiesbaden: Steiner, 1979), 7-15.

[5] BL IOR/G/3/6, "Gerald Aungier in Bombay to the East India Company in London," 15 December 1673, f. [3]27. Mentioning its popularity in October and its location in Mahim indicates a likely reference to *hazrāt qurbān śāh bābā dargāh*, today located within Mahim Burial Ground.

The most notable presence left by the Portuguese in the lands they ceded to the English lay in the established Catholic communities. Bombay had many "fine, fair" Catholic churches.[6] Writing in 1711, John Burnell made note of several. Between Dongri in the east and Girgaon in the west, north of the Fort area, in what is now Bhuleshwar, he described the Portuguese "hamlet called Nogena, containing two streets the principal being of a considerable breadth." At the top of this street, Burnell wrote, there was "a large spacious convent and church belonging to the Portuguese of the Order of St. Francis, whose inside is extraordinarily beautiful, the altar being adorned with a variety of images." The church was used regularly, according to Burnell. "Fronting the church doors are two great crosses," he wrote, "the sight of which and the hours of trinity call the zealous Romans to their beads."[7] Parel, even further north, had by the early 18th century a small town, "adjoining a large noble convent, though now in ruins, belonging formerly to the Jesuits." This property was certainly one of the "seized lands" Aungier negotiated the return of to the Portuguese (in exchange for compensation) in 1670. Burnell described it, even in its decrepit state, as "of a very good height," having "several large rooms and private apartments." Though the roof was "wholly fallen in," the altarpiece was "yet entire, over which is still remaining the representation of God the Father." This church fell into disrepair only shortly before Burnell's visiting, according to his account; the Company had re-seized it and its accompanying lands, "the most productive of any on the island, extending from Sewri Fort to that of Sion, upwards of four miles in length, including all the salt grounds," only following the

[6] BL IOR E/3/34, "Gerald Aungier and Council at Bombay to EIC in London," 15 December 1673, f.279r.
[7] *Bombay in the Days of Queen Anne…*, ed. Samuel T Sheppard (London: Hakluyt Society, 1933), 41, 41n.

Anglo-Mughal War. According to Burnell, its revenues from salt pans and agricultural production "were said to amount to a pound of gold a day" in the 1680s.[8]

There were also secular buildings within English Bombay which were themselves originally the homes of Portuguese landowners. Burnell wrote that "the house where the General and all the Factory reside," though "now it hath been sufficiently altered by its inhabitants," was previously the seat of the d'Souzas, "a large Portuguese fabric" befitting their status as some of the wealthiest landowners in the area before the arrival of the English. In fact, the house in Fort was not the primary residence of the family on Bombay—that was their house in Mazagaon, north of Dongri on the hill above the harbor. "At the east end," wrote Burnell, the hill "falls down in steep declining rocks and on the west it shoots out to the water's edge."[9] On the western end was built the d'Souza estate, "a large square house" which the family lived in up until the onset of the Anglo-Mughal War. The d'Souzas controlled the land and labor of all the residents of Mazagaon and built for their converted Indian population yet another Catholic church, Our Lady of the Mount, in the southwest of their land. This was evidently one of the more popular places of worship for the island's Catholic population in the 17th and early 18th centuries, as Burnell described "on solemn days the inhabitants walk in procession…the whole clergy of the island assisting" to the top of the hill on which it was built. The faithful carried "the Host under a canopy of state, and [sung] hymns and anthems and other rites of their religion."[10]

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[8] Ibid, 57-59.
[9] Before the reclamation of the "great breach," the northwestern edge of Mazagaon ended in a small bay (occasionally referred to as a creek) where the Company's smaller vessels could be kept in monsoons, and larger vessels were taken aground for cleaning and repairs (before the building of the drydocks).
[10] *Bombay in the Days of Queen Anne…*, ed. Samuel T Sheppard (London: Hakluyt Society, 1933), 53-55.

In addition to these Mughal and Portuguese remnants were several important Hindu temples which were surely some of the oldest structures on the island. Outside of small village temples which were certainly there, though seldom described by European visitors, there was one temple complex which caught the attention of nearly every western visitor to Bombay: Walkeshwar, which commanded the very tip of Malabar Hill. Directly north of this point at the Hill's southwestern extremity began the "great breach," an estuarial ingress which stretched as far north as Worli and as far east as Mazagaon, "overflowing the land quite into the heart of the island, thought at low water it falls dry."[11] While most modern sources describe this temple complex as lying desecrated, "destroyed by the Portuguese" until Rāma Kāmath, a local Konkani businessman with Company connections, endowed its rebuilding in 1715, it was in consistent use in the 17th and 18th centuries.[12] Based on Burnell's descriptions, there appear to have been at least two separate *mandir*s in the early 18th century, one devoted to a Shivling and the other to a Shiv Nataraj *murti*. Burnell noted the "ruins of an ancient and once noble pagoda, now in a pile of rubbish, being blown up by the religious Portugals when they possessed the island," but insisted there was still quite an active worship community at the Walkeshwar complex. The Shivling mandir was described by Burnell as full of burning ghee *diyā*s, and "in the nature of a ceiling is a canopy of red cloth, in the center of which hangs down a rope of flowers." The Shivling itself Burnell described as "a black stone like a hatter's block, seated in another flat one, though of broader dimensions, with rims or a ledge round it, and a mouth to emit water. This, as well as the stone in the middle, was almost covered with flowers, and was the god they adored." He also observed the traditional smaller temple to Ganesh within the Shiv mandir, and the

[11] Ibid, 42.
[12] BL IOR/G/3/6, "Gerald Aungier in Bombay to East India Company in London," 15 December 1673, f.[3] 28.

requisite Nandi *murti* “before the door in the veranda.”[13] The Shiv Nataraj mandir is similarly described as a site of active worship, with “an altar full of flowers,” and an accompanying Bhagavati murti, presumably representing Parvati.[14]

These sites, then, made up the landscape the Company’s servants surveyed upon their arrival in Bombay in 1668. The town, primarily inhabited by local Hindus, Muslims, and eventually Parsis lay directly to the north of the Fort area, where the English were to make their home and factory at the port. It had few or no buildings made of materials more durable than wood; most were described by observers as “kajan’d,” or thatched. Outside of those easily moveable and repairable, climate-appropriate homes, then, were the port’s Portuguese stone house. Spread out across the higher points of land stretching away to the north were a few Portuguese-built homes, still inhabited at the time of the Company’s arrival by their Portuguese owners, as well as Catholic churches, Muslim *dargah*s, and Hindu *mandir*s. The landscape the Company’s servants surveyed showed little obvious improvement to English eyes. It became clear to Gerald Aungier and his fellow administrators that a major project of building needed to be undertaken if Bombay was to fulfill its potential as a commercial factory.

As we have already seen, most of Aungier’s ambitious planning was focused on “the encouragement of trade,” but as he frequently reminded his bosses in London, he took “care…for the encouragement of piety.”[15] The grandson of an early 17th century Archbishop of Dublin, he was a religious man raised in the Church of Ireland in the 1640s and 1650s. Contrary to the increasing division of the Protestant communion in England in the Jacobean period, the Church

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[13] *Bombay in the Days of Queen Anne…,* ed. Samuel T Sheppard (London: Hakluyt Society, 1933), 45.
[14] Ibid.
[15] BL IOR/E/3/33, “Gerald Aungier and Council to the East India Company in London,” 12 July 1672, f.62.

of Ireland pursued a policy of broad comprehension before 1641. Much like the Bombay Aungier found himself in as an adult, the Ireland of his childhood contained a small number of Anglicans, a tiny number of other Protestants, and a vast majority of Roman Catholics. As such, the long-term policy of the state church was to welcome all comers, serving as a haven for nonconformity.[16] Aungier himself professed a commitment to a broad, low church belief in one of his earliest letters to London as Governor in November of 1669. Showing an inclination to anti-Arminian nonconformity, he complained that the Court of Directors in London knew "that the principles of religion owned and practiced by your servants in Surat and Bombay differ much" from those of two new ministers, James Sterling and James Hutchinson. Indicating that he did not view holding different principles of religion mutually exclusive with being an Anglican, Aungier wrote that the difference was at least "not in fundamentals but in outward ceremony only." Regardless, he "heartily wish[ed] for the…comfort of your servants, you had pleased to send out men of great latitude, for we find it hard to persuade our people from the opinion they have taken up." Aungier wrote that "you yourselves herein contradict your own order in offering a force upon our consciences, to wit, that we must have these ministers, or none."[17]

In calling for "men of great latitude," Aungier was explicitly tying himself to a movement in the post-Restoration Church of England. Taking its name from Simon Patrick's 1662 pamphlet *A Brief Account of the New Sect of Latitude-men, Together with Some Reflections on the New Philosophy*, "latitudinarianism," as it came to be known, was a set of practices affiliated to a certain kind of Anglican clergyman. These practices included a commitment to

[16] Alan Ford, "The Church of Ireland, 1558-1634: A Puritan Church?" in *As by Law Established: The Church of Ireland Since the Reformation*, ed. Alan Ford, James McGuire, and Kenneth Milne (Dublin: The Liliput Press, 1995), 52-68.
[17] BL IOR/E/3/30, "Gerald Aungier and Council in Surat to East India Company in London," 27 November 1669 f.258.

broad churchmanship, a friendliness toward relaxing doctrinal and liturgical rules if doing so would broaden comprehension, a belief in moderation (as Patrick called it, "virtuous mediocrity"), an emphasis on moral and practical theology, and an interest in the "new science" being developed at the University of Cambridge.[18] Gerald Aungier, though not a clergyman, held each of these commitments, and sought to advance them while Governor and President in Surat and Bombay.

Aungier's commitment to broad churchmanship and doing away with "indifferent" differences in liturgy and doctrine can be seen in his 1669 letter complaining about the arrival of two high church clergymen. Like John Locke in his 1667 "Essay Concerning Toleration," Aungier believed "toleration conduces no otherwise to the settlement of a government than as it makes the majority of one mind, and encourages virtue in all, which is done by making and executing strict laws concerning virtue and vice, [and] by making the terms of communion as large as may be…which is latitudism."[19] As Locke affirmed that "latitudism" would settle a government by promoting unity through a broad comprehension and "strict laws concerning virtue and vice," so too did Aungier see a large and united English congregation as a tool for creating "good government," a key quality for 17th and 18th century English/British imperial sites. As he wrote to London, Aungier believed "nothing hath proved more fatal to commonwealths than confusion in matters of religion." As such, it was in the Company's interest

[18] S.P. [Simon Patrick], *A Brief Account of the New Sect of Latitude-men, Together with Some Reflections on the New Philosophy* (London: 1662), 7; Richard Kroll, "Introduction," in *Philosophy, Science, and Religion in England 1640-1700*, ed. Richard Kroll, Richard Ashcraft, Perez Zagorin (New York: Cambridge Unviersity Press, 1992), 1; Brent S. Sirota, *The Christian Monitors: The Church of England and the Age of Benevolence, 1680-1730* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2014), 20.
[19] John Locke, "An Essay Concerning Toleration," in *John Locke: A Letter Concerning Toleration and Other Writings*, ed. Mark Goldie (Indianapolis, IN: Liberty Fund, 2010), 132.

to "take off all occasion of offense of this nature, for the unity is the soul of all great actions without which they fall and consume like a body oppressed with ill humors." Aungier explained that most English people in Surat and Bombay did not conform to the high church Arminianism professed by the new clergy James Sterling and James Hutchison, though he believed their differences were "in outward ceremony only." Emphasizing his belief that liturgical and doctrinal quibbles should prove no bar to a united congregation, Aungier wrote that if Sterling and Hutchison were not "absolutely and indispensably wedded to their own persuasions," Aungier and his colleagues would "endeavor to embrace them with the arms of brotherly love under such qualifications as may unite us as possible under one body, one Christian congregation."[20]

Nor was Aungier misrepresenting the beliefs of his fellow Company servants in any way. An analysis of the library at Surat reveals 165 volumes, including multiples of some texts.[21] Of these, at least 111 were religious texts. Only one was straightforwardly Arminian (a donated copy of Charles I's *Eikon Basilike*). Many were texts associated with "puritan" strains of the early 17th century Church of England, such as Jeremy Taylor's *The Great Exemplar* (1649), the works of William Pemble (1635), Calvin's *Institutes*, and John Downham's *Christian Warfare* (multiple editions, 1604-1618). There was a copy of some of the early writings of the moderate Presbyterian Richard Baxter (unknown edition), and even *Scripture Light the Most Sure Light* (1656) by William Bridge, the Independent minister.[22] The reading habits of the Company's servants reflect an educated, and nonconforming, group.

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[20] BL IOR/E/3/30, "Gerald Aungier and Council to East India Company in London," 27 November 1669, f.258.
[21] Unfortunately, the survey only accounted for bound books; we do not have a record of what pamphlets and newsletters were circulating.
[22] BL IOR/E/3/34, "List of Books in the Library of the Surat Factory," 31 July 1673, f.86.

Regardless, Aungier and his colleagues reiterated their commitment to finding liturgical common ground. At the same time, they argued the negative of Locke's argument as well as the positive. Aungier wrote that sending out high churchmen, rather than "men of great latitude," was dangerous, no matter how godly the new individual clergy were. "Disagreements" among the English would "render us obnoxious" to scandal "from the Romanists, but [also] all others our neighbors." While the India administrators apologized repeatedly for their "freedom" in expressing their displeasure about the Company's choice of clergymen they nevertheless affirmed that it was their "greatest aim and essentially consisting with [the Company's] good to maintain order, love, and unity amongst us all." Keeping their communion as broad as possible was key to "preserving peace and honor among us," as well as "taking off all occasion of scandal and censure."[23] Complaining of the position of the clergymen was not born out of a desire to "make any uncharitable reflection on the prudence or moderation of these two gentlemen," Aungier explained. "But…out of zeal to unity and order, to two main pillars of your government."[24]

Aungier believed such a commitment to unity among the English population was particularly important in Bombay, an imperial site where he saw a small and unruly English Protestant group which needed to govern a large population of many kinds of people—not only Catholics, Hindus, Muslims, Armenian Orthodox Christians, Jews, and Parsis, but also a multitude of castes and ethnic groups which sometimes cut across confessional divisions. Unity and order, brought about through a broad communion, was all the more necessary because many of the English resident at Bombay were "seamen and soldiers." Aungier often described them as

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[23] BL IOR/E/3/34, "List of Books in the Library of the Surat Factory," 31 July 1673, f.86.
[24] Ibid, "Gerald Aungier and Council to East India Company in London," 23 January 1670, f.344f.

"the meaner sort" of people.[25] His "first work" upon arriving in Bombay, "after having ordered a public fast and humiliation for God's blessing," was to issue out orders "for a more strict observation of the Lord's day throughout the whole island, and care taken for the encouragement of piety, and the discountenancing and punishing the exorbitant vices of our people."[26] In a town of 4,000 Christians, there were "very few in so much that their number is even despicable" English Protestants. Among this "very few" there were enough "disorders in religion, breaches of the holy Sabbath, profaneness and swearing, drunkenness, and other licentiousness" that the "offenders wherein [were] cited and warned in every session" of the Courts of Judicature.[27] Indeed, Aungier wrote that "the vicious and most scandalous lives of those who call themselves Christians, as well Protestants as Romanists, hath cast an odium and dislike of our sacred profession" in India. "To the shame of many Christians in India," he continued, "be it declared that Mohammedans and Gentoos live more strict and virtuous in their conversation than they. We must first reform ourselves before we hope to convert others."[28]

Despite the challenge, Aungier was not overly discouraged by the serious need to build unity, order, and good government from the ground up. He was proud of the fact that Bombay, which he often called "your hopeful island," was "an infant, and must be cherished."[29] However, he was also painfully aware that it was "an almshouse…where through the diseases reigning many poor men, widows, and orphans call out for our charitable assistance;" it was "an embryo

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[25] BL IOR/G/3/6, "Gerald Aungier and Council in Bombay to East India Company in London," 15 December 1673, f.12.
[26] BL IOR/E/3/33, "Gerald Aungier and Council to East India Company in London," 12 July 1672, f.62.
[27] BL IOR/G/3/6, "Gerald Aungier to East India Company in London," 15 December 1673, f.26, 36.
[28] Ibid, f.12.
[29] BL IOR G/3/6, "Gerald Aungier and Council to East India Company in London," 21 December 1672, f.24, 18.

without form, without life, starved in the womb for want of nourishment, neglected, despised, discouraged by her hard neighbors the Moors, and Portuguese."[30] Crafting a paragon of good government was therefore not only necessitated by fears of English scandal and disorder. "The natives of this island, having been long accustomed to the Portuguese manner of government, have as yet an inclination thereto," Aungier wrote, even with its "far more uneasy, arbitrary, and tyrannical" nature in comparison to the English.[31] He wrote, "the reason seems to be a long obdurate custom, which as in beast so in the lower sort of men, renders even the heaviest yoke light, and the most unreasonable laws or most unjustifiable ceremonies of religion, policy, or civil conversation, beloved and most tenaciously observed." Aungier often found trying to "win the people over" to a "thorough embracing of English laws and rights" tiresome. It was difficult to keep "so many nations quiet," when each "zealously prosecuteth their own interest and privilege, emulous and discontented if they do not enjoy all alike." At the same time, Aungier admitted that he took "some pleasure also thereby," puzzling out "a way to render even their emulations, one against another, advantageous to [the Company], causing them to contend who should express their fidelity and service unto you most zealously."[32]

However, Aungier and his fellow Council members harbored concern they would struggle to stand up against the influences of South Asian and Portuguese polities in Bombay. "There are some so base that no exhortation, no reproof, no punishment how onerous soever will reclaim them" among the English at Bombay, the Council wrote. Despite being "very severe with them by fines, imprisonments, and corporal punishments," Aungier noted that "nothing will

[30] Ibid, f.26.
[31] BL IOR G/3/6, "Gerald Aungier and Council to East India Company in London," 21 December 1672, f.26, 24.
[32] Ibid, f.39.

do," and "our severity in these cases hath caused many of your English…to leave the island to serve the Portuguese and Moors, where they live at greater liberty." This loss of population to the other, less virtuous surrounding polities caused the Council to fear "lest they should turn Romanists or Moors."[33] Aungier also discussed the influence of Catholics on the English in his "Proposals" for Bombay. "Many of the English and others Protestant soldiers sent out do marry with Portuguese mestise women, natives of the island who are Roman Catholics," he argued. "The children of the said Protestants are through their fathers' neglect brought up in the Roman Catholic principles." Some blame could be laid at the feet of neglectful fathers, but some also lay with zealous Fathers: "the *padre*s…endeavor to baptize the said children and any way attempt to inveigle them away from the Protestant faith."[34]

The Portuguese influence wasn't confined to the education and catechism of children. With the small cadre of qualified native Englishmen living in western India in the 1670s, the local Company administrators were forced to rely on Portuguese-speaking Catholic residents of Bombay to make the city work according to their plans. Aungier stated that "we have been forced to serve ourselves of the native Portuguese for Justices, Constables, and other public offices, especially in the lower Court of Judicature."[35] Under the prevailing system of hiring "native Portuguese," Aungier wrote "the proceedings of the said Courts, as also of upper courts, have been hitherto on necessity done in the Portuguese language." Aungier and his colleagues were functionally dependent on support from Portuguese-speaking Catholics. This was particularly challenging when the Company's employees conflicted with local *fidalgo*s; Aungier wrote that they threatened "those your servants (whom we are forced to employ…of the Roman

[33] BL IOR/G/3/6, "Gerald Aungier to East India Company in London," 15 December 1673, f.12.
[34] BL IOR/E/3/32, "Proposals Touching the Island Bombay," January 1672, f. .147f.
[35] Ibid, f.148f.

Catholic principle) with severe spiritual censure, with excommunication, pronouncing them damned for serving heretics, and suchlike illegal pernicious arts."[36]

Aungier and his colleagues also went out of their way to maintain good relations with non-English residents, as with their promise of freedom of religion, "being one of the chief motives which invites strangers to settle on your island."[37] This freedom of religion was far from a freedom to conform of the sort often ascribed to latitudinarians in England.[38] Outside of the freedom granted to Hindus and Muslims to worship at their extant *dargah*s and *mandir*s on Bombay, and the toleration of the Catholic churches on the island, Aungier granted the request of the local Parsi community to build what remains their Tower of Silence at Malabar Hill.[39] He also exempted Armenian "members of the Eastern Church" from a sumptuary law/plan to encourage "greater consumption of our own native manufactures" by which he required Christians in Bombay to wear English fabrics.[40]

To emphasize the connection between the Company employees' good government, moderation of behavior, and comprehension with the church, Aungier preferred to ascribe social unrest in Bombay to disaffected individual Englishmen, rather than non-English populations. For example, in March of 1670, Aungier took depositions about the behavior of Captain Henry Young, at that time the Deputy Governor of Bombay. Young, Aungier wrote, gave the

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[36] BL IOR/E/3/32, "Gerald Aungier and Council to East India Company in London," 1 June 1671, f.14f.
[37] BL IOR/G/3/6, "Gerald Aungier to East India Company in London," 15 December 1673, f.12.
[38] See, for example Richard Ashcraft, "Latitudinarianism and Toleration: Historical Myth versus Political History" in *Philosophy, Science, and Religion in England, 1640-1700*, ed. Richard Kroll, Richard Ashcraft, and Perez Zagorin (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1992).
[39] BL IOR G/3/6, "Gerald Aungier to East India Company in London," 15 December 1673, f.28. Parsi Towers of Silence are analogous to the "burying ground" Aungier describes them as, though they were often disallowed by other local polities because of Parsi practices surrounding the dead.
[40] BL IOR E/3/32, "Proposals Touching the Island Bombay," January 1672, f.147f.

administration "great trouble" through his "imprudence and inconsiderate rashness" when he went through Bombay "exasperating the soldiers and natives, especially the Romanists, against your Governor and Council…endeavoring to raise parties and discontents among the English soldiery whom (as witnesses affirm), he told they should now be slaves to tyrants, for such he called Gerald Aungier." Young addressed the Portuguese "*povo* [people] of the island. He suggested they were not safe neither to religion, nor estates under your government."[41] Young's actions roused a crowd of Indo-Portuguese residents who came "in a tumultuous manner to protest against Gerald Aungier and his council in His Majesty's name…they were set on by the *padre*s who being also called before [the council] did confess [they] were encouraged thereto by Captain Young." Aungier finished with the statement: "it nearly concerns you to secure your government, which will never be safe if any person in such authority or his family have relation to the Romish religion."[42]

But why exactly did Aungier believe moderation, order, and unity, as the basis of good government, required a church? In this, he was once again in communion with the writings of Anglican clergymen often described as latitudinarian, who were focused on the role of the church and the clergy in bringing reasoned argument, and practical theology to the flock. Many of the latitudinarian divines who emerged in the 1660s were veterans of the Interregnum and its demands on Anglicans.[43] Many were students of the Cambridge Neo-Platonists, considered the originators of the "new philosophy" of experimental science discussed by Simon Patrick in his

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[41] IOR E/3/31, "Gerald Aungier and Council to East India Company in London," 30 March 1670, f.4.
[42] Ibid.
[43] W.M. Spellman, *The Latitudinarians and the Church of England, 1660-1700* (Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press, 1993), 13; John Spurr, *The Restoration Church of England, 1646-1689* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1991), Chapter 1: "The Church of England and Anglicanism, 1646-1660."

pamphlet.[44] Latitudinarians, in borrowing experimental science's emphasis on rationality, sought to represent the case for good works and personal reform intrinsic to Reformation Anglicanism as clear, reasonable, and forthright. Eventual latitudinarian Archbishop of Canterbury John Tillotson preached on Saint Paul's desire to teach "what men might understand, and what they ought to believe and practice, in a plain, unaffected, and convincing manner."[45] Edward Stillingfleet specifically advocated using clear and simple arguments to enjoin "stupid and senseless people" to greater piety.[46]

Such exhortations by latitudinarians rhyme with Aungier's style of writing and discourse. For example, when discussing the "inclination" of the local residents towards "the Portuguese manner of government," Aungier wrote he undertook "a work of much caution, much patience…he is forced to overlook many things, pardon many faults, pass by many neglects, forgive many fines, till that by degrees he hath brought them a right understanding, and convinced them by demonstrable experience of the equity, justice, moderation, and

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[44] The historiographic literature on rational theology, latitudinarianism, and the new philosophy is long and storied. See R.F. Jones, *Ancients and Moderns: A Study in the Rise of the Scientific Movement in Seventeenth Century England* (St. Louis: Washington University Studies, 1961); Charles Webster, *The Great Instauration: Science, Medicine, and Reform 1626-1660* (New York: Holmes and Meier, 1975); Barbara Shapiro, "Latitudinarianism and Science in Seventeenth-Century England," *Past and Present* 40 (1968); James R. Jacob and Margaret C. Jacob, "The Anglican Origins of Modern Science: The Metaphysical Foundations of the Whig Constitution, *Isis* 71 (1980): 251-267; Steven Shapin and Simon Schaffer, *Leviathan and the Air Pump: Hobbes, Boyle, and the Experimental Life* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1985); Richard Ashcraft, *Revolutionary Politics and Locke's "Two Treatises of Government,"* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1986); SJ Gerard Reedy, *The Bible and Reason: Anglicans and Scripture in Late Seventeenth Century England* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1985).

[45] John Tillotson, "The Necessity of Repentance and Faith," in *Works*, vol. 7 (Edinburgh: 1759), 254.

[46] Edward Stillingfleet, "Bishop of Worcester's Charge to the Clergy of His Diocese," in *Works*, vol. 3 (London: 1707-1710), 627.

reasonableness of our government."[47] Aungier even undertook scientific experimentation himself while President. He wrote that while "assisting of the new works without the tank," he had "discovered some stones which appear to him to be a mineral quarry, and having immediately made an experiment thereof by fire, found it to be a very good iron."[48] Two later clergy (the previous High Church men having died), John France and Robert Lloyd, brought a similar sense to bear on the reasons for building a church at Bombay. They wrote that under Gerald Aungier, "the omnipotent founder of all Kingdoms, Commonwealths and Societies, hath promised his blessing and assistance…of that great reformation which is so well begun, and vigorously carried on by the signal example, and daily encouragement of piety, virtue, and industry which our Honorable Governor at all times in most eminent manner exhibits unto all, and the generality of your Honors' servants endeavor to imitate."[49]

Thus, in keeping with the beliefs of latitudinarian churchmen and their sympathizers in the 1660s from Simon Patrick to John Locke, Aungier traced a clear connection between a widely comprehending low church congregation and the promotion of unity, order, and good government in a heterogenous East India Company settlement. Unlike the perspective advanced by some scholars, this tolerant and comprehending policy was not a particular, grudging, "unhappy endurance" of peoples of numerous faiths.[50] It was a politically imbued commitment

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[47] BL IOR/G/3/6, "Gerald Aungier to East India Company in London," 21 December 1672, f.39
[48] Ibid, "Gerald Aungier to East India Company in London," 6 January 1673, f.59.
[49] IOR/E/3/34, "John France and Robert Lloyd to East India Company in London," 14 January 1674, f.337.
[50] Haig Z. Smith, *Religion and Governance in England's Emerging Colonial Empire, 1601-1698* (Cham, Switzerland: Palgrave Macmillan, 2022), 207; Glenn J. Ames, "The Role of Religion in the Transfer and Rise of Bombay, c.1661-1687," *The Historical Journal* 46, no. 2 (2003): 317-340; Philip J. Stern, *The Company-State: Corporate Sovereignty and the Early Modern Foundations of the British Empire in India* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), Chapter 5: "'The Most Sure and Profitable Sort of Merchandise:' Protestantism and Piety, 100-120;

on the part of local administrators, even when it brought them in conflict with their supervisors in London. The assertion is borne out by Aungier's discussion of building a church, which he first raised in 1672. Perceiving that the Court of Directors were unhappy with his belief in spending money to make money, Aungier proposed from the beginning to fund the church privately. He wanted a public church because he believed, as did many low churchmen, that the rational, practical theology and moralism that circumscribed the teachings of the Church of England were key tools for creating and reinforcing the moderate, disciplined, and fundamentally tolerant agents of administration which he believed were necessary to Bombay's government.

Yet Aungier recognized that neither his beliefs about toleration and comprehension nor his beliefs about how to grow Bombay were universally shared by his contemporaries. While he had many low church allies on the London Court of Directors, he was certainly aware that for every Maurice Thompson or John Jolliffe there was a conservative, High Church Benjamin Bathurst, Josiah Child, or George, Lord Berkeley. He was aware of (and unhappy about) the kinds of people the Company regularly sent to Bombay from England. So while he may have been happy with a "donation" from the Company to fund his church, he didn't want to wait to get the political will together to facilitate such a donation. Therefore, Aungier wrote to London in 1672 that he "designs by God's assistance…that a small church shall be erected for our public religious worship." However, "[the Company] will not be put to charge, for the church will be raised at the expense of your President and other well disposed of your servants, as an offering to God for his blessing on our labors for you." While Aungier was confident of his abilities to "lay out the ground and provide materials," he wanted "approbation" from London before breaking

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Aparna Balachandran, "Of Corporations and Caste Heads: Urban Rule in Company Madras, 1640-1720," *Journal of Colonialism and Colonial History* 9, no. 2 (2008).

ground.[51] He reiterated his plans for a church about eighteen months later, when he wrote of "four wants which the island sustains," including "a church or chapel for divine service."[52]

Interlude: Austerity, Authority, and the Changing Meaning of "Good Government"

Aungier, who died in 1677, left in his will 5,000 rupees dedicated to the construction of the church in Bombay.[53] Thomas Rolt, his immediate successor, first raised the issue in a letter to London in early 1678. Rolt suggested that "that necessary and pious work of building a church which hath been so long designed and hitherto only talked of," was put off "for want of a due and fit example." If only some cash were meaningfully delivered in towards the cause, it would encourage "others warily disposed thereto." Rolt and his council suggested ordering "the issuing out of your cash for a beginning, and moiety of your generous allowance towards the religious work which we question not but will have a happy influence upon your servants that it may be finished in a short time."[54] For the first time, the idea of the building the church was now predicated on the Company releasing cash.

It was expected that this infusion of cash from the Company would be returned in a payment from Aungier's estate. However, there were significant difficulties in releasing the promised funds. Aungier's brother, the Earl of Longford, actively attempted to recover Gerald's wealth, and the Company in London could do little more than order the estate to be frozen until Aungier's papers and will could be delivered to London for authentication and perusal at the

[51] BL IOR/E/3/33, "Gerald Aungier and Council to East India Company in London," 22 October 1672, f.58f.
[52] BL IOR/E/3/34, "Gerald Aungier to East India Company in London," 15 January 1674, f.340.

[53] BL IOR/E/3/38, "Charles James and Council at Surat to East India Company in London," 31 August-31 October 1677, f.27; "Thomas Rolt at Suvali to East India Company in London," 18 Mar 1678, f.180f.
[54] Ibid, "Thomas Rolt at Suvali to East India Company in London," 18 Mar 1678, f.180f.

Earl's behest. Rolt initially sent, in April 1679, a packet of reports answering enumerated questions Longford had posed.[55] However, by a response received in the end-of-year shipping from England, it became clear that Longford was not disposed to honor his brother's pious bequest. "We are sorry nothing will be allowed of the 5,000 rupees left by President Aungier towards the building," Rolt wrote. At least the Company had decided to account the 4,000 rupees Rolt had spent of the Company's cash on the building project already as a gift. "We observed so long in expectation that the particular benevolence should have raised it to the condition you have expressed," Rolt explained, "that had we not timely issued out your part for encouragement, a pice would not have been contributed, nor the least particular begun towards it." And now, "by paying in your part, [we] hath brought in diverse subscriptions, so that it is now raised to a good forwardness."[56]

The correspondence between Thomas Rolt and the Court of Directors in January of 1680 would be the last substantive discussion of the church project for some time; the "good forwardness" Rolt wrote of must be taken to be the completion of the walls discussed by writers like John Burnell in the 1710s. As we have seen, the 1680s and 1690s were a tumultuous time for the EIC and in Bombay. Resources and energies were diverted in other directions; politically, the Company became increasingly Tory-affiliated. Why, then, did it halt investment in building an Anglican church at a time when rescuing the church-in-danger was one of the Tories' most important political goals?

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[55] BL IOR/E/3/40, "Thomas Rolt and Council at Surat to East India Company in London," 5 Apr 1679, f.13.

[56] BL IOR/E/3/40, "Thomas Rolt and Council in Suvali to East India Company in London," 24 Jan 1680, f.221. A *paisā*, or "pice," generally refers to the smallest unit of coinage under an Indian currency system.

Aungier and his colleagues pursued the church project for multiple, deeply convicted reasons. As his policies and proposals for Bombay demonstrate, he was committed to toleration outside the church and broad communion within the Church of England congregation he was building. He was deeply devout, and his specific form of latitudinarianism led him to see a broad, low church as the right tool for improving the good government of Bombay as a diverse and religiously tolerant site of Company activity. As a welcoming Anglican communion which would incorporate all English residents of Bombay, the church as envisioned by Aungier would draw in a variety of laborers and residents from England and elsewhere in Protestant Europe while maintaining and policing their roles as leaders of a cosmopolitan, growing port city.

In contrast, the perspective advanced by Aungier's later successor in the Governorship, John Child (his former subordinate), saw the church as an unnecessary, useless luxury. In contrast to scholars who have located a kind of ecumenism in John Child's mentor, Josiah Child's, plans for the East India Company, I view the role of religion in the Childs' philosophy of Bombay's administration very differently. The perception of Josiah Child as a religiously tolerant Hollandophile comes from a line in his 1665 version of *A Discourse on Trade* that overseas possessions ought to be "an Amsterdam of Liberty."[57] However, this interpretation of Child's view is predicated on the assumption that the Company needed to assert its authority and sovereignty in new territorial possessions, which was never true in Bombay. The Company was not sovereign there but acting as the lessee of the English crown's land, and their attempts to establish forms of local sovereignty were regularly contested, as we have seen. Their authority was contingent on their contribution to the growth and development of the site for all its

[57] Josiah Child, *A New Discourse on Trade* (London: 1693 [1667]), 152.

residents. Local merchants and laborers had other sites where their capital, skills, and work would be well compensated, notably cities in Gujarat before 1707.

As such, the underpinning motivation for Child as the advocate of a Dutch pluralist model dissipates. While it's true that this model would presuppose Child was uninterested in continuing the church, it presupposes that because it assumes that the Company is abandoning religious concerns in order to police and govern local, immovable religious groups.[58] In Bombay, where the Company governed very little territory but governed it, in their view, by a clear and defensible lease agreement in service of the crown, there was no reason to worry about policing undesirable resident groups that the Company couldn't remove.

More important than any latent Hollandophilia in Child's theory of governance in the 1660s is the extent to which his views had changed by the 1680s, when he gained control over Bombay through his governor and follower John Child. As we saw, by the 1680s, Josiah Child had thrown his lot in with King James II and adopted a form of political economy which saw wealth as finite and wealth production as zero-sum. Because Child was so intimately connected with James, it was not in the interest of the East India Company to be seen promoting the church of James' enemies, the Anglicans, in Bombay, which was still a crown colony, even if one leased to the Company. James himself owned 10,000 pounds of EIC stock. One writer even accused Child and his EIC of "setting up popery and tyranny."[59] Furthermore, because the Childs only saw themselves in Bombay for the reason of extracting as much wealth as possible, they did not see it as in the Company's interest to develop the infrastructure of Bombay—hence John Child's

[58] Cf. Haig Z Smith, *Religion and Governance in England's Emerging Colonial Empire, 1601-1698* (Cham, Switzerland: Palgrave Macmillan, 2022), 207-210.
[59] Unattributed; quoted in Steve Pincus, *1688: The First Modern Revolution* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009), 373.

derisive nickname, "Mr Save-Charges." The Childs fundamentally believed in the power of monopoly, as we have seen. One element of that belief was their sense that they were, ultimately, representatives of the Crown of England, as the Crown not only leased the site of Bombay to the Company, but also conferred the Company's trading rights through its royal charter. As such, there was no need to cultivate a rational, orderly, and united good government in the Company's factories and among their "meaner sort" of employees. Rather, it was the duty of the Company's subordinate servants to unquestioningly obey the authority which rested in Child.

Child's beliefs proved a challenge to enact in practice. John Child was just as (arguably far more) plagued with disunity, disorder, and bad governance as Aungier ever had been. The most obvious case of such disunity and disorder over different opinions of good government lay in the events of Keigwin's Rebellion, which, as we have seen, was framed explicitly by the rebels as a dispute about the nature of the governance of Bombay. However, for all that John Child was willing to distribute "books for the better instruction of [inhabitants] in the grounds of the Christian religion," and be that the Company would "be pleased to order us a large bible and a common prayer book for the use of the fort," he wasn't willing to concede that a state-sponsored church was a worthwhile investment for a passel of merchants trading for the advance of their masters' interests in a foreign land.[60] Rather, he and his colleagues wrote during Keigwin's revolt that they did "now think it high time to lay down the evil consequence that may attend the base and unparalleled actings" of "naughty men so notoriously contemptible to His Majesty and the Honorable Company's authority" who "like unfaithful servants broke their oaths

[60] BL IOR/E/3/40 f.222 and 289f, "Thomas Rolt and Council at Suvali to East India Company in London," 24 Jan 1680; "John Child at Bombay to East India Company in London, 1 January 1681."

in betraying the Honorable Company." They accused their local Keigwin-led English opponents of declaring to "renounce [their] religion and turn Moor before [they] would be given up into the President's hands."

But Child's plan to redress such rejections of Company authority and declarations of loose morals was not to use the moderating power of the church to reason with his opponents through theology and community. Nor did he believe a church could be used to indoctrinate them through sermons proclaiming the might and right of the royal prerogative, as many men of similar persuasion suggested in England in the 1680s. Rather, John Child turned again and again to an arena of unimpeachable hierarchical authority: seizing on such opponents as "interlopers" and "making them public examples."[61] In the era before the settling of Sandys' case, such a decision relied wholly on the power of the crown to issue charters and assert Company monopolies. As such, Child was on much safer absolutist ground in prosecuting his disordered opponents as interlopers than in winning them over with the persuasive, unifying church of Aungier.[62]

As we have seen, Child's experience in Keigwin's rebellion failed to sway his perspective on enforcing conformity to the will of the Company through authority and prerogative rather than persuasion and unifying rhetoric. His decision to plunge straight head first into the Anglo-Mughal War not two years later showed his recommitment to the importance of absolutist empire through the East India Company in India, as well as his unshakeable adherence to Josiah Child's unchanged view of political economy. The persuasive, unifying,

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[61] Close readers will recognize Child's assessment of disgruntled former EIC servants John Petit and George Bowcher in the leadup to Keigwin's rebellion, discussed in Chapter 2, in these citations. BL IOR/E/3/43, f. 5, 5f, "Consultation Held at Surat 4 Apr 1683."
[62] See Steve Pincus, *1688: The First Modern Revolution* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009), 376-377.

community church had no place in the Company Bombay of the 1680s. Hence, Child officially halted the project, writing to London in 1685 that "we shall not go about [the church] til we see ourselves in a condition to go through with it."[63]

Completing: The Reemergence of Material Investment in Promotion of "Good Government"

The reemergence of the church's importance in the 1710s reflected the reemergence of "good character" and "integrity" as the prerequisites of imperial good government in Bombay.[64] Both Governor Charles Boone and his clergyman, Richard Cobbe, viewed the church project as central to the establishment of Bombay as a viable, long-term site of English imperial activity, just as Gerald Aungier had. However, for Boone and Cobbe, the backlash to the conservative religious and political economic policies of James II—and by extension, Josiah and John Child—had produced the Glorious Revolution, and a radically different context for the Church of England and its role in the lives of English people abroad.

Boone and Cobbe agreed with Aungier about the church's role as a form of necessary civic infrastructure for teaching and policing the morals and good government of English residents, but the politics of religion for Company servants were rapidly changing. The relationship between politics and religion in 1710s Britain was still framed as a low church-high church debate, much as it was during Aungier's time. But these identities had been subsumed more than ever by the broad political platforms of the parties they were associated with—the Whigs and the Tories, respectively.[65] As the independent East Indies merchant John Scattergood

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[63] BL IOR/E/3/45, f.31, "John Child and Council to East India Company in London," April 1685.
[64] See BL IOR/B/53, Minutes of the Court of Directors, 16 March 1715, f.298.
[65] See H.T. Dickinson, *Walpole and the Whig Supremacy* (Aylesbury, UK: The English Universities Press, 1973), Geoffrey Holmes, *British Politics in the Age of Anne* (London: Hambledon Press, 1987); J.H. Plumb, *The Growth of Political Stability in England, 1675-1725* (Atlantic Highlands, NJ: Humanities Press, 1967); Nicholas Rogers, *Whigs and Cities: Popular Politics in the Age of Walpole and Pitt* (Oxford, UK: Clarendon Press, 1989)

put it in a letter to his business partner in November 1714, "for Europe, I know very little…only we have High Church and Low Church among us as last year."[66] At the same time, the Hanoverian monarchy in Britain was brand-new. Fears of Jacobite uprisings against the Hanoverians in favor of the Catholic heirs of James II were rampant in the public sphere, and encouraged by the government.[67] For that reason, the letter's mention of High and Low Church factions concludes with the notion that "now both parties believe the Pretender will come in, and Captain Duglass makes no doubt of it. He says that [Robert] Harley [the Tory leader of the government until mid-1714] has gone so far that he must go further to secure his head."[68] In other words, the Harleian ministry had ginned up so much fear of a Catholic invasion that if one did not come, the ministry would fall.

Our letter-writer, John Scattergood, was a least a little prescient. The Harley ministry had in fact fallen by the time he penned his letter, though not as a direct result of any unrealized Jacobite threat. An uprising in Scotland in favor of the Pretender was less than a year away. As other scholars have convincingly argued, the popular politics of the "Jacobite threat" were explicitly tied to parties, and ultimately to the financial politics of Britain and the East India Company. Tories were increasingly being painted as crypto-Jacobites. The ubiquitous Walpolean Whig-funded anti-Tory, anti-Jacobite sentiments dominating the public sphere between 1714 and

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[66] BL Mss Eur C387, "John Scattergood in Canton to William Phipps," 6 November 1714, f. 1/397.

[67] For a discussion of the relationship between fearmongering about Jacobitism and contemporary joint-stock company politics, see Abigail L. Swingen, "The Bubble and the Bail-out: The South Sea Company, Jacobitism, and Public Credit in Early Hanoverian Britain," in *Boom, Bust and Beyond: New Perspectives on the 1720s Stock Market Bubble* (Boston: De Gruyter Oldenbourg, 2019), 139-159; and Abigail L. Swingen, "Calico Madams and South Sea Cheats: Global Trade, Finance, and Popular Protest in Early Hanoverian England," *Journal of British Studies* 63, no. 1 (2024): 114-138.

[68] BL Mss Eur C387, "John Scattergood in Canton to William Phipps," 6 November 1714, f. 1/397.

1720 grew to encompass the danger Jacobitism posed to "public credit and the national debt."[69] Through a delicate process of substitution, this position within popular politics could and would be used to prop up the joint-stock companies, including the EIC, at all costs.[70] Over the course of Britain's post-1688 financial revolution, the public debt had become increasingly tied to the new institution of the stock market. Therefore, the Walpolean Whig position tied the financial health of the nation to the health of the joint-stock companies backing those new fiscal institutions, like the EIC. Any rejection of the interests of the companies was therefore seen as a rejection of the public good. Abigail Swingen has demonstrated how the popular Whig metaphor of the "sponge," which the crypto-Jacobite Tories would use to default on (or "wipe away") the public debt if they came to power, tied the Tory cause to the economic collapse of Britain, the undermining of the constitution, and the return of Catholic absolute monarchy.

I do not conduct this review of Company politics in the 1710s to make the claim that Bombay's administrators completed the Anglican church in 1718 out of a fear of Catholic Jacobite Tories running roughshod over Bombay and the Company's mercantile interests. Rather, as Swingen and Mark Knights have suggested, I bring it to bear here as a reminder that anxiety about the joint-stock companies, their health, and the levels of influence they had on governing in the metropole was a crucial aspect of British life in this period.[71] Financial

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[69] Abigail L. Swingen, "The Bubble and the Bail-out: The South Sea Company, Jacobitism, and Public Credit in Early Hanoverian Britain," in *Boom, Bust and Beyond: New Perspectives on the 1720s Stock Market Bubble* (Boston: De Gruyter Oldenbourg, 2019), 142.

[70] See also David Stasavage, "Partisan Politics and Public Debt: The Importance of the 'Whig Supremacy' for Britain's Financial Revolution," *European Review of Economic History* 11, no. 1 (2007): 123-153.

[71] Mark Knights, *Representation and Misrepresentation in Later Stuart Britain: Partisanship and Political Culture* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2005); Abigail L. Swingen, "The Bubble and the Bail-out: The South Sea Company, Jacobitism, and Public Credit in Early Hanoverian Britain," in *Boom, Bust and Beyond: New Perspectives on the 1720s Stock Market Bubble* (Boston: De Gruyter Oldenbourg, 2019), 146-147.

decisions, including those made by the EIC and its employees, were never apolitical for these historical actors.[72] As a result, when the Company's Court of Directors was inundated with sniping complaints from their employees in western India in 1714, accusations of financial and moral corruption may have hit too close to home. Perhaps that is part of why a vote of the Directors held to fire seven of their most senior administrators in Bombay and other factories based on corrupt dealings and poor job performance. Such a move was, as far as they knew, unprecedented in the annals of Company administrative history. The dismissed men included Bombay governor William Aislabie, second-in-council for Bombay Bernard Wyche, Bombay council members Douglas Burniston and John Courtney, former justice of the Bombay court William Phipps, and a fixture of EIC affairs on the Malabar Coast, Robert Adams. Suspicion also fell on Bombay council members Thomas Wiltshire and Stephen Strutt, though they were kept on for lack of evidence.

In addition to the roiling public sentiments about debt erasure, cover-ups, and secret cabals which flooded the London-based directors' field of vision, the accusations were found deserving of extraordinary recrimination because of the key role given the men under scrutiny. They had been entrusted with the reestablishment of Bombay's trade after the political and financial turmoil caused by the union of the "Old" and "New" East India Companies in 1708. As we have seen, the arrival of the "New" Company in western India in 1704, and the attempts to assign debts and assets to the legal entities of "New" and "Old" Companies in the wake of their merger in 1708, only exacerbated the Company's problems with the weakening Mughal

[72] The work of Bruce Carruthers has done much to demonstrate the relationship between metropolitan politics and the fiscal policy of the 18th century financial institutions. See *City of Capital: Politics and Markets in the English Financial Revolution* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1996).

Governorship of Surat. Men like Phipps, Aislabie, and Wyche had served the Company for many years before their appointments to positions of power, making them some of the few men to become governors and high-ranking members of council after working their way up from writers and factors. Their regional expertise and understanding of how the complicated merger of the Companies had gone down, along with the conflicts the merger had prompted, were meant to make them especially strong advocates of the Company's regeneration in western India. They already knew how seriously the interplay of metropolitan and local politics with newly powerful financial forces could affect the livelihoods of Company men.

Instead, these figures had dropped the ball, seeking personal enrichment at the expense of the Company's political and fiscal reputation. They had not replied with "any, or but slight answers to the Company's letters," not bought ordered goods, not organized their correspondence according to the Company-wide style, and not sent the notes of their meetings once per year as required by by-law. Registers of goods on the Company's ships were inaccurately written out, and ships were regularly sent back to England on "mean freight." Why, the Directors asked, would Bernard Wyche decide "not to clear himself of being concerned in the *Tankerville*'s mean freight?" And why did the Bombay council insist on "letting out ships to earn near their demurrage [time]," instead of keeping them "some time idle" and sent home on time, incurring large demurrage charges on charterparty which the Company in England was obliged to pay? Another ship had "brought up 500 ton of pepper" from the Malabar Coast in 1712, "of which only 258 tons" was registered to the Company. The other private interests who had loaded the remaining 242 tons of pepper on the ship had not left any record of paying freight charges, “though the council were told they were not fit to be continued in the service” if they did not charge freight and record freight charges on shipping private pepper purchases.[73]

The administration in Bombay was further accused by ships’ captains like Isaac Pyke of the *Stringer* of overcharging the Company for victuals and pocketing the difference, in a novel extension of the policy John Child and his council had been accused of using in the lead-up to Keigwin’s revolt. Cows “which could be bought at 11” xeraphins were charged to the Company at 22 xeraphins each for “shipping, recovery, and provisions, forcing the captains to pay the same for what they bought [from the Company] at 12, which were no better than usual.”[74] Pyke minced fewer words in his ship’s journal, writing that “if I should launch into their tricks, and speak of all I know of these people, I should fill up this book, and not tell all neither,” though he was “not used to India long enough to serve the devil for fear, and when the abuse is so very great it ought be made public, which is the reason of my putting it here.” Pyke “wished that no engrossers of stores and provisions were allowed” in Bombay, “nor no customs demanded for such goods as are not ‘buy and sell with freedom,’ which would prevent all these exactions.” After all, he noted that “the purser marine was first appointed for the assistance of shipping, to get such necessaries ready for them as should be needful, and to assist them in getting their salted provisions for their voyages.” But by 1713 the position had “become a great post,” and the council member who served in it got his subordinate, “and the moody and six or eight more” to “do the business, while he rambles about on men’s shoulders in his palanquin.” Pyke summed up the situation thusly: “this makes me call to mind one of Aesop’s stories, of a wise shepherd who

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[73] BL/IOR/D/94, “List of Memoranda from letter to Bombay of 27 March 1714,” f. 68.
[74] Ibid, f. 86; BL European Manuscripts (hereafter Mss Eur) D5, “Isaac Pyke’s Journal of the Voyage of the *Stringer,* continued,” ff. 58-59, in which he noted his ship’s owners were “cheated of 60 pounds, nine shillings, sixpence…and yet I ought not to complain of this usage because [the purser marine]’s a councilor and may resent it.”

had a dog [or wolf] to guard his sheep. But finding [the animal] worried them [the sheep], everybody knows what he did."[75]

Further complaints that precipitated the mass firing are best detailed in whistleblower letters from Bombay council members Stephen Strutt, John Hillar, and Thomas Moore, sent in 1713 and 1714. They detailed fiscal mismanagement as well as unhelpful factionalism on the Bombay council. Strutt complained in May 1713 that the "Company's affairs are in a manner wholly neglected" by Aislabie and his allies. "We transact business without consulting on it," Strutt explained, "and then it's easily guessed what management must ensue and whether people seek the Company's interest or their own more immediately." He finished up his letter noting "there [are] too many irregularities and abuses here for a letter to contain or a person who has much proper business otherwise to recollect."[76] Hillar, a relative of the Company's secretary Thomas Woolley, argued in his correspondence that Bombay's current administration's negotiations with Surati merchants would "not discover…and advance towards a more open or free traffic with Surat." With all the intriguing and conniving, he would "leave to time to explore the truth," especially since Strutt, Hillar, and Moore's attempt to speak up about Aislabie's financial policy "exposed us to several inconveniences and some contumelious usage."[77]

All three were signatories on a June 1713 letter further accusing Aislabie of being "resolved to break through all obstacles and to have a majority on the council" by packing it with

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[75] This is a version of the traditional story of the "wolf in sheep's clothing" sometimes found in editions of Aesop's *Fables*. The moral, of course, is that appearances can be deceiving.
[76] BL IOR/H/322/1, "Stephen Strutt at Bombay to Secretary Thomas Woolley in London," 8 May 1713, f.84, 85. It is important to note that the Bombay consultations and council minutes from 1713 are missing from the India Office Records, forcing historians to reconstruct the narrative of this time from alternative sources.
[77] Ibid, "John Hillar at Bombay to Secretary Thomas Woolley in London," 7 May 1713, ff. 88, 88f.

his loyal subordinates. Aislabie was reported to have asked "'must I always be contradicted?'" when Strutt, Hillar, and Moore voted against his proposal. The three asserted that they had been asked to sign on to inaccurate meeting minutes regarding the disagreement. They did "declare that what we wrote the Honorable Court of Directors concerning this affair was the real truth, and wherein the words of the consultation differs from that 'tis wrong." Furthermore, they were "really of opinion [Aislabie] does this purely with a design to quarrel with us, surely believing we would not sign." In fact, Aislabie "did declare in a public company in May last that never any general had been so opposed by his council as he had been, but he was resolved to make us repent it before he left the island."[78]

By the end of 1713, the whistleblowers were reporting financial misconduct on the part of Aislabie and his colleagues. Strutt accused Aislabie of using company funds to float the business of the Surat businessman Rustāmjī Manakjī. According to Strutt, Rustāmjī's invoices for labor and shipping had been paid out to the tune of two *lakh* rupees principal and some five and a half *lakh* rupees in interest. This was despite complaints from Strutt and others that several line items were fraudulent, "but it coming on the stage when we were obliged to be passive it was passed."[79] Hillar minced fewer words, writing that the self-serving dealing of Aislabie and his faction might be "one great reason why Bombay hath not a greater character." The "strange dealings" he had seen "sometimes make me think the world is turned topsy turvy." He wrote that London "may send the most gold directions (as I find they have a great many already) and reap them to eternity in vain, if they don't find out some method to enforce their performance."

[78] BL IOR/H/322/1, "Stephen Strutt, John Hillar, and Thomas Moore at Bombay to [Secretary Thomas Woolley in London]," 17 June 1713, ff. 91-93.
[79] Ibid, "Stephen Strutt at Bombay to Secretary Thomas Woolley in London," 10 November 1713, ff. 106-106f.

Furthermore, the Directors must "direct somehow that the agents of such [underhanded] practices may be made liable." Hillar explained that "what would most delight me in this place, would be to see the island rise out of its lethargy, and become (as sure 'tis very capable of being made so with a little true application), a place of credit to our country and also of great advantage to our masters."[80]

The accusations must have seemed like a credible threat to Aislabie and his colleagues, as they responded with scorched-earth tactics.[81] Presumably wanting to draw attention away from any investigation of financial mismanagement, Aislabie turned to another strategy for impugning an employee's personal government and morality. In November of 1713, as the evidence against him mounted, Aislabie forced Moore to resign from council by somehow bringing to light his engaging in sex acts with other men while in Bombay. Aislabie himself referred to it in a letter as only as "the worst of vices," and noted that the only reason he had decided not to prosecute Moore publicly was out of fear "that the Indian inhabitants would have too great an occasion to make just reflections on the English name."[82]

The exact nature of Aislabie's imputation is clear from Hillar's writings on the event. Hillar went into greater detail in repudiating Moore because Moore had been an ally of his and Stephen Strutt's. The two needed not only to preserve the validity of their claims of Aislabie's

[80] Ibid, "John Hillar at Bombay to Secretary Thomas Woolley in London," 11 November 1713, ff.108f-109.
[81] Given the absence of official correspondence and Aislabie's tendency to respond "not at all" to Company letters, we have little data about his thought process or his bombshell revelations about Moore.
[82] BL IOR/H/322/1, "William Aislabie at Bombay to Secretary Thomas Woolley in London," 9 November 1713, f. 95.

misdeeds, but also ensure that they, too, could not be inveigled in a similar factional scheme.[83] "I have had some reason to believe I have arrived at the true meaning of the *coloquintida* [vine of Sodom] in the middle of your letters," Hillar wrote to Thomas Woolley. For "though I have sorely said Bombay is a thorny place, yet I never apprehended so dangerous as it hath proved of late." The "monstrous irregularities" in question were "scarcely short of the abominable wickednesses of Tiberius," and it was "a shame to hear…the enormous facts and foul passions some and not a few belonging to our country have been guilty of." Hillar got even more specific in noting he "never conceived the meaning of Tacitus when he mentions the *sellarii et spintrice* in Tiberius' reign" until Moore's conduct had been brought to the council. But "such a scene of impiety hath and will be laid open, as I believe is hardly to be matched since that monster-like prince's time." Lest his meaning yet be misinterpreted, Hillar drove the point home: "the sodomite and catamite are (both parts) as far as I can find to be imputed to all the actors in this obscenity, and the contagion hath been communicated…so generally that 'twill be difficult to find a remedy. But the General will, I believe, take such measures as to lay the axe as near the root as 'tis possible for him."[84]

Even after losing Hillar to illness and death at the end of 1713, the damage had been done for Aislabie and his faction.[85] His heroism in uncovering the moral dissolution of his opponent couldn't save him from well-substantiated claims of self-dealing and mismanagement of Company affairs. Company Secretary Thomas Woolley had paid close attention to the letters

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[83] The candid discussion of homosexual practices during the council meeting which Hillar alludes to was likely included in the Bombay consultations, alongside the corruption allegations, may help explain why the records from 1713 are not preserved.
[84] BL IOR/H/322, "John Hillar at Bombay to Secretary Thomas Woolley in London," 11 November 1713, ff. 109-109f.
[85] Ibid, "William Aislabie at Bombay to Secretary Thomas Woolley in London," 30 April 1714, f. 118.

coming from the anti-Aislabie faction, not least because the most voluminous were from his relative, John Hillar. He had placed them in front of the Directors, who reacted with alarm.[86] Even William Phipps, an erstwhile ally of Aislabie, was forced to acknowledge in a letter to Woolley in March of that year that the Directors' "complaints" were "just" regarding the "intolerable abuse there was in Surat." He wrote that "the miserable condition" Bombay was "reduced to," led him to leave the region and shift his new independent merchant's business to Madras. The straw that broke the camel's back, it seemed, was Thomas Moore. Aislabie's willingness to allow Moore to return home quietly, rather than being "sent [to England] in ignominy and shame, having been surprised in the act of sodomy," seemed to have backfired with one of his allies.

Nevertheless, it pained Phipps to "leave a place I have lived in so long, wished well, and strived to serve in so unsettled, poor a posture as at present it is in." Bombay under William Aislabie had become not only a site of underhanded dealing, prejudicial to the trade of the Company, but also, through Aislabie's response to his accusers, a den of perceived iniquity and vice. Its prior good government, both administrative and individual, had been replaced by financial and moral bad government. Its trade and profitability were suffering as a result. As John Hope, a junior member of Bombay council, wrote regarding the whole affair, "a hint or two about Bombay: if those maxims and principles [the Directors] have so excellently laid down in your letters…were deeply rooted in the minds of our present council, we should soon feel the good effects thereof, both to the Company and ourselves." However, "instead thereof a sneaking,

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[86] BL IOR/B/53, Minutes of the Court of Directors, 30 June 1714, f. 68; Ibid, 9 February 1715, f. 266; Ibid, 24 February 1715, f. 279; Ibid, 16 March 1715, ff. 298-299; Ibid, 22 March 1715, ff. 305-306; Ibid, 1 April 1715 ff. 318-319; BL IOR/D/93, "Thomas Moore's Account of Proceedings at Bombay," 1713, f. 322; BL IOR/D/94, "Private Trade Committee Minutes" on overcharges at Bombay, 24 February 1714, f. 52-53.

servile, submissive sort of late been the best ascendant for preferment." The employees remaining at Bombay wished for the departure of Aislabie, "when we shall have a new scene of affairs."[87]

Charles Boone was therefore able to take advantage of the Court of Directors' reaction to the various claims of Bombay's dissolution. He won the role of replacement governor at a vote taken within five days of submitting his credentials—something he had done before the Directors had officially voted to fire Aislabie. Boone was instructed at his appointment to keep an especially close eye on Thomas Wilshere, one of the remaining members of the Bombay council. In fact, Thomas Wilshere's papers continuing his appointment were contingent on Boone determining if "he will give a faithful account upon oath of what he knows" concerning underhanded dealing between Aislabie, Wyche, and Surat-based merchants. The Court of Directors felt "it [was] to be feared he hath been more or less in that ill secret."[88]

It's unclear how much of the "ill secret" Boone himself knew before his arrival in India in 1715. He had at least known something about the various intrigues of private fortune-hunting among west coast EIC employees since 1712. John Scattergood, our independent merchant and dedicated letter-writer from earlier, wrote Boone from Madras in September of that year, when Boone was in England. In his letter, Scattergood mentioned that trade between Surat and Bombay would likely be "stopped up," preventing movement of west coast goods toward Madras and Bengal. According to Scattergood, the blockage was because Aislabie was "angry" about not being included in the "union" in trade policy being struck between the presidents of Madras and

[87] BL IOR/H/322, "William Phipps at Bombay to Secretary Thomas Woolley at London," 22 March 1714, ff.122-123f.
[88] IOR/B/53, Minutes of the Court of Directors, 1 Apr 1715, f. 319.

Bengal that year.[89] When Boone learned of the Company's Directors voting on a new governor for Bombay a few years later, therefore, he had at least some idea of what was driving their decision-making. At his appointment alongside his second-in-council, Laurence Parker, care was made to emphasize his good character above and beyond his "integrity and ability." Boone was "earnestly recommend[ed]" to "preserve his character" while serving as Bombay's governor and instructed to "endeavor to the utmost to bring their affairs [back] into a flourishing condition."[90]

So, Boone was seen as a 18th century change candidate for the EIC. As he noted in an early personal letter from Bombay, he "came in the nick of time to save the Company 110,258 rupees and 61 pice commission" from reviewing the disputed Surat brokers' accounts. The "commission" was broken down to 45,941 rupees for Aislabie, 18,376 rupees for Wyche, 9,188 rupees for Stephen Strutt (justifying the Directors' suspicion of him), and a further 36,763 rupees split up among the other council members. Showcasing his dry humor, Boone wrote that he was "of opinion the Company will not think their management deserves such a generous gratuity." In all, Bombay had "great want of regulation…but were I to do all this at once they would load me with curses and backbitings."[91] As such, Boone's interest in the church project stemmed from recognizing it as the very sort of community-policing and good government-encouraging institution that would help get the floundering settlement of Bombay back on track. More than any faith-based impetus, Boone, like Aungier, advocated for building the church because of the role it had to play as part of Bombay's civic infrastructure. That vision of good government and

[89] BL Mss Eur C387, "John Scattergood in Madras to Charles Boone," 15-18 September, 1712, f.1/172.
[90] BL IOR/B/53, Minutes of the Court of Directors, 16 March 1715, f. 299.
[91] BL IOR/H/322/1, "Charles Boone at Bombay to Secretary Thomas Woolley in London," 12 January 1716, ff. 155f-156.

civic leadership was, in Boone's eyes, more important than ever in an era of high-stakes financial politics for both Bombay and the Company as a whole.

Boone was somewhat circumspect about the need for the new church in his official correspondence. He agreed that the rooms used for a chapel in the fort were too small, writing repeatedly over the course of the church's construction that the Company "would not have built" the church "but that the chapel would not hold the congregation."[92] But Boone was more interested in making secular improvements to Bombay to encourage settling the island with productive and commercial residents. His recommitment to the policy of Aungier was just one part of his reforming mission and goal of reestablishing good government at Bombay. His plans also included such infrastructural projects as returning to the idea of land reclamation along the settlement's "Great Breach," the construction of a new hospital and customs house, and, Boone's perennial favorite, the building of a wall to fortify the growing town beyond the Fort.

Many of Boone's arguments read like a restatement of the policies of Aungier and his colleagues. "A walled town at Bombay would invite rich men" to settle there, Boone wrote in the Bombay General Letter dated 24 January 1716. These would be "Moors" and "Gentoos," as the Portuguese, "being so tyrannical, giving [only] the Portuguese the liberty of their religion" had already "brought several families to Bombay."[93] There was no reason to suppose the same would not be true of South Asians chafing under the rule of the Mughal governor at Surat or the Maratha state inland to Bombay's south and east. Encouraging the residence of "rich traders" who would "leave Surat" were Bombay only better protected would no doubt "increase the

[92] BL IOR/E/4/449, "Charles Boone and Council at Bombay to EIC in London," 30 Oct 1718, f.308.
[93] BL IOR/E/4/449, "Charles Boone and Council at Bombay to EIC in London," 24 January 1716, f.232.

revenues" of the city, Boone wrote.[94] It would also help protect the Company from the snafus which had entangled Boone's predecessors in shady debts to both Surati merchants and the Mughal state. The freedom of religion was once again held up as a provision of good government, which would draw residents to Bombay, just as it had been in Aungier's time.

Boone further justified his civic infrastructure projects by presenting them as loss leaders for the Company's goal of increasing profit in Bombay, much as Aungier had done. If, as Boone assured his interlocutors would be the case, fortifications and land reclamations drove up the population and generated a whole new swath of land which could be sold, Bombay would "soon be populous and rich equal to Madras."[95] Though building the wall would certainly "be expensive," it would "in a few years increase the customs and revenues to reimburse the charge."[96] And unlike other parts of India, Bombay was a city whose population was developed almost entirely through the provision of desirable public goods and civic infrastructure. As we know, it did not have a large permanent, static population prior to the Company's arrival. And should the Bombay factory grow through the efforts of Boone and his colleagues to build a well-governed, more transparent administration, it would serve as a model for Company growth without underhanded trade or illicit political dealings.

Boone's success in his quest to make Bombay a haven of industrious trade and good government once again is borne out not only by his popularity with his superiors and his success with the church but by the analysis of his subordinates. Benjamin Francia, a young Company employee in western India, wrote to Boone's old friend John Scattergood about him within a few

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[94] Ibid; Ibid, "Charles Boone and Council at Bombay to EIC in London, 14 January 1716, f. 220.
[95] BL IOR/E/4/449 "Charles Boone and Council at Bombay to EIC in London," 24 January 1716, f.230.
[96] Ibid, "Charles Boone at Bombay to EIC in London," 9 March 1716, f. 224.

months of Boone's arrival in the settlement. "We have great alteration in these parts since the new governor arrived," Francia wrote. "I doubt not but he will make trade flourish on this side of India."[97] Jonah Ingram, an employee in Bombay, wrote to Secretary Woolley that "the arrival of his Honor Boone here has caused such a turn of government, so much to the interest of the Company, that I do not know how to express it, more than to assure you the place is in a few years likely to be the best for trade in India. The vast pains his Honor takes to bring people here and the encouragement they meet with…will bring men of worth soon to the place." The independent trader Elihu Trenchfield concurred, writing to Scattergood that he "found Governor Boone a very generous friend to me, and very assisting in the disposal of our cargo, which gives me hopes still of making a profitable voyage."[98] This was despite Scattergood's own opinion that Boone's commitment to good government in his personal as well as Company business had brought Scattergood little benefit. Over the years Boone had remained in the governorship, Scattergood had "been concerned in three voyages with Governor Boone's brother," a ship's captain in India. All three had sailed between Bombay and China, and Scattergood counted himself lucky if he ever saw "my own money again, with interest." He had turned down the option to invest in the Boone brothers' new ship and claimed only to have invested in a Boone-sponsored country trade journey to the Red Sea "for the sake of my [cousin] going supercargo." In that investment, he would be "glad to get my principal." All in all, since Boone's appointment to the governorship at Bombay, "India [was] quite altered since some people have left it," and

[97] BL Mss Eur C387, "Benjamin Francia in Surat to John Scattergood," 2 February 1716, f. 2/17.
[98] BL Mss Eur C387, Elihu Trenchfield at Tellicherry to John Scattergood, 5 December 1717, f. 2/146.

"one that gets anything now for their [ship's] owners must manage matters with an abundance of frugality and circumspection."[99]

It would nevertheless be a difficult task for Boone to complete the seventeenth century church edifice Aungier had started. The traveler John Burnell wrote that in 1710 the church "begins now to decay, trees growing out of the stone work." Given the prevalence of military engagement in and around the factory in the preceding years, Burnell even argued that the church should be "pulled down, for should we have a rupture with the Dutch, they may chance to make use of it for a battery on it, whereon they may mount twenty pieces of cannon [aimed directly across the green at the Fort] with ease."[100] It becomes difficult to see how Boone, clearly more interested in the secular civic infrastructure projects he writes on at length, didn't agree with Burnell. Yes, he was already committed to his pet project of building a wall with rock quarried from Dongri Hill, but he also complained about the "calamitous circumstances" in which he found Bombay upon his arrival, "the custom house a wretched old building, the hospital worse, the barracks and ward houses not tight."[101] These "old buildings," many of which were inherited from the Portuguese, were still in terrible shape in 1719, when Boone and his colleagues wrote that "without great repairs the house in the Fort will fall, [the] upper and lower beams [are] all rotten."[102]

Usually, Boone advocated for replacing these old and damaged buildings wholesale. In a personal letter to the Court of Directors dated 20 December 1718, shortly before the first sermon

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[99] Ibid, John Scattergood to Francis Chamberlain, November 1719, f. 2/378.
[100] John Burnell, *Bombay in the Days of Queen Anne, Being an Account of the Settlement Written by John Burnell*, ed. Samuel T Sheppard (London: Hakluyt Society, 1933), 21.
[101] BL IOR/E/4/449, "Charles Boone and Council at Bombay to EIC in London," 14 January 1716, f.214.
[102] Ibid, "Charles Boone and Council at Bombay to EIC in London," 24 September 1719, f.351.

in the completed church, Boone wrote that when he had first come to Bombay, "the Company's buildings were the Bunder, the Castle, and tank houses. The two last cost as much to repair as they are worth. [We] have not now lodgings for the Company's servants…[at the time of my arrival] the naval storehouses [were] built with kajans, no Mint, the Custom House scarce to be kept standing, not a dry room in the Bunder during the rains."[103] Boone explained that he had thus been to "some charge…to have settled all new. The Company would have provided accordingly, but supposing everything in order, when nothing was, so it has been [my] misfortune to lay out more money than usual."[104] How was he willing to pay for the church project?

The answer was that he, or at least the Company he represented, didn't really have to. In finding the money Boone was aided by the other champion of the church-building project in Bombay, the assiduous Richard Cobbe, settlement chaplain. Along with lending an appropriately faithful air to the proceedings, Cobbe was able to sidestep one of the biggest impediments to the church building project in Aungier's time, and the single point on which John Child was able to halt the project: expense. Through the new avenue of lay activism within the 18th century Church of England and a dedicated project of community engagement, Cobbe raised the funds needed for the completion from across the spectrum of Bombay's residents. In so doing, he reinforced the commitment of the laity in the settlement to Boone's civic infrastructural vision, as tied to the presence of the national church. This was in marked contrast to the expected narrative, as highlighted in typical historiography. To date, analyses of the Church of England's involvement with the East India Company and its settlements in India in the 18th century have relied on the

103 Ibid, "Charles Boone at Bombay to EIC in London," 20 December 1718, f.322.
104 Ibid, f.323.

idea that the Company in the 1700s was completely uninterested in its chartered duty to support clergy in its factories and chaplains on its ships. If they did not actively oppose the establishment of the Church in the factories, the Company's administrators have been seen as at best neglectful.[105] As an attempted response to this perceived policy issue within the EIC, in 1710 the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge (SPCK) stepped in to provide support to the Company. It proved difficult, according to the voluble eighteenth-century SPCK secretary Henry Newman, to find qualified clergy for positions in India. "The gentlemen of our universities [are] bred too delicately to undertake so hardy a service," Newman wrote in a letter to the Bishop of London, John Robinson.[106]

Most recently to Cobbe's appointment, the Bombay factory had been served by the chaplain George Watson He was appointed at the unification of the Companies in 1708, before the involvement of the SPCK. Watson was presumably the first chaplain since Thomas Tyler traveled with Sir John Gayer from England in 1698.[107] However, he was not regularly featured in letters from the Bombay Governor he served under. He disappears from the Company record relatively quickly after departing from London. He was probably the "rector" mentioned in Burnell's 1710 account, who "preaches once of a Sunday, prays twice, as likewise each morning on weekdays, and administers the sacrament four times a year."[108] But Newman wrote in 1711

[105] See Brent S. Sirota, *The Christian Monitors: The Church of England and the Age of Benevolence, 1680-1730* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2014), 239. This is in notable contrast to the goals of the Anglican communion in the Atlantic world.
[106] Cambridge University Libraries (CUL) GBR/0012/MS SPCK/D4/3, Letter Books of Henry Newman Volume Three, "Letter from Henry Newman to Bishop of London," 13 Nov 1714, f. 74.
[107] For a convenient list of all the East India Company's appointed chaplains, including those sent to Bombay and Surat, see S.J. McNally, *The Chaplains of the East India Company*, BL IOR Mss Eur D847.
[108] John Burnell, *Bombay in the Days of Queen Anne…*, ed. Samuel T Sheppard (London: Hakluyt Society, 1933), 8.

that he was dead and the SPCK were hunting for a new candidate to recommend to the Company.[109] That candidate, according to the Company's Court of Directors' Meeting Notes from March 1714, was one Richard Cobbe.

We know very little of Cobbe's early life, and there is no mention of him in Newman's correspondence or the notes of the SPCK before his application is made to the Company. What we do know about Cobbe comes from the application he submitted to the Court of Directors. Unlike the appointee of Newman's generalization, Richard Cobbe did have a degree from Oriel College, Oxford. Before his appointment to the chaplaincy at Bombay he had made it onto the clerical ladder as the curate of Chippenham. He was evidently well liked and respected enough by his colleagues, both in Oxford and Wiltshire, to send "testimonials from the bailiff, burgesses, and other inhabitants of Chippenham, and from the Dean and Fellows of Oriel College," along with his application to the open Bombay chaplaincy in March of 1714.[110] Cobbe's competitor for the position was Robert Walker, a clerk who had only recently been elevated to the priesthood and had studied at Glasgow, rather than one of the English universities. It is possible that Henry Newman, already holding the opinion that India was wanting more qualified clergy than the likes of Walker, had been particularly persuaded by Cobbe because he came from the desired, and difficult to find, background. Cobbe was elected a Corresponding Member of the SPCK on 18 March 1714, immediately after his election to the chaplaincy and almost exactly one year before

[109] Newman to Rev. Dr. Josiah Woodward, 6 Dec 1711, *S.P.C.K.: Early Eighteenth Century Archives* (London: World Microfilms Publications Ltd.,1976), reel no 21, f. 31. Thanks to Brent S. Sirota for directing me to this source base.
[110] BL IOR/B/52, Minutes of the Court of Directors, 10 March 1713/14, f. 650.

Boone's election to the governorship. He wrote frequently to both Newman and Archbishop of London John Robinson as he worked to build the church upon arrival in Bombay.[111]

Cobbe's elite background begs the question of why he wanted a position which the SPCK and Fulham Palace had trouble filling with highly qualified candidates.[112] In his preface to his collection of materials related to the church-building campaign which he published later in life, Cobbe never explained why he desired this career move. His salary with the Company was set at fifty pounds a year, with fifty pounds' "gratuity, in case he shall be found to deserve the same."[113] This was probably a significant step up in Cobbe's finances; Chippenham's vicarage was described as one of the least valuable Anglican livings during the Restoration period.[114] While it may have increased in value in the intervening years, Cobbe wasn't yet the vicar in 1714, only the curate, and so only received a small stipend, rather than any tithes or produce from the vicarage's glebe.[115] At the same time, it's likely the 50 pound gratuity was what made the position tenable for Cobbe; as early as 1666, the church had set the "clerical poverty line" at 50 pounds per annum, though the average value of a curacy in the 1670s and 1680s was only 20 to 30 pounds per year.[116] While Cobbe's salary was therefore of debatable value, it's notable that he also benefitted financially in the United Company era from being able to engage in private

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[111] *S.P.C.K.: Early Eighteenth Century Archives* (London: World Microfilms Publications Ltd.,1976), reel no. 2; Brent S. Sirota demonstrates in *The Christian Monitors: The Christian Monitors: The Church of England and the Age of Benevolence, 1680-1730* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2014) that chaplains in Europe and the East Indies were usually elected such "corresponding members" of the SPCK, which enabled them to tap into the Society's extensive network of members to raise funds for the needs of the communion abroad, and to solicit donations of materials, like the SPCK's educational Anglican texts, to use in their ministry.
[112] BL IOR/B/52, Minutes of the Court of Directors, 10 March 1713/14, f. 650.
[113] Ibid.
[114] See John Spurr, *The Restoration Church of England, 1646-1689* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1991), 176.
[115] Ibid, 174.
[116] Ibid, 175, 171.

trade, should he so desire, while in residence. After 1708 private trade was once again considered a welcome activity for Company servants to engage in, though Boone had instituted strict examination of it as part of his reformation of Bombay's governance. Cobbe was also able to eat from the Company's communal table and live in Company housing, rather than providing for himself on his curacy as he would have done in England. He may have also been a true believer in the cause of ministering to the Company's flock.

Cobbe's journey from London to Bombay took about six months; he notes his arrival as 21 September 1714.[117] He then spent a further nine months serving as chaplain in the old Fort room of worship mentioned as early as the 1670s, which he describes as "two upper rooms beat into one, which served us for a chapel." He found this setting inadequate, as it required "performing our public devotions in so private a manner…being locked up in the Fort or Castle in time of divine service." As a result, he began campaigning in June of 1715 to complete the church Aungier had started, "for God's honor and service, according to the use of the Church of England, that all the island might see we had some religion among us."[118] In this he echoed the words of Aungier as well as his actions, hoping to promote the Company's image among Bombay's diverse residents. However, it was both less and more simple in the second decade of the eighteenth century to fit an Anglican church into that vision than it had been in Aungier's time. As we observed earlier, most scholars have seen this period as one of, at best, "salutary neglect" from the Church of England and the East India Company when it came to promoting the spiritual wellbeing of the Anglican flock in Eurasia.[119]

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[117] BL IOR/E/4/449; His arrival was noted in the Bombay general letter of 3 January 1715, along with the other recruits arrived in the second half of 1714, f.197.
[118] Richard Cobbe, *Bombay Church…* (London: Oliver Bros, 1766), vii.
[119] They were, of course, dedicated proselytizers with the support of the SPG in North America.

Much of the explanation, therefore, for Cobbe's success in getting the church built comes from the work he did within Bombay's English community. Cobbe was a man with a high level of education in comparison to the average Company chaplain, with previous parochial experience in England and steeped in the renewing spirit of the SPCK. He turned the project of finishing the church into a community endeavor reminiscent of the process of church building the SPCK and Englishmen and -women had followed in European cities during the first decade of the eighteenth century.[120] As such, it proved no cost to the Company other than the donations made by Boone on their behalf. Cobbe kept, and later published, meticulous records of the donations and subscriptions he had taken from parishioners and benefactors for the completion of the church at Bombay. He documented raising a significant amount of money from the residents of Bombay themselves—and a wide cross-section of them. As such, he was able to employ the new tool of lay activism, developed at home by the Society for the Reformation of Manners, the SPCK, and the SPG, to sidestep questions of the church's value which might be raised by less committed boosters.[121]

Between 1 July 1715, shortly after he began his campaign from the little chapel in the upper story of the Fort, to Whitsunday 1720, Cobbe raised 43,992 rupees to build the church, or

[120] Brent S. Sirota traces one of these church-building projects in continental Europe in *The Christian Monitors*. He writes that building an Anglican church "for merchants and sailors" in Rotterdam "became something of a cause célèbre early in the reign of Queen Anne," with "the main proponents of the project" coming from the SPCK and SPG. Much as with the church at Bombay, the Rotterdam church was funded in no small part through donations from military regiments and naval commanders who would directly benefit from utilizing its services. Brent S. Sirota, *The Christian Monitors: The Church of England and the Age of Benevolence, 1680-1730* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2014), 231.

[121] The first Society for the Reformation of Manners was founded by Gerald Aungier's first cousin, once removed, Richard Bulkeley, a broad churchman. Thomas Papillon, an old ally of Aungier's, saw church reform as aligned perfectly with whig politics in the 1690s. See Craig Rose, *England in the 1690s: Revolution, Religion, and War* (Oxford, UK: Blackwell, 1999), 206, 202.

5,499 pounds according to his assessment of 2 shillings, sixpence to the rupee.[122] This included 10,000 rupees on behalf of the company, but the remainder was raised through individual donations. Many of Bombay's prominent citizens gave generous amounts; for example, over the course of the several-year fundraising project, Charles Boone gave over 3,000 rupees of his own money. However, most of the donations were in much smaller amounts and were given by people across Bombay's social strata. The smallest donation came from "Isaac King alias Pereira," identified by Cobbe as "a converted Jew," who gave six rupees, or fifteen shillings, in August of 1715. Many people donated anonymously in very small amounts through the collection plate at the sacrament, which regularly returned sums like 29 or 44 rupees. The average donation was around 150 rupees, while the most frequently donated amount was 100 rupees, followed by 50 rupees. Over 200 people were named donors, when single donations in two or more individuals' names are accounted for. This represents a sizable proportion of the English population at Bombay. Over these more than 200 people, twelve women were named as having given individual donations, and another seven donations were given under men's names in honor of or representing their wives or daughters. Some of the individual donators we know a little about from their later wills, proved at Bombay. For example, Jonathan Stanton, who gave 100 rupees in July 1715, died a major in the Company's militia in July 1728, and bequeathed all he had to his wife Elizabeth.[123] Jonah Ingram, who donated 110 rupees total between 1715 and 1719, later became an early alderman and noted resident of the city. His wife, Anne Ingram, who died in October of 1736, left her own will. It will gave sums between 400 and 800 rupees to each of her three daughters, another 500 to her granddaughter, and gave 60 rupees to her doctor,

[122] Richard Cobbe, *Bombay Church…* (London: Oliver Bros, 1766), 74.
[123] BL IOR P/416/77, The Last Will and Testament of Jonathan Stanton, Major at Bombay, 10 July 1728, f.9.

Henry Compton.[124] In addition, she wrote that "it is my will and desire that my slave girls Sabina, Flora, and Talia, have each of them their free and absolute liberty, and that my executor do give each of them the sum of 20 rupees…and it is my further desire and request that my slave boy, Pompey, have also his liberty and a legacy of 20 rupees."[125]

The people donating to the church were thus people who lived much or all their adult lives in Bombay and built families and communities there in the first half of the eighteenth century. Most of the individuals donating were Company employees in one way or another. But some were independent merchants. Others were sailors and ship's captains passing through Bombay on charterparties with the Company. Twice Cobbe records donations from "Cumsha (a Chinaman)" and "Chunqua (a Chinaman)." Cornelius Soddington, the once-bankrupt former governor of St Helena, gave first in his own name, then again "for my wife when I have her" and finally, presumably as he died without her, his "legacy" of 400 rupees. Another man, joiner John Curtis, gave his complete bequest of 276 rupees into the church fund. At Christmas of 1716, one Richard Waters, presumably frustrated with the rate of construction, said that he would promise to pay in 50 rupees at the end of the following August, "provided the Church is covered in…I mean not with kajans only."

The community at Bombay, represented by the breadth and depth of contributions to Cobbe's church rebuilding project, was thus evidence of the power of the policies advocated by Aungier, and later Boone and Cobbe. There was a sense among the English residents at Bombay that the provision of public goods, of civic infrastructure, including a church, was a necessary part of the existence of their factory. Having lived through the tumult of the previous decades,

[124] Evidently coincidentally sharing the name of the Anglican divine.
[125] BL IOR P/416/78, The Last Will and Testament of Anne Ingram, Widow of Jonah Ingram, 3 October 1736, f. 155.

these residents were ready for a little good government, in personal and Company terms. Bombay was a place which existed for the pursuit of profit, certainly, but the donating individuals showed their belief that profit would come in the largest amount to a place which provided public amenities to its population. There was general buy-in to the claim, advanced first by Aungier and later by Boone and Cobbe, that these amenities would help to bring order, unity, and good government to the factory. The residents profiled in the church building donation campaign did not see Bombay as being full of the walking dead, or a site to spend a minimal stint in before getting out with what fortune you could. Rather, they felt it was a place of expansion—of commerce, yes, but also the social and civic trappings of community life.

Even Cobbe's cajoling donations out of such a large proportion of the population shows the evidence of the church's role in policing and governing English residents, reinforcing their roles within the Company's diverse community at Bombay. This is further represented by Cobbe's seating chart for the completed church's pews, which shows how weekly attendance at church services allowed for a representation of social standing and reinforcement of good government. The Governor, Council, and their families are given pride of place, followed by military and commercial Company servants in order of the skilled qualities of their labor.

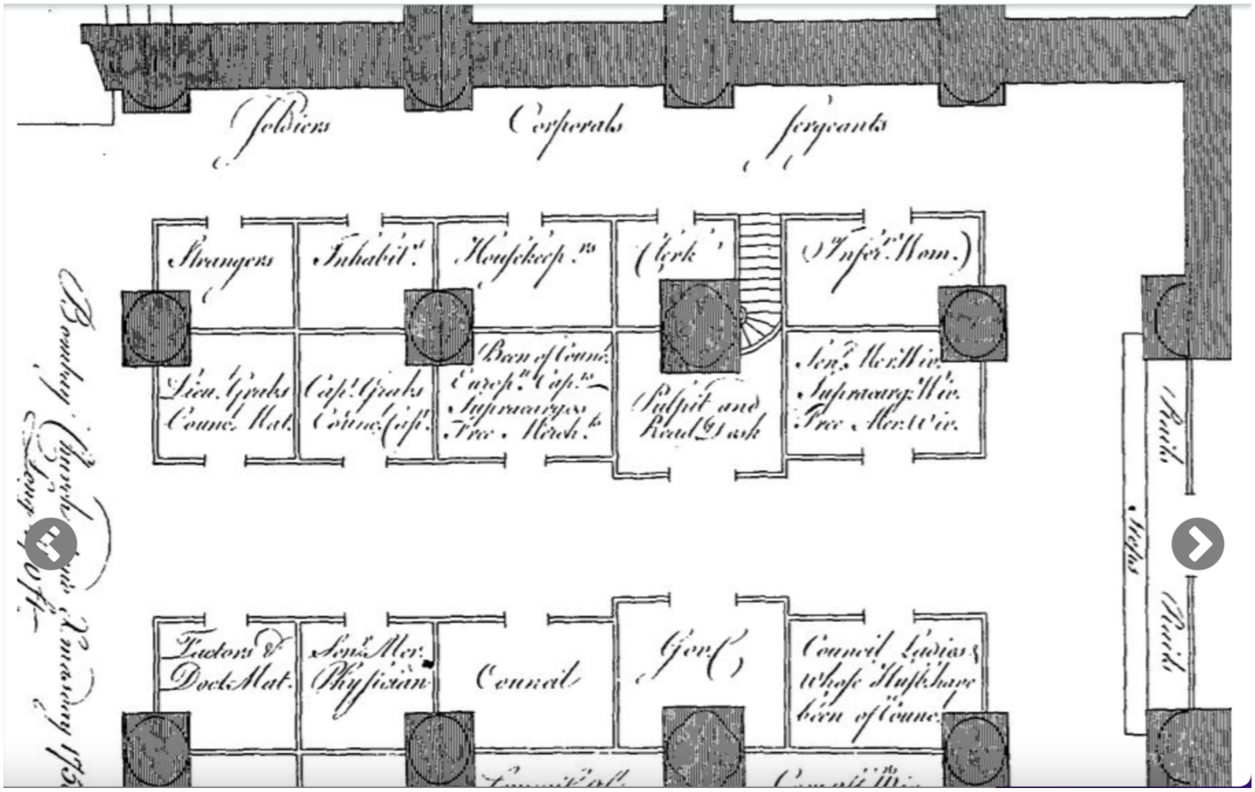

Figure 1: Detail from Cobbe's Seating Chart for Bombay's Church. Public Domain.

Soldiers, writers, “strangers,” and “inferior women” are all also accounted for, allocated standing places and pews with interrupted sightlines to the pulpit.

The role of the church in the community was echoed in the rhetoric around the church building campaign expressed most fervently by Cobbe. In his sermon from 19 June 1715, at which he launched the donation campaign, Cobbe preached on the biblical quest to rebuild the temple at Jerusalem, and Solomon’s continued pursuit of the temple after David’s death. Reflecting on the tumult of the preceding decades, Cobbe noted that “David, who was a man after God’s own heart, was not permitted to set about this holy and religious work himself, because he had frequently been engaged in wars…yet God, it seems, accepted of his good will, in being the first proposer of it, and he did well, it is said, that it was in his heart.”[126] Here Cobbe

[126] Richard Cobbe, *Bombay Church…* (London: Oliver Bros, 1766), 7-8.

comments on the idea that Aungier began the church, but he and his immediate successors could not finish it, "frequently [being] engaged in wars" as David. Yet the mere reality that they had proposed the church, and, like David, left a "vast preparation of all things…wood and stone, and other materials made ready to his son's hands," meant that their work, though it now was a crumbling ruin full of weeds and trees, was good in God's eyes. It also meant that Cobbe and his parishioners, like Solomon, were now charged "with the same zeal and liberality, though not with the same magnificence" to "[rebuild] and [raise] out of its rubbish, after so many years' captivity, and that too even in troublous times" the church begun by Aungier, much like the Second Temple of Jerusalem.[127] Leaving aside his biblical inspiration, Cobbe returned again to the reality of life in Bombay. "The inhabitants round about us are not only not ashamed to acknowledge their false and imaginary deities, in the most public manner they are able," Cobbe said, but they also were happy to "insult us with their number of churches and pagodas, even upon our own territories." In comparison, the English in their little chapel were "pent up and confined, as with curtains." He ended his sermon with a call to the sense of discipline through belief and cosmology of improvement which drove the behavior of Bombay's early inhabitants. "We feel the usefulness of good works," Cobbe noted. "They conduce both to the honor of God, and the interest of our religion, by preventing every causeless separation from its communion; it is also a credit and advantage to the whole island, inasmuch as religion is, or ought to be, the chief concern and business of our whole lives." Cobbe reminded his congregation that "when there is such a convenient provision made for the free and open profession of [religion], it will be

[127] Richard Cobbe, *Bombay Church…* (London: Oliver Bros, 1766), 9.

an encouragement to trade, and a public indication of our faith and integrity."[128] He ended, naturally, with an exhortation:

> If ever, therefore, we expect to see this island flourish and increase in honor, wealth, and power; if ever we hope for God's mercy and protection, or desire the light of his countenance to shine either upon our counsels or endeavors, our families or ourselves, may we date the blessings from the day that the foundation of this church is laid? And may this blessing, not confined to time or place, diffuse itself beyond the circle of this royal settlement unto the neighboring factories round about us! May their merchants carry out little, and bring in much; and when they have brought it home, may God breathe upon it, and multiply it exceedingly![129]

Thus, though 36 years had passed since Aungier's death and the halting of the church-building process, with many attendant crises both for the Company and the Church of England, the campaign for the church's completion between 1715 and 1719 relied on the same justifications, the same rhetoric. The church would bring the English community together. It would order them to practice the behavior which would enable them to shape their settlement into a productive commercial hub through good government. In the 1710s English Bombay began to emerge from decades of true volatility on the part of the Company's Indian administration, as the Old and New Companies became United and Surat and Bombay once again were working towards the same commercial and sociopolitical goals. At the same time, the threat of violent conflict with local polities was reduced, if only temporarily. Despite all the turmoil of the intervening years, Richard Cobbe and Charles Boone found themselves returning to the same policies of Aungier and his administrators over forty years before. The sense of the value of productive labor and increasing toleration and trade proved as powerful in 1715 as it had in 1674.

Conclusion

[128] Ibid, 16.
[129] Ibid, 17.

Gerald Aungier saw the church as a necessary component of Bombay's civic infrastructure. Acceptance of cultural difference, exemplified by allowing for public worship for many faiths, as well as political representation for many social groups, was a key aspect in Aungier's vision for Bombay's development.[130] However, he also believed that "order, good government, and unity" were the fundamentals of encouraging Bombay's growth.[131] In a place where the English population was to always be a governing minority, Aungier saw a comprehending and welcoming church as the only public institution capable of uniting and policing the English residents as "one body."[132] This belief was so significant that in response to persistent admonishments about the need to reduce the public charge on Bombay, he innovated private funding schemes for the church project.

Aungier's commitment to low church latitude was yet another aspect of his plans for the development of the Company's "hopeful island" which was imbued with political content. While his personal anti-Arminian Anglicanism was shared by his colleagues in Bombay and Surat, it did not reflect a universal position in the East India Company by the 1670s. Nor were his beliefs in the importance of the broad church as a vehicle for inculcating reason, moralism, and practical theology with which to attain "order, good governance, and unity" shared by his successors, most notably John Child. As part of his own politically imbued set of positions on the administration of Bombay, Child felt that control of the population in Bombay derived from his ultimate authority. Child believed that he held power derived from the Crown of England itself,

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[130] See BL IOR/E/3/32, Gerald Aungier's "Proposals Touching Bombay Island," 1671, ff. 146-149f.

[131] BL IOR/E/3/30, "Gerald Aungier and Council at Swally to the East India Company in London," 26-27 November 1669, f. 258.

[132] BL IOR/E/3/30, "Gerald Aungier and Council at Swally to the East India Company in London," 26-27 November 1669, f. 258.

and therefore he must be obeyed, not that it was his responsibility to inculcate a practical theology of reason in his subordinates so to advance good government. Child was uninterested in expanding the public charges of his merchants' fort for the mere luxury of a church, and he certainly wouldn't spend his own money on it.

For the men who completed the church, 18th-century governor Charles Boone and chaplain Richard Cobbe, the project retained Aungier's valences. However, those earlier claims operated in a changed context. As we have seen, the Anglo-Mughal War, crisis of Company monopoly, and merger of the New and Old East India Companies had destabilized the Company's administration in western India. Regional polities were also in decline and transformation.[133] On top of these India-based challenges, the political climate in the metropole was rife with political-economic anxiety. The Directors of the East India Company were in the good graces of the government after Walpole's Court Whig ascension in 1714. However, the connections the Whig-backed media made between the threat of Jacobite plots, Tory supporters, and the vulnerability of the joint-stock backed national debt created a dangerous environment. Companies had to be financially stable and free from fiscal and social scandal, as they were now uniquely tied to the very continuance of the British state. As such, when scandal erupted among Company employees in western India in 1713, countenancing fiscal, administrative, and perceived moral laxity, the Directors were compelled to clean house.

The change candidates sent to clean Bombay up and get it back on the right track were spearheaded by Charles Boone. In concert with his chaplain, Richard Cobbe, Boone pursued a policy of civic infrastructural investment both secular and religious. Given the expense of his

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[133] See Chapter 3, "The Bombay Theater of the Anglo-Mughal War and the Crisis of Monopoly, 1686-1708."

revitalization campaign, Boone would probably have put off the expensive church completion. But Cobbe was able to draw on the burgeoning practice of lay activism within the Anglican communion to champion a highly successful donation campaign. In the final instance, the church was completed with thousands of pounds in small-money donations from men and women across the spectrum of Bombay's residents. The evidence of their shared commitment to the church building project speaks to the popularity and power of the policy of civic infrastructural investment and development of Bombay. Far from being a purely political, ideological, or even political-economic story, the growth of Bombay along its distinctive commerce- and infrastructure-oriented trajectory can be seen in the very fabric of the city's built environment. The church helps tell that story, and it is far from the only massive early modern building project to engage Bombay's developmental narrative. We turn to another example, Bombay's dockyards, in the next chapter.

The Politics of Bombay's 18th Century Dockyards: Western India and Partisan Imperial Policy

Introduction

In 1750, Bombay Dockyard opened its first drydock. For the first time since English ships had arrived in Surat to establish a direct trade in Indian goods, there was a full suite of infrastructure devoted to shipbuilding and ship repair, owned by Englishmen, in India. The massive implications of the dockyard complex and its technically sophisticated drydock affected the English imperial project in Bombay, and beyond, at every level. The presence of British shipping and shipbuilding infrastructure in Bombay, a site over which British sovereignty was *de jure* assured more than any other EIC outpost in Asia, provided the British East Indies shipping complex and the British Navy with a strategically invaluable resource. For the first time, massive repair and reprovisioning operations could be carried out under direct East India Company supervision and financing within the Indian Ocean. Thus, the new dockyards promised to obviate the stopgap measures that were used for decades in Asia to rate English ships seaworthy—or at least seaworthy enough to limp back to Britain or North America for assessment and repair at royal and private dockyards.[1] Such a resource dramatically increased the sustainability of British naval and mercantile power projection in the Indian Ocean arena. At the same time, it tied shipbuilding, shipping, and naval power projection closer than ever to the East India Company's

[1] See Sarah Kinkel, *Disciplining the Empire: Politics, Governance, and the Rise of the British Navy* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2018); H.V. Bowen, "Britain in the Indian Ocean Region and Beyond: Contours, Connections, and the Creation of a Global Maritime Empire," in *Britain's Oceanic Empire: Atlantic and Indian Ocean Worlds, c. 1550-1850*, ed. H.V. Bowen, Elizabeth Mancke, and John G. Reid (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2012): 58-59; Andrew Lambert, "Strategy, Policy, and Shipbuilding: The Bombay Dockyard, the Indian Navy, and Imperial Secuirty in Eastern Seas, 1784-1869," in *Worlds of the East India Company*, ed. H.V. Bowen, Margarette Lincoln, and Nigel Rigby (Rochester, NY: D.S. Brewer, 2002): 137-151; Nicholas Tracy, "Parry of a Threat to India, 1768-1774," *Mariner's Mirror* 59 (1973): 35-48.

financial calculus. As a result, it further wove the Company into the British imperial state, challenging the idea that the Company's sovereignty in South Asia was ever meaningfully distinct from that of the imperial state.[2] Lastly, through the project's reliance on western India's predominantly Parsi shipbuilding community in decision-making and construction processes, Bombay's dockyard project served as a turning point in the Company's relationship to South Asian labor. If the dockyard proved so important to the British imperial state and merchant community, why did this monumental project only reach completion in 1750? Why was it only begun in earnest in 1735?

The answer lies in the politics and ideological differences over empire and the East India Company that persisted into the mid-18th century, despite common assumptions about political cohesion within British imperial policy at this time.[3] These political changes and conflicts altered

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[2] Cf Philip J Stern, *The Company-State: Corporate Sovereignty and the Early Modern Foundations of the British Empire in India* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011).
[3] See Steve Pincus, ""Reconfiguring the British Empire," *William and Mary Quarterly* 69, no. 1 (2012): 63-70; "Addison's Empire: Whig Conceptions of Empire in the Early Eighteenth Century," *Parliamentary History* 31, no. 1 (2012): 99-117; "*Gulliver's Travels*, Party Politics, and Empire," in *New Perspectives on the History of Political Economy*, ed. Robert Fredona and Sophus A. Reinert (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2018); James M. Vaughn, *The Politics of Empire at the Accession of George III: The East India Company and the Crisis and Transformation of Britain's Imperial State* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2019): 19-49; Bruce Carruthers, *City of Capital: Politics and Markets in the English Financial Revolution* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1996), 138; Anne Murphy, *The Origins of English Financial Markets: Investment and Speculation Before the South Sea Bubble* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 39-65; P.G.M. Dickson, *The Financial Revolution in England: A Study in the Development of Public Credit, 1688-1756* (New York: St. Martin's, 1967), 46-57, 407-414, 522-533; Tiraana Bains, "Making and Debating Empires in South Asia and the Global British Empire, 1756-1799," doctoral dissertation, Yale University 2021; Ibid, "The Making and Unmaking of a Presidency: Envisioning Empire in British Bencoolen, 1685-1825," *Journal of British Studies* 63 (2024): 521-541; Amy Watson, *Patriots Before Revolution: The Rise of Party Politics in the British Atlantic, 1714-1763* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2025). Cf Lewis Namier, *The Structure of Politics at the Accession of George III* (London: Macmillan, 1929); J.H. Plumb, *England in the Eighteenth Century* (Hammondsworth, UK: Penguin, 1950); Ibid, *Sir Robert Walpole* (2 vols.; Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1956-1961); H.T. Dickinson, *Walpole and the Whig Supremacy* (London: English Universities Press, 1973); and to

the earlier calculus about the East Indies shipping complex in the eyes of both Company Directors and ships' owners in London and Company employees in India. In England, the Company's corporate impetus to improve their shipping infrastructure in India resulted from the turbulent, then stabilizing, relationship between the Company as an institution and the partisan politics present in Parliament. Eventual growing synergy between the aims of both advanced a crucial metropolitan shift toward integrating South Asia into the imperial state. In so doing, the politics of the Company and the state help belie today's dominant historiographic interpretation of the distinct "Company-state" status of English imperialism in Asia.[4]

This decision was also fraught with ideological conflict for India-based Company employees. Surat, where South Asian mercantile shipping on the western coast was clustered in the 17th century, was the earliest site of an EIC factory in India. The access Company merchants had to local merchant elites in Surat kept them tethered to the city even after the EIC got control of their own land and harbor in Bombay. As we have seen, even when the Company attempted to pull investment from Surat and focus on Bombay during the Anglo-Mughal war, they failed to convince Surati merchants to risk their relationships with the Surat government and trade with the Company out of Bombay. By the end of the conflict, the Mughal state remained powerful enough to compel the Company to continue doing the bulk of their west coast trading in Surat.

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some degree C.A. Bayly, *Rulers, Townsmen, and Bazaars: North Indian Society in the Age of British Expansion, 1770-1870* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2012 [1983]), 239-276.

[4] Cf. Philip J Stern, *The Company-State: Corporate Sovereignty and the Early Modern Foundations of the British Empire in India* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), 11; Ibid, *Empire, Incorporated: The Corporations that Built British Colonialism* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press, 2023); David Veevers, *The Origins of the British Empire in Asia, 1600-1750* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2020); Andrew Phillips and J.C. Sharman, *Outsourcing Empire: How Company-States Made the Modern World* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2020); David Veevers and William A. Pettigrew, ed. *The Corporation as a Protagonist in Global History, c.1550-1750* (Boston: Brill, 2019).

But by the 1730s, the Mughal state was in far different straits. Rapid territorial expansion and intensive military conflicts had cost the Mughals their always-tenuous hold on many of their subordinate regional assignees. As a result, breakaway regional powers like Shivaji's Marathas in the west kept the wealth produced by their land, instead of forwarding part of it up the food chain to the central Mughal administration.

In Surat, where capital was concentrated despite the traditional agrarian base of the state's wealth being eaten away by rival powers, local merchants and the Company's employees were forced to react to the flailing local Mughal apparatus which began to encroach on the capital reserves that funded international trade. Company employees, bitterly divided along ideological lines also evident in their patronage networks, were conflicted about the appropriate response. While prior scholarship has focused on individual private trade concerns as the driving force behind Company employees' reactions to Mughal state collapse in western India, little attention has been paid to linking those decisions to the partisan theories of empire and wealth which circulated across the British imperial space at the time. Here, I show that one group of Company employees in Western India, committed to a risky, militaristic, territorially expansionist theory of empire associated with their Establishment Whig patrons in London as well as across the empire, dominated Company administration in Bombay and Surat in the crucial years leading up to 1735. An opposing group, who advocated a commercial, labor- and capital-development intensive, comparatively less militaristic role for Bombay were nevertheless able to wrest control over the local administration from this opposing party after 1735. This move was in keeping with the political tactics of their Radical-Patriot Whig patrons and interlocutors in England and across the empire who moved against the Establishment Whig oligarchy at the same time. Both in Bombay-Surat and elsewhere across the empire, British partisans were able to capitalize on the very Walpolean strategies of scandal-uncovering and allegations of personal malfeasance to achieve the rejection of the oligarchy's political methods and ideological goals. As a result, after decades of disagreement, the prolonged commercial crisis in Western India was able to galvanize a full-throated, albeit partisan, commitment to Bombay as a site of commercial-, capital- and labor-based imperial growth as symbolized by the dockyards project. By uncovering these partisan-political fault lines within the Company's decision-making across its multi-sited and hierarchical administration, I once again reject the common concept of the Company-state as either a unitary, corporate actor in imperial expansion or a diffuse, uncontrolled and uncontrollable network of rogue Englishmen in India. Rather, I demonstrate how the Company's "too big to fail" incorporation into the machinery of the British imperial state kept partisan-political and ideological conflict alive within the constraints of the Company's governance structure, linking it ever-closer to the global and holistic debate over the politics and ideology of 18th century British imperialism among the state's subjects and citizens.

The increasing difficulty of working within the slowly collapsing Mughal administration in Surat helped bring regional interlocutors on board with the Company's idea of shifting operations to Bombay, which the radical-Patriot vision for the site and its dockyard implied. But the Company's merchant collaborators among the South Asian communities of western India were not, alone, enough to prove the success of the dockyard project. The beginning of Bombay's dockyards found its final puzzle piece in the role played by South Asian, specifically Parsi, shipbuilders during its design and construction. These Gujarati Parsi artisans had been based in and around Surat since before the development of the Mughal administration of seaborne trade in the region in the 1500s.[5] Their expertise in the vernacular shipbuilding styles of the Indian Ocean region, along with access to the superior shipbuilding materials of South Asia and the Arabian Sea littoral, combined to produce a distinctive skill set the radical-Patriot wing of the East India Company's administrators wanted to encourage and capture in their site of commercial and industrious empire: Bombay. However, Parsi craftsmen were not simply an extension of the Parsi merchant community. Because of their expertise in an in-demand skillset, Parsi artisans were able to take or leave the Company's offers of employment and collaboration. They negotiated for themselves within the political valences of the time and space in which they lived, in such a way that challenges the common interpretation that Parsis needed the English to climb an economic and political ladder in western India.

With the collapse of Mughal influence in Surat, the successor Maratha state seemed poised, in Company employees' eyes, to dominate the littoral waters, and potentially poach the expertise of regional shipbuilders.[6] If Surati Parsi shipbuilders were coaxed away to one of the centers of Maratha naval construction by the prevalence of business, the security of the EIC's

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[5] See H.E. Eduljee, *Kisseh-I Sanjan* (Bombay [Mumbai]: K.R. Cama Oriental Institute, 1991), 1-26, 49-59; Eckehard Kulke, *The Parsees in India: A Minority as Agent of Social Change* (München [Munich]: Weltforum Verlag, 1974), 23-33; David L. White, "Parsis in the Commercial World of Western India, 1700-1750," *The Indian Economic and Social History Review* 24, no. 2 (1987), 187-188, 193; Ashok V. Desai, "The Origins of Parsi Enterprise," *The Indian Economic and Social History Review* 5, no. 4 (1968), 307-310.

[6] See Walter Sadgun Desai, *Bombay and the Marathas up to 1774* (Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal, 1970); Manohar Malgonkar, *Kanhoji Angrey, Maratha Admiral: An Account of his Life and his Battles with the English* (Bombay [Mumbai]: Asia Publishing House, 1959); R.A. Wadia, *The Bombay Dockyard and the Wadia Master Builders* (Bombay [Mumbai]: R.A. Wadia, 1955); Bhalchandra Krishna Apte, *A History of the Maratha Navy and Merchantships* (Bombay [Mumbai]: State Board for Literature and Culture, 1973); and especially Lakshmi Subramanian, *Indigenous Capital and Imperial Expansion: Bombay, Surat, and the West Coast* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1996); Ibid, *The Sovereign and the Pirate: Ordering Maritime Subjects in India's Western Littoral* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2016); Ibid, "Bombay and the West Coast in the 1740s," *The Indian Economic and Social History Review* 8, no. 2 (1981): 189-216.

shipping, and the overall stability of shipping in the region, could take a serious hit.[7] The Maratha-aligned regional seaborne powers had few compunctions, if any, about raiding shipping. Both the English and the Marathas had adopted the use of ships' passes some years earlier, in emulation of and response to Portuguese claims of control over the region's waters. But most actors agreed that the Portuguese were a collapsing power in the region, much as the Mughals were.[8] For advocates of Bombay as a radical-Patriot styled, commercial- and industry-oriented port, with a highly useful shipping and dockyards complex open to the Company and her allies, trading the Portuguese claim to extensive control over the maritime littoral for a Maratha claim thereto was not progress.

Instead, the dockyard project and a shipbuilding and shipping industry at Bombay could create an opportunity to reconfigure the pass system that had come to dominate the western coast and engage the Maratha seaborne powers on a more commercial footing.[9] At the same time, attracting Parsi artisans to Bombay's shipbuilding complex would not only strengthen Bombay's fledgling maritime construction and repair industry but prove a potential drain on the seagoing

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[7] Lakshmi Subramanian, "Bombay and the West Coast in the 1740s," *The Indian Economic and Social History Review* 8, no. 2 (1981): 189-216.

[8] Lakshmi Subramanian, *Indigenous Capital and Imperial Expansion: Bombay, Surat, and the West Coast* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1996); Ibid, *The Sovereign and the Pirate: Ordering Maritime Subjects in India's Western Littoral* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2016); Ibid, "Bombay and the West Coast in the 1740s," *The Indian Economic and Social History Review* 8, no. 2 (1981): 189-216; P.S. Pissurlencar, *Portuguese-Maratha Relations* (Bombay [Mumbai]: Maharashtra State Board for Literature and Culture, 1983).

[9] Subramanian derisively treats this language as a smokescreen for EIC landgrabbing, especially in "Bombay and the West Coast in the 1740s," *The Indian Economic and Social History Review* 8, no. 2 (1981): 189-216; but it is worthwhile to take it seriously, in the spirit of the interventionist foreign policy of Patriot Whigs detailed by Amy Watson in *Patriots Before Revolution: The Rise of Party Politics in the British Atlantic, 1714-1763* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2025). See also John Brewer, *Party Ideology and Popular Politics at the Accession of George III* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1976); Kathleen Wilson, "Empire, Trade, and Popular Politics in Mid-Hanoverian Britain: The Case of Admiral Vernon," *Past and Present* 121 (1988): 74-109.

expertise of the Maratha. In this manner, the collaboration with Parsi shipbuilding engaged the radical-Patriot Whig formula for foreign, should the Marathas continue to position themselves against the Company. The Company would extend its access to resources to make possible protecting a commercial system in the region that was maximally free and fair, much as radical-Patriot Whigs argued across the empire in the 1740s. Parsi craftsmen, for their part, were able to negotiate a comparatively powerful position in relation to the Company precisely because they were crucial to the success of the plan. That negotiation was parlayed into growing political-economic success and influence for Parsis in manufacturing, as well as trading—within the Parsi community, and among the Company's employees and directors. As such, early 18th century Parsi shipbuilders demonstrated the more inclusive, manufacturing- and commercial-oriented radical-Patriot theory of empire within the South Asian context, as North American colonials did in the Atlantic World.

If this interpretation of the Parsi shipbuilders' role seems overly concerned with the Company's understanding, I need to note that it is comparatively challenging to glean the exact motivations of Parsi shipbuilding figures whose appearance in the early 18th-century source base is fleeting. Nevertheless, it is possible to sketch out the career of Lavji Nasarwanji Wadia, the first known Parsi master builder in Bombay, by examining Company sources and cross-referencing Parsi community histories available in English. Wadia's work as master builder earned him and his descendants obvious, even fawning, respect from later English naval figures and Company employees. His reputation thus marked a real turning point in the Company's broader considerations of South Asian labor in their western Indian possession, in keeping with the partisan-political ideals of radical-Patriot Whigs. As the 18th century wore on, the radical-Patriot party became increasingly fervent in their belief that the benefits and opportunities of the

British imperial state belonged to all the empire's subjects, regardless of their background—in the Indian Ocean world as well as the Atlantic.

As may be apparent, in this history of the construction of Bombay's dockyard complex, the narrative and material realities of the dockyard itself often take a backseat to the political-economic conflicts I attempt to uncover. Nevertheless, I see the dockyards as a crucial organizing tentpole for this argument. Too often have historians of this period in the region become bogged down by the internecine details of bizarre decisions historical actors made--both Europeans and South Asians. While the events of the era and the individuals involved in them are certainly key to any holistic understanding of change in western South Asia over the 18th century, this overly individual focus is what has led to arguments that privilege squabbles over specific private fortunes and imperial connections over the broader changes that suites of decisions led to in the region, which had far longer-reaching consequences for the institutions (and necessarily the individuals) who lived and worked in western India in the later 18th century and beyond. My focus on the decision-making which enabled the ultimate construction of the dockyard allows me to connect what might at first glance look like an impenetrable tangle of *ad hominem* griping to a consistent ideological and partisan-political debate occurring across the British empire at the time under study. This effectively draws one compelling signal out of what has, to many observers, seemed so much noise. The object that is the dockyard makes that possible and allows me to link several previously siloed historiographies in this analysis.

The Charterparty System, Shipbuilding, and Metropolitan Politics of Empire c.1735

Building dock infrastructure in Bombay was advocated, at least at some point, by every Company administrator of the city between 1661 and 1735. This unanimity was unusual, cutting across the partisan divides which have always governed Bombay's trajectory. The concept of dock infrastructure thus represented one of the few areas of civic infrastructural policy which commanded support from both advocates of Bombay as a commercial entrepôt and advocates of it as a site from which to expand a territorial empire in India. For advocates of a commercial imperial vision for the city, shipping infrastructure would solidify Bombay's importance as a site of lading and unlading for long-distance maritime trade throughout the Indian Ocean region, whether the traders were on Company-sponsored ships or not. For advocates of expanding the Company's territorial control in western India, a purpose-built set of docks and shipyards would allow for a more militarized and fortified Company factory from which to conduct business with an upper hand.[10] Since both groups' theory of Bombay's development supported investment in a dockyard, the long period of inactivity on this front cannot be explained by purely emphasizing intra-Company ideological contestation. Instead, the fallow period in the development of Bombay's maritime industry must be seen, in large part, as resulting from Company shipping and maritime defense policies which began in the early Stuart era and survived the partisan politicization of the East India Company's decision making after the Restoration.

Starting with members of Marlborough's royal expedition to receive Bombay from the Portuguese in 1662, Englishmen wrote of its exceptional maritime potential. "His Majesty will reap much benefit by the customs that may be raised" from Bombay's "famous" and "very commodious" port, Henry Gary wrote.[11] When the EIC took over Bombay from King Charles II in 1668, it was seen as unimproved. And yet, it had genuine natural advantages as a port *and* as a fort. Therefore, the site interested both those who saw Bombay as a burgeoning commercial

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[10] See also James M. Vaughn, "John Company Armed: The English East India Company, the Anglo-Mughal War, and Absolutist Imperialism," *Britain and the World* 11 (2018): 101-137; P.J. Marshall, *Bengal: The British Bridgehead, Eastern India 1740-1828* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1987).

[11] TNA CO 77/9, "Henry Gary at Goa to [?] in London," 31 December 1662.

entrepôt and their factional opponents. Commercial advocates argued that "Bombay lies in an excellent latitude for the whole trade of India," being "a most excellent harbor, winter and summer;" therefore, Bombay would benefit from a population of "carpenters for building houses as well as ships."[12] For territorial and military-expansion minded administrators, "a dry dock for the refitting of ships [would] be of great use," in the city for military purposes, "and [might] be easily made."[13]

Bombay-based boosters of the city, even when ideological opponents, thus supported investment in a dockyard.[14] The stumbling block that kept administrators from building one was not, at this time, local political will. Rather, the corporate board of the EIC in London wavered on the topic throughout the Company's early years in control of Bombay. Investing in such a complex would mark the first significant project designed to benefit the EIC's administration of Indian sites; in other factories, they had been able to coopt extant local systems and infrastructure.[15] Obviously Directors in London understood that Bombay, as an "unimproved" site, had little to no administrative infrastructure in place when the Company took control of it in 1668.[16] However, the cost outlays for responding to that reality with built infrastructure proved

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[12] BL IOR/3/37, "John Petit Council at Bombay to London," 24 January 1677, f.180; BL IOR/E/3/32, Gerald Aungier, "Proposals Touching Bombay Island," January 1672, f. 147f.
[13] BL IOR/E/3/46, "John Wybourne and Bombay Council to Court of Committees," 29 December 1686, f. 120v.
[14] While the "booster" language is not historically accurate, many of Bombay's advocates during the 1600s and 1700s remind the 21st century reader of the 19th century expansionist city advocates profiled in, for example, William Cronon's *Nature's Metropolis: Chicago and the Great West* (New York: W.W. Norton and Company, 1991).
[15] Peter J. Marshall, "The British in Asia: Trade to Dominion,1700-1765" in *Oxford History of the British Empire*, vol. 2 (5 vols; New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), 502-506; Bernard Cohn, *Colonialism and its Forms of Knowledge: The British in India* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1996).
[16] See Paul Slack, *From Reformation to Improvement: Public Welfare in Early Modern England* (New York: Clarendon Press, 1998).

daunting to a board of merchants, even those who were developing a partisan-political ideology of empire. These were men who had entered the governance of the Company to implement their partisan methods of making money from Indian trade. In the political economy of 17th century powerful merchants, those methods did not often involve *spending* money *in* India.[17] Instructions from London regularly qualified their ideological support for a dock complex, emphasizing its need to be cost effective. The Directors reminded their expenditure-happy booster-administrator Gerald Aungier that the Company was not a "prince" with "nothing else to do but to maintain themselves and their own greatness…spend[ing] their estates in making a great show that signifies nothing." Rather, they were in "business to advantage ourselves by trade."[18] While engaged in the Anglo-Mughal War, the Directors' interests in a militaristic expansion led them to write, "delay not in making a good dry dock." But even then, their support was conditional, stipulating the project should only move ahead if "it can be done at a charge that will be repaid us in revenue within seven or eight years."[19] At a time of open hostilities with the Mughal state, as the island was depopulated and trade all but ceased, one struggles to understand how an accurate future prediction to that effect could be supported by any evidence from India.

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[17] This is an area within the literature on economic theorizing and party-politics in the Stuart period which requires further research. To date, historians focused on the parliament-crown dynamics of the late Stuart era have often glossed over the political economic debates of the early 1670s to get to the post-Exclusion Crisis debates which flourished at the end of Charles II's reign. Steve Pincus and James Robinson make a somewhat static argument about the state's continual investment in imperial "public goods" in the early modern period, but their data stems from the post-Glorious Revolution period. See "Wars and State-Making Reconsidered: The Rise of the Developmental State," *Annales: Histoire, Sciences Sociales* 71, no. 1 (2016): 5-36.

[18] BL IOR/E/3/88, "Court of Committees in London to President and Council in Surat," 5 March 1675, f. 84v.

[19] BL IOR/E/3/91, "Court of Committees in London to General and Council at Bombay," 3 August 1687, f.166.

Throughout the period, Bombay-based boosters' inclinations to spend were caught by a net of adverse ideology and economic thought in London. Bombay was without its own reliable source of capital for projects most administrators agreed were beneficial, and that was a significant stumbling block to getting such a project off the ground. Aungier had tried to get around the issue of funding by suggesting that "there be encouragement granted for the building of ships, and vessels[--]that is a particular privilege in the customs or otherwise for so many years, provided that after being built they be not suffered to sold to any other place, but employed in voyages for ten years or more and that when any such vessels are sold…double custom be paid for them."[20] Such proposals were common in the early 1670s, when the Company's London Directors frequently suspended customs in Bombay; that leniency about revenue dissipated, however, as the decade wore on. We have already seen how cash-strapped and risky EIC trading in western India became as the dominant political-economic and partisan ideology within the Company grew increasingly affiliated to the late Stuart state in the 1680s. That led to the partisan-political crisis of monopoly and the damage, particularly to western Indian trade relationships, that the presence of New Company affected.

Even with those constraints, however, a strength of the EIC remained making its shareholders money, and a lot of it. High dividend payments for East India Company shareholders became a tentpole of the developing London stock market. High dividends were a business choice the Company made, and they were funded in no small part by remitting the profits of the East India trade to London, rather than reinvesting them in the Indian business.[21]

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[20] BL IOR/E/3/32, Gerald Aungier, "Proposals Touching Bombay Island," January 1672, f. 147f.

[21] The Company's fiscal enmeshment with the state went alongside that of the South Sea Company and Bank of England after the defeat of the Godolphin-Marlborough ministry and the British intervention in the War of Spanish Succession. Eventually, the three joint-stock companies created an economic engine for the Walpolean state. See Chapter 3 for the first part of

Under the partisan politics of the 1710s and 1720s, public finance relied on liquid EIC capital within the metropole, and in return, the EIC and its joint-stock colleagues, the South Sea Company and the Bank of England, maintained monopoly privileges. This arrangement became increasingly powerful under the political era of Prime Minister Robert Walpole and his Establishment Whigs. As one recent scholarly summary put it, Walpole's "economic policy supported the interests of city financiers within Britain…Robert Walpole was a skilled political manager who used patronage, voting slates, and the expansion of the executive bureaucracy to ensure that his members adhered closely to the ministry's dictums." The Establishment Whigs were "in many ways the party of moderate conservatism," with an "approach to governance" that "was designed to maintain a socially stable and commercially secure British Empire."[22] Such a relationship provided an ongoing incentive for corporate leaders to reject the reinvestment of Company liquidity for any major project in India, including Bombay's dry dock.[23]

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this narrative, as well as James M. Vaughn, *The Politics of Empire at the Accession of George III: The East India Company and the Crisis and Transformation of Britain's Imperial State* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2019): 19-49; Bruce Carruthers, *City of Capital: Politics and Markets in the English Financial Revolution* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1996), 138; Anne Murphy, *The Origins of English Financial Markets: Investment and Speculation Before the South Sea Bubble* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 39-65; P.G.M. Dickson, *The Financial Revolution in England: A Study in the Development of Public Credit, 1688-1756* (New York: St. Martin's, 1967), 46-57, 407-414, 522-533. H.T. Dickinson, *Walpole and the Whig Supremacy* (London: English Universities Press, 1973), 93-94, 99, 109.

[22] Amy Watson, *Patriots Before Revolution: The Rise of Party Politics in the British Atlantic, 1714-1763* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2025), 5.

[23] Metropolitan residents knew the truth about the quid pro quo that sustained the companies and argued against it, but they weren't a factor in the EIC's calculus. For examinations of the joint-stock/English-British state nexus, see Abigail L. Swingen, *Competing Visions of Empire: Labor, Slavery, and the Origins of the British Atlantic Empire* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2015), 172-195; Steve Pincus, "Addison's Empire: Whig Conceptions of Empire in the Early Eighteenth Century," *Parliamentary History* 31, no. 1 (2012): 111-112. For the "politics out of doors" reaction, see John Trenchard, "The Fatal Effects of the South Sea Scheme, and the Necessity of Punishing its Directors," in *Cato's Letters* (4 vols, London: Printed for W. Wilkins, 1733), 1:5-9; Ibid, "How Exclusive Companies Influence and Hurt our Government," in *Cato's Letters* (4 vols, London: Printed for W. Wilkins, T. Woodward, J. Walthoe, and J. Peele, 1733),

That decision-making on the part of the metropolitan EIC administrators drove many complaints from the Company's Bombay-boosters into the 1720s. The opposition to a policy of metropolitan stock manipulation in lieu of investment in the Company's sites of empire in India never went away. The Company's employees in Bombay who wanted investment, including in the dockyard, during this period knew exactly how important cost was to the bosses in London who opposed them politically. But these employees still wanted infrastructure and saw it as a public good which might be able to win the support of increasingly Walpolean Establishment Whig Directors. So, they tried to assert Bombay's ability to bear fiscal responsibility for the project. When a Bombay Governor came to power who rejected the more Walpolean perspective, he might observe that "your Honors are very uneasy under the expense of building." Yet, he could argue, maritime investments would have immediate impact on day-to-day costs. "The benefit of preserving your marine stores will, we doubt not, sufficiently warrant the building that [marine] yard," Charles Boone and his Council wrote in November 1723, adding that "the warehouses as can be spared shall be let out to shipping."[24] Employees in Bombay were

3:206-213; "Motion for Appointing a Committee of Twelve to Inquire into the Proceedings of the South Sea Company," 1 Jun 1733, in *Cobbett's Parliamentary History of England*, 36 vols. (London: 1806-1820), 9:151; *Daily Courant*, 28 February 1730; Abigail Swingen, "The Bubble and the Bail-Out: The South Sea Company, Jacobitism, and Public Credit in Early Hanoverian Britain," in *Boom, Bust, and Beyond: New Perspectives on the 1720 Stock Market Bubble*, ed. Stefano Condorelli and Daniel Menning (Boston: De Gruyter, 2019): 139-159; Abigail Swingen, "Calico Madams and South Sea Cheats: Global Trade, Finance, and Popular Protest in Hanoverian England," *Journal of British Studies* 63, no. 1 (2024): 114-138; Adrian Randall, *Riotous Assemblies: Popular Protest in Hanoverian England* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006). Furthermore, Tawny Paul has recently published a piece on the market in mariner's tickets which demonstrates further engagement with the macroeconomic politics of imperial state finance in this period by a wide variety of English men and women. See "Involuntary Investors in British State-Building: Seamen's Tickets and the Financial Revolution, c.1700-1760," *Past & Present* (2025): 1-38.

[24] BL IOR E/4/459, "Governor and Council at Bombay to Court of Directors in London," 8 November 1723, f. 251.

willing to acknowledge some rudimentary docking facilities which were put in place following the siege of the city in the Anglo-Mughal War. However, the Council regularly reported disparagingly on the permanently provisional nature of shipping and docking infrastructure.

A focus of these Governors' reports was how expensive stopgap infrastructure, like the docks in his time, was. The shoreline set aside for shipping facilities in Aungier's initial plan was now occupied by slapdash huts which were used by a ragtag bunch of semi-qualified English ships' carpenters and Company Marine employees. Ships were being laboriously careened and partially repaired, but without any permanent dockyard infrastructure and few qualified ships' carpenters, capacity for repair was limited. Invalid ships' goods needed to be stored, especially while they were careened, but the only facilities for storage of transiting cargo were open-air sheds. "Building sheds for housing the stores of the several vessels lied up [here] in the rains (and which being *kajan*ed are likely to be destroyed with fire)" was therefore a "very great expense in the Marine," William Phipps and Council explained in March 1722. They argued it was in the Company's financial interests to spend "within six thousand rupees" upfront to "build a Marine Yard…with a range of warehouses…and convenient tiled sheds for the work of the carpenters and sawyers, and also a proper office for the Master Attendant….what we judge a very necessary expense, which by its convenience in a short time will be saved."[25] In 1723, this proposal was followed up with a more detailed plan for docking facilities drawn up by captain and surveyor Elias Bates, who prefaced his description of the project with "when this settlement being less burthensome [it may] become more agreeable to your Honors" to "consent to so considerable an undertaking." Bates explained that "it is the general opinion here there will be

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[25] BL IOR/E/4/459, "Bombay Council to Court of Directors in London," 22 Mar 1722, f. 55-65. *kajan* was used by English officials to refer to woven palm matting and thatching across South Asia.

little occasion for a wet dock, but that a dry one would be of great use and might be completed as laid down in the draft for about 20,000 or 30,000 rupees."[26]

As much as partisan-political concerns drove decision-making about the policy of the Company, individual projects could thus remain beholden to specific fiscal concerns. Particularly, infrastructure projects in the 17th and 18th centuries were high financial risk and high reward potential endeavors, as they remain today. Eventually, the Company's Directors would change their tune and decide to fund the project. Why? What changed? The answer lies in the charterparty system by which the London Directors tendered bids for Company shipping and even negotiated convoy and defensive service from the English Navy. From the earliest royal charters of the East India Company, the provision of shipping to and from India was left wholly within the Company's purview. In 1600, when the Company was founded, the available English state-controlled tonnage was minimal, as was typical at the turn of the 17th century in Europe.[27] Mercantile tonnage in private hands was limited as well, especially for long-distance shipping vessels, or merchantmen.[28]

The petition which a cohort of Levant- Company affiliated merchants sent Queen Elizabeth on 24 September 1599 which created the original East India Company stated only that a total fund of £30,133 had been subscribed by "diverse merchants, induced by the success of the voyage performed by the Dutch nation, and being informed that the Dutchmen prepare for a new

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[26] BL IOR/E/4/459, "Governor and Council at Bombay to Court of Directors in London," 8 November 1723, f.206-270.

[27] In 1603, at James I's accession to the English throne, the entire English Navy was four ships and a few small pinnace boats; see Elizabeth Milford, "The Navy at Peace: the Activities of the Early Jacobean Navy, 1603-1618," in *Mariner's Mirror* 76, no. 1 (1990), 24.

[28] Cf 19th and early 20th Century antiquarian histories of English shipping, especially William Schaw Lindsay, *History of Merchant Shipping and Ancient Commerce* (London: Sampson, Low, Marston, and Searle), 1876 (4 vols); works of E. Keble Chatterton, especially *The Old East Indiamen* (London: T. Werner Laurie, Ltd), 1914.

voyage, *and to that end have bought diverse ships here, in England*, were stirred with no less affection…and upon that affection have resolved to make a voyage to the East Indias."[29] The Merchant Adventurers were driven to submit their petition in part by fear that extant shipping stock in England would be bought by the VOC, damaging the interests of England and its merchants in the zero-sum world of early 17th century foreign policy and trade. Thus, for the first voyages of the East India Company, its London-based investors purchased some of the only ships capable of such a journey available in England, including the *Malice Scourge,* the *Susan*, the *Hector*, and the *Ascension*.[30] The *Malice Scourge* was sold to the Company for £3,700 by major Company investor George Clifford, Earl of Cumberland, who had it built in 1586 to support his privateering activities. The early voyages of these trading fleets, however, brought considerable returns to the Company, which were widely reported across Europe; when the stock was reopened to new subscriptions in 1613, its total funds jumped from £30,133 to £418,000, including several foreign subscribers' money. But the trade was still risky; 64 ships were lost between 1601 and 1640.[31] For these reasons, purchasing ships from private owners for the East India Company trade grew increasingly expensive over the first decades of shipping. Shipowners knew the Company needed ships to continue the trade, and the trade promised spectacular returns. Shipowners looked to bring some of those returns to their own pockets. And, as the less

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[29] "Court Book 22 September 1599-10 August 1603," BL IOR/B/1 f. 9f; emphasis added. See also William Dalrymple, *The Anarchy: The Relentless Rise of the East India Company* (New York: Bloomsbury, 2019), 6-14.

[30] William Dalrymple, *The Anarchy: The Relentless Rise of the East India Company* (New York: Bloomsbury, 2019), 6-14.

[31] For loss figures, see John Keay, *The Honourable Company: A History of the English East India Company* (London: HarperCollins, 1991), 112-113. For investment in the second stock, see Rupali Mishra, *A Business of State: Commerce, Politics, and the Birth of the East India Company* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2018), 6. See also Robert Brenner, *Merchants and Revolution: Commercial Change, Political Conflict, and London's Overseas Traders, 1550-1653* (London: Verso, 2003), 25-32.

risky shipping route between England and North America became more popular, competition for seafaring ships increased dramatically.

The Company's response was to begin building their own ships. They had already bought a dockyard in Deptford in 1607, and the earliest ships built there were seen off with great fanfare by the chief English promoter of privatized empire, James I. The cost of building was reported to be more than three times less than the cost per ton of purchasing from private shipowners. By 1640 the EIC had expanded their dockyard operations to a second facility at Blackwall. Between 1607 and 1640, these two shipyards built 76 ships, specially designed both to carry freight and hold their own in maritime combat. At this point, the Company's shipping industry was vertically integrated. Hulls, masts, yards, sails, anchors, cables, and cordage were produced in the Company shipyards. The victualling was done by the Company, for the Company. They made their own gunpowder from imported saltpeter.[32]

And yet, problems quickly arose. Closely tied to the crown, the Company in the late 1620s and 1630s struggled with Charles I's lack of support after the Dutch attack on Company servants in Amboyna.[33] The Company vacillated between threatening to seek the support of Parliament at one moment and refusing to join the Levant Company in rejecting tonnage and poundage the next. Charles, unlike his father James, wanted more control over the Company, and if he couldn't get it, he would start his own rival companies, as in his support of William Courten.[34] The political climate made Company investors increasingly conservative about

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[32] For the best discussion of these dynamics, see Jean Sutton, *Lords of the East: The East India Company and its Ships* (London: Conway Maritime Press, 1981), 10-11, 13, 19, 46-47.

[33] For a recent and thorough treatment of the Amboyna conflict, see Alison Games, *Inventing the English Massacre: Amboyna in History and Memory* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2020).

[34] See Rupali Mishra, *A Business of State: Commerce, Politics, and the Birth of the East India Company* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2018), 242-302.

building ships. The ships the EIC built “might prove to be white elephants,” because of their size and design; “they were unsuitable for any other type of trade.” At the same time, private owners and part-owners of ships “were unwilling to let their ships out on freight” for voyages to India, “even at £30, £40, or £50 a ton for such long and dangerous voyages in seas infested with Portuguese and Dutch ships of war.”[35] The years of Personal Rule thus greatly weakened the East India Company, even as the North American merchants’ maritime trade grew.[36] For the first time in 1639, it was no longer cheaper for the Company to build its own boats. They took a privately built ship, the *Caesar*, on charter again that year, and quickly thereafter dismantled their shipbuilding faculties. The experiment of the Company dockyards had lasted only 32 years.[37]

With the shift to private shipping, one must ask who, exactly, made bids for Company shipping on these privately owned vessels? If it was so hard to get private shipping, even at exorbitant rates like £50 per ton, during Charles I’s reign, what changed? Partly, the foreign policy situation merchants’ cleared up a bit in 1637, when Charles made an alliance with the Dutch against the Spanish.[38] For another, there *was* good money to be made in providing Company shipping—and the risk was reasonable for the right investor. Company Directors, including the new colonial merchants who had innovated in private shipbuilding for the Atlantic market and finally gained access to the Company’s stock, had a decided interest in supplying

[35] Jean Sutton, *Lords of the East: The East India Company and its Ships* (London: Conway Maritime Press, 1981), 19.
[36] Contrast Mishra’s narrative to that in Robert Brenner, *Merchants and Revolution: Commercial Change, Political Conflict, and London’s Overseas Traders, 1550-1653* (London: Verso, 2003), 92-112.
[37] Jean Sutton, *Lords of the East: The East India Company and its Ships* (London: Conway Maritime Press, 1981), 19, 46-47.
[38] Elizabeth Hines, “Anglo-Dutch Commerce, Religion, and War, 1634-1652,” doctoral dissertation, University of Chicago, 2024, 40-63.

EIC shipping. The Company's Directors were some of the country's wealthiest men, whether from City or new merchant pedigree. As such, they were some of the only people in England with the liquid capital resources to build ships privately, pooling financing from only a small number of individuals. They could recoup that money on a near-guaranteed basis by providing shipping to the Company on a standardized contract, known as a charterparty.[39] Such a system benefitted both the Company and its individual members. It was desirable on the part of the Company as a joint-stock corporation because it limited their capital responsibilities for shipping in the era before widespread indemnity insurance for corporate bodies. The Company was only responsible for paying the lump sum to charter the ship and sundry other fees and expenses. They were explicitly not responsible for the finances of ship repair and seaworthiness while the ship was under charter, including within Indian waters. They were not responsible for compensation should the ship sink. They did not have to commit to any unexpected or unpredictable expenses.

At the same time, the ship owners, as Company Directors, could tender bids for shipping at a manipulated non-market rate. They could build exactly the right style and size of ship needed for Company trade and artificially limit the number of such ships available by making knowledge of what the Company wanted in East Indiamen difficult for outsiders to acquire. They could also exert considerable control over individual ships' voyages by providing ships' captains with complementary, and occasionally contradictory, instructions alongside those from the Committee of Shipping. Such dual sets of instructions gave captains plausible deniability if they tried to contest aspects of charterparty within India. By keeping private instructions from owners

[39] Jean Sutton, *Lords of the East: The East India Company and its Ships* (London: Conway Maritime Press, 1981), 19-24, 46-47.

private, it became increasingly difficult for Company officials in India to assert the authority of charterparty over private owners' instructions.[40] Thus, the standard charterparty contract sought to shift as much responsibility for a ship's seaworthiness and repair as possible onto the individual shipowner. That shipowner was willing to accept the risk because he was getting a shipping charter above market rate and had the promise of returns in the form of dividends from the Company as well as private privileges for importing luxury goods on his ship.[41]

Such an understanding of the system is borne out by close reading of a standard charter party. While it is difficult to find surviving examples of these documents, a parliamentary committee published a version of one, mostly unchanged since the late 17th century, in 1773. It began by stipulating that the owners and captain of the ship were responsible for rendering the ship "ready fitted and manned, with so many men as shall be sufficient to take in and preserve all such bullion, goods, and merchandizes as the said United Company shall send on board;" on or before the date agreed in the contract. It was furthermore the responsibility of the owners and captain to render the ship "strong and tight, and well and sufficiently victualed, tackled, and apparelled," both before departure and "at the time and times of her departure from port to port abroad, and also at her last departure from the East Indies." To ensure such an outcome, "the said

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[40] Issues with charterparties are a near-constant point of complaint and contention in the correspondence between India and England. Demurrage was often the biggest point of complaint; in their role as Company-serving Directors, the Court would often write of their frustration that overstays in India were "such costly things to us that you must effectually provide against and prevent them in the future," and "protest against…owners for all damage which may accrue to us thereby." See BL IOR/E/3/106, "Court of Directors in London to President and Council at Bombay," 29 Nov 1734, f. 253-254, among others.
[41] Jean Sutton, *Lords of the East: The East India Company and its Ships* (London: Conway Maritime Press, 1981); Sutton writes, "this small group of men…provided the right ships at the right time, but not at the right price. The element of pure self-interest…motivated their organization of shipping…providing many of the ships themselves on a rota basis and influencing the court in deciding the freight which they would receive as owners," 19.

Company, their surveyors, agents, officers, waiters, and servants, in England and abroad" were guaranteed "free liberty from time to time, and upon all occasions during this whole intended voyage, and until finally unladen, to repair and remain on board the said ship," so that they could "put locks on the hold, or seal the hatches of the said ship, if they please; and to take a survey of the said ship, and every part thereof." All such surveillance was to be entertained "at the charge of the said part-owners" and ship's master. Every regular expense, from required commissions from the crown to the paper, pens and ink needed to keep the required ship's journal, was to be covered by the ship's owners, not the Company. At the same time, the Company not only promised a rate of freighting above market value. It also granted extensive demurrage payments (a per diem payment for time spent on the voyage above the length stipulated by contract) and "allowances" of customs-free shipping to ships' officers and owners, calculated either in monetary value or in weight. [42]

Due to these elements of the East India Company's charterparty system, the Court of Directors were financially disincentivized from the building of a Bombay dockyard, specifically, for decades. The Directors perceived it as less financially risky to keep a system of promising nothing for commercial shipping maintenance in place. But while wearing the hats of shipowners (naturally jaunty and nautical), the same Directors were able to control the market on East India Company shipping and make high returns. Individual shipowners could slash ship ownership expenses either by maintaining ships comparatively minimally (which would not be questioned by the Company they controlled, even though inspection was written into charterparty), as well as through giving individual ships' captains highly risk averse sailing instructions which

[42] Appendix no. 1 to the "Fifth Report of the Committee of Secrecy Appointed to Enquire into the State of the East India Company," 30 March 1773, in *Reports from the Committees of the House of Commons,* vol. IV (London: House of Commons, 1776), 264-277.

competed with or overrode those of the Company (which the Company was then unable to enforce abroad). Committing to investment in a dockyard in India would not only require diverting Company cash away from paying dividends and into an expensive infrastructural project, but it would also commit the Company to enforcing their high standards for commercial shipping. Both outcomes were bad for the Company Directors' personal finances.

At the same time, the growing partisan-political enmeshment of Company and government did have significant influence on the Directors' decision calculus. First, the system of closed charterparty contracts, a form of risk management and extensive control over the Company's shipping by its Directors, started to lose its power in 1708. When the New and Old East India Companies were merged under one charter in that year, Parliament entered more fully into the regulation of the Company's trade. Parliamentary factfinding during the crisis of monopoly had uncovered the first great wave of financial scandals within the Company's merchant elite, which included the artificial manipulation of the shipping charter system.[43] In

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[43] There is significant literature on the defining of public office, corporate office, corruption, and the responsibilities of English joint-stock companies' officials to the public in the 17th and 18th centuries. One can refer to the introduction for some discussion of the historiography of bureaucracy in the early modern English/British imperial context. For treatment of the EIC's relationship with these issues more specifically, see Mark Knights, *Trust and Distrust: Corruption in Office in Britain and its Empire, 1600-1850* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2021); Bruce Carruthers, *City of Capital: Politics and Markets in the English Financial Revolution* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1996); Huw Bowen, *The Business of Empire: The East India Company and Imperial Britain, 1765-1833* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006); Bernard Cohn, "Representing Authority in Colonial India," in *The Invention of Tradition*, ed. Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2012 [1983]): 165-210; Miles Ogborn, "Wherein Lay the Late Seventeenth-Century State? Charles Davenant Meets Streynsham Master," *Journal of Historical Sociology* 15 (2002): 96-101; Callie Wilkinson, "The East India College Debate and the Fashioning of Imperial Officials," *The Historical Journal* 60, no. 4 (2017): 943-969; Nicholas B. Dirks, *The Scandal of Empire: India and the Creation of Imperial Britian* (Boston: Belknap Press, 2006); Peter Marshall, *East Indian Fortunes: The British in Bengal in the Eighteenth Century* (Oxford, UK: Clarendon Press, 1976); Will Pettigrew, "The Changing Place of Fraud in Seventeenth-Century Public Debates about International Trading Corporations," *Business History* 60, no. 3

response, the union of the Companies included a new by-law prohibiting the supply of Company shipping from Company Directors.[44] This was the first push towards reintegrating Company shipping and shipbuilding within the EIC's financial structure. If it became hard to charter ships from Company Directors, the appeal of chartering private shipping was dramatically lessened. Charterparty terms would have to be farm more favorable towards ship owners to incentivize them to provide the high-quality, specific shipping infrastructure the Company relied on. The EIC would lose the ability to control the appointment of captains, along with the high fees the sale of East India captaincy commanded. And while rates of charterparty might be less artificially inflated with the Directors out of the tendering process, the rates would remain higher than in many other industries. This was partly because the by-law preventing chartering Directors' ships wasn't a perfect constraint; Directors could still functionally own a ship by funding it more covertly. Additionally, the practice of hereditary bottoms drove up prices for the Company because of the downstream costs of acquiring a Company shipping charter.[45]

Furthermore, the Court of Directors, risk-averse and still recovering from the financial disasters of the 1690s and 1700s, maintained a politicized sense of fiscal peril when it came to a Bombay dockyard. The project would take several years to complete, and the political economic conditions in London and India were too unstable to commit to anything with an extended timeframe. The Company's debt-for-monopoly swap system that maintained their charter cost

(2018): 305-320; Spencer Leonard, "'The Capital Object of the Public:' The 1766-7 Parliamentary Inquiry into the East India Company," *English Historical Review* 132 (2017): 1110-1148; and more generally the work of numerous scholars on the crisis of the "nabob" in eighteenth century British politics and the Hastings trial.

[44] Of course, most scholars agree that this by-law was only ever loosely enforced; see Jean Sutton, *Lords of the East: The East India Company and its Ships* (London: Conway Maritime Press, 1981), 14, 19-23, 31-33

[45] Ibid, 29-33, 69-71.

them large amounts of ready cash at regular intervals and tied the Company's monopolistic rights to its continued funding of the national debt. This, combined with the commitment to regular high-yield dividends, put additional pressure on the Company's cash reserves. By 1708, there were also signs of instability in the newly British state which made the company's connection to the national debt risky, yet impossible to get out of. The Acts of Union were new and comparatively untested, though Jacobite threats were on the rise in Britain.[46] In the maritime context, a newly powerful Whig junto had proposed a series of bills which seemed likely to commit the British Navy to a greater role in protecting trade, even as the War of Spanish Succession was ongoing—which admittedly had the possibility to significantly change the Company's decision calculus around a dockyard investment. Nevertheless, a Court of Directors stalked by the ongoing threat of Whig revocations of monopoly could not be swayed into making a large cash outlay.[47]

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[46] The Act of Union was particularly bad for the English East India Company, as it angered many who had invested in Scots joint-stock companies whose investments would essentially be lost at the time of union. The Scots East-India Company had been petitioning against the English East India Company's attempts to enforce their monopoly against the Scots Company for years to this point, and in 1708 at least some pamphlet literature was calling on the English Company to pay the equivalence to the Scots Company which had been negotiated in the Act of Union, instead of the English state; see "Reasons why the East-India Company Ought to Pay the Equivalent Agreed to be Paid the Scots Company by the Articles of Union: And also Some Cautions Offer'd with Respect to the Renewal of their Grant" (London: n.p., 1708). At the same time, the domestic textile industry was threatened by the changes afoot in Britain and had started a paper war against the importation of India goods altogether, supported by some Whig political economists.

[47] Cf Linda Colley, *In Defiance of Oligarchy: the Tory Party, 1714-1760* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1982); see also J.H. Plumb, *The Growth of Political Stability in England, 1675-1725* (London: Macmillan, 1979 [1967]); Abigail L. Swingen, *Competing Visions of Empire: Labor, Slavery, and the Origins of the British Atlantic Empire* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2015), 172-195; Ibid, "The Bubble and the Bail-Out: The South Sea Company, Jacobitism, and Public Credit in Early Hanoverian Britain," in *Boom, Bust, and Beyond: New Perspectives on the 1720 Stock Market Bubble*, ed. Stefano Condorelli and Daniel Menning (Boston: De Gruyter, 2019): 139-159; Steve Pincus, "Addison's Empire: Whig Conceptions of Empire in the Early Eighteenth Century," *Parliamentary History* 31, no. 1 (2012): 99-117.

Throughout the period, a stable plank in the Company and the ships' owners' argument against a dockyard in Bombay was the widespread presence of vernacular shipbuilding and repair infrastructure in western India. It was much easier to negotiate charterparties which placed the financial burden of seaworthiness on captains and owners when both sides could argue that it was possible to repair a ship in western India in case of emergency without involving the Company. The hub of shipbuilding and repair for northern and western India's vernacular maritime trade was in Surat. The Portuguese outposts of Daman and Goa also had small, but growing shipbuilding industries. All three operated on a South Asian model, in which shipyards were not dissimilar to other stepped *ghat* infrastructure common along rivers. The shipyards at Suvali, near Surat, were "hollowed out on the bank of the [Tapti] river. While the ship was building, these slips were closed towards the river by an earthen dam. When the work of the building was completed, the dam was taken away and the water coming in floated off the ship."[48] In western India, many river mouths showed the effect of highly contrasted water levels depending on tides; this dramatic tidal table helped explain the "great breach" and "overflown" lands discussed frequently in Bombay. In Suvali, it helped enable comparatively low-investment shipbuilding docks.

Despite the availability of shipbuilders and infrastructure, it was still true that construction practices in South Asia and England varied dramatically. The unfamiliarity of many typical elements of South Asian shipbuilding often impacted the willingness of English captains on Company charterparty voyages to get repairs done by the "country carpenters" at Surat,

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[48] J.M. Campbell, *Gazetteer of the Bombay Presidency*, Vol II (Bombay: Government Central Press, 1877), 146-147.

Daman, or Goa.[49] A major difference was in the materials: teak wood, coconut fiber, and cotton in India versus picked rag and rope fiber and oak wood in Europe. Design was different as well, with a shell-built process dominating in India which allowed for more flexibility in construction than the typical European "skeleton" or framed method. Local company employees were advocates of local methods and materials, proclaiming them "very lasting" because they "admit of no caulking or other trimming" once finished.[50] Such processes meant that ships for the Company's use in Indian Ocean waters "might be built much cheaper" in India than in Britain, since "the timber of [this] country is much more durable than oak, and…the method of working it is much fitter to the climate."[51] Nevertheless, English captains were unsure about the feasibility of repairing an oak-hulled, skeleton-built English ship with the materials and techniques prevalent among South Asian shipbuilders.[52] Because of the control those captains had over their owners' ships, the marine stores in Bombay were forced to maintain a stock of "European" wood, nails, and other items.[53]

Even basic repair and maintenance tasks like graving and sheathing were done differently in India and England, being a two-step process in Europe but only a one-step process in India.

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[49] See William Taylor Money, "Observations on the Expediency of Shipbuilding at Bombay, for the Service of his Majesty, and of the East Indian Company," (London: Longman, 1811). Cf Henry Manwayring, *The Seaman's Dictionary* (1644); John Smith, "An Accidence for Young Sea-men: Or, Their Pathway to Experience" (1626).

[50] "George Oxenden and Council at Surat to Court of Committees in London," 2 Nov. 1668, quoted in William Foster, *The English Factories in India, 1668-1669* (London: Clarendon, 1927), 79. Foster writes that "no copy" of this letter is extant, "but a full abstract (consisting mainly of quotations)" was available to him. Ibid, 23.

[51] BL IOR/E/3/105, "Court of Directors in London to President and Council at Bombay," 12 Mar 1731, f. 231.

[52] Company Directors also expressed their concern about this matter regularly; see BL IOR/E/3/106, "Court of Directors in London to President and Council at Bombay," 5 Mar 1735, f. 430 for an example.

[53] For the prevalence of "European" maritime stores, see the monthly accounting figures in the Bombay records, for example in BL IOR/P/341/8, "Bombay Public Consultations," 1735-1736.

This was because oak, the English material, was less resistant to the warm water pest shipworm than the Indian teak.[54] Such a significant difference in one of the most common hull repair tasks (which contemporaries estimated needed complete redoing every two to three years) was yet another example of the practical problems which built on the financial disincentive to do repairs outside of England. Occasionally, one might find a captain comfortable with taking on the financial burden of local repairs on behalf of his ship's owners, or one who managed to negotiate a financial agreement with the Bombay Council to pay for the repairs. However, there remained a serious concern that such a financial outlay would not guarantee the benefits of a repaired ship whose repairs were done in India, because the vernacular shipyards and construction practices were so manifestly different.

Perspectives had altered, however, by the 1730s. In changes that had bolstered the Company's Directors, Robert Walpole's road to power compassed reinvigorating the Company's monopoly.[55] Walpole's interest in financing the national debt through alliances with monopoly trading companies helped the EIC negotiate the longest extension of their charter in years in 1730, renewing their monopoly until 1766.[56] But in moves that made many of the Directors nervous, Walpole and his Establishment Whigs had spent much of the first three decades of the 18th century engaging the country in naval war after naval war. The merchant community, even

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[54] Henry Manwayring, *The Seaman's Dictionary* (London: John Bellamy, 1644), f.46, 74, 93; Ruttonjee Ardeshir Wadia, *The Bombay Dockyard and the Wadia Master Builders* (1955), 23n.
[55] HT Dickinson, *Walpole and the Whig Supremacy* (London: English University Press, 1973), 93-94, 99, 109; "Motion for Appointing a Committee of Twelve to Inquire into the Proceedings of the South Sea Company," 1 June 1733, in *Cobbett's Parliamentary History of England,* 36 vols (London: 1806-1820), 9:151; *Daily Courant*, 28 February 1730. See also Bruce Carruthers, *City of Capital: Politics and Markets in the English Financial Revolution* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1996), 138.
[56] BL IOR/E/3/105, "Court of Directors in London to President and Council at Bombay," 12 Mar 1731, f. 242, 252.

those who identified as Establishment Whigs, increasingly felt that Walpole's policies failed to protect the shipping interests of the nation. Instead of investing in protecting the newly strengthened monopoly through naval power projection, Walpole's government in the late 1720s and 1730s privileged peace with Spain and an attempted territorial imperial expansion in the Southern Cone of South America.[57]

The EIC finally was forced to contend that the Walpolean state would not materially support the big companies' trade through maritime power projection, but at least it was supporting their interests at home. From that position of supposed strength, the directors were able to reach a consensus about spending their own money on maritime security. The Company commissioned two new cruising ships for Bombay from dockyards in England in 1729.[58] But the final blow to the Directors' majority-positive relationship with the state, which kept them from taking their own initiative to expand their infrastructure in South Asia, came in 1733, with Walpole's great parliamentary crisis. Wanting to eliminate the land tax on one of his more tenuous constituencies—cash-poor upper-class landowners—Walpole's major political project in that year was to raise additional customs and excise taxes on British consumers. While Walpole started with excise rates on goods not directly connected to the chartered companies, opposition to the plan was significant. Merchants further felt the need to distance themselves from Walpole when, in 1734 after failure of Walpole's excise plan in the Commons, the House of Lords opened a wide-ranging investigation into the accounting of the South Sea Company. The partisan wind was shifting, and the conditions for the dockyard project were coming right in London.[59]

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[57] Sarah Kinkel, *Disciplining the Empire: Politics, Governance, and the Rise of the British Navy* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2018).
[58] BL IOR B/60, "Court Minutes," 2 July 1729, f. 257.
[59] Because the partisan nature of decision-making within the East India Company is largely unexplored, especially in England, there are not direct citations to others making a similar

Western India in the 1730s: Dockyards to Consolidate Bombay's Role Amidst Regional Change

Regardless of the metropolitan politics, a reality was that the advancing dockyard project implied shifting most of the Company's trading business from Surat 150 miles down the coast to Bombay. That means that if historians want to understand how and why the project was ultimately implemented and overseen by local Company employees, the field must reevaluate the common historiographic assessment of the dominance of private trade matters, as well as the impact on the Company of the collapse of the Mughal state in Gujarat. Only through seeing both topics in a more holistic view which engages the partisan politics of the Company can a truer picture of the events of the 1730s and 1740s, including the dockyard project, begin to emerge. Seeing the events of the period clearly through the lens of contested EIC politics shows how disagreement about the role of Bombay and the role of the Company in the empire was alive and well even during the era of the Establishment Whig ministries in British politics. Attending to this debate allows us to cut through the noise of short-term developments in the private trade trends of the Company's employees and the shifting balance of regional power in western India in the first half of the 18th century. We can then see how the continuance of pro-civic infrastructure investment and anti-militarist, anti-expansionist policy ideas for Bombay led to the

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argument. For valuable data on the metropolitan East India Company in the eighteenth century, albeit after the period under study here, see H.V. Bowen, *The Business of Empire: The East India Company and Imperial Britain, 1756-1833* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006). For a significant monograph-length treatment of the excise crisis, see Paul Langford, *The Excise Crisis: Society and Politics in the Age of Walpole* (London: Oxford University Press, 1975). William J. Ashworth has examined some of the political valences of the excise crisis in *Customs and Excise: Trade, Production and Consumption in England, 1640-1845* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003); so have William J. Hausman and John L. Neufeld in "Excise Anatomized: the Political Economy of Walpole's 1733 Tax Scheme," *Journal of European Economic History,* 10, no. 1 (1981): 131-143; a recent treatment of the House of Lords' activity during the crisis is Clyve Jones, "The House of Lords and the Excise Crisis: The Storm and the Aftermath, 1733-1735," *Parliamentary History* 33, no. 1 (2014): 160-200.

commitment to the dockyard project on the part of Company employees and the consolidation of Bombay's imperial role as a maritime, commercial entrepôt in the western Indian Ocean.

As late as the 1720s official correspondence from Bombay to London advocated for improving Bombay's shipping capacity. Yet, most scholars working on the activity of Company employees in western India in this period have ignored such material. They focus on arguing that western India's Company servants, rather than promoting trade at Bombay, actively drove shipping away from the city, even as they paid lip service to its potential for a dockyard and shipping hub. According to this scholarship, such men did so because of the prevalence of private enrichment practices during this period. In the post-merger United East India Company, the political valence of private trade had shifted from the hardline stance of the 1680s and 1690s to the softer perspective of the post-merger era. After 1708, any employee could buy, sell, and move goods around the Indian Ocean littoral in his free time, using his own money, with the intent of turning a personal profit. He couldn't ship most goods from India back to Britain without paying heavy import duties, but other commercial activity was fair game. The employee could then remit money back by paying cash into the Company's coffers in Asia and taking an IOU at a set exchange rate to collect on back home. Many contemporary Company employees and Directors believed the practice benefitted both the Company as a whole and individual EIC servants. For those who could scrape together the initial capital, it was private trading that made seeking Company employment worth it.[60] For the Company, private trade kept costs down and

[60] Ian Bruce Watson, *Foundation for Empire: English Private Trade in India, 1659-1760* (Delhi: Vikas, 1980), 63-68.

employees relatively quiescent, presuming enough regulations were in place to protect the EIC's own profits.[61]

For Company employees looking to make a personal profit in western India, the trading hub had always been Surat, not Bombay. For several centuries before the arrival of the Company, Surat had been the "blessed port" of the Mughal state. It was the place of embarkation for thousands of South Asian Muslims *en route* to Mecca during the yearly *haj* pilgrimage, and the nodal point for all the Mughal seaborne trade with points westward. Surat's population in the 1720s was estimated between 150,000 and 200,000.[62] Decades of scholarship on East India Company private trade has shown the extent to which English Company employees relied on partnerships with Indian Ocean-based capital, producers, and consumers; many of the Company's (and its employees') interlocutors were based in Surat as it was the hub of this trade and location of the Mughlai imperial customs house.[63] Additionally, the Company had been claiming the right of reduced customs at Surat since 1664.[64] The Directors in London saw the customs reduction as a point of national pride and a zero-sum advantage over other European

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61 Ibid, 80-81. Plenty of individual corporate directors were investors in competitor companies and projects through the years as well. Personal profit maximization was always part of the game, even for EIC true believers.

62 Ashin Das Gupta, *Indian Merchants and the Decline of Surat, 1700-1750* (Wiesbaden: Steiner, 1979), 2-5, 7, 29; Ghulam A. Nadri, *Eighteenth-Century Gujarat: The Dynamics of Its Political Economy, 1750-1800* (Boston: Brill 2009), 9-22.

63 Holden Furber, *Bombay Presidency in the Mid-Eighteenth Century* (Bombay: Asia Publishing House, 1965), 28-29; Ian Bruce Watson, *Foundation for Empire: English Private Trade in India, 1659-1760* (Delhi: Vikas, 1980), 190-271; Timothy Davies, "English Private Trade on the West Coast of India, c.1680-c. 1740," *Itinerario* 38, no. 2 (2014), 53-55; Emily Erikson, *Between Monopoly and Free Trade: The English East India Company, 1600-1757* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2014), 56-68.

64 Farhat Hasan has conclusively demonstrated there was no mass concession on customs from the Mughal state to the EIC in Surat in the 1660s, but that the Company believed there was and continually acted to preserve this "ancient privilege." Farhat Hasan, *State and Locality in Mughal India: Power Relations in Western India, c. 1572-1730* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 113-114, 124-125.

traders in the region, and their longstanding instructions to employees were to move Company goods from Surat to Bombay and then on to Europe. If employees and their South Asian colleagues could get their private trade passed through Surat's customs "under cover" of Company trade, they could also save a (much more meaningful) amount over competitors.[65]

Despite the risk getting caught in such illicit schemes could run for the whole operation of European trade in western India, Emily Erikson has contended that private trade, especially at non-Company-controlled ports like Surat, "contributed significantly to the overall success of the Company trade." Providing extensive statistic evidence, Erikson argued the Company ended up with "a larger, more integrated network of trade" through allowing and tacitly encouraging these practices.[66] In keeping with her claims, scholars of the East India Company in the first half of the eighteenth century have emphasized the desire of Company employees to maintain a thriving Company business at Surat, rather than attempting to shift the Company's business to Bombay, which a dockyard would imply.

At the same time, scholars of western India in the eighteenth century, who are typically not scholars of the East India Company, have assumed a general union of interests between Company employees (whether in their employed capacity as traders or as individuals) and Company Directors in London. They further assume that united interest was devoted to extending militaristic, territorial control over India from the earliest period and across all of South Asia's geography. They are not interested in the complex intra-Company politics this work is dedicated to uncovering, and like most historians of South Asia, they presume, in one way or

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[65] Ian Bruce Watson, *Foundation for Empire: English Private Trade in India, 1659-1760* (Delhi: Vikas, 1980), 214-216.
[66] Emily Erikson, *Between Monopoly and Free Trade: The English East India Company, 1600-1757* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2014), 124.

another, the national historiography of modern South Asia. Therefore, they have assumed that Company employees acted on the Directors' desire to shift as much trade as possible from Surat to Bombay over the entire 18th century. They assume the Company's India employees' desire to bolster Bombay at Surat's expense is a simple expression of the Company's unitary goal to exert well-defined control over the entire complex of trade and production in the region, fully bypassing local actors. In so doing, the Company and its employees would be able to weaken competing powers in the region until they could take over the apparatus of the state, as happened in Bengal's hinterland after the accession to the *divani*.[67]

Scholars of private trade and the English commercial empire thus present work which painstakingly catalogs all the private business, scandal, and trade statistics available for the 18th century. They seek to argue that private trade either saved or doomed the fortunes of the Company, with little attention to the context of the parts of India those private traders were engaging with over time, or the political and economic debates about the Company which

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[67] Examples of this historiography include Ashin Das Gupta, *Indian Merchants and the Decline of Surat, c.1700-1750* (Wiesbaden: Steiner, 1979); Martha Chaikin, "Surat and Bombay Ivory and Commercial Networks in Western India," in *The Dutch and English East India Companies: Diplomacy, Trade, and Violence in Early Modern Asia*, ed. Adam Clulow and Tristan Mostert (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2018), 107-109; David L. White, "Parsis in the Commercial World of Western India, 1700-1750," *The Indian Economic and Social History Review* 24, no. 2 (1987): 183-203; Ibid, *Competition and Collaboration: Parsi Merchants and the English East India Company in 18th Century India* (New Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal, 1995); and especially the work of Lakshmi Subramanian. See *Indigenous Capital and Imperial Expansion: Bombay, Surat, and the West Coast* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1996); Ibid, *The Sovereign and the Pirate: Ordering Maritime Subjects in India's Western Littoral* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2016); Ibid, "Bombay and the West Coast in the 1740s," *The Indian Economic and Social History Review* 8, no. 2 (1981): 189-216; Ibid, "The Political Economy of Textiles in Western India: Weavers, Merchants, and the Tradition to a Colonial Economy," in *How India Clothed the World: The World of South Asian Textiles, 1500-1800*, ed. Giorgio Riello and Tirthankar Roy (Leiden, NL: Brill, 2009): 255-276; Ibid, "Piracy in India's Western Littoral: Reality and Representation," in *Piracy in World History*, ed. Stefan Eklöf Amirell, Bruce Buchan, and Hans Hägerdal (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2021): 129-148.

continued within it over the length of its existence.[68] Scholars of western India, the Mughal and Maratha states, and South Asia more generally, do much the same for their own preferred polities and historical actors, positioning them as valiant proto-national, anti-colonial agitators against an EIC which continuously and unquestioningly desired territorial expansion and military control over the subcontinent.

Yet both approaches have consistently neglected the relationship between this context and the partisan-political world in which they acted. It is partly my contention that this historiographic siloing is part of why so little attention has been paid to the building of Bombay's dockyard at all. Scholars must examine the behavior of the Company's employees in Bombay and Surat in the full context of flourishing private trade, the politics and ideologies of the Company's various Directors and employees, *and* the collapse of the Mughal state/rise of successor states to understand why the Company's employees engaged their institution in extreme mercantile and political risk in the 1730s. The Company's employees' responses to regional and intra-company conflicts reflect the actions of two ideologically opposed groups. One is firmly ensconced in the dominant position of the Walpolean era: that power is a game of patronage and personal enrichment, and that expanding one's power in a variety of ways will ultimately provide the greatest benefit to the public interest.[69] That group, led by men like Robert

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[68] Emily Erikson is the champion of the "private trade saved the Company" argument; Ian Bruce Watson argues most forcibly for its role in the Company's collapse. Watson has been supported by numerous scholars of Bengal and the moral panic over the corruption of the "nabob" in later 18th century British politics, such as Peter Marshall, Nicholas Hoover Wilson, Nicholas Dirks, and others.

[69] As detailed by Edward Owen Teggin, these men had received the patronage of John Gould Sr. and Jr., members of the influential and longstanding EIC family. John Gould Jr. married a distant relative of Gerald Aungier (on his mother's side) and the entire family was closely involved in Anglo-Irish business concerns, which is what brought Cowan into their orbit. John Gould Jr. was known as a poorly behaved rake, but he inherited his powerful uncle Nathaniel's seat in Parliament representing New Shoreham in Sussex. The Goulds were all strong supporters of the

Cowan and Henry Lowther, created the crisis of the Company's relationships at Surat by overleveraging the power and alliances they had to extract as much wealth and privilege, and extend their and the Company's power, as far as possible in the region. They furthermore saw their actions as constitutive of the Walpolean Whig goal of "preserv[ing]—and perhaps even expand[ing]—Britain's territory" abroad.[70]

The other side, represented by Cowan and Lowther's successors and opponents in Bombay and western India (who were indebted to their patron Charles Boone, former Bombay Governor turned Company Director and pivotal figure in the construction of Bombay's Anglican church), were advocates of more equitable commercial relationships with a variety of actors in the region.[71] Rather than forging alliances and making enemies in a relentless hunt for stable, expanded Company power and private trade wealth, these men wanted a policy of open

18th century Whig establishment's turn towards territorially and militarily aggressive policies. In Parliament Nathaniel (and then John Jr.) voted consistently with the Walpole administration, and Nathaniel even made an enemy of radical-Patriot political-economic thinker and MoP William Pulteney. See A.N. Newman's entry on Nathaniel Gould and Paula Watson's entry on John Gould Jr. in *The History of Parliament: The House of Commons, 1715-1754*, ed. Romney R. Sedgwick (Rochester, NY: Boydell and Brewer, 1970); Edward Owen Teggin, "The East India Company Career of Sir Robert Cowan in Bombay and the Western Indian Ocean, c.1719-35," doctoral dissertation, Trinity College Dublin 2020, 46-52.

70 Amy Watson, *Patriots Before Revolution: The Rise of Party Politics in the British Atlantic, 1714-1763* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2025), 24.

71 Charles Boone can be identified as an anti-establishment, anti-militaristic expansion Whig. To begin with, he was descended from Oxenden ally Christopher Boone. His career in the Company is additional evidence. Furthermore, based on his short voting record while in Parliament, we can see that the only issues he cared to vote on were to express his opposition to Walpole's desire to fund civil list arrears in 1729 and Hessian mercenaries in 1730. His son Daniel, who inherited his seat representing Ludgershall in Buckinghamshire, was a consistent opponent of Walpole's administration as well, and spoke alongside George Lyttelton, Richard Grenville, and William Pitt on the Convention of Pardo on 8 Mar 1739. This marked him out as one of Cobham's Cubs (later Patriots) who notably remained loyal to the Grenvilles and Pitt even when it cost him his place in 1746. See R.S. Lea's entries on both men in *The History of Parliament: The House of Commons, 1715-1754*, ed. Romney R. Sedgwick (Rochester, NY: Boydell and Brewer, 1970).

commerce designed to enrich the Company, its employees, and their regional interlocutors.[72] They supported the equitable application of the English legal tradition, even when it favored local interlocutors over Englishmen. And most importantly, they preferred withdrawing from the internecine political machinations of Surat and the Mughal successor states on the western Indian coast in favor of developing a dockyard at Bombay. That dockyard infrastructure, they argued, would draw business to them and promote the growth of manufacturing and long-distance commerce in the Company's city. Since growing wealth and expanding political participation was not a zero-sum proposition to them, the need to win control over territory or create elaborate policies that benefitted English private traders at the expense of their local partners were not desirable. But a well-developed port, open to all, was.[73]

The instability of western India in the 1730s, and the first group of Company's employees' very Establishment Whig responses to it, are best exemplified in the two blockades of Surat's port which took place at the peak of shipping season in 1734 and 1735. The first was

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[72] See also Amy Watson, *Patriots Before Revolution: The Rise of Party Politics in the British Atlantic, 1714-1763* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2025).

[73] Steve Pincus remains the liveliest writer on the Establishment/Patriot Whig division which emerged after the War of Spanish Succession and the ascent of Walpole as Prime Minister, though Amy Watson's new book is also incredibly valuable and has been cited above. For the evolution of Pincus' thinking on the topic, see "Reconfiguring the British Empire," *William and Mary Quarterly* 69, no. 1 (2012): 63-70; "Addison's Empire: Whig Conceptions of Empire in the Early Eighteenth Century," *Parliamentary History* 31, no. 1 (2012): 99-117; "*Gulliver's Travels*, Party Politics, and Empire," in *New Perspectives on the History of Political Economy*, ed. Robert Fredona and Sophus A. Reinert (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2018). The only downside to Watson's text is its emphasis on the Atlantic world. To my knowledge, the only other scholars to begin examining the ideological context of British empire over the early modern period with reference to Asia are James M. Vaughn and Tiraana Bains. See James M. Vaughn, *The Politics of Empire at the Accession of George III: The East India Company and the Crisis and Transformation of Britain's Imperial State* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2019); Tiraana Bains, "Making and Debating Empires in South Asia and the Global British Empire, 1756-1799," doctoral dissertation, Yale University 2021; Ibid, "The Making and Unmaking of a Presidency: Envisioning Empire in British Bencoolen, 1685-1825," *Journal of British Studies* 63 (2024): 521-541.

initiated by a Company employee, using Company resources, to try and counter the demands of the failing Mughal state's representatives in Surat. The second was the product of the Company's western Indian employees' attempt to outsource the militaristic protection of their personal and professional interests to one of the many competing successors to the Mughal power in the region, with catastrophic results.

Henry Lowther, the Company's chief of the Surat factory, drove the decision to blockade in February 1734.[74] Scholars of private trade and Company employees' self-enrichment policies in the 18th century have long seen Lowther as an archetype of the corrupt, self-interested Company employee. He had little of his own capital when he arrived in western India but was quickly taken under the wing of the powerful Bombay Governor Robert Cowan, who had already amassed an Indian fortune.[75] Borrowing heavily from his benefactor and local Indian merchants who worked with Cowan, Lowther was able to exert influence and live the life of a wealthy private-trading Company bigwig in Surat, possibly without ever having a meaningful stock of ready cash to his name.[76] In the system of private trading which scholars have fleshed out as

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[74] I cannot be sure, but it is certainly likely that Lowther came from one of the several branches of the prominent Lowther family. The most powerful of these branches was certainly that which advanced to the position of Viscount of Lonsdale after the Glorious Revolution, but there were many minor branches of the family, and even the Lonsdale branch lost much of its wealth in the South Sea Bubble. Regardless of the exact family tree, Lowther was unable to rely on any wealthy or powerful relatives during his extended fall from grace in the mid-1730s, implying that any connection he had to the Lowther reputation was somewhat tenuous.

[75] Cowan, the son of a successful Scots-Irish burgher in Londonderry, had the further patronage of Company Directors John Gould (senior and junior) and William Phipps, a former Bombay Governor; see Edward Owen Teggin, "The East India Company Career of Sir Robert Cowan in Bombay and the Western Indian Ocean, c.1719-35," doctoral dissertation, Trinity College Dublin 2020.

[76] In the later investigation, Company employees in Bombay claimed that Lowther resorted to stealing from Cowan after Cowan had left Bombay, "perhaps with a view to that stale threadbare trick of getting into a man's debt to make sure of his interest and support in order to its clearance." BL IOR/P/341/8, "Bombay Public Proceedings," 8 Feb 1736, f. 46.

operating in eighteenth century India, that cash could come to him later, as Lowther parlayed his connections and initial high-risk investments into real returns, and coopted the support of future Company employees who would take his place in the bottom tiers of the private traders' ladder of capital and labor.[77]

However, by 1734, Lowther's prospects were beginning to sour. Cowan was unceremoniously fired by the Court of Directors in March. Despite the Company's approval of private trade within India on the part of their employees, they did *not* approve of any collusion between their employees and other European ventures in India, especially the encroachments they viewed new European companies like the Ostend Company making during the European wars of the 1720s and 1730s. The 1731 Treaty of Vienna, which attempted to resolve some of the lingering problems the Company associated with these projects, had supposedly shut down the Ostend Company. But, as mentioned above, it merely caused the slow exodus of Ostenders. Many flocked to form the Swedish EIC, allowing the continued sending of ships to western India by companies unaffiliated to Britain's allies.[78] As a result, the Company took care to inform its

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[77] For a detailed discussion of how this system worked, see Ian Bruce Watson, *Foundation for Empire: English Private Trade in India, 1659-1760* (Delhi: Vikas, 1980).

[78] There is apparently some debate about the nature of the relationship between the Ostend Company and the Swedish EIC. Most historians of the British East India trade see the Swedish EIC as basically a front for the continued operations of the Ostend Company. It is my understanding that historians working with documents in Swedish have challenged this interpretation. I was alerted to this potential historiographic mismatch by an errant line in Danish historian Ole Feldbæk's review of Belgian scholar Christian Koninckx's *The First and Second Charters of the Swedish East India Company (1731-1766): A Contribution to the Maritime, Economic, and Social History of North-Western Europe in its Relationships with the Far East* (Kortrijk, BE: Van Ghemmert, 1980). Feldbæk is not particularly complementary of Koninckx's work,but finishes by noting his "very convincing arguments against the hitherto generally accepted view of the Swedish East India Company as a resurrected Ostend Company under a flimsy Swedish camouflage;" *The Journal of Economic History* 41, no. 3 (1981): 682. For a concise summary of the position of the "hitherto generally accepted" English historiography, see Holden Furber, *Bombay Presidency in the Mid-18th Century* (Bombay: Asia Publishing House, 1965), 11-18.

employees in Bombay of precisely which non-English European ships had "the benefit of the Vienna treaty," and which did not. For the unapproved shipping, Company employees were "to execute our orders to all ships under foreign commissions," which included rendering no assistance, "not so much as water or provisions," and certainly no trading with them.[79] Yet Robert Cowan, had done exactly that in 1732 when the Portuguese-flagged ship *Europa* had arrived in western Indian waters. The *Europa* was not only allowed to victual and water itself in Bombay harbor, but also to trade its wares.[80] Cowan protested that the Portuguese were British allies, as far as he knew, and that he had lived for several years in Portugal as a young man. The Portuguese still had their own colonies in India. Surely the Company could not have meant for him to refuse aid to a *Portuguese* ship. And yet, they had.[81] While Cowan had no choice but to accept his dismissal, he took his time cleaning up his private affairs in western India and arranging to remit his personal wealth back to London. In this he was supported by his patrons among the Company's Directors in London, men who had supported his career for the past 15 years.[82] This project notably included chasing down debts due from Henry Lowther to the tune of

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[79] BL IOR/E/3/106, "Court of Directors in London to President and Council at Bombay," 15 Mar 1734, f.207; BL IOR/E/3/105, "Court of Directors in London to President and Council at Bombay," 3 Mar 1732, f. 471, 473.

[80] BL IOR/P/341/7, "Bombay Public Proceedings," 18 Sept 1732, f.18-19; Ibid, "Bombay Public Proceedings, 29 Sept 1732, f. 23-24; Ibid, "Bombay Public Proceedings," 20 Oct 1732, f.45-46; Ibid, "Bombay Public Proceedings," 23 Oct 1732, f.47-48; See also Edward Owen Teggin, "The East India Company Career of Sir Robert Cowan in Bombay and the Western Indian Ocean, c.1719-35," doctoral dissertation, Trinity College Dublin 2020, 201-202, 264-266, which treats the *Europa* incident from the perspective of Cowan's personal archive, held at the Public Records Office of Northern Ireland.

[81] For a more complete discussion of Cowan's Portuguese connections and believe in Anglo-Portuguese diplomacy, see Edward Owen Teggin, "The East India Company Career of Sir Robert Cowan in Bombay and the Western Indian Ocean, c.1719-35," doctoral dissertation, Trinity College Dublin 2020.

[82] See Edward Owen Teggin, "The East India Company Career of Sir Robert Cowan in Bombay and the Western Indian Ocean, c.1719-35," doctoral dissertation, Trinity College Dublin 2020, which takes full advantage of Cowan's extensive personal accounts to determine his exact

Rs 153,637 and Rs 655,847, as well as ones due from the Company's Surat broker, Laldas Parekh, worth Rs 47,595 and Rs 83,201.[83]

While Lowther could not have known the sword of Damocles was hanging over his immediate boss in January and February of 1734, he recognized his finances were severely straitened by so much debt.[84] Lowther was now firmly on the side of trying to militaristically compel payment from the Surati merchant community, in a move in keeping with Establishment Whig theories of diplomacy. It was easier than ever to argue that the time had come for drastic action, because the Mughal-appointed governor (*mutasaddi*) of Surat, Tegh Begh Khan, was putting increasing pressure on the Surati business community as well. Numerous scholars have examined the western Indian business community's experience of the collapse of the Mughal state and growth of various successor states—most notably the Maratha—in the 1730s. Ashin Das Gupta, Lakshmi Subramanian, Ghulam A. Nadri, Farhat Hasan, and recently Sudev Sheth, have documented the effects of successive Mughal governors of Surat's losses of control over the city's hinterland between the death of emperor Aurangzeb ('Alamgir) in 1707 and the blockade of 1735.[85] While traditional understandings of Mughal state relations with the merchant

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methods of building and remitting wealth in Chapter Six, "Cowan's Return to England and Legacy, 1735-39," 278-309.

[83] Ibid, 281-282. Cf Ian Bruce Watson, *Foundation for Empire: English Private Trade in India, 1659-1760* (Delhi: Vikas, 1980), 106, where he argues that Cowan was unable to remit his fortune after his firing.

[84] The investigation report claimed paying Cowan back made Lowther "an insolvent bankrupt to the prejudice of his other creditors, divesting himself of the means of satisfying them with the share they were in all justice and equity entitled to." BL IOR/P/341/8, "Bombay Public Proceedings," 8 Feb 1736, f.46.

[85] Many historians continue to cite Das Gupta's narrative of Surati trade's collapse, notable for its thoroughness. Subramanian largely concedes the Gujarati field to Das Gupta and turns her attention to the southern sphere of Maratha influence between Bombay and Goa. Nadri and Hasan build upon Das Gupta's research with attention to alternate source bases, particularly those in Dutch and Persian. See Ashin Das Gupta, *Indian Merchants and the Decline of Surat, c.1700-1750* (Wiesbaden, DE: Steiner, 1979), esp. Chapter Five, "Episodes in Decline;" Lakshmi

community emphasize how few and reasonable the state's fiscal demands were on the mercantile population of Surat (the empire's primary port), historians largely agree this situation changed in the eighteenth century.[86] The legitimacy of the Surati governor's claim over administration was itself weakened in the early years of the 18th century as competing claimants fought in the city's streets and enlisted the competing authority of the Marathas and the Mughals to establish their right to the governorship.[87] While the central Mughal state at the height of its power may not

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Subramanian, *Indigenous Capital and Imperial Expansion: Bombay, Surat, and the West Coast* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 1996); Ghulam Nadri, *Eighteenth-Century Gujarat: The Dynamics of its Political Economy* (Leiden, NL: Brill, 2009); Ibid, "Exploring the Gulf of Kachh: Regional Economy and Trade in the Eighteenth Century," *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* 51, no. 3 (2008): 460-486; Ibid, "The Commercial World of Mancherji Khurshedji and the Dutch East India Company: A Study of Mutual Relationships," *Modern Asian Studies* 41, no. 2 (2007): 315-342; Farhat Hasan, *State and Locality in Mughal India: Power Relations in Western India, c.1572-1730* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004); Ibid, "Forms of Civility and Publicness in Pre-British India," in *Civil Society, Public Sphere, and Citizenship: Dialogues and Perceptions*, ed. Rajeev Bhargava and Helmut Reifeld (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 2005): 84-105; Sudev Sheth, *Bankrolling Empire: Family Fortunes and Political Transformation in Mughal India* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2024), esp. Chapter Four, "Interlude: Cultivating Financial Crisis Under Aurangzeb, 1660s-1719."

[86] For discussion of the Mughal administration of shipping in the empire's heyday, the work of Shireen Moosvi is particularly data-rich, notably those pieces collected in *People, Taxation, and Trade in Mughal India* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008). Especially useful are "The Indian Economic Experience, 1600-1900: A Quantitative Study" (1-34); "The Silver Influx, Money Supply, Prices, and Revenue-Extraction in Mughal India" (35-80); "Mughal Shipping at Surat in the First Half of the Seventeenth Century" (257-274); "Travails of a Mercantile Community: Aspects of Social Life at the Port of Surat (Earlier Half of the Seventeenth Century)" (275-287); and "Gujarat Ports and their Hinterland: The Economic Relationship" (288-296). See also John F. Richards, "Mughal State Finance and the Premodern World Economy," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 23 (1981): 285-308; Ibid, "The Seventeenth Century Crisis in South Asia," *Modern Asian Studies* 24 (1990): 625-638; Ibid, *The Mughal Empire* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1993), esp. Chapter Nine, "The Economy, Societal Change, and International Trade," 185-204; The Mughal empire decline thesis has been treated in the Introduction.

[87] Karen Leonard, "The 'Great Firm' Theory of the Decline of the Mughal Empire," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 21, no. 2 (1979): 151-167; Farhat Hasan, *State and Locality in Mughal India: Power Relations in Western India, c.1572-1730* (Cambridge University Press, 2004), 31-49; Ghulam A. Nadri, *Eighteenth-Century Gujarat: The Dynamics of its Political Economy* (Leiden, NL: Brill, 2009), 9-22; Sudev Sheth, *Bankrolling Empire: Family*

have relied on loans and taxes from Surati merchants to nearly the extent prior scholarship supposed, Sudev Sheth has convincingly demonstrated that "Mughal state officials were the key agents who identified and forced merchants to initially partake in the politics of its decaying apparatus…it was the downfall of the Mughal Empire that provided unprecedented opportunities for bankers to deploy money and information in ways that eventually made them indispensable to processes of new regional state formation in the eighteenth century."[88] However, Sheth's attention to the Mughal Persian source base and his focus on the relationship between the *longue durée* history of the Mughal central state and Gujarat has resulted in work that neglects the impact of European merchants and their Companies in the region at the same time.

Nevertheless, Sheth and other scholars demonstrate how Surati merchants' capital became increasingly illiquid. The merchant communities, Muslim (Indian and Arab/Turkish), Parsi, and Hindu alike, were compelled by the *mutasaddi* (often utilizing the threat of or recourse to violence) to back up the needs of the city's administration with cash. The regional administration was itself compelled to turn to the merchants as their ability to extract wealth from the hinterland beyond Surat's walls was weakened by the *mutasaddi*'s failing legitimacy

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Fortunes and Political Transformation in Mughal India (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2024), 144-222. Hasan, Nadri, and Sheth's analyses take as their most significant source material the Persian-language piece *Mirat-ul Haqa'iq*, a diary kept by local administrator Itimat Ali Khan between 1717 and 1727 alongside the *Mirat-I Ahmadi*, the traditional Persian source for Gujarati history; Sheth also makes the first analytical use of Gujarati sources, the *Ganima no Pavado* ("Ballad of the Enemy"), composed by Gujarati Nagar Brahmin scribal elite Vishwanath Jani in 1706 and the narrative verse *Rustam no Saloko*, composed by Hindu scribal elite Samal Bhatt in 1725. See also Sanjay Subrahmanyam, "The Hidden Face of Surat: Reflections on a Cosmopolitan Indian Ocean Center, 1540-1750," *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* 61 (2018): 205-255.

[88] *Bankrolling Empire: Family Fortunes and Political Transformation in Mughal India* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2024), 178-179; Cf Karen Leonard, "The 'Great Firm' Theory of the Decline of the Mughal Empire," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 21, no. 2 (1979): 152.

and the incursions of the Marathas, which both disrupted production and ultimately resulted in the grant of Surat's regional *chauth* (a tax levied at 25% of estimated land revenue) to the Maratha state in 1723.[89]

Meanwhile, the merchants were trying to make money from dealings with the European Companies, especially the English and the Dutch. When it came to the English, the Surati merchants could also do private business with the Company's employees as individuals. In these relationships, most deals were made on credit, and the accounting used to document them frequently appeared as "selling" trade goods to Surati merchants in exchange for wiping out Company employees' individual debts. The Company could be made into a middleman for these affairs quite easily; because the Company regularly failed to provide enough cash for its employees to make purchases of goods to be sent to Europe in cash, the Company's employees would "lend" their own cash reserves to the Company—though they often borrowed that cash themselves from local South Asian *sarafs*, or moneylenders. The motivation for South Asian merchants to participate in these accounting shell games was simple; the arbitrage on the interest typically garnered them a healthy profit. Furthermore, *sarafs* and merchants working together could then potentially make gains on whatever goods they got out of the Company. However, the merchants' and *sarafs*' participation was dependent on the longstanding liquidity of actual cash

[89] See Sudev Sheth for the most concise discussion of this process, wherein it is argued that one of the competitors for Surat *mutasaddi* at the time agreed to the *chauth* payments in exchange for Maratha support of his claim, despite the central empire's support of his rival. The Company had some understanding of this process, but they struggled to fully understand the politics at play. As patronage and internecine personal politics were features of the EIC's internal decision-making in this period, they were also certainly part of the Mughal state's. *Bankrolling Empire: Family Fortunes and Political Transformation in Mughal India* (New York: Cambridge Press, 2024), 188-190; BL IOR/P/341/5-5A, "Bombay Public Proceedings," 1721-1724; BL IOR/G/36/11 "Surat Diary and Consultations," 1724-1725; BL IOR/G/36/118A, "Surat: Letters Received," 1724-1726.

reserves under the Mughal state, which has been demonstrated by several scholars. As that liquidity was squeezed by the instability of regional governance, revenue collection, and administration as the 18th century progressed, South Asian interlocutors were no longer the easy source of borrowed capital the Company and its employees had seen them as for so many decades.[90]

In 1734, Lowther and Cowan needed to get money out of this population as their own finances grew increasingly overleveraged. They also recognized the pressure the *mutasaddi* had put the merchants under and wanted to try and direct it to their own advantage. An EIC ship was expected to dock in Bombay and Surat shortly, on its way home: the *Heathcote*. In comparison to their other ships, designed to sail up and down the coast, the *Heathcote* was larger, and equipped with significantly more powerful cannons. An idea began to emerge: could the *Heathcote* be used to settle, once and for all, the *mutasaddi*'s threats to the Company, and maybe even his demands on the merchants?

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[90] BL IOR/P/341/7-8, "Bombay Public Proceedings," 1730-1736; BL IOR/G/36/15-20, "Surat Diary and Consultations," 1730-1736; Ashin Das Gupta, *Indian Merchants and the Decline of Surat, c.1700-1750* (Wiesbaden, DE: Steiner, 1979), esp. Chapter One, "The Blessed Port of the Mughals," 23-86; Irfan Habib, "The Monetary System and Prices," in *The Cambridge Economic History of India*, vol. I, c. 1200-1750, ed. Tapan Raychaudhuri and Irfan Habib, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1982), 360-381; Karen Leonard, The 'Great Firm' Theory of the Decline of the Mughal Empire," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 21, no. 2 (1979): 151-167; Sudev Sheth, *Bankrolling Empire: Family Fortunes and Political Transformation in Mughal India* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2024); Ghulam A. Nadri, "The Maritime Merchants of Surat: A Long-Term Perspective," *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* 50, no. 2/3 (2007): 235-258; Ibid, "The English and Dutch East India Companies and Indian Merchants in Surat in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries: Interdependence, Competition, and Contestation," in *The Dutch and English East India Companies: Diplomacy, Trade, and Violence in Early Modern Asia*, ed. Adam Clulow and Tristan Mostert (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2018), 125-149; Farhat Hasan, "Conflict and Cooperation in Anglo-Mughal Trade Relations During the Reign of Aurangzeb," *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* 34, no. 4 (1991): 351-360.

Indicating the forethought applied, certain merchants in close relationships with the Company, like the Parsi Rustam Manak family, were encouraged in January to "repair to Bombay by the first conveyance after the 10th of February" alongside their "wives…and any other females belonging to that family." If they remained in Surat during Cowan and Lowther's planned blockade, it "may give opportunities to the government not only of oppressing and fleecing them, but also a handle to claim their husbands the Mughal's subjects." A refusal to shift to Bombay meant they would "no longer be entitled to the Company's protection, but must submit to the law, customs, and practices of the government under which they choose to reside."[91] At the same time, the Company's employees at Surat noted their plan to shortly suspend pass issuance to Surati shipping "if we find the government continue to persecute the brokers and factory servants, or any other person entitled to our Honorable Masters' protection."[92]

Shortly after issuing such an order to the Rustam Manak family, the Company's employees in Surat and Bombay learned that "Gokul Patel, the head overseer" of the Company's investment (their order for fabrics), who worked under the Company's main merchant contacts, had been targeted by the Surati community "as is believed, at the instigation of the enemy [the Surati government]." The corpse of a man who owed Patel money (which Patel had been trying to collect to satisfy the various creditors who were circling each other in the city), had been dumped in front of Gokul Patel's house. The deceased's "relatives, being very poor…accused his servant of having beaten the deceased to death." This claim allowed the Surat government to get involved, with the primary law enforcement officer under Tegh Begh Khan, Ghulam

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[91] BL IOR/G/36/18, "Surat Diary and Consultations," 8 Jan 1734, f. 59-60.
[92] Ibid, f. 60.

Muhammad, setting a guard outside Gokul's house, explaining to the Company that "it was a case of murder…and that if the accused was not delivered up he would next morning take him by force out of the factory." Furthermore, "about fifty of the deceased's relations came to the factory and demanded Gokul Patel…[then] they went to the *darbar* and complained they had been beat at the factory," before planning to cremate the deceased in front of the English compound.[93] It wasn't only the English and the merchants who understood the relative responsibility of the Company and its employees for the credit crunch. Now, the general population of the city was getting involved, and creating opportunities for the city's administration to try and exert power over the Company or its subordinates.[94] Allowing a foreign sovereign representative to act on English merchant interests was galvanizing. Such an outcome was anathema to the Establishment Whig theory of empire.

As much as the Gokul Patel incident gave the *mutasaddi* the opportunity to intervene, it also gave Cowan and Lowther the excuse they wanted to make their own display of force and blockade Surat's port. February was approaching, which both men knew was the height of the shipping season for trade between Surat, the Red Sea, and the Persian Gulf.[95] As a result, the

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[93] BL IOR/P/341/7B, "Bombay Public Proceedings," 18 Jan 1734, f. 34-36.
[94] See also Abhishek Kaicker, *The King and the People: Sovereignty and Popular Politics in Mughal Delhi* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2020); Farhat Hasan, *State and Locality in Mughal India: Power Relations in Western India, c. 1572-1730* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004), for discussions of "politics out of doors" in Mughal Delhi and Surat. Cf Adrian Randall, *Riotous Assemblies: Popular Protest in Hanoverian England* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006).
[95] Both had previously been stationed at the Company's factory at Mokha in what is now Yemen, the primary site for coffee exports in the region and an entrepôt for trade goods intended for the Arabian Peninsula and broader Middle East. Alongside Mokha, Surati trade often traveled between the west coast of India and Basra (in modern-day Iraq) or Bandar Abbas (now in Iran). See Edward Owen Teggin, "The East India Company Career of Sir Robert Cowan in Bombay and the Western Indian Ocean, c.1719-35," doctoral dissertation, Trinity College Dublin 2020, 103-154; Nancy Um, *The Merchant Houses of Mocha: Trade and Architecture in an Indian Ocean Port* (Seattle, WA: University of Washington Press, 2009), esp. 78-95; Om Prakash,

blockade would have a high impact; the trading season between Surat and the Gulf was comparatively short, and the government would be compelled to reach an agreement with the merchants and/or the Company before the shipping window closed and seagoing vessels already laden for Arabian ports were left to rot in dock. On January 27th, Lowther crafted a letter to Cowan and his Council members at Bombay which detailed the beginning of the blockade and its immediate antecedent. When the Europe ship *Heathcote* had docked at Suvali harbor (the only deeper-water dock available near Surat for an East Indiaman), it was meant to be laden for England and dispatched as quickly as possible, on explicit orders from London. Yet, Lowther and his subordinates at Surat had received "advice…that Tegh Begh Khan had an intention to take advantage" of the absence of the *Heathcote* from Suvali harbor to "by force bring our gentlemen…to submit to his own terms or oblige them to withdraw [the] settlement" at Surat.

Therefore, if the *Heathcote* left ASAP as demanded by the EIC bosses, the entire Surat factory was at risk of being pressured to acceded to the Mughal governor's demands for a loan. Apparently, "the restrictions they were under [from the Company's orders] in relation to [sending away the *Heathcote*] were as publicly known and debated upon in the *darbar* as at our own board." Tegh Begh Khan had written to his patrons in Delhi, "representing…the nature of our privileges" in Surat, and even the "Dutch, French, and Portuguese" representatives in Surat were telling Lowther that the EIC "have nothing to expect hereafter from our grants in that city but what takes place from their present resolution." So, instead of sending off the *Heathcote*, Lowther had ordered it to blockade the mouth of the Tapti river, being "sufficiently experienced" in the "present demands" of the Mughal Governor that "they could obtain nothing…until the

"English Private Trade in the Western Indian Ocean, 1720-1740," *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* 50, no. 2/3 (2007): 215-234, among others.

government saw them steadfast to stop the" river up.[96] In the view of Cowan, "the steps they have taken" at Surat were "unavoidable, unless we had run the risk of having our Honorable Masters' dear-bought privileges called into question, and their authority rendered despicable at the option of a licentious and avaricious Surat government."[97]

While the Surati merchants were theoretically the Company's and their employees' natural allies in any business conflict with the Mughal government in Surat, neither the Company's employees nor the merchants in 1734 saw it as a clear-cut mutual interest. For the English, especially Cowan and Lowther, following common precepts of Establishment Whig political economy, there were good merchants, and there were bad merchants. Good merchants were those who would continually enter into questionably financed business deals with the Company's employees, whether in a private or corporate capacity. Even better if they rarely or never pressed for repayment of the Company's and its employees' own debts to them. In this, the Company's employees' strategies shared much with those of their patrons and Establishment supporters in London when it came to the bailed-out South Sea Company. The original SSC's inability to advance Walpole's plans for a territorial empire in the Southern Cone after the War of the Spanish Succession had led directly to the first stock market crash. But the SSC of the later 1720s and 1730s, after being bailed out by Walpole in a genius political maneuver, was widely understood as a financial instrument with limited actual product, existing to fund the national debt on the basis of a continued stable stock value. Establishment Whigs' belief that real wealth was fundamentally tied to land, rather than labor or product, meant that their interactions with the credit and debt market were consistently risky. As long as everyone was happy to go

[96] BL IOR P/341/7B, "Bombay Public Proceedings," Letter from Chief Henry Lowther and factors at Suvali to President Robert Cowan and Council at Bombay, 27 Jan 1734, f. 43-45.
[97] Ibid, 28 Jan 1734, f. 49-51.

along with the illusory construction of assets to support the continual extension of credit, such a system could continue as long as needed for the territorial expansion of the Establishment's empire to ultimately provide real backing for the financial risk.[98]

Of course, not every merchant the Company dealt with was willing to move money around indefinitely, waiting for an imaginary date when the English might have enough control over land to pay them back. So, Lowther and Cowan's bad merchants were those whom the current iteration of employees had turned out of the Company's favor for various reasons of politics and trade, alongside anyone who dared to ask for money when it came due. Often these (like the family of Rustam Manak) were affiliated to the influential 1720s Governor of Bombay Charles Boone, who we met in the preceding chapter. Boone was one of the most influential anti-Establishment Company Directors then sitting in London, and the current recipients of his

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[98] Bruce Carruthers, *City of Capital: Politics and Markets in the English Financial Revolution* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1996), 138; Anne Murphy, *The Origins of English Financial Markets: Investment and Speculation Before the South Sea Bubble* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 39-65; P.G.M. Dickson, *The Financial Revolution in England: A Study in the Development of Public Credit, 1688-1756* (New York: St. Martin's, 1967); Abigail L. Swingen, *Competing Visions of Empire: Labor, Slavery, and the Origins of the British Atlantic Empire* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2015), 172-195; Steve Pincus, "Addison's Empire: Whig Conceptions of Empire in the Early Eighteenth Century," *Parliamentary History* 31, no. 1 (2012): 111-112. For the "politics out of doors" reaction, see John Trenchard, "The Fatal Effects of the South Sea Scheme, and the Necessity of Punishing its Directors," in *Cato's Letters* (4 vols, London: Printed for W. Wilkins, 1733), 1:5-9; Ibid, "How Exclusive Companies Influence and Hurt our Government," in *Cato's Letters* (4 vols, London: Printed for W. Wilkins, T. Woodward, J. Walthoe, and J. Peele, 1733), 3:206-213; "Motion for Appointing a Committee of Twelve to Inquire into the Proceedings of the South Sea Company," 1 Jun 1733, in *Cobbett's Parliamentary History of England*, 36 vols. (London: 1806-1820), 9:151; *Daily Courant*, 28 February 1730; Abigail Swingen, "The Bubble and the Bail-Out: The South Sea Company, Jacobitism, and Public Credit in Early Hanoverian Britain," in *Boom, Bust, and Beyond: New Perspectives on the 1720 Stock Market Bubble*, ed. Stefano Condorelli and Daniel Menning (Boston: De Gruyter, 2019): 139-159; Abigail Swingen, "Calico Madams and South Sea Cheats: Global Trade, Finance, and Popular Protest in Hanoverian England," *Journal of British Studies* 63, no. 1 (2024): 114-138; Richard Dale, *The First Crash: Lessons from the South Sea Bubble* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2004); J.P. Carswell, *The South Sea Bubble* (London: Cresset Press, 1961).

support and patronage in western India (like Bombay Council Members and erstwhile Company agents in Arabia John Lambton, John Horne, and John Braddyll) were arrayed against Cowan and Lowther, whose patronage came from a different faction of the London corporate body.[99]

For the merchants, the world of possible allies and influences was much larger. Certain merchants might be currently feeling a credit squeeze from the Mughal governor, but if they played their cards right, they could parlay that into the status of kingmaker in the regional or even empire-wide power politics.[100] Furthermore, most merchants in the Surati business community didn't share the assumption that land was the foundation of their wealth. While some merchants operated as tax collectors and land administrators for the Mughal state, these roles were more commonly performed, especially by the 1730s in western India, by the regional nobility. This simple difference once again shows how crucial it is for scholars of European empire in South Asia to recognize the incredibly variable regional contexts in which the Companies operated. While it is arguable that land tenure in Bengal or southeastern India was relatively newly constituted under later Mughal administrators or successor states, giving an opening to merchants to become involved in the extraction of land wealth on behalf of or in league with the Company, the same can simply not be said for western India. Scholars of the Maratha, Mughal, and even earlier states in the western and southwestern region have documented a far longer history of land administration and tenure which was often well insulated

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[99] For further details on the Company's Directors' competing patronage networks in the Arabian Sea at this time, see Edward Owen Teggin, "The East India Company Career of Sir Robert Cowan in Bombay and the Western Indian Ocean, c.1719-35," doctoral dissertation, Trinity College Dublin 2020.

[100] Karen Leonard, The 'Great Firm' Theory of the Decline of the Mughal Empire," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 21, no. 2 (1979): 151-167; Sudev Sheth, *Bankrolling Empire: Family Fortunes and Political Transformation in Mughal India* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2024).

from merchant interests.[101] As a result, many Surati merchants likely did not see their own political economy or interests best represented by the Cowan-Lowther contingent. Their own willingness to support the actions of the Company in Surat was therefore dependent on who the Company's representatives proved to be. The merchants' decisions were not purely between the Company on one side and the flailing Mughal edifice on the other.

The Company employees' reasonings about which merchants were appropriate allies were borne out in the writings they produced about the situation in Surat in early 1734. Lowther blamed the leak of information about the Company to the governor on Manakji Nauroji, "the author…of many…things relating to the present disputes with the government of Surat." Tegh Begh Khan "would hereafter" depend on "the information of [these] evil councils at Bombay," the Rustam Manak family, "who do not want a sufficient share of rancor to ferment everything that may embroil the Honorable Company's affairs" in Surat. "A little patience brings most things to light," Cowan noted, and the Surat employees "may be able, they say, to lay open the particulars of these late cabals and the contents of a letter Nauroji Rustamji wrote the *qiladar*

[101] For writing on the traditional view of land tenure (based on Bengal), the most influential text remains Ranajit Guha, *A Rule of Property for Bengal: An Essay on the Idea of Permanent Settlement* (Paris: Mouton, 1960). Scholars who have contributed to the reassessment of this theory's applicability in western India include Sudev Sheth, *Bankrolling Empire: Family Fortunes and Political Transformation in Mughal India* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2024), Richard M. Eaton, *A Social History of the Deccan: Eight Indian Lives* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005); Hiroshi Fukazawa, *The Medieval Deccan: Peasants, Social Systems, and States* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1991); Rosalind O'Hanlon, *Lineages of Brahman Power: Caste, Family, and the State in Western India, 1600-1900* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 2025), esp. 203-206; Shireen Moosvi, "Reforming Revenue Administration: Aurangzeb's Farman to Rasikdas, 1665," in *People, Taxation, and Trade in Mughal India* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2008), 175-186; Andre Wink, *Land and Sovereignty in India: Agrarian Society and Politics Under the Eighteenth-Century Maratha Svarājya* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1986); and especially Sumit Guha, in "Civilizations, Markets, and Services: Village Servants in India from the Seventeenth to the Twentieth Centuries." *Indian Economic and Social History Review* 41, no. 1 (2004): 79-101; *Beyond Caste: Identity and Power in South Asia, Past and Present* (Leiden, NL: Brill, 2013).

[Ghulam Muhammad] a few days ago, and was delivered him in the night by his son Manakji, whom they have reason to charge with the ill treatment continued to Gokul Patel's family." It was the intention of Cowan and Lowther to use this opportunity not only to project their and the Company's power at Surat, but to strike a blow at the heart of the Rustam Manak family, and by extension the opposing branch of the Company's governance in the region, represented by Charles Boone and his proteges.[102] Cowan further claimed that Manakji Nauroji's willingness to negotiate with merchants and the Governor without the Company's permission was an "open defiance of the authority of our Honorable Masters."[103]

The blockade of the Surat port by the Company's ship *Heathcote* was surprisingly successful in the eyes of Lowther and Cowan. The *mutasaddi* and merchants had reached a breaking point as the season for shipping off goods to the Arabian Sea ports grew ever-shorter. The governor and the mechants countersigned bonds promising that the merchants in closest alliance with the *mutasaddi* would pay off the Company's preferred brokers, Jagannath Laldas' sons, on behalf of the government to the tune of some Rs 70,000.[104] As discussed above, much of this cash would find its way into the complex substitutive accounting system employed by Lowther and others.

However, Lowther hadn't been able to compel the *mutasaddi* and his allied merchants to pay off the Rs 50,000 demurrage charge the *Heathcote* expected for its charterparty overstay in blockading Surat port. Having that charge on the books was something the Company's employees could avoid worrying about for a while; they weren't required to pay it in Bombay, and if the Company's Directors were happy enough with the decisions Cowan and Lowther had

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[102] BL IOR/P/341/7B, "Bombay Public Proceedings," 7 Feb 1734, f. 65-68.
[103] Ibid, 8 Feb 1734, f. 70-71.
[104] BL IOR/P/341/7B, "Bombay Public Proceedings," 3 Mar 1734, f. 105.

made about the blockade, it may never be a problem for them. But it did push them further into a second risky financial relationship which they had been building alongside these Surati relationships. For several years, the Company's employees had been "loaning" money and military supplies to their former enemies, the *sidis* of Janjira, for support actions in their on-again, off-again skirmishes with the Maratha-aligned regional maritime powers. The Marathas could claim the allegiance of the upsurging Angre family of Vijaydurg, known to the English as Gheriah, 300 miles down the coast. Because the Marathas were engaged in military conflict with the Portuguese, nominal English allies in the region, throughout the 1730s, the Angre fleet had no compunctions about seizing vessels with Portuguese or English sailing passes as prizes. In response, the Bombay-based ships of the Marine, designed as both coastal trading and power-projection vessels, took as prizes Angre ships and any South Asian coastal vessels which were evidenced to have traded with the Angres at Vijaydurg. The Angre ships were usually true prizes, while the local vessels were often ransomed to their owners, alongside a stern warning not to import at Vijaydurg again.

But the Company's shipping and maritime power projection complex at Bombay was simply not significant enough to fully combat the threat they perceived from the Maratha-aligned maritime forces. While they continued to write to London in advocacy of building up the dockyard and constructing more coastal boats with military capacity, they also sought to build an alliance with the only other seagoing polity in the region that was aligned against the Maratha: the *sidis*. While the memory of the Bombay siege and the Anglo-Mughal war was still important to policy in western India (as frequent references to the Company's "dear-bought" privileges at Surat remind us), the *sidi*s became convenient allies. They still owed nominal allegiance to the Mughals at Surat, who theoretically paid them an Rs 200,000 yearly bounty, known as a *tanka*, to provide naval security (though it was in arrears by 1734). This aligned them, in the eyes of the Company's employees, against the Marathas. As a result, the Company's employees began covertly supporting them. This was despite criticism from the Company's Directors in London, who wrote that they were "at a loss in forming our sentiments of this undertaking, which is rightly observed to be out of the common road of our ordinary business." The "large sums of money advanced the *sidis* out of our cash" shocked the Board of Directors, who reminded their employees that "we scarce had anything to do with the *sidi*s 'til within two or three years' past, [yet] your consultations and letters have in a great measure been filled with them." The employees should "avoid making such loans in the future," and "never let them rest 'til our just demands are satisfied" by the *sidi*s for repayment.[105]

With Cowan receiving the news of his firing in September 1734, a few months after he and Lowther pulled off the first blockade, the new Governor John Horne (a protégé of Charles Boone) took these injunctions to heart and began looking for a way to get the *sidi*s out of the Company's debt. It was clear to him that the Company's books were a mess, especially with the creative accounting deployed in Surat, and while he wasn't sure that he could cut the *sidi*s off entirely without losing some maritime security in the region, he was confident that their debt could be easily traced. Therefore, it could be relatively quickly demanded repaid.[106]

Unfortunately, the actions of Lowther in Surat had made such a decision politically fraught. The *sidi*s' main source of income was that Rs 200,000 annual payment from the Surati

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[105] BL IOR/E/3/106, "Board of Directors in London to President and Council at Bombay," 15 Mar 1734, f. 229; Ibid, "Board of Directors in London to Governor and Council at Bombay," 5 Mar 1735, f. 440; Ibid, "Board of Directors in London to Governor and Council at Bombay," 2 July 1736, f. 685.
[106] BL IOR/P/347/7B, "Bombay Public Proceedings," 21 Sept 1734, f. 303-304; Ibid, "Bombay Public Proceedings," 7 Oct 1734, f. 339; Ibid, "Bombay Public Proceedings," 29 Oct 1734, f. 379-381.

government for maritime protection, which hadn't been paid in several years. In their arguments with the Company's employees, it was this failure on the part of Mughal state which continually drove them to borrow money and military stores from Bombay in the first place.[107] Lowther, in keeping with his and Cowan's political-economic goals, had argued for the Company to take over this duty and the concomitant payment as a way of resolving the Surat government's ability to leverage the Company in any way, and to keep the Surati state in the Company's debt.[108] The Company's employee's angling for the rights to the bounty, known as the *tanka*, was well known to the *sidi*s, who were asked to provide a copy of their *farman* from the Mughal state for the Company to peruse as they debated entering into such a relationship with the Surati government.

Feeling caught between a demand for repayment by the Company and a possible loss of any opportunity for such repayment should the Company assume the *tanka*, the *sidi*s reacted explosively. In January of 1735, the *sidi*s' representative, Masud, sailed for Surat with the intent to "demand their arrears from this government." The second blockade of Surat port in as many years had begun.

Lowther argued in a letter to Horne in February that he had "too much reason to believe the steps already taken have intimidated those who chiefly deal with us from dipping too much into trade this season." As a result, the Company's employees in Surat had "met with such variety of villains, that the most solemn promises are not to be depended on; nor can we acquit the merchants from having some share in these evil councils, hoping that by restraining English trade, we might be influenced to secure them" against the depredations of the competing regional states.[109] In March, Lowther reported that Ghulam Muhammad, Tegh Begh Khan's right-hand

[107] BL IOR/G/36/19, "Surat Diary and Proceedings," 23 Jan 1735, f. 64.
[108] BL IOR/P/341/7B, "Bombay Public Proceedings," 7 Oct 1734, f. 339.
[109] Ibid, Henry Lowther at Surat to John Horne and Council at Bombay, 18 Feb 1735, f. 91.

man, had apparently, "after a long harangue of three hours, setting forth their great poverty, the diminution of the revenues and the great expense they are at in maintaining their soldiers," informed him that "it was impossible under so many disadvantages" for the Surati government "to comply with [the *sidi*s' demands]."[110] He was reminded that the governor "and all the merchants" were "unanimously agreed that the *sidi*'s coming is a premeditated design of the General and Council of Bombay," who the Suratis thought had it "in their power to turn and manage *sidi* Saud as they please."[111]

Lowther replied that the Company had "nothing more at heart than the welfare of this city," and that they had supported the *sidi*s with goods and money at the behest of the then-emperor Muhammad Shah. Nevertheless, he told Horne that the EIC had received "an ill return for the care that has been taken for many years past of the commerce of this city."[112] In keeping with Governor Horne and the radical-Patriot Whig faction's new priorities, the massive commercial consequences of the *sidi*s' blockade built up an urgency for reaching a diplomatic solution. The *sidi* fleet, copying Lowther and Cowan's actions the year before, had intentionally seized Surat shipping "but a few days" before the sailing season for the Red Sea trade ended in early March. The Company was "afraid there will be hardly time to adjust matters, and then the Governor will become obstinate when he has lost the season for receiving his customs." Complicating matters, Surati merchants, "by the loss of their year's trade," would have trouble covering any kind of payment demanded by the *sidi*s.[113] Of course, the *sidi*s also understood the commercial impact of their actions, and the leverage it gave them. The blockade commander

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[110] Ibid, Henry Lowther at Surat to John Horne and Council at Bombay, 9 Mar 1735, f. 105.
[111] Ibid, Henry Lowther at Surat to John Horne and Council at Bombay, 2 Feb 1735, f. 72-73, 75.
[112] Ibid, Henry Lowther at Surat to John Horne and Council at Bombay, 18 Feb 1735, f. 91-92.
[113] BL IOR/G/36/19, "Surat Diary and Proceedings," 4 Mar 1735, f. 102.

circulated an open letter in the city appealing directly to Surat's merchants after the seizure of shipping. He claimed "it [was] far from his desire to interrupt the commerce of this city, or stop the pilgrims bound to *haj*, provided Tegh Begh Khan will leave their demands to be amicably adjusted, and to settle the *tanka* allowed them by the king."[114]

Both groups lobbied by the *sidi*s' statement—pilgrims and merchants—supposedly took the Sidi's goals at face value and came to Lowther directly after the commander's letter circulated. Lowther wrote that 700-800 *haji*s "came in a body to the factory to request us to interpose in the present disputes" less than a day later.[115] The same day, and well into the next, the *mahajan*, or governing body of Surat's merchants, gathered at the English factory and pleaded with one voice for the English to mediate the dispute. Despite suspecting, as the governor did, that the Company was behind the whole affair, the merchants' hands were tied as soon as the blockade began. They were once again forced into offering a cash payment—not to the government, exactly, but on the government's behalf to a foreign entity, who was very likely to turn around and hand it over to the Company's coffers.[116]

Horne, in particular, was not happy about the Surati merchants being once again compelled into a large debt, even if it was one that would help get the *sidi*s' debt off his books. In keeping with the radical-Patriot Whig ideology he and his allies in Bombay represented, his ultimate goal was to increase commerce in the region. If the Company's local interlocutors were

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[114] BL IOR/G/36/19, "Surat Diary and Proceedings," 10 Mar 1735, f. 105.
[115] Ibid, 11 Mar 1735, f. 108.
[116] Ibid, 11-12 Mar 1735, f. 108.

so strapped for cash that the production quality or quantity of valuable regional piece goods collapsed, commerce would collapse also.[117]

As a result, the Company's employees agreed to try and mediate the disagreement. The *sidi*s were still seen as potentially important allies in the EIC's own maritime skirmishes with the Marathas, so Cowan had negotiated a "secret article" in a treaty he signed with the *sidi*s which would give the Company the revenue from the *tanka* payments, should the *sidi*s manage to recover them.[118] But now it seemed that "one concession made these country people only induces them to demand others, which…will be quoted as precedents," and Horne in particular was no longer sure that such an agreement would hold. As such, the Company would need to "make what provision we can for our defense, but in the most secret and private manner possible." Lowther assured Horne that "no writing has been passed on this occasion, nor any public agreement been made, but that this thing was passed in private conversation…and will never be thought binding by [the merchants] on our side."[119] The decision of the Company to help the Surati merchants negotiate the most protective possible deal was not well received by the *sidi*s, whose leader *sidi* Saud had quite a nasty encounter with John Horne when he learned of it. He accused the English of being "more the friends of the Suratis than of them," and "that we had our own interest in assisting" local parties. *Sidi* Masud said much the same to Lowther at

[117] In April of 1735, the Surati merchants would claim that the local market had fallen 20% or more by virtue of the *sidi*s' blockade. See BL IOR/P/341/8, "Bombay Public Proceedings," 15 Apr 1735.
[118] BL IOR E/3/106, "Letter Book, 1733-1736," Board of Directors in London to President and Council at Bombay, 15 Mar 1734, f. 206, 217, 228-230; Ibid, Board of Directors in London to President and Council at Bombay, 5 Mar 1735, f. 439-447
[119] BL IOR G/36/19, "Surat Diary and Proceedings," John Horne and Council at Bombay to Henry Lowther, 2 March 1735, f. 97; Henry Lowther to John Horne and Council at Bombay, 3 March 1735, 4 March 1735, f. 101.

Surat, informing him that the Company's behavior had left the *sidi*s with "an opportunity of letting the English see them in their old shape," of the Anglo-Mughal War days.[120]

Regardless, the deal the company brokered between the *sidi*s and the Surati state and merchants was ratified that month, with *sidi* Saud apologizing to Horne alongside "many assurances of gratitude for the obligation's they were under to the English, and that they would not proceed on any affairs without their advice and approbation." As much as Horne was annoyed to be made out as the controller of either group, he did "not [judge] it proper to make a quarrel with the *sidi*s upon this occasion," and "told him that everything should be forgot and the English would always be ready to show themselves friends of the *sidi*s."[121] Shortly thereafter, the Surati merchants assured Horne that they had no hard feelings, and hoped he would keep the money they had entrusted to the Company for paying off the *sidi*. They were ready and hopeful to do business again with the EIC.[122]

Such an about-face regarding the Company's employees' actions indicated the goals of Horne and his faction to extricate themselves from the games of the prior faction and promote commerce as much as possible in the region. This was in keeping with the faction's radical-Patriot commitments. Yet an even clearer example of Horne and his faction's ideological adherence comes in the fallout of a complex local court case involving Lowther, a local merchant, and the radical-Patriot faction member John Cleland in 1735. Lowther's personal business deals came under company scrutiny when Cowan was replaced by Horne, and all the fallout happened as the 1735 blockade was underway. The initial complaint was brought by the

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[120] BL IOR/P/341/8, "Bombay Public Proceedings," 2 May 1735, f. 123-124; 8 May 1735, f. 127.
[121] Ibid, 9 May 1735, f. 128.
[122] Ibid, 6 Jun 1735, f. 137.

Surati merchant Lala Shivshankar before even the first blockade, who claimed that Lowther owed him 40,700 rupees. Lowther proposed to settle the dispute through arbitration, but Shivshankar instead went to the Surat governor. Lowther claimed the governor was likely to rule in his favor, which drove Shivshankar to withdraw his complaint there and venue-shop the case in the Bombay Mayor's Court.[123] Cleland served as Shivshankar's attorney. Lowther's response to Cleland's case was that the Bombay jurisdiction had no authority, as "the cause of action in dispute arose in Surat and with a subject of the Great Mughal."[124]

Cleland's response unleashed a torrent of radical-Patriot sentiment towards Lowther. Cleland argued that Bombay Mayor's Court was the perfect jurisdiction for the case. Lowther's claim that it could only be heard in Surat was as good as "renounc[ing] the wholesome laws of…king and country," because by "demurring…the jurisdiction of the court," Lowther had announced his "ill intentions to sacrifice my masters' dear bought privileges, meaning their *farman* or license to trade in the Mughal's dominions under certain limitations." If the Company abandoned their court's right to decide such cases, Cleland "could not suppose any Englishman in Surat whatever station or character he might enjoy, could have credit for five rupees." Furthermore, Cleland went so far as to publicly accuse Lowther of having blockaded Surat port in 1734 in "an arbitrary proceeding," to recover 64,000 rupees for his own personal accounts.

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[123] BL IOR/P/341/8, "Bombay Public Proceedings," 3 January 1735, f. 6-7, 12. This is an example of what the legal historian Lauren Benton identified as overlapping jurisdictions in colonial law, which allowed individuals, whether associated with the imperial power or the local population, to assert agency and control over a contested set of legal norms and expectations. See *Law and Colonial Cultures: Legal Regimes in World History, 1400-1900* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1999).
[124] BL IOR/P/341/8, "Bombay Public Proceedings," 3 January 1735, f. 7.

Should Lowther's argument be accepted by the court, Cleland argued, Bombay was no better than "an asylum for all offenders, and at best a common mint."[125]

In Lowther's view, these claims were libel, and "the most Jesuitical and base evasions that was ever known to be given under the hand of anyone that ever pretended to be an Englishman." Lowther complained that "had any such liberties been taken by any of our Courts at Westminster Hall as there was in that of Bombay," the lawyer who did so "would have been by the judges of the bench ordered into custody and severely fined, and forever afterwards rendered incapable of pleading in any Court whatsoever."[126] Cowan backed him up, complaining about Cleland's insinuation that "the stopping the Bar [Surat harbor] at that time, and other transactions subsequent to it by the Chief and factors at Surat by order of their Governor and Council of Bombay were unjust and unlawful" was an "insult" which he "had no room to apprehend." Cowan even took a leaf out of former governor Aislabie's book and tried to discredit Cleland through an insinuation of his own. He complained that Cleland lacked "the character of the smallest share of honor or honesty," and was "one who, not many years since, deserted his king, country, and even the color nature designed him, and was sent to me from Mahim…as a pinioned slave. Circumstances indeed that best suit his principles and practices but render him unworthy of even my horsewhip."[127]

Cleland's response was to defend himself with recourse to radical-Patriot values of "constitutional reform, dynamic economic expansion" and the rooting out of "corruption."[128] Lowther's argument that Shivshankar's case lacked jurisdiction in Bombay had "self-evident

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[125] Ibid, f. 7-8.
[126] Ibid, f. 8-9.
[127] Ibid, f. 11.
[128] Amy Watson, *Patriots Before Revolution: The Rise of Party Politics in the British Atlantic, 1714-1763* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2025), 31.

consequences to trade and public faith," Cleland argued. It threatened "the most sacred assurance and security of merchants of all nations." Especially given that Cowan and Lowther had "so deeply affected the honor of our national justice in these parts," Cleland argued that "the denial of that justice [to Shivshankar] might ultimately prove destructive to our Honorable Masters' interest, credit, and estate at Surat."[129] As regarded Lowther's claim of libel, Cleland argued he had "said too little upon an occasion where it was impossible to say too much…if in the course of the debate I have been lead into the mention of some points too delicate to bear touching upon, or that personally affected Mr. Lowther," he shouldn't have brought the case in the first place. Cleland was simply acting "as an English gentleman, a servant of the Honorable Company," and "an attorney acting for my constituent." There was no better disinfectant than sunlight for John Cleland, who felt Lowther's attempt to dismiss Shivshankar's claim on jurisdictional grounds was "not of a nature either to subsist long of itself, or to encourage any further trust to, or dealings with, an English merchant, at least."[130]

Cleland directly tied his case to the nature of the Company's work in western India, arguing that "the honorable opinion the Mughal government has of the integrity of our nation and of our regard for justice, and the plainness and candor of our dealings," was the reason the Company had "not only an unlimited credit at Surat, but are peculiarly distinguished…by the grant of our *farman* privileges, allowing us the exertion of our own laws and acts of sovereignty, even over their subjects, in the heart of their country." But, Cleland claimed, "should the justice of this civil government be refused a Mughal subject only suing for his own, or such a plea as this? Would it not bring those privileges into a certain danger? And if they were totally cancelled

[129] BL IOR/P/341/8, "Bombay Public Proceedings," 3 January 1735, f. 14-15.
[130] Ibid, f. 15.

and destroyed, on account of such a flagrant injustice, where would the blame lie? With what face could our nation complain that [the laws of nature and nations] were not observed?" Cleland claimed he would have the backing of the Court of Directors on this point. "When they see this plea on record, as see it they must," Cleland argued, the Directors would "disavow, with a becoming abhorrence, a servant of theirs who, on the credit of his post in the service, as Chief of their factory at Surat, borrows money off merchants there, withdraws to their head settlement at Bombay, and when pursued on his [promissory] note, interposes such a screen from payment." He went even further, bringing in the royal charter which undergirded the very existence of the incorporated town of Bombay. "That our royal charter intended a particular favor and tenderness for the rights of aliens," Cleland attested, "is, I think, pretty apparent from the sense and spirit of the preamble to our charter, as well as the clause in it empowering this Honorable [Mayor's] Court to choose two aliens into their body." Furthermore, Cleland noted, "our registers are full of precedents of procedures for their relief; and I am in hopes this Honorable Court will look on the title of an alien, foreigner, or stranger as an inducement to do him all the justice in their power, instead of accepting such a plea against him."[131]

Cleland finished by reminding his audience that "all civilized nations favor trade and traffic, and consequently the certainty of property by a universal distribution of justice. Even the nations of cannibals seldom or never devour strangers or aliens. But if they did," Cleland claimed, "I don't see how a quotation from them would conduce much to the honor or support of

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[131] BL IOR/P/341/8, "Bombay Public Proceedings," 3 January 1735, f. 20-22. For the corporate nature of Bombay, see Philip J. Stern, "The Corporation and the Global Seventeenth-Century English Empire: A Tale of Three Cities," *Early American Studies* 16, no. 1 (2018): 41-63. For more about the early history of courts in Bombay and the other cities of the Company in India, see Arthur Mitchell Fraas, "'They Have Travailed Into a Wrong Latitude:' The Laws of England, Indian Settlements, and the British Imperial Constitution 1726-1773," doctoral dissertation, Duke University 2011.

the defendant [Lowther's] pleas." If Lowther was supported, such a decision would "effectually tear up all public faith and credit by the roots, fundamentally destroy the whole English trade in these parts, and convert our island into an asylum or sanctuary only sacred to pillage and rapine."[132]

Cleland was ultimately vindicated by the Court of Directors, as he predicted he would be.[133] It did him little good, and Lala Shivshankar even less, as Lowther skipped town in March of 1736, before the issue was settled. He was under investigation by Horne and the rest of the radical-Patriot Bombay faction, and had no more support from Cowan, who had sailed home months earlier with his cash. By the end of April 1736, Horne's ally John Braddyll had compiled a full report of Lowther's wheeling and dealing. The whole investigation was partially a useful scapegoating of a figure the Company's western India employees had little hope of catching up to. The Directors in London were not happy about the outcomes of the policies Cowan and Lowther had tried to implement in the 1730s, and it was helpful to Horne and his faction to be able to pin any and all ongoing problems on the two. But at the same time, Braddyll's report and the investigation into Cowan and Lowther demonstrated the faction's commitment to a partisan theory of radical-Patriot empire which was not easily identified in earlier brouhahas like the one Aislabie was embroiled in several decades earlier. The radical-Patriot faction of Bombay administrators devoted considerable time and energy to uncover the exact details of Lala Shivshankar's case in Surat, for instance. Braddyll discovered that the Mughal central administration in Delhi had issued a royal order on Shivshankar's behalf for the seizure of Lowther and one of his Surati allies, Shambhudas. "Lowther was then at Bombay," Braddyll

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[132] BL IOR/P/341/8, "Bombay Public Proceedings," 3 January 1735, f. 22.
[133] See also Hal Gladfelder, *Fanny Hill in Bombay: The Making and Unmaking of John Cleland* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2012).

explained, "but had he been at Surat he was evidently liable to a lawful seizure and imprisonment, and nothing could or ought to have protected him from it but the power, high rank, and authority which our Honorable Masters their Chiefs at Surat enjoy." Of course, those powers and authorities were "designed for the Honorable Company's benefit and advantage, and not to protect their servants in such crying injustices." As a result, "every private act of oppression, every unfair advantage or abuse of power and authority annexed to the Chiefship becomes necessarily a public injury, and in proportion lessens and destroys the currency of trade and business, and the English credit in general."[134] The Company's employees were acting all along with a political, ideological, and partisan outlook, not simply a demand for more land or personal private trade enrichment.

The uncovering of Lowther and Cowan's abuses and the vindication of the Company's rights and values as the protector and promoter of a freer, more open trade between 1734 and 1736 (paradoxically brought about by two blockades) was a victory for the more radical party among the Company's Directors and employees. So would the dockyard project prove to be. But for the dockyard project to succeed, the Company's radical-Patriot faction would come to rely on the active support of a particular "alien" community: the Parsi Zoroastrians of western India.

Parsi Shipbuilders, Parsi-English Relationships, and Constructing the Bombay Dockyards

For decades, historians of South Asia have described the rise of "competition and collaboration" between European imperial figures and South Asian people as a later 19th century project. This has been the dominant interpretation for western India, the south (including Madras and the many "princely states") and Bengal.[135] While some scholarship has highlighted

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[134] BL IOR/P/341/8, "Bombay Public Proceedings," 2 Apr 1736, f. 189-191.

[135] See Anil Seal, *The Emergence of Indian Nationalism: Competition and Collaboration in the Later Nineteenth Century* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1968); Rosalind O'Hanlon's

individual figures in the later 18th century who contributed to the expansion of the territorial empire and the production of colonial knowledge, this is by no means a universally accepted re-periodization in the field; nor does it directly address the specific context of Bombay through the early modern period.[136] Even historians whose work highlights the active participation of South Asian individuals in the politics and economy of empire before the massive penetration of the British imperial state into land tenure focus their attention on the period after 1750.[137] Much of

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early work mostly follows Seal's interpretation, as in *Caste, Conflict, and Ideology: Mahatma Jotirao Phule and Low Caste Protest in Nineteenth-Century Western India* (Delhi: Ashoka University/Orient Blackswan, 2016 [1985]), 6-7; Christine Dobbin, *Urban Leadership in Western India: Politics and Communities in Bombay City, 1840-1885* (London: Oxford University Press, 1972); Thomas Metcalf, *Ideologies of the Raj* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1994); Amar Farooqui, *Opium City: The Making of Early Victorian Bombay* (Gurgaon, UP: Three Essays Collective, 2006); Rajnarayan Chandavarkar, *The Origins of Industrial Capitalism in India: Business Struggles and the Working Classes in Bombay, 1900-1940* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994).

136 Key examples: C.A. Bayly, *Indian Society and the Making of the British Empire* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1990) and *Recovering Liberties: Indian Thought in the Age of Liberalism and Empire* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2012); Ranajit Guha, *A Rule of Property for Bengal: An Essay on the Idea of Permanent Settlement* (Paris: Mouton, 1963); Bernard Cohn, *Colonialism and its Forms of Knowledge: The British in India* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1996); Nicholas Dirks, *Castes of Mind: Colonialism and the Making of Modern India* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2001); Robert Travers, *Ideology and Empire in Eighteenth Century India: The British in Bengal* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007).

137 In this space, I would choose to highlight recent scholarship, starting with the later work of O'Hanlon. See especially Chapter 10, "In the Presence of Witnesses: Petitioning and Judicial 'Publics' in Western India, c. 1600-1820," in *Lineages of Brahman Power: Caste, Family, and the State in Western India, 1600-1900* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 2025), 392-434; also Tiraana Bains, "Making and Debating Empires in South Asia and the Global British Empire, 1756-1799," doctoral dissertation, Yale University (2021); Anirban Karak, "Capitalism, Caste, and Subaltern Aspirations in India: Bengal, c.1500-1859," in *Capitalism: Histories*, ed. Robert G. Ingram and James M. Vaughn (Rochester, NY: Boydell & Brewer, 2025). Notably, the increasing interest in the figure of Ananda Ranga Pillai, recently described by a biographer as "the 'Pepys' of French India," has begun to push this kind of scholarship further back in time, at least for the French East India Company. See C.S. Srinivasachari, *Ananda Ranga Pillai: The 'Pepys' of French India* (Delhi: Manohar, 2024); David Shulman, "Cowherd or King? The Sanskrit Biography of Ananda Ranga Pillai," in *Telling Lives in India: Biography, Autobiography, and Life History*, ed. David Arnold and Stuart H. Blackburn (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2004), 175-202; David Washbrook, "Envisioning the Social Order in a

the interest in this area has focused on the cooptation and reification of *jati* and *varna* distinctions in the economy and politics of Indian regions controlled by the British, and so is concerned with caste-oriented Brahman and non-Brahman action among Hindu people in British-adminstered areas.

A common exception to this focus on Hindu groups has been limited research on the Parsi community of Persian-origin Zoroastrians. This population has always been tiny, with a comparatively outsized influence in English-South Asian relations after about 1700. In the community's most beloved origin story, after fleeing modern-day Iran because of persecution from the newly Muslim state, the Parsis arrived on the coast of Gujarat, in the small polity of Sanjan. The ruler of Sanjan, known in the story as Jadi Rana, "feared" the Parsis, wondering, "would not such strange men create dissention and perhaps even usurp his crown? Frightened by their dress and accoutrements," Jadi Rana instructed the Parsis to explain their religion, both the "open" and the "secret" parts. He demanded Parsis speak in Gujarati were they to settle in his lands. He instructed Parsi resident women to "dress like Indian women." And he required that the Parsis "lay aside your arms and promise never to use them."[138] In response, according to legend (as it was not actually recorded in the Parsi poem detailing their arrival) the Parsi priest leading the group requested a glass of milk, some sugar, and a spoon. Pouring a spoonful of sugar into the milk, the priest stirred until it was dissolved, invisible, but still sweet. This, he said, was the representation of what Jadi Rana could expect if he welcomed the Parsis into his

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Southern Port City: The Tamil Diary of Ananda Ranga Pillai," *South Asian History and Culture* 6, no. 1 (2015): 172-185; Philippe Haudrère, "The Hindu Courtier and the French Governor: Pondicherry, 1744-60," in *Asian Port Cities, 1600-1800: Local and Foreign Cultural Interactions*, ed. Masashi Haneda (Singapore: National University of Singapore Press, 2009), 175-191.

[138] H.E. Eduljee, *Kisseh-I Sanjan* (Bombay [Mumbai]: K.R. Cama Oriental Institute, 1991), 50-51.

territory. They were the perfect minority: invisible, blending right in with the rest of the population; but also benefitting the community, bringing sweetness recognizable to all.[139]

The combination of outsize importance in business and trade, alongside the community's numerically insignificant population, has drawn the interest of academics looking to define the emergence of capitalism in India and the identity of the model minority. As one scholar summarized it, the history of the Parsis has been explained with recourse to the Weberian notion of the spirit of capitalism, the lack of caste among Parsis, their inherent foreignness, and the principles of their religion.[140] In more recent works, scholars have borrowed from sociological and anthropological works to explain "minority and entrepreneurial success in terms of several factors," including "a conscious effort to use minority group identification, tight control by minority elites, and internal group resources." This leads to "minority entrepreneurs" acting "not only to advance themselves, but also their community, within the economic and/or political context of their society."[141]

It is this latter point which I feel provides the missing piece in the puzzle of Bombay's dockyard process. Whereas previous scholarship has examined the push factors which drove early Parsi merchant communities to work with the English in the era of Mughal decline in Surat, few works have demonstrated interest in Parsis working with the English as craftsmen and artisans, rather than brokers and moneylenders. For example, David L. White, one of the foremost historians of Parsis in eighteenth century western India, explicitly declined to

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[139] A good literary retelling of this iconic story is available in Boman Desai, *The Memory of Elephants* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2001 [1988]), 23-24.
[140] Ashok V. Desai, "The Origins of Parsi Enterprise," *Indian Economic and Social History Review* 5, no. 4 (1968), 307.
[141] David L. White, *Competition and Collaboration: Parsi Merchants and the English East India Company in 18th Century India* (Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal, 1995), xv.

investigate the Parsi shipbuilders of Bombay because "they were controlled and employed by the EIC. Unless the Parsi master builders had access to capital to strike out on their own, they would have kept working for others."[142] Since these individuals were not "entrepreneurs," they were not a part of his study of community advancement "within the economic and/or political context of their society." Lakshmi Subramanian, who produced a monograph on the Parsis' greatest competitors for EIC business, Gujarati Banias, consistently downplayed the Parsis' role as "neophytes and new-comers to trade," without "the same political and social connections" as other groups in the region.[143] While these historians and other scholars used the community's relatively new engagement in the trading world of western India to argue why the Parsis were such early allies of the EIC and such early residents of Bombay under the Company, they primarily focused their economic and political analysis on a small population of Parsis with moveable capital who were actively searching for wealth. This prompted such scholarship to focus on the economic and political push factors which made the EIC comparatively attractive to the Parsi upper crust. I would like to gesture here at some of the political-economic pull factors after 1735 which drew Parsi artisans to Bombay, made them the some of the most important figures in the dockyard construction process, and contributed to the rapid enrichment of the community overall in Bombay over the course of the 18th century.

In examining the role played by Lavji Nasarwanji Wadia in the development of the Bombay dockyards beginning in 1736, I demonstrate the importance of pushing our frame of reference for questions of imperial "collaboration and contestation" further back in time. I also

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142 David L. White, "Parsis in the Commercial World of Western India, 1700-1750, *Indian Economic and Social History Review* 24, no. 2 (1987), 191.
143 Lakshmi Subramaian, *Indigenous Capital and Imperial Expansion: Bombay, Surat, and the West Coast* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1996), 50.

call attention to the importance of local actors' behavior as a marker of the Company's South Asian interlocutors' interest in the Company's own political-economic conflicts and positions. The claims advanced here are merely a starting point for our investigation of the history of Parsi involvement with the Company and British imperial state over the early modern period. This is an area where scholarship focused on Gujarati- and Avestan-language archives, alongside privately held archival material, could prove crucial. I suspect such work will yield nuanced perspective on what I offer here, particularly as regards the motivation and intracommunity politics of the holistic Parsi population during the collapse of the Surati Mughal state and rise of Maratha power in and around western India.

Almost every narrative of Lavji Nasarvanji Wadia's story covers the same three points. After working for some time in Surat's shipbuilding industry, Wadia was invited to Bombay by the Company to serve as a ship's carpenter and give input on the soon-to be-constructed dockyards in 1735. He was appointed the "master builder" of the dockyard sometime around then, a position he held with great distinction until his death in 1774 and passed on through the male line of the Wadia family for another 100-plus years.[144] In telling this story, almost every Parsi community history and academic text cites to one or more of three places: family scion R.A. Wadia's self-published *The Bombay Dockyards and the Wadia Master Builders* (1955), D.F. Karaka's multivolume *History of the Parsis: Including their Manners, Customs, Religion, and Present Position* (1884), and D.B. Patel's *Parsi Prakash*, or *Light of the Parsis* (1860), the

[144] Examples span from H.D. Darukhanawala, *Parsi Luster on Indian Soil* (Bombay [Mumbai], Claridge & Co, 1939), 492-495, which is a sort of community history, directory, and collection of Parsi advertisements all published together, to David L. White, *Competition and Collaboration: Parsi Merchants and the English East India Company in 18th Century India* (Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal, 1995), 89, and Jesse S. Palsetia, *The Parsis of India: Preservation of Identity in Bombay City* (Boston: Brill, 2001), 51, which are both peer-reviewed texts from academic publishers.

Gujarati-language community history often considered the most extensive work. Without speaking to Patel's work, Wadia and Karaka base their histories on a selection of EIC documents. While these are certainly useful, they must be held up against a close reading of the Surat and Bombay Councils' daily records for a holistic picture to emerge.

Wadia was by no means the first Parsi at Bombay, nor even the first Parsi artisan (as opposed to merchant). With the pro-settlement and pro-manufacturing policies of various Bombay Company administrators over the years, a small but growing population of Parsi weavers, shopkeepers, and small merchants had settled in the city since the first provision of grounds for a Tower of Silence by Gerald Aungier in the 1670s.[145] However, he was the first individual Parsi craftsman about whom we have knowledge. The preservation of his personal details through the Company's administrators' veneration of his skills was in keeping with the radical-Patriot focus on commerce and manufacturing displayed by the men of Bombay Council in the later 1730s and 1740s, as well as their increasingly merit-oriented philosophy of advancement within the Company's service. Wadia was born at Surat between 1700 and 1710 and trained in the Parsi shipbuilding industry there. He was evidently known to the Company's employees as early as July of 1735, as the Surat diary reported then that "Lowjee, a ship-builder of this place" had "informed" the Council that he had met with "twenty-eight English men who had run away from Bombay and brought with them a pinnace" the night before at the port of Daman.[146]

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[145] David L. White, *Competition and Collaboration: Parsi Merchants and the English East India Company in 18th Century India* (Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal, 1995), 89. A Tower of Silence is the English term for a Parsi *dokhma*, where the community practices last rites. Due to the nature of Parsi funerary practices, many towns and cities in western India were not amenable to the presence of a *dokhma* within city limits. As such, the *dokhma* in Bombay became a particular draw for Parsis moving to the city.
[146] BL IOR/G/36/19, "Surat Diary and Consultations," 29 Jul 1735, f. 234.

In January of 1736 the Bombay Council wrote again to Surat. Their English ships' carpenter, Edward Roach, had petitioned to return to England in August of 1735, and was soon to depart on the next Europe ship.[147] As a result, Bombay was "in want of a good master carpenter for building a groab." Indicating that Lavji Wadia was known as a talented carpenter, the Bombay Council suggested "if Lavji will go thither on that service, he shall have all fitting encouragement."[148] It only took the Surat Council a few days to learn that Lavji was "already engaged in some work that will shortly be finished." He indicated his willingness to sail for Bombay and the shipbuilding job there only after his contract at Surat was complete.[149] Karaka proposes some additional details drawn from a posthumous report, which are largely unsubstantiated in the contemporary Company sources. In this account, Lavji Wadia was the foreman of the Company's official builder in Surat, a Parsi named Dhanjibhai. George Dudley, the master attendant of the Bombay Marine, was supposedly "sent…to Surat to agree with…Dhanjibhai to build a ship for the Honorable Company's service, to be called the *Queen*." Dudley was evidently "so much pleased with the skill and exertions" of Wadia "that after the launch he endeavored to persuade him to proceed with some artificers to Bombay, where the Government were desirous of establishing a building yard." However, in this retelling, Wadia's "fidelity to his engagements would not allow him to yield to Mr. Dudley's solicitation 'til his master's consent [was] procured. This was at length obtained with great difficulty."[150]

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147 BL IOR/P/341/8, "Bombay Public Proceedings," 30 August 1735, f. 186, 188-189.
148 BL IOR/G/36/20, "Surat Diary and Consultations," 18 Jan 1736, f. 42.
149 Ibid, "Chief and Council at Surat to President and Council at Bombay," 22 Jan 1736, f. 46
150 William Taylor Money, "Observations on the Expediency of Shipbuilding at Bombay: For the Service of his Majesty, and of the East India Company" (London: Longman, 1811), 74-76; also quoted in D.F. Karaka, *History of the Parsis: Including their Manners, Customs, Religion, and Present Position*, vol. II (London: Macmillan, 1884), 61.

Dhanjibhai was certainly a Parsi shipbuilder at Surat with whom the Company contracted for shipping. George Dudley was the Master Attendant of the Bombay Marine at that time. But there is no evidence that Dudley was supervising the building of a Company vessel at Surat within months of the *sidi*s' siege being lifted, nor is there any suggestion that only Dudley's impassioned pleas for the great skill of Wadia convinced the Bombay Council or Dhanjibhai to send him specifically for the construction of the new dockyard. Rather, the Company's employees seemed a bit annoyed by his insistence on finishing up his current obligations in Surat before traveling down the coast. They were certainly not happy to learn that Lavji had "refused to come" to Bombay "without bringing eleven others with him," costing the Company an advance on wages of nearly 400 rupees.[151] The Wadias' later value to the Company clearly inflated the description of their doyen's arrival.

Rather than emphasizing how special any one Company employee may or may not have considered Lavji to be, there is more value in examining what we can learn about Lavji's behavior from his historical record. For one thing, Lavji seemed to have a "trust, but verify" attitude toward the Company from the start. While he wanted their favor and was happy to tip them off about potential deserters in Daman, he was not at their beck and call, to the exclusion of all others. As much as he may have wanted the EIC's business, he wasn't willing to turn his back on established contractual relationships in Surat to pursue it. He was clearly valuable enough to the English, and enough of a known commodity, for them to wait two months for him to tidy his affairs in Surat and negotiate advances on pay for himself, his second-in-command, and his preferred laborers. The picture which appears is still one where the English need Wadia more than he needs the Company, in stark contrast to the image of Parsi "entrepreneurs" like the

[151] BL IOR/P/341/8, "Bombay Public Proceedings," 24 Mar 1736, f. 144.

Rustam Manak family in the same era. This historical reality turns the traditional argument about Parsi-English collaboration and contestation on its head. Whereas scholars have repeatedly emphasized how important the EIC was for the Parsis, in providing them with access to capital and an on-ramp to merchanting, in the instance of the Parsi craftsman, it is the Parsi, not the Company, who holds the cards.

As discussed above, the Company's employees felt the pressures of the regional maritime power situation in the 1730s and 1740s. Concern over Maratha-aligned maritime powers seizing shipping of all kinds and further disrupting regional trade propelled the Company's employees to advocate for an increasingly interventionist maritime policy in the region. This was in keeping, again, with the dominant political-economic partisan position within the Company. As much as radical-Patriot Whigs had opposed wars which they felt damaged the trading and commercial opportunities of Britain and the empire under Walpole, they championed interventionist conflict which was meant to protect and promote freer commerce and trade. In western India, this led to a muscular littoral maritime policy and a conflict with the Maratha maritime powers, referred to regularly as "pirates." Rather than seeing this policy as an attempt to extend Company-state sovereignty, as some scholars have suggested, it should be analyzed to some degree at face value, as a response to regional power disputes which imperiled trade. [152]

This emphasis made the 1730s and 1740s the perfect time for Lavji Nasarvanji Wadia to exert his claims on the Company's employees in Bombay. The War of the Austrian Succession was soon to break out, with consequences for the Company in the eastern half of the Indian Ocean. Whenever naval conflict was afoot for Britain, it was increasingly difficult for the

[152] Cf Lakshmi Subramanian, *The Sovereign and the Pirate: Ordering Maritime Subjects in India's Western Littoral* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2016).

Company to contract English ships' carpenters for work in India. Plus, most Company employees in India felt local shipbuilding materials and techniques were better suited for Indian Ocean waters and Indian Ocean power projection. They were willing, if grudgingly, to negotiate with Wadia for his services. Wadia, an evidently well-traveled and experienced shipbuilder, knew the regional situation as well as the Company's employees did, and negotiated accordingly. When he first moved to Bombay with his crew in March of 1736, he negotiated a 30 rupee per month salary for himself, 20 rupees a month for his second-in-charge (also named Dhanji), 13 rupees a month for his three journeymen carpenters, and 12 rupees a month for seven less-experienced carpenters. Furthermore, he "insisted" that "three months' pay should be advanced him, as also to Dhanji Khurshed and to the other ten carpenters."[153]

Throughout 1736 and 1737, as the Maratha and Portuguese fought on Salsette, Wadia worked away on the new dockyard, with the expenses of the project neatly accounted for every month in the Company's books.[154] He also had work building more coast-going ships for protecting Bombay's trade as the Company's employees invested in their own Marine and declined requests for help from the Portuguese.[155] His work was evidently highly satisfactory, as the Company's employees had little reason to mention him by name in the ensuing years, even as they ordered additional ships and began to expand the dockyard he had been involved in constructing. His family, however, did join him in Bombay in 1742, when he successfully applied for a 1,000-rupee loan to build a large home for them within the Fort area. Every ship he built earned him a bonus of 300-500 rupees.[156] He built at least 19 ships over the 1740s, before

[153] BL IOR/G/36/20, "Surat Diary and Consultations," 16 Mar 1736, f. 88.
[154] See BL IOR/P/341/9, "Bombay Public Proceedings," 1737-1738.
[155] For example, Ibid, f. 130-135.
[156] BL IOR/P/341/12, "Bombay Public Proceedings," 13 Mar 1741, f. 117; BL IOR/P/341/13, "Bombay Public Proceedings," 27 Aug 1742, f. 400; BL IOR/P/341/15, "Bombay Public

the dry dock was even built.[157] Sohrab P. Davar, writing a family history of the Parsi *panchayat*, or community council, noted his service as the head of Panchayat in the 1700s, though "no records regarding the transactions of the *panchayat* at the time" remain.[158] Not only did Lavji and his descendants parlay this success into a long standing shipbuilding business and social clout; they also branched out into long-distance trade themselves, and soon diversified their business.

Scholars have seen Wadia's success as "contributing to the prosperity" of "middle-level" Parsi merchant entrepreneurs in India, or as a "proto-industrial endeavor that was not allowed to reach its natural conclusion," instead "assist[ing] the transition of the Parsi mentality from mercantile to industrial by way of technological innovation."[159] Instead, I again propose reading these traces in the historical record as evidence of Wadia's own knowledge of his invaluable contributions to the political-economic goals of the Company in Bombay at that time. Working hard was certainly enough to keep Lavji Nasarvanji Wadia afloat, if he was building almost two ships as year. But negotiating for and receiving high-value bonuses, favorable building loans, and (eventually) gifts from the Company in London shows that was able to do more than keep afloat as an artisan: he was able to connect his skillset to personal economic benefit. There was

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Proceedings," 9 Sept 1746, f. 372; BL IOR/P/341/16, "Bombay Public Proceedings," 3 Jan 1749, f. 4.

[157] David L. White, *Competition and Collaboration: Parsi Merchants and the English East India Company in 18th Century India* (Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal, 1995), 154.

[158] *The History of the Parsi Punchayet of Bombay* (Bombay [Mumbai]: New Book Company, 1949), 4.

[159] David L. White, *Competition and Collaboration: Parsi Merchants and the English East India Company in 18th Century India* (Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal, 1995), 155-156; Christine Dobbin, *Asian Entrepreneurial Minorities: Conjoint Communities in the Making of the World-Economy 1570-1940* (Richmond, UK: Curzon, 1996), 86-87; see also Amalendu Guha, "Parsi Seths as Entrepreneurs, 1750-1850," *Economic and Political Weekly* 5 (1970): M-107--M-115; Ibid, "The Comprador Role of Parsi Seths, 1750-1850," *Economic and Political Weekly* 5 (1970): 1933-1936.

never a clear-cut distinction for the Wadias between trade, manufacturing, and politics, just as those things were tied inextricably in the radical-Patriot conception of empire at the time. The same perspective remains present today, when the Wadia Group's holdings range from Bombay Dyeing and Brittania Industries (which manufacture cotton suiting and shelf-stable biscuits) to the Punjab Kings cricket franchise and Wadia Techno-Engineering, a project management provider. Nusli Wadia, the current Wadia Group doyen, is a grandson of the founder of Pakistan on his mother's side as well as the scion of one of India's most powerful business families (itself married into the English nobility) through the paternal line.

Conclusion

This long and meandering journey through the politics of debates over (and ultimately the building of) Bombay's dockyard complex has demonstrated conclusively the continuing importance of factional and partisan politics in the EIC and its administration of western India in the first half of the 18^{th} century. While most historians of the EIC have devoted their attention in this period to the "problem" of private trade and Mughal decline, and most historians of South Asia have focused on the role of Mughal decline and Maratha advancement in the region, few scholars have taken seriously the suggestion of active political valence in policy-making around western India in this period. By tying siloed historiographies and disparate regions of the empire together over a timespan of more than 20 years, I have showed how important those active political debates were, even when they are difficult to find in the dry administrative texts of the EIC archive.

Furthermore, I have challenged common historiography of the Parsi community and early "competition and collaboration" narratives regarding the presence of European trading companies in early modern South Asia. By focusing on Parsi artisans rather than Parsi “entrepreneurs” I have reestablished the evidence of Parsi independence from EIC policy in the region in the 1730s and 1740s, demonstrating how knowledge of the Company’s political-economic decision-making extended beyond the boundaries of the Company’s employees and directors in India as much as in Britain.

I see this as an attempt to link the pre-1757 history of the English/British in India to the burgeoning field of partisan political history in the British Atlantic world in the 18th century. To date, studies of the partisan politicization of the British empire in the 1700s have focused on this movement as an Atlantic story. It has been contrasted to a comparatively apolitical, mercantile, militaristic, and territorially expansionist unitary Company policy in the Indian Ocean region which grew only more rigid as the 18th century drew to a close. This historiography is too dependent on the eastern Indian Ocean arena and the history of English/British activity in Bengal (and to a lesser extent, Madras). It simply cannot account for the trajectory of the EIC’s western Indian holdings at the same time. Attempts to force all three Presidencies into the same unitary apolitical framework focused on territorial expansion across this period do no one any favors. Rather, this work proves the importance of disaggregating the politics and debates of the EIC, both within its corporate structure and outside of it, across imperial spaces. This increasingly holistic view of imperial changes in the early modern period actually clarifies more of the explanatory picture behind modern British imperial expansion by rejecting a need to superimpose the same trajectory across South Asia. I look forward to increasing attention to these issues from other scholars. In particular, I hope to see both work expanding the source base used here to include more vernacular-language data and considering this period’s politics in comparison to political-economic debate in the other Company factories and sites. I also welcome challenges to this argument’s periodization and look forward to seeing longer narratives of change and continuity in this space. I find these would be particularly rich moving forward into the second half of the eighteenth century and even the nineteenth century, where most of the current research on the politics of Bombay's business community is currently situated.

Conclusion

In the end, many of my thoughts on this work remain built around the questions that brought me here in the first place. Why have academics and non-academics alike been so comfortable with leaving Bombay's early history comparatively unexplored? What do dominant, incomplete narratives enact on the world and the people in it, both now and in the past? In the case of Bombay, at least, these questions have enabled me to examine a significant archive in what I see as novel and illuminating ways. While I have chosen to focus on Bombay's evolution as a site of partisan, durable political conflict over the meaning of empire in Britain's global sphere and in South Asia more specifically, I recognize that there are many, many more stories to tell and arguments to make about pre-1800 Bombay. Not all will agree completely with what I have set out here, but nor will they all be mutually incompatible with what I have found and argued for. Without discounting those who have come before me in critically examining premodern Bombay, I here demonstrate conclusively and distinctively the value of continued critical engagement with Bombay in the pre-1800 period, alongside other sites of East India Company activity in the subcontinent. Bombay in the 17th and 18th centuries is an incredibly rich topic for historians with a multitude of scholarly interests and backgrounds. It is fundamentally important for the city's early history to be incorporated into our historical and historiographic narratives of English/British empire, South Asia, and the English/British in South Asia.

With more specific attention to what I have presented here, this dissertation attests that Bombay's early history is best explained through a lens of economic, ideological, and most importantly, political contestation among a diverse range of historical actors. From Keigwin's Rebellion and the Anglo-Mughal War to the Anglican church and dockyard, every major change in Bombay's fabric was contested and challenged by invested East India Company Directors, their employees, and the South Asians who lived and worked alongside those employees in western India. This political conflict over the English/British empire and Bombay's role in it created a durable site of an ideologically and politically specific model of empire in western India. As much as examining the historical linkages between ideological- and politicalsparring and policy actions in the early modern world might lead us to think human action tends toward a tug-of-war, with nothing to show for all that tussle but a lack of historical change, Bombay's experience of early modern political conflict does not bear such an expectation out.[1]

While Bombay's history was determined by partisan conflicts, and the ideologically dominant group in those conflicts changed many times over the *circa* 100 years under study, that conflict nevertheless trended in a recognizable direction. Due to the specific context of Bombay's site, such as its geography lacking an easily accessible, export-productive hinterland, its legal identity as a crown colony which was administered by the East India Company, and its physicality as a swampy estuarial harbor, Bombay was not a good candidate for the same strategies the East India Company used over the period to administer, expand, develop and control its other factories and holdings.[2] As such, administrators, executives, and South Asian interlocutors focused on Bombay were forced to respond to the specific

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[1] Cf. Lewis R. Namier, *The Structure of Politics at the Accession of George III* (London: Macmillan, 1929); even Steve Pincus has suggested "scholars should begin to narrate the history of the British Empire as a series of contests between competing political economic strategies," without attention to how such an approach might render historiography incapable of arguing for real change. See Steve Pincus, "Rethinking Mercantilism: Political Economy, the British Empire, and the Atlantic World in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries," *William and Mary Quarterly* 69, no. 1 (2012): 32.

[2] See Ranajit Guha, *A Rule of Property for Bengal: An Essay on the Idea of Permanent Settlement* (Paris: Mouton, 1963); Robert Travers, *Ideology and Empire in Eighteenth Century India: The British in Bengal* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007); Ashin Das Gupta, *Indian Merchants and the Decline of Surat: c. 1700-1750* (Wiesbaden: Steiner, 1979); B.G. Gokhale, *Surat in the Seventeenth Century: A Study of Urban History of Pre-Modern India* (London: Curzon Press, 1979); G.S. Sardesai, *New History of the Marathas* (Bombay: Munshiram Manoharlal Publishers Pvt Ltd, 1948); Jadunath Sarkar, *Shivaji and His Times* (New Delhi: Orient Longman, 1973 [1920]); V.D. Savarkar, *Hindu Pad-Padashahi; or, A Review of the Hindu Empire of Maharashtra* (New Delhi: Bharti Sahitya Sadan, 1971); Sailendra Nath Sen, *Anglo-Maratha Relations, 1785-96* (Delhi: Macmillan, 1974); William Dalrymple, *The Anarchy: The Relentless Rise of the East-India Company* (London: Bloomsbury, 2019); C.A. Bayly, *Rulers, Townsmen, and Bazars: North India in the Age of British Expansion* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1983); Muzaffar Alam, *The Crisis of Empire in Mughal North India: Awadh and Punjab, 1707-1748* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2013); C.A. Bayly, *Imperial Meridian: The British Empire and the World 1780-1830* (London: Longman, 2002 [1989]); P.J. Marshall, *The Making and Unmaking of Empires: Britain, India, and America c. 1750-1783* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005).

context of their imperial site with distinctive strategies if they wanted to make Bombay an effective revenue-generator for themselves, the Company, and the English/British empire. Therefore, Bombay's growth and development over the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries was only effective when it differed from the other factories' increasingly dominant strategies of territorial expansion and intensifying military activity.

This text has traced four roughly chronological, varied examples of Bombay's commercial trajectory over the approximately 100 years between 1665 and 1753. It starts with my narrative of Keigwin's Revolt. I demonstrate how the original Company plan for Bombay aligned with newly emerging proto-Whig ideas of wealth generation focused on manufacturing and freer trade, rather than land and its resources. The best example of this lay in early, influential Bombay Governor Gerald Aungier's proposed plan for developing the island, which I explored in some detail. However, as part of the politics of empire over the late 1670s and 1680s, the Company's controlling Directors and administrators after Aungier's death emerged as Tory opponents of such a policy. Instead, they focused on austerity in their Indian factories and the remuneration of as much wealth-generating, finite produce as possible. That didn't mean that they found an effective route to wealth in that plan in the Bombay context, and it didn't mean that Directors and Company employees who still believed in Aungier's model were completely removed from control and administration. Such a reality led directly to Keigwin's Revolt, which I analyzed through the lens of the proto-Whig political economy expressed in the revolt's documents. Even though the revolt was put down and Bombay's administration returned to the very Tory control of John Child, I showed that it demonstrated how the power of the alternative political economic and ideological theories of empire and growth in Bombay could have a genuine impact on the Company's policy. It left an ideological roadmap for the continuing resistance to Tory policy and politics in and about Bombay moving forward into a crisis-ridden period.

We moved from Keigwin's Rebellion to the Anglo-Mughal War, an understudied but crucial moment when ideology fueled imperial policy in India. The chapter served as a bridge to the 19th century case studies presented here. In it, I focused on how geographically differentiated the outcome of the conflict was in India, despite the perceived ideological unity of the Child-era Tory imperial project. I demonstrated how a territorial, militaristic policy which was beginning to dominate Tory political economy in the period had a hope of success in eastern or southern India but was never a practical project in the west of the subcontinent for contextual reasons. The result of trying to apply the same policy in Bombay as in Bengal led to a disastrous defeat for the Company in the west, complete with infrastructural collapse in Bombay and heavy indemnity responsibilities due to the Mughal state in Gujarat. This western Indian outcome drove the earliest post-Glorious Revolution complaints about the East India Company in London's public sphere and in Parliament. As such, the Bombay theater of the Anglo-Mughal War had a pivotal role in the crisis of the Company's monopoly in the 1690s, when William III chartered a second, competing joint-stock company to trade to India at the same time as the original (old) EIC. While the territorial and militaristic outcomes of the Anglo-Mughal War in Bengal effectively negated the impact of the New East India Company in that part of South Asia, the same outcomes weren't possible in western India, and the New Company was able to much more effectively challenge the viability of the Old Company's trade and administration on the Arabian Sea littoral. This outcome was true on top of the indemnity which had to be paid on the western coast, and therefore already stretched the Company's liquidity there. Through tracing this ideologically imbued conflict in Bombay and in London, I turned the typical analysis of the war's results inside out. Rather than leading to the centralization of the Company's regional factories across India, I argued such an outcome was only demonstrated in Bengal. In fact, the opposite effect was measurable in Bombay. As such, the Whig vision of freer trade and manufacturing-oriented population center growth was able to survive and ultimately thrive in western India's debate over the theory of empire, though the same cannot be argued as clearly for the east.

The fourth chapter of this text shifted gears somewhat to examine how post-United Company merger in 1708, the political-economic conflict over Bombay's imperial trajectory focused on debate over actual infrastructure development in the factory, rather than on the conflicts over bureaucratic structure which dominated the earlier fights. I started with the project to build Bombay's Anglican church, which gave me the chance to examine the relationship between the governmentality of the Company and the national church. I showed how investing in a potentially extraneous project like a church building could become imbued with political economic valence about the nature of English/British imperial growth and administration in the early modern period. I also squared the circle of a church-building project being associated with the typically less-Anglican Whigs of the early 18th century, rather than the typically more church-oriented Tories of the period.

Finally, I treated the politics which swirled around attempts to build Bombay's dockyard in the second quarter of the 18th century. Instead of focusing on the materiality of the dockyard as an infrastructure project, I traced the complex political debates which made investing in Bombay's docking and shipping infrastructure such a nonstarter in the first six decades of Company activity in the factory. I then examined how the crisis of the 1730s in western India—context which the English had a role in worsening, due to the partisan positions of Company actors in the period—changed the calculus. Rather than propping up the Mughal state's representative in Surat, the Company switched gears decisively to invest in Bombay instead. I ended with a coda of sorts about how more careful attention to the pivotal role of the Parsi community of western India illuminates an even more complex political field when it comes to maritime resources and power projection in western India at the mid-18th century.

Precisely because of the animating questions I introduced in the introduction to this work and the beginning of this conclusion, my project has been driven by the need to understand and explicate the political-economic trajectory of Bombay as a way to flesh out our understanding of early modern British empire in South Asia. I believe I have demonstrated not only that Bombay followed an alternate trajectory to the other factories for historically explicable reasons, but the alternative trajectory Bombay took is key to a fuller understanding of South Asia and its historical actors during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Doing so will produce an increasingly holistic and accurate explanation of early modern English/British imperialism in South Asia and around the world. It will also help dismantle current temporal and geographic boundaries in our historiography which appear to seal modern and early modern South Asia off from modern and early modern British imperialism, British imperialism in the Atlantic world off from British imperialism in everything that isn't the Atlantic world, and so on. By introducing a comparatively small amount of complexity and differentiation, a much simpler and more integrated picture of South Asia, as well as the English/British empire during this time, emerges.

This project does such work through my methodological decision-making. As much as I have pursued a project which relies on historical data that cuts across common archival and historiographical epistemological frameworks, drawing on pamphlets and manuscripts, material produced in the metropole and the peripheries, material from institutional actors and non-institutional actors, I agree with my attentive readers that this argument is built in its largest majority on the content of the EIC archive. This collection is incredibly rich and incredibly challenging to fully understand and utilize. I believe one of my greatest skills gained through this project is my extensive knowledge of and facility with the India Office Records held at the British Library. I have done my best to fully embrace the call sounded by Philip J. Stern in *The Company-State* to take "the Company seriously as a political institution and its writing as a body of ideological work." Stern wants to "resist the tendency to envision the Company…in conditional, metaphorical, and ultimately imperfect terms" by seeing it "as a body politic on its own terms…a vision of an early modern 'empire' that was constituted by a variety of competing and overlapping political and constitutional forms."[3]

Following Stern's methodological and interpretive injunction, I read the EIC archive for its intrinsic political and ideological contestations. In my reading, the Company (or at least its constituent Directors and employees) saw its sovereignty in Bombay clearly. Because of Bombay's unique status as a Crown colony, the ultimate sovereignty clearly came from the monarch, which by the end of the seventeenth century, was vested in Parliament. Such a reading shifted my understanding of the Company's actors, who in the case of Bombay were contesting the rightness and effectiveness of the application of that sovereignty through their Company's administration, politics, decision-making and policy. This distinction is key, as it helps me recreate a lively debate over how the imperial sovereign

[3] Philip J. Stern, *The Company-State: Corporate Sovereignty and the Early Modern Foundations of the British Empire in India* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), 1-15.

state was enacted, for what reasons, to benefit whom, and so on. These debates, I demonstrate here, were crucial to the establishment of an effective empire across the globe and throughout the early modern period. Treating the Company's archive as an archive of bureaucracy and the underlying complexities and failures thereof to enact political and ideological values helps bring early modern English/British imperialism in India into Steve Pincus, Tiraana Bains, and A. Zuercher Reichardt's injunction to "think the empire whole" by taking "the state seriously." [4]

Reading the archive for this conflict means that I see the Company's activity as one part of the expansion of the global English/British imperial state, which requires attention to divisive politics of empire within the Company. The best way to give that attention to the state through its bureaucratic apparatus of the East India Company was, for me, to read its archive precisely for this divisive politics of empire which I have uncovered across the four case studies examined in this work. As such, I recast the EIC archive as a site of contest, debate, politics, and ideology as other scholars have begun to recast the bureaucratic archives of the Atlantic world colonies. It allows us to offer one solution for a common problem in histories of early modern politics and ideologies. How can you prove the existence of political-ideological conflict without an obvious public sphere of the kind illustrated in London as early as the 1670s?[5]

Tiraana Bains, James M. Vaughn, and Amy Watson have neatly sidestepped this problem in recent years by focusing on times and places where such a public sphere is visible to the historian.[6] But

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[4] Steven Pincus, Tiraana Bains, and A. Zuercher Reichardt, "Thinking the Empire Whole," *History Australia* 16, no. 4 (2019): 612.

[5] Steve Pincus, "'Coffee Politicians Does Create:' Coffeehouses and Restoration Political Culture," *Journal of Modern History* 67, no. 4 (1995): 807-834; Jürgen Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1991 [1989]).

[6] Tiraana Bains, "Making and Debating Empires in South Asia and the Global British Empire, 1756-1799," doctoral dissertation, Yale University, 2021; James M. Vaughn, *The Politics of Empire at the Accession of George III: The East India Company and the Crisis and Transformation of Britain's Imperial State* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2019); Amy Watson, *Patriots Before Revolution: The Rise of Party Politics in the British Atlantic, 1714-1763* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2025).

the historian interested in Bombay and the politics of empire before 1800 simply does not have access to the traditional archive of the public sphere (locally published newspapers, pamphlets, records of what people discussed in Bombay's punch houses, etc.). Instead, I have shown here that such a public sphere archive is not a clearly established prerequisite when the corporate, bureaucratic archive itself is as contested and political-ideological as any public sphere might be. This contention is why I am so confident about the methodological intervention made here. It privileges political and ideological contestation among Company actors and their interlocutors regarding western India wherever that contestation is found, without trying to establish the Habermasian requirements of the public sphere first. That allows for a much more explanatory, regionally and temporally engaged, and importantly more holistic picture of change over time for both the British empire writ large and the trajectory of that empire in South Asia. As the field of history moves towards reconstituting the political-ideological debates of the early modern world in a truly global, holistic context in the wake of Habermas and the public sphere theorizing of the second half of the 20th century, it is crucial to continue to uncover political-ideological conflict wherever it is found, be that in the pamphlet-broadsheet-salon context or the bureaucratic one.

As much as this dissertation has proved the validity of the history of early modern Bombay as an object of study, and challenged the dominant historiographic narratives which seek to explain the early modern English/British empire or the growth of English/British power in South Asia, it has gestured toward and demonstrated the validity of this methodological approach. I see that gesture and demonstration as its most widely applicable intervention, and end with its importance.

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